

# OPINION & COMMENTARY

**PETER ARUNDEL**  
PUBLISHER

**TREVOR BARATKO**  
EDITOR-IN-CHIEF

## EMPOWERING PEOPLE AND THEIR PASSIONS

The Times-Mirror is dedicated to the people of Loudoun County and the passions that define their lives. Tracing its lineage in the county to 1798, the Times-Mirror remains a vital link of communication that keeps the community informed of the changing events, issues and characters in our unique part of the world. Our goal remains to provide citizens with the information they need to make the best possible decisions about their lives, their communities, their societies and their governments.



Twitter/@JenniferBoysko

33rd Senate District candidates Joe May (R) and Jennifer Boysko (D) stop for picture in Leesburg during Tuesday's election.

### OUR VIEW

# The makeup of things

It's almost unfortunate we found the picture noteworthy, but it nonetheless stood out.

As voting was winding down in Tuesday's state Senate special election between Republican Joe May and Democrat Jennifer Boysko, an image posted on Twitter caught our eye. There was May and Boysko posing together for a selfie outside Ida Lee park in Leesburg, a polling location where the two collegial politicians apparently crossed paths.

"Joe May and I agree — we love Virginia," Boysko wrote. "Spending our last hour together at the polls."

That two competitors could shake hands, share a smile and strike a pose on Election Day shouldn't be newsworthy, but in our current all-or-nothing climate, it is. We aren't anticipating a jovial Donald Trump-Nancy Pelosi selfie anytime soon.

Tuesday's polling-place photo struck us as a sign that there's still hope for the "Virginia Way," a term often sung with pride by legislators in the commonwealth. We can disagree, we can see the world through different lenses, we can exert our passions, but we're all human, and most of the time public servants are genuinely trying to serve their fellow man the best they know how.

"I try very hard to be as good of public servant as I can be, and animosity has relatively little place in being a good public servant," May told us in a candid interview following his defeat Tuesday. "Civility still has some place in the makeup of things."

The Republican businessman who served in the House of Delegates from 1994-2014 said something he always enjoyed in Richmond was colleagues reflexively addressing one another as "ladies or gentlemen."

"The statement is implicit that you're ladies or gentleman unless you prove yourself otherwise," May said. "I've always liked that little touch of civility. That's what we sometimes refer to as the 'Virginia Way.' I don't see a reason to end that."

The 33rd Senate District special election was a condensed campaign, lasting less than two months. Perhaps a shorter political season is the magic ingredient for a better politics. The shorter time frame allows limited opportunities to attack, to stir mud and to slander.

Maybe we're naive, but we hope the picture of a smiling May and Boysko can serve as a reference point for current and future elected officials. Fight for your beliefs while respecting those of your opponents. Utter a "lady" or "gentlemen" instead of an insult. Indeed, civility still has some place in the makeup of things.

## THE BUZZ

Stories from the Times-Mirror that have people buzzing on social media.



**"BREAKING NEWS:** Leesburg continues to build on every square foot of undeveloped land. Film at 11."

**CARL CONWAY**  
on "Chick-feel-A, other restaurants approved for Oaklawn in Leesburg"



"Is Boysko a Marxist Democrat like the rest of them? When I was growing up there were moderate and conservative Democrats that deserved support on election day. I can't think of any moderate Democrats except maybe Joe Manchin. Democrats today hate President Trump more than they love their country."

**MIKE PHILLIPS**  
on "33rd State Senate District results"



"Wow.... how criminal.... ?? Next the airport will arrest a Santa and this paper will report how he isn't real."

**ASHLEIGH RHODES-VENSKOSKE**  
on "Soccer star Wayne Rooney arrested, booked in Loudoun County"



"People need to lighten up. Turn off Fox News, close Drudge Report, take a deep breath, go outside, go volunteer. Do something productive."

**AARON PERRIN**  
on "Rep. Wexton displays transgender pride flag outside congressional office"

### STORY COMMENTS

Readers can comment on stories that are published on LoudounTimes.com.

# OPINION & COMMENTARY

PETER ARUNDEL  
PUBLISHER

TREVOR BARATKO  
EDITOR-IN-CHIEF

## EMPOWERING PEOPLE AND THEIR PASSIONS

The Times-Mirror is dedicated to the people of Loudoun County and the passions that define their lives. Tracing its lineage in the county to 1798, the Times-Mirror remains a vital link of communication that keeps the community informed of the changing events, issues and characters in our unique part of the world. Our goal remains to provide citizens with the information they need to make the best possible decisions about their lives, their communities, their societies and their governments.

FIRST PERSON | TREVOR BARATKO

# The Hilarie huddle

The reporter's text came in at 7:34 a.m. last Thursday.

Just a few months out of Virginia Tech, new guy John Battiston was asking, should the opportunity arise, whether it'd be professionally acceptable to ask actress Hilarie Burton for an autograph. He assured me it would be for his girlfriend and not him, which for some reason made it more OK.

Trusting him to appropriately assess the situation, I said sure, as long as he doesn't bulldoze over students shouting, "Hilarie! Hilarie! I love you! Sign my shirt!"

I'm not too severe a stickler on things like that; after all, I'm the guy who has failed time and time again to bring myself to change out the few-year-old Facebook profile picture featuring a selfie with Emma Stone at the Middleburg Film Festival. Humble brag? Yes, yes it is.

Burton, a star of "One Tree Hill" and former co-host of MTV's "Total Request Live," was back in her hometown of Sterling Aug. 29 to rally the students at Park View High School. Last year, after word came down that Park View didn't have enough players to field a varsity football team, Burton sprung to action, visiting her alma mater and launching Project Patriot, a nonprofit that serves as a vessel to encourage and support Park View students in their extracurricular endeavors.

By all accounts, Project Patriot has been a success. Nearly four times the number of footballers turned out for the Park View team this year, and they'll open up the season Friday against Falls Church.

"Go kick some butt this year," Burton, who has raised thousands of dollars for the school, commanded the students.

Additionally, the NFL Players Association contributed \$10,000 worth of equipment for the Sterling athletes, and former Redskins star Clinton Portis joined Burton for last week's festivities.

"This will be the time that you look back on later in life," Portis said. "These are wonder years. So enjoy this moment. Friday Nights are where all the memories come from."

As a friend said to me after the event, these pledges of support — both financially and emotionally — are about much, much more than things. Yes, high-dollar, snazzy cleats are awesome for a 16-year-old kid. Sure, it's cool to snap Instagram shots of celebrities gracing the halls of your school.

But more than that, Burton and her supporters are letting the kids at Park View — a



Facebook/Project Patriot

Hilarie Burton, a Park View High School graduate and "One Tree Hill" star, models a long-sleeve tee from her High School Forever line.

Title 1 school — know they're worth the investment in time and money. In a school system with more than 80,000 students, not every child is going to have a compassionate and steadfast support system they deserve.

With her appearance, her initiative and her corporate partnerships, Burton is telling the teens: "I'm here for you, because you deserve this."

John Battiston didn't end up getting his autograph last week, and he's been emergency jewelry shopping ever since. No worries, John — we have a hunch Hilarie will be back soon, advocating for the community she loves.

*Trevor Baratko is the editor-in-chief of the Loudoun Times-Mirror. He can be reached at tbaratko@loudountimes.com.*

## THE BUZZ

Stories from the Times-Mirror that have people buzzing on social media.

...

"Devastating. What Justice is there for a crime so hideous that it destroyed not just Ryan's life but his entire family as well? And in true criminal fashion, it seems the perpetrators were never able to muster an ounce of remorse. Disgusting."

**PAULA YOCOM**

on "Ashburn man who was injured in violent West Virginia University assault dies as result of his injuries"

...

"I used to live in western Loudoun. I now live in rural, rural Iowa and I have broadband! One of the richest counties in the United States and the western folks still do not have decent internet? You should be ashamed, Loudoun County!"

**WENDY HEIN WIEBEN**

on "Disconnected and dejected: After two decades of resident complaints, Loudoun County considering rural Broadband investment"

...

"Donut craze is following the cupcake craze which followed the frozen yogurts. Waiting for bubble tea bubble to burst."

**STEVEN THAI**

on "Another Leesburg doughnut shop closing its doors"

## STORY COMMENTS

Readers can comment on stories that are published on LoudounTimes.com. Commenting requires registration. Comments appear at the end of individual stories on the web site.

# OPINION & COMMENTARY

**PETER ARUNDEL**  
PUBLISHER

**TREVOR BARATKO**  
EDITOR-IN-CHIEF

## EMPOWERING PEOPLE AND THEIR PASSIONS

The Times-Mirror is dedicated to the people of Loudoun County and the passions that define their lives. Tracing its lineage in the county to 1798, the Times-Mirror remains a vital link of communication that keeps the community informed of the changing events, issues and characters in our unique part of the world. Our goal remains to provide citizens with the information they need to make the best possible decisions about their lives, their communities, their societies and their governments.

## OUR VIEW

# \$15 million here, \$10 million there

## Lame-duck board goes on a spending spree

There were so many dumbfounding facets to the Board of Supervisors' Tuesday night funding item for D.C. and Loudoun United it's hard to know where to start.

But we'll give it a shot.

First was how seemingly out of nowhere the request from the sports franchise to the county for an additional \$10 million came from. This \$10 million is beyond the \$15 million Loudoun County has already committed to help build the Segra Field complex, additional practice fields and offices at Bolen Park in Leesburg.

We wouldn't expect United officials to advertise their troubles, but we also didn't expect their woes to be so big so fast. Sure, there were many a tiny crowd for Loudoun United's inaugural season this year, but we figured that was par for the course for a new franchise just getting its footing. We certainly didn't foresee taxpayers having to contribute another eight figures to the project.

Also asinine Tuesday was fact the initiative was initially included on the consent agenda — meaning no discussion on the matter would've taken place had it remained there. Thankfully at least one su-



County officials, including Economic Development Executive Director Buddy Rizer, left, and Board of Supervisors Chairwoman Phyllis Randall (D), second from right, supported spending another \$10 million on Loudoun United's Segra Field complex.

pervisor — Kristen Umstatt (D-Leesburg) — had the sense to pull it off consent so the light could be shone on the issue. Still, public discussion lasted just a few minutes, and most supervisors remained silent before signing off at the public's expense.

Can you imagine if the board swiftly agreed to send \$10 million to a pro sports team without any debate and discussion? Yeah, unfortunately, so can we.

We were further aghast that the vote came in at 7-1, with only Umstatt opposing. (The vote likely would've been 8-1 had

Supervisor Matt Letourneau (R-Dulles), a vocal supporter of Loudoun and D.C. United, been present) A lame-duck board with a six-to-three Republican majority — several of whom call themselves fiscal conservatives — votes 7-1 to send \$10 million to a private enterprise after already approving \$15 million for said enterprise the previous year. How's that for principle?

It's projects like this that make cynics of government observers and critics of public-private partnerships. We know supervisors and county officials like Eco-

nomics Development's Executive Director Buddy Rizer say they'll be made whole when it's all said and done. And maybe they will, but pardon us for being skeptical after this latest stunt.

It would be unfair to omit the fact the new funding comes with additions to the United-county partnership, including the introduction of the National Women's Soccer League's Washington Spirit into the equation. The Spirit will play several home games at Segra Field and move some operations to Loudoun, and the county expects additional marketing and branding beyond the initial terms of the agreement.

We could perhaps get behind these additions in exchange for the county coughing up another million, but \$10 million is egregious.

It was further disappointing that no Loudoun United or D.C. United representatives attended the meeting to make their case. Certainly there's been wheeling and dealing in back rooms and on the phones, but it would've been a welcome gesture to see the organization's leadership explain themselves for the public record.

We've used these editorial pages before to rally and cheer on Loudoun United as a community project, a sports team we can finally call our own. We maintain our hopes for the team's prosperity — both on the field and in the bank.

But we can't endorse handing out another \$10 million to a private enterprise so soon and with such little transparency.