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**InTheKnow**



**TRADITIONAL FALL, NEW SPRING**

The Fall Arts and Crafts Show returns as town prepares for RiverFest 2020.

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**RISING UP TOGETHER**

Stonewall's Shawn Murphy and Tyleik Williams share the spotlight

» PAGE 16



**AN 'ABSURD' CARNIVAL**

Local artist John Hartt preparing Manassas exhibition

» PAGE 19

# FINAL PITCHES



After considering sites in Fairfax and Prince George's County, the Pittsburgh Pirates moved their Single-A franchise from Alexandria to Prince William County in 1984. FILE PHOTO



The Potomac Nationals won three Carolina League titles, the last one coming in 2014.

JEFF MANKIE | FOR INSIDENOVA

Six major-league organizations have fielded teams at Northwest Federal Field at Pfitzner Stadium.

JEFF MANKIE | FOR INSIDENOVA

## Fans saying goodbye to Potomac Nationals as team heads south

» EMILY SIDES  
esides@insidenova.com

Gainesville resident Dave Stinson, a long-time fan of the Potomac Nationals, was among supporters in the stands for one of the team's final games in Prince William County.

"It's like most things in life, in general you don't appreciate what you have until you lose it," he said.

He will only have a few more chances to see the team in Prince William. The P-Nats,

the high Class A affiliate of the Washington Nationals, plan to open the 2020 season at a new \$35 million stadium in Fredericksburg. If they don't make the playoffs this season and assuming the new stadium is ready by next spring, their final game in Prince William's Pfitzner Stadium will be Aug. 29.

"I love baseball and will absolutely miss them," Stinson said during a game against the Myrtle Beach Pelicans on Aug. 15.

Springfield resident John Ballenger and his

P-NATS » PAGE 10

**Inside:** Remembering the first minor-league game in Prince William, plus a look at other facts from the team's 35-year run in the county. Pages 10-11.

**Final homestand:** The Potomac Nationals' final home regular-season games of 2019 will be Aug. 23-29. The Aug. 29 game includes a dirt giveaway from the stadium.

**What's next for the Pfitz?** After requesting suggestions and receiving several proposals for the future of the Pfitzner Stadium, county officials have yet to adopt any plans. Board Chair Corey Stewart said that responsibility probably will fall on the next board. All eight supervisor seats are on the ballot in November.

## VDOT studying Route 28 intersection improvements

» EMILY SIDES  
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As cars drove by on state Route 28, the Virginia Department of Transportation and Del. Danica Roem, D-13th, announced Monday that the state agency has begun a study of five intersections along the congested road in the Manassas Park and Yorkshire areas.

The study is estimated to cost \$250,000 to \$300,000, said Helen Cuervo, VDOT's North-

ern Virginia district engineer.

Expected to be completed by the end of the year, the study will analyze alternative intersection designs that can make Route 28 safer and move cars more efficiently, said Roem, a first-term delegate who is running for re-election this November against Republican Kelly McGinn.

The study will look at intersections from Blooms Quarry Lane north to the border of Prince William and Fairfax counties.

"We're studying a number of options, so it's not a one-size-fits-all," Roem said.

Among the options considered will be roundabouts, flyovers and other intersection improvements, Roem said.

When the study is completed, officials will still have to figure out what options to pursue, how much they will cost and how to fund

ROUTE 28 » PAGE 3

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## AFFILIATION HISTORY

The Potomac franchise has been a Class A affiliate for six different major-league clubs since moving from Alexandria for the start of the 1984 season. Here are the year-by-year records through 2018

### Potomac Nationals Affiliation: Washington Nationals

Year	Overall record
2018	74-62
2017	63-77
2016	73-65
2015	65-74
x-2014	78-58
2013	84-55
2012	64-75
2011	68-71
2010	70-69
2009	79-58
2008	79-61
2007	69-68
2006	64-76
2005	63-77
<b>Overall record</b>	<b>993-946</b>

### Potomac Cannons Affiliation: Cincinnati Reds

Year	Overall record
2004	67-72
2003	62-77
<b>Overall record</b>	<b>129-149</b>

### Prince William Cannons (1997-98), Potomac Cannons (1999-2002) Affiliation: St. Louis Cardinals

Year	Overall record
2002	59-81
2001	66-74
2000	62-76
1999	54-85
1998	72-67
1997	69-70
<b>Overall record</b>	<b>382-453</b>

### Prince William Cannons Affiliation: Chicago White Sox

Year	Overall record
1996	58-80
1995	64-76
1994	71-65
<b>Overall record</b>	<b>193-221</b>

### Prince William Cannons/Yankees Affiliation: New York Yankees

Year	Overall record
1993	67-93
1992	69-71
1991	71-68
1990	64-75
x-1989	72-66
1988	55-75
1987	66-74
<b>Overall record</b>	<b>464-502</b>

### Prince William Pirates Affiliation: Pittsburgh Pirates

Year	Overall record
1986	67-72
1985	65-74
1984	75-65
<b>Overall record</b>	<b>207-211</b>

x=Carolina League champions



With close access to the field at Pftzner, kids were a constant presence seeking baseballs from players. **JEFF MANKIE | FOR INSIDENOVA**



Stephen Strasburg is one of a number of Washington Nationals who have done re-hab assignments at Potomac. **BILL KAMENJAR | FOR INSIDENOVA**

#### P-NATS >> FROM PAGE 1

wife brought their two sons, Lincoln, 7, and Hudson, 3, to the game. During the game, a Pelicans player gave Hudson a foul ball.

“He was super excited,” Ballenger said. “We are trying to convince him to play baseball next year. I think the baseball game solidifies the feeling of going to a game and feeling important.”

Minor-league games are rites of passage for some children. The P-Nats game was a test to see whether their sons could handle attending a Washington Nationals game. “Maybe in a year or so,” Ballenger said.

Team owner Art Silber, 79, bought the P-Nats when he was 49, about five years after the team moved to Prince William. The team was known as the Prince William Pirates and Cannons before becoming the Nationals in 2005. Silber formerly played minor league baseball in Kansas City and coached first base for the P-Nats on the weekends for over two decades. He said he’s thankful for the friends, memories and players he’s known over the years.

“Emotionally, it’s really difficult for me and my family,” Silber said. “For 30 years, we’ve been in and out of the ballpark...I’ve watched people grow old and they’ve watched me grow old.”

The road to the team leaving the county has been a long one.

“It is going to be very difficult to say goodbye to a lot of people who I’ve known for many years,” Silber said.

The team continued playing at the aging Pftzner Stadium only because it received waivers from Minor League Baseball.

For years, Silber tried to secure a new home for the team in Prince William, settling on a site between Stonebridge at Potomac Town Center and Sentara Northern Virginia Medical Center.

In 2017, the county considered a deal with Silber that would have built a stadium financed through county bonds, with the team paying roughly \$2.7 million yearly for 30 years, as well as \$450,000 in annual rent for the land.

But county supervisors were divided over the project, and the board ultimately rejected the plan.

“Quite candidly, the best thing that happened to us was the deal in Prince William didn’t happen,” Silber said. “I leave with nothing but the best memories and a tremendous sense of gratitude for all that we’ve had over the last couple of decades.”

The team’s stadium will be at Celebrate Virginia South off Interstate

 For more photos, go to [INSIDENOVA.COM](http://INSIDENOVA.COM)

95 near Central Park. In November, the Fredericksburg City Council unanimously agreed to pay \$1.05 million to the team for 30 years – covering about 40 percent of the financing for the park. In exchange, the city will be able to use the stadium for events for up to 183 days a year.

“It is thrilling, absolutely thrilling,” Silber told InsideNoVa. “We’re looking forward to continuing to work with our partner, the Washington Nationals; they’re excited. It’s our opportunity to bring a first-class baseball facility to the Northern Virginia area.”

After the move to Fredericksburg, the team will have a new name, which has not been announced.

Wearing a P-Nats hat and an old Washington Nationals jersey, Matt Tillson, sophomore at James Madison University, also attended the P-Nats’ home game against the Pelicans. He hadn’t been to a game in eight years, but he drove to the ballpark to see the team a final time before they move. He remembers watching the P-Nats as a kid.

“They’re moving and it’s breaking my heart,” he said.

From his home in Fairfax County, he doesn’t think driving to Fredericksburg will be feasible.

Silber said he hopes to retain half of the current market of fans, but local fans not ready to make the trip may still see a few more games next spring.

He expects the new ballpark to be completed by April, but in case it’s not, he plans to renew the team’s lease agreement with the county for Pftzner Stadium through December 2020. Silber has until Sept. 1 to notify the county of the team’s intent to renew its lease, according to the agreement.

If the new ballpark isn’t ready when the season starts, Silber said, the team could begin the season at Pftzner and finish it at the new ballpark.

While Pftzner can seat about 5,200, the new ballpark will seat about 6,500 for games, Silber said. For concerts, the new ballpark will be able to fit 9,500 people. It will host 12 concerts a year for Celebrate Virginia.

Prince William Board At-large Chair Corey Stewart, who supported the 2017 deal, said he regrets that the county didn’t build a new stadium for the team. “If it were up to me, we would be constructing a new stadium right now and

the P-Nats would be staying in Prince William County, but the votes [on the board] just weren’t there.”

If the county had issued bonds to the team for a new ballpark in the county, and if the team defaulted on repaying, the county would have been responsible for paying back the funds.

“Although that’s true, there was strong data to show that the team would’ve been successful in that location [in Woodbridge],” Stewart said.

Stewart said he expects the county will renew the P-Nats’ lease until December 2020.

“We’re really sad to see them going and we wish them luck,” he said. “I hope and I’m confident they’re going to do very well down in Fredericksburg.”

In 2018, the P-Nats sold only 50 season tickets, and the team has never sold more than 200 in a year, Silber said. Already the team has sold out 13 suites and received 1,800 season ticket reservations for the new ballpark.

In addition to providing a relaxing, family-friendly activity, minor-league teams also give players an opportunity to gain experience in hopes of moving up to the big leagues.

Fauquier County residents Lamar and Dottie Boone know that to be true firsthand. After retiring in 1993, Lamar Boone started working for the team’s booster club, which provides financial and other support for players. He was the booster club president for 21 years, and Dottie, his wife, was treasurer for 23 years. Their last year working with the booster club was 2017.

“We made the focus on the players,” Dottie Boone said.

The couple said they helped raise funds to give gift cards to players and find host homes where they could stay for free during the season. The booster club sold cracked wooden bats they received from the Washington Nationals, they said. On some Saturdays, they’d provide home-cooked meals.

His favorite memories include interacting with the players and staff to see if there was anything they needed, he said. The couple was almost like parents to the team.

“At every bus departure for an away game, I’d bring breakfast food,” Lamar Boone said. “I always enjoyed it. It was relaxing and we could talk to the players.”

Dottie Boone said she recommends fans in Fredericksburg get involved with the team.

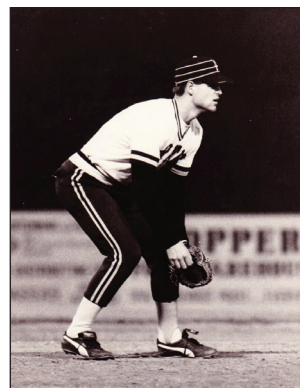
“They’re dedicated in what they want to do,” she said. “They’re great people on the whole.”



## THEY STARTED HERE

These future major-leaguers began their professional baseball careers in Prince William County

Name	Year here	What they did here	MLB career
<b>Barry Bonds</b>	1985	Hit .299 with 13 homers and 37 RBIs in 71 games after being selected as the sixth overall pick in the 1985 MLB Draft by Pittsburgh	MLB all-time home-run leader and seven-time NL MVP award winner
<b>Jeff King</b>	1986	Hit .235 with six homers and 20 RBIs in 37 games after being selected No. 1 overall in the 1986 MLB Draft by Pittsburgh	Batted .256 with 154 homers in 1,201 games
<b>Braden Loper</b>	1997	Went 3-6 with a 4.48 ERA in 64.1 innings after being the third overall pick in the 1996 MLB Draft by St. Louis	Member of two World Series champions (2003 Florida Marlins and 2006 St. Louis Cardinals)
<b>Anthony Rendon</b>	2012	Hit .333 in nine games after being the sixth overall pick in the 2011 MLB Draft by Washington	2016 NL Comeback Player of the Year and 2019 all-star



Jeff King



Anthony Rendon

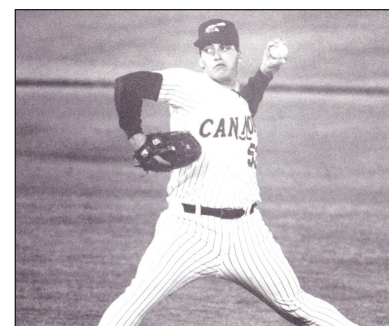
FILE PHOTO

POTOMAC NATIONALS

## OTHER NOTABLE NAMES

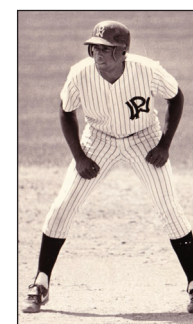
These players also came through Prince William County on their way to the majors

Name	Years in Prince William	What they did here	MLB accolades
<b>John Smiley</b>	1985	2-2 in 10 games	Two-time all-star who led the National League in wins in 1991
<b>Bobby Bonilla</b>	1985	Hit .262 in 39 games	Six-time all-star and 1997 World Series champion with Florida
<b>Bernie Williams</b>	1988	Hit .335 in 92 games	Four-time World Series champion with New York Yankees and five-time all-star
<b>J.T. Snow</b>	1990	Hit .256 with eight homers and 46 RBIs in 138 games	Six-time gold glove winner with California and San Francisco
<b>Brad Ausmus</b>	1990-91	Hit .236 in 1990, .304 in 1991	Three-time Gold Glove winner and one-time all-star
<b>Sterling Hitchcock</b>	1991	7-7 with 2.64 ERA	NLCS MVP in 1998 with San Diego
<b>Andy Pettitte</b>	1993	11-9 with a 3.04 ERA	Five-time World Series champion with New York Yankees, three-time all-star
<b>Jorge Posada</b>	1993	Hit .259 in 118 games	Five-time all-star and four-time World Series champion with New York Yankees
<b>Mike Cameron</b>	1994	Hit .248 in 131 games	All-star and three-time Gold Glove winner with Seattle and San Diego
<b>Magglio Ordonez</b>	1995	Hit .238 in 131 games	Six-time all-star with Chicago White Sox and Detroit Tigers
<b>Rick Ankiel</b>	1998	9-6 with a franchise-record 181 strikeouts	2000 Sporting News Rookie Pitcher of the Year
<b>Albert Pujols</b>	2000	Hit .284 with two homers in 21 games	10-time all-star and three-time NL MVP with St. Louis and Los Angeles Angels
<b>Coco Crisp</b>	2001	Hit .306 in 139 games 2007	World Series champion and 2011 AL stolen-base leader
<b>Joey Votto</b>	2004	Hit .298 with five homers in 24 games	Six-time all-star and 2010 NL MVP with Cincinnati
<b>Ian Desmond</b>	2005	Hit .256 in 55 games	Two-time all-star with Washington, Texas



Andy Pettitte

FILE PHOTO



Bernie Williams

FILE PHOTO



Mike Cameron

FILE PHOTO

# A crazy start to the season

## Remembering Prince William County's first minor-league baseball team in 1984

» DAVID FAWCETT  
dfawcett@insidenova.com

Of all the home openers Northwest Federal Field at Pfitzner Stadium has hosted in its 36 years, the most memorable was the first one in 1984, otherwise known as the night of the horse, the holler and the banned bunt.

Or for history's sake, officially known as April 19, 1984, the day professional baseball made its delayed-but-distinctive debut in Woodbridge as the Single-A Prince William Pirates hosted the Hagerstown Suns.

Around the horn, the bizarre events started in the outfield. Unsafe playing conditions at the new stadium, caused by hard rain, forced umpires to rule the warning track off limits. Workers positioned a row of saw horses along the warning track; any ball hit over the saw horses but short of the fence became a ground-rule double.

At home plate, the wackiness included some hollering by the Suns, upset with the quagmire-like field conditions. The umpires wouldn't cancel the contest, but they did outlaw all bunts on the freshly laid sod.

And to think this game technically wasn't the Pirates' official home opener. That took place April 1 when Prince William played Lynchburg in Norfolk because Prince William County Stadium wasn't finished.

After almost an hour-and-a-half delay,

baseball commenced at 8:43 p.m. on April 19. The Pirates won their fifth straight, defeating the Suns 6-2, but the memorable moments from their maiden voyage didn't end that soggy, damp night.

The Pirates' class of '84 featured a sight rarely seen at the Single-A level: a union of major-league players, past and future.

The past came in the form of Super Joe Charboneau, the 1980 American League Rookie of the Year who after struggling through three straight injury-plagued seasons, landed in Woodbridge for a final comeback.

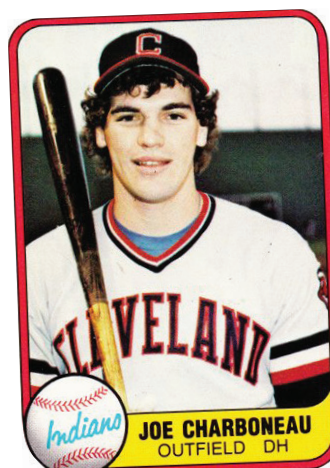
The future came in the form of Leon "Bip" Roberts and Felix Fermin, who went on to star with the Cincinnati Reds and the Cleveland Indians respectively.

The class of '84 featured colorful stories like the time manager John Lipon put a punching bag in the dugout so Charboneau, an intense, combative player, would have something to vent his frustrations on besides the new lockers. (The bag, by the way, lasted only one homestand before Charboneau ripped it apart.)

Prince William's first season of minor-league baseball also included the Pirates giving up an inside-the-park home run after Jim Aulenback got his leg stuck under the outfield fence while chasing a fly ball.

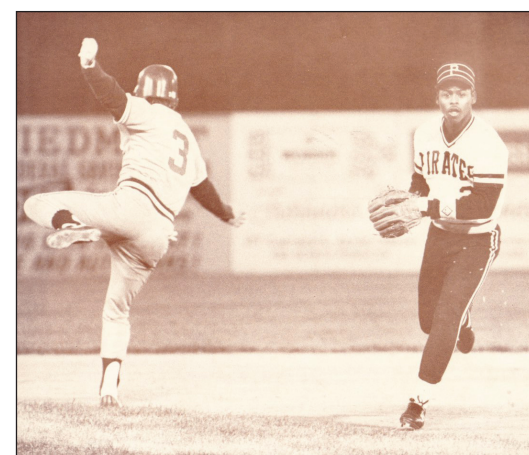
The list goes on, but it always begins with the stadium itself, a state-of-the-art facility, considered one of the elite minor league parks at the time.

Actual on-site lockers, tunnels between the dugout and the clubhouse, and



Joe Charboneau

SUBMITTED



Bip Roberts (right)

FILE PHOTO

plenty of lights were far from the dilapidated parks like Greenwood, S.C., a step below Prince William on the Pirates' minor-league ladder.

The "big leagues" arrived in Prince William after the Alexandria Dukes moved south, primarily for two reasons: Dukes' cramped quarters at Four Mile Run Park and a city ban on beer sales.

Dukes president Eugene Thomas, impressed with Prince William's offer to build a stadium immediately, turned down two other interested parties, Fairfax and Prince George's (Md.) counties. The Pirates organization looked forward to the move.

Pittsburgh did put a formidable team in Prince William.

The roster included six future major leaguers and a noted manager in Lipon, a 30-year veteran who retired after spending the 1992 season with Single-A Lakeland.

Led by Roberts and fellow Carolina

League All-Star Kim Christensen, the Pirates nearly captured the first-half pennant with their hitting.

Prince William went into the final weekend with a 1.5 game lead over Lynchburg, but finished a game back after splitting a doubleheader with Hagerstown.

Charboneau wasn't there for the second half after Pittsburgh promoted him to Hawaii, but unfortunately for the fading star, Prince William would mark the last stop on his comeback trail. He hurt his ankle in Hawaii, underwent surgery and then retired.

"I can still see that field in my mind right now," Charboneau said.

There certainly was a lot to see that first season.

*This is an updated story that originally published in 1993 commemorating the 10th-year anniversary of minor-league baseball in Prince William County*





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**SPECIAL SECTION INSIDE**

# CYBERBULLYING HITS STUDENTS ... AND ADMINISTRATORS

### With online harassment, parents, schools tackle cases of abuse differently than teens, children

» BY EMILY SIDES  
esides@insidenova.com

**A**fter collecting her children's phones before bedtime last month, Bristow resident Te'Aira Thomas was alarmed to see Snapchat messages sent to her son with an image of a swastika, and racist and homophobic names.

"I'm not going to call [the messages] 'Oh, this is how we roll,'" she said. "This is very serious to my son and my family. It's really been hard."

Officials at Prince William County Public Schools say they haven't noticed a significant increase in reports of cyberbullying in recent years. But Thomas' situation highlights the challenges in dealing with the issue. As educators and elected officials work to provide resources for students' mental health, cyberbullying still can be difficult for students, parents and even school staff to navigate.

Creating social media accounts and posts can be easy, and even adults can be targets. Superintendent Steve Walts recently launched a Twitter feed to share school-closing announcements and other school news, and the account has 16,000 followers.

A parody account of Walts' account has more than 800 followers and routinely shares posts mocking Walts with profanity or manipulated images.

The school division reported the parody account to Twitter, but the account is still active.

"We will continue to follow up with Twitter," Prince William County Public Schools spokeswoman Diana Gulotta said. "We encourage the public's assistance in reporting inappropriate accounts to Twitter."

When confronted by a cyberbully, experts



recommend that children ignore the messages and tell a trusted adult, said Jenny Mischel, a doctoral candidate specializing in educational psychology at George Mason University's College of Education and Human Development. Mischel has studied bullying for four years and focused on cyberbullying in the last two years. Mischel recommends parents and educators explain to children what is inappropriate and that they don't deserve to be treated cruelly. In addition, parents can reach out to the parents of other children involved so parents can correct the behavior.

"The difficulty is that it's all online," she said. "Whereas the kids who are bullied [at school] have reprieve when they go home, but with cyberbullying, there is no way to escape it. The

CYBERBULLYING» PAGE 3

# P-Nats' end may mean new future for Pfitzner

### As baseball moves south, county leaders fielding ideas for aging stadium

» BY EMILY SIDES  
esides@insidenova.com

**T**he Prince William County Board of County Supervisors received four suggestions for the future of Pfitzner Stadium after the Potomac Nationals minor league baseball team leaves the aging ballfield for a new home in Fredericksburg.

Ideas include redeveloping the 34-year-old stadium and the larger property surrounding it as a mixed-use development with recreational, housing and retail space

After 33 years of leasing the stadium from the county, the P-Nats, a high Class-A affiliate of the Washington Nationals, inked a deal with Fredericksburg to relocate to a new \$35 million stadium at Celebrate Virginia South, off Interstate 95 near Central Park.

Potomac Nationals' owner Art Silber plans to open the new stadium as early as April 2020, though the team's lease in Prince William doesn't expire until after the 2020 season.

Last fall, Prince William County asked for ideas from potential private partners on the best uses for the 7-acre Pfitzner Stadium and the surrounding 65-acre property the county owns, with a particular eye for sport and recreational opportunities that would appeal to residents and attract tourists.

PFITZNER» PAGE 3

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The property also has a BMX track and three softball fields used by adult leagues.

**OPPORTUNITIES FOR PFITZNER**

The stadium is nearing the end of its useful life, according to the county. The county could get rid of the metal stands and outfield, and keep the field for kids to play on, said Corey Stewart, the board's at-large chair.

A new stadium and sports tourism attractions could be funded through a proposed county bond referendum this November, or it could be a privately funded project altogether.

The board will look into the information provided to the county, said Stewart, while pointing to plans for a bond referendum in November that could finance mobility, park and other capital projects.

"Obviously what we'd like to do is work with the private sector in order to improve the quality and hold down the cost to taxpayers," Stewart said.

Pfitzer Stadium is "not a great spot"

for an athletic team, because it is tucked away from Prince William Parkway, Stewart said.

"If we get another pro baseball team, we should get a new location — because a pro baseball team needs visibility and you can't get it back there," he said.

Supervisor Ruth Anderson, R-Occoquan, said she agrees that the county should seek out a professional baseball team and find another location for a stadium.

Anderson, whose district includes the stadium and surrounding property, envisions the property staying focused on sports and recreational activity. She thinks it's not suitable necessarily for retail and housing development, because there is not enough road access.

"From my perspective, I would like to see it remain mostly sports oriented," she said.

The board is considering the pitches for the Pfitzer site and has not yet made a decision whether to partner with any of the companies, said Jason Grant, the county spokesman.

As far as the requests for sports opportunities at the stadium, Anderson said the responses don't excite her. She said she does not expect to request more information from the respondents.

"For me, I would like to see maybe a combination of some of these things we received, but none of the four [responses] strikes me as the absolute right answers right now," Anderson said.

**SPORTS TOURISM IN PRINCE WILLIAM**

One idea would redevelop the stadium into a mixed-use development with housing, retail and recreation. DCS Design — along with Peterson Companies, Toll Brothers and Good Works — submitted an idea that includes the stadium in a development that would have multiple housing options, including for those over the age of 55.

DCS Design also suggested selling some of the property for private development, with the revenue going toward recreational improvements to the stadium.

Utah-based Victus Advisors outlined a

three-phase approach for the county that would study the sports tourism market and facility opportunities, review the financial feasibility and economic impact, and then determine management of the facility.

Victus Advisors provided similar services related to market research, economic analysis, financial planning and developing an operations plan similar to the Virginia Beach Sports Center, a \$60-million, 200,000-square-foot facility set to open in 2020.

Another company, Complete Game, headed by Paul Colangelo, Mike Colangelo and Shawn Camp, proposed an indoor baseball and softball complex for youth baseball, adult softball leagues and college summer teams.

Safe at Home suggested the county could build a new stadium and a new playground with space to host festivals throughout the year. The company also suggested that pieces of the county's property near the stadium could be sold for retail development and the county could start a sports commission to recruit events and raise funds.

problem is the negative feelings go with the child to school, and that's going to affect their social interactions potentially and their ability to concentrate in school."

Thomas' son said he had seen a drawing of a swastika before, written in a boy's bathroom at school last year, but he didn't know what it was until his mother explained. The next day, the child who sent the Snapchat messages texted an apology, but Thomas still reported the messages to the administration at Marsteller Middle School, which her son attended.

Thomas' son told the school resource officer he did not feel threatened, so there was no disciplinary action taken against the student who sent the messages, according to his mother.

The school division investigated the posting and "found no connection to the school or a school event," according to a statement from Gulotta.

School administrators told Thomas that since the messages were sent outside of school hours, Prince William County

police would be the ones to investigate the matter, and they were notified by the school resource officer. The police and the county's Commonwealth's Attorney's Office declined to prosecute anyone in connection with the Snapchat messages sent to Thomas' son, according to police spokesperson Sgt. Jonathan Perok.

**DIFFERENT RESPONSES**

Since the incident, Thomas has looked through her son's phone and found another video a few days before the swastika image was sent. It also was meant to demean her son through name calling.

The son called out his friends for "bullying" him, but he didn't tell his mother about it.

In Mischel's research, she has posed different hypothetical scenarios to adults and children, and asked if they consider the situations to be an example of cyberbullying. The children were less likely than adults to call something cyberbullying, until the situation escalated to a public post or message, she said.

"Adults and kids have different definitions of cyberbullying, so it's difficult to address," she said.

Kids don't tend to tell parents when they are bullied, because they think their parents won't understand or they are worried their phones will be taken away.

"Kids don't tell an adult until it's overwhelming," she said. "They feel embarrassed or feel like they should handle it, or worry that their parents will make it worse."

**CYBERBULLYING EDUCATION**

Prince William County Schools addresses cyberbullying through events, posters and other programs, Gulotta said. School counselors provide classroom lessons to students about internet etiquette, safety and cyberbullying, and school resource officers provide students with information about Virginia laws about cyberbullying.

The school division's Safe Schools Advisory Council also sponsors events for

parents, and most schools have a campaign to combat cyberbullying and promote inclusion and kindness, Gulotta said.

Children in third to fifth grades learn how to communicate positively in conflict or bullying situations and learn responses to ease that conflict, Gulotta said.

In middle school, students learn about changes, choices and challenges, as well as social media awareness.

In seventh grade, students are taught the "Pause Before you Post" program created by Jostens. Posters around schools reinforce the message, and children get backpack tags that have a pause sign.

Thomas said she hopes even one child will be positively impacted by sharing her son's situation.

"I want them to manage the next crisis better, because some kids don't have someone to champion for them," Thomas said. "It would still be going on if I didn't find out. It's not just my kid. I would never have known if I didn't go through his phone. It's just sad."



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