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Fauquier Times | February 5, 2020



In late January 1983, the 1909 upper school building on High Street, Warrenton was demolished, despite controversy about the building's status as "a contributing element of the eligible historic district." A 36-unit apartment complex later rose on the property.

FAUQUIER FLASHBACKS FROM THE FAUQUIER TIMES

75 Years Ago Feb. 8, 1945

With only a week in which to volunteer, half enough Fauquier County citizens have offered to be blood donors when the Red Cross Blood Donor Unit visits Warrenton on Feb. 15. **Upton Richards**, chapter recruiting chairman, said the urgent need from overseas has resulted in a request for 160 pints of blood.

Lt. James E. Poe of Hume, who was reported missing in action in November, is a German prisoner, his parents, **Mr. and Mrs. Ollie Poe**, heard last week. A letter from Jimmy arrived at the Hume Post Office on Friday. He was wounded in the leg in Germany and was being treated in a German hospital.

A dance for the benefit of the Warrenton Platoon, Co. 111, Virginia State Guard, will be held at Rockwood Hall, Warrenton, on Feb. 23. A popular orchestra has been engaged, and admission is \$1.50. Members of the Warrenton Rifles will attend in uniform, and all servicemen are invited.

50 Years Ago Feb. 5, 1970

Meeting a major public need, Fauquier Hospital officials announced that beginning Feb. 7, a physician will stand duty for emergency cases from noon on Saturdays until 7 a.m. Mondays. Hospital Administrator **William H. Green Jr.** noted that the new service, under contract with a group of doctors in the Northern Virginia area, will offer immediate treatment of emergency cases.

Jody McClanahan, Billy How-

land and Isaac Woodson were photographed leaving the front door of Fauquier High School on the afternoon of Jan. 30 after completing three days of exams. The school's 1,151 high school pupils began their second semester of work on Feb. 3.

Eleven scouts from Troop 175 were inducted at the Tenderfoot Investiture held at Warrenton United Methodist Church on Jan. 26. They were **Paul Anderson, Larry Dawson, Mike Fincham, Leroy Edwards, David Gray, Mike Gray, Gary Heiser, Monty Lamirand, Danny Miller, Mike Strawser and Mike Seely.**

25 Years Ago Feb. 8, 1995

Big K Radio held a forum Tuesday night on Walmart's proposal to build a store in Warrenton in an attempt to gauge public opinion on the idea. The only problem was that the public failed to show up. "Personally, I wanted to know what the people are thinking about Wal-Mart coming to this community," said **Dee Parker**, the station's news director.

The Fauquier and Rappahannock bar associations have endorsed Fauquier County **Circuit Court Judge W. Shore Robertson** for a seat on the Virginia Court of Appeals.

The Fauquier Times-Democrat was named Virginia's best large weekly newspaper in the 1994 editorial competition sponsored by the Virginia Press Association. This is the third consecutive year that the Democrat has captured the prestigious award, receiving the most points for writing, photography, design and graphics.

— Compiled by John T. Toler

EDITORIAL

Middle school dominoes

Even as Fauquier County School Board members inched toward consensus Monday night on a plan to renovate and expand the county's middle schools, there was an uncomfortable acknowledgement that the process has been painful and enduring. Over the last three years, decisions have been made ... and un-made ... and re-made ... as new information comes to light.

It's a sticky problem and no solution is perfect. School board members must consider cost, bus route ramifications, big questions about security or the need for trailers (learning cottages) and smaller ones about whether a new road would affect the size of ballfields.

And with each passing year without a decision, the cost goes up. Tick ... tick.

By the time the expansion projects are done — three or more years from now — will all the schools be at capacity anyway?

Some questions are completely outside the school division's control. What housing developments will come online and where will they be? Could proffers be used to pay for school seats? Will state laws change to create new, unforeseen issues?

It is encouraging to see that as the school board members and staff wrestle with these issues, they always remember to ask: "How will this decision affect instruction? Is this consistent with our student-centric approach? Is this choice fair and equitable to all students?"

School board members could be forgiven for wanting to avoid the nightmare that is redistricting. In the meeting Monday, board members and school staffers suggested various options for moving students from one school to another.

We paraphrase option 4: "We can move 300 students from Taylor Middle to Cedar Lee after the expansion there. If we expand Auburn Middle at the same time, we could move 200 or 300 students out of the Central schools to Auburn. Then we could move all the central school kids to one school while we renovate the other."

It's like a game of dominoes

that starts with the renovation and expansion of Cedar Lee Middle School in Bealeton. Each move sets another in motion.

The stakes are high. Everyone in the room knows that they are talking about real children, real families who don't want to be moved away from their friends and support networks. No one wants their child to have a longer bus route, or be in a bigger school where they'll perhaps get less attention.

Minor redistrictings — ones that shift one or two subdivisions of families from one school zone to another — are awful. The redistricting that will be required in our current scenario is awful X 10.

Of course, the other elephant in the room (there are several) is which central district school (Taylor Middle School or Warrenton Middle School) will be renovated to be used as a school and which will be reconfigured to be used for other purposes.

William C. Taylor High School alumni who graduated from the county's first black high school have had a presence at board meetings for years, listening for a hint at which way the board will lean. They understand Taylor Middle School's historical significance and would like it to remain as an educational institution, if not as a traditional school, then as a Head Start facility or an alternative school.

In every school board meeting for the last year, discussion has carefully steered away from this question until other decisions have been made. It is the last domino.

Monday night, the Taylor alumni heard that the two new school board members — Susan Pauling of Center District and Stephanie Litter-Reber of Lee District — validated their concerns. Earsaline Anderson said after the meeting, "I'm feeling a little more positive. I have hope."

The School Board may announce the contractor for the Cedar Lee renovation and expansion after a meeting this Thursday. As the design and construction phases begin, the dominoes begin to fall.

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Fauquier Times | February 26, 2020



PHOTO COURTESY OF JOE AUSTIN

The Bethel Church on present-day Blantyre Road northwest of Warrenton was built in 1836. The small cabin on the right in this 1870 photograph was the original building of the Bethel Military Academy, founded there in 1867. The church was used as the BMA chapel, and in more recent years, has served the Bethel United Methodist Church.

75 Years Ago March 1, 1945

A Marine fighter pilot from Bealeton, **2nd Lt. Powhatan M. Kehoe** was credited officially with four Japanese planes destroyed on an airfield near Saigon, French Indochina, after returning from the first carrier strike of the war on the Asiatic mainland. Lt. Kehoe describes the attack as “a cinch,” although he returned to his squadron with a bullet in the wing of his Corsair fighter.

Pvt. Benjamin T. Harris, son of **Mr. and Mrs. H. A. Harris** of Warrenton, was wounded Feb. 8 in Germany, his second injury. Pvt. Harris was struck in the face, but not seriously hurt. **1st Lt. Eugene Brooks**, son of Mr. and Mrs. W. A. Brooks of Remington, was slightly wounded in the leg in action in Belgium.

March draft calls received by the local board include 21 men to report for induction during the month and 12 men to have their pre-induction physicals.

50 Years Ago Feb. 26, 1970

Fauquier’s supervisors have announced their opposition to legislation pending that would repeal the state’s Blue Laws – which forbid the sale of merchandise on Sundays – and provide for local options on the question of Sunday sales. Center District **Supervisor James F. Austin**, a Warrenton merchant, said later that he believes the local option on Sunday sales would result in a “chaotic situation” because of confusing differences among localities in the

sales permitted.

A growing shortage of classroom space is forcing Fauquier school officials to reassign some Warrenton area elementary and junior high students for the coming year and to press into service an old school that had been closed last year. The plan would permit conversion of the Warrenton Elementary School into a second junior high for central Fauquier by shifting fifth and sixth grade pupils to Warrenton Primary, which was vacated in 1969.

25 Years Ago March 1, 1995

A three-judge panel from the 20th judicial circuit yesterday named **Ross D’Urso** the interim Commissioner of Revenue, taking the place of the retired **Alice Jane Childs**. D’Urso bested five other applicants after interviews with the panel Monday night, and will have the inside track in the November election.

Ansley Hulfish, county registrar for nearly 29 years, is leaving her post at the end of March because of health problems. The three-member county electoral board will appoint her replacement this week. Chairman **Jim Lawrence** said Monday that the board had narrowed the field of applicants from 13 to four and will make a final decision on Friday. The state pays the \$28,434 salary.

Ron Jenkins of the Karate Sports Academy in Warrenton will present the 11th annual Martial Arts Championships March 4 to 5 at Stonewall Jackson Senior High School in Manassas.

– Compiled by John T. Toler

EDITORIAL



School bus safety warning: A reminder about what’s at stake

I was driving to work this morning, on the one-lane-each-way, winding Springs Road. I drive that way to Warrenton, rather than taking U.S. 29, because it’s prettier. It starts my day surrounded by beautiful countryside instead of tractor-trailer trucks. It’s a road like hundreds of others in Fauquier -- scenic, but narrow, without shoulders, and impossible to see around the next bend.

I ended up behind a school bus picking up elementary school kids. It stopped every quarter mile or so and put out its stop-traffic arm. At one stop just past the golf course, a little girl – about 6 or so – came careening down the driveway toward the bus. She was dressed in pink shirtsleeves and pigtails, and she was holding one sleeve of her jacket up over her head. It streamed out behind her like a kite as she ran toward her ride to school. I could see her mom smiling and shaking her head at her little dynamo. My guess is this little girl does a lot of careening. It was a moment.

It reminded me of when, during the Feb. 10 school board meeting, school board member Donna Grove had a moment herself. During a member roundtable, Grove passionately talked about the problem of drivers passing school buses. Grove is a no-nonsense person who is not afraid to speak her mind, but it seemed her passion on this topic surprised the crowded room, and may have even surprised herself.

“This is not that hard, folks. We can fix this,” she said. She reminded all of us that getting to work or that “important” meeting five minutes

earlier is not worth a child’s life.

She metaphorically banged the table as she finished: “Do. Not. Pass. A. Stopped. School. Bus!”

I have seen Donna Grove with her grandchild in her arms. With a glance, it’s easy to see that she is fiercely protective of that adorable, wide-eyed toddler. This may be where her passion for school bus safety comes from.

So far this year, 181 violations of passing a school bus have been recorded. A number of Fauquier County school buses have cameras to catch violators, but most do not. When a bus driver sees someone passing his or her stopped bus that has its warning arm out, they can take note of the license plate and call it in, but the law enforcement response is often delayed.

The bus cameras are a great tool, but seriously, should we have to spend many thousands of dollars to prevent people from endangering our schoolchildren this way? Passing a school bus is not in the gray area of traffic infractions. If the school bus is stopped with its warning lights flashing, that means a child is about to get on or off that bus.

It’s easy and non-controversial. Just. Stop.

The cameras on school buses are a great idea and we are glad the school district is working toward getting more.

But It might be less expensive – and a good reminder of what’s at stake -- to post a sign on every school bus: Watch out for careening children.

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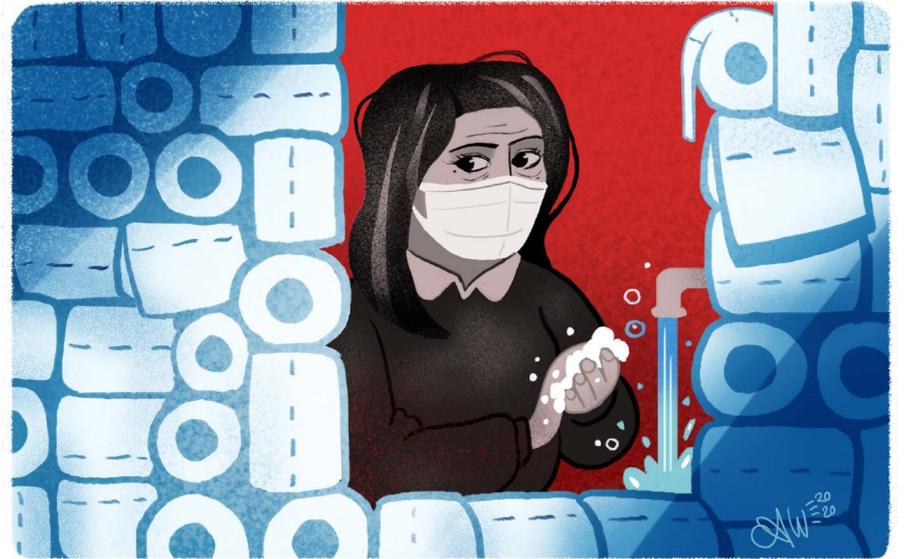
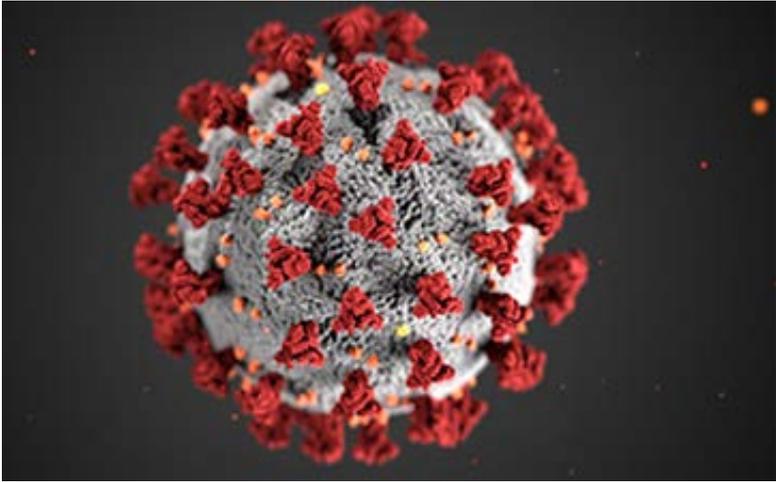


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Fauquier Times | March 18, 2020



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We're all in this together

Since coronavirus precautions really took hold here on Friday, we know you are dashing into the store to buy provisions; you are burning up the internet trying to complete work assignments and maintain social connections; your kids are somewhere between thrilled at a two-week break from school and devastated because all of their activities have been canceled.

We are right there with you. Literally.

Our front door on Culpeper Street is locked. Our receptionist is answering the phones between jumping up to let delivery people come in and drop their parcels.

Inside on Tuesday, we were still working, but starting today, working from home will be the norm. We'll cover meetings remotely much of the time, but when we are there in person, we'll be among the few who absolutely, positively, have to be here.

There's good news, though. If ever we were prone to take for granted the trust you have in the Fauquier Times, any doubt has vanished over the last week.

When we put a button on our website to curate all the COVID-19 stories, you said thank you for making it easy to find the latest local news. When we began to list closings, cancellations and postponements all in one place, you shared your news with us, and we were able to share with your neighbors. We have received several notes saying how much that is appreciated.

The challenges we face now loom large, like the ones you face.

We want to be able to provide the news you need to navigate this crisis, to stay safe and healthy, to work and feed your family.

Please help us to do that by staying in touch and letting us know what you'd like to see covered. Since we won't be seeing you at the planning commission meeting or on the soccer field for a while – and the curbside pickup line is not conducive to chit-chat – we are asking you to let us know what you are concerned about.

Our town, county and school officials are working hard to put new systems in place so they can keep providing the services we all need. Is there something that isn't working, or something that is working exceedingly well? Let us know.

If your neighborhood is working together to care for kids or hosting a fun Facebook Live event, let us know.

If your postal delivery person makes a point to check on an elderly person along their route, let us know.

Local businesses are going to have to get creative. Some are already using out-of-the-box thinking to provide goods and services to residents. If your business is trying a new approach, let us know and we'll help you spread the word.

David Jeck, superintendent of schools, described the COVID-19 pandemic as unprecedented. That means that are going to be situations – for all of us – that come up that we haven't planned for.

If we know anything about Fauquier it is that we are people who want to help. If you've got a problem, there is someone who wants to help you figure it out. Let us know about your challenges and your problem-solving techniques.

And course, if you have news, plain old news, not coronavirus news, we'd like to hear about that, too.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Thoughts on how to help your neighbors during the COVID-19 health crisis

Unprecedented times call for unprecedented actions, which we're seeing through previously unimagined cancellations, warnings and recommendations. In the past several days, we've been faced with finding solutions to ever-evolving problems. With the health and well being of our residents at stake, we're collaborating with partner organizations to help ease the increasing burdens people are facing.

So many people have asked how they can help, reminding me of the strength our community shows in times of need. If you are interested in learning what you can do, beyond following the guidelines of the Virginia Department of Health and Centers for Disease Control, consider these options:

Stay in touch with neighbors through emails and phone calls to make certain the needs of others are being met. Social isolation is an issue in our society without the threats imposed by a pandemic, so needs will range from arranging to get food or medicine to simply offering your time for conversation.

Your area churches are finding ways to help the community, even without being able to gather as congregations. Email us at info@pathforyou.org to share how your church is helping others as we try to get our arms around what efforts are already taking place.

Many have asked how they can volunteer. As requests for social distancing and self-quarantining grow, we ask that you check the PATH Volunteer Hub's website – www.letsvolunteer.org -- social media, or with your church about nonprofits' needs. Priorities will shift in many organizations, and balancing the health of you and your family with the needs of others is critical in these coming weeks.

Consider donating to the Northern Piedmont Community Foundation's Now and Forever Emergency Response Fund, to assist those local organizations needed the most during this health crisis. The PATH Foundation is contributing \$100,000 to their efforts and will continue to monitor their needs. The website for online donations is: donatenow.networkforgood.org/npcf.

Remember the food banks. It's one thing to need money to buy food for your family, but another when food seems in scarce supply at area stores. Contributions to the food bank can make a meaningful difference to people unable to make ends meet, especially now. Last week, we provided initial emergency funds of \$15,000 to Fauquier FISH and the Rappahannock Food Pantry in anticipation of increased needs for getting food for children out of school. We also gave \$10,000 to the Fauquier Free Clinic to make certain their needs for supplies are met. The PATH Foundation staff is in regular contact with area organizations to stay apprised of their situations.

If you or someone you know needs help finding services, call PATH Community Link at 855-495-5465, or email communitylink@pathforyou.org. They have over 1,000 resources within their database, and they are able to offer assistance in both English and Spanish.

The strength of our country is our people, and that is especially true in our community. Our mission is to strengthen the health and vitality of our community, both of which are being tested. As you are able, I hope you will join in these community-wide efforts to find ways you can help.

CHRISTY CONNOLLY
President and CEO, PATH Foundation

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