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\$1 JUNE 29 - JULY 5, 2023

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FROM BETS TO JETS

Trio of landmark projects may be coming to area



Bettors played historical horse-race machines during opening day at Rosie's Gaming Emporium in Dumfries in January 2021.

JAMES JARVIS | INSIDENOVA

Rosie's Gaming sets sights on Manassas Park

Voters would decide via fall referendum

» BY JARED FORETEK
jforetek@insidenova.com

Rosie's Gaming Emporium is looking to make a push into Manassas Park.

Churchill Downs Inc., the operator of Rosie's, announced June 23 it is collecting signatures to initiate a voter referendum on whether the company could open a casino-like gambling operation in the Manassas Park Shopping Center on Centreville Road.

The company runs six "gaming empo-

GAMING » PAGE 6



A rendering of a possible expansion at Manassas Regional Airport that could include commercial flights.

Commercial flights out of Manassas?

City leaders roused by new proposal

» BY JARED FORETEK
jforetek@insidenova.com

Commercial passenger flights could soon be taking off from Manassas.

The Manassas City Council is considering a proposal from airport management company Avports that would bring commercial flights to the city's general aviation airport within the next two years.

On Monday, representatives from the Dulles Airport-based company laid out their proposal to an eager City Council: The company would enter a 40-year lease for the airport's terminal and build a 35,000-square-foot addition, enough capacity for as many as 30 commercial passenger flights per day.

AIRPORT » PAGE 7



Sanders Lane, a four-mile road that runs between Sudley and Braddock roads near Gainesville, is located just north of Pageland Lane.

ROGER SNYDER | FOR INSIDENOVA

Is another Digital Gateway in the works?

Gainesville-area neighbors weighing possible land sale

» BY BEN PETERS
bpeters@insidenova.com

Residents of rural Sanders Lane in western Prince William County are moving forward with an effort to assemble and sell their properties to a data center developer.

The effort is similar to what transpired on nearby Pageland Lane that led to the proposed and controversial PW Digital Gateway data center project.

An email obtained by InsideNoVa from the Catharpin Committee, a communi-

SANDERS LANE » PAGE 6



And the winners are...

Over 19,000 voters. About 155,000 individual votes. Over 5,000 local businesses, organizations and people nominated. Meet the 2023 Best of Prince William honorees in nearly 200 different categories.

>> 48-page Special Pullout Section Inside



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NEW YEAR, NEW ISSUES

As 90,000 students return, so do challenges

Cell phones in schools becoming problematic

Could a system-wide ban be on the way?

» BY JARED FORETEK
jforetek@insidenova.com

As school divisions across Virginia debut more stringent cell phone policies aimed at limiting student distractions in class, Prince William County Public Schools officials are hinting local policy changes could be on the way.

Schools and teachers in the county can set their own cell phone policies. But with educators and students saying the problems posed by the devices have only become worse since the COVID-19 pandemic, Superintendent LaTanya McDade says her central office is considering new division-wide policies for the first time.

“We have some schools that have independently implemented cell phone policies. As a school division collective-

CELL PHONES » PAGE 5

HIGH SCHOOL FOOTBALL PREVIEW



Freedom's Tristan Evans-Trujillo has a new name but the same game.
SPORTS, Page 15



The Osbourn Park High School band was on hand for first-day festivities Monday.

JARED FORETEK | INSIDENOVA



The new Innovation Elementary School, just outside of Manassas, welcomed students for their first day of school on Monday. Innovation is the county's first three-level elementary school.

CAMERON DELEAN | INSIDENOVA

Division publishes 'explicit' book list

Titles include 'Beloved,' '1984,' 'Invisible Man'

» BY JARED FORETEK
jforetek@insidenova.com

Prince William County Public Schools has published its list of teaching materials deemed “sexually explicit,” which parents can opt their students out of being taught under a state law that went into effect at the start of the 2023-24 school year.

After reviewing curriculum materials in the run-up to the new year, school

BOOKS » PAGE 5

SEE THE FULL LIST

» All 113 books currently found on the county's “sexually explicit” list can be found online at bit.ly/PrinceWilliamBookList.

MORE SCHOOL NEWS

County won't follow state transgender policies

» EDUCATION, PAGE 3

First-day takeaways, new elementary school

» EDUCATION, PAGE 4

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NOVEMBER 9 - 15, 2023

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HOW WE VOTED

BOARD OF COUNTY SUPERVISORS CHAIR	
	Votes (Pct.)
Deshundra Jefferson (D)	60,431 (51.4%)
Jeanine Lawson (R)	56,789 (48.3%)
SCHOOL BOARD CHAIR	
	Votes (Pct.)
Babur Lateef*	57,397 (49.5%)
Carrie Rist	47,409 (40.9%)
Kim Mehlman-Orozco	10,650 (9.2%)
STATE SENATE: 30th District	
	Votes (Pct.)
Danica Roem (D)	29,730 (51.5%)
Bill Woolf (R)	27,802 (48.2%)
HOUSE OF DELEGATES: 21st District	
	Votes (Pct.)
Josh Thomas (D)	13,572 (51.5%)
John Stirrup (R)	12,737 (48.3%)
HOUSE OF DELEGATES: 22nd District	
	Votes (Pct.)
Ian Lovejoy (R)	15,814 (52.6%)
Travis Nembhard (D)	14,189 (47.2%)
COMMONWEALTH'S ATTORNEY	
	Votes (Pct.)
Amy Ashworth* (D)	68,453 (53.4%)
Matt Lowery (R)	59,339 (46.3%)
MANASSAS PARK PARI-MUTUEL WAGERING	
	Votes (Pct.)
NO	1,791 (58.9%)
YES	1,251 (41.1%)

* - Incumbent

Results as of Wednesday afternoon. Absentee ballots postmarked by Tuesday will be counted if received Monday, Nov. 13, by noon. See vote totals for more races on Pages 2-9 and visit InsideNoVa.com for updates.

DESHUNDRA'S DAY



Prince William County Board Chair-elect Deshundra Jefferson speaks to supporters during the county Democrats' victory party in Manassas on Tuesday night. TAVAN SMITH | FOR INSIDENOVA

Jefferson will be first Black woman to lead county board

» BY BEN PETERS
bpeters@insidenova.com

Democrat Deshundra Jefferson on Tuesday defeated Republican Supervisor Jeanine Lawson in the race for chair of the Prince William Board of County Supervisors, becoming the first Black woman to hold the office.

Jefferson's rise from obscure political figure to leader of county government in less than a year underscores Prince William voters' dissatisfaction with current incumbents.

Through her primary win in June over Democratic incumbent Chair Ann Wheeler, who outraised her by a 5-1 margin, and her defeat of Lawson, the most senior member of the board, Jefferson ousted two of the most powerful women in local politics. Wheeler and Lawson rarely saw eye to eye and their antagonistic exchanges were frequently the source of consternation in the board room.

Lawson's defeat means she will no

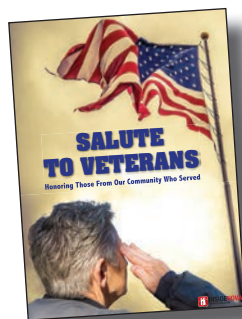


Potomac District Supervisor Andrea Bailey was one of six board incumbents who were reelected Tuesday. TAVAN SMITH | FOR INSIDENOVA

JEFFERSON » PAGE 17

INSIDE

A special pullout section honoring local veterans



Hundreds sign up for Gateway hearing

Commission begins review of contentious data centers

» BY BEN PETERS
bpeters@insidenova.com

The Prince William County Planning Commission on Wednesday began its highly anticipated public hearing on the contentious PW Digital Gateway data center project, a meeting that officials were expecting to last more than 24 hours.

Commissioners will render recommendations on two rezoning requests by QTS Realty Trust Inc. and another by Compass Datacenters. The companies combined aim to build 23 million square feet of data centers on roughly 2,100 acres along Pageland Lane in western Prince William near Gainesville in what would become the largest data center corridor in the world.

GATEWAY » PAGE 19

HOW LONG CAN IT GO?

» Nearly 300 people signed up to speak at the county Planning Commission's Digital Gateway public hearings, which began at 2 p.m. Wednesday. If the speakers use all – or just most – of their allotted time, the hearing may well last more than 40 hours. Follow our coverage at InsideNoVa.com

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