

# Fluvanna

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## REVIEW

### Voters May Decide School Tax

*Proposed 1% sales tax would fund construction, renovations, and debt*

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LM fire department debuts new electronic sign

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**FOURTH FITNESS**

Runners, swimmers brave heat for LMOA holiday sports

**PAGE 6**

**HISTORY ROLLS**

VA250 Mobile Museum will stop at County Fair

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# Fluvanna REVIEW

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- Fork Union Village Shopping Center
- Fork Union Post Office
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- Columbia Store
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- Fluvanna Middle School
- Fluvanna High School
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## School sales tax referendum may go to Fluvanna voters

BY HEATHER MICHON  
EDITOR

Fluvanna County voters may be asked in November whether to approve a local sales tax of up to 1% to help pay for school construction and major renovations.

The Board of Supervisors voted to begin the process of placing the question on the ballot at their July 1 meeting.

County Attorney Dan Whitten said the General Assembly has expanded localities' authority to impose an additional sales and use tax of up to 1% for school construction and major renovations, provided voters approve it by referendum.

If approved, the tax would be used solely for school capital projects, including construction, major renovations, and debt service. It would expire no later than June 30, 2046.

The additional tax would not apply to groceries for human consumption or essential personal hygiene products. County staff estimated the tax could generate roughly \$1.5 million to \$2 million annually, though officials said they would work to get a more precise estimate.

The referendum must be ordered by the Circuit Court at least 81 days before the election. Whitten said the deadline is Aug. 14, creating a tight window for the county to move forward.

School construction costs have risen sharply in recent years.

Across Virginia, the cost of building a new elementary or middle school has commonly ranged from about \$25 million to \$60 million, depending on size, site conditions, materials, and design. A 2021 state review also found that more than half of Virginia school buildings were more than 50 years old.

In Region 5, which includes Fluvanna County, the median age of school buildings was 55 years. During the board discussion, supervisors noted that Central Elementary School dates to 1958 and the former high school building opened in 1976.

"We're going to have to address these issues," Supervisor Mike Sheridan said.

Complicating the issue for the supervisors was a 2025 decision to allocate 2% of the new county meals tax to school construction. Some supervisors questioned whether the county should continue dedicating that meals tax revenue to schools if voters approve the sales tax referendum.

Sheridan said they might want to consider reallocating that 2% towards replacing emergency vehicles, another high-ticket source of stress on the county budget.

Fork Union Supervisor Mike Goad said he was uncomfortable blocking voters from deciding the question, even though he had concerns about adding another tax.

"If this were our decision, I would be voting no," Goad said. "But since we're putting it to the people."

### Bulk water hearing delayed

Supervisors also delayed action on a proposed bulk water ordinance after residents and board members raised concerns about drought conditions, high-volume users and the need for clearer limits on water withdrawals.

The proposed ordinance would establish a hydrant-meter permit process for contractors and other users purchasing bulk water from the county. Water would be drawn from a designated location under the Route 250 water tower at Zion Crossroads.

The proposed fees include a \$1,500 meter deposit, a \$35 monthly rental fee, and a bulk water rate of \$12 per 1,000 gallons.

The draft ordinance would require users to submit monthly meter readings to the utilities department. The county would inspect meters annually. If a permit holder withdrew water without using the meter, the agreement could be terminated, and the matter could be referred for possible criminal charges.

County departments and volunteer fire companies would be

**School sales tax  
continues on page 4.**

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# The Weekly Crossword

by Margie E. Burke

## ACROSS

- 1 Auto parts giant
- 5 \_\_\_ out (declined)
- 10 Puts away
- 14 Oil acronym
- 15 Mania
- 16 Put on a long face
- 17 Lively
- 18 Solid ground
- 20 No longer good
- 22 Former Kudrow co-star
- 23 Made off with
- 25 Nature calls?
- 26 Balances
- 28 Fed the fire
- 31 Cowboy nickname
- 32 Fit to eat
- 34 Deep black
- 38 Bobby Brady, to Carol
- 40 One fleeing a flood, maybe
- 42 Jedi guru
- 43 Sketcher's tool
- 45 Funnyman Brooks
- 46 Type of union or bureau
- 48 NFL's \_\_\_ Beckham Jr.
- 50 Old photo tint
- 53 Opt for first
- 55 Chocolate treat
- 58 Scottish flat-bread
- 61 Venom neutralizers, e.g.
- 63 News bit
- 64 Chart toppers
- 65 Hollywood Holmes
- 66 2021 film, "\_\_\_ Look Up"
- 67 "\_\_\_ we forget ..."
- 68 Apple desktops
- 69 Aphrodite's son

## DOWN

- 1 Yep's opposite

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	
14				15					16				
17				18					19				
20				21			22						
		23				24			25				
26	27				28		29	30					
31				32	33				34	35	36	37	
38			39				40		41				
42					43		44				45		
			46	47					48	49			
50	51	52					53		54				
55					56	57		58				59	60
61							62				63		
64					65						66		
67					68						69		

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- |   |   |   |
|---|---|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>2 High point</li> <li>3 Bewildered</li> <li>4 Film genre</li> <li>5 Musical eight-some</li> <li>6 Set in advance</li> <li>7 Road-paving stuff</li> <li>8 Pound of verse</li> <li>9 Campus VIP</li> <li>10 Like most sitcoms</li> <li>11 Main blood line</li> <li>12 Chemo target</li> <li>13 Musial and Laurel</li> <li>19 Captain's command</li> <li>21 Romantic dozen</li> <li>24 Do a voice-over</li> <li>26 Crafty site</li> <li>27 Bill killer in D.C.</li> <li>29 Like some music</li> <li>30 Zachary of "Shazam!"</li> <li>33 Inside info</li> <li>35 Part of a fraction</li> <li>36 Ship's backbone</li> <li>37 Shout out</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>39 One opposed to war</li> <li>41 High up</li> <li>44 Quick drink</li> <li>47 Rapids ride</li> <li>49 Get off the fence</li> <li>50 Lesley of "60 Minutes"</li> <li>51 Tennessee ___ Ford</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>52 Golf strokes</li> <li>54 Lessens</li> <li>56 Villain in "The Avengers"</li> <li>57 SAT or GMAT</li> <li>59 Bingo's cousin</li> <li>60 911 responders, briefly</li> <li>62 Give ___ go (2 wds.)</li> </ul> |
|---|---|---|

### Answers to Previous Crossword:

A	R	C	S		S	C	U	D		I	R	O	N	
F	I	A	T		S	C	O	F	F		N	O	D	E
A	C	M	E		A	R	R	O	W	H	E	A	D	S
R	E	P	L	A	C	E	D			E	R	N	S	T
		A	L	I	K	E		D	A	R	T			
N	A	I	A	D		N	A	I	L	B	I	T	E	R
A	G	G	R	E	S	S	I	V	E		A	R	G	O
M	E	N		S	H	A	R	E	R	S		A	R	A
E	N	E	S		O	V	E	R	T	U	R	N	E	D
S	T	R	A	I	N	E	R	S		R	E	S	T	S
		L	E	E	R		I	S	A	L	L			
A	M	O	U	R			N	F	L	T	E	A	M	S
W	A	L	K	S	O	N	A	I	R		A	T	O	P
E	S	A	I		C	L	U	E	S		S	O	D	A
S	S	N	S		R	E	T	D		E	R	S	T	

# SUDOKU

Edited by Margie E. Burke

Difficulty: Medium

								2
			9					
		2	3					4
5	7				9			
9				6				
	8			1		3		
	3				6		5	
		4	5			6		
		6				8	1	

### HOW TO SOLVE:

Each row must contain the numbers 1 to 9; each column must contain the numbers 1 to 9; and each set of 3 by 3 boxes must contain the numbers 1 to 9.

### Answer to Previous Sudoku:

1	6	9	7	8	5	3	2	4
3	7	4	1	2	9	8	6	5
8	5	2	6	4	3	7	1	9
4	1	5	8	3	7	6	9	2
7	8	6	2	9	4	5	3	1
2	9	3	5	1	6	4	8	7
6	3	1	4	7	2	9	5	8
9	4	8	3	5	1	2	7	6
5	2	7	9	6	8	1	4	3

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## School sales tax continued from page 3.

exempt from the permit requirement, though they would notify utilities when using water.

Public Works Director Bobby Popowicz said most expected users would be small contractors, landscapers, or similar customers. He estimated the program might generate \$6,000 to \$7,000 annually, or possibly \$10,000 to \$11,000 in a heavy construction year.

Popowicz said automated meter-reading systems would cost far more than the county would likely recover in revenue. Supervisors discussed lower-cost monitoring options, including game cameras.

Residents urged the board to strengthen the ordinance before adoption.

Ray Bassi of Lake Monticello said the revised draft was better than the first version, but still lacked mandatory caps, a high-volume permit class, project aggregation rules, county-controlled monitoring and drought triggers.

"In a drought warning environment, a bulk water ordinance without mandatory high-volume caps is not real water management," Bassi said.

Other speakers said the ordinance should prioritize residents, farms, schools, and essential public services during drought conditions.

Supervisors ultimately agreed to bring the ordinance back on Aug. 5 with additional work on caps and high-volume water use.

### Noise ordinance advances

The board also voted to advertise an Aug. 19 public hearing on proposed changes to the county's noise ordinance – but not before a lively discussion over lawn-mowing.

The proposed ordinance update would modernize the language on sound measurement, add maximum sound levels for business and industrial districts, clarify daytime and nighttime standards, and give the county the option to seek an injunction in Circuit Court for repeated or unresolved violations.

Whitten said the draft also

removes animal noise regulations and allows trash collection to begin at 6 a.m.

Cunningham Supervisor Chris Fairchild objected to language restricting mowing before 7 a.m., especially during summer heat.

"The very thought that I can't, when the sun shows up on my property, go out and mow my lawn. What are we doing?" Fairchild said.

Major David Wells said the Sheriff's Office was mainly looking for enforceable tools for nuisance complaints, particularly loud music, late-night parties and firearms. "I can't think of a single lawnmower-related complaint," he said.

The board agreed that staff should revise the draft before the public hearing.

### Public comment rules revised

Supervisors also amended their bylaws so speakers at public comment no longer have to state a full address.

Instead, speakers will be asked to give their name and voting district or general community of residence, such as Palmyra, Troy, or Lake Monticello.

The board also clarified rules for supervisors attending community meetings. No more than two supervisors may attend at the same time, but supervisors may stagger attendance during longer open-house-style events.

### Parrish honored for 50 years

The meeting opened with a resolution honoring Sandra Ann Parrish, chief deputy clerk of the Fluvanna County Circuit Court, for 50 years of service to the county.

Parrish began working in the Circuit Court Clerk's Office on July 12, 1976, and has served under multiple clerks during a career spanning five decades.

The board praised her professionalism, institutional knowledge, and commitment to preserving county records and supporting the court's work.

The resolution recognized Parrish's "remarkable work ethic, loyalty and devotion to the citizens of Fluvanna County and the Commonwealth of Virginia."

## New pastor begins at Palmyra United Methodist Church

BY PATSY BROWN AND  
ALYCE WALCAVICH  
SPECIAL CORRESPONDENTS



The Palmyra United Methodist Church community welcomed the Rev. Daniel H. Burch as its new pastor Sunday, July 5, when he preached at both the 8:30 and 11 a.m. worship services.

"Pastor Daniel," as he is known, follows the Rev. Sung W. Yoo, who has retired.

Burch brings an extensive background in serving rural churches in both Kentucky and Virginia. He was ordained as an elder in the United Methodist Church and holds a Master of Divinity degree and a Master of Theology degree from Union Presbyterian Seminary in Richmond.

Burch is a lifelong Methodist who grew up on a family farm in Stafford County. As a child, he was active with his family and the United Methodist Church. His first job, from ages 10 to 15, was as a farmhand. As a teenager, he refereed soccer and worked at a golf course.

After high school, Burch was offered both soccer and golf scholarships to Randolph-Macon College in Ashland. He turned down both scholarships and majored in religious studies and ethics.

He later pursued religious studies at Union Presbyterian Seminary in Richmond. In seminary, he balanced his passion for theological education with his growing relationship with God through ecumenical studies.

After completing his Master of Divinity degree, Burch was accepted into the Clinical Pastoral

Education program and served for 10 weeks as a clinical chaplain at VCU Medical Center, formerly the Medical College of Virginia, working mostly in pediatric trauma and women's health units. He said the experience led him to ask hard questions, which compelled him to continue his studies and earn a second master's degree. His focus was on the Old Testament book of Job and its relation to human suffering.

Since completing his studies, Burch has served four churches through three appointments. He served as a minister at Warsaw United Methodist Church in eastern Virginia for three years. After his marriage, he relocated to Kentucky with his wife, Linda, who was serving as a Presbyterian minister there. In Kentucky, Burch served the Carlisle-Owingsville Charge for two years. His second post was at Mount Sterling First United Methodist Church, where he served for four years.

Two years ago, Burch was ordained as an elder in the United Methodist Church, giving him full rights to administer all sacraments.

When asked about his leadership style, Burch said empowerment and communication are at the top of his list. He believes God's grace empowers people to change the world. His preaching style involves research, study, and planning.

His wife, who is also a pastor and now serves Cove Presbyterian Church in Nelson County, enhances his preaching. They are best friends and partners in life and ministry. Their shared understanding of church dynamics and culture makes his ministry more fulfilling.

Burch brings energy and vitality to the congregation and the community. He plans to reach out to people and communicate by text, phone and email, as well as in person. He will schedule office hours and appointments and plans to meet people throughout Fluvanna as he checks out local coffee shops and golf courses.

Outside the church, Burch is an avid golfer and enjoys fishing. He and his wife enjoy hiking and playing with their dog, Maker, a

flat-coated retriever. Burch also likes to read and research. His musical talents include guitar and mandolin, and he is learning the banjo. In a pinch, he can also play the trombone. In addition, he can play handbells and may sing bass in the church choir and perhaps ring in one of the church's two bell choirs.

Burch is eager to serve not only Palmyra United Methodist Church but also the wider Fluvanna community.

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BY RUDY GARCIA, OWNER, RIVANNA WOODS FINANCIAL / TAX SERVICES

### Retain, Reactivate and Recruit

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The key to any successful business is leveraging these three concepts: Retention, Reactivation, and New. Understanding these ideas will help your business survive and thrive.

#### The basics

The most important asset in virtually every business is its customer list. This list generally has two components: ever-boughts and never-boughts. The ever-bought list contains everyone who has ever paid you for one of your products or services, whereas the never-bought list comprises those who responded to an ad or asked for a sample, but never paid you for a product or service.

Your understanding of your customer list and what actions to take will be different, depending on your objectives around each concept. Here are some thoughts:

• **Retain (retention):** The place to start. As you look at your customer list, those that are actively buying from you often represent a lion's share of your revenue, sometimes up to 90%! That makes this group important to your business's success and this importance can be summed up in one word: RETAIN.

• **Your goal:** Understand the number and percent of active customers that come back during your business's current year. Then apply revenue attributed to these customers to calculate a revenue per active customer. Most businesses use a 12 month cycle to calculate their retention number, but your business may be different.

**Action:** Calculate your retention number and percent for the past three years. Look at the trend and determine what action is required.

• **Reactivation: Bringing back key customers.** Once you identify your ever-boughts, there will be a number of customers that are no longer buying your products or services. With this group you need to determine how long it's been since their last order. This aging

of accounts is important, as customers who most recently bought from you will be easier to reactivate than a customer who has not bought from you in a number of years.

• **Your goal:** Create a list of your inactive customers based on when they last bought from you, then determine why the customer(s) is no longer using your products or services.

**Action:** Target your recent inactive customers and develop a contact plan to entice them to come back to you. Even if they don't, try to understand why they left so you can apply the answers to your current customer base.

• **New Customers: Expensive, but worth it.** You've focused on retaining your core customers and recovered a number of valuable, inactive clients, so what's next? This is where activities to attract new customers comes into play.

• **Your goal:** At a minimum, you'll need enough new customers to replace those that were not retained. (Reactivated old customers should not be considered new.) Know what this number is and decide if you wish to maintain or grow your enterprise.

**Action:** By understanding your current customers, you can target similar new customers that will provide the greatest value. Leverage word of mouth advertising with your key customers, and look for creative ways to bring in new clients. If you aren't sure where to start, look at last year's new customer list and learn what brought them into your business. Then use these clues to create your marketing plan going forward.

To summarize, focus on retention, then fill in with reactivating prior customers, and finally don't forget to add new, high-value customers to expand and grow. As always, should you have any questions or concerns regarding your tax situation please feel free to call us at 434-442-4044 or email [info@rwftaxservices.com](mailto:info@rwftaxservices.com).

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Rick Wells DC

## New sign, clearer message

NEW SIGN, CLEARER MESSAGE  
CONTRIBUTED BY MIKE FEAZEL



Drivers traveling along South Boston Road are likely to notice something new outside Lake Monticello Volunteer Fire & Rescue.

The department recently installed a modern electronic sign, replacing a decrepit wooden sign that had been removed several years ago.

“Basically, we needed another way to communicate with the community that we are a part of,” said LMVFR President John Lye. “We will be putting up announce-

ments of upcoming events, bingo, for example, as well as public safety tips and so forth. Obviously, we will also announce any fundraising efforts.”

## Spirit Run and Lake Swim continue Fourth of July tradition

BY DUNCAN NIXON  
SPORTS CONTRIBUTOR

Every Fourth of July, Lake Monticello holds its 5K Spirit Run and Swim Across the Lake.

Even though the Spirit Run begins early, at 7 a.m., turnout continues to grow. This year, 200 runners registered in advance, with many more signing up early that morning.

Most runners are out to improve their personal best or finish in the top three in their age group. A smaller group comes in with a realistic shot at winning the overall men’s or women’s title.

On the men’s side, that list

is short. Matt Barresi finished second last year, but the 2026 race was his again. He has now won the Spirit Run 5K in 20 of the past 21 races. Barresi is a marathoner, so a 5K is hardly a challenge for him.

On the women’s side, the race has had several different winners in recent years. This year, however, there was a repeat champion: Sophie Farley, a 2024 graduate of Fluvanna County High School, again took the women’s title. Farley ran cross-country and track at FCHS and now competes in both sports at Longwood University.

The Spirit Run has always been a family event. Deb Lugar, who again won her age group, had 11 family members competing. It was also fitting, during the country’s 250th anniversary year, that third-year West Point cadet Campbell Michael ran this year and won his age group.

The Swim Across the Lake used to be held in the midafternoon. After several very hot Fourth of July events, however, it was moved to a midmorning start.

The event is an open-water swim from Beach 3 to Main Beach. Open-water swimming is different from swimming in lanes in a pool. Swimmers must frequently look up to make sure they are not drifting off course and making the swim longer than necessary.

It is quite a sight to see the swimmers splash into the water as the race begins. The strongest swimmers quickly separate from the pack and come in well ahead of most of the field.

This year, Cooper Dillman again won the men’s event, and Isabella Thompson was the fastest woman. Swimmers also compete to finish in the top three in their age groups, but most, like the runners, are competing against themselves and trying to improve on their best time.

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# LAKE VIEWS

NEWS FROM YOUR LAKE MONTICELLO NEIGHBORS



Ever feel like there's nothing happening around here? Think again! We've got something exciting going on every day. Some activities are even open to the public, like our dining and golf options! Stay in the loop by visiting [Imoa.org](http://Imoa.org). Lake residents can also sign up for our weekly newsletter or text message updates. Not signed up yet? Just give Member Services a call. Meanwhile, enjoy browsing the selection of activities below! For more details on resident-exclusive Groups and Clubs, simply log into [Imoa.org](http://Imoa.org) and choose that option under the Member Services tab. Happy planning!

**Every Tuesday through July 21:** Barista Baker | 7 AM -12 PM | 34 Edgewater Drive. Come have coffee at the pool every Tuesday morning this summer and help support the Lake Monticello Swim Team. Fluvanna County's famous barista, Barbie, will serve your breakfast favorites, donating a portion of the proceeds to the Sharks!

**July 10:** SPEEDLIMIT Band | 6-8:30 PM | Bunker Bistro

**July 11:** GLOW Pool Party! | 7-10 PM | Lake Monticello Pool. Join the LMST Sharks for a night of swimming and dancing to raise money for the swim season. Tickets are \$12/person or \$50/family. Email [LMSTsharks@gmail.com](mailto:LMSTsharks@gmail.com) for tickets and more information.

**July 11:** Free Putting Clinic | 11 AM – 1 PM. This FREE clinic will help you make more putts and gain confidence on the greens.

**July 14:** Red Cross Blood Drive | 9 AM - 2 PM | Ashlawn Clubhouse Lake Room. The need for blood doesn't take a vacation! There are still several slots available. Please sign up today at [RedCrossBlood.org](http://RedCrossBlood.org) or call 1-800-733-2767.

**July 15:** Water Workgroup | 10-11:30 AM | Ashlawn Clubhouse. This meeting in Terrace Room A will focus on updates to local infrastructure upgrades and improving in communication between LMOA and our water and wastewater utility.

**July 15:** Lake Monticello Swim Team (LMST) Home Meet | Pool closes at 4 PM. Cheer on the Sharks in their last home meet of the season.

**July 17:** CLASSIC ROAD Classic Rock Band | 6 PM | Bunker Bistro

**July 18-19:** Championship Weekend. Test your skills to become the 2026 Club Champion! Register by visiting the Pro Shop at 51 Bunker Blvd. or calling 434-589-3075 by July 11.

**July 22:** Open Mic | 6-8 PM | Bunker Bistro

**July 23:** Regular Board Meeting | 7 PM | Fairway Clubhouse. Watch the GM Corner for information on how to watch or sign up to speak at a Board Meeting. For Lake Monticello residents only.

**July 24:** CHICKENHEAD BLUES Band | 6-6:30 PM | Bunker Bistro Patio.

**July 25:** "Lil Lakers" Serve Lunch | 10:30 AM – 2 PM | Lakeside Restaurant at Ashlawn Clubhouse. Bring your kids to Lakeside at 10:30 AM where they will learn how to set up lunch service! Come to lunch at 11:30 AM to have your child wait on you. A limited menu of burgers, sandwiches, and salads will be available. Cost is \$20/adult - and of course a big tip for your child! Call 434-591-0106 to reserve.

### Free Weekly Ashlawn Clubhouse Activities for Lake Residents

**Mondays:** Tai Chi | 9-10:15 AM - Practice for the experienced.

**Tuesdays:** Functionally Fit will resume on July 14 | 11:30 AM-12:30 PM - Build agility, strength, and more with Janelle Holden. All you need is a mat and enthusiasm. Questions? Email: [jnkpfitness@gmail.com](mailto:jnkpfitness@gmail.com).

**Tuesdays & Thursdays:** Yoga with Renata Miller | 8:45-10 AM - Just bring your mat!

**Wednesdays:** Strength Training Circuit | 10:15-11:15 AM - This class incorporates free weights, tubing, and bodyweight exercises that will help you tone your entire body and feel energized. Contact [jnkpfitness@gmail.com](mailto:jnkpfitness@gmail.com) with any questions you may have. Participants should bring their own weights and a mat.

Line Dancing with Jan Shattls | 9-10 AM - Just a fun way to exercise with friends and neighbors at the Ashlawn Clubhouse!

**Saturdays:** Lake Monticello Run Club | 8 AM | Bunker Park Parking Lot - Join neighbors of all ages for a 5K run or walk. Just show up!

Check us out next week for the Independence Day Weekend Winners!

## History, hiring and homegrown goods

BY PAGE H. GIFFORD  
ARTS & CULTURE CONTRIBUTOR

### VA250 Mobile Museum coming to county fair

Virginia's role in the nation's founding will be on display at this year's Fluvanna County Fair when the VA250 Mobile Museum Experience visits Pleasant Grove Park.

The traveling exhibit, titled "Out of Many, One," is housed in a ex-

pandable tractor-trailer – 90 feet long and 35 feet wide when fully expanded – and is making stops across Virginia and beyond as part of the statewide commemoration of the 250th anniversary of the American Revolution.

The museum highlights Virginia's role in the Revolution, telling the stories of well-known figures such as George Washington, Thomas Jefferson and Patrick Henry, as well as Indigenous Virginians and enslaved and free African Americans whose lives and labor shaped the era.

The hands-on exhibit uses interactive displays and storytelling to introduce visitors to the people, events and ideas that helped shape the nation. The museum is scheduled to be at the fair from Aug. 13-15.

### Fluvanna job fair draws strong turnout

More than 100 job seekers attended the Fluvanna Job Fair on June 4 at the Fluvanna County Library, according to Fluvanna Economic Development.

Hosted by Fluvanna Economic

Development in partnership with Virginia Career Works, the event brought together more than 20 employers representing health care, construction, food service, local government, skilled trades and other fields.

Employers spoke with candidates, shared information about open positions and, in some cases, conducted on-site interviews. Several businesses reported meeting strong applicants and making useful connections with potential employees.

Economic development officials said the response from employers and attendees showed the value of connecting local businesses with residents looking for work. Based on the turnout, officials said the job fair will become an annual event.

For more information about workforce development programs and business resources, email [econdev@fluvannacounty.org](mailto:econdev@fluvannacounty.org).

### Business spotlight: The Artful Lodger

The Artful Lodger is now open at 2428 Richmond Road in Troy, along Route 250 east of Charlottesville.

Owners Caroline and Christopher Minsky found the property, formerly home to Cosner Brothers Auto Parts, in 2023 and saw a chance to expand their furniture and interior design business in the greater Charlottesville area. The building has been renovated into a larger showroom with more space for furnishings, accessories and design services, as well as an attached warehouse.

After two years of renovation, the large blue building now gives

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## THIS WEEK'S PET: Priscilla!

**Meet Priscilla!** Priscilla originally came to the home of a very kind person in December, but sadly couldn't stay as she didn't get along with the resident cat. In her time here Priscilla has learned that she loves to just nap the day away. She will on occasion, pop up if she sees that people want to give her attention. Or wet food. She also enjoys a good brushing, just nowhere near her belly. Priscilla would be best suited in a home that could do slow introductions with other cats. ❤️

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customers more room to browse the store's curated selection of furniture, rugs, lamps, pillows, art and other home accessories. The store focuses on high-end pieces with a contemporary, comfortable and relaxed style.

The Artful Lodger also offers design services to help customers complete rooms or larger home projects.

For more information, visit [lodgerva.com](http://lodgerva.com).

### Hidden Springs Family Farm

Hidden Springs Family Farm began as a dream for Barbara and Dewey Haines, retired Army veterans who moved from Manassas in 2021 to grow and raise their own food.

The couple wanted to build a life centered on self-sufficiency, sustainable farming and careful stewardship of the land. When they first found the property, they were drawn to its rolling fields and quiet setting. At the time, there was no house on the land, and the fields were leased to a local cattle farmer.

In 2023, the *Fluvanna Review* interviewed the Haineses about building the farm from the ground up. They talked about their commitment to chemical-free practices and the hard work of developing a farm naturally. Their reward, they said, was healthy food for their family and the chance to share it with the community.

Today, Hidden Springs Family Farm is home to laying hens, broiler chickens, sheep, rabbits, honeybees and a high tunnel that extends the growing season. The farm produces eggs, meat, vegetables, honey and other products.

The farm operates a farm stand, and the Haineses also sell at the Fluvanna Farmers Market outside Fluvanna Ace Hardware on Sundays during market season. Follow Hidden Springs Family Farm on Facebook for product updates and market schedules.

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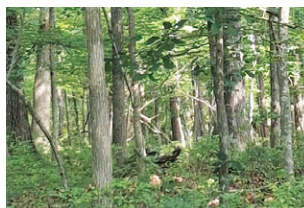
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340 JEFFERSON DRIVE  
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### SPECIAL NOTICES

**MACAA FOOD PANTRY NEW HOURS:** Monday: 1 to 6 pm., Tuesday: NO food pick-up, Wednesday: 10 am to 2 pm., Thursday: 1 to 6 pm., Friday: 10 am to 2 pm., Saturday: Every 3rd. Saturday of the Month from 10 am to 2 pm. Location: 8878 James Madison Hwy., Fork Union, VA. Phone (434) 842-2521.

**VIRGINIA DEPT. OF VETERANS SERVICES:** Need Help? Attention Veterans and Dependents! Visit us at the Fluvanna Community Center, 5725 James Madison Highway > by appointment only. Call Jeannette Flint at (434) 529-6431 to schedule your appointment. www.dvs.virginia.gov

### WANTED

**2026 FSPCA SPONSORS:** If you would like to sponsor a Pet of the Week photo, email edee@fluvannareview.com or call (434) 207-0221 no texts accepted. The pet photos are sent to us from the Fluvanna shelter each week. The photos help find forever homes for

our four legged furry friends. You may place your business, special occasion, memorial narrative , etc. at the bottom of each pet picture.

**VOLUNTEERS FOR MACAA FOOD PANTRY:** We are seeking enthusiastic volunteers to help support MACAA's work in the Fluvanna community. Tasks: food pickups, sorting donations, stocking, packing boxes, checking in visitors, and other minor tasks. Volunteer hours: 9 a.m. to 2 p.m. , M-F. No prior experience needed – training will be provided. Call (434) 842-2521 or email foodpantry@macaa.org.

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## How Virginia became the world's data center capital and how it's going

NATHANIEL CLINE, SHANNON HECKT (VIRGINIA MERCURY)

Demand for internet access and electronic storage has grown alongside digital technology itself. At the center of that growth are the energy infrastructure and data centers that governments and companies began developing in Northern Virginia in the late 20th century. Today, the region houses the world's largest concentration of data centers, making Virginia the nation's digital capital.

That growth has brought major economic benefits for local governments, but it has also divided communities increasingly weary of the facilities' heavy demands on water and energy, among other impacts.

The commonwealth's rise as a global digital leader did not happen overnight, said House Technology Committee Chair Cliff Hayes, D-Chesapeake. It was a result of years of persistence, long-term planning and problem-solving.

"This designation for the commonwealth to be the digital capital not only of this country but of the world has taken a lot of stamina, resilience and vision," Hayes said.

Hayes said leadership also means adapting to new challenges. This year alone, lawmakers passed an entire package of bills aimed at further regulating the industry, while the fight over tax incentives remains largely unsolved.

### AOL's move

Ashburn's rise as one of the largest digital infrastructure hubs began in 1997 with the arrival of America Online, or AOL, then the primary internet gateway for many users. Soon after, UUNet/WorldCom and the relocation of the Metropolitan Area Ethernet East, a major internet exchange and traffic hub, helped create unmatched fiber connectivity, turning Loudoun County into a key internet crossroads and destination for other businesses.

Buddy Rizer, executive director for Loudoun County Economic Development, said AOL's decision to locate in Loudoun helped make the internet mainstream for Americans and anchored the infrastructure that turned Loudoun and Virginia into the world's leading internet hub.

"You can't overstate the importance of AOL, right? AOL didn't invent the internet, but they made it accessible to ordinary Americans at the moment that the commercial internet was starting to take off... by the late 1990s AOL had 20 million subscribers, and roughly half of U.S. homes that had internet were using AOL by 1997."

Rizer said once Loudoun established core infrastructure and attracted a few anchor companies, growth became compounding: infrastructure drew companies, companies brought more infrastructure and the cycle continued for roughly 20 years.

### Data storage and computing explodes

While data centers have existed in Virginia for decades, the recent rise of artificial intelligence has accelerated demand for the warehouse-like facilities that store and process data around the world.

Ali Mehrizi-Sani, a professor at Virginia Tech, said Northern Virginia had many of the right ingredients to attract the industry even before the state sales and use tax exemption passed in 2008.

"The fact is that we have a lot of customers of data, and that's really the federal government and their contractors," Mehrizi-Sani said. "They use a lot of data, so really just proximity to Washington, D.C. has been a main driver of honestly everything in Virginia, including data centers."

The early development of the internet exchange points in Virginia, combined with large stretches of undeveloped land in Northern Virginia, also helped fuel the industry's growth. Loudoun County, for example, was far more rural than it is today.

Loudoun recorded 71 operating data centers, the most of any locality in the commonwealth, according to a 2024 study by the Joint Legislative Audit and

Review Commission. Statewide, 131 data centers were operating at the time.

"That's why you see data centers are coming further south, even to areas like where I live in Roanoke and Botetourt County, essentially in search of land," Mehrizi-Sani said.

He said data centers have also remained in Virginia because electricity rates are comparatively lower than in other parts of the country. Another major factor is the state's sales and use tax exemption.

### Tax breaks and tax gains

In Loudoun, data center revenue has generated substantial tax income year after year, providing the county with more than \$100 million annually to support schools and government services.

The revenue stream — estimated at about \$890 million in 2018 — has grown enough that the county has reduced real estate tax rates for homeowners every year for the past decade, according to county officials.

Revenue from data centers has also allowed county leaders to propose reducing the personal property tax rate on vehicles beginning in tax year 2026 and eliminating the \$25 vehicle license fee.

In 2008, the General Assembly approved a statewide incentive allowing data centers to avoid the state's 5.3% sales and use tax, which at the time was estimated to save the industry about \$1.5 million annually. Data centers routinely refresh computer equipment and software, the exemption can significantly reduce costs every few years.

Now, however, the cost of the tax break has ballooned to about \$1.9 billion annually in foregone state revenue.

While the tax break had previously been extended, and former Gov. Glenn Youngkin sought to continue it through 2050 in his final budget proposal, debate over potentially ending the incentive led to months of negotiations and brought Virginia to the brink of a government shutdown after lawmakers failed to pass a budget until the final days of June.

Some lawmakers argued the industry had benefitted enough from the tax exemption. At the same time, concerns over rising energy costs and environmental impacts prompted legislators to look for ways to reclaim some revenue from the trillion dollar industry.

But Gov. Abigail Spanberger led the push to preserve the tax break, arguing Virginia had "made an agreement" and should not reverse course. The exemption is currently set to expire in 2035 unless lawmakers change it before then.

"We know technology is not bad," Senate Finance Committee Chair Louise Lucas, D-Portsmouth, said last month. "We all can benefit from technology, but we, as a government, have not done a good job in managing the regulations and the impact on our communities, and that's what we've got to rein in. But we've also got to rein in the fact that data centers — they're some of the largest corporations on the face of the Earth, trillion dollar organizations — are getting tax exemptions right now."

While the exemption ultimately remained in the budget, lawmakers approved a new energy consumption tax on data centers expected to bring in a total of \$600 million annually, or \$1.2 billion over the biennium. The industry will pay 1.1 cents per kilowatt-hour of electricity consumed up to the cap, with any excess refunded at the end of the fiscal year.

Dominion Energy and Mecklenburg, Northern Virginia, and Rappahannock electric cooperatives reported in 2023 that data centers used about 5,050 megawatts of power that year, based on peak-load forecasts, according to the Joint Legislative Audit and Review Commission.

"What I have found is that some of the businesses coming to our commonwealth, they want to make investments in our communities and in our workforce. The consumption tax, as we've conceived of it here in the commonwealth, is one that's based on fairness," Spanberger told The Mercury last month.

**Data center capital continues on page 12.**

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**Data center capital**  
*continued from page 11.*

Lawmakers also approved new water use regulations for data centers in areas designated as water scarce and within the water management area east of Interstate 95.

Virginia has a new two-year budget. Here's what lawmakers

now require of data centers.

The changes aim to push facilities away from evaporative cooling systems that consume millions of gallons of water annually and toward more efficient technologies. Also, for the first time, the state will regulate data center noise levels.

The General Assembly also passed bills requiring cleaner backup generators that emit fewer carbon emissions and measures intended to help localities better assess the residential and environmental impacts of proposed facilities.

**Public policy**

In 2010, Virginia created a retail and sales tax exemption for data centers, a factor companies have consistently identified as important in site selection.

Loudoun designated large areas for industrial and employment uses where data centers could be built, helping reduce development timelines and support continued growth.

Through successive comprehensive plans, Loudoun also reserved large tracts of land in eastern Loudoun — near Washington Dulles International Airport and the W&OD Trail — for industrial and employment uses close to existing fiber networks and electrical infrastructure. The move ensured a long-term supply of development-ready sites for large-scale data center campuses.

Opposition from residents has grown in recent years, with hundreds of community members attending local government meetings to oppose projects near homes, drinking water supplies and high-voltage transmission lines. Residents have urged lawmakers to impose stronger regulations and seek greater financial contributions from the industry for supporting infrastructure.

**What's next**

Last week, lawmakers ordered a work group to study how the data center tax exemption could be phased out or modified to generate additional state revenue. A report is due in November.

While Spanberger has described the new consumption tax as "fair," the data center industry

disagrees. After lawmakers approved the budget amendments last week, Data Center Coalition CEO Josh Levi said the new tax will "drive away investment and job creation, and tarnish Virginia's reputation."

"The message to businesses in all industries is clear — Virginia is no longer a reliable partner," Levi said in a June statement.

Rizer argued that Loudoun's and Virginia's future depends on treating data centers as a foundation for broader technology growth while maintaining a stable and predictable business climate.

"You can't take success for granted ... the principle that made us successful is a predictable, welcoming environment with predictable tax and policy issues," Rizer said. "The only way that that success can go into the future is by staying grounded in those principles that brought us this far."

As for federal involvement in an issue that has become a national flashpoint, Democratic U.S. Sen. Tim Kaine of Virginia, who was governor when the tax exemption passed, said states should decide individually how to manage data center growth rather than adopt a one-size-fits-all approach.

"(Data centers are a) global phenomenon, and being a leader in this important area is good for America's national security and for Virginia's economy," Kaine said. "But there are real challenges when it comes to water, power and land use, so local communities must get a say when it comes to how to handle them."

Virginia has become the state that many others are watching as they weigh to and regulate the growing data center industry. Lawmakers now face balancing the promise of economic investment with mounting concerns from residents pushing back against continued expansion.

**Editor's Note:** This article originally appeared on the Virginia Mercury ([virginiamercury.com](http://virginiamercury.com)). It is reprinted here via Plucky Wire, a digital story-sharing network that connects independent newsrooms to expand local reporting.

**Community Calendar**



**FLUVANNA**

County Calendar



QR Code provided by the Fluvanna Leadership Development Program

**Registration Open for Fluvanna Leadership Class**

Registration for the Fluvanna Leadership Development Program will continue through **Aug. 14**, but the class fills quickly. The non-political class shows how Fluvanna County works and how to effectively get things done. In-person classes are every other Thursday, Aug. 27 – April 7 (except holidays) and include opportunities to meet everyone who's anyone in Fluvanna. Registration costs \$100 and includes the popular free bus tour of the county with lunch, a graduation dinner, and snacks at classes. Registration and additional information are at [www.fluvannaleadership.org](http://www.fluvannaleadership.org)

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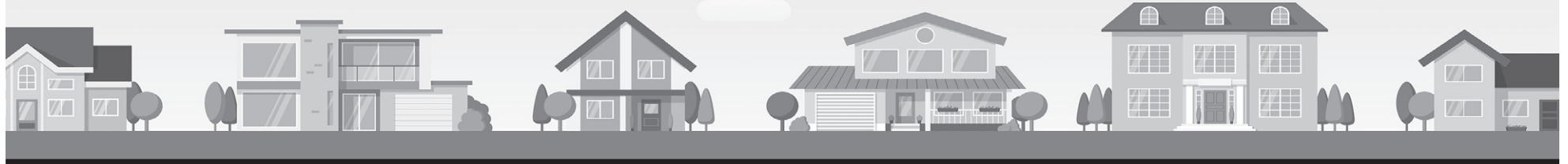
Fluvanna Leaders for Race & Diversity (FLRD) is located at 14455 James Madison Highway in Palmyra. It is open on **Tuesdays and Thursdays** from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. It accepts cash and food donations. (434) 987-1938.

**Food Pantry & Food Assistance**

FLRD Community Food Pantry is located at 14455 James Madison Hwy, Palmyra VA in the School Board Administration Building. To receive food please visit our pantry on Tuesdays and Thursday from 10am to 2pm. Questions or donations, contact (434) 987-1938.

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## MARCH 2026 PROPERTY TRANSFERS

PROPERTY TRANSFER DEEDS ARE PROVIDED BY THE FLUVANNA COUNTY CIRCUIT COURT.

### 3/02/2026

Pillow, Kyle Otis to Hill, Nicholas. 2.00 Acres. \$499,000.

Stanley Martin Homes ... to Halperin, Kaytlin. See document for full description. \$369,990.

Gomes, Melissa to Ganer, Donald. Lot 10 Phase 11 Falcon Hills Section LM. \$405,000.

### 3/03/2026

Lull, Ellen L. to Dellapenna, Tiana. 0.389 Acres. \$275,000.

Turner Miller, Romant... to Hattaway, Jared and Amanda Hattaway. 2.100 Acres. \$315,000.

### 3/04/2026

Orth, Martin A. See document for full description. 5.042 Acres. \$720,000.

### 3/05/2026

Collins, Laurie B. to Miller, Justin. Lot 142 Phase 7, Crofton LM. \$345,000.

Stanley Martin Homes ... to Fields, Kevin Dewayne and Chantal Centofanti Fields. See document for full description. \$312,000.

### 3/06/2026

Carver, Kelly Allecia to Marin, Ruby E. 2.841 Acres. \$329,000.

### 3/09/2026

US Delta Timberlands... to Hulbert, Alec. See document for full description. \$244,750.

Clark, Columbus R. to Seay, Kirk M. and Joanne P. Seay. Lot 208 Phase 4 Fairway LM. \$275,000.

### 3/10/2026

Serenity Hill LLC to Townsend, Cameron Jonathan. 10.18 Acres, off of VSH 6. \$350,000.

Grose Real Estate Inv... to Old Louisa LLC. 1.00 Acres. \$255,000.

Booker, Ralph A. to Lloyd, Ethan s. and Allie R. Lloyd. 3.487 Acres. \$300,000.

Felts, Tracey to Ferguson, Spencer T. and Malin M. Ferguson. Lot 228 Phase 1 Ashlawn LM. \$295,000.

### 3/11/2026

Dodson, Tyler Andrew to Pitchford, Timothy T. Lot 227 Phase 3 Montpelier LM > \$330,000.

### 3/12/2026

Balagtas, Eduardo Cu... to Vitales, David Dulay and Celia Balagtas Vitales. Lot 397 Phase 4 Fairway Addition One LM. \$273,900.

Costanza, Anthony L. to Samar- aee, Moamin Al and Amenah A. Abdullah. Lot 224 Phase 5 Tufton Section LM. \$266,250.

Serafini, Silvio to Goo, Dennis D. K. TR, and Susan J. Goo, TR., Dennis D.K.Goo and Susan J. Goo. Lot 102 Phase 10 Cherokee LM. \$300,000.

US Delta Timberlands ... to Gaudiose, Bryan Kyle and Kacie Barksdale Gaudiose. 100.3 Acres. \$255,000.

### 3/13/2026

Stanley Martin Homes ... to Dew, Celia Colby and Casey Barker Quinn. See document for full description. \$314,085.

Ownby, Christopher T. ... Bes- sette, Roger J. and Lisa M. Bes- sette. 2677 Acres Fronting on Route 634. 415,000.

Gorman, Andrew J. to Ellis, Gilbert. Lot 2, in DBK 138, Page 488. \$50,000.

### 3/16/2026

Rock Creek Residence ... to Costa, Robert J. and Christy M. Costa, Lot 302 Phase 12 Edge- wood Section LM. \$300,000.

RAS Trustee Services ... to US Bank Trust National Associ... 331 Applewood Lane, Palmyra, VA 22963. \$194,919.

### 3/17/2026

Watson, William H., III to Martin, Edward M., Sr. and Tracy Martin. Fluvanna County. \$425,000.

### 3/18/2026

DES Construction Inc to Smith, Cody Brian and Glenda May Smith. \$462,500.

Good Buy Real Estate ... to Foley, Reagan M. Lot 323 Phase 10 Cherokee LM. \$275,000.

Novelle, Garrett to Mitchell, Peyton James and Olivia Isabella Mitchell. \$354,900.

Liberty Homes VA Inc to Emmenis, Stefanus Van and Harriet Barnett. \$515,672.

### 3/19/2026

Feden, Stephen D. to Norvelle, Garrett and Heather Norvelle. 7.168 Acres. \$322,000.

### 3/20/2026

Stanley Martin Homes ... to Maher, Patricia Mendelis and Shaun Andrew Maher. See document for full description. \$461,490.

Stanley Martin Homes ... to Na- simullah, Mia M. See document for full description. \$299,990.

### 3/23/2026

Loseff, Kyle Steven to Fox, Alison M. \$399,000.

### 3/25/26

Liberty Homes Va inc. to Bishop, Melissa Gayle. See document for full description. \$354,999.

McGowan, Garrett Ed ... to Jordan, Travis P. and Sabra A. Jordan. \$500,000.

Filipponi, Gabriella to The Brayvon Company, LLC. \$320,000.

### 3/26/2026

Benco LLC to Taylor, Marshall P. 10.09 Acres, Parcel 3 Shores Road. \$200,000.

### 3/27/2026

Mercer, Sharon to Merrick, James and Cady Merrick. 8.613 Acres. \$74,800.

Brown, Rovelto to Lindsay, Vijay Majestic. 16.862 Acres. INST 250003037. \$112,195.

Beane, Brian to Forsyth, Joshua and Kristen Karnoutsos. \$400,000.

Talbott, Robert L. to Mott, Michael Landy and Morgan A. Mott. 3.069 Acres. \$562,000.

Daddy Rabbit Inc. to Temple, Mervin Sylvester, Jr. \$332,000.

Aylor, Oscar R. to Goo, Dennis D.K. Tr. And Susan J. Goo, TR, Dennis D.K. Goo & Susan J. Goo F... \$432,500.

### 3/30/2026

Stanley Martin Homes ... to Chi- chili, Sagar R. and Sindhura Bagepalle. \$297,490.

Liberty Homes VA Inc. to Douglas, Ronnie Lorenzo, Jr. and Kayla Douglas. 3.041 Acres. \$460,611.

### 3/31/2026

Toepfert, Muriel C. to Rittinger, Wilma and David Rittinger, Lot 108 Phase 11 Falcon Hills LM. \$385,000.

River Hill Organics Inc. to Pallone, Joseph Gerard. 7.113 Acres. \$58,000.

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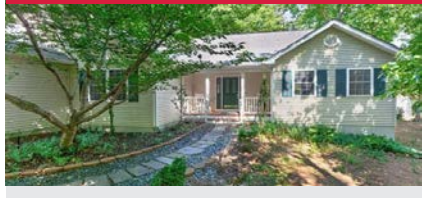


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