

**CRACKED  
BREAKING  
&  
RECENTLY  
BROKEN  
NEWS**

# Warrenton: The Flyer



**LOCAL NEWS  
Fact-Based  
Fun Edgy Civil**



VOLUME XXVI - May-June

FREE

THIS IS OUR TOWN PAPER

## Fast Track Public Notice and Sale of 18 Court Street is Just Another Questionable Decision By Town Council

By Ike Miller

Front page of this week's Fauquier Times headline article, "...SOLD! OLD TOWN HALL SLATED FOR NEW SOCIAL CLUB"

Yes, the Town Council has voted to SELL the building for more than half of its appraised value, FINANCE the building interest only (3.93%) and take a balloon payment in year five. To be used as a private social club and restaurant.

The citizens should be disgusted by the terms, presentation and fast track of this sale for several reasons:

1. Details of the sale terms weren't divulged to the citizens until the morning session on April 14th, the VERY DAY of the vote to sell. No process was explored to seek a more competitive offer, no counter-offer was made and no revision of the terms offered by Madison Dale / Mr. Ash was discussed or even contemplated to make this sale more palatable to the citizens.

2. It is deeply ironic that the building's condition was a primary reason the Council recommended its sale. The Town owned and operated much of its business and the police station from that very building for more than 47 years. Did the Town leadership spanning nearly 50 years lack the presence of mind to maintain the building and make annual incremental upgrades to the very office it occupied?

3. The Council and especially our Mayor failed miserably in negotiating with the Board of Supervisors to secure future exclusive use of one of several courthouse and administration buildings that will become obsolete in the next few years once the judicial center is completed. One or more of these should have been negotiated for town citizen community use (e.g., arts, music, and an indoor farmer's market). We potentially

(continued on page 3)

## Democratic Process saves FREE SPEECH

### Artists want to Enliven the HEART of Warrenton: Mayor Rejects Them



**The Heart of Warrenton  
(former Town Hall & Fauquier Bank)  
is located behind the Fauquier History Museum at the Old Jail**



By Patty Pratt

The democratic process narrowly saves the 1st Amendment rights of Warrenton citizens on April 14th at the morning Town Council Session. Paul Mooney, Larry Kovalik, Dave McGuire and Eric Gagnon knew inherently that they represent the citizens and after quite the sleight of hand by Mayor Carter Nevill, these four voted yes.

Here's how it all happened. Artists had been gathering for months designing an Arts concept (Live Music by Gloria's Music Alliance, Theater and Visual Arts) for the Historic Town-owned property at 18 Court Street. This was an underutilized municipal building looking for a new purpose. Here's how it all happened. Artists had been gathering for months designing an Arts (Live Music by Gloria's Music Alliance, Theater and visual arts) concept for the Historic Town-owned property at 18 Court Street. This was an underutilized municipal building looking for a new purpose, or so we had been told. Mr. Ash of Madison Dale, a Chevy Chase Maryland firm, presented to the Fauquier County Board of Supervisors a very self-serving proposal that he purchase the Warren Green Building with little to no money down, interest only payments for 4 years at approximately 3.9% and a balloon payment the end of 5 years. Discussions with his firm and two others transpired for months concluding with the BoS initially accepting an offer with generous arrangements never offered to a local business firm. Then again, unlike the Town, the County owns the property and has the financial reserves to tailor a favorable purchase structure. Fast forward many months and behold Mr. Ash wants to receive same type of financed deal on the Town-owned former Town Hall at 18 Court Street and publicly pressured the

(continued on page 5)



## 18 Court Street SOLD ...Maybe

by Percy Dunagin

During this month's Town Council regular meeting (April 14th) the council considered and passed an ordinance to sell the 18 Court Street building to the developer (Mr Ash of Madison Dale) who had already agreed to buy the Fauquier County-owned Warren Green Hotel at 10 Hotel Street. This council meeting was designated as a "public hearing" on this matter, in order to comply with Virginia State Code (§ 15.2-1800B) for the sale of town-owned property. In the end, the town council voted 5-2 to approve this ordinance, thus giving Mr Ash the go-ahead to purchase the property. But there may be a sticking point to the deal, as was raised during the debate of the matter that evening.

In the working meeting earlier that day, the council heard from the Town staff a summary of the developer on his proposed purchase of and use of the property; and then from local artist Patty Pratt who presented (after some stone-walling from certain members of the town council and the mayor) an alternative plan on behalf of numerous Warrenton citizens for the disposition of this building. Ms Pratt's proposal advocated for leasing the building to an organization that would run the property as an arts and activities center, with the focus of benefiting many citizens of Warrenton. Mr Ash plans to operate the building as a private club in conjunction with his hotel business that will occupy the historic Warren Green Hotel after he renovates it.

(continued on page 3)

## Editors' Picks

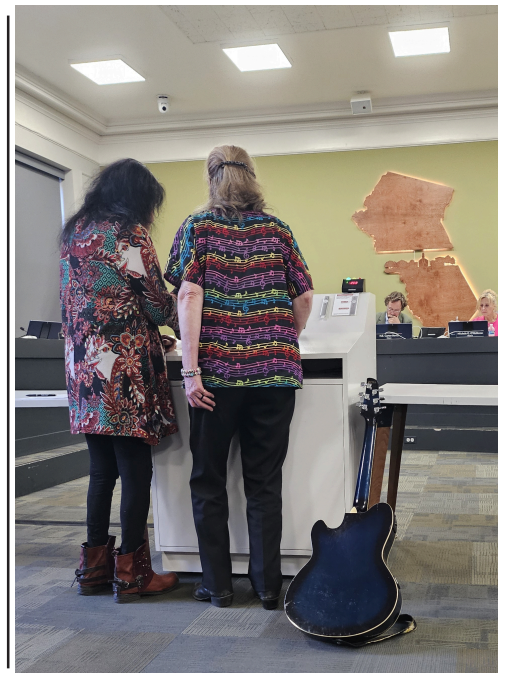
The calendar page shown below has a crisp drawing of 3rd & Main Gourmet to Go. Inside this small kitchen is a giant cuisine. You'll find gourmet quiche, sandwiches, desserts, & take-home meals. Try the She crab soup. 15 S. Third St. Mon. - Sat. 11a-3p thirtdandmainva@gmail.com 540.347.2935



"They took all the trees and put 'em in a tree museum. And they charged the people a dollar and a half just to see 'em. Don't it always seem to go, you don't know what you've got til it's it's gone..." Mary Shapiro and friend sing acapella after Mayor Carter Nevill indicates the guitar is a prop and not allowed. They knocked it out of the park.

See story on page 6. >>>

<<< The drawing of 3rd & Main Street pictured on the left is a series of drawings by a local resident, Christopher Lambert. He draws mainly for fun, though you can occasionally find his work for sale in local shops. You may have encountered him locally drawing pictures of people's pets. He doesn't charge for them, he uses drawing as a way to connect to people. Currently some of his drawings are hanging in Frame Craft at 64 Main Street where you can purchase a calendar with those drawings or the original drawings.



### About WPAC

The Warrenton Public Advisory Committee (WPAC) contains the group of local people who value truth and facts when making decisions to keep the Historic Old Town Charm of Warrenton Virginia and matters of concern with Town Council. We strive to bring subject matter expert inputs to a wide variety of small town issues and concerns and to inform our community of fact-based information, presented in a transparent forum. If you align with these values then you are part of the WPAC community. All are welcome in the discussion. Check out our blog [www.wpac.blog](http://www.wpac.blog) for more information or to become a contributor.

Warrenton: The Flyer (W:TF) is a compilation of inputs from people in Warrenton communities including residents, shop keepers, business owners & friends ~25 mile radius.

The editing, ads sales, production publishing and promotion of W:TF flyer is done by a small local business called We The Flyers.

>>WeTheFlyers@protonmail.com<< for advertising & article submission.

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# Convictions Conjectures Complaints Grumblings Grievances

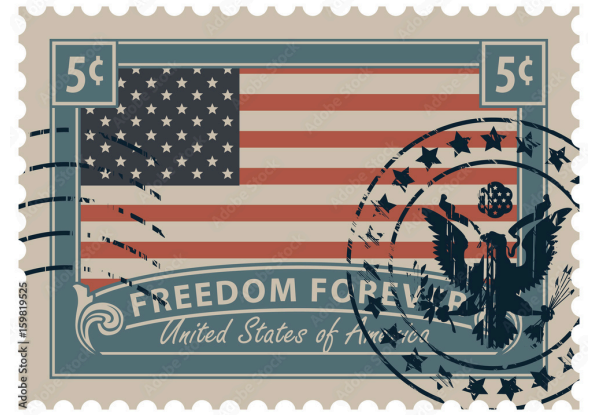
## Opinions

## Gossip

## Reports

## Letters To The Editors

In this section Warrenton: The Flyer publishes Letters to the Editors (WPAC) and Community Event Reports for topics relevant to our town. Please submit to our publisher: [WeTheFlyers@protonmail.com](mailto:WeTheFlyers@protonmail.com) WPAC will curate articles based on interest, relevance, and space availability.



### WHERE'S WALDO? >>>

Look for Waldo in a different place in new publications. Waldo is one of the most spotted longtime residents. He loves to walk the streets of our Historic Old Town of Warrenton. He wants to preserve the charm. Waldo submits articles on [WPAC.blog](http://WPAC.blog) about recent sightings from his regular walks & strong opinions on Town matters.



### Trial over Amazon reprinted

By Percy Dunagin

On March 9th 2026 at the Fauquier County Circuit Court in Warrenton, Judge Stephen Sincavage presided over an approximately 90-minute proceeding that ultimately only set up the next trial hearing date of June 15th 2026 (at 10 AM), where he will hear the full oral arguments given by both sides. Between now and then, the judge will pour over the 4,000 pages of stipulations that both parties have agreed are "the facts" in the case, along with studying the proposed order that the plaintiff filed and the written briefs that each side must submit by May 8th . For most of us laypeople, court proceedings are something we only are exposed to in the movies or TV, which makes this process appear to be drawn out. But watching the trial, along with only about 20 other observers, I was somewhat impressed by the orderly process, the calm demeanor and the respectful decorum throughout. This is not at all like the movies. This case, CL23000128-00, is trackable at <https://eapps.courts.state.va.us/CJISWeb/CaseDetail.do> was initially filed on March 16, 2023 by 12 plaintiffs (3 are listed on the court documents: Charles and MaryGay Cross and Kevin Hampton) with 3 defendants (Town Council of Warrenton, Town of Warrenton and Amazon Data Services).

So what are the key arguments on which this case will turn? Actually the two parties agree on what the key arguments are, but of course they differ on how the law should be interpreted in its application to the agreed-upon facts. At this hearing, each side presented opening arguments before Judge Sincavage, outlining what they will argue in their written briefs and oral arguments. First, the plaintiff, represented by Mr. Mullin, and then the defense, represented by Mr. Westover. While both sides referred to and pointed out the pertinent facts in the case, these are not known by many people. Let me review some of those facts in chronological order. April 13 th , 2021: Town Council approved by unanimous voice vote the "Initiation of a Zoning Ordinance Text Amendment to Add Data Centers to the I District". This document did not include the statement that this action was in the public interest, as required by Virginia Code 15.-- 2286(A) which states "Any such resolution or motion by such governing body or commission proposing the rezoning shall state the above public purposes therefor." August 10th , 2021: Town Council approved by unanimous voice vote the "Text Amendment to Add Data Centers in the Industrial (I) District". This text amendment did include the required statement on public interest: "WHEREAS, the Town

Council has determined that the health, safety, general welfare of the public and good zoning practice warrant this amendment". Feb 14th , 2023: Town Council approved 4-3 the Special Use Permit (SUP) for Amazon to proceed with its proposed data center in Warrenton. March 11th, 2025: Town Council approved by unanimous voice vote the "Resolution to Initiate ZOTA-25-1 to Remove Data Centers as a Permissible Use within the Industrial Zoning District." This text amendment did include the required statement on public interest. July 8th, 2025: Town Council approved 6-0 the "Ordinance to Approve ZOTA-25-1 Zoning Ordinance Text Amendment to Article 3, 9 and 12 to Remove Data Centers as a Permissible Use within the Industrial Zoning District."

The plaintiff's argument centers around the claim that the resolution to change the zoning is defective in 2 ways, either of which invalidates (void ad initio) that zoning change and the subsequent SUP. The first defect stems from the absence of the public purpose statement as required by Virginia code. The second defect is the lack of a written, signed resolution for the initiation of the zoning change that occurred on April 21st, 2021. The plaintiff cited in opening arguments many legislative precedents supporting their case. The defense's main argument is that the two legislative actions, the underlying zoning change and the SUP, are independent. Therefore, the validity of the zoning change does not affect the subsequent SUP, which was approved on Feb 14th , 2021. In fact, Virginia Code also allows for certain exceptions that even if the zoning change amendment was invalid, that does not require a void ad initio on all subsequent actions. Furthermore, they argue, the zoning change was in fact valid under Virginia Code standards, because the written resolution approved on August 10th , 2021, did include the public purpose statement. In addition to this, the defense will argue that Virginia Code 15.2-2286 also requires that any appeal to a zoning ordinance must be made within 30 days, which the plaintiff did not do. In fact, the defense will argue, the Town of Warrenton and Amazon operated under the presumption from 2021 to 2023 that the zoning amendment was valid, and hence went forward with the debate and approval of the SUP. Only in March 2023 was this suit brought that challenged all that. The plaintiff is asking the Court to do the following actions: 1) void ad initio the text amendment of April 2021; 2) void the SUP; 3) make all permits and actions for the data center project null and void; 4) issue a permanent injunction on the use of the property that would be pursuant to the voided actions; 5) issue a writ of mandamus on counts 1, 2 and 4 above; and 6) direct the Town officials to take the appropriate actions.

Despite the cordiality and apparent agreement on many facets of the case, it is by no means simple, nor is it obvious at this point, which way the judge will rule. We will all have to wait until June. Meanwhile, Amazon must also wait to build the data center, which still has several logistical obstacles such as power and water, to negotiate. Comments? see [WPAC.blog](http://WPAC.blog)

# Headlines & Front Page News Continued

SOLD Maybe (continued)

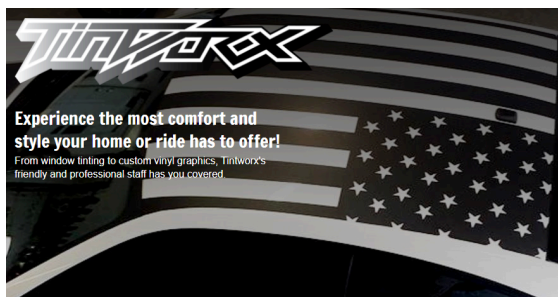
During the evening public hearing, approximately 15 people spoke during the period allotted, including the developer. Most were in favor of the sale, but some also brought up the consideration of delaying the decision. It was this consideration that was echoed in two motions raised by two separate members of the Town Council after the citizens had finished speaking. First, Mr McGuire (at large) entered a motion to amend the resolution to add a 30-day "cooling-off" period. This amendment was quickly defeated by a 5-2 vote, signaling that most on the council had made up their minds on the sale. Next, Mr Gagnon (Ward 5) entered a motion to amend the resolution to delay the vote until the town attorney could seek a legal opinion from the state Attorney General on the Virginia Code's requirement for a town voting to sell such a property. This was a stickier issue, which resulted in several parliamentary procedures by the council that ultimately ended the debate. The council then voted 5-2 to defeat that amendment also. Next, more debate on the original ordinance by council members followed, with the ultimate vote on the ordinance around 8:30 pm. In the council's 5-2 vote for the ordinance, only Mr Gagnon and Mr McGuire voted "Nay".

Sounds simple, however, the issue that Mr Gagnon raised may still rear its ugly head. Here's why. While Virginia Code Section 15.2-1800 stipulates only that the town must hold a public hearing before selling real property, another part of Virginia law suggests that there is an additional requirement. Here is the language (my emphasis added):



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**Did you know? The WARF  
is in debt about \$1.2M  
...every year!**

**see story page 5**

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Article VII, Section 9 of the Virginia Constitution states: "Section 9. Sale of property and granting of franchises by cities and towns. No rights of a city or town in and to its waterfront, wharf property, public landings, wharves, docks, streets, avenues, parks, bridges, or other public places, or its gas, water, or electric works shall be sold except by an ordinance or resolution passed by a recorded affirmative vote of three fourths of all members elected to the governing body." This section is cited by the Virginia Code Section 15.2-1800B. Furthermore, Section 15.2-2100A (Restrictions on selling certain municipal public property) also repeats the Constitution's language on this almost verbatim. The key phrases in both of these texts are "other public places" and "a recorded affirmative vote of three fourths of all members elected to the governing body" (in our case 6 out of 7). This is exactly what Mr Gagnon was asking about, and the response from the Town Attorney (Philip Strother) that evening was the following: he had already researched this and determined that Virginia law did not require a three fourths vote from us because apparently our property is NOT what this law is talking about. Mr Strother did not elaborate much, other than to insist that 18 Court Street is not a "public place", which resulted in Mr McGuire seriously questioning the accuracy of that position. Because of the parliamentary procedures that quickly shut down any further debate after that, the matter was quickly over.

What does then constitute a "public place" in the context of Virginia law? It seems that the town is supposed to be satisfied that Mr Strother is correct, and no additional legal opinion is needed on this. However, there is good reason to believe that Virginia law does offer some more definition on the use of this term, one that just may cause us a problem. One definition appears in the Virginia Code under the stipulations of Powers of Local Government, 15.2-2820: "any enclosed, indoor area used by the general public, including but not limited to any building owned or leased by the Commonwealth or any agency thereof or any locality, public conveyance or public vehicle, educational facility, hospital, nursing facility or nursing home, other health care facility, library, retail store of 15,000 square feet or more, auditorium, arena, theater, museum, concert hall, or other area used for a performance or an exhibit of the arts or sciences, or any meeting room." In another, the Virginia Code Definitions Section (4.1-100, which is under the topic of Alcoholic Beverage and Cannabis Control), the term is defined as "any place, building, or conveyance to which the public has, or is permitted to have, access, including restaurants, soda fountains, hotel dining areas, lobbies and corridors of hotels, and any park, place of public resort or amusement, highway, street, lane, or sidewalk adjoining any highway, street, or lane." It seems difficult for the average layperson to say how our building does NOT fall into these definitions, but what would the legal experts say?

It is not entirely clear whether Mr Gagnon or Mr Strother is correct, but shouldn't the question be explored further, in order to have a sound legal standing? If not, don't we open up this deal to legal challenges? That is exactly what Mr Gagnon cautioned (while not insisting he was correct on the law), thus asking for a simple delay to investigate. Time will tell if this sticking point will either a) invite somebody to file a lawsuit, or b) cause the developer to back out, or both. If we did need 6 out of 7 votes, we certainly didn't get them, and that one vote may make a huge difference as the sale now proceeds. The majority may rule, but that doesn't make them always right.

Fast Track Sale Questionable Decision (continued)

use of one or more of those County-owned buildings before the Court Street vote to sell. In today's paper, BoS supervisor Ike Broaddus suggested that when the judicial center is completed, (Mr. Ash) "...might come and buy the pretty building next door to go bigger!" If the County-owned Circuit Court building is eventually sold to Mr. Ash, only the General District courthouse and the Juvenile and Domestic Relations courthouse buildings remain as walk-able alternatives for Town and County community events in the historic district.

4. While the County also owns the soon-to-be-surplussed Warrenton Middle School on Waterloo Street, the Town citizens have no commitment from the County that the Town can use all or even part of that complex. It is common practice, as confirmed by the Town Council's Vice-Mayor, for the Mayor himself to request formal meetings with the County Board of Supervisors. A sit-down of this kind has not happened in years and many town citizens have green-lighted the Town Council to sell the only remaining Town land asset in the entire historic District. While the potential future revenue from the Warren Green Hotel and the club-restaurant could yield much-needed revenue for the Town, the Town has made no effort to secure a future viable community event space.

## WARRENTON BUDGET 201

By Anthony Sippert

*Town of Warrenton Budget 101, pt 2*

During the 14 April 2026 Town Council Meeting, a Warrenton Proposed Budget in Brief for Fiscal Year 2027 (1 JUL 2026 to 30 JUN 2027) was provided to those in attendance. It was a slick document with a glossy cover. It looked very professional. On the Welcome page of the document, it stated, "The goal of this abbreviated budget document is give (sic) an overview of the budget while continuing our dedication to budget transparency."

However, that transparency is fully realized only by those who choose to dig further into the additional resources listed on the "Where to Find More Information" page. There you will find links to the full Fiscal Year 2027 proposed budget, the proposed 2027-2032 Capital Improvement Plan, and the Plan Warrenton 2040, which is the Town's long-term, comprehensive plan. The first two are found at [www.warrentonva.gov-177-Budget](http://www.warrentonva.gov-177-Budget), and the latter is found at [www.warrentonva.gov-170-Plan-Warrenton-2040-Comprehensive-Plan](http://www.warrentonva.gov-170-Plan-Warrenton-2040-Comprehensive-Plan). These are the documents you must study and understand if you want to be an informed citizen and be fully aware of the long-term budget plans and the implications they will have on future taxes or debt that the town will be obligated to incur. Debt that may lead to tax increases in the future.

Some basic things one must understand are that there are multiple categories of the budget. The Town's budget is organized into groups of related accounts that are tied to specific sources of revenue. This is a requirement of the Commonwealth of Virginia that the various sources of revenue be matched with a fund for program costs associated with that source of revenue. The example given in the brief is that money received from resident water bills should not be allocated to pay for Police services. The Town Budget will lay out all the various revenue sources and the funds they are tied to.

In the coming issues of this newsletter, we will continue to dive into the Town Budget, the various funds, and their associated revenue sources.



**QUICK ACCESS TO  
TOWN BUDGET**



# TOWN Truths and-or COUNCIL Consequences

Dedicated to providing accurate information to Town Residents and Town Businesses to further the action on new or current town topics, propositions, & votes.

## Who represents your Ward? Find your Town Council Member: Use the Ward Map >



**Paul Mooney AT-LARGE** Term expires 12/31/2026  
Councilman Paul Mooney is a husband and father of four, a local small business owner, and a Marine Corps reservist. Paul says he's passionate about his community and wants to ensure it stays a place where families, individuals, and democracy can thrive.



**David McGuire AT-LARGE** Term expires 12/31/2026  
David McGuire has a Master's Degree in History. As a fiscal conservative he believes in the transparency of government. The primary responsibility of being a Town Council Member is "to have integrity in all your actions both public and private."



**Eric Gagnon WARD 5** Term Expires 12/31/2028  
Councilman Eric Gagnon is a retired publisher, training professional, consultant, and inventor, with experience as an entrepreneur, business owner, and technology patent litigation & licensing specialist. Eric often says he believes in truth, transparency and standing behind your word.



**Michele O'Halloran, WARD 4** Term Expires 12/31/2028  
Councilmember O'Halloran originally from the Republic of Panama, immigrated to the United States in her early 20s. She has resided in Arizona and Florida, employed in both private and public sectors as a Human Resource Manager before moving to Warrenton 20 years ago.



**Larry Kovalik WARD 3** Term Expires 12/31/2028  
Councilman Kovalik is a Senior Field Service Engineer for medical laser systems.. As a 25-year resident Larry fully supports our town's Vision and Values statement regarding the preservation of Warrenton's small-town character. Respect, Protect, & Preserve are his priorities.



**William Semple II WARD 2** Term Expires 12/31/2028  
Bill, Vice Mayor and Councilman is a retired entrepreneur, businessman and Navy veteran best known for inventing and successfully licensing mapping programs for common electronics. Bill says he has an avid commitment to preserving the Warrenton he loves.



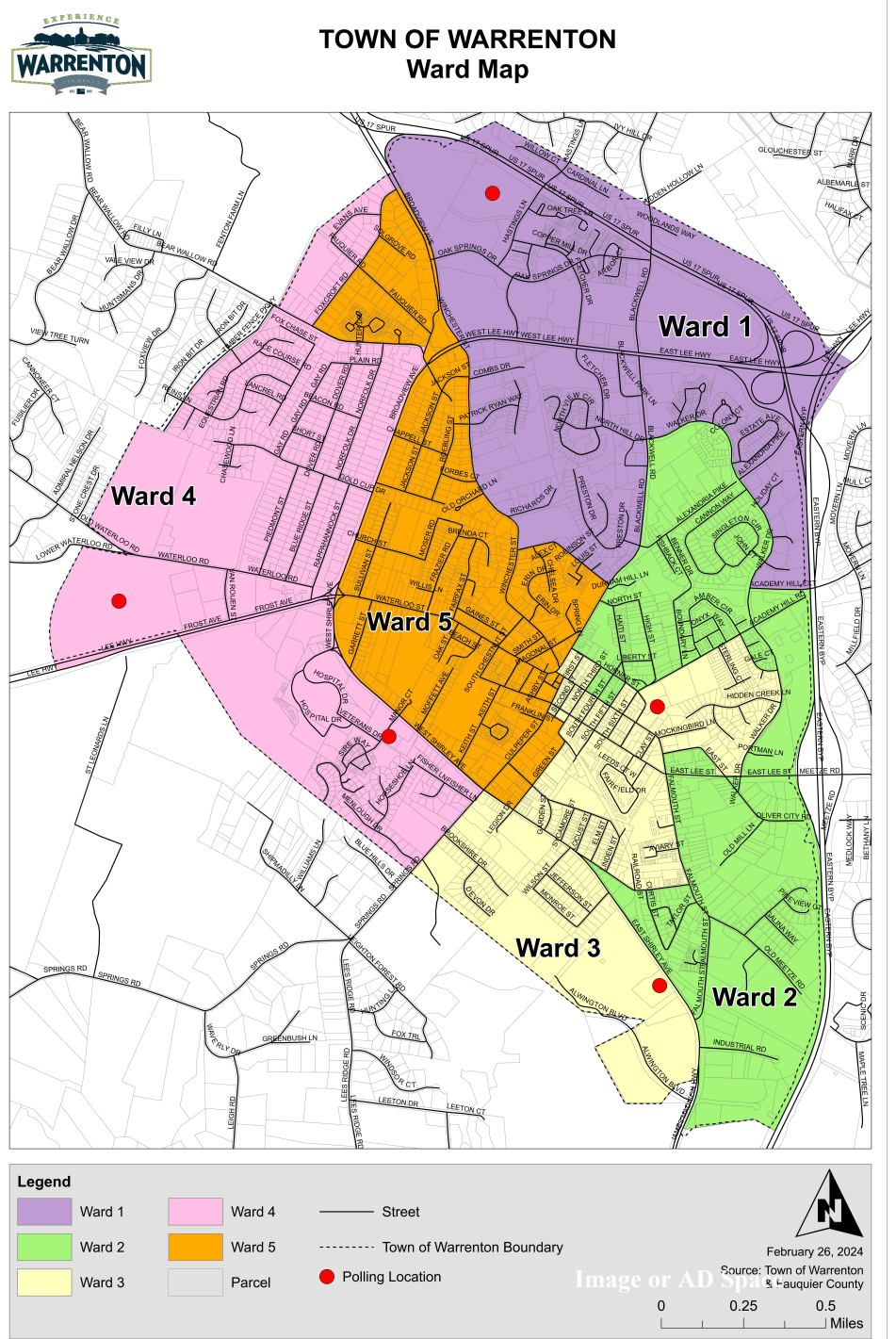
**Roy Francis WARD 1** Term Expires 12/31/2028  
Roy retired from the Federal Government where he served as the Departmental Printing Officer for the Department of the Interior. A fiscal conservative, he says he believes in supporting representative government, listening to the people, openness, and transparency.



**Carter Nevill Town Mayor** Term Expires 12/31/2026  
After graduating he remained in Charlottesville working in restaurants until he became a Southeast Regional Sales Manager for the leading importer of South African wines. In 2004 he opened Carter and Spence, Ltd. He is active in Old Town, greater Warrenton & Fauquier organizations.

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- mohalloran@warrentonva.gov**   **540-340-4946**
- egagnon@warrentonva.gov**      **540-645-6156**

**Your TWO CENTS is Welcome!**



### Town Council Meetings

**Regular Meetings** of the Town of Warrenton Town Council are held in the Council Chambers, Town Hall, 21 Main Street on the **second Tuesday** of each month **Working Session** at 9 AM and **Regular Meeting with Public Speaking Session** 6:30 PM.

**Suggestion:** Prepare about 400 words and make TWELVE copies for the town council and staff or submit online to comments to townclerk@warrentonva.gov



**TOWN COUNCIL LIVE STREAM**

**Planning Commission** Regular Meetings are held on the **third Tuesday** of the month at 7 PM in the Town Council Chambers at 21 Main Street.

The **Architectural Review Board** will meet on the **fourth Thursday** of every month at 21 Main Street.

**Planning Commission Work Sessions** are held on the **fourth Tuesday** of the month, as needed, at 7 PM in the Town Council Chambers at 21 Main Street.

[www.warrentonva.gov](http://www.warrentonva.gov)



(Robin Pegler and Chris Whiteside putting in pansies on a cold day.)

**SPRING IS EVERYWHERE** -especially the Post Office Boxes Have you noticed those beautiful cement boxes near the stairs of Main Street Post Office? They are maintained by the Francis Fauquier Garden Club, FFGC which started in 1960. They are a group of 15 ladies who take turns changing the theme in the boxes.

The boxes were commissioned by Sparkey Lewis, who served for 27 years on the Warrenton Town Council as Ward 5's representative. Mr. Lewis did this for Elizabeth "Bizz" Carter, the wife of Bill Lineweaver, mayor of Warrenton from 1974-1998. Bizz was an avid gardener and a member of the FFGC. Not only are these FFGC ladies graciously beautifying our town but they were also recently (January) awarded a statewide 1st place prize among numerous garden clubs.

# Town Truths & Old Town News

(continued from page 1) Council in open morning session several weeks ago to fall in line with the County or perhaps the deal would collapse. (Keep in mind that the Town must BORROW money to finance this year's required capital to provide long overdue upgrading and maintenance to our water and sewer systems).

Before we had a chance to present our proposal to the town, Ms. O'Halloran stated that the Council knew the deal was coming for a year. Really? Were citizens asked a year ago about responding to an offer to sell the former Town Hall? Was Court Street part of the intended purchase from the County a year ago? The citizens had NO IDEA it was even in play.

Many Town residents and local artists quickly prepared an alternate proposal that would make Warrenton a destination town realizing that the town could use more foot traffic on Main St. regardless of whether it happened in the 18 Court Street property. We had hoped that our foot traffic numbers along with some strategic marketing would far outweigh the proposed use as a private membership club and sometimes available extremely expensive restaurant. Built into the Arts Concept was a way to preserve and maintain the building with a variety of fundraising activities. The plan also generated several hundred thousand dollars a year in usage fees. Surely, this would be something the town would seriously consider since the proposing artists came with decades of collaborative for profit and nonprofit successes. Best of all, the town citizens would keep its only historic property remaining in the historic district in the Town of Warrenton.

I'd heard that the mayor plays tricks, sort of dirty pool and I had witnessed some at the last few Town council meetings where he makes a promise in a closed session and changes it up in front of the open public session. This causes sparks to fly. Or sometimes he adds things at the last minute to the agenda or selectively erases them entirely to try to exert power or push his own agenda. At this morning session I lived this first-hand and experienced his antics. He did not even acknowledge us on the morning of the 14th.

I recalled Mayor Nevill's chummy hospitality from the previous Town Council meeting where Mr. Ash was greeted with the grandiose welcome as if a King were in our midst. Instead, the Mayor put the budget item first so that we would have to wait an hour or two before presenting our presentation and charts. Then he had the Town Manager give an update of Mr. Ash's development proposal and moved to the next item ... skipping right over the presentation which Councilmember Gagnon placed on the consent agenda more than three weeks prior! Mr. Gagnon stopped the process. Mr. Mooney asked for a 10-minute recess to talk to us. Then he called a vote after the recess to even consider hearing our presentation on the alternate proposal for the building. For the record, the voting to present was Council member Gagnon Aye, McGuire Aye, O'Halloran NO, Semple NO, Kovalik Yes, Francis ABSTAIN, Mooney, Yes!

And so, by the slimmest of margins we were afforded the opportunity to present our case for NOT selling the building and retaining it as a Community Center, citing detailed attendance and revenue projections, potential uses, space allocation and fees paid to the Town. (You can stream a recording of the presentation from warrentonva.gov on the Meetings, Agendas, Minutes section).

I, like many I have spoken with, feel that many people on the Town Council and several members of the Town staff are behaving like a controlling tyrannical government that doesn't listen to its citizens. Council member Semple, after initially voting to DENY us time to present to the Council, asked many questions. Council Member Semple publicly apologized 3 times later that morning and evening for initially voting NOT to allow us to present our alternative.

Once again, the decision to sell the building was made in closed session without regard to the will of the Citizens, the fiduciary responsibility to market the building and accept sealed bids or the wherewithal and fiscal discipline to sell the building in a lump sum with NO financing and NO balloon payment in 5 years. All but one "Abstaining" vote may have prevented a qualified and experienced team from presenting an alternative.

And in the end, the Town Council caved to sell the very building they and prior councils and mayors let decay and defer maintenance and improvement for 47 years, while operating the former Town Hall in that very space. If you think this is unjust, keep your eye on the new tax rate increases to be voted on next month and examine carefully the new budget, and pay particular attention to the outlying years expenditure on "projects" and "improvements" to Parks and Recreation and other non-critical functions like. Do we REALLY need to spend \$850,000 over 3 years on a new outdoor skating park at the WARF? Simply the tip of a very dangerous iceberg.

## TOWN Happenings -Of Note



**April 19th Great Mothers March allows residents to paint the Earth Day mural in Old Town Warrenton**



**Acclaimed American vocalist and bassist, renowned as the "Voice of Newgrass," JOHN COWAN, plays at the Listening Room at Drum & Strum to a PACKED house in Warrenton on April 11th**



comments?

[www.WPAC.blog](http://www.WPAC.blog)



WPACdiscussion



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## The WARF: Time for Us to Make Some Tough Decisions

by Warrenton: The Flyer Staff

Since it opened in 2006, the Warrenton Aquatic and Recreational Facility (WARF) has lost between \$1 million to \$1.4 million each year of its operations, amassing a total loss for the Town of over \$40 million. Now, major systems at the 20 year-old facility are breaking down. For example, the play feature at the toddler pool now requires replacement, at an estimated cost of \$374,000, and similar big-ticket infrastructure replacements for this facility are now coming due. The cumulative impact of these yearly losses has placed great pressure on our Town budget. Combined with higher water and sewer infrastructure repair costs, higher personnel and overhead costs, and inflation, the financial costs of the WARF impose an unsustainable burden on our Town.

Despite several membership fee increases, the WARF continues to be a significant money-losing operation for the Town, and will continue to be, at least until its annual \$600K debt service payments end in 2032. After that, its financial outlook is still unclear. Another key fact about the WARF is who uses it: Only around 18% of its total annual users are Town residents; the rest are from Fauquier County and surrounding areas.

Neither the County, nor any private sector partner, appear to be interested in taking over the WARF so, for the foreseeable future, we must all make some tough choices about this facility, since it is clear the Town can't continue to keep operating this facility at this loss rate.

One Town Council member has proposed an earmarked property tax increase to cover a greater share of this facility's annual financial losses. This "WARF tax" would be a separate line item on each Town homeowner's property tax bill, with proceeds from this tax dedicated to offset its yearly operating costs. On the other hand, there are many residents who say they have never used the WARF, they don't care what happens with it one way or another, and they refuse to pay higher taxes to support it. Is it fair to these people to impose a tax on them for a recreational facility they'll never use? While it is true that municipal facilities, such as pools and parks, are viewed as public amenities, and as such, are not expected to operate as profitable operations, a small town like Warrenton cannot sustain continued losses of \$1-1.4 million each year.

It's up to the citizens of our Town to make some tough choices about this facility. Would you pay higher property taxes to keep the WARF going? If not, there may not be other realistic alternatives that would permit the Town to keep the WARF operating without finding some way to cover its large annual deficits.

What do you think? Contact us, and contact your Town Council representatives to let them know.



**QUICK ACCESS**  
TO BUDGET  
««



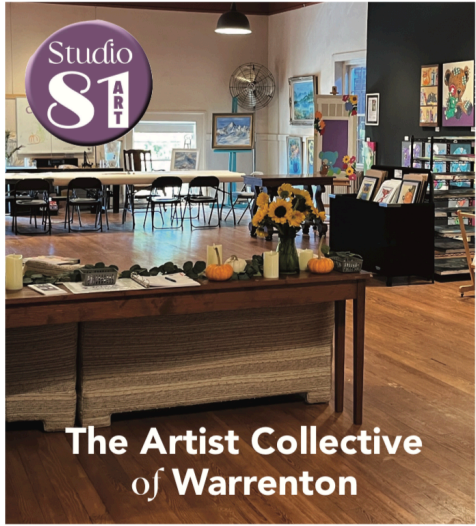
# Your Town: Local News



private & family lessons | personalized songwriting | therapeutic music



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 Creating Healing & Peace through Music  
 I come to you!



## The Artist Collective of Warrenton

81 Main Street, Warrenton, Virginia  
 (side entrance off 4th Street, purple door)

Our mission is to make a connection between local artists and our community. To help our local artists with a venue to display and sell their art. To create a destination for homeowners to acquire original local art at an affordable price. To foster the appreciation of the arts through an open-to-the-public shared art studio - "watch art in progress".

Check our website for hours:  
[www.artstudio81.com](http://www.artstudio81.com)

Follow us on FB for pop-up hours.



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# Got Music?

## Blessings of Hope & Love Music of Warrenton & NOVA

by Patty Pratt

Connected spontaneously at Art Studio 81 on a random day in Spring, artists gathering at the Art Collective located at 81 Main Street, Warrenton, VA had an unexpected visitor with a guitar (rather than a paint brush) in tow. Given the mission to connect local artists with all people in our community, we embraced Mary Shapiro and her compassionate musical talent as an artist in-kind. Mary provides a wide variety of musical offerings of which one is playing music to Hospice patients. She works with kids and special needs individuals along with anyone needing encouragement in finding their musical score. She often hosts Open Mic Nights.

There's no need to feel intimidated or stopped when it comes to expressing yourself, Mary finds a way to make you feel comfortable in sharing yourself even in times of fear or strife. Let the music play! (Or you can just say a poem or talk about your art experiences.) We are all valued and Mary is just the friend and practitioner to point that out and make it happen.

Music is a considered a Divine and honored expression of faith by all religions and faith organizations. Mary has a Certified Music Practitioners license (CMP) and sings often to Warrenton Seniors and Hospice patients. From inspiring young persons and adults to guiding families on their journey with the death of a loved ones, Mary invites you in like sage on a musical journey providing all who hear her with an invaluable experience of enhancement to our lives. I am blessed to have had the spontaneous interaction to meet her and are grateful for the openness of Art Studio 81 provide a space and platform for people to connect.

Mary's musicality, grace and beautiful spirit make Warrenton, Fauquier County and surrounding NOVA areas a premier place to find yourself grounded in blessings, hope and love for whatever your life's path has brought forth. Please call her when you or a loved one needs musical healing.



**The Compassionate Friends**  
 Supporting Family After a Child Dies

Through a network of over 500 chapters with locations in all 50 states, as well as Washington DC and Puerto Rico, The Compassionate Friends has been providing support to bereaved families after the death of a child for five decades. 2 Chapters are located in Front Royal & Manassas. Email [WeTheFlyers@protonmail.com](mailto:WeTheFlyers@protonmail.com) if you would like to join or create a group in Warrenton. Visit [www.compassionatefriends.org](http://www.compassionatefriends.org)

Website: [arcofncv.org](http://arcofncv.org)  
 Office Phone Number: 571-399-5390  
 Email: [info@arcofncv.org](mailto:info@arcofncv.org)



Join The Arc of North Central Virginia for Arc@Home, a free monthly virtual program featuring fun, educational activities that support wellness, creativity, and social connection for people of all ages and abilities.



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Becky Abdullah  
 Office Manager

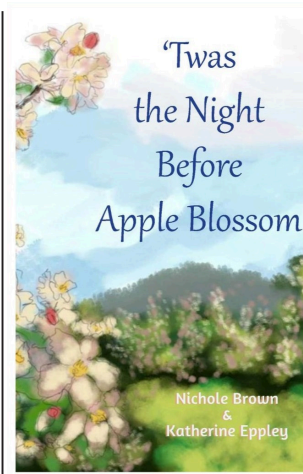
Nikki Butler, Au.D.  
 Audiologist



493 Blackwell Rd, Ste #311, Warrenton, VA 20186

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### BOOK REVIEW

By James Brown  
 Since 1924, the Apple Blossom Festival has successfully promoted the Winchester-Shenandoah Valley apple industry. The ABF has grown from a single day event to a full nine-day celebration of the region's apple-related businesses, history and

culture. There is so much to learn about this spectacular event, which attracts thousands of tourists each year.

Author Nichole Brown personally experienced the Festival while living and teaching in Winchester. She felt strongly that such a unique and amazing celebration should be the topic of her next book. Loosely based on Twas the Night Before Christmas, the poetic style narrative of Twas the Night Before Apple Blossom takes the reader through the history of the Festival, while weaving in the story of a family experiencing events such as the Firefighters' Parade, Midway Fair and Grand Feature Parade.

Co-author Katherine Eppley focused on the history and impact of this century-old Festival. She was fascinated to see how the Festival had to pause during World War II, and how it was re-started immediately after the war ended. At that time, the Festival Chairman owned the town's movie theatre and managed to get Bing Crosby to be the Grand Marshall which produced high numbers of parade viewers. The tremendous success of that idea resulted in celebrities of all types serving as Grand Marshall for the Grand Feature Parade. Other celebrities serve as the Firefighters' Parade Marshall, which is known as the largest such parade in the entire country!

Nichole and Katherine collaborated closely with their talented illustrator, Kellie Davies. Kellie created a series of watercolor-style illustrations, capturing the essence and spirit of the region and Festival. These images depict iconic moments which thousands of tourists come to see each year.

Readers who are familiar with the Festival will feel right at home as they peruse the images and text. Those who have not yet had the pleasure of experiencing this wonderful event will get a taste of the region's history and culture, as well as of the Apple Blossom Festival. The authors were not commissioned to produce this book: They simply love everything about the Shenandoah Valley and Winchester, Virginia region and desired to share the significance and impact of apple orchards and the Festival within the region.

Books are available at stores in Warrenton and Winchester, as well as online through Amazon and Tinsel Thyme Press.

**(www.tinselthymepress.com)**



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**Have you met our town's Renaissance woman - Ann Marie Walsh?**

By Veronique Dunagin

Grew up in Brooklyn, NY where her mother moved the family to Grandparent's home – 3 boys and 2 girls – while her father was in the Navy during World War II. Ann Marie loved living in Brooklyn where she worked in the fine department store, B. Altman & Company. Later she moved to Washington DC and settled in Georgetown. She enjoyed walking through Georgetown and appreciated all the history. She landed a job on Capitol Hill working for Senator Howard Robison of NY. She worked for Senator Robison for 10 years.

During her time in Washington DC, her brother moved to Warrenton, VA because of his passion for Civil War history and Col. John S. Mosby. Ann Marie was convinced to also move here and has never regretted it.

She worked for a CBS radio station, WQRA AM/FM radio where she would sometimes do the morning news broadcasting. She was always coming up with great ideas and one was broadcasting the newly started Gold Cup event. She would attend wearing the fancy hat and meeting many celebrities. She giggled, telling me how she met Jack Kent Cook, the owner of the Redskins, and asked him if Washington will bring back a baseball team.

She later moved on to picking up “odds and ends” jobs. She is quite versatile and the list is long and a book should be written one day but I picked these three because they are rich in Warrenton history. She would come up with an idea and the town loved her ideas and would say, “Yes, go do it” and so she did!

Partnership for Warrenton – a foundation to protect and preserve Old Town Warrenton (somewhat like the job of Town Manager). She started the famous annual July 4th Children and Pets Parade on Main Street – a day filled with music, tradition and community spirit.

Gumdrop Square – she had a friend who worked for the Ice Capades and he graciously designed all the props for Gumdrop Square which is held every Christmas in the John Barton Payne building. Lots of family fun and a photo op with Santa is the big attraction.

Fauquier Democrat newspaper – Owner and Editor, Lou Emerson, hired Ann Marie as their sales and advertising person. She worked two years at the paper.

You may see her walking around Warrenton. She was in a car accident in October which broke her ankle. But that didn't stop her. Taking her rehab outdoors, she walks about 2 ½ hours a day where she takes great pleasure seeing this beautiful historical town -- up close -- and meeting so many friendly folks who offer her rides when they can see the walking is taking its toll. Sometimes she hops in and sometimes she flashes her beautiful smile and declines – the walking is

(Continued on Next Top Column)

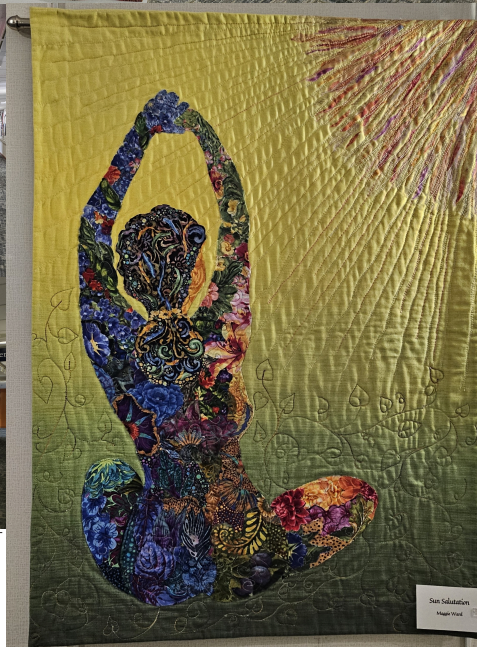
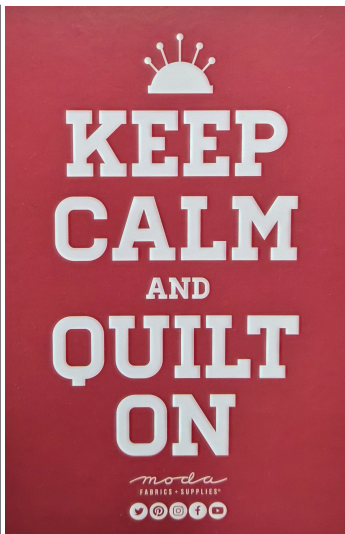


good. Her favorite stop is at Harvest Bread where she is recognized by all. She truly loves Warrenton which is her home – a town rich with history and some changes. She encourages all to get to know this quaint town – go to events that it offers, attend town meetings, vote in elections and participate and be vocal of the changes you don't want to see happen to this small town.



**Quilt Show at Fauquier Hospital**

Dozens of quilts were on display during the month of April organized by a group called the Twisted Stitchers displayed at Fauquier Hospital. While it has already ended at the printing of this paper, there are over 103 shops participating in a quilters shop display that you can tour during the months of May and June. Warrentons local quilt shop Quilting Essentials on 5th Street just off of Main is participating. For more information on the All Blue Ridge Shop Hop contact Angie at Quilt Essentials. See ad below on this page.



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 May & June 2026  
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**Warrenton Bible Fellowship**  
46 Winchester St. Built 1912 in Romanesque Revival Style.

**St James Episcopal Church**  
73 Culpeper St. Built 1853-1912 (post 1909 fire) Gothic interior including Saint Agnes window.

**Warrenton Presbyterian Church**  
91 Main Street Built in 1855 and tall steeple in Italianate style added ~ 1890's

**PUT IT IN PERSPECTIVE**

By Patty Pratt

- 1) Check the FACTS
- 2) Do the MATH
- 3) Does it MAKE SENSE?
- 4) RECHECK the FACTS!
- 5) DOUBLE CHECK

If one million DATA CENTERS (~10x5x5 meters) were launched into Low Earth Orbit LEO; how much distance would be between them?

FACTS: (convert to meters)  
LEO Height above Earth's surface = 800,000 m  
Total radius = 7,171,000 m  
Surface area of a sphere =  
 $A = 4\pi r^2$   
 $A = 4\pi(7,171,000)^2 = 650,903,000,000 \text{ m}^2$

$$\frac{A_{total}}{N} = \frac{5.09903 \times 10^{11}}{10^6} \text{ m}^2$$

$$\approx 5.09903 \times 10^5 \text{ m}^2$$

Conclusion: 500,000 m?  
**Double check it!**  
SpaceX has submitted a proposal to the FCC to place 1M data centers in space. No need for water cooling & plenty of solar energy. This would make Data Centers nearly obsolete on the earth.



Doggy Devotionals by Veronique D.

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By Glen Latham, Our Local Warrenton Cartoonist

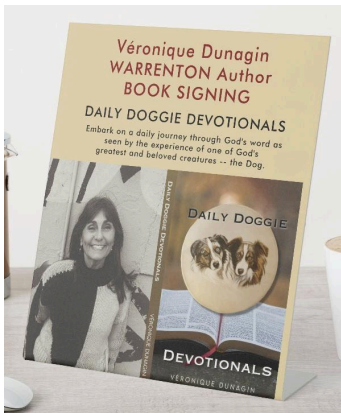
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**>>EVENTS<<**

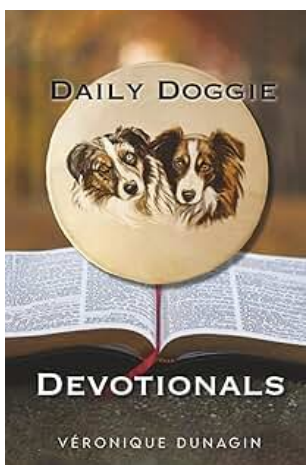
**MAY 30** - Warrenton Farmers Market, Deb's Homemade Delights  
**JUNE 6** - Culpeper Christian Store



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