

Articles by Joe Keating 2006

► **Chasing Away the Blues; Blue Ribbons for the Photo Show; Houses Reflect Support**

October 18

Chasing Away the Blues: As Waterford lapsed into a blue post Fair postpartum, the "you have something that must be done before the Fair " feeling having vanished for a while, it is time for the Fair Post-Mortem. The weather seems to have become traditional with two rainy days followed by a great Sunday. For two days the only blue was the gayly bobbing balloons being handed out that added color to the streets from Patrick to the Mill and helped predict blue skies for a blue Virginia.

Blue Ribbons for the Photo Show: The Waterford Fair Photography Show presented its Blue, Red, Yellow and White ribbons awarded for 1st through honorable mention on Wednesday night, Known as ~Varnishing Night", even though "Fixative Night" might have been more to the point. The winners are; Best of Show: Michael Barolet; Best Loudoun: Sarah Huntington then Elizabeth Thompson; Catocin Creek: Kitty (A) Rose followed by Jim Hanna; Historic American Building: Doug Maddock then Laurette Nelson; Abstract: Duke dePlanque then Denise Moore; Nature Studies/Animals Norman Gresley then V. Michael Strauss, Mary Louise Ravese and Ellen Hard with an Honorable; Architecture: Robert Corn-Revere then Neil Steinburg and Larr Kelly; Photojournalism: Robert Corn-Revere, Mouncy Ferguson, Hilary Cooley and Jamee Cloud; Still Life: Michael Strause and Luigi Mancini; Creative Expression: Kelly Putz, Tom Mullins, Sunny Reynolds and Neil Steinberg; Portrait: Michael Barolet, Joe Cunningham, Mary Dudley and Neil Hughes; Landscape: Karla Turner, Martha L. Cammack, Mary Lou Ravase and Seymore Kaitlin; Waterford Fair: Kitty (A) Rose, Robert Pierce and Jane Mann.

Houses Reflect Support: The houses of the Waterford National historic Landmark as usual reflected the character of their owners and their feelings about the value of our village. This was demonstrated positively in the intense activity in preparing for and shown most noticeably by the ongoing restoration of the Pink House that formed a Fair demonstration in itself. Also of note was what has been called the historic Tyvek House on Janney Street whose fluttering presence amidst its newly installed placard fence also reflected the owners values. This restoration was rushed to completion by one of Loudouns leaders partners who labored long after dark in preparation for the Fair.

► **The Noblest Prize; More Wonderful Winners; Waterfords Protection**

October 11

The Noblest Prize: The most prestigious prize that is awarded in Waterford, The Florence Kiley Award for Art, Has been won this year by Dave Cozens, a recent Graduate of

Stonebridge High School and now a student at Virginia Commonwealth University. The Award is given to the best entry in the annual Red Barn Art Show from a senior or recent graduate of a High School in Loudoun County. It is the first time a student from Stonebridge has won the award. This belies the accusation that Waterford harbors prejudice against Ashburn.

More Wonderful Winners: In this years show the winners by Category are : Best in Show, Carol Higgs: Best Waterford Scene Antonia Walker; Best Loudoun Artist, Dan Williams; Oil Painting, Beth Piper followed by Trisha Adams and A. Rose; Acrylic Paintings, Maribe Chandler-Gardiner followed by Alberta Hatfield and Dick Brewer; Watercolor Paintings, David Finnell followed by Pauline D. Lorfano and Loy McGaughy; Drawings, Leonida Ivantich; Sculpture, Steven Soechtig; Mixed Media and Collage, Larry Helms followed by Susan Pronko and Pat Shoaf; Pastel, Libby Stevens followed by Libby again and Maria Briganti.

Waterfords Protection: Fire Prevention Week is October 8-14, 2006. Hamilton Volunteer Fire Dept. will hold an open house on Saturday, Oct. 14, from 10am to 2Pm. Come visit the station and see the 2 new fire trucks. There will be fire truck rides, free hot dogs and sodas and much more. Come out and support your fire department.

► **Tree Falls; Sound of the Tree; Preparing for the Fall**

October 3

Tree Falls: This Friday the sound of a falling tree is heard. The tree has only been falling 143 days to me but it is possible that there is an ancient and venerable crone lurking in the dusty recesses of a dried weed heap that has heard 195 days. That is enough have heard all the Waterford Homes Tour and Crafts Festival that ever were. The three days of the Fair are here again and to most, the rest of the year, Waterford is the tree falling in a forest with no one there. The realization of this first hit home when once an 8 year old boy bounded out of a car around Thanksgiving. He ran a few steps up Main Street and then back down to his parents with a horrified look on his face. "Where are all the people? What happened? What happened?" he cried. He had been here before, five or six times, but only during the Fair.

Sound of the Tree: Over the span of days the sound of the tree has changed. It was once dominated by the rattle of visitors and the rustle of dried weeds wrapped in paper, punctuated only by the scream of a steam tractor whistle. A 143 days ago the boom of muskets was added to the mix and the steam whistle became less frequent. Will the muskets eventually grow dim and be replaced with slamming rattle of Kalashnikovs?

Preparing for the Fall: Yes, Friday the Fair falls upon us. Unlike last year, the weather is crisp and clear and the long dry summer set the foliage ablaze early so that the color is added to the scenery of a village that has been planning, polishing, painting and paving to have the Waterford National Historic Landmark presented at its best. The contractors for

VDOT are hard at work paving fresh edges to Clarkes Gap Road and building a blacktop paved ditch diverting the Main Street Big Hill water away from its short cut over the Village Green grass just above the village pump. No matter. It is not raining, these three days.

► **Who; What; Where**

September 27

Who: Only the privileged live in Waterford, as in Loudouns' other five historic districts. Becoming privileged is not acquired by wealth so much as by state of mind and a willingness to sacrifice. In fact there are many, perhaps a majority, of these privileged who are below the poverty level in this, the wealthiest, county in the United States. The state of mind is only attained by the epiphany that one is a voyager on the spaceship earth who revels in the journey so much that it is unconscionable not to protect that ship even from themselves. The protection of even the Waterford cabin requires sacrifice. This sacrifice is not so drastic in Loudouns' historic districts as could be for a soldier in battle but it is still a bundle of sacrifices most are not willing to make. One of the most maligned sacrifices is that of ownership. No one who lives in Waterford has the "Property Rights" claimed by some in this county. We privileged few do not own historic property. We are only the current defenders of the place in which we live and have sacrificed the right to exploit it for a fleeting dollar. That is why we are the privileged who live here now. The enjoyment of that privilege is what we have received from all those who have lived here before and we pay back to all who visit or who will live here in the future. [Why we live in Waterford »](#)

What: In the meeting at the Old School Wednesday by the Loudoun County Planning Department information, such as what defines a historic district, was being sought for the counties web site on Taylorstown and Waterford, 2 of 5 such districts. Waterford, the county's first historic district, is concentric with the larger state and still larger Waterford National Historic Landmark. Quixotically, since the larger State and National Districts contain the unique rural setting defining Waterford set a precedent where the county is constantly the tail that tries to wag the dog. This dog wagging will continue to be a problem unless the county and state districts become concentric to the National since the National relies on Virginia and Loudoun for the protection of the Waterford historic resource, not the other way around.

► **Drought Ends; Fair Servers and Overseers; Historic District Meeting**

September 20

Drought Ends: Living in a small village causes one to be aware of the subtle changes in the ebb and flow of the traffic on Main Street and how they signal the seasonal changes that have become the natural order of life outside in Loudoun. The school bus does not appear and summer has begun. The water trucks sloshing through Main Street indicate the pools are being filled up along with the failing wells and you know that the summer

drought has begun. Then last week the school buses were rolling again as summer ended. The septic tank pump trucks began thier sloshing through Main Street as failing septic tanks are pumped out and you know the summer drought has ended. One wonders, are failing wells and failing septic tanks mutually exclusive. Since some new home owners claim to have neither there must be those lucky few who have both.

Fair Servers and Overseers: As the weather prospects for a perfect Fair continue to improve, recruitment for the Waterford Citizens Associations' BBQ stand is progressing. There are still a few vacancies left to serve a shift behind the counter for all three days. Contact WCA Vice President Ken Dunne 882-9148 to do your part to support the year long activities of the WCA. Also a full compliment of homes will be on tour and a full compliment of docents will be needed to help interpret the historic houses. A few vacancies for docents and overseers still exist to help our Fair visitors enjoy the tours. Contact Bonnie Getty at 882-4830.

Meeting Tonight: Heidi Siebentritt, the historic district planner for the Loudoun County Department of Planning, notifies us that the Department is having a community meeting at the Old School tonight, 20 Sept. at 7pm. The meeting for both Waterford and Taylorstown districts are to provide information about the formation and effect of the designation and about a matching grant awarded to the County to create an interactive website as a public information and education tool on the Countys' 6 historic districts.

► **It Was a Dark and Rainy Night; Dogs Dip; Wait-listed**

September 13

It Was a Dark and Rainy Night: The Waterford Tennis tournament almost ended after the court at the elementary school was awash late Memorial Day. By then the Womens' Doubles champions were Debbie Burke and Terry Crawley, Mixed Doubles winners were Steve Solow and Terry Crawley. Mixed Doubles Consolation winners were Mike Fitzgerald and Mary Ann Henderson and the Mens' Consolation was won by Mike Fitzgerald and Mike Cowell. The Wellman Chamberlin and Nancy Felton sportsmanship and spirit awards were given to Hans Hommels and Susan Verdon respectively. But one of the longest and hardest fought mens' double matches ever played in the tournament was still undecided. This final tournament match was started Monday afternoon and was delayed by rain after four games with Steve Solow and Jim Tiffany leading Ron Carpenter and Bill Babry (of Ashburn) 3-1. When play resumed Wednesday the tide turned and Solow and Tiffany won the set 6-4. The tide turned again in a hard fought second set and Solo and Tiffany won 7-5. A ten point tie breaker was agreed upon on the fast darkening non-lit court and the night-owls of Waterford tennis, Carpenter and Babry prevailed 10-6. Time, 7:20 pm.

Wait-listed: Due to the number of applicants exceeding the number that can be admitted to the first grade, the Waterford Elementary School has joined the other prestigious institutions of higher learning, such as the Ivy League, in wait-listing applicants. For the first time a few first graders who live in the Waterford School district are attending classes

in other schools. This problem is only with the first grade at Waterford this year when other school districts who have had new house construction far outstripping the building of new schools find the deportation and attendant long bus commutes for students in even higher grades necessary.

Dogs Dip: The Greystone Community Pool ended its season Monday with a pool closing party. A new event brought the swim season to a grande finale as members dogs were permitted to be the last users of the year in a grande dog dip. Bayly Beland, a large yellow labrador seemed to be the most accomplished canine swimmer. On exiting the pool he required no towel but provided a shower for all bystanders.

► **Rains Proffered; Trophies Proffered; Rains profit**

September 6

Rains Proffered: One way to break the drought is to have the Waterford Tennis Tournament. The initial matches of this oldest continuous Doubles Tournament in Virginia got under way this week. The ladders are now formed after the first matches determined who is in for the consolation mixed', mens', and womens' trophies and who is up for overall trophies and special awards. With the demise of the indoor courts in Leesburg to fill in matches forced inside by weather, this year is bound to be a miracle of scheduling.

Trophies Proffered: Non-playing spouses and friends have gathered at a variety of Waterford courts for the finals on Labor Day each year since way back in the twenties of the last century. The Waterford Tournament adds and renews names to crowded and battered trophies. Few are the long-time Waterford families who do not boast of at least one or more trophy husbands or wives. This distinction is not to be confused with the term of trophy husbands or wives who live in McTrophy houses that are traditionally, never actually, in an historic district. These are the lawyer foyered McMances, bedecked McMullets and balconied McBarbies that have been purchased with the proceeds of divorce settlements.

Rains profit: As if to make up for the monsoon conditions that affected last years' Waterford Home Tour and Crafts' Festival (The Fair) the weather seems to be making amends this year. First the grass seed that was skillfully planted and mulched in the Tannery display area of the Bond Street Barn was watered lightly twice or thrice with night time showers and as the roots began to take hold a series of soaking rains sent them on their way to providing a grassy cover. Finally hurricanes and near hurricanes are stirring the Eastern Seaboard now early in September, setting up the long range conditions. Come the Fair on October 6, 7 and 8 we will have the classic warm clear days and cool nights that make for a classic Fall weekend. We needed the rain this week and this year we will have the fair and perfect Fair.

► **H2O Less; H2O Yes; Grass Less; Grass Yes**

August 30

H2O Less: As Waterford clings to the last desperate days of summer before school starts

every living thing is now being governed by water. As the tennis players begin a final tune up for the Waterford Tournament, the oldest continuous doubles tournament in Virginia, water breaks are more frequent this year as the only local indoor tennis courts are now awaiting the blade of the dozer. When deep dusk comes to the Catoctin Valley and the relentless sun slams down behind the second Blue Ridge the flood plain of the Catoctin Creek becomes the Serengeti Plain.

H2O Yes: The deer must now outnumber and out combined-weight all other large mammals drinking water in the greater Waterford area. Sitting quietly of an evening on the berm of the millrace looking across the Catoctin Creek one sees hundreds of dark shadows moving away from this, once permanent and now diminishing, source of water. At first one thinks the cattle have been returned to pasture, but as some of the shadows move almost close enough to touch you find the shadows are all deer. If you move at all they are gone in a twitch of the dusty grass.

Grass Less: Last weekend a drive around our neighboring, never dark hence aptly named, Beacon Hill at Paeonian Springs revealed all three acre yards after three acre yards going brown in the August heat. All, that is, except one. When asked how that one yard was emerald green in the midst of so much brown the secret was a sprinkler system and a 90 gallon per minute well. No one in Waterford has green grass. But there is hope.

Grass Yes: This week the tannery pit problem at the Tannery Lot near Bond Street Barn was solved. The pits were filled in with topsoil so the archeological horizons were preserved and the area now slopes toward the Tannery Branch. Three types of tall fescue seed were spread and a six inch layer of straw mulch was spread over the top. Now, with a few good rains before the Fair, not during the Fair, the mud hole problem will be solved.

► **In the Bright Light of Day. The Horror of it All**

August 16

In the Bright Light of Day: The heat wave broke in Waterford this week and we crawled out of our air conditioned caves and into the drought stricken yard. Now is the time to see everything that is not where it should be and some things that are there that have never been seen before. Obviously, now looking at the withered edges, striped Hosta should not be seen in the full sun like the naked ladies. Sumac trees really grow too quickly. It seems like yesterday when the limb loppers were applied to the emerging shoots in early spring. One, growing out of a fern bank flourishing under a sagging rain gutter, has grown to the second story since being cut off in the spring. Its branches are covering the sidewalk and are at eye level. Thus is revealed a great Waterford yard mystery.

Seeing and Being Seen: At first one would think that small clumps of bird down had blown into the leaves. But then why there, just at that one place and part of the tree. A close look reveals that the leaves are chewed in a little scalloped pattern that one sees on leaf fragments being carried by ants in tropical rain forests. Looking even closer at the 1/4 inch tufts of white downy feathers gives an impression that you have something looking back at you, an impression that one gets when discovering the eyes of a very shaggy dog.

But here, if the eyes are there, they are too small to see.

The Horror of it All: The small downy feathers wave in the gentlest of breezes, and when blown upon with any force they break off and drift downily onto the grass. The tufts are spaced about the leaves and seem to be chewing, but then a breath of air turns up a leaf and the true horror of the situation strikes full force. Some of the leaves are covered underneath with colonies of these feathery beasts. They seem to be doing something under there, perhaps plotting to overtake the world. I do not know what these things are. Do you?

► Lovettsville and Waterford

July 26

Correction: Yes; the correction in last week's Loudoun Times Mirror was this column. An eagle-eyed reader from Arizona noticed a reference to the German forest without the r in Deutcher Wald and Der vaterland not the correct Das Vaterland. Somehow this also slipped by the German desk staffed by the crack linguists at the Loudoun Times Mirror, perhaps brought on by vacationitis, (Attention, Latin Desk). Also, as to the missing Waterford Columns, they can be found in the on-line editions of the Loudoun Times Mirror.

Deutcher Market: Our German village to the north of Waterford, Lovettsville (formerly Dutch (sic) Crossing), is the site of a farmers market on Rt. 287 at the Game Protective Association on Tuesdays from 4 to 7 p.m. through the end of October. Also of note is the Lovettsville Oktoberfest on 30 September this year.

The Past Supporting Lovettsvilles' Future: You may wonder why Waterford always feels a fraternal kinship with Lovettsville that is not as subdued as its kinship with other parts of Loudoun, Ashburn for example. The reason lies in its association during the War of North Loudoun (1861-1865), most notably as members of the Loudoun Rangers commanded by Waterford's miller, Capt. Sam Means.

Ironically the German roots of Lovettsville are becoming more noticeable in the current turmoil over zoning in Loudoun County over the desirability of adapting the Clem-Burton Proposal without destructive grand-fathering. A disproportional number of Waterfordians spoke before the joint BOS and PC session on Monday. This was idealistically in support of Lovettsville as it is the only town in Loudoun that has the potential to expand as a self-contained residential community without impacting in a highly detrimental manner on the rest of Loudoun. This German settlement has proximity to Loudoun's two Potomac bridges and rail mass transit, annexable land not yet destroyed for high density housing by McMansionization, clean river water and an under-utilized and expandable modern sewer treatment facility, a commercial zone not destroyed by sprawl and also diverse and intelligent leadership and Town Council that can make Lovettsville's desirable potential a reality.

► Germany and Waterford

July 26

Return To Wasserfurt: Waterford prides itself on being a bastion of civilization situated

halfway between West Virginia and Ashburn (not that there is anything really wrong with them) but on returning from Germany there is a realization that we are still only a Thomas Kincaid like light in the wilderness of the eastern deciduous forest. Waterford has only the intellectual heights from which to look down on the disparate sprawl, a forest of reality that has replaced the trees.

Ludwigs IIs' Dreams: 1300 meters on the top of the Falkenstein, near Fussen in Bavaria, King Ludwig II once sat watching the construction of Schloss Neuschwanstein. He had a dream of a castle on the peak on which he was sitting with its' spectacular 360 view of his world. The dream had reached the planning stage and from the artists' and architects' drawings of what Ludwig was planning it is obvious that Schloss Neuschwanstein, one of the scenic wonders of all the world, would have been an inconsequential shack by comparison. This dream was one of the reasons he is labeled the Mad King and was probably responsible for his death under suspicious circumstances. Suspect were the 19th century Bavarian equivalent of our Board of Supervisors who did not share his dream and were more concerned with the cost of construction of Ludwigs' many other dreams. Subsequently they finished many of these projects of Ludwig and are today reaping the benefits.

Grossvateren: With our Supervisors decision to emasculate an attempt to control the sprawl that infects our wilderness by delay and then Grossvateren the bitter fruits of that delay they will have murdered the dream, Loudouners have in general and Waterfordians have in particular, that we are capable of taming the wilderness in which we live. Loudouns' governing council will have missed adapting an attitude that evolved in Bavaria. This is, when it comes to protecting the quality of life of its citizens, and even our visitors, other considerations are not the most important concern of an elected government.

► **First Parade, Out of the Pool, Fireworks Last Glimmer**

July 12

First Parade: The first 4th of July parade in Waterford left Saturday from the back yard of the Wisteria Covered Cottage on Main Street. The Cottage, long time home of Mary Elizabeth Wallace, is the site of traditional picnics including her childrens', grandchildrens' and her sister Vera Louis' families. The parade left in the late afternoon toward its destination, the Waterford Mill Dam. The mighty Catocin was mightier than usual due to recent rains and so the music was provided by the ripple of rushing water to the snare drum beat of swishing grass. The marchers followed an honor guard of poles bearing fluttering fishing lures. Ranks broke only to ford and jump the creek, still high enough to cover the well remembered stepping stones. They arrived at the Dam destination to the thunderous applause of tons of water plunging over the now submerged centuries old cataract.

Out of the Pool: In the pool below the dam no one ventured out to find the boulder in the middle that forms an invisible resting place halfway across. Instead, poles and lures were employed, in a mostly catch and release program, to determine how long it would

take to catch a fish dinner at Waterfords most venerable fishing hole. It was determined that it is still possible but at some other state of water flow and season. Comparisons were then made to other highly touted and nationally known waterfalls that are now judged less impressive than ours.

Fireworks Last Glimmer: As darkness began the marchers retreated to the starting point in the back yard at the edge of the Phillips' Farm meadow. The fireworks, faintly seen first in distant towns, grew brighter and brighter until the entire meadow was ablaze in an inferno as millions of fireflies each blinked their own little spark. Then the day was over. After a jump start for a car with a long burning trunk light, all headed to other homes no longer in the village. The last glimmer of another historic celebration went up Main Street, blinking in a jar held by the youngest here on that now historic day.

► **Dampened, Undampened, Flooded**

July 5

Dampened: Catoctin Creek is running red, but still within its banks. If the rain continues like this for a remaining forty days and nights Waterfordians will pair up all the animals and began to dimension building material in cubits preparing for a down the county trip.

Undampened: The benefit at the Old School for the Taylorstown Store Sunday was attended by an enthusiastic crowd treated to the professional artistry of Mercy Creek after a dinner of olive and chickpea miso spreads, gazpacho and potatoes. Before the performance of Mercy Creek a warm up by Barry Charlton and Allen Kitselman featured Allens' songs about growing up in New Jersey and Waterford.

Flooded: Mercy Creek, with Jim Ball on drums and Cheryl Nystrom on guitar and vocal, is an Orchestra packed into two people that flood the Old School with sound. The thumping bass of Balls' djembe sub-woofs pulsingly up through the floor as Nystroms' clear voice flows out the roof. All the spaces in between jump with Jims' complex drum rythems stacked four and five deep as you look into the swirling melody for all the guitars and instruments pouring out. You can only find the one Cheryl holds, and that is all of them. Amazing. To close the evening Allen and Barry returned to the stage for a rousing finaly that left the crowd wanting more and Allen saying he had played every thing he knew. Fans of Barry know that versitile Barry knows all those Allen does not know and a few more besides. The plans for the renovation of the Taylorstown center landmark by Main Street Architects un-veiled at the concert showed that Allens' day job must have been making inroads on his repertoire.

Downstream in DC: Waterford not only has music coming in but also has music going out. Saturday, Christian Mercker (vocal and guitar) and Main Street neighbor James Hayden on drums journeyed to Bladensburg to capture second in the DC Blues Society Regional. Their repertoire was composed of original Blues written by Christian. The only Blues in Waterford must be the ones that cause music.

► **A-closing In 2007; A-drying Since 1970; A-fourthing on 03**

June 29

A-closing In 2007: Route 662, Clarke's Gap Road, will be closed between Route 9 and Doe Run Lane during road construction work in the summer of 2007. The deadline for comments from those concerned is today. The likely scenario involves only one way southbound traffic on Route 662 to be allowed from Doe Run Lane to Route 9 for 60 days. Also three weekends are needed when Route 662 may be completely closed to all traffic for laying a 6' pipe across the road. Northbound traffic would use Rt 704 that will have the stop light at Route 9 in place by then.

A-drying Since 1970: Until the 1970's the marshy area on the west side of Clarkes' Gap supported a lot of cattails and other water plants that tempered and cleaned the tributary furnishing water to Peacock Farm and on. As the impervious surfaces increased and the marshy areas were filled in, the stream changed from one that furnished a continuous flow to one that hurriedly carried off the water before it could soak in. Now wider pipes are required to speed that water into the stream. This is happening throughout the Catoctin watershed and is the reason why massive amounts of money will be needed to replace a natural system. The clean water for wells and a Catoctin Creek that once flowed through well watered farms are the reason Waterford is here and the reason for the beauty of its natural setting. Since the Federal wetland protection laws are being considered inapplicable we might be better off if Clarkes' Gap Road is eliminated and all the cattails replanted.

A-fourthing on 03: The Waterford Citizen's Fourth starts on 3 July at 6:30 pm at the Old School with the Potluck Dinner. Bring an entree, salad and desert to share. There will be music (One Horse Town Live with Waterfords' Janet Garbe), kids games and kickball. After dinner at dark there will be the Schooley Mill Field Fireworks. The next day will be; beginning at 10 am, The parade registration at Factory Street, 11am the Parade to the Bond Street Field, 11:45 Songs and Awards, 12:30 pm Hot Dogs, Drinks and Watermelon and all afternoon the Greystone pool opens with the non members fee.

► **Pan Ends, Roads Reach Out, The Roads Reach In**

June 21

Pan Ends: Peter Pan closed its scheduled run with rave reviews from all who saw it. The talent exhibited went beyond the students as shown even in the excellence of the set. The stage in the cafeteria was for a too brief two nights transformed into; a leafy bower tree house for a hiding Peter and a reviving Tinker Bell, the bedroom in the Darlings' London townhouse, the forest of Never Never and Native American camp, the ship of Captain Hook and crew, the cave of the lost boys and back to The Waterford Elementary School. Congratulations to the cast and crew who once again prove Broadway is but a brief candle to Waterfords' walking shadow. The stages of the past are merged into the walls of the cafeteria and a boy called Christmas hears the sound of music flying off to Peter Pans', now historic, Never Land.

Roads Reach Out: Waterfords' roads, though heavily traveled, are still reaching the far corners of the earth. A wedding celebration starting in Thailand reached Waterford Sunday as Michael Anderson and his bride Thaneeya (Ae) Pientong were introduced to his home town crowd. The brides parents, Mr. And Mrs Pientong, along with the brides two sisters and brother were also honored by the celebration at the Shawen House. As the sun set behind the Blue Ridge in the west, to the best Bluegrass music east of Catoctin Creek, country and western star, and mother of the groom, Ann Mathews, rose from her long and distinguished day job to her rightful place on the stage to the delight of all her fans once again.

Roads Reach In: A wedding on Saturday at the John Wesley Church of Kathy Fahey to Neal Golden is another example of the widely spreading influence of Waterfords' art and culture. The brother of the bride, John Fahey, recently began working at the Seattle Times in the other Washington. He was recruited into his position by Waterford Elementary School Alumnus Ann Tiller, who is now an award winning journalist for that other "Times".

► **The Trees That Please, Polls and Plays, 48 Graduate**

June 14

The Trees That Please: Many Waterfordians headed down Loyalty Road last Sunday afternoon to The Land Trust of Virginia's "Garden Party to Save Virginia's Countryside" at Birchwood Farm, the home of Dean and Linda Linderman, just on the Waterford side of Taylorstown. The weather was perfect and the setting in the garden among the almost 4000 collected trees exceeded all perfection this side of the Garden of Eden. Strolling among the tree boxes and beds containing 7,500 bags of mulch on a carpet of plush grass while gazing at historic Furnace Mountain to the north and the distant second rise of the Blue Ridge vanishing away to the south from the west made it easy to realize what a special place our part of Loudoun is in our most beautiful Virginia.

Polls and Plays: Waterford Elementary Schools ends the year with a highly successful presentation of Peter Pan that drew audiences from as far as Houston Texas to see the performance. To add depth to the school use a Democratic Primary was scheduled to share the venue with the 5th Grade Farewell on Tuesday 13 June.

48 Graduate: Congratulations to Waterfords 5th Grade graduates who leave the nurturing nest of Waterford Elementary School to the broader less civilized seas of academia this Tuesday. They Are, from Mrs Tinsman's Class: James Charlton, Sam Ganis, Jan Gustafson, Jared McIntosh, Paul Meed, Mark Roberts, Evan Smith, Samuel Weber, R.J. Warfel, Emily Beisler, Haley Bullen, Lyndsey Caldwell, Bailey Carver, Sophia Dutterer, Kendall French, Austin Fust, Emily Huebner, Delaney Hunter, Alexandra Juzbasich, Caitlin Manson, Kathryn Nachajski, Bailey O'Gara, Kendall Reulein, Courtney Tibbetts, Deborah Trader. From Ms. Rhoads class: Eric Almon, Robert Burke, Corbin Dunn, Gus Erickson, Jimmy Lambert, Hunter Madison, Evan Meyers, Tyler McMullen, Brent Reinertson, James White, Ford Wyatt, Jake Yates, Taylor Bonenberger, Carolynn Boutivas, Alexa Fetterly, Kayla Harrell, Kelly Hart,

Jessica Hutchison, Mackenzie Kelly, Katie Reeve, Morgaine Smith, Rhiannon Smith, and Madelaine Williams.

► **Thai restaurants in Ashburn; Help at The Corner Store**

June 6

On The Road to Ashburn: Reports of a burgeoning of Thai restaurants, both good and bad, have been coming down the sea reach of Clarke's Gap Road for about a year and so a small group of Waterfordians rode the ebb of the tide last Friday, outward bound, for darkest Ashburn. Conducted by Tara Linhardt and Danny Knicely, who as world wandering minstrels had lived in Thailand and had actually even been to Ashburn, we thought it best to caravan for protection, given the editorial hostility of the natives. We found ourselves disembarking at The Burapa Thai at 44031 Ashburn Shopping Plaza in the heart of darkest Ashburn. Advised on what to order by Tara we spent a delightful two hours sampling and lunching on a range of treats from the familiar Satay and Pad Thai, through the curries Panang and Green and into the authentic Asian Ginger chicken.

Our Thai dining debut was a tastebud marathon ranging from the soothing milky sweet Thai tea and coffee to the smooth richness of peanut and coconut sauces, the tang of limes and lemon grass and into a range of pepper heat from slightly nippy up to exceeding the upper end of most Mexican cuisine. Tara advised us not to go to true Thai hot as was an acquired taste that only Henry Mercker, at 8 months, the youngest among us, could acquire after 30 or forty years training. A good hint from Tara was to order on the mild side and ask for Prik Bone, an epergne of hot condiments, to work up. As we left Ashburn, happy and well fed, the natives seemed amazingly indifferent that we had been among them and though they never venture as far as Waterford we felt the risk of venturing to Ashburn was worthwhile if you are going to the Burapa Thai.

Help at The Corner Store: The Waterford Foundation would like to keep the Corner Store Sunday afternoons to welcome and educate visitors and residents new to the area about the historic significance of the village, but it needs your help to do so. If you can spare as few as 4 Sunday afternoons from 12 to 5pm between now and November 19, please email Edith Crockett at edith@waterfordconnection.com or telephone: 882.3801.

► **Schadenfreude; Snakes Down; Rabbits Up; Living Easy**

June 1

Schadenfreude: Wednesday morning Waterford woke with a jolt to the rumblings of Schadenfreude heard above the wail of a power outage. This was necessitated by the installation of a new transformer by Virginia Power to accommodate all the new houses. Waterford struggled to read, by only the dawn's early light, the news about the lack of state transportation funding this year. The realization also dawned that the rush hour roar through the village will continue to worsen and the Schadenfreude comes when you realize that what is bad for Waterford is even worse for the rest of Northern Virginia, especially Ashburn.

Snakes Down: The Brocks by the Mill alerted us to the presence of a seven foot blacksnake that had descended from the top of the large maple tree beside the Tannery Branch. The snake had been feasting on birds and bird eggs and, after pausing for a frog snack at the branch by the alligator, was seen later going to ground in a south-facing stone wall two houses up.

Rabbits Up: The spring rabbit population seems to be up this year as Waterfords cat community has begun to harvest the crop. Three different cats have been seen bringing home the bacon from the fields on the western edge of the village. The rabbits maybe drawn to the Tree and Leaf CSA, that is already sold out this year, or perhaps pressure from the coyote has driven the rabbits closer to the village just as the dog dominated development has driven the deer into the more spaced out parts of the Catoctin Valley. The activity at last Saturdays' Gardeners Club Plant Exchange indicates that rabbits and deer may soon come even closer in as many gardens are being started.

Living Easy: Summertime hits this month and as usual the living is getting easy in Waterford, especially if you are a blacksnake, cat, coyote, vulture or vegetarian. It is not getting much easier if you are a bird, rabbit, deer or driver.

► **A Time on the Trail; The Best are Back; Correct to Coyote**

May 17

A Time on the Trail: Saturday afternoon friends and family gathered to surprise sagacious Phil Paschall in his own back yard for a celebration of a blaze on the trail of life. The one that no 12 year-old ever plans to participate in and views those who achieve that age as a kind of alien species. For years the dominant feature in the back of the Edward Dorsey House was the bamboo grove that furnished several generations of Waterfordian anglers the means to fish Catoctin Creek. Now, thanks to years of jungle control by Phil and Betty, the bamboo is cleared to reveal a spectacular view shared by all the west side Big Hill houses stretching all the way across the Catoctin Valley to Phils' beloved Appalachian Trail.

The Best are Back: When one wakes of a morning in Waterford now, there is an ambiance of intense activity. Pick-ups and service vans arrive early and stay late. It seems that new house construction in the rest of Loudoun so intense that even the worst workers were fully employed is ending and once again the most skilled workers have come back to their regular jobs in Waterford. Mother Nature has finally began to cooperate with ambitious gardening plans and the abundant rain in recent weeks has permitted the dividing not only of perennial plants but the relocation of sizable boxwood and bushes without taxing always tentative household water supplies.

Correct to Coyote: Several weeks ago mentioned the fox in Phillips Farm but the alliterative attempt was premature. As the "fox" came to within a hundred yards of our vantage point and better binos were brought to bear. it was discovered that it was a 35 pound adolescent coyote. This made sense as the cats had always seemed to know. They

would perch in trees and their gaze was like a weather vane pointing the direction of the coyote. The coyote is just as aware of our presence as its ears are up and is looking our way when we go to the back yard. To avoid scaring it in an unplanned manner we only observe it from cover.

Watch your cat.

► Katherine Chamberlin; Pool Prepped

May 17

Living History: Vivacious Katherine Chamberlin, surrounded by family and friends at Greystone Sunday afternoon, celebrated nine tenths of a century since arriving as a stranger in our midst. The crowd ranged from friends met when both were 9 years old eighty one years ago to grandchildren still in their teens. Bluegrass music was provided by the Loudoun Travelers with Katherine' nephew Robert Chamberlin performing as guest artist. Robert is recovering from two dislocated shoulders acquired while pushing a pickup truck someplace.

Pool Prepped: Meanwhile across Clarkes Gap Road ,Greystone Pool, the oldest surviving community pool in Virginia, and perhaps the world, is being prepared for its thirty second opening in the modern era. Patty Hess explained the techniques used to return the spring tadpole crop to the wild being released subsequent to the pools early season use, frog hatchery. Ann Belan was busy power washing the surrounding deck as the portraits of Octavius the octopus squiggled on the shallow wall and Free Willy the killer whale dove on the deep. The waters of Greystone Pool are proported to be magic as children who have been immersed in its waters have never been known to drown. The reason for this is that David Copperfields' caul was once floated on its surface.

Free-Will: And speaking of Free Willy, reminds us of the donation that is asked for by the Bethel United Methodist Church on the Stumptown Road. The first Ham and Turkey Dinner of the 2006 season gets under way 5-7 pm this Saturday 20 May. These suppers are now accompanied by live music and, in keeping with the ecclesiastical surroundings, also deviled eggs and angel food cakes. Just as revelations were made to Peter on the road to Appia and Paul on the road to Damascus, who knows what may occur on the road to Stumptown?

► Garage gone; Correct to Coyote; Cordelias' Day

May 10

Garage Gone: Coming home after a few days helping an aunt in Woodstock adjust to a new elbow we surprised to see the Pink House garage gone. We knew it was going and it was admittedly an unattractive friend but it was a friend it seems to be a characteristic of Virginians, of which Waterfordians are an archetype, to morn the loss of the old or at least the former, We can only console ourselves in hopeful anticipation of something better in its place.

Correct to Coyote: Last weeks column mentioned the fox in Phillips but the alliterative attempt was premature. As the "fox" came to within a hundred yards of our vantage point

and better binos were brought to bear, it was discovered that it was a 35 pound adolescent coyote. This made sense as the cats had always seemed to know. They would perch in trees and their gaze was like a weather vane pointing the direction of the coyote. The coyote is just as aware of our presence as its ears are up and is looking our way when we go to the back yard. To avoid scaring it in an unplanned manner we only observe it from cover. Watch you cat.

Cordelias' Day: Friends gathered late Sunday in tribute to Cordelia Chamberlin in light of her many years of many faceted service to the village. At the height of the festivities in the Goods back yard overlooking the Phillips Farm pasture a denizen of the Greystone Community Pool appeared in the form some what belying a begoggled and floatated Robbie Smith. And then, to add greater dimension to the occasion, a bald eagle, instantly identified by Neil Hughes, soared into view as it followed th coarse of the mighty Catoctin Creek. An aerial display followed as this noble visitor was attacked by two of Waterfords resident crows. As the sun set the our American symbol glided back toward the Potomac.

► **Yard sale ; Foxes, herons and hawks** ▲

May 2

Y Day 6 May: Saturday is the Yard Sale Day for Waterford starting at 9 am and going through 2 pm. The flyers have been distributed and if you act right now Mary Kenesson will be able to post your yard on the web site map. For information go to www.waterfordconnection.com/flea. Already we have seen boxes of antiques and collectibles being spread out and priced as they are brought to light in the flurry of spring cleaning throughout the village. Maps will be available at the Waterford Market and at each of the sale sites for the non-internet connected. We are offering an attic squirrel for a very reasonable price at the yard sale. This squirrel has doing an excellent job of keeping the attic and eves free of starling nests but is ready to move on.

New WF Directors: The Membership of The Waterford Foundation met last Tuesday evening at the Old School electing new directors Ed Good, Ernie Smith, Phil Paschall and Ann Goode. The officers were all reelected with Jim Behan as President , Nancy Doan as Vice President, Susan Sutton as Secretary and Mark Clinard as Treasurer. The Foundation is currently searching to fill the vacant Executive Director position.

Foxes, herons and hawks: The Phillips' Farm pasture is a whirlwind of pasture activity. As the foxes have shifted their attention from mice to spring groundhog the red-tailed hawks have taken over the mouse control. In Catoctin Creek the blue herons are keeping the frogs in check. The daily activity peaks about 5pm. And can be observed from the Old Mill patio. Bring your telescope.

► **Another Pulitzer; Another Star** ▲

April 25

Another Pulitzer: Geraldine Brooks has won the 2006 Pulitzer Prize for her novel "March" thus continuing Waterfords' tradition of having a Pulitzer Prize winner every 10 years or so. This tradition was started by 2005 Oscar winner Larry McMurtry in 1986 winning Fiction

with "Lonesome Dove" and by Henry Taylor, who was the Poetry Chair at Waterford Elementary School, with the 1986 Pulitzer Prize for Poetry with "Flying Change". The Waterford winning tradition was continued by Geraldine's husband Tony Horwitz who won The Pulitzer in 1995 for National Reporting. Her novel shows her perspicacity gained by her experience as a war correspondent with insights on the nature of war voiced by Captain March, the absent father in Louisa May Alcott's "Little Women". Given our current war, one wonders how many are now not e-mailing home events too terrible to tell as did Geraldine's character, March, when writing home in 1861-65 .

Another Star: A new thespian star has risen in Waterford as Natalie DeHart is starring as the heroine stepsister Portia in Aurora Studio Theatres' production of Rodgers and Hammersteins' Cinderella.

The musical is about how her character, Portia, is able to cope with the devious inroads on her life being made by a whiney high maintenance family drudge who uses the aid of an alien agent and seeks to bring about an unconstitutional government takeover by enthralling a prince that should belong to Portia. Natalie will be appearing at Hillsboros' Old Stone School 28 at 7:30p.m., 29 April at 3 p.m. and 7:30 p.m., and 30 April at 3 p.m. The final performances are at Leesburgs' Loudoun Country Day School 6 May at 7:30 p.m. and 7 May at 3 p.m.

Another Meeting: The Membership of The Waterford Foundation met Tuesday evening at the Old School electing new directors Ed Good, Ernie Smith, Phil Paschall and Ann Goode. The officers were all reelected with Jim Behan as President , Nancy Doan as Vice President, Susan Sutton as Secretary and Mark Clinard as Treasurer. The Foundation is currently searching to fill the vacant Executive Director position.

► **Yard Sale; Vole Patrol; New doors open** 🏡

April 19

6 May is Y day: Why keep it when Saturday, 6 May has been set as the day for the Waterford Wide Yard Sale Day. Mary Kenneson is coordinating events so all who will have items out for sale should contact her at Masuke@erols.com to have your location mapped or to get a location somewhere in the thick of things. All that remains for those who are wondering what to do with all those things that have been discovered during spring cleaning is to put a price on them and set them out on the morning of the 6th. As far as customers are concerned, "Put it out and they will come."

Vole Patrol: *Microtus pinetorum* are exceptionally abundant in Waterford this year as this hemisphere globally warms and they are the favorite spring time tonic for most of Waterford free range cats. The trouble is that as the cats come in from their dawn patrol they like to bring along these critters that provide the perfect combination of an active sport to be followed by a snack. Sometimes even two snacks can be made as half can be left around for later. Also if they are brought in early enough the cat can take them up under the covers of a bed warmed by sleeping owners as a means to start the day off with a bang. Be sure to check what your cat is trying to bring in this spring.

New doors open: Work is progressing on the weighing shed opposite the Old Mill. The Mill side double doors have been replaced by a smaller opening. Also the top cutout that showed that one time high hay wagons to pass through the other set of double doors has been somewhat obscured with the replacing of some of the siding.

Skyta sighted: Paul and Kitty Rose bring us news from Sandy Skyta who has been touring the world from her Georgia based retirement. Our former Postmaster, Sandy, keeps following events in Waterford and is continuing to support the villages essential services, especially fireworks.

► **July 4th Fireworks; Elementary School; Foxes Hunt** ▲

April 12

Fourth to start on third: Out of consideration of the Fourth of July not being followed by a holiday, the Waterford Citizens' Association at its Tuesday first meeting under the leadership of President Tom Edmonds decided to fire its fireworks beginning at dark on the third of July.

This makes the fireworks the first event of the villages' celebration of Independence Day followed as usual with the traditional parade, speeches, games and feasts. The reasons contributing to this decision, besides following work day, were, after all it is the Fourth in Rome, we have not yet a corps of trained and certified fireworks shooters to replace the retired Bill Beaver crew, and rain is expected on the night of the Fourth. Some thought that the sodden 2005 Fair BBQ sales may have fostered a "more bang for a buck" attitude.

Expansion expounded: Presentations were made concerning the proposed expansion of the Waterford Elementary School By Beth Erickson, Mike Stup and Nick Ratcliffe. The overcoming of the obstacles presented by the overburdened roads and the limited time, space and financial considerations and the uncertain water resources in order to expand the availability of Loudouns' premier elementary school will probably require heroic efforts on the part of the Waterford area residents, the tax payers of Loudoun and all the administrations involved in the county, state and national agencies.

Phillips' Farm fox hunt: The warm weather has impacted the Catoctin Valley and one of the most intriguing aspects that can be viewed almost daily are foxes hunting mice in the Phillips' Farm pasture. The Phillips' fox clan surround an area by Goose Bedroom Bend and belly in toward the center. When one locates a mouse scurrying through the grass the fox takes a great arcing leap coming straight down on the doomed. prey. After a few fore-foot stomping seconds the mouse is seized and sometimes tossed into the air, caught, and wolfed down.

The joy of our lives in a springtime Waterford may only be exceeded by those of our foxes.

► **Garder's Gather, Waterford Green** ▲

April 6

Gardeners' Gather: The Waterford Gardeners' Club emerged from a winter dormancy at a meeting at the Kennessons' aptly named Robin (no relation to spring) House Sunday afternoon with plans for restoring the Village Green and setting Saturday 20 May from 9:00

a.m. until noonish for the Waterford Plant Exchange.

Green Graveled: The Village Green is the area around the jail and the town pump where Main, Second and Water Street all flow together to form the village and universe center. In recent years the Main Street ditch and drain pipe have become clogged by VDOTs' maintenance deficit so that gravel has formed an out-wash plain, turning much of the Village Green into the Village Gravel. The little Christmas tree there has become more suitable for the Ellipse in Washington and with its top in the power lines likely to be lit at an inopportune moment. Also, parking along Water Street has removed all the grass and the retaining wall is leaning in. The town pump was discussed but its repair is not an option out of fear that some uninformed visitor would actually drink the water.

Green Grassing: In light of the inaction of VDOT and Virginia Power the Waterford Gardeners' is taking steps to recruit a few strong young men to ditch and clear so that the green will again be green with grass and the retaining wall will be protected by forsythia and planter boxes. The Gardeners' are now fervently rooting forsythia and other woody shrubs as well as starting seedling and potting surplus perennials in preparation for the best plant exchange ever.

🏡 Saving the Shed, Archeological Gardening, Causi Bellum 🏡

March 29

Saving the Shed: Rich Biby wasted no time in getting the work on the Old Mill weighing shed under way this week. The words "ground up restoration" are evident when you notice that the practically invisible foundation was below the ground, having been submerged by about a hundred years worth of road improvement in front of the Mill. The shed is now suspended on new supports as the bottom foot or so of the board and batten siding is being renovated. The submergence of the bottom of the shed seems to indicate that Waterford is growing up about the rate of a foot every hundred years on average. This should keep us above ground as global warming increases the sea level at a lesser rate.

Archeological Gardening: The fact that Waterford is growing deeper is becoming evident to us all as we began to scratch around in the ground in preparation for spring planting. Things that you would expect to be on the surface are disinterred from just below the ground to a considerable depth that is encountered in deep tilling and fence post digging. We have encountered silver spoons in the yard and have conjured up images of the family silver being hastily buried to save it from the clutches of marauding soldiers of both sides during The War of North Loudoun, 1861-1865.

Causi Bellum: As we have mentioned of the past this was a period in which the Quaker inhabitants of Waterford waged a vicious letter writing campaign to both governments in Washington City and Richmond to desist in their hostilities as it was adversely effecting life in Waterford as well as other places. Both governments responded by periodically jailing the letter writers until reason prevailed. This, as now, took over two Presidential elections to resolve.

Plated Playthings: The silver spoons recovered in spring gardening in the past, having been discovered as being merely silver plate have been returned to the former property

owners, some in their 90's, only to find out that the spoons were lost, when they were children digging holes in the yard.

► **Cookie pins, Litter, Gardening** ▲

March 23

Waterfords' Irish Roots: We are celebrating St. Patrick's Day this year with the wearing of the green shamrock cookies baked by our friend Alise Chaudet. They are practically indestructible and can be worn for years by gluing a safety pin to the back with a glue gun. Also they are available as an emergency snack at anytime once they have been soaked overnight in a pint of Guinness. Alise should do the Fourth of July Stars.

KLBS' Litter Roots: Keep Loudoun Beautiful is looking for a Waterford area chairman for the Spring Roadside Cleanup in April. This county wide effort lets us start the out and about part of the year with clean roads and is especially important in areas like Waterford, renown for our beauty. Interested parties should call KLB board President Brenda MacEoin at (703) 771-4231.

Gardeners' Plot: The Waterford Gardeners' Club is having discussions this week to plan for the spring plant exchange. Now is the time to start seed flats and mark those things in the yard that need thinning. The plant exchange is an important part of Waterfords' historic as it enables our gardens to have continuity through the years. The exchange also preserves Waterford heirloom plants such as the Marie Hilton Boxwood, all the Marie Weatherholtz yarbs, the Norman Weatherholtz Horse Radish, the Dick Neuman Lilac, the Mary Elizabeth Wallace Wisteria, the Ruth Bentley Confederate Violet and the Joan Thomas Copper Basil.

Chestnut Cut: We mourn the loss this week of the Chinese Chestnut tree by the weighing shed across from the Old Mill. This tree was planted over 50 years ago by Albert White, famous as a landscaper throughout Loudoun. The tree, whose removal was necessary to protect the shed, was planted as a reminder of the importance the American Chestnut had to Waterford as a timber tree and a supplier of the tannin bark for the Waterford Tannery. Albert White also brought cuttings from the boxwood at Morven Park that formed the basis for the Marie Hilton specter protected boxwood gardens at Hillside. We are not sure what Marie is going to do about the Chestnut.

► **Waterfordian Wins Oscar, No Aliens** ▲

March 15

Waterfordian wins Oscar: In keeping with the Waterfordian tradition that once a Waterfordian always a Waterfordian, Larry McMurtry a second Street house sitter and a High Street inhabitant, won an Oscar for the best adaptive screen play writing at the awards ceremony some where out west Sunday. Sharing the award with Larry was Diana Ossana. Larry, long recognized as a world class writer and storyteller had been previously nominated in 1971 for The Last Picture Show. Larry felt the Academy's selection of another film for best picture meant Americans are not ready to accept the concept of gay cowboys.

"Home, home on the range,
where the deer and the antelope play."
Where soon will be heard, the discouraging word,
Americans don't want their cowboys gay.

Jazz: The Rick Whitehead Trio in Concert will be at the Old School on Saturday evening, 18 March. This is a venture to bring jazz to the Old School on a regular basis to balance the Waterford Concert Series that usually has a more formal presentation. The profit from the \$15 admission will be set aside toward future events hopefully giving more local exposure of the professional musicians in our midst who are usually performing in more distant and much larger venues.

That the Rick Whitehead Trio was selected to inaugurate this presentation of Jazz is especially apropos given the rather King Kongish titles of the trios' first two CDs, *Live in Captivity* and *Live in Captivity Again*. We expect that the Trio of John Previti on bass guitar and Barry Hart on drums led by master jazz guitarist Rick Whitehead will be released from captivity in the Waterford Old School Saturday to be wild in the country.

No Aliens: At first it was thought that aliens had landed a pair of miniature space ships on Clarkes' Gap Road near Schooley Mill Branch coming into the village. Perhaps the little flat mats with beads sticking out the top are traffic sensing devices placed in the road to detect and identify the illegal truck traffic roaring through the village. It turns out they record speed as well as count cars and speed is thought to be a factor when wrecks pollute Schooley Mill Branch.

► **Bluebirds** ▲

March 8

Scouts about: As the last of the snow has melted except for the flurries dusting around when the north wind blows we have begun to see bits of blue darting about the underbrush signaling that the bluebird scouts are looking for nesting sites once again.

Historic Bluebirds: Waterford has been blessed by a plethora of bluebirds since the early 1980's when the Waterford Foundation bluebird nesting box project instituted in the wake of late 1970 discussions to flood Catoctin Creek watershed began to bear bluebirds. The Foundation provided seed money for the construction of 200 nesting boxes based on plans provided by the Loudoun Times Mirror. All of the boxes were placed in the Catoctin Watershed and by the early 1980,s flocks of bluebirds containing twenty to thirty birds could be seen flying around the Waterford area fields. Though most of those nesting boxes have now fallen into disuse or have not been systematically maintained, the residual is still with us both as above average density of this once threatened species and an increase in the diversity of the bird population around the historic village.

Immigrants to Ashburn: The development outside the National Historic District has also had some birdwise benefits in a kind of quixotic way. One of the threats to bluebirds has always been the usurping of nesting sites by house sparrows and starlings, both non native species. The nesting boxes were placed away from houses and monitored against sparrow

use and the design of the boxes precluded entry by starlings. As the development became denser around other parts of Loudoun the sparrows and starlings migrated to Ashburn, are not now so prevalent in Waterford and our windshields are cleaner.

Many places will benefit by the placing of bluebird nestboxes but it has been demonstrated that Waterford and the Catoctin Valley will benefit more.

► **Driver side sidewalks, Safe hunting, Don't ask, don't tell** ▲

February 22

Driver side sidewalks: Sunday morning saw everyone out clearing sidewalks and digging paths to get cars out of the effects of the blizzard of ought-six. Some chose to back out of the hole left by the car and some chose to pull forward. This type of snow that leaves a walled parking place causes us to reverse entering cleared spaces to put the driver door next to the side walk and avoid the dangerous climb up and down the gutter slope. This may be an ill advised tactic as the Sheriffs department has begun a crack down on driver side parking in Waterford. Getting your car down in the ditch is perilous also as some parts of Main Street are ditched deep enough to keep a car until washed out in the spring floods.

Safe hunting: The snow was also the best packing snow for snowmen that has been seen in years. A classic snowman was constructed in the Marietta Collins Cottage site. Given recent events, the snowman was wearing a carrot orange nose along with its orange hat and orange scarf as a precaution in case of hunters. As the village wags gathered about there was a discussion as to whether or not Virginia should require a lawyer stamp on hunting licenses along with the orange vest requirement.

Don't ask, don't tell: Waterford is a national, state and county historic district that is concentric with the smallest county part formed by the pre-1932 Byrd Road act incorporated Waterford. Our Loudoun Board of Supervisors control the destiny and even the very existence of all three of these districts, usually through the Historic District Review Committee. Last week an attempt to give control of the Loudoun portion of "This Hallowed Ground" historic corridor to the Board of Supervisors failed. The reason given by some Board members who rejected this attempt was that they did not want to give up control. Waterfordians are cautioned not to tell these supervisors that it is they who control all our historic districts.

► **Auctions, hammers and geese** ▲

February 16

Auctions aweigh: The Factory Street Goose was suited up as a Steeler sitting on a terrible towel Sunday as history was made by Waterford's first online auction. With Chuck Anderson of Waterford Real Estate as auctioneer the Waterford Mill weighing station went on the online auction block Saturday morning. As pre-arranged, Chuck had dutifully e-mailed perspective bidders the latest bid all day Saturday. The conditions of the sale were that bids could be submitted by e-mail in thousand dollar increments with a starting bid of \$35,000. There was also an undisclosed amount below which the owner of the historic property would not be required to accept. The right to accept the highest bid was reserved.

Hillside haunts: The property being auctioned is across from the Old Waterford Mill. It had been part of the Hillside House and was used to garage Marie Hilton's Carmen Ghia for many years. The property had been a bequest to her from her neighbor at Mill End in the 1960s. The shed has been the bailiwick of the Waterford Weavers and the Waterford Quilters for many years during the fair since Marie's death. The property also served as a nursery for boxwood that formed an impressive part of the gardens at Hillside. She said that she will return and haunt anyone who does not care for the boxwood, but she has not been seen, yet. No bids were received on Saturday.

Drifts and flurries: As Super Bowl Sunday drifted toward the 6 p.m. kickoff no bids were received. Chuck, aware that online auctions are subject to last minute bid sniping, had made it a rule that in the last 15 minutes of the auction bidders could only make one bid each. About 4:15 p.m. he notified interested e-mailers that the requirement for a \$35,000 minimum bid had been dropped and this precipitated a flurry of bidding. As the auction hammer fell at 5 p.m. the winning bid was \$31,000. The winning bid was more than six times the real estate assessed value of \$5,700, but no round of applause was heard. This may be because the assessed tax value is expected to go up on all our houses and most of us realize we cannot afford to live here much longer.

Gone goose: Monday morning the Waterford Goose was resplendent in a Pittsburgh Steelers warm-up suit, the Seattle Seahawks lost and Waterfordians are waiting for the other hammer to fall.

► **Wojak the Waterford groundhog** ▲

February 8

Wojak: Waterfordians are beginning to stir out of their burrows, the foremost being Wojak the Waterford groundhog who emerged from his burrow on Thursday and seeing no shadow began to look around for something to eat as spring is neigh.

Fair pears: He had fattened up on pears last October right after the Fair and emerged with that "Where have all the people gone." look seen on the faces of tourists who have only been previously to the village during the Fair. Henry Mercker, who lives in the Sappington House, is about the same size and weight as Wojak and knows that this venerable beast was named "Grandfather" by the Waterford area Indians sometime before 1607. Henry saw no shadow either.

Triathlon bound: Henry's neighbor, Alyssa Barker, who lives in the Goodwin House, has been stirring about also as she prepares for the St. Anthony's Triathlon near Tampa Florida on 30 April. This event is a bike 1.5K, swim 40K and run 10K event and has served as a qualifier for the famous Iron Man Triathlon.. Alyssa is part of a Team in Training of the Leukemia and Lymphoma Society. Her expenses for the St, Anthonys' Triathlon were a gift from her parents but she is participating in events to benefit the Society such as a pancake booth at IHOP in Leesburg 28 Feb. and a dog wash later on. Alyssa can be seen in training downing malted milk shakes on her website at

www.active.com/donations/fundraise_public.cfm?key=aBarker

Biker griper: Last week in this paper the prevalence of cyclists (referred to as bikers) on Waterford's roads was lamented by a non-Waterfordian unaware of the fact that Waterford loves cyclists. This is shown by Alyssa's proving all Waterford women are athletic by her training for world class competition in an event involving cyclists. Furthermore, cyclists have been admired for their traffic calming potential and it has long been hoped that Waterford could be the key to a bike trail connector.

WAOD-C&O connect: This connector would come from the WAOD Trail at Clarkes' Gap to Waterford and then down Old Waterford Road to Nestlewood Road. The connector would then follow the old wagon road that went along the south branch of Limestone Branch until it crosses the Whites' Ferry Road. Thence it goes down to Whites' Ferry and hooks up to the C&O tow path. Anyone so inclined could jump on their bicycle in the morning and make a round trip to DC and be back in time for supper never having had to backtrack.