



The

Lodger

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NEWSLETTER FOR RESIDENTS AND FRIENDS OF THE LODGE AT OLD TRAIL

To Incorporate or Not, a Recurring Question

Every now and then, there is talk about incorporating Crozet as a Virginia Town. Crozet is a neighborhood community in Albemarle County, a place name on maps, and a designation by the U.S. Census Bureau as a population-concentrated area for statistical purposes. Why the current interest by some people in suggesting Crozet be made a new political subdivision known as the Town of Crozet?

Our understanding is that the growth in population density and the associated impacts such as traffic increases appear to be the main impetus for proposing more independence for Crozet. County agencies and its governing body are now responsible for all planning and zoning within Crozet and Old Trail. Town status would give residents more authority over development affairs.

If town establishment were to occur and its boundaries included Old Trail, all included residents would feel the effect of the new layer of government. This would include an additional election of town council members and a possible added personal property tax for vehicle owners.

State rules govern the creation of a new government subdivision, so we asked the Virginia Department of Housing and Community Development to tell us what has to happen to establish a new town in Virginia. We also consulted the feasibility report on town incorporation done for Massanutten, a Virginia resort community likely to eventually incorporate.

Who initiates the process to form a town and is there an official procedure that must be followed?

The process can be initiated in either of two ways. In the judicial process, a petition is filed with the county circuit court by at least 100 qualified voters residing in the area to be incorporated. The circuit court with which the petition is filed notifies the Virginia Supreme Court, which appoints a special court to hear the case for incorporation. The special court may request the Virginia Commission on Local Government to conduct a review of the proposed incorporation. The specific requirements of the judicial process are spelled out in the Code of Virginia law (chapter 36 of title 15.2).

Alternatively, petitioners can request the Virginia General Assembly to enact town incorporation on its own

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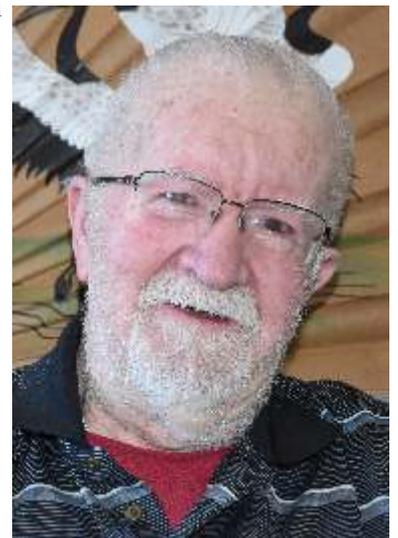
RESIDENT FOCUS

Bill Repass disregarded the draft notice he received during the period of the Vietnam conflict in 1965. No, he was not a scofflaw. Rather, he was an enlistee in the U.S. Air Force starting his 25-year career as a Communications Officer when the notice arrived. The mistake was soon resolved. A native of southwest Virginia and a graduate of UVA, Bill became expert in the operation, maintenance, and development of the electronic equipment used by the Air Force, serving tours of duty in the U.S., Asia, and Europe and retiring with the rank of Lt. Colonel. A widower and the father of two daughters, he is an ardent amateur astronomer and mastered the art of pulled pork slow cooking. He moved from his daughter's home in Manassas to his apartment at The Lodge in 2018.

Bill and his two brothers were raised in the small town of Pulaski, Virginia, a community of fewer than 10,000 people near Blacksburg in the New River Valley. His father was a night watchman at a garment factory in the town and his mother was a homemaker.

After graduating from Pulaski County's high school, he attended UVA and earned a bachelor's degree in chemistry. Or as Bill would explain it, "I won't brag about my grades, but I did graduate with a degree."

Faced with the likelihood of being drafted, he chose to enlist in the Air Force and was selected for training in electronics at the Communications



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Resident Focus (cont'd)

School at Keesler Air Force Base in Biloxi, Mississippi, one of the two largest military technical training centers in the United States. His training prepared him for operation and maintenance of air traffic control systems, radio and telephone networks, and radar. In a later assignment, he returned to the communications school at Keesler where he and his crew of 800 were in charge of the maintenance of all the equipment used to train the thousands of enlisted personnel and commissioned officers attending the school.

He retired from military service in 1990.

While on duty at an Air Force base in Taiwan, Bill learned that it can be a lot easier to fall in love than it is to get married. Mary Liang-Tsai Sue Hsu, a Chinese national, worked as a secretary at the base exchange. He and Mary dated for several months and planned to get married before traveling together to his next assignment in Hawaii. Not so fast said Taiwanese authorities, requiring him to travel to Hawaii alone while Mary made the necessary application for permission to marry. Returning two months later, Bill and Mary got married in Taiwan, only to find out that her passport processing would take more time, causing him to make another round trip from Hawaii before the two could finally unite.

While living in California, the Repasses experienced an unforgettable rite of passage when Mary was sworn a U.S. citizen in an especially moving ceremony timed to coincide with the American Bicentennial. She joined with other citizen applicants in the ceremony performed in the downtown square of Sacramento, California—winning a photograph and feature story in the Sacramento Bee newspaper.

Mary passed away from cancer in 1990.

Bill is the parent of two daughters. Debbe, a graduate of the College of William and Mary, is an employee of the U.S. State Department. Her work has taken her to many countries including Taiwan and Saudi Arabia. She and her husband reside in Manassas and have two grade school children.

Daughter Wendy lives in Crozet and works for the UVA Hospital in Charlottesville. She is a computer specialist and is currently producing graphics on the Covid pandemic. Her sculpturing, painting, singing, and guitar playing are a reflection of her training in art at UVA.

Bill became involved in making and selling pulled pork sandwiches with his son-in-law after retirement from the military. They bought whole shoulders of pork and cooked

the meat in a mobile cooker that they hauled to a farmers market in Manassas. Bill would monitor the temperature and adjust the wood fire as the meat was being slow cooked for 14 hours before shredding and adding the sauce. People from the heartland of pork barbecue country, says Bill, would tell him “Gee, this is the best pulled pork we ever ate.”

Bill also developed an interest in astronomy as a hobby. He and his son-in-law set up high-powered telescopes at night to view the planets. He recalls seeing Jupiter with its five moons, the rings around Saturn, and the red, orange color of Mars. “Once you know where to look, you can see the color of Mars with the naked eye.”

His pastimes now consist of reading fiction, staying up to date on electronics and astronomy with technical books, and using his lap top. “But computer technology has gone beyond me,” says Bill, “so I consult my daughter or grandson if I have a problem.”



Clockwise from upper left: wedding day in 1976 in Taiwan; the family in 1980; Bill with daughters Debbe (l) and Wendy and son-in-law Mike; and some of Mary's statues and vases in ceramic, an art form she learned after coming to the United States.

Woman, 90, Defies Foot Deep Snowfall

After repeated calls and fruitless Internet searches to schedule a Covid vaccination, Seattle, Washington, resident Fran Goldman finally landed a Sunday morning spot at Seattle Children's Hospital, unaware of a forthcoming 12-inch snowstorm.

When it began snowing on Saturday, she knew driving would be treacherous the next day, and elected to walk the three mile route. Satisfied with a test run by foot on Saturday, she donned layered clothing, put on snow boots, and grabbed her walking sticks Sunday morning for the six-mile round trip.

Wending her way on a trail and residential streets, she arrived at the hospital one hour later and just five minutes late for her appointment.

It would have been more difficult, she said, had she not gotten a bad hip replaced.

Ms. Goldman was scheduled to receive her second dose of the vaccine a month later. She planned to drive.



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Town Incorporation (cont'd)

through a special act, requiring enough members to be persuaded for two-thirds majority votes in each house of the legislature for the incorporation to succeed

What roles do the state or county play in the process to establish a new town?

In the judicial process, a copy of the petition must be provided to the county attorney and each member of the Board of Supervisors. The county can be party to the incorporation case, but does not have veto authority. The special court may order incorporation of the town when it has been assured that all standards in the law have been met. After incorporation has been ordered by the special court, the charter is requested for adoption by the new town council. The Virginia General Assembly is responsible for the adoption of the municipal charter. On the other hand, if the General Assembly passes legislation proposed by its members to enact a town, the legislation would be the town charter. The charter is the document that defines the organization, powers, functions, and essential procedures of the town government.

How are the boundaries for a proposed town determined?

There are two related standards that help determine the town boundary: First, the number of inhabitants of the proposed town must exceed 1,000. Second, the statute states that the area of land designated to be embraced within the town must be judged as "not excessive."

How many members must serve on the governing body and when do they take office?

The first election of town council members must be held within 90 days of town incorporation and must include five members. Registered voters within the town boundaries, as determined by the county electoral board, are eligible to vote. The original council members serve until their successors are elected and take office pursuant to the town charter.

Besides a governing body, what other agencies must be established for the new town to function and how and when are they established?

Generally, additional agencies are established based upon the direction of the town governing body and as called for in the town charter. Other towns have established their own police departments or made arrangements with the county for law enforcement. Towns are required, however, to establish a local planning commission which typically consists of private citizens appointed by the town council. County public schools continue to provide education for town residents.

Does an incorporated town have control over zoning and land use matters?

Whereas counties are responsible for county-wide planning and zoning, towns are responsible for planning and zoning within town boundaries including the development and amendments of a town comprehensive plan. Towns ensure compliance with its zoning laws by appointing a Zoning Administrator and a Board of Zoning Appeals to hear appeals of the administrator's decisions

and zoning actions.

Are taxes imposed by the new town in addition to or in place of other local taxes?

The town would likely be required to assess a local real property tax to cover expenses. The town real property tax would be in addition to the county real property tax. The Lodge ownership would be subject to any new town real property taxes. A town vehicle tax would be in addition to a county vehicle tax. The adoption of other tax powers that have been granted to towns appear to be at the discretion of the town governing body.

How long does the process to establish a town typically last?

Department of Housing and Community Development: We do not have an answer to this question because the process is rare and has not occurred since 1990 when the town of Clinchco was formed by Special Act of the General Assembly. Massanutten report: Town incorporation via judicial proceedings can be fairly time consuming and fairly expensive due to the necessity of legal representation, analysis, and court action. Town incorporation directly via Virginia General Assembly enactment can be relatively quick and inexpensive, but more politically based.

Do private citizens get the opportunity to endorse or object to proposed town incorporation?

If the matter is referred to the Commission on Local Government for review by either the Special Court or the General Assembly, the Commission would conduct a public hearing on whether or not the town's establishment meets the criteria of town incorporation. All interested parties may present evidence before the commission at the hearing. It is likely that the ruling bodies would want to hear from as many affected parties as possible, making a public hearing all but certain.

FROM THE ARCHIVES (Courtesy the Shenandoah Valley British Car Club)

The Golden Years

Several days ago, as I left a meeting, I could not find my keys. I looked in my bag. They were not in my pockets. A quick search of the meeting room revealed nothing. Suddenly I realized I had left them in the car. Frantically, I headed for the car park.

My husband has scolded me many times for leaving the keys in the ignition. My theory is the ignition is the best place not to lose them. His theory is that the car will be stolen. His theory was right. The car park was empty.

I immediately called the police to report my car was stolen. I gave them my location and confessed that I had left my keys in the car.

Then I made the most difficult call of all.

"Hello my love," I stammered. (I always call him "my love" in times like these.) "I left my keys in the car, and it has been stolen."

There was a period of silence. I thought the call had been disconnected.

Then I heard his voice. He barked, "I dropped you off!"

Now it was my time to be silent. Embarrassed, I said, "Please come and get me."

He retorted, "**I will as soon as I convince this policeman I have not stolen your bloody car!**"

Briefs

THE ABSENCE OF TOURISTS ON A SWEDISH ISLAND wreaked havoc among seabirds.

Normally the island of Stora Karlson in the Baltic Sea is visited by birdwatchers to see brooding common murrelets clinging to rocky cliffs on the tiny island. Due to the pandemic, summer visits last year were banned. No boats were floating offshore with eager birders training their binoculars on the murre colony. The island's restaurant was closed. Except for the occasional researcher, the island was devoid of humans. But this departure from the norm had a strange chain reaction. The nesting murrelets spent less time tending their eggs and chicks. The colony lost eggs, kicking them off ridges during panicked takeoffs, or leaving them vulnerable to hungry gulls and crows. Twenty-six percent fewer eggs hatched in 2020 than was typical. The researchers observed another phenomenon; the island's white-tailed eagles had changed their behavior. Wintering eagles, without the influx of visitors, were not leaving the island as they usually do, and others were joining them, resulting in a seven-fold increase. Murrelets are not prey, but they fear eagles and scatter whenever they are sighted. How ironic. Wildlife disturbance by humans is universally avoided as much as possible. Conservation policies for seabirds may be adjusted now, however, by using tourism as a means to minimize disturbance from predators.



MOST EVERYONE HEARD OF SPCA, but how many are aware of Farm Sanctuary?

With sanctuaries in California and New York, Farm Sanctuary has rescued, rehabilitated, and put up for adoption thousands of farm animals, many of them rescued from industries that find them useless due to inferior productiveness. In 1986, Farm Sanctuary President and co-founder Gene Baur rescued a live sheep from a pile of dead animals during an investigation of the historic Lancaster Stockyard in Pennsylvania. The discarded sheep was the start of Farm Sanctuary and the beginning of the farm animal sanctuary movement of today. An estimated 77 billion animals worldwide were slaughtered for food in 2018; nearly 10 billion a year in the United States alone. Farm Sanctuary promotes laws and policies that support better farm animal treatment, animal protection, and more veganism through rescue, education, and advocacy, with an emphasis on ending extreme confinement of farm animals in tight cages. The group has won lawsuits requiring humane treatment of farm animals and is credited for Burger King adopting veggie burgers in its restaurant menus. For more information, visit farmsanctuary.org on the Internet.



A Shelter Director is known as "The Farm Animal Whisperer."

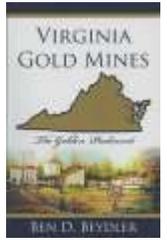
MOST OF US WILL NEVER WITNESS A TOTAL SOLAR ECLIPSE when the day becomes dark as night.

You have to be at the right place at the right time. A Goddard Space Flight Center scientist estimates there are eight chances to view a total eclipse in the U.S. over a single lifetime if you are at the right locations. The next total eclipse on planet Earth occurs December 4, 2021, but to see the spectacle, you must be in Antarctica. For those interested in seeing the one and three-quarter minute show, a chartered flight above the clouds is part of a tour planned by Sky and Telescope magazine. Cheapest seats are \$19,000 for two people. By the way, participants must book their own flight to and from Santiago, Chile.



GOLD MINING IN BUCKINGHAM COUNTY?

No mine is proposed yet, claims Thomas Ullrich, CEO of the Canadian mining company conducting gold exploration on forest land owned by the Weyerhaeuser company. He says drilling exploration and study is continuing before a mine can be thought of in the county next door to Albemarle. Company press releases say significant gold mineralization has been discovered. Caught off guard, the county halted the drilling in November as a violation of its zoning ordinance. Two months later, they allowed the drilling to continue. Breathing sighs of relief with the Atlantic Coast Pipeline being scuttled, Virginia environmentalists are gearing up to oppose the mining. They cite water contamination as a potential threat from the chemicals used in gold mining, in an area where private wells are the main source of drinking water and the nearby James River supplies water to millions. When asked by a property owner whether gold is mined by sinking a shaft, geologists laughed and said, no, open pit mining. Virginia's first gold mine opened in 1825 in Amherst County, followed by dozens of others spanning a 140-mile stretch from Fairfax to Buckingham County. The California Gold Rush and the Civil War dealt the industry a blow from which it never recovered.



A 90-YEAR-OLD BROUGHT A MAJOR AMERICAN CORPORATION TO ITS KNEES.

Aaron Epstein of North Hollywood, California shamed AT&T for ultra-slow Internet service with an ad admonishing the giant corporation in the Wall Street Journal. Watching a movie on the Internet was like watching a slide show, says Epstein, asking the company CEO in the ad why he and his neighbors were being treated so shabbily. After tiring from months of being told on the phone that fiber optic service was coming, the life-long subscriber of AT&T could take it no longer. He got results. A CEO staffer called the next day with new promises. Two days later, repair men told him installation had begun. His neighbors praised him as their hero. Others chastised him for spending \$10,000 on the ad rather than giving it to the poor. He said he would rather be criticized than ignored.



A PROPOSED SOLAR PANEL FARM is

under review by Albemarle County. The facility would power 2,600 homes served by the Central Virginia Electric Cooperative. The project, two miles from Batesville, will occupy 80 acres of 136 acres of forested and agricultural land owned by the Cooperative. County approval will be considered not later than January 2022. If approved, six-month-long construction could begin in early 2022. Nearby landowners in a Zoom information meeting were generally supportive, but expressed concerns about lighting impacts on night skies, negative effect on property values, and absence of continued access for outdoor recreation.

