

OPINION

Letters To The Editor

Efforts to keep Ebony country continue

To the Editor:

The Keep Ebony Country grassroots campaign to oppose rezoning and Dollar General coming to Ebony is alive and well! A Petition to Appeal the Jan. 29, 2020 vote by the Brunswick County Board of Supervisors was filed on Feb. 28, 2020 by Petitioners, Anne Edwards Hartley and Prospect Cemetery Association, and on behalf of this grassroots effort and all who are in opposition both publicly and privately. Although COVID-19 has slowed the court system, the Petition to Appeal is moving forward.

Here's where we are: we filed our response to the County's Demurrer on Friday, May 29, 2020! We have a very solid response and case. The Demurrer is a typical first step, which tries to make the case we don't have a case, and it should be thrown out. Our response makes it very clear and compelling that we do have a case and it is solid and must be heard. The only hearing on the calendar so far is a hearing for the Demurrer, which is scheduled for Aug. 3, 2020. The Appeals page on the website has more detail. <https://keepebonycountry.org/appeal>

So far we received 10 Amicus Briefs from citizens who wanted to add their support legally. Thanks to all who were able to contribute. It is not too late, if anyone else feels compelled, instructions are on the Appeals page of the website.

There has been no subdivision of the property to create the 2.04 parcel for Dollar General and transfer ownership - although it has been rezoned and the zoning map updated without any provisional connection to the "use of

the property" that is stated in the application.

Community support is really important. The best way now is through a donation. We raised \$9300 to get the Appeal kicked off and moving forward - and now focused on Round 2 - \$7500. You can find more about donations on this page <https://keepebonycountry.org/donations>. Or send check made payable to "Keep Ebony Country Fund" and mail to Keep Ebony Country, c/o Kay Whitehead, P. O. Box 36, Ebony, VA 23845. If you wish to remain an anonymous donor, just include a note to that effect with the check.

We are not alone! There are a couple of articles posted on the Keep Ebony Country Facebook page about other nearby locations that ultimately said NO to PAR 5 and Dollar General. One place is Cluster Springs in Halifax County, Virginia - that was also very controversial. The Planning Commission recommended approval; however the Board of Supervisors said NO that it should be addressed with the Conditional Use Permit. PAR 5 and Dollar General walked away.

Thanks for your time and continued interest. Public support is encouraged and greatly appreciated. Please consider showing your support with a donation.

I hope you are all staying virus-free and healthy.

Respectfully submitted,

Anne Edwards Hartley
On behalf of Keep Ebony Country Campaign

Brunswick
STEW
by Mark Evans



Well, it's the end of May in Brunswick County and it seems that it's the end of our late spring cool days.

The mugg is here. (Humid, muggy days and nights)

Cindy always says that she is grateful that we got married in November and that we then moved right out to Virginia. She worries that if we had gotten married in July and moved out here that she might have immediately gone back west and missed the beautiful falls and the mild (compared to Utah) winters, and the green growing springs and the deep green forests of Brunswick County (and the rest of Virginia.)

With the mugg here, we'll be back on our schedule of getting out into the garden by 6 a.m. to pick the Sugar Peas, and weed the bean rows and tie up the blackberries, and eat the raspberries.

We have been trying to grow raspberries for 20 years and every time the plants have withered or been eaten by rabbits or consumed by Chinese Beetles. (I know that you call them Japanese Beetles, but now that Cindy and I are going to Japan in 100 days to teach the Gospel of Jesus Christ, I feel like I need to blame the bug on a different country that seems to be in the business of producing irritating pestilences.)

Anyway, this year the raspberries, a strain recommended by the father of the wife of our oldest son, have done wonderfully.

Cindy loves raspberries and has been putting them in yogurt, cereal and smoothies.

For me, raspberries are OK, but I'd prefer strawberries or blueberries. After 2 weeks of almost daily raspberries smoothies, I had to confess to Cindy that truth. She was crushed.

But she recovered and forgave me (I think) and today I had a strawberry/blueberry smoothie and she had a raspberry, strawberry, and banana smoothie.

And, amazingly, we still get along and love each other.

Speaking of love, we had a new grandson born this week in Atlanta. We haven't visited Jack yet but we had a Zoom conference with him and his parents and his other grandparents (who live in Buffalo.)

It was kind of a weird Zoom call. Usually, there is a lot of talking and sub-conversations going on. This time we all just mostly watched and listened to Jack.

During a 2 minute silent moment, Jack opened his eyes a bit and hiccuped. Pretty exciting!

Please don't ask me those two questions that all women seem to ask about new babies because I didn't pay attention when I was told but if I had to guess I'd say 20 pounds and 19 inches, give or take 14 pounds or 12 inches.

I did make the mistake of giving him a nickname over the internet video chat and received a sharp reprimand from his mother. Evidently, she has not watched the Samurai Jack cartoons before.

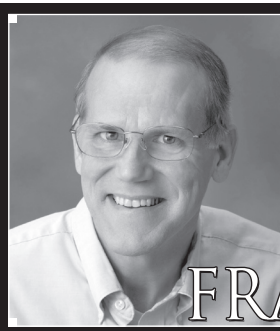
I have learned over the past 32 grandchildren that, with time, I've been allowed to call the child just about any nickname after I've burped them a couple of times and held them so that the parents got a break. The one exception to that was that I was never allowed to call Kaylee (our oldest grandchild) the name that I wanted them to call her, Zoe. I even suggested Zoe for their next two daughters but was still rejected.

Oh well. I guess we always wanted our children to be independent, right?

And speaking of acting independently, keep an eye open to what's happening at the Lawrenceville Airport recently. It seems, from what I've heard, that some employees of the county have been making decisions about that facility without the knowledge of the entire board. I'm not really sure, yet, what their goal is.

Well, gotta go.

We need to go out and pick raspberries again so we can



FROM THE DESK OF
SENATOR FRANK RUFF

More Is Not Always Better

We all grew up being told more, bigger, and better is good. Such phrases as "keeping up with the Jones" were the mantra of the 60's and 70's. If the neighbors got a new car, then some felt they "needed" to buy a new car. The battle went on and on with much of our society. It continues on in much of what happens in our world today.

It made some sense to get the public's attention by closing down things for a couple of weeks when the Coronavirus started spreading quickly across America. It was something that was very deadly that no one knew much about. Then, some governors decided that they had to be more compassionate than others. Instead of incrementally extending that two-week closing of America, one governor after another decided to dictate more harshly how they could reign over us, their subjects, than the next state. They made speeches about we had to follow the science in these decisions. I agree, we do need to follow the science! However, we need to be open to listening to what the science is telling us. Not just use it to justify decisions already made.

Simplest Is Not Always Best

Governors made the simple decision that if a couple of weeks quarantine is good then months long quarantines must be great. They did not look at the science or the sand eroding around their feet. While they, and most of us, have been focused on the deaths directly caused by Coronavirus, some have died because medical providers were prevented from closely monitoring the physical and mental health of some, while others died because they were afraid to go to hospitals and clinics when needed. If hospitals' and providers' opinions had been treated with the respect they deserve, some of those losses might not have occurred.

If governors had been seriously looking at the science and the data behind it, they would have seen that those in nursing homes and in assisted living were the most likely to die from the virus. They were ignoring that 40% of the deaths were occurring there and instead focused on inserting themselves into our lives. Early reports out of Washington State were of how bad the nursing home mortality was once the virus got into the nursing home. Studying that was apparently too complex for the scientists at the CDC.

Likewise, instead of bankrupting businesses with blanket mandated policies, governors could have given suggested guidelines and trusted people to make the right decisions. Most would have figured out ways to operate while protecting customers and employees alike.

Masks

Some thought that masks would be an excellent way

to protect themselves from the virus. The experts at the CDC, who we rely on to be the experts on disease, assured us that masks would do no good; they blocked nothing. Then the same people assured us that the opposite was true; that everyone needs to wear a mask.

Now, Governor Northam has taken the step to dictate that everyone must wear a mask when out in the public. He did this because it was the simplest way to do it, not the best. If he had been better focused on not the simplest solution rather than the best solution, it might have been more helpful for everyone. Showing people how to safely put on and take off a mask would help. Encouraging one to frequently wash a mask would help. Teaching people how handling a mask can make them safer or not handled correctly makes them a greater danger. Explaining to the public that while masks can help keep them safer, most of them are not well contoured to your face, therefore, they will not prevent all viruses, germs, bacteria from getting into your body.

In addition to them not preventing everything from getting into your respiratory system, they also give wearers a false sense of security. Without a mask, one might avoid walking directly in front of another. With a mask, many are less likely to be as cautious around others.

If Governor Northam had not chosen the simplest solution, he would not have created nearly as much angst with Virginians.

We love to hear from you! You can reach us at Sen. Ruff@verizon.net, 434-374-5129, or P.O. Box 332, Clarksville, VA 23927.

COVID-19 State, Federal, and Community Websites

Governor Northam News Releases <https://www.governor.virginia.gov/VA> Dept. of Health: <http://www.vdh.virginia.gov/coronavirus/>

COVID-19 Virginia Resources: <https://covid19.virginia.gov/>

Forward Virginia Guidelines: <https://www.virginia.gov/coronavirus/forwardvirginia/>

Virginia Employment Commission Pandemic Unemployment Assistance: <https://www.vec.virginia.gov/html/pua.html>

Virginia Secretary of Commerce and Trade COVID-19 Resource: <https://www.commerce.virginia.gov/covid-19/>

Commonwealth Updates: <https://www.virginia.gov/coronavirus/>

Virginia Tax Filing: <https://www.tax.virginia.gov/coronavirus>

Virginia State Board of Elections: <https://www.elections.virginia.gov/>

VPAP.org (not a state website): <https://www.vpap.org/elections/>

Centers for Disease Control and Prevention: <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/index.html>

Federal website <https://www.coronavirus.gov/>

SBA Disaster Assistance: <https://www.sba.gov/disaster-assistance/coronavirus-covid-19>

U.S. Dept. of Labor Employee Rights: <https://www.dol.gov/agencies/whd/pandemic/ffcra-employee-paid-leave>

U.S. Dept. of Labor Employer Requirements: <https://www.dol.gov/agencies/whd/pandemic/ffcra-employer-paid-leave>

U.S. Dept. of Labor FAQ's: <https://www.dol.gov/agencies/whd/pandemic/ffcra-questions>

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