



Senior Moments

with Emma Edwards

We need computer buttons for life

The “start” button on my computer gives me too many choices: *Switch user, log off, lock, restart, sleep and hibernate*.

What if we humans (especially us seniors) had such buttons to handle living our own lives? We do, to some extent, but don’t usually realize it.

One day recently, I began my day with the *restart* button. I couldn’t find the remote, which is the size of a credit card, for my Bose Radio. I had looked everywhere.

Many seniors have what I call a junk drawer and, often, it holds such treasures. And yes, it was there. Time to do the annual sorting of that drawer.

I perused my choices for that *restart* and decided I needed to hit the *switch user* button.

Remotes come in all sizes. So now I’ve switched to two drawers with one containing nothing but remotes. However, I still haven’t found the remote for my large oscillating fan. I had already found the small remote to my bedroom TV, which had been lost for a few months. No, it was not in the junk drawer, but in the sewing drawer.

It’s been said you can’t teach an old dog new tricks. Maybe that’s true for dogs, but I think we seniors can learn new tricks.

Choices, options and energy slide into the options for learning as we age in place or perhaps become RVers, as my hubby and I did on our second retirement.

We had many *restarts* in

our lives. We were never ready to *hibernate*. *Sleep?* I could and still do *sleep* easily, even at naptime. However, I think hubby was in the *lock* position and seemed able to manifest calmness in most any situation.

In the “olden days,” cats were inside most of the day and outside all night. It seems once we got in bed I would say, “did you put the cat out?” and he would either get up and do the deed or say “yes dear, did you set the alarm?”

In this era, neither applies as we can set an alarm weeks in advance or at the moment. And we would never allow a cat to be out all night.

So comes the question: Can you teach an old dog new tricks?

Ben Franklin once said, “We are all born stupid, but one must work hard to remain ignorant.”

Life, no matter the age, is about learning. As a widow who spends time with several other widows, I learned early in widowhood that “You never know how strong you are until being strong is the only choice you have.”

Hibernation is tempting sometimes, but not a solution. There’s so much to learn, but it’s time to *log off!*



Mayor’s Message

by Henry Balensifer III

Accountability is a two-way street

A number of factors have combined to create stress and strain on the mental health of many.

Nerves are frayed from months on lockdown, there’s a changed landscape for businesses and doing business, plus unemployment, the continued failure of unemployment insurance assistance, the harassment of people wearing masks or not wearing masks in stores, and the sudden awareness of how different life experiences affect minority Americans and what to do about it.

We also had a local incident of an off-duty officer allegedly engaged in racist behavior. We are investigating this as quickly as possible while ensuring thoroughness via an independent investigator. This way, the public can take confidence, regardless of the result, that the investigation was impartial and done by someone with no attachments to our city or its police department.

It’s also important to note that the city cannot legally fire people over allegations, nor should it. That’s also not a defense of the accused. While allegations may be sufficient to destroy a person’s career or life in public, it is not a legal basis for summary judg-

ment or termination. There must be proof, there must be evidence, there must be due process.

The city manager initiated the investigation based on reports of a social media post. In the meantime, the officer is on administrative leave, thus removing the person in question from enforcement duty until their innocence or guilt can be determined.

Additionally, it’s worth noting that the city charter bars elected officials from interfering with the operations/personnel matters of the city. This isn’t New York, Minneapolis, or Portland, where the Mayor can issue decrees regarding employees. All elected officials in the city are volunteers with day jobs or are retired. This is why the city entrusts by charter law employment decisions to a professional manager.

Here in Warrenton, we’re starting to see and discuss more of the issues needing improvement in our city. In

doing so, we will have to review things that many make us uncomfortable. Accountability is a two-way street, and we must be committed to not being afraid of it -- but as an opportunity to become better. Should we always just keep doing what we’re doing because “it’s always been that way” or should we strive to see if there’s a better way to do it?

The city manager, myself and the City Commission are not afraid to talk about doing things differently. Some of our greatest critics (you may have read their letters to the editor in this paper) have offered some good ideas once you dig into the real crux of the letters, and in some cases we’ve implemented those ideas.

In short, I love and believe in Warrenton and its people. We’re family.

Are we perfect? No. Are we doing OK overall? I’d say yes. Can we do better? Absolutely, and we will.

County adopts ethics policy

County commissioners adopted a new policy Wednesday night on appropriate governmental conduct.

The order applies to all county employees, contract employees, applicants, contractors and authorized volunteers.

The policy is meant to reinforce an organizational culture that provides the opportunity for all to report their concerns and complaints with assurance they’ll be investigated in a fair and timely fashion without retaliation.

It covers the abuse, improper use or destruction of county resources; corruption such as using one’s influence in a business transaction; dishonesty and a reckless disregard for truth; fraud; and mismanagement or misappropriation of assets, including needless waste.

The county has partnered with the company EthicsPoint to provide a public hotline in which the public, employees or contractors can file a complaint by phone or email and remain confidential.

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