



# Mount Vernon Civic Association, Inc.

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May 2008

## President's Message

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### General Membership Meeting

Wednesday,  
May 14, 2008

#### Speaker:

*Tim Shirocky*  
Assistant Director of the  
Fairfax County  
Department of  
Tax Administration

#### Where:

*Washington Mill  
Elementary School*

#### When:

*7:00 pizza and soda  
7:30 PM program*



### Greetings Friends and Neighbors!

I look forward to seeing you at our next Mount Vernon Civic Association meeting on May 14th at Washington Mill Elementary School. Our speaker will be Janet Tim Shirocky, Assistant Director of the Real Estate Division, Fairfax County Department of Tax Administration, who will speak and answer your questions about our real estate property tax assessments. I know that this continues to be a topic of great interest to many of our members and I'm sure you will enjoy this presentation. Primo Pizza will be served at 7 PM and our meeting begins at 7:30.

### Community Party!

I am extremely pleased to announce that our Second Annual MVCA Community Party will be held on Sunday, September 21st in Picnic Area "A" at Fort Hunt Park from 2-6 PM. This area has a covered pavilion and stage area, playground, ball fields, and restrooms. And for those who enjoyed last year's musical entertainment, Clarence "Blues Man" Turner and his band will be back again this year to keep the party rocking! For those members who are die hard Redskins fans, we are also planning to televise the scheduled Redskins-Cardinals game. If you are interested in

attending, volunteering, or sponsoring this year's party, please contact our Party Committee co-chairs Tom Cleary and Susan Alvarado. Tom can be reached at 360-3903 and Susan's telephone number is 360-3235. I deeply appreciate their willingness to lead the Association's efforts to make this year's community party another great success. I encourage you to contact them and be a part of the Party team. I'll see you there!



### 100% Membership

I would like to congratulate Jay Miller, Block Captain for Nellie Custis Court, for being the first to achieve 100% membership on his block. Great job Jay!! For those of you who have not yet returned their membership renewals, it's not too late!

Our Association has a direct voice in the issues facing all of us in Mount Vernon- from transportation, public safety, planning and zoning, county budget, schools, and more. We also provide support to the community through our bi-annual

*Continued on next page.*

*Continued from Page 1*

directory, quarterly newsletters, web site, community clean-up, financial support to our local schools and Cub Pack, and more. I hope that you agree with me that \$20 a year is a bargain to join or maintain your membership in MVCA.

If you need a membership form, please contact me or Tom Cleary and we'll be sure to get you one. Or you can send a check with your name and address to our Mount Vernon P.O. Box address.

### **Membership/Directory Committee**

As you know, Kristin Matheis is leaving her position as Chair of the Membership / Directory Committee. Kristin has done a wonderful job serving our community and I know you join with me in thanking her for all her hard work and support. I am pleased with the response we have received with our membership renewals from members who are interested in chairing and serving on this committee. I have scheduled an organizational meeting of the Membership / Directory Committee on May 21, 8 PM, at Washington Mill Elementary School. Please put that date on your calendar and plan to join us.

Thanks for your support and I'll see you on May 14<sup>th</sup>.

*Best wishes,  
John Skudlarek  
President, MVCA*



## **Public Safety**

### **Ticketing and Towing Begins May 1 for Mount Vernon Community Parking District Violations**

Beginning May 1, police will ticket vehicles parked in violation of the Community Parking District (CPD) regulations recently established in the Mount Vernon Magisterial District. A "tow tag," a warning ticket and an informational flier will be attached to the vehicle. The owner will have 48 hours to move the vehicle. If the vehicle remains in the CPD after the initial 48-hour period, a parking ticket will be issued with an additional 48 hours to move the vehicle. If the vehicle is not removed from the CPD following the second 48 hours, it will be towed.

For a map of the Mount Vernon District CPD and more information on a large area CPD, go to [www.fairfaxcounty.gov/fcdot/large\\_cpd.htm](http://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/fcdot/large_cpd.htm). To report a vehicle in violation of the CPD regulations, call the Police Department's non-emergency number, 703-691-2131, or the Mount Vernon District Office at 703-780-7518; both TTY 711.

The Mount Vernon CPD was established following a public hearing on March 10 and passage by the Fairfax County Board of Supervisors of an amendment to Section 82-5B of the Fairfax County Code to allow large-area CPDs without a petition. A large-area CPD was subsequently passed for the

Mount Vernon District. This process augments the current petition-based process that is still in use. In all cases, restrictions only apply to public streets in residential areas within any CPD and there are provisions for limited exclusions.

Vehicles that are not allowed on public streets in residential areas in the Mount Vernon Community Parking District are:

- Boat trailer.
- Watercraft.
- Motor home.
- Camping trailer.
- Trailer or semi-trailer, even if attached to a vehicle.
- Vehicle with three or more axles.
- Vehicle with a gross vehicle weighted rating (GVWR) of 12,000 pounds or more.
- Vehicle transporting 16 or more passengers (except school buses).

There is an exemption for vehicles temporarily parked (for up to 48 hours) for the purpose of loading, unloading or preparing for a trip.

For more news and information, visit [www.fairfaxcounty.gov/news](http://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/news).

## Health and Human Services

### Inova Mount Vernon Hospital

Construction is progressing in all phases of the new addition, both inside and outside the building. Parking is limited, but valet service is up and running with very nice personnel. If space is not available in front, drive to the north side to the entrance to the "ENG" building, and a member of the parking personnel will park your car and return same when you are ready. Tipping is not necessary but I would encourage it.



### How Are Fairfax County Youths Behaving?

Fairfax County published a recent survey of statistics covering 8<sup>th</sup>, 10<sup>th</sup>, and 12<sup>th</sup> graders.

#### Alcohol

The most commonly used substance. Twenty percent have driven a car after drinking alcohol.

#### Tobacco

Cigarette smoking is the lowest in five years and 92% are not current smokers.

#### Marijuana

Eighty-five percent have never used the drug, 18% of 12<sup>th</sup> graders and 8% of 10<sup>th</sup> graders currently use marijuana.

#### Inhalants

Three percent of 6<sup>th</sup> graders and 6% of 8<sup>th</sup> graders report using inhalants. Eight graders used inhalants instead of marijuana and cigarettes. Inhalants included cleaning chemicals, butane, bug spray, and propellants in whipped cream or cleaning fluids.

#### Gangs

Ninety percent are not in a gang. Of those in gangs the breakdown is African Americans 7%, Latinos 5%, white youths and Asian youths 2%.

#### Bullying and aggression

Fifty percent reported being bullied, taunted, teased, or ridiculed. A large percentage of these reported being lonely, admitted carrying a weapon, have used drugs and alcohol, were depressed and/or have considered suicide.

#### Mental health

Twenty-four percent of 8-12<sup>th</sup> graders felt sad and hopeless and reduced their activities. Fifteen percent considered suicide. Forty percent of girls and 17% of

boys reported depression. Nineteen percent of girls and 11% of boys reported considering suicide. Forty-five percent of Latinos reported being depressed, the highest of all races. The rate of considering suicide is similar to the national average.

### Health and Human Services – Two Committee Chairs

At our last civic association board meeting it was decided that the health and human services area of the civic association should have two individual chairpersons, one for health and the second for human services. The chairman of the health committee would attend the weekly noon health discussions held at the Mount Vernon Hospital. The chairperson for human services would attend the once-a-month evening meeting, also held at Mount Vernon Hospital and chaired by Louise Cleveland, who continues to put her heart and soul into her position. She is most dedicated to her position.

Please contact our civic association president, John Skudlarek, 703-704-5213, if you are interested in chairing the Human Services Committee.

C.A. Loughridge, M.D.



### Interested in Human Services Issues in Our Community?

Volunteer to be chair of the Human Services Committee for the Mount Vernon Civic Association. Call John Skudlarek, 703-704-5213, for more information.

## Planning and Zoning

The Planning and Zoning Committee met in March and April. Unfortunately, I caught the flu this winter and missed a meeting so parts of my report are taken from the minutes of the meeting. Thus, this article may lack the details I try to include to bring you up to date on what's happening with the planning and zoning in our district.

### Lorton

At the March meeting, P&Z was presented with a new plan for a Sunrise Senior Living center in Lorton. It would be an assisted living facility as opposed to full care and would consist of 80 units serving senior citizens of average age of 80. The plan is for a traditional Sunrise style facility with Victorian gables and porches. The lot they are looking at is 5.3 acres with 64 required parking spaces. They are currently presenting the plan with 1/3 of the lot to be tree save area. I do not know if this 1/3 of the lot is sloped or difficult to build upon as this does sound like a generous tree save area for a developer to offer. To achieve the desired use, a rezoning is needed. We have not voted on this plan yet but have been told the adjacent community supports this proposed use. I do not know what the current zoning is but will let you know as this application progresses.

### Lorton Prison Site

I also want to update you on what is happening with the Lorton parcel that was formerly the Lorton prison. Much of the the 3000 acre parcel is under the control of the Fairfax County Park Authority (FCPA) and it is seeking ways to fund it's master plan for a major athletic fields' complex. FCPA plans to develop a total of 16 rectangular and 8 diamond playing fields. The plan also includes the Laurel Hill Sportsplex. The cost was



estimated at \$144 million which has forced the FCPA to examine creative ways to try and fund the project. As we all know, money for many needed projects is just not available at the present time.

### Infill Meeting

I attended a meeting on infill development a few weeks ago that was sponsored by Supervisor Hyland's office. The purpose of this meeting was to bring together various county officials and developers with neighbors in the Mount Vernon district to discuss the challenges presented by infill development in established neighborhoods. While nothing was resolved, the meeting was productive as it gave neighbors concerned or

effected by infill development the opportunity to voice their concerns to county officials. The major issues addressed were storm water management, house heights and the dirt and noise of construction.

Some good news offered at the infill meeting –the county is actively trying to come up with new, more effective ways to measure the heights of houses. They are looking at different means to restrict the heights of new houses in established neighborhoods by using formulas or criteria that include a comparison of the neighboring houses' heights and using lines of sight between adjacent houses.

They are also considering measuring the height by using the original grade of the lot an infill house is built upon. Currently, developers can make a house legally taller by building it on higher ground created by pushing dirt onto the footprint where the house is to be built. While no new regulations have as yet been approved, the county does seem to be realizing it has to do something to stop new infill houses from towering over older neighbor's houses in established neighborhoods. I was very pleased with the meeting and feel it demonstrated that Supervisor Hyland has heard the complaints many in this area have towards infill development and is responding. Let's just hope the county staff will come up with the regulations and implement them in a timely fashion.

### King's Crossing

Some of you may have read recently in the local Mount Vernon papers that the long awaited development of Kings Crossing ( located at the intersections of South Kings Highway and Route one where the old Michaels and current location of Chuck. E. Cheese's) is **not** going forward. Despite years of plans and negotiations with neighboring communities and the approval of the required zoning amendments, the developers have decided to **not** go forward with the mixed use of residential condominiums and retail space. Currently the owners are going to redo the facades of the buildings and try and lease them out without any big additions of new buildings. The improvements are to include the addition of much needed landscaping to the property, including the parking lots.

### Planning Commission Approved Upzoning of Leatherland Property

Finally, I want to give you another update on the Leatherland property. As you may recall, this property consists of 7.46 acres on Telegraph Road next to Winstead Manor. It is currently zoned R-1 but developers have applied for a rezoning to PDH-2. Through the use of proffers, development of houses is limited to 11 ( it could have been 14) . If it was left as R-1, they could build 7 houses.

Both your local committees — the P&Z and the Environmental Committees —disapproved this

rezoning application in a joint resolution after numerous meetings with the developer and their attorney. I consistently voted against the higher rezoning as both adjacent communities oppose the rezoning and the neighbors I speak with from our civic association tell me they want less density in our area. I agree with trying to keep the density low as we do not have the infrastructure to handle the density we now have.

The interesting development I want to report is that on April 30, 2008, despite the nonsupport of both our local Mount Vernon Committees for this rezoning AND our district Planning Commissioner, the very knowledgeable Mr. Earl Flannigan, the Planning Commission voted to approve the rezoning application. It is quite unusual for the Planning Commission **to not defer** to the judgment of the planning commissioner whose district the property is located in. However, that is what occurred. Our very fine Commissioner, Mr. Flannigan supported the views of this district and did not support the application for rezoning. However, in a rare occurrence, the Planning Commission voted to approve the rezoning, despite Mr. Flannigan's objection.

While many may see it as only 11 houses or 4 more houses than they could have built before the rezoning, please remember every



rezoning sets a precedent. The next parcel in that area that wants to go from an R-1 to a PDH-2 or R-2 will have a far easier time as the developer will point to the Leatherland property and its higher zoning. Actually, one of the main reasons stated by developers seeking this upzoning was that Winstead Manor- the adjacent community had previously been upzoned. Well yes, it was upzoned and it was upzoned at the request of this same developer. He bought Winstead, had it rezoned and then came back and purchased Leatherland a few years later and is now applying for this upzoning. The precedent such upzonings begin is contagious.

The application now goes to the Board of Supervisors. I will keep you posted as I find this Leatherland application very interesting to watch progress through the system. Everyone enjoy the warm weather and remember to look out for one another's houses as we start vacation season!

Anita (JoJo) Shifflett  
Planning and Zoning  
Committee



Thanks to our volunteers, eight since the last issue of our newsletter, our neighborhood is patrolled, several times per week, on our behalf. They keep an eye open for suspicious vehicles, unusual activities, and evidences of anti-social behavior throughout our neighborhood, from Mount Vernon Highway to the Potomac River. We meet up with our nightly foxes, an occasional opossum, and (*mirabile dictu*, 'wonderful to report') a flying squirrel. Were this service assigned to a security service, this patrol would cost much more than the annual subscription to the MVCA.



Now that the season of hibernation has passed, we can expect a heightened level of activity among those who would disturb our content. Our weekly logs report no more than the continual invitation of the unlocked Mansion House gates to all comers. We urge more vigilance upon members of the swim and sailing clubs who use these gates, especially during the summer months.

Officer Robert Clift of the Mount Vernon Station has been keeping us informed of current and potential safety issues in our neighborhood. Among his communications is the improved method of reporting litterers along our roads and streets. On the Giuliani Principle, therefore, of No Tolerance of even small infractions of community

## Neighborhood Watch

decorum, I draw to your attention his latest notice. If you spot anyone violating the littering laws—throwing debris, even cigarette butts, out of vehicles, make note of the license plate, the place, and the time, and call (703) 324-3106 or check with [www.fairfaxcouncil.org](http://www.fairfaxcouncil.org) to pursue the case. The penalty a first offender will be no more than an official notice; but besides its deterrent effect for sensitive souls, this notice has the potential to grow real (i.e., legal) teeth the next time around.

Following my notice of the need for better signage that we had an active Neighborhood Watch program here, Officer Clift has

agreed to replace or install signs of our positive (though not aggressive) existence at several points of access to the neighborhood. My gratitude to those who suggested sites for these new signs.

Additional volunteers for Neighborhood Watch service (feel the thrill of cruising the dark streets as your community sleeps) will relieve our 36 participants: *servi sine nominis communitatis* ('anonymous servants of the community').

*Cóilín Owens, Coordinator  
4309 Neptune Drive  
cowens7@gmu.edu*

## Directory and Membership

Thank you to everyone who has sent in their 2008 membership dues! If you misplaced or did not receive a membership form, you can download one at [www.mvcaneighbors.org](http://www.mvcaneighbors.org). Dues can be mailed to:

MVCA  
PO Box 61  
Mount Vernon, VA 22121

As mentioned in the last issue of this newsletter, this year we challenged all Block Captains to obtain 100% membership for their respective blocks. All block captains who reach this goal will receive 2 complimentary passes and a VIP tour of

the Mount Vernon Estate. Congratulations go out to Jay Miller and the residents of Nellie Custis Court as the first block in our community to reach 100% membership!

Several blocks are currently just one household shy of 100% membership:

- Brookmay Court
- 9324-9339 Heather Glen Dr
- Macklin Court
- Mavis Court
- 9203-9215 Volunteer Drive

*Kristin Matheis  
Directory & Membership  
703.924.3317*

## Environment and Recreation

Here is the latest news from the MVCCA Environment and Recreation Committee meetings.

### Vegetative Buffers

A resolution was passed by the Environment and Recreation Committee aimed at maintaining required vegetative buffers, installed by a homeowner .

Anyone whose property extends into a Resource Protected Area and has tried to get a permit for construction or expansion into the RPA should know that these vegetative buffers are required as a condition for granting waivers or modification to the requirements of the Chesapeake Bay Ordinance. This requirement is done to protect the water quality and quantity of flow. Unfortunately, the permit did not require that the vegetative buffer “to run with the land” negating the value and purpose of this requirement. The County attorney indicated that a deed restriction could be attached to the property deed if county staff were instructed to do so by the Board of Supervisors. The deed restriction would provide another tool the county could use to enforce compliance. Action, however, would probably have to be initiated by a knowledgeable resident of the community.

### New Alexandria Flooding

In order to prevent future flooding in the New Alexandria and Belle View Area, the Corps of Engineers did a study. Only plan “1a” (a pump and surrounding levee and walls) will

get serious attention because of its favorable benefit-to-cost ratio. The next stage is a feasibility study which will cost \$800,000 and the neighborhoods involved would like Fairfax County to fund it in order to expedite the process.

### Water Quality

Fairfax County is having continued problems with determining Total Maximum Daily Loads of contaminants in our streams. PCB concentrations are measured in sediment and not traced back to their source. The fish in the Potomac River are contaminated, especially those like Pan fish which feed off the bottom of the River and live in the River year round. However, Rockfish which only come up the tributaries to spawn and don't live here year round are not contaminated. Another concern is the rise in E.coli detection. E.coli is a bacterium that is commonly found in the lower intestine of warm blooded animals. More water testing specifically DNA testing is needed to identify the source of the E.coli contamination which could be leaking sewer pipes.

### Mount Vernon Estate Parking

Construction is underway for additional parking, and there is concern about storm water runoff. Also it seems that busses continue to have engines idling while parked at the estate, causing significant air pollution, despite restrictive signage.



### Join in The 5<sup>th</sup> Annual MVCA Spring Cleanup

WHEN? Saturday, May 31, 2008 from 9AM - Noon

WHERE? Meet at the Mansion House Parking Lot

WHAT? Help beautify our neighborhood and reduce environmental pollution. Join friends and neighbors as well as the members of the Washington Mill Cub Scout Troop 1503 for a fun morning of cleaning up unsightly trash along the streets of the MVCA Community.

Free supplies (hats, safety vests and bags). Free treats to get you energized. Please bring gloves.

QUESTIONS? Call Bette Zaletel at 703-780-9355

See you all Saturday, May 31. Think Green.

*Bette Zaletel  
Environment and  
Recreation Committee*



## Transportation

These tips on driving more efficiently and maintaining your vehicle can help improve the fuel economy of your car or truck. They were researched from the internet.

### Engine Warm-Up

Avoid prolonged warming up of engine, even on cold mornings - 30 to 45 seconds is plenty of time.

Be sure the automatic choke is disengaged after engine warm up ... chokes often get stuck, resulting in bad gas/air mixture.

Don't start and stop engine needlessly. Idling your engine for one minute consumes the gas amount equivalent to when you start the engine.

Avoid "revving" the engine, especially just before you switch the engine off; this wastes fuel needlessly and washes oil down from the inside cylinder walls, owing to loss of oil pressure.

Eliminate jack-rabbit starts. Accelerate slowly when starting from dead stop. Don't push pedal down more than 1/4 of the total foot travel. This allows the carburetor to function at peak efficiency.

### How to Buy Gasoline

Buy gasoline during coolest time of day - early morning or late evening is best. During these times gasoline is densest. Keep in mind - gas pumps measure volumes of gasoline, not densities of fuel concentration.

Choose type and brand of gasoline carefully. Certain brands

provide you with greater economy because of better quality. Use the brands which "seem" most beneficial.

Avoid filling gas tank to the top. Overfilling results in sloshing over and out of tank. Never fill gas tank past the first "click" of fuel nozzle, if nozzle is automatic.

### How to Drive Economically

Exceeding 40 mph forces your auto to overcome tremendous wind resistance.

Never exceed legal speed limit. Primarily they are set for your traveling safety, however better gas efficiency also occurs. Traveling at 55 mph give you up to 21% better mileage when compared to former legal speed limits of 65 mph and 70 mph.

Traveling at fast rates in low gears can consume up to 45% more fuel than is needed.

Manual shift driven cars allow you to change to highest gear as soon as possible, thereby letting you save gas if you "nurse it along". However, if you cause the engine to "bog down", premature wearing of engine parts occurs.

Keep windows closed when traveling at highway speeds. Open windows cause air drag, reducing your mileage by 10%.

Drive steadily. Slowing down or speeding up wastes fuel. Also avoid tailgating - the driver in front of you is unpredictable. Not only is it unsafe, but it affects your economy, if he slows down unexpectedly.

Think ahead when approaching hills. If you accelerate, do it before you reach the hill, not while you're on it.

### General Advice

Do not rest your left foot on the floor board pedals while driving. The slightest pressure puts "mechanical drag" on components, wearing them down prematurely. This "dragging" also demands additional fuel usage.

Avoid rough roads whenever possible, because dirt or gravel rob you of up to 30% of your gas mileage.

*Paul Schray  
Chair, Traffic &  
Transportation  
Committee*



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 2nd Vice President: Pat Stallings..... 703-778-4442  
 Secretary: Karan Cerutti ..... 703-778-4442  
 Treasurer: Tom Cleary ..... 703-360-3903

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 Ron Neitzke ..... 703-360-3807  
 Sandy Polson ..... 703-360-2814

### Committee Chairpersons

Budget and Finance: David Fish ..... 703-360-9559  
 Consumer Affairs: Vacant  
 Directory: Kristin Matheis ..... 703-924-3317  
 Education: Valerie Schalk ..... 703-619-6312  
 Environment and Recreation: Bette Zaletel .... 703-780-9355  
 Block Party: Vacant  
 Health/Human Services: Babe Loughridge ..... 703-780-3845  
 Maintenance: Vacant  
 Membership: Kristin Matheis ..... 703-924-3317  
 Neighborhood Watch: Coilin and  
     Julie Owens ..... 703-360-9028  
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