



Mount Vernon Civic Association, Inc.

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www.MountVernonCivicAssociation.org

President's Message

May/June 2009

Greetings Friends and Neighbors,
I hope this edition of the MVCA newsletter finds you well and enjoying the Spring weather. Summer is just around the corner!

We have several great events coming up that I am pleased to share with you. Our next general membership meeting is on May 13th. George O'Quinn, owner of Dominion Surveyors, a member and great supporter of the MVCA, will be our guest speaker. George will present a historical perspective on the art and science of surveying and demonstrate modern and vintage surveying instruments from his collection. This will be a presentation of great interest that will bring in to focus the activities

of our First President and former neighbor early in his career. Pizza at 7:00, meeting at 7:30 PM in the Washington Mill School cafeteria. See you there.

May 16th will see community members coming together to help beautify our community again this year. Many thanks to Mike Habib, a long serving and dynamic Board member, for volunteering to serve as chair of the Environment and Recreation Committee and head up our Community Clean-up. Please see the details of this event inside the newsletter and come out and join us on the 16th.

It's official! Our 3rd Annual MVCA Community Picnic will be held on Saturday, June 13th from 2-6 PM on the grounds of St. James Episcopal Church at 5614 Old Mill Road. We will have hot barbecue, cold drinks, live music, and games for all ages. The picnic is open to all residents within the MVCA community. Please plan to come and help make this our best picnic yet! The picnic is absolutely free. We do ask you to RSVP and bring a side dish or salad to share. Volunteers are always welcome too! See the flyer on the next page. Please

call Jeannine Simmons at (703) 360-3613 or go to <http://www.doodle.com/s5deznc25nnz4kgn> to RSVP and volunteer. We look forward to seeing you on June 13th at St. James! Rain or Shine!

Thanks again to everyone who renewed their Association membership. As you know, this is a Directory year and all members will receive their Directory in the next month. If you haven't sent in your membership dues, it's not too late! Dues are \$20 a year and you can find the membership form on our web site at www.MountVernonCivicAssociation.org. Speaking of Membership and Directory, I would like extend special thanks to Ken Poortinga and Elizabeth Bancroft for their hard work managing our membership affairs and producing a first class directory again this year. We are indebted to them and all the wonderful volunteers who serve our community.

I appreciate your support and I hope to see you at our upcoming MVCA events.

Best wishes,

*John Skudlarek
President, Mount Vernon
Civic Association*

General Membership Meeting

Wednesday, May 13, 2009

Speaker

George O'Quinn
Dominion Surveyors

Subject

The Art and Science
of Surveying:
A Historical Perspective

Where and When

Washington Mill Elementary School
7:00 Pizza and soda
7:30 PM program



Neighborhood Watch

Reports from our weekly volunteers indicate that things have been quiet in the Mount Vernon Neighborhood. As the weather warms up, and to judge from two recent police warnings from the district station, this is not likely to continue. There has been a rise in daytime and nocturnal burglaries in the wider area in the past month.

Thus, as few reminders are in order.

Vehicles

The police report a surge in area thefts particularly from vehicles of car stereos, GPS units, and other easily portable valuables left in open sight.

- Always lock unoccupied cars, even for a few minutes.
- Park cars in well-lighted spots.
- Do not put valuables in glove compartment or under the seats: lock them in the trunk or take them indoors.
- When removing your GPS unit, wipe windscreen with a moist towelette to erase the mark of the suction cup.
- Write down the serial numbers of all valuable items to help in identification: many of these items show up in pawnshops or in the course of police searches.

Homes

- Inform neighbors if away from your home for even a few days.
- Do not allow newspapers or mail to accumulate.
- Trim trees or shrubs that might obscure front or rear doors.
- Maintain outside lights or motion-sensor lights.
- Check out any unfamiliar noises or unfamiliar vehicles.

Report suspicious activity to Crime Solvers (1-866-411-TIPS/8477).

Thanks

Thanks to our 40 volunteers who take weekly shifts on our patrols. During the months of March and April, these folks showed the colors: Bart & Evelyn Hewitt, Jay & Carole Gillard, Ron & Joan Jones, Sean McCarthy, Royce & Chris Radeline, Phil Mongan, Kevin & Debbie O'Neill, Dennis Phillips, and Rich & Pat Gilfillan.

We are staffed through the end of May, before the new cycle begins. If there are any volunteers who would like to join in the effort, now is a good time. During the summer months many of us may be on vacation and our unwelcome visitors may not.

*Cóilin Owens, Coordinator (703) 780-5218
(cowens7@gmu.edu)*

MVCA Annual Picnic

Sat. June 13, 2009 2p-6p St. James Episcopal Church, Old Mill Road.

Last name
A-M = Salad, N-Z = Side Dish

Beer/Wine, Live Music, Moon Bounce, BBQ, Cake

Volunteers needed to help set-up, clean-up, etc. Call Jeannine Simmons @ 703-360-3813.

Education

Graduating Seniors

Mt. Vernon High School graduation will occur on June 18th at 4 p.m. at Mount Vernon High. Their graduation party will be at Dave and Buster's. West Potomac High School will graduate on June 17th at 2 p.m. in the Patriot Center. The graduation party will follow at Dave and Buster's. Congratulations to all our Seniors. We are proud of you.

The calendars for the 2009-10 school year are posted and available online at <http://www.fcps.edu/cal.htm>.

TJHSST Admissions Test Prep Seminar—The Thomas Jefferson High School for Science and Technology (TJHSST) Admissions Test Preparation Seminar is open to students who will enter grade 8 in the 2009-10 school year and want to prepare for the entrance exam. Coursework focuses on admissions test-related mathematical and verbal reasoning, essay writing, and study strategies. Participation in this course does not constitute application, admission, or acceptance to TJHSST. The program runs July 6 through July 17 and July 20 through July 31. For more information, visit <http://www.fcps.edu/aceclasses/>.

Do You Have a Student Entering Sixth Grade Next Year?

If yes, he or she may need a booster dose of Tdap (tetanus, diphtheria, acellular pertussis). Sixth grade students cannot begin school in the fall without documentation of having had either the Tdap booster OR documentation of having had a tetanus containing vaccine within the past five years. If your child is still 10 years old, he or she may receive the Tdap vaccine, Boostrix, which is approved for 10-year-olds, or you may wait until the 11th birthday to receive the vaccine approved for 11-year-olds. Documentation that your student has received this immunization should be brought to the school registrar. Fairfax County Public Schools tracks compliance for this state requirement, and students who do not meet the requirement by the first day of school will be excluded from school. Students can receive immunizations required for school at no charge at any Fairfax County Health Department walk-in immunization clinic.

Valerie Schalk

MVCA Education Committee Chair

Spring Cleanup

Join in the 6th Annual MVCA Spring Cleanup

Help beautify our neighborhood by joining your friends, neighbors and members of Washington Mill Cub Scout Troop 1503 for a morning of cleaning up unsightly trash along the streets of the MVCA community.

When: Saturday, May 16 from 9AM-noon

Where: Meet just inside the entrance to the Mansion House Parking Lot

We will have free supplies such as safety vests, hats, and trash bags. Please bring your own gloves.

Questions: Call Mike Habib at 703-360-7742.

NOTE: This is the same time as the Mansion House Clean-up. Mansion House members will be gathering near the clubhouse, while we will be just inside the entrance.

Public Safety

Drivers and other road users are advised that large tour buses often make U-turns (sometimes two or more buses in a row) at the corner of Cherry Tree Drive and Route 235 after they have discharged their passengers at Mount Vernon.

County budget cuts will include reductions in certain Public Safety services and programs. Fire Department Heavy Rescue, EMS/Ambulance and Police Services, and police helicopter patrol flight hours will probably be reduced. The highly trained and internationally acclaimed FC Fire Department Heavy Rescue units (building and bridge collapses, serious fires and severe auto accidents, elevator accidents, workplace accidents, overturned trucks, railroad accidents, etc.) that remain in service will have to cover larger areas with the potential for longer response times. The MVCCA Public Safety Committee under Dallas Shawkey's leadership is monitoring all of these developments.

John A. Hurley, Sr. 703-799-9353

Planning and Zoning

The Planning and Zoning Committee met on April 6, 2009. County officials updated the committee on the progress of the county's attempt to better control the height of houses in infill neighborhoods. The county refers to the issue as one of maintaining neighborhood compatibility. It is currently looking at two methods, a bulk of plane method and a set back ratio. The set back ratio method is currently being examined as a less complicated and less expensive method. At the risk of oversimplifying, the setback ratio would basically mean the higher a house is the further it will be required from the property line. The county is studying both methods but it does not look like a decision is near.

Currently, a maximum of 35 feet is permitted for all houses built in Fairfax County. A house is measured from the pregrade or postgrade level of ground, whichever is lower up to the "mean" of the roof. It is not measured from the ground up to the top of the house. One fact that should be noted is that the county does not send anyone out to measure new houses. The builder or architect certifies on the plans the house is not over 35 feet. No county inspection is done on this measurement. County inspections are done only to check safety features such as wiring, foundation footings, etc. County officials have become more vigilant about house heights since it was discovered in 2006 that hundreds of homes were over the limit because builders were measuring using various methods and were building houses on higher post grade fill dirt.

Another big issue at last month's meeting was the proposed installation of a AT&T / Cingular cell tower or "monopole" at the Masonic lodge on Fort Hunt Road. As many of you know, the lodge is a very old building and is in a neighborhood. Several neighbors came to the meeting and were concerned about aesthetics and the potential dangers of a cell tower near their house. Cingular has been proposed to place the tower on the property as a flagpole with an American flag. However, the proper care and lighting of the American flag was discussed and the neighbors seemed to prefer a simple brown or green colored pole. The bigger concern of neighbors was whether or not such cell towers have been proven safe. We were told by the Cingular representative they are safe and that the courts have

**Mount Vernon Civic Assn, Inc.
Officer, Directors, and Chairpersons
2008 – 2009**

Officers

President: John Skudlarek.....(703) 704-5213
1st Vice President: Paul Schray(703) 619-9377
2nd Vice President: Pat Stallings.....(703) 778-4442
Secretary: Karan Cerutti.....(703) 360-9559
Treasurer: Tom Cleary.....(703) 360-3903

Directors

Mike Habib:(703) 360-7742
Ron Neitzke:(703) 360-3807
Sandy Polson:(703) 360-2814

Committee Chairs

Community Picnic: Jeannine Simmons.....(703) 360-3613
Education: Valerie Schalk(703) 619-6312
Environment & Recreation: Mike Habib.....(703) 360-7742
Health & Human Services: Babe Loughridge ..(703) 780-3845
Membership/Directory Co-Chair:
Elizabeth Bancroft.....(703) 360-4206
Membership/Directory Co-Chair:
Ken Poortinga(703) 360-7740
Neighborhood Watch: Collin Owens(703) 360-9028
Planning & Zoning: JoJo Shifflett.....(703) 704-9222
Public Safety: John Hurley.....(703) 799-9353
Transportation: Paul Schray.....(703) 619-9377

webmaster@MountVernonCivicAssociation.org

ruled that such towers are safe. I cannot verify whether this is true or not. The committee voted to oppose the tower as the plans were presented however, discussions between the neighbors and phone company representatives are continuing.

Have a safe and happy spring!

JoJo Shifflett

For Spring...A Little Garden Humor

What does the letter "A" have in common with a flower?
They both have bees coming after them. *Kim Roblin*

Gardening requires lots of water - most of it in the form of perspiration. *Lou Erickson*

Life expectancy would grow by leaps and bounds if green vegetables smelled as good as bacon. *Doug Larson*

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MVCA Events

Membership meeting: Wednesday, May 13

Annual MVCA Community Clean-up:

Saturday, May 16

Third Annual Community Picnic:

Saturday, June 13

Membership meeting: Wednesday,

October 14, 2009



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