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Jan/Feb 2009

President's Message

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General Membership Meeting

Wednesday, January 14, 2009

Speaker

Captain David Moyer,
Mount Vernon Station
Commander



Where and When:

Washington Mill
Elementary School
7:00 Primo's pizza
and soda, 7:30 PM program

Greetings Friends and Neighbors,
Happy New Year!

Andrea and I hope that you had a happy holiday season and that you will enjoy a healthy and prosperous 2009. Despite the current economic climate, we remain grateful for our many blessings, and living in this community is certainly one of them!

Our next MVCA membership meeting will be held on January 14th. Captain David Moyer, the new Mount Vernon Station commander, will be our guest speaker. I hope that you will be able to join us, meet Captain Moyer, and discuss issues with those who protect us and our community. Primo's pizza at 7:00, meeting at 7:30. See you there!

2008 was another great year for our Association. We strengthened the MVCA Board with several new energetic and committed volunteers. We held our "2nd Annual" MVCA Community Picnic at Fort Hunt Park in September and everyone who attended had a great time socializing with neighbors, enjoying the great food, and listening to the music of Clarence

"Blues Man" Turner. Under Bette Zaletel's leadership, we had another successful Community Clean-up, and thanks to Coilin Owens and the Neighborhood Watch team, we continue keep a watchful eye out and deter crime in our neighborhood. The Association provided support to our local schools and students. We also hosted several great speakers at our meetings, and we modernized our web site, www.MountVernonCivicAssociation.org.

I am excited about the year ahead. We are tentatively planning to hold the MVCA Community Picnic on June 13. While many members were impressed with the excellent facilities at Fort Hunt Park, the consensus seems to be that most people prefer a picnic within the boundaries of our Association. We are considering having the picnic back in the Belle Rive neighborhood, or possibly at the Mount Vernon Yacht Club, on the point. Please let me know what you think.

Continued from page 1

2009 is also a Directory year. Ken Poortinga and Elizabeth Bancroft have graciously stepped-up to lead this effort. I ask everyone to consider helping Ken and Elizabeth either by serving on the committee, or volunteering to serve as or assist your Block Captain. At a minimum, please make sure that they have your most current information, which you can easily do when you send in your membership renewal. ☺

I would again like to thank our wonderful MVCA Board members for their service, our advertisers and picnic sponsors, the Neighborhood Watch team, and everyone who contributes to making our Association successful and our community a better place. I would also like to recognize and thank Joan Howe of Dolphin Lane for the wonderful job that she did beautifying the entrance signs to Yacht Haven. Joan put in a lot of selfless effort on her own initiative and the results are fabulous. Thank you all!

It continues to be my privilege to serve as MVCA President. Please feel free to contact me at President@MountVernonCivicAssociation.org if you have any questions, comments, or issues. And please don't forget to renew your Association membership!

*Best wishes, John P. Skudlarek
President, MVCA*



2009-2010 Directory

Preparations are underway for the new 2009-2010 MVCA Directory. Please return your 2009 annual membership dues and renewal form promptly so that we can insure the information printed in the directory is accurate.

Don't forget, if your child babysits, mows lawns etc...please include the information in the renewal form. Also, if you know that a neighbor is new on your street, would you let them know about the association so that they won't throw out our form as j*u*n*k mail?

As part of the update, we will be soliciting for advertisers for the new directory. For this next issue of the directory, we will again be offering MVCA member and non-member rates. If you are a business owner that would like to place an ad in the next directory, please contact us to insure you receive an ad rate kit.



Looking ahead to future newsletters and directories, we would like to hear from "original owners" or long time owners (maybe your parents were original owners?). Some of our houses are 50 years old and we'd like to celebrate our age by sharing old photos and stories of the Mount Vernon area. If you have any old photos of houses and families or interesting stories, please contact me at eeeb@verizon.net

*Ken Poortinga 703.360.7740
Elizabeth Bancroft 703.360.4206*

Education

Most of us realize a strong school system not only provides a future for our children but also plays a critical role in stabilizing home values, attracting high-profile businesses to Northern Virginia, and maintaining a certain quality of life. A first-class school system should be a top priority for all Fairfax County residents.

Many of us are acutely aware of the impacts the economy is having on our state, local, and Fairfax County Public School (FCPS) System budgets. FCPS Superintendent Jack D. Dale has proposed a three-tiered plan of budget cuts to enable the school system to address a budget shortfall for FY 2010.

The first tier includes program and reduction efficiencies where possible without critically affecting instruction. Cuts in this tier would amount to \$43 million. If implemented, the Tier 1 cuts would eliminate the girls' gymnastics program in high schools and reduce funding for middle school after-school initiatives. The Changing Education Through the Arts program and the MentorWorks program would be eliminated. Counselors, social workers, and psychologists would see their caseloads increase.

The second tier requires a cut of \$123 million and a reduction of more than 775 positions. Tier 2 cuts would increase class size by .5 students in elementary, middle, and high school and close the planetariums. Printed copies of the FamilyGram newsletter would no longer be available, and elementary



school magnet transportation would end. Employees would not receive a market rate adjustment. The deepest cuts would occur in Tier 3. It assumes no increase in the

amount of the county transfer of funds over last year and would require a cut of \$219 million and a reduction of nearly 1,500 positions. Tier 3 cuts would include increasing class sizes by 2.5 students, discontinuing transportation to high school academies with buses that serve five or fewer riders, and increasing rental rates for schools as community-use facilities by 15 percent. Salary step increments for employees would be delayed by six months, employees would be furloughed for one day, and bus service to gifted and talented centers would be reduced.

Final budget decisions will not be determined until May 21, 2009, when the School Board adopts its approved budget for FY 2010.

How can you help? There are efforts we can do to support our local public schools. We can collect box tops for Washington Mill Elementary. Individual schools can earn up to \$20,000 from the Box Tops for Education Clip program each year. Simply clip box tops from your favorite products and drop them off at your convenience in Washington Mill's front office. Both Safeway and Giant grocery stores have a school rewards program where they will contribute a percentage of sales to identified schools. GIANT shoppers who register their BonusCards with the A+ BonusBucks program can help our schools earn cash each time they shop using their BonusCard. There is no cap in how much GIANT will donate. Register at your store's Customer Service desk or online at www.giantfood.com/aplus.htm. To register for Safeway's program log on to www.escrip.com.



All we need to do is get as many people as possible to designate one of our schools and use their bonus cards each time they shop. This small effort on our part helps our local schools tremendously and maintains our community.

Valerie Schalk, Education Committee

Planning and Zoning

It looks as if we may end up with a Wegmans at the corner of Beulah Street and Telegraph Road. Changes to the Comprehensive Plan allowing the store to move forward were approved by the County but a rezoning must occur before the current site, which is now being used as a landfill and open space can be used for a grocery store. Once Wegmans applies for a rezoning, public hearings will be held which will provide residents an opportunity to express their views regarding the use of this land site.

The site involved is a 33 acre parcel, most of which is located in Lee District. The plan also includes an office building. There was discussion of 200 residential units on the site plan as well, but at the time of publishing this article, I cannot confirm if these units are still part of the plan. I will continue to update the community on the progression of this proposal as it moves through the county system.

We are getting a new Comfort Inn on Route One. It will be located at 8847 Richmond Highway near the Roy Rogers and Woodlawn Stables. It is planned as a three story, 60 room hotel with brick and stucco exterior. It is going to be located on the same side of Richmond Highway and very close to the Hampton Inn that is also going in.

As you all know, this corner of Route One near Woodlawn Plantation is an historic overlay district which means new construction is subject to approval by an Architectural Review Board (ARB). Knowing this, I was disappointed to see the drawings depicting the exterior of the new hotels. I see nothing distinctive or "historic" or hinting of a colonial taste in any of the newly approved designs. As these new hotels go up, please let me know if you share my concerns that the facades do not meet the expectation you may have for buildings located in your local historic overlay district.

I did express my discontent with the stucco facades but was told the stucco was approved by the ARB and in one case, I was told the ARB suggested to the developer's architect to use more stucco and

less brick so the building would fit in better on the Route One Corridor. I seriously disagree with that approach and feel brick and stone exteriors would better reflect the colonial style I assume we want to achieve in the Woodlawn historic overlay district.

There are also plans to tear down one of the older motels on Richmond Highway, located across from the Arthur Treacher's and Krispy Kreme. The owners are local businessmen who plan to tear the older one level motel down and build a new two story hotel.

Our local planning Commissioner, Mr. Earl Flannigan commented at the last P&Z committee meeting that he was concerned that Route One may become too populated with new drug stores and hotels which of course excludes the use of the land for other uses. The problem is there is very little the county can do to stop an owner from placing another hotel or drug store on his land as long as the land's zoning status permits the use. Such projects are by-right projects and the county cannot prevent the permitted use but is left to regulate such things as size, density and parking spaces.

Thus, we see the difficulty in trying to plan for more diverse stores and services on Richmond Highway.

Finally, the house height issue is being addressed by a committee on "looming." The committee is comprised of representatives from all over the



Planning and Zoning

county and have been assigned the task of trying to craft a solution to the question—how high should a house be and how do we prevent new homes from towering over existing houses? The committee has been around for about a year now but recently they have been coming up with final plans including an angle of bulk plane approach. One plan has been rejected by the Board of Supervisors and the committee met last week to try and find a solution. They are currently working on a plan similar to the one used by the City of Alexandria. Basically, the maximum height of a house would be based upon such factors as how close you are to your setback lines and how far away the new house is from the adjacent neighbors. In other words, the county is now realizing they must move away from one constant height maximum of 35 feet for all houses to a more individualized approach based upon

where the new house is located in proximity to the older houses and the set backs.

One final thing in case you have not heard—the King's Crossing site at the intersection of Route One and North King's Highway (Chuck E. Cheese is there) is going to be the new home of a super Wal-Mart. The owners of the property were not able to make the mixed use site work out and recently announced their plans to lease to Wal-Mart. Personally—I'm still hoping to get a good bookstore on Route One.

Well, that's the news from planning and zoning. If you have any comments, feel free to give me a call. I'm listed in the directory.

JoJo Shifflett

Planning and Zoning Committee

Public Safety

Happy and Safe 2009 to all! During the winter months we all need to be attentive to pedestrian, jogger and bicyclist safety whether we are drivers and/or participants. Pedestrians, joggers and bicyclists should have lights and reflective markings during the hours of reduced visibility and may wish to carry a cell phone and whistle in the event of need. Similarly if your neighbors are away be alert to trucks, ladders, activity, open garage doors, etc that "do not fit." If mutually convenient you and your neighbors may wish to exchange contact numbers to reach a relative or friend when residents are away.

On January 14 our General will feature the new Commander, Captain David Moyer, of the FCPD Mount Vernon station, Master Police Officer Rob Clift, and Officer Darryl Davis. The FCPD will make a presentation, hold a Q&A session and distribute crime prevention and safety literature.

The FCPD is holding another of the very well-received Citizen's Police Academy workshops over five Thursday evenings beginning on January 15. The FCPD will hold the Academy in the Conference Area of the FCPD Mount Vernon police station next to the INOVA Mount Vernon Hospital. Information for the free Academy is listed on Page 8 of this newsletter.

A big tip of the hat to Chairman Coilin Owens and the Neighborhood Watch volunteers.

Call 911 to report any Police, Fire or Rescue/EMS emergency.

Your Neighbor, John A. Hurley.

703 799 9353



Health and Human Services

Several members of the Mount Vernon Civic Association have requested that this column continue to report on interesting case histories of patients seen in the Emergency Departments at Alexandria and Mount Vernon Hospitals over the last 30+ years.

A physician from NIH (National Institutes of Health) telephoned the Emergency Department (ED) at Alexandria Hospital and requested information about a patient he was seeing in his office. The ED nurse on duty asked for the name of the patient and when told, said, "Oh, I remember her very well. She was examined and treated by Dr. Loughridge and referred to the clinic for follow-up." I related the following to the NIH physician.

The head nurse was walking the patient down the hall to our large examination room. She was chewing-out the patient the entire walk—"Ethyl, you know you should not be wearing your sister's glasses. You should go to the clinic and be checked." Ethyl replied, "But I can't keep my eyes open and I thought my sister's glasses might help."

Ethyl was sitting on the edge of a stretcher getting her vital signs (temperature, pulse, and blood pressure) taken and I was sitting at a desk completing another patient's chart. I asked Ethyl to open and close her eyelids as fast and for as long as possible. Within minutes she sat with her eyes closed, unable to open them. I asked the nurse to give her a shot of *neostigmine*. Within twenty minutes she was able to open and close her eyes with no difficulty. This confirmed my impression—"Myasthenia gravis, most likely." She was discharged and referred to the clinic. Eventually she was referred from the clinic to NIH for further studies. Readers of this newsletter may know that this troubling disorder has no cure.

*Dr. Babe Loughridge,
Health and Human Services Committee*



Dear Community Members:

On behalf of the physicians, staff, and volunteers at Inova Mount Vernon Hospital we wish you a healthy and prosperous New Year!

2008 was an exciting year as we watched our expansion and renovation within the hospital taking shape. As work proceeds we can see how this expansion will impact the flow of our inpatients, the easy access for outpatients and seamless processes that will make a visit to the hospital a trouble-free experience. We wait with anticipation for the work to be completed in 2009.

Currently our contractors are working on the interior of the hospital build-out, installing walls, electrical, and plumbing so that we can begin moving our MRI diagnostic equipment into their new areas within the hospital during January 2009.

We are excited about the future of our hospital. Delivering high quality care to you, our community, remains our number one goal. Through the hard work of our dedicated physicians and staff, we once again exceeded our quality core measures for 2008 and will continue this work into 2009. We will keep you updated on our progress and assure you that we are all committed to meet your health care needs, today, tomorrow, and well into the future.

Thank you for your continued support.

*Barbara Doyle, CEO,
Inova Mount Vernon Hospital*

Neighborhood Watch

Officer Daryl Davis of the Mount Vernon District Station reports that during the first three quarters of 2008, overall crime in Fairfax County has risen by 10.1% over the same period in 2007. Although the number of violent crimes has dropped by 10.1%, it is outweighed by an increase of 12% in property crimes. While our neighborhood is free of more serious crime, we have been affected by some—, thankfully but a few—instances of property offenses. Neighbors looking out for one another and observing a few commonsense rules can keep the Mount Vernon area from appearing in the statistical report for 2009.

Our patrols have noticed a few suspicious presences: illegally-parked vehicles and unaccountable late-night loiterers. We have noted the times, places, and license plates, and (in a couple of instances) asked questions. We want it to be known that the neighborhood has eyes and ears beyond those possessed by its owls and flying squirrels. Thanks to our volunteers in the Neighborhood Watch program for the time they take away from their homes these winter nights.

We owe a special thanks to two of our residents, Pete and Adriene Pessel for bringing one of the few strings of larcenies to an end. Intercepting a trio of vehicle burglars at 4:30 a.m. outside their home on

Millburn Court, Pete’s quick action in apprehending the slowest of the trio, locking her in his garage, and Adriene’s prompt call to the police resulted in the arrest of all three and recovery of a lot of property from previous burglaries. The Pessels’ ability to identify the thieves, and their willingness to testify in court, will enable the police to break more serious cases—of armed robbery—attributed to this same gang.



This case highlights the need to observe a few rules that help protect property and the peace:

- Lock all outside doors, including those through garages, at night
- Know where your garage door opener is
- Do not park cars on the street at night
- Lock all vehicles parked outside secure areas
- Never leave valuables in vehicles in plain view of passers by
- Leave an outside light on at night or install a motion-sensor light
- Take note of any vehicles either speeding or driving slowly through your street
- Watch the property of any neighbors who may be out of town

Cóilín Owens, Coordinator
(703) 780-5218 or cowens7@gmu.edu

A Few Twisted Medical Terms

for your enjoyment

Alimentary: What Sherlock Holmes said to Watson

Benign: What we want when we are 8

Castrate: The fee for setting a fracture

Infest: What you do in the stock market

Neurosis: New red flowers

Paradox: Two physicians

Scurvy: A winding road

Vertigo: How foreigners ask directions

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

Officers

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Public Safety: John Hurley 703-799-9353
Transportation: Paul Schray 703-619-9377
Website: Mike and Catalina Holland 703-341-6503
 webmaster@MountVernonCivicAssociation.org

**Mount Vernon Citizens
Police Academy**

January 15 - February 12, 2009

Mount Vernon District Police Station
(2511 Parkers Lane, Alexandria)

The Fairfax County Police Department is hosting a special five-week Citizens Police Academy for individuals who live or work in the Mount Vernon area of Fairfax County and are at least 18 years of age. The Citizens Police Academy is designed to provide members of the public with a unique "glimpse behind the badge." Participants learn about the Fairfax County Police Department, including police procedures and programs available to citizens.

Classes will be held on five consecutive Thursday nights from 6:30 p.m. to 10:00 p.m. Participants are encouraged to attend all five classes. The program is offered free of charge.

Participants will learn about:

- 911 Call Center
- Patrol
- Traffic stops
- Gangs
- Domestic Violence

For an application or more information, please call (703) 280-0713 or e-mail CPA@FairfaxCounty.gov.

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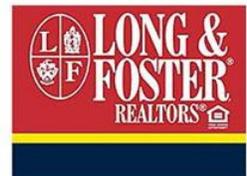
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Coming soon...to your mailbox!

Mount Vernon Civic Association membership renewal letter will be mailed in the next few weeks. Please send your dues and renewal information as soon as possible. As a member you support your community and will receive a copy of the new 2009-2010 neighborhood directory when it is published in April.

For more information, turn to page 2...

MVCA Upcoming Events

Membership Meeting January 14, 2009

Membership Meeting March 11, 2009

Neighborhood picnic (tentative) June 13, 2009



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