



Mount Vernon Civic Association, Inc.

Spring 2011

www.MountVernonCivicAssociation.org

Belle Rive • Ferry Landing Estates • Ferry Landing Villa • Ferry Point Estates • Mount Vernon Forest • Mount Vernon Park • Oxford • Riverwood • Vernon Square • Westgate • Wycliffe • Yacht Haven

General Membership Meeting

Wednesday, March 9, 2011

Speaker

Colonel Mark Moffatt
Deputy Commander for Base
Realignment and Closure

Subject

Changes to Fort Belvoir and
its impact on our community

Where and When

Washington Mill Elementary
7:00 PM pizza and soda
7:30 PM program

President's Message

employees this year under the mandates of the 2005 BRAC legislation. Colonel Moffatt will provide us an update on the progress of BRAC implementation at our neighbor military base and discuss issues and impacts within the local community, including transportation. This subject impacts everyone in MVCA and I encourage you to join us March 9. For advance reading, you can go the Fort Bevoir's "New Vision" site: www.belvoirnewvision.com. We'll start with a pizza social at 7:00. Our meeting starts at 7:30. See you there!

I am pleased to report that we will have our 5th annual community picnic at St. James Episcopal Church again this year. The date is June 4 and the time is 1-5 pm. Mark your calendars! Jeannine and Dave Simmons have graciously agreed to lead our Picnic Committee again this year and are already hard at work. Thank you Jeannine and Dave! Johnny Artis is returning by popular demand and the menu includes plenty of brats. If you have any ideas for the picnic, you would like to join the committee, or are interested in being a picnic sponsor, please contact Jeannine or me. We are excited about continuing this wonderful event.

Since I last wrote to you, two new people have stepped up to

represent our association and serve our community. Sean McCarthy is our new Budget & Finance Chair and Karan Cerutti will now pull "double duty" as Secretary and Planning & Zoning Chair. Thank you both! Thank you, also, to all of our Board members who give their time and talent to make our Association work and our community a better place to live.

Speaking of being a better place to live, this year's MVCA "Spring Cleaning" is scheduled for May 7. See page 4 for details. I hope you can spend an hour with us to help keep MVCA beautiful!

In closing, I would like to ask you to remember Sandy Polson, who passed away late last year. Colonel (Retired) Polson was a MVCA Board member for 25 years, serving in roles including Planning and Zoning Chair and Director. He was a loving husband and father, community supporter, and highly decorated veteran. He will be interred with full military honors at Arlington National Cemetery on April 12, 2011. Please keep Sandy, Kiki, and the Polson family in your prayers.

*With best wishes,
John Skudlarek, MVCA President*

Greetings Friends and Neighbors!

Thanks to all of you who attended our January MVCA membership meeting. Barbara Doyle, CEO of Inova Mount Vernon Hospital (IMVH), gave an excellent presentation detailing Inova's long-term plans for the hospital to remain a vital health-care provider in the greater Mount Vernon Community.

Our guest speaker at our March 9 meeting is Colonel Mark Moffatt, Fort Belvoir's Deputy Commander for BRAC (Base Realignment and Closure) and Transformation. As you are no doubt aware, Fort Belvoir will open two new \$1 Billion (with a "B") facilities and welcome a total of 19,300

*In Loving Memory of Col.
(Ret.) Harold "Sandy" Polson*

Harold Alfred Polson, retired U.S. Army Colonel, departed this life at the age of 86 on November 16, 2010. Known as "Sandy," he was the beloved husband of Kiki, father of Jeffrey, Steven, and Sally-Ann, grandfather of Jason, Keri (dec.), Kara, Brittany, Steven, Jonathan, and Camille, and great-grandfather to Bailee Grace. Throughout his life, Sandy had countless friends and relatives who knew him as a devoted family man, a distinguished veteran of three wars, and a man of unlimited compassion, optimism and good humor.

Born and raised in Brockton, Mass, Sandy was both a good student and an accomplished local athlete. In early 1943 he enlisted in the U.S. Marine Corps and was deployed to the Pacific where he fought in the Battle of Okinawa.

Sandy devoted his life in service to his country, serving a full career, initially with the U.S. Marine Corps and later with the U.S. Army. His combat service included action in the Pacific in WWII, Korea, and Vietnam and was highlighted by the award of two Silver Stars, one Bronze Star, five Distinguished Flying Crosses, and two Purple Hearts. Following his distinguished military career, he was employed for many years by FMC Corporation.

Sandy was a dedicated, energetic member of the Mount Vernon Civic Association Board, serving over a period of 25 years. He was greatly appreciated by everyone who served with him and he is still alive in our hearts.

Budget and Finance

Fairfax County Economic Development Authority

Did you know, that Fairfax County has an award-winning Economic Development Authority (FCEDA) with offices in San Francisco, Bangalore, London, Munich, Seoul and Tel Aviv? Those offices assist in marketing efforts to attract national and international investment to Fairfax County. Their mission is to "foster and promote the government, social, educational and environmental infrastructure that will make Fairfax County a world-class 21st century business center and the global capital of the knowledge industry."

Our unemployment rate has gone up to 4.6 percent but it is still low compared to the national average. However, the Fairfax County office-space vacancy rate is running high at over 15%. For additional information on the FCEDA, doing business in Fairfax County, and the business incentives available, please visit www.FairfaxCountyEDA.org.

2012 Fairfax County Advertised Budget

On February 22, the 2012 Fairfax County advertised budget was released to the public. The County did not increase the real estate tax rate; however, some of us may see an increase in our real estate taxes as home prices have bounced back from the mean assessed lows of 2011. The advertised tax rate remains at \$1.09 per \$100 in real estate value.

Some additional 2012 highlights include a balanced budget with no expansion, no compensation increases, and limited infrastructure investment and spending increases that cover only critical requirements. The county revenue should increase in 2012 by about 3% from 2011.

The 2012 budget does not include the 3% increase requested from the School Board. This would amount to about a \$48.8 million General Funds increase (nearly 3 cent real estate tax rate increase).

Budget and Finance Issues to Consider Moving Forward

The 2012 budget is being described as a "bare bones" budget to meet the minimum spending requirements. The 2012 budget allows for limited infrastructure investments and no compensation increases.

Most of us would agree that our infrastructure, and, in particular, our roads, need funding now. Our school system is growing with more students on the way from the BRAC expansion at Ft. Belvoir. It would appear that we are going to have to increase spending in these two areas.

Employee compensation will continue to weigh on the budget, as county and school board employees enter the third year without a pay increase. Retirement systems for both employees are also under pressure.

Additional budget information can be found at www.FairfaxCounty.gov/budget.

Sean McCarthy, Budget and Finance Chair

Education

FY 2012 Budget

The Fairfax County School Board has voted to approve the FY 2012 Advertised Budget of \$2.2 billion with a projected enrollment of 177,416 students. This is an increase of 3.6% from FY 2011 approved budget. The advertised budget includes 258 additional positions to support the projected growth of 2,120 students, or 1.2 percent of the current school year population, as well as market scale adjustments and step increases for all eligible employees. The Board directed Superintendent Jack D. Dale to develop a plan to complete the implementation of full-day kindergarten over the next three years beginning with the 2011-12 school year. The FCPS plans to finalize the budget on July 1, 2011.

Summer Camps

It's not too late to start thinking about summer camps. Here are two opportunities offered through the Fairfax County Public School System.

Tech Adventure Camp

Tech Adventure Camp is designed to give students in the 5th, 6th, and 7th grade during the 2010-2011 school year the opportunity to explore careers and technology as they rotate through eight areas: automotive technology, culinary arts, CAD/3 D Design, gaming, graphic arts, robotics, video and webpage design. The camp is two weeks long and offered July 18 – July 29, 2011, 8:30am-2:00pm.

Institute for the Arts

Institute for the Arts (IFTA) is a unique academic program for students providing enrichment in the visual and performing arts. Students enjoy a friendly, non-competitive environment to help grow and expand their knowledge of the arts. IFTA's goals are to offer students experiences they may not get in their regular school setting; to focus on skills, concepts, and the artistic process rather than the final product; and to integrate the study of various arts disciplines. Students take four 70-minute classes that they select from a variety of course offerings. IFTA is open to students who will enter grades 7-12 during the 2011-12 school year. The camp will be offered July 5 – July 29, 2011, 8:30am-2:00pm.

Both camps will be held at Lake Braddock Secondary. Registration will be open March 14 – May 27. For additional information, visit the IFTA website at www.fcps.edu.

Valerie Schalk-Day, Education Chair

Neighborhood Watch

Our weekly volunteers—two per night—are keeping an eye on security in the neighborhood. We have had reports on some storm damage and missing signs. Our local police have once again reminded us that the most frequent property offenses in our area arise from unlocked vehicles. Automatic garage openers, if simply clipped to car visors, are an invitation to house-breaking (newer models have disabling devices). Make sure that interior entrances from garages are locked.

Along Old Mount Vernon Road and Ferry Landing Road we have seven signs announcing Neighborhood Watch. Three of these are damaged or defaced, and are being replaced. In addition, I have asked the police department to add a further eight: at the five entry points to the neighborhood along Mount Vernon Highway, at the two yacht clubs, and at the entrance to Washington Mill Park. Police regulations and budget constraints may limit the response to this request.

Our current schedule of operation takes us through April 30. We can always take on new volunteers: more are needed during the summer months. Thanks to everyone who has been faithfully keeping up the alert.

Cóilín Owens, Coordinator, cowens7@gmu.edu

Earth Day

Celebrate Earth Day in the Mount Vernon area on Saturday April 23! Visit some of our local natural treasures (Dyke Marsh, Huntley Meadows) in the morning to see raptors and champion trees, and in the afternoon go on a self-guided Eco-Tour to learn about environmental challenges our area faces and steps toward a more sustainable future, including eco-friendly landscaping, eco-friendly energy use, and stewardship lessons for youngsters. Contact betsy@folhc.org for more info; after April 1, check <http://mvcca.org/> for a program and tour map.

Volunteer to help Mount Vernon students plant trees on April 20 from 10am-4pm! The Mount Vernon High School Ecology Club is organizing "211 in 2011," to plant 211 trees on school grounds to honor Earth Day 2011. Volunteers of all ages are needed--bring your family, friends, and if possible a shovel and gloves! For more information contact Matt Thompson at mjthompson@fcps.edu. Thank you and we look forward to seeing you at our event!

In our Community

Annual MVCA Spring Cleanup: Saturday, May 7

Please join your neighbors and participate in the annual MVCA Spring Cleanup. This is an opportunity to pick up unsightly trash along our streets and help beautify the neighborhood. We will meet at 9am at the Mansion House parking lot. We will provide free supplies including hats, safety vests, gloves, and bags. The cleanup will last until noon. Any questions? please call Mike Habib at 703-360-7742

Fort Hunt Park Site Development Plan

The National Park Service (NPS), which administers Ft. Hunt Park, is drawing up a development plan on how the park should look and be managed in the future. At a recent meeting, NPS reps said they were open to community suggestions about the park's future, e.g. for new trails, trees, or changes in other areas. For their part, the NPS is particularly interested in designing a project which would present the rich history of the park. NPS reps noted that the

park was a focal point of US military intelligence during the Second World War. Though they stressed that they have no pre-conceived notions, they are clearly entertaining the idea of some kind of visitor center which would provide an interpretation of the park's history. Such a center could range from a new building to a kiosk. Community views would be a factor in determining the scope and location of such a center.

If you have any comments about modifications to the park and/or the idea of a visitors center, you should send written comments by March 11 to either of the following:

National Park Service
George Washington Memorial Parkway
C/O Turkey Run Park
McLean, Va. 22101

or email to the NPS's Planning, Environment and Public comment website www.parkplanning.nps.gov.

Public Safety

Our FCPD Station Commander, Captain David Moyer, is moving on to a promotion with the PD. We wish him continued success and thank him for his and his Team's many services to the Mount Vernon District and to our neighborhood. We welcome and look forward to having the new Commander, Captain Randy Joyce, speak at one of our general meetings.

FCPD Master Police Officer (MPO) Greg Kotteman heads the Mount Vernon District Station Crime Prevention Unit. He is highly knowledgeable and can be reached at 703 360 8928 and gregory.kottemann@fairfaxcounty.gov. Please contact MPO Kottemann to be placed on his mailing list for e-mail alerts and news of crime trends and crime prevention tips. "Crime in progress" calls and fire and ambulance/rescue squad emergency calls should be made to 911. Be sure you have a clear address/location and a description of cars and vehicles that may be involved in the crime or emergency when you call 911.

Best wishes for a safe and crime-free Spring!

Your Neighbor, John Hurley

Picnic Time!

The picnic is planned! 1:00pm – 5:00pm Saturday, June 4, 2011 at St. James Episcopal Church, 5614 Old Mill Road, Alexandria, VA 22309.

There will be plenty of bratwurst, burgers, hot dogs, cole slaw, potato salad, pasta salad, and cake! Beer and Wine will be available. Johnny Artis will be accompanied by two guitarists performing great easy listening tunes! The moon bounce returns! It will be inside the fenced-in playground.

If you would like to sign up for Set-Up, Clean-Up, Bartender, or Griller give Jeannine or Dave Simmons a call at 703-360-3613. We look forward to seeing you!

National Library In Depth

The updated site plans for the National Library for the Study of George Washington at Mount Vernon are available on the MVCA web site at www.mountvernoncivicassociation.org/update-national-library.html. Learn the current state of planning for this significant project, literally in our Association's back yard. Thanks to Sean Regan for making them available!

May the Road Rise to Meet You...

In my travels through the Mount Vernon area on two wheels and four, the road, in the form of buckling asphalt and yawning, cavernous potholes has indeed been rising, and occasionally falling, to meet me. Happily, the Virginia Department of Highways (VDOT) is out with loads of liquid duct-tape, filling in the holes and smoothing the cracks with the unique blend of slurry. If you have a pothole issue that you're eager to share with the good folks at the Newington VDOT Division, check www.virginiadot.org/travel/citizen.asp, where you can spread the word.

The Virginia Assembly seems to have finally passed a budget that includes a whopping \$1.5 million for the long-awaited US 1 Transit Study (one hand clapping for Delegate Surovell and Senator Puller who respectively sponsored the House and Senate bills that brought home the bacon). Next step is for the gov'ner to sign the bill as passed, which may actually make rail between the beltway and Fort Belvoir along Route 1 a reality in my lifetime.

Costco's a-comin' at least according to the company and various interests championing the "we'll-take-whatever-we-can-get-at-this-point" approach to the revitalization of Richmond Highway. Costco representatives gave a fairly detailed overview of the project planning as it related to traffic at the most recent meeting of the Mount Vernon Council of Civic Associations Transportation Committee, and I must say that the company has truly given thought to how to best accommodate the traffic patterns and flow on the road. That said, from my amateur point of view, I predict something close to chaos on the road, should the current plans come to fruition. In fairness to Costco, the planners are largely constrained by VDOT's dictates. Perhaps most importantly, absent a

determination of where exactly the fabled "centerline" dividing both sides of the roadway lies, optimized usage of the median, say, for a rail line, for example, is difficult to envision.

Sources tell me that Uncle Fairfax does not have any regulations to preclude the connection of Dolphin Lane to Ferry Landing Road, as is envisaged in the plan for the development of the large parcel at the end of Ferry Landing Court. Furthermore, the Fairfax County Public Facilities Manual encourages and dictates that connections should be made to adjoining properties. I've been told that an extension of Dolphin Lane "is . . . good engineering practice, and it . . . promotes the health, safety and welfare of the citizens to not have single ended access to subdivisions. If an accident or act of nature were to occur blocking the only access into a subdivision the safety of the citizens may be compromised therefore it is always desirable to have numerous access points for ingress and egress." To crown this, a little bird told me that VDOT has recently adopted new secondary street acceptance requirements, which incorporate a connectivity requirement into the design of new developments. The new requirements not only encourage multiple connections, but mandate connections specifically to existing stub streets to meet a specific connectivity index. But, I note here that two waivers have been submitted to date, one to waive the requirement to provide access to adjoining properties, and another for storm water detention. My last check indicates that neither of these waivers have been processed, and that both are in the very preliminary stages of evaluation. And there you have it.

*Pete Esser
Transportation Chair*

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