



# Mount Vernon Civic Association, Inc.

Summer 2012

[www.MountVernonCivicAssociation.org](http://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

## President's Message

I hope that all are enjoying the mild Spring weather that our area has experienced over these past several weeks. Its time again for our general membership meeting scheduled for Wednesday, May 9 at 7:30pm in the library at Washington Mill Elementary

### Mount Vernon Civic Association General Membership Meeting

Wednesday,  
May 9, 2012

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

School. Pizza and beverages will be served at 7:00pm. We hope to see you there.

Current events have given cause for the MVCA Board and the Neighborhood Watch Committee to review the standards and responsibilities of the more than 60 volunteers that comprise the MVCA Neighborhood Watch Program. The chairman of the committee, Coilin Owens, has provided a guideline which is printed in this edition of the newsletter for your information. The MVCA Neighborhood Watch program is approved by the Fairfax County Police Department.

The Cherry Tree Drive Traffic Calming Task force will be meeting with county and state transportation officials, members of our county supervisor's office, school administrators and Fairfax County Police officers at Washington Mill Elementary School to witness the

commute of traffic during an early morning student drop-off period. The Task Force maintains that it is important for the decision makers to observe the speeding problem first hand. Current traffic calming alternatives include additional signage (with flashing lights), speed tables and street-paint school description signs. The Task Force expects the implementation of measures to correct this safety issue before the start of the next school year.

The proposed Route 1 widening project between Telegraph Road and Route 235 has become more of an issue lately due to the proposed alignment of the new road through the Woodlawn Stables and horse pastures. Although not yet approved for construction, the proposed roadway would shift to the east side of the existing road where significant right of way would be acquired from the adjacent landowner causing relocation of the horse stable operations. Pete Esser, the MVCA Transportation Committee Chairman, has been monitoring the



development of the project and will continue to advise the MVCA Board of the design process.

The MVCA Board is happy to announce that Bruce Kitchen has volunteered to chair the MVCA Education Committee. Bruce has valuable personal and professional experience with the education system which will benefit our community as education issues continue to challenge our region.

Please be sure to join us at the MVCA Annual Picnic on Saturday, June 9, at St. James Episcopal Church. There will be catered barbeque, hotdogs and beverages along with live music for entertainment. We look forward to seeing you there!

*Paul Schray, President  
Mount Vernon Civic Association*

## Membership News

Greetings to our MVCA neighbors,

Renters and owners alike - if you are new to the neighborhood or area, we welcome you to the association! Once you join, we will deliver our 2011-2012 directory. For those new to our neighborhood, the directory is filled with neighborhood information including a list of people who babysit, dog walk and mow lawns etc. We also encourage you to check our advertisements as neighborhood resources.

If you haven't already sent in your yearly membership, please send your \$20 dues and the form (<http://MountVernonCivicAssociation.org/docs/membership-form.pdf>) to Mount Vernon Civic Association, P.O. Box 61, Mount Vernon, Virginia 22121.

Please be sure to fill out the form. Sometimes we receive the forms with no information and

we have to go back to the check or envelope to reference the paperwork. Both the treasurer and membership directors handle the forms so it is really appreciated when you fill out the information.

Lastly, we hope to see you at our annual picnic on June 9 at St. James' Episcopal Church located at 5614 Old Mill Road. Please join us and meet old and new neighbors alike.

Thank you for your support.

*Elizabeth Bancroft 703.360.4206*

*Ken Poortinga 703.360.7740*

*Membership Co-Chairs*



## The Three L's

Please think of the Three L's for this summer regarding safety and security:

LOOKING--- particularly when driving, walking, jogging, riding bicycles, etc

LOCKING-- your home, garage, sheds, cars

LIGHTING--your property

Best wishes for a safe and happy summer.

*Your Neighbor, John Hurley  
Public Safety Chair*

## Environment and Recreation

### Plant Clinics

The Mount Vernon Farmers Market will be held every Wednesday from 9 to noon from May 2 to Sept. 26. The venue is the parking lot of the Sherwood Hall Library. One of the features of the farmers market is the plant clinic booth staffed by Fairfax County Master Gardeners. These knowledgeable volunteers will answer your questions about plants and gardening. They will also do lab diagnosis of whatever might be ailing your plants and shrubs. Just bring them a sample of the afflicted vegetation. The volunteers can

also give advice on your lawn and in some cases will actually visit your home to take soil samples and make recommendations on turf improvement.

### Weed Warriors

Invasive weeds such as English Ivy, bush honeysuckle and porcelain berry are destroying the trees and shrubs along the Mt. Vernon Trail and the GW Memorial Parkway. The National Park Service is organizing groups of volunteers to attack these invasive weeds, particularly at Dyke Marsh. The volunteers work mostly on

Thursdays from 10 to noon. If you would like to sign up to help in this effort, contact [Christina\\_demariano@nps.gov](mailto:Christina_demariano@nps.gov).

*Mike Habib, Chairman  
Environment and Recreation  
Committee*



## Transportation

Continuing to plague the Mount Vernon Magisterial District - and the rest of the Dominion - is a lack of funding for much-needed transportation projects.

This has led to a general impasse in terms of the State, via the Virginia Department of Transportation (VDOT), taking responsibility for adequate maintenance of secondary roads, and the counties finding themselves in the uncomfortable position of determining which transportation projects not actually falling within their purview are in such dire shape that the counties must step in with their own dwindling funds.

The issue over the state foisting responsibility onto municipalities appears headed for a final confrontation in the near future. Until then, expect bare-bones maintenance of area roadways, signage, and grassy medians and shoulders. On this note, please note that VDOT continues to encourage interested and motivated citizens to take matters into their own hands, within limits. Information on the Adopt-a-Highway program can be found here: <http://www.virginiadot.org/programs/prog-aah-default.asp> Limited mowing and trash removal privileges are granted to VDOT volunteers under the program.

Finally, the weekend parking fiasco at Grist Mill Park has

been addressed to some extent, and in an environmentally friendly way. The overspill from folks parking for soccer games has been tackled by the installation of additional parking areas, defined by concrete parking bumpers set directly on the turf adjacent to the old dairy barn. This is a compromise solution; it preserves natural surfaces and encourages infiltration of groundwater. Whether the project will last through the season or be churned into muck remains to be seen, but many thanks for the Fairfax County Parks Authority for finally responding to a long-met need!

*Peter Esser, Chairman,  
Transportation Committee*

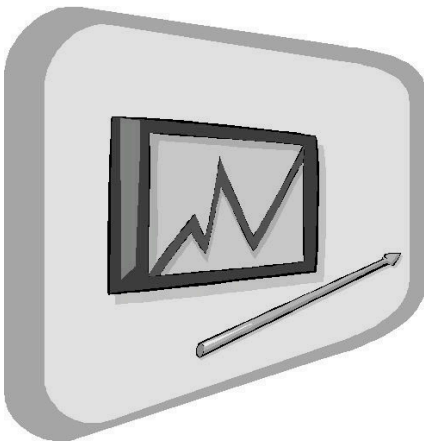
## Budget and Finance

### 2013 Fairfax County Budget

The 2013 Fairfax County (FC), full year, proposed budget plan was released on February 28th 2012. Our County Executive, Tony Griffin, proposed a balanced budget with no increase in the property tax rate of \$1.07. However, a sewage rate increase was proposed of \$.01 for a total of \$.025.

The Fairfax County Board of Supervisors set the advertised tax rate at \$1.08. On April 24th, the FY 2013 Board marks up the budget with May 1st being the formal adoption of the 2013 Fairfax County Budget and School Transfer.

On average, tax payers should see an increase in their real estate tax bill based on a FC mean assessed home value increase to \$448,696. This amounts to an approximate average increase of \$34 plus



the sewage rate increase of about \$45 for a total average increase of about \$79 per property owner.

Additional highlights in the 2013 FC budget include: a market rate increase (pay increase) of 2.18% for all county employee; a 5% increase in SAAC fees; a 10% increase in Rec- PAC program fees; and 7% increase in Fairfax Connector Fees.

### Virginia State Budget

The fourth version of the biennial Virginia state budget was approved by the Commonwealth Senate on Wednesday, April 18th. One of the compromises in the final version was the elimination of funding for the Dulles rail extension.

Some additional highlights for the state budget include projected full year state revenue growth for 2011 of 4.6%. The 2012 Budget includes measures to reduce the unfunded liabilities for the state pension system and increases to the K-12 education budget were also agreed too.

### Fairfax Water

Have you ever witnessed a private party hooking up their truck to a fire hydrant for what

appears to be free water? This quarter's water bill publication has a great picture and article discussing the fees and process associated with this practice.

It is legal provided you have a permit and use the approved apparatus. The charge is \$5.65 per 1000 gallon from April 15th through October 15th.

Of note, the water bill "commodity" charges are set to increase effective with the April 1st meter readings. On average, quarterly bills should increase by about \$2.88. For all of us gardeners and pool and sprinkler system owners, we should see a further year over year increase.

I look forward to reporting the adoption of the FY 2013 Fairfax County Budget at our next meeting. I will also bring a copy of the water bill publication showing the picture of the fire hydrant attachment. The link to the Fairfax County Budget page is [www.FairfaxCounty.gov/dmb/](http://www.FairfaxCounty.gov/dmb/).

*Sean McCarthy  
Budget and Finance Chair*

## Education

Hello, my name is Bruce Kitchen and I'm excited to take over as the new education committee chairman.

My family has lived in Mount Vernon for more than 10 years and our three children have all gone through the FCPS school system; our youngest is currently a senior at Mt. Vernon HS.

My goal as chairman is to keep you informed on issues pertinent to our children's education whether they're in public school, private school, or home-schooled.

### Give your input on FCPS facility improvements.

The Fairfax County Public Schools (FCPS) Facilities Planning Advisory Council (FPAC) is hosting an interactive blog and invites all Fairfax County residents to join this online discussion about long-term goals for FCPS facilities. The blog will be available for citizens to post comments until the end of June.

FPAC, a citizens committee appointed by the Fairfax County School Board, created a draft of a strategic facilities plan that includes 25 proposed goals addressing capacity and space use, operations and maintenance, communication, and capital improvement

funding and projects. The draft plan addresses the challenges facing FCPS as school enrollment swells, demand for space and services intensifies, and funding sources to meet maintenance, renovation, and construction needs are drained.

The blog, at <http://fcpsfpac.wordpress.com>, coincides with a series of community meetings FPAC is hosting in April and May. The first meetings are scheduled for Tuesday, April 24, from 7-9 p.m. at Carson Middle School and Glasgow Middle School. On Tuesday, May 22, two additional meetings will be held from 7-9 p.m. at Whitman Middle School and Robinson Secondary School. Additional information can be found at <http://www.fcps.edu/fts/planning/fpac/index.shtml>.

The new strategic plan will provide a decision framework for facilities issues related to capital investments, program assignments, and boundary management, and will enable FCPS to more effectively anticipate, respond to, and manage change. FPAC will present the final plan to the School Board in the fall.

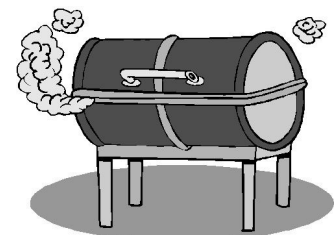
*Bruce Kitchen*  
*MVCAEducation@hotmail.com*

# The Sixth Annual Mount Vernon Civic Association Picnic

Join the party!  
 June 9, 2012  
 1:00 - 5:00 PM

St. James Episcopal Church  
 5614 Old Mill Road

Hot dogs, hamburgers  
 and all the fixings  
 Live entertainment  
 Moon bounce



## Neighborhood Watch

Our Neighborhood Watch program is approved by the MVCA and the Fairfax Police Department.

- Our patrols remind our neighbors to be alert to potential crime.
- We are the “eyes and ears” of a safe and amicable community life.
- We observe suspicious persons or vehicles, drive past, showing the Neighborhood Watch sign, and note tags.
- We observe license numbers or other identification of unusual vehicles or persons, record time and place of observation.
- We report suspicious persons or activities to the police non-emergency number: 703-691-2131.
- We report emergencies or crimes-in-progress to 911.

- We are not a vigilante operation.
- We do not carry any weapons.
- We do not challenge anyone about their right to walk the public streets.
- We do not shine lights in anyone’s face or take uninvited photographs.
- We do not have police powers of interception, pursuit, or arrest.
- We do not demand ID from anyone.
- We observe and note properties at risk as suggested by uncollected mail or newspapers, unsecured garages or vehicles.
- We observe and note minor violations: on-street parked cars, long-term dumpsters, uncollected refuse.



- We pay special attention to potential violations at these locations: Methodist Church parking lot, Mansion House Yacht Club, Mount Vernon Yacht Club, Washington Mill School parking lot, Washington Mill Park entrance.

Members of either yacht club are entitled to protect these respective premises as they would their own homes.



## Rabies: Deadly but Preventable

Spring is here so more people will spend time outdoors enjoying parks, yards and trails here in Fairfax County; it's a good time to learn more about wildlife and the threat of the rabies virus. Rabies, though rare in humans, is a deadly virus carried by a variety of animals and is most often through the bite of a rabid animal.

So far in 2012, the public has encountered over a dozen rabid animals; raccoons, skunks and bats. In the past five years, there have been 239 such encounters. The rabies virus is, clearly, present in Fairfax County and across the region.

Please join Animal Control and Health Department experts in an online discussion to address this serious topic; one that families and all those who spend time outdoors need to know more about. The chat takes place Wednesday, April 25 from 1 until 2 p.m. You may submit questions in advance at [www.fairfaxcounty.gov/askfairfax/ActiveDiscussion.aspx?roomid=28](http://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/askfairfax/ActiveDiscussion.aspx?roomid=28)

Health Department and Animal Control  
Officials Online Chat

Wednesday, April 25, 2012,  
1 p.m.-2 p.m.

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## Griffin

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## Upcoming Events in Mount Vernon

- May 9      MVCA General Membership Meeting  
7:00pm (Pizza) 7:30pm Meeting  
Washington Mill Elementary School
- June 9      MVCA Annual Community Picnic  
1:00 - 5:00, St. James'  
Episcopal Church



## Mount Vernon Civic Association, Inc.

### Officers

President: Paul Schray .....(703) 619-9377  
 1st Vice President: Pete Esser.....(703) 799-5150  
 2nd Vice President: John Skudlarek .....(703) 704-5213  
 Secretary: Karan Cerutti .....(703) 360-9559  
 Treasurer: Tom Cleary .....(703) 360-3903

### Directors

Mike Habib.....(703) 360-7742  
 Ron Neitzke .....(703) 360-3807  
 Dan Rinzel .....(703) 360-4627

### Committee Chairs

Budget and Finance: Sean McCarthy .....(703) 360-0372  
 Education: Bruce Kitchen .....(703) 799-6473  
 Environment & Recreation: Mike Habib .....(703) 360-7742  
 Health & Human Services: Vacant  
 Membership/Directory Co-Chair:  
     Elizabeth Bancroft .....(703) 360-4206  
 Membership/Directory Co-Chair:  
     Ken Poortinga .....(703) 360-7740  
 Neighborhood Watch: Coilin Owens .....(703) 780-5218  
 Planning & Zoning: Karan Cerutti .....(703) 778-4442  
 Public Safety: John Hurley.....(703) 799-9353  
 Transportation: Pete Esser .....(703) 799-5150