



Mount Vernon Civic Association, Inc.

Winter 2013

www.MountVernonCivicAssociation.org

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In This Issue

President's Message.....	1
Budget and Finance.....	2
Dr Loughridge	3
Health and Human Services Redux.....	3
Membership and Directory News	4
Very Punny	4
Public Safety.....	5
Education.....	6
Neighborhood Watch	7

Mount Vernon Civic Association General Membership Meeting

Speaker:

Curtis Viebranz, president and chief executive officer of the Mount Vernon Estate

Topic:

Future plans and current activities of interest to MVCA

Where and When:

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

President's Message

Welcome into the new year and I hope that all experienced a wonderful holiday season. As we move into the new year please accept my invitation to participate in the MVCA Annual General Membership Meeting which will be held Wednesday, January 9 at Washington Mill Elementary School. Our guest speaker for the evening will be Curtis Viebranz, president and chief executive officer of the Mount Vernon Estate. He will share with us future plans and current activities that are of interest to MVCA, the estate's closest neighbor. Please join us at 7:30pm for the start of the meeting or stop by at 7:00pm for pizza and beverages.

One of the agenda items that we will be addressing at the meeting will be the membership election of a new MVCA director. Long time director and MVCA volunteer Ron

Neitzke has left the board as he and his wife Jean, will be

relocating from the Mount Vernon area. We wish them the best as they will be missed. The board has nominated Ken Poortinga to fill the vacancy. Nominations to fill the position will remain open until the election. Please contact me if anyone is interested in serving or feel free to nominate candidates at the meeting.

The MVCA has open chairmanships for three committees that are important to our representation with the Mount Vernon Council of Citizens' Associations. It is essential that MVCA is represented within the council's committee structure as the committees provide a conduit of opportunities for MVCA to both provide input and direction and receive information from our county, state and federal representatives and agencies. Committee chairs are needed for the Health & Human Services, the Consumer Affairs, and the Environment and Recreation committees. Please contact me or one of our other committee chairs if you are



interested in exploring an opportunity to serving in any of these positions.

Planning for the next MVCA Community Picnic has begun. Because of the busy schedules of competing events held in June, we will be scheduling the picnic for a weekend in May. If you would like to help with the planning of this event please contact Ken Poortinga or me.

As always I invite all to spend a few moments reviewing this newsletter as it contains important information occurring within our community that will be of interest to you. Please do not hesitate to contact me, our directors or committee chairs if we can be of assistance.

*Paul Schray,
President, Mount Vernon*

Budget and Finance

Fairfax County Full Year 2014 and Full Year 2015

I hope everyone had a relaxing Holiday season and that Santa was good to everyone. As I write this article, the Federal budget impasse is ongoing. I've asked Santa for pragmatic and selfless leadership in Washington. Let's see if he was able to fit that in his sleigh! It would be nice to have a new holiday classic movie like "Miracle on the Mall" playing for our grandchildren.

With that in mind, the Fairfax County budget discussions are likewise underway for 2014 and 2015. Needless to say, the events going on in Washington, and specifically, the sequestration could have a significant direct and indirect affect on Fairfax County. Our county leadership is watching consumer confidence related numbers such as sales tax for an early read on how the local economy is doing and the psychological effects of the fiscal cliff talks (The 2014 Budget starts in July of 2013). So far, we have been holding steady with an unemployment rate at 4%.

The county presentation can be found at www.fairfaxcounty.gov/dmb/ and provides the overview and projections for 2014 and 2015. Some of the highlights include residential home value projected to increase 2.5% in 2014 and 2015. At the current real estate tax rate of \$1.075 per \$100, this will amount to an average increase of \$120.59 per household. Overall, General Fund Revenue is projected to increase 2% in 2014 and 2015.

Meals Tax

A tax on meals continues to be discussed. Proponents of the meals tax are touting it as a way to raise revenue for the growing needs of the public school system. The idea is for it to be a temporary tax that will have a greater effect on the disproportionate amount of diners from out of town (for example, business, vacationers, and special event participants).

I have requested, at the council level, greater clarity on the cost drivers in the public school system and more transparency with our current expenses before the community supports this potential new tax. Additionally, I would like to see hard data on who our Fairfax County diners are, a review of county meals tax rates around the area and more discussion regarding the supposedly "free" money that we are leaving on the table.



In conclusion, please feel free to contact me with any specific points of interest or suggestions. Have a great New Year.

Sean McCarthy, Budget and Finance Chair

Chalmers A. "Babe" Loughridge, M.D. 1918 - 2012

Our community lost a leader and outstanding citizen when Dr. Chalmers A. Loughridge died recently.

Babe and three other primary care physicians gave up their private practices in Alexandria in 1961 and began staffing the Emergency Room of the old Alexandria Hospital (then located at Duke Street and South Washington Street) on a 24/7 basis. The "Alex Plan" was later followed across the country and was the forerunner of Emergency Medicine, now a medical specialty.

Babe and his wife, Reggie, moved to this area and built a house on Rive Drive in 1968. In 1971, with others in the growing community, he helped organize the Mount Vernon Civic

Association. For forty years, he served and wrote on Health and Human Services. He also served at various times as an officer with the association. His committee reports were always read with a smile as he imparted his own brand of humor.

He leaves Reggie, their son, Jeff, and his wife Susan, and three granddaughters to remember, with us, what a good friend and neighbor we have lost.



Dr Loughridge

Health and Human Services Redux

Dr. Loughridge gave many, many contributions to this newsletter to enjoy over the years. Here's a review of just a few.

Clean-Up Tip

Several years ago this writer was teased about mentioning what was considered a no-no in discussing skin care. The no-no was about cleaning the belly button, especially if you had what the small kids call an "inner" button. Bathing in a tub or shower will not suffice due to the recessed position and may just "plain out smell." Best method is to dip two cotton tip swabs in rubbing alcohol and twirl a few revolutions. My small grandchildren brought this to my attention recently!

MVCA Newsletter, October/November 2003

Infections in Hospitals

Resistant organisms continue to plague all hospitals. Therefore, if you do require hospitalization it is up to you to practice strict hygiene and not rely on those servicing your needs. How did this happen? Remember, sulfa drugs were discovered in the late 1930's, followed by penicillin in the early 1940's, then the broad-spectrum antibiotics, like tetracycline, in the 1950's. Through indiscriminate use of these and newer antibiotics, inside and outside of hospitals, bacteria developed resistance and continued to attack humans and animals. A formidable job lies ahead for the human race. Hopefully the researchers in the pharmaceutical industry will stay ahead.

MVCA Newsletter, January/February 2006

Membership and Directory News

Hello to all our MVCA members and neighbors,

We will be publishing our next Mount Vernon Civic Association Directory in Spring 2013.

Members who pay their annual membership dues will receive a copy of the new directory.

Membership forms for 2013 will be mailed in January and we appreciate you sending your dues and forms in early. In case you didn't know, your checks go to the treasurer and your membership forms come to us. Because of this split, we ask you to fill out your name and address on your form. The first/last name information you include on your membership form is what will be printed in the directory. Some members just send in a check and write "nothing's changed" on the form but as we don't know who is "nothing changed" we aren't able to enter the data in a timely manner. Thanks for your attention to this detail.

We are so thankful for our great block captains. You are our welcome committee when new neighbors move in and we're always happy hear from you. Would you call us and let us know you'd like to continue working with us?

We received lots of compliments for our last directory cover with the great photography. We'd like to do it again so if you'd like to offer your photos for publication, please email them to pam@NoVaArtsGroup.com or mail them to P.O. Box 61, Mount Vernon, VA 22121. We would like to show the natural and architectural beauty we share in our community. Suitable subjects include scenes from our annual picnic, views of local buildings, plant life, woodland scenes, Mount Vernon Estate, and the Potomac River. The photographs will be published in high resolution,

full color, and we'll of course give you credit for your work.

Once again, we will be offering you an opportunity to advertise with us in our upcoming directory. We hope you will take advantage of this to support our directory and community. Please contact Ken Poortinga at the number below for more information.

Wishing you a very Happy New Year to you all from your membership chairs,

Ken Poortinga

703-360-7740

ken8487@verizon.net

Elizabeth Bancroft

703-360-4206

e_ecb@yahoo.com

Very Punny

Will Rogers might have been the greatest political sage this country has ever known:

Never kick a cow chip on a hot day.

Never miss a good chance to shut up.

Always drink upstream from the herd.

If you find yourself in a hole, stop digging.

The quickest way to double your money is to fold it and put it back in your pocket.

If you're riding ahead of the herd, take a look back every now

and then to make sure it's still there.

After eating an entire bull, a mountain lion felt so good he started roaring. He kept it up until a hunter came along and shot him. The moral: *When you're full of bull, keep your mouth shut.*

Lettin' the cat outta the bag is a lot easier 'n puttin' it back in.

*Thanks to
Babe Loughridge,
June, 2004*

Public Safety

Happy and Safe Holidays and 2013 to all.

Drive responsibly particularly in periods of darkness and/or low visibility. Keep a sharp lookout for pedestrians and bike-riders.

Be ready to STOP when school buses are active. Do NOT pass a school bus when its red lights are blinking.

Carry cell-phone, ID, whistle, flashlights and light-reflective gear when walking, jogging, bike-riding.

Wear helmets and high visibility/reflective gear when bike-riding. Equip bikes with lights, reflectors and bells. Know the laws regarding powered scooters and similar smaller vehicles.

Allow for extra braking distance when pavement is wet or snowy/icy.

Do not overload electric circuits.

Ensure that smoke and carbon monoxide detectors have working batteries and that fire extinguishers are fully charged,

Dispose of Christmas trees safely. Do not store fireplace ashes in the house or garage. Be exceptionally careful with candles. Do not store gasoline and similar flammable liquids in garages and houses. Remember that fumes can travel and be ignited by such as hot water heater pilot lights.

Prevent crime by using motion-sensitive outside lighting and keeping cars locked, Arrange with neighbors to pick up newspapers, packages, etc when you are away.

Keep cell phones charged and flashlights, battery-powered or hand-crank radio ready in event of electric power failure.

Use care on icy steps and sidewalks.

Efforts continue with both State and County authorities to improve traffic and speed control signage in the area of the Washington Mill Elementary School and Cherrytree Drive..

Report rabid or possibly rabid animals to 911 or 703 691 2131. Be aware that both foxes and coyotes are active in our area.

Call 911 for emergency response by Police and/or Fire and/or Rescue (Ambulance). Be clear re your address and nearest intersection.

*Your Neighbor,
John A. Hurley
Public Safety Chair*



Education

Dr. Tish Howard, Washington Mill Principal, Retiring Jan 31

After 11 years and a 100 mile round trip daily commute to WMES Dr. Howard has decided to retire as Principal of WMES. She told me that if she lived closer to the school she'd stay forever.

There will be a farewell social for Dr. Howard at Washington Mill on January 17th beginning at 6:30 PM. All current and former parents and former students are welcome.

Dr. Howard began her tenure as principal at WMES in the fall of 2002. During her time as principal she has implemented many changes at the school, both inside and outside the classroom. When I asked her what her crowning achievement was she was quick to focus on the equalizing the educational opportunities for all WMES students and closing the achievement gap between white, black and Hispanic students. She is also proud of the family environment that she helped establish at WMES. This is particularly evident in the low turnover of faculty; WMES has one of the longest tenure of teachers in the county (I can personally attest that this isn't from coddling her staff!).

Dr. Howard will be replaced for the remainder of the school year by a



retired Principal. A committee will select a new Principal prior to next school year.

FCPS Budget Update

Fairfax County Public Schools has found an extra \$9.7 million in its Fiscal Year 2013 budget, much of which school board members voted to set aside for its FY 2014 (July 1, 2013- June 30, 2014) beginning balance. The additional funds were found via the final FY 2012 budget review and the result of increases in income and decreases in expenditures from the projected budget. As of today, the FY 2014 Budget has a projected \$162 million deficit.

Each year the budget is formed assuming no changes in state or county funding from the previous year. Typically, the funding is never exactly the same from year to year – increases/ decreases in tax revenues and state/federal will alter the funding level. The county anticipates being able to give the school system a \$84.2 million increase in fiscal year 2014, about half of the \$162 million the school system needs, according to budget documents. That could all change if President Obama and Congress can't come up with an agreement to resolve the upcoming "fiscal cliff."

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MATT MATHES

Neighborhood Watch

Each night of the week we have two volunteers patrolling our neighborhood, reminding us that our security cannot be taken for granted. It devolves upon each one of us to be one another's eyes and ears. Over the fall, there have been mercifully few incidents of property crime (from unlocked vehicles), a few reports of suspicious intruders, and thanks to alert neighbors, and a couple of prompt police interventions. We want to want to keep it this way.

We are perilously close to Rte. 1 where theft, robbery, and assault—especially after dark—are in the weekly news. Officer Kottemann reminds us that 80% of thefts occur as a result of unsecured properties, vehicles or homes. We should keep all valuables—especially laptops, ipods, cell phones, and navigation devices—out of sight. Install motion-responsive lights. Keep a can of wasp spray handy: it can repel a human intruder at twenty feet. You can get free professional advice on home security—with many original practical suggestions—at the website <http://www.crimedoctor.com>.

Current information on local incidents can be found in Thursday's Post ("Local Living": Fairfax Edition), and on line, the Mount Vernon Patch, the Weekly Activity Report (Fairfax County Police), and the Sex Offender Registry (Virginia State Police).

Keep the non-emergency number (703) 691-2131 beside the telephone and add it to the list of automatic numbers on the cell phone. Use it to report suspicious activity including attempted scams. Do not tolerate eyesores and nuisances—long-term dumpsters, illegally parked vehicles, uncollected refuse, speeders, and persistent dog-barking. If meriting a police call, be sure to give time, place, and description of the vehicle or persons. Advise strollers at dusk to wear reflective or at least bright clothes.

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510 KING STREET SUITE 301

ALEXANDRIA, VA 22314

Our patrol schedule will be renewed at the end of February. New volunteers welcome (703) 780-5218 or covens7@gmu.edu. Thanks to our fifty current volunteers for their time, vehicle use, and vigilance.

--Cóilín Owens, Coordinator

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) 778-4442
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

Upcoming Events in Mount Vernon

January 9, 2013MVCA general
membership Meeting
January 17, 2013Farewell social for Dr
Tish Howard, long-time
principal of Washington
Mill Elementary.
6:30 PM at Washington
Mill
March 13, 2013MVCA general
membership meeting
May, 2013.....Neighborhood picnic.
Date to be announced.