



Mount Vernon Civic Association, Inc.

October 2022

www.MountVernonCivicAssociation.org

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You Don't Want To Miss Our MVCA Membership Meeting 10/12!

Our next Congressional election, Tuesday, Nov. 8 will define the direction our nation will take for many years to come. MVCA has invited the candidates for the 8th Congressional District to speak at our October 12 meeting. Each candidate will be given 10 minutes to explain why they are running, what their vision is for our country and why you should vote for them. Then, you will be invited to submit your question on cards and our moderator will ask the questions. Our agenda will include:

- 7-7:30 p.m.: MVCA will provide pizza & drinks. Come eat with us, introduce yourselves to the candidates, and enjoy being together for the first time in 2 1/2 years
- 7:30-8:15 p.m.: Candidates will speak, and questions will be asked and answer
- 8:15-8:45 p.m.: We will present/approve our minutes/budget and make brief announcements

Where: *Washington Farm United Methodist Church, 3921 Old Mill Rd* in the meeting room in the building next to the church. We are grateful to Pastor Clair Miller for letting us meet there (we can't meet in our usual Washington Mill Elementary School location until construction is complete.

Food for Thought

How would you feel if you were a student at Washington Mill Elementary School and on a Friday afternoon, as you were getting ready to go home, you knew there would be little or no food at home to eat that weekend?

That is the situation 50-55 children face each week. The solution –the Food for Thought program. Each Friday, children are given a packet that includes a breakfast, lunch and dinner plus a few snacks for the weekend. The program cost is \$1,200/month. Most of the funds come from teachers' donations.

The MVCA invites you to join us in providing food for the children's packets. There are 3 easy ways:

1. Write checks payable to: Washington Mill PTA and note that is for FFT. Mail to: Washington Mill PTA, 9100 Cherrytree Dr, Alexandria, VA 22309
2. Donate directly to their Member Hub store. No login needed. Donation link: <https://washingtonmill.memberhub.com/store?limit=21&live=true>
3. Purchase food from the list below and bring it to our next MVCA Membership Meeting October 12th at Washington Farm United Methodist Church at 3921 Old Mill Road

Please see Page 3 for a suggested list of foods that can be donated to the students!

HEALTH

What's the Real Deal With Prostate Cancer Screening?

We are past the days of clinical exams for prostate cancer screening... you know what I'm talking about! The blood test that helps screen for prostate cancer is the Prostate Specific Antigen (PSA). But how helpful is PSA? PSA testing is, in fact, quite complex. The decision whether to or not to screen is also complicated by direct-to-consumer advertising, personal relationships with men who have experienced prostate cancer and limited time to ask questions with your own doctor.

The U.S. Preventive Services Task Force, the group that makes guidelines for preventive care, gives prostate cancer screening for men between **55-69 years old a C recommendation**. A C means that there is moderate certainty that screening provides a small benefit. For men **70 years old and over, it is given a D recommendation**. D is a "don't do it!" The grades of these recommendations originate from the randomized controlled trials, systematic analyses, and meta-analyses – in other words, from the highest level of research available.

I'll focus on men 55-69 years old here. For men over 70 years old, without a personal history of prostate cancer, the one liner is that you are exceedingly unlikely to benefit from PSA screening. Don't do it. For men with a personal history of prostate cancer, with a family history (brother or dad), and those with a long history of tobacco use – have a conversation with your primary care doc because these recommendations don't apply. Importantly, Black men are twice as likely to die from prostate cancer as compared to White men. This is understood to be linked to social determinants of health, not genetics. Black men fall under the recommendations here.

Over the course of a life, a man has between a 2-4% risk of developing prostate cancer. A population

example is the most powerful way to illustrate the benefits and harms of screening. If 1,000 men were screened by PSA, 240 men would screen positive with a high PSA. Of those 240 men, 100 would have a biopsy for prostate cancer BUT 20-50% of those positive biopsies would never experience symptoms of prostate cancer (this is over diagnosis, and worth another 750 words to explain). 80 men would choose surgery to remove part of, or the whole prostate – of those 50 will develop erectile dysfunction and 15 will develop urinary incontinence. Now, back to the large group- from 1,000 initial men, screening prevented 1 man from dying due to prostate cancer, 3 men will be prevented from having metastatic disease, but 5 men would *still* die from prostate cancer. The odds of being harmed from screening are greater than benefiting from screening.

So, what do I say to my patients with average risk? This is a personal decision – if you have thought about testing, *and* this keeps you up at night, *and* you are willing to come back and have a conversation if your number is high, then get the PSA. If these three points are not part of your narrative, don't get screened. What do I say to my dad? Don't get screened, because he's an average risk guy, and I am far more concerned about the harms than benefits for my own family.

Alison Huffstetler, M.D.
Health Committee Chair

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PUBLIC SAFETY

The Mount Vernon District Police Commander, Captain Jeffery Reiff, was re-assigned in late September to the key post of Commander, Special Operations Division, where he will be responsible for a broad variety of specialized FCPD units that provide 24 x 7 support. Captain Reiff led the Mount Vernon Police team during a period marked by the pandemic, changes in crime and traffic patterns and growing concerns about the difficulty of recruiting and retaining Police Officers. He was very accessible and pro-active. Captain Reiff will be succeeded in Mount Vernon by Captain Fred Chambers.

School Buses

Please be attentive to school buses and STOP when the red lights are flashing. Be alert to students running to their school bus stops in the morning and from the bus stops in the afternoon.

Halloween

Be alert to children on Trick or Treat walks particularly after dark. Hopefully they will have flashlights and not candles and have some adult supervision. Avoid use of costumes that may be highly flammable.

Fire Prevention

October features Fire Prevention activities and reminders like ensuring smoke detectors have new batteries and that fire extinguishers are charged. All family members should be aware of escape routes and a meeting point outside the home.

Street Safety

Be alert. Carry a flashlight, whistle and ID. Consider not using headphones as they may prevent you from hearing a vehicle. If something does not "look right" take a different route and, if necessary, call 911.

911

CALL 911 in case of emergency-FIRE, POLICE, RESCUE/AMBULANCE to get assistance- Do NOT assume that someone else has called. The 911 operator will tell you if 911 is "already on it." Be sure you have the CORRECT ADDRESS for the emergency location.

Neighborhood Watch

Hats off to Ted Thompson and the MVCA Neighborhood Watch for their contributions to a safer and more secure neighborhood.

John Hurley
Public Safety Chair

Food For Thought Program Donation Suggestions

Breakfast:

- White & chocolate milk
- Oatmeal single packets
- Individual cereal packets
- Nutrigrain bars
- Granola bars

Lunch/Dinner:

- Chef Boyardee
- Chicken Noodle soup
- Ramen
- Mac n Cheese

Snacks:

- Goldfish crackers
- Applesauce
- Fruit cups
- Fruit snacks

An easy way to purchase? Go to Amazon, select from the suggestions above, pay and have it delivered to your home!

LOCAL HISTORY

The 50 Year Celebration of the Sherwood Hall Medical Center

(Part One)

Sherwood Hall Medical Center (SHMC) was constructed in 1976 on the heels of the famous Mount Vernon Hospital that was built at the same time across the street in the Hybla Valley - Gum Springs area. My summary and discussion of the SHMC is based on personal experience. After I arrived at the National Institutes of Health in 1979 from Boston, I had an immediate opportunity to increase my income by working as a "moonlighter" at the aforementioned Mount Vernon Hospital. I started moonlighting in 1979 until 1982 when I opened my part-time office and then built a full-time office in the SHMC.

These were fortunate times. I was encouraged to open an office by a very distinguished emergency room physician who was considered the father of emergency room medicine in the United States. This was Dr. James Mills, the early founder of the Association of Emergency Room Physicians. The Mount Vernon Hospital along with Alexandria Hospital have remained in the forefront of American medicine.

My introduction to the SHMC was through a wonderful cardiologist-internist, Frank Talbot, MD, who unfortunately has passed away along with most of the other physicians in the medical center. The true father of the building, and of the Mount Vernon Hospital, must be considered Dr. Gorman Redding who also passed away at age 55, prematurely, while he was vacationing in

Atlantic City in 1989. He left behind his wife, Jean, who continued the office for a short time along with his son, Michael Redding. Gorman had a brother, Richard, who was a physician in the area but not in the building, and there was David, who was a dentist.

I would like to add that this presentation should be considered in terms of my first writing on George Washington who was knowledgeable and well-read in medicine. I subsequently wrote about who goes to the hospital, namely Mount Vernon Hospital and now I am focusing on the Sherwood Hall Medical Center. As most of you know, this famous SHMC is located in the Gum Springs area which houses the historic society.

Gum Springs is the home of the oldest African American community in Fairfax County. It was established in 1833 by West Ford, who had been an enslaved farmer on George Washington's Estate. He was considered part of their family. When he was freed, he was given 100 acres of land, whereupon he founded Gum Springs. He was helped by Quakers and by others.

Today, it is part of the current special community in the area. This area is considered a National Historic Site and will become a National Historic designation as well. The Gum Springs Historical Society and Museum is located down the street from the medical center on 8100 Fordson Road.

Peter Bernad, M.D.
Environment & Recreation Chair

Note: Part Two will be in our January 2023



AIR TRAFFIC NOISE UPDATE

The Airports Authority, which serves as the Community Noise Committee's facilitator, has indicated that the Metropolitan Council of Governments (MCOG) wants the route that planes take to land and take off will remain over the river, although residents along the river will be significantly affected. (I was unable to find supporting evidence on the MCOG website to confirm this and am still looking).

This implies that we would be affected by aircraft noise on an ongoing basis. Arriving planes from the south fly over our area before landing. In contrast to today, there would be little respite, because when the wind shifts, departing southbound planes will also fly over us. Therefore, we will be impacted by both arrivals and departures.

In addition, because the routes are circular, the noise will last for an extended period of time. Occasionally, the noise of planes landing literally becomes one continuous noise, as the lengthy noise profile of one plane blends with the noise of the

subsequent plane. When walking my dog, I have experienced this effect. Keep in mind that this is for arrivals, but the effect during departures will be much worse.

All noise studies are designed to measure cumulative noise (not loudness, per se) to analyze the effects of airplane noise on humans. These studies are used for policy purposes. However, the noise effects from arrivals that we currently experience are not factored into the discussions, and as a result, the debate has shifted from dispersion towards moving all flights over us, regardless of the negative effects.

It is ironic that the MVCCA adopted a paper detailing the significant adverse health effects of aircraft noise, since one area has been designated to be exposed to this harmful noise for the benefit of the other areas.

Poul Hertel
Air Traffic Chair

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NEIGHBORHOOD HAPPENINGS

October 6, 2-6 p.m. – A free children’s car and booster seat inspection will be provided at Gum Springs Community Center, 8100 Fordson Rd

October 12, 2022, 7 p.m. – MVCA Membership Meeting, Washington Farms United Methodist Church, 3921 Old Mill Road

November 25, 2022, 10- 4 p.m. – Red Cross Blood Drive, 2000 George Washington Memorial Parkway. Sign-up to donate at www.redcrossblood.org

December 20, 2022, 1 p.m. to 6 p.m. – Red Cross Blood Drive, 2000 George Washington Memorial Parkway. Sign up to donate at: www.redcrossblood.org

January 11, 2023, 7 p.m. – MVCA Membership Meeting. Washington Mill Elementary School



The Haunting of Yacht Haven



If you haven’t discovered Wade & Lisa Woolwine’s 100+ moving Halloween figures in their front yard at 4400 Dolphin Ln, you will want to go.

From Saturday, 10/1 until Halloween, on Fridays, Saturdays and Sundays, 5-9 p.m.

And the figures move!

Washington Mill Elementary School Construction Update

The construction is wrapping up! We can expect the following activities this fall:

- There will be one or two more alarm tests in October/November (anticipated for Saturday during day). FCPS will inform MVCA when the tests will take place
- The remaining classroom trailers will be leaving the site mid-October through November
- Site work behind the school to restore the fields will be completed in late fall

Yacht Haven Garden Club Upcoming Event!

The Yacht Haven Garden Club is presenting their 38th annual Fashion Show and Luncheon – **FASHION FUSION** - Thursday, October 27, 2022, at the Mount Vernon Country Club in Alexandria.

Fashion show tickets are \$55 and the reservation deadline is October 20. Make checks payable to YHGC.

Please include phone number and email address and mail to Rhea Killinger at 510 Tennessee Avenue, Alexandria, VA 22305. The funds raised pay for the Club’s many community projects.



We love the Mount Vernon community and have appreciated the support now and through the years. We hope everyone is staying healthy and safe. We hope to reopen our doors soon and look forward to seeing you all again. In the meantime, we are open for carryout Tuesday through Sunday. See our website for full hours and menus.

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Please join us for our MVCA Membership Meeting!

Our October 12 meeting will be held for
all who wish to attend at 7 p.m. at
Washington Farm United Methodist
Church, 3921 Old Mill Rd, Alexandria,
VA.

Please note:
We will not be meeting virtually