

Mount Vernon Civic Association

www.MountVernonCivicAssociation.org

WINTER 2024

Belle Rive • Ferry Landing Estates • Ferry Landing Villa • Ferry Point Estates • Mount Vernon Forest
Mount Vernon Grove • Mount Vernon Park • Oxford • Riverbend • Riverwood • Vernon Square • Washington Woods
Westgate • Wycliffe on the Potomac • Yacht Haven Estates

Winter Association Meeting

Please join us on January 10, 2024, 7:30 PM at Washington Mill Elementary School Library for our MVCA Association meeting. We will vote on MVCA officers for the 2024-2025 term and hear updates from the committee chairs about news as we enter 2024. Save the date for the future 2024 MVCA Association Meetings: March 13, 2024; May 8, 2024; October 9, 2024.

Slate of Officer Nominations

President: Alison Huffstetler

Vice President: Jason Leaver

Second Vice President: Karan Cerruti

Treasurer: Open for nominations

Secretary: Open for nominations

Directors: John Hurley, Dan Rinzel, Sean McCarthy

Volunteer with MVCA- We Need You!

We are in need of several volunteers to fill positions – board and committee chairs – to keep the MVCA functional and in line with your priorities. Consider volunteering for any of the following positions (no experience necessary, we'll show you the ropes!)

Treasurer: Responsible for managing the association money, receive dues, pay bills, and keep accurate accounts of transactions. Provides an update of the finances at each meeting.

Secretary: Responsible for recording minutes of all meetings of the Association and Board of Directors, attend to the articles of incorporation and bylaws, provide written record of meetings, and attend to correspondence of the Association.

Budget and Finance Committee Chair: Responsible for tracking and disseminating local/county budgetary information.

Block Captain: Organizes block captains and disseminates information. Coordinates distributions of MVCA directory.

What's the time commitment? The board meets monthly for 1 hour during the academic year and board members attend the 4 annual association wide meetings. Most chairs provide article updates for the newsletter 2-3 times per year. The Association Bylaws published in the 2023-2024 MVCA Directory, page 84, has further information. To volunteer, reach out to any current chair (final page of this newsletter), President Alison Huffstetler at alison.n.huffstetler@gmail.com, or via the website, mountvernoncivicassociation.org/volunteer.

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Firstly, a neighbor let me know that the Mount Vernon Unitarian Church at 1909 Windmill Lane has composting bins available for composting drop off. If you'd like to keep a kitchen bin but don't want to invest in a backyard composting setup, this is a great option!

Secondly, the Friends of Mount Vernon Trail are always looking for volunteers, even in winter! There are cleanups organized almost every weekend. Their website is mountvernontrail.org. Enjoy the brisk air and meet new friends!

Thirdly, it's supposed to be a snowier than average winter, and most of us are getting ready and buying supplies. With our homes so close to the river, it'd be good to invest in de-icer, which are salt and chloride-free ice removers. These are typically labeled as pet or child safe. Excess chloride in surface water is toxic to plants, fish, and amphibians. The simplest solution is to focus on shoveling first, and only use salt or de-icer when necessary, like stairs or where ice tends to accumulate.

Have a plan in place for helping neighbors who will need sidewalks and driveways shoveled. While out shoveling warm up your muscles beforehand, take frequent breaks, and drink lots of water.

Have fun and be safe!

A Big "Thank You" to the MVCA Committee Chairs and Community Members

This year we say thank you and goodbye to several committee chairs. *Ted Thompson*, Neighborhood Watch Chair, has been in his role for 7 years. He has organized dozens of volunteers and ensured that we have thoughtful and consistent monitoring of our neighborhoods. When you see him around, say "Thanks!" *Jorie O'Donnell*, Block Captain Chair, has kept the information channels flowing and delivered hundreds of community directories to our neighbors. She has been in her role for 3 years, and we will miss her as a member of our monthly meetings! She walks around the neighborhood often – send her a smile and a wave. Finally, *Lisa Faustlin* has been our diligent secretary since 2016 and will resign this year. A fastidious but concise writer-her minutes keep our memory intact and provide insight into the happenings of our association meetings. Thank you, Lisa, for your years of volunteering!

Additionally, we appreciate all the 2023 neighborhood watch volunteers:

Mike and Megan Ben Ary	Sean McCarthy
Pam Broka	David and Ann McSween
Karen Cerutti	Samine Naqvi
Lisa Faustlin	Jorie O'Donnell
Connie Graham	Julianne Owens
Mike and Catalina Holland	Dan Rinzel
Donna Julian	Ted Thompson
Ron Leffler	Pete and Debbie Thrapp
Tony and Christina Lindh	Paul Tuohig
Stephen Markman	

Season's Best Wishes to all. Thank you to our First Responders (Fire, Police, Sheriffs, Rescue/Ambulance, 911 Communicators, State Police, U.S. Park Police, Medical, Court and Correctional personnel ,etc,) and many relatives who "watch and wait" for the safe return of a family member from her or his duty tour. Thank you also to those who provide our basic utilities (water, gas, electricity) and our roads and Postal system.

Please be careful driving during the Holiday Season as there is the potential for encountering impaired drivers. The Fairfax County PD announced that they will intensify Enforcement Patrols to stop impaired drivers. The FCPD is also expanding its LPR (License Plate Reader) coverage which has proved useful in tracking violators and stolen vehicles. The Mount Vernon Station of the FCPD notes that "Traffic- related questions, issues or concerns can be directed to: FCPDMTVtraffic@fairfaxcounty.gov."

In colder winter weather be careful to keep your car keys with you if you stop at a gas station or store particularly at night. Non-driver passengers are at risk of being abducted if the car engine is "running" and the car is car-jacked.

Be very careful re slips and falls on ice and snow.

The Fire Department reminds us of the need for fire/smoke and carbon monoxide alarms as well as extinguishers and family escape plans and routes. Treat alarm signals as valid and call 911 immediately and advise the 911 operator of ACCURATE address/location and of any persons needing assistance in departing the home. Have a family meeting place.

Be sure to keep "eyes on" any candles or items that have live flames and ensure that they are out during sleeping hours. Dispose of package wrappings, boxes, and cartons safely. Fireplace ashes are a special hazard. Each situation is different but there are some overarching suggestions: do not put ashes into paper or cloth bags and do not put combustibles near heat/flame sources such as hot water heaters, floor heating fans. Be thoughtful of children's clothing and read the tags for fire safety information.

Season's Best to You and Your Families and please be safe.



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The MVCA Transportation Chair mission is to identify, relate, and communicate those transportation issues and effects of potential impact to the residents, and members of MVCA in the Mt Vernon area. The Mount Vernon Council of Citizens' Association (MVCCA) Transportation Committee met on 11 Dec 2023. Participating in the meeting were MVCCA Chair, members, and the National Park Service (NPS) Police Lt Tim Wallace who provided a brief summary of NPS Police practices and accomplishments looking back at 2022. Lt Wallace reported on the number of fatal accidents, DUI arrests, and narcotic investigations. Lt Wallace reported that fatal accidents were down 58%, 23% of those were speed related - numbers from reported and investigated events along GWPW South. This year alone, 5 narcotic arrests had been made. MVCCA members expressed concern to Lt Wallace over lack of NPS Police presence during persistent high-speed drive times. Lt Wallace reportedly is aware of these speeding events and indicated NPS Police are not ordered to their respective patrol areas based on known time of speeding activity. The MVCCA CoChair and others recommended other external oversight be contacted to address this NPS lack of response and presence.

The VDOT 495 Express Lane, Wilson Bridge Study and changes proposed for I-95/495 & Wilson Bridge have been returned for review following public response. Virginia Department of Transportation is currently studying the feasibility of extending existing High Occupancy Toll Lanes from the Mixing Bowl over the Woodrow Wilson Bridge and into Maryland. These changes could potentially reduce the current amount of untolled access exists across the bridge, create impediments to using the bridge for Metro as it was originally designed, or have right-of-way impacts at existing interchanges to allow for new exit and on ramps. Public input on these changes and likely negative impacts was voiced and documented by MVCCA Committee members following the October 25 at Sherwood Regional Library.

\$1.7 million was approved for funding pedestrian and bicycle improvement and maintenance projects. At the Tuesday 05 December Board of Supervisors (BOS) meeting, FFC Supervisor Dan Storck, highlighted \$1.7 million had been approved for funding pedestrian and bicycle improvement and maintenance projects, including:

- Fort Hunt Road from Belle Haven Country Club Entrance to Woodmont Road (Mount Vernon)
- Fort Hunt Road and Westgrove Road/Rollins Drive (Mount Vernon)
- Huntington Avenue and Fenwick Drive (Mount Vernon)
- Newington Road between Telegraph Road and Ona Drive/Dupell Park (Mount Vernon)

Metrobus Changes Begin Sunday, December 17, 2023 with 24/7 DC Bus Service (effective 17 Dec to 17 Jan 2024): These changes expand service along Metro's highest ridership corridors in response to customer demand and to improve on-time performance across the region. New 24/7 bus service will be added in the District of Columbia operating every 20 minutes or sooner, improving transit access for customers traveling at all times of the day, advancing equity efforts for those who have traditionally had limited transit options late at night and early morning.

- In Maryland, additional weekday morning service will operate from New Carrollton to Silver Spring on Route F4; and,
- In Virginia, additional REX (Richmond Highway Express)
- Service to the Fort Belvoir Post Exchange and Commissary will begin after 5:30 a.m. seven days a week.
- An additional northbound trip will be added to the schedule between 8 and 9 p.m., seven days a week.
- New stops will be added at Mill Road & Jamieson Avenue between Eisenhower Avenue and King Street-Old Town stations to improve access for customers in the Carlyle area.

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Washington Mill Elementary School (WMES) ended the 2022-23 school year fully accredited and with rising SOL test scores showing significant inroads into the pandemic learning loss plaguing school divisions across Virginia and the nation. One exception was in math scores which the school is concentrating on for this year as midyear assessments will shortly be done.

As a Title I school WMES is also entitled to programs providing professional “High Impact Tutors” to address learning loss and academic needs on an individualized basis. Tutors are currently working in most grades depending on the identified needs.

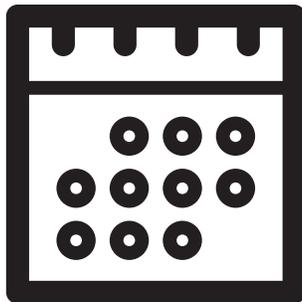
Country-wide attendance problems have been in the news lately and WMES is no exception but through intensive monitoring, proactive programs and extensive parent outreach attendance is at levels meeting accreditation requirements. Parents may not realize that chronic absence not only hurts their child’s academic career and creates issues for the classroom teacher, but can also affect the accreditation status of the school—and the regulations make no distinction between “excused” and “unexcused” absences. As before the pandemic, parents should consider whether every minor childhood ailment necessarily requires missing school and judge accordingly. Hopefully, families will try to limit family trips to school vacations and the summer; even a day or two tacked onto a holiday can become a problem over the course of the year.

At all levels, social media cell phone use continues to be worrisome and it is never too soon to have on-going conversations with your child. In our area, there was a recent “swatting” incident which caused police activity and lockdown at a local school. Children need to understand that false 911 calls and/or false online threats and reports are not funny pranks but serious misbehavior which can lead to injury, prosecution and a juvenile record.

On a lighter note, there is a fun one-night volunteer opportunity at WMES to help man booths at Science Night on January 25, 2023. The Science Night is run by a professional provider and all materials are provided; what you get to do is help kids run the experiments! The time investment is 5:15pm to about 7:45pm on January 25, 2023. If you can help, please email me (sharbeck@aol.com) by January 15, 2023, and I will send names on to the school.

As a reminder, we will again collect monetary donations for WMES’ “Food for Thought” at the general meeting, or donations can be sent directly to the school PTA. Checks can be made out to WMES PTA. Support not only helps needy kids but also frees us the PTA’s hard earned funds for enrichment activities for all kids and families.





Mark Your Calendar!

Join Us For Association Meetings

All meetings will take place at Washington Mill Elementary School
January 10, 2024 • March 13, 2024
May 8, 2024 • October 9, 2024
7:30 pm • Pizza and drinks served

Mount Vernon Civic Association, Inc.

Officers

President: Alison Huffstetler757-303-2254
1st Vice President: Jason Leaver703-799-6739
2nd Vice President: Karan Cerutti703-778-4442
Secretary: Lisa Faustlin.....303-396-5164
Treasurer: Jason Leaver703-799-6739

Directors

John Hurley703-799-9353
Dan Rinzel703-360-4627
Sean McCarthy703-360-0372

Committee Chairs

Appearance and Maintenance: Vacant
Block Captain: Jorie O'Donnell.....703-765-6470
Budget: Vacant
Education: Judy Harbeck703-780-1883
Environment & Recreation: Christina Reitz.....812-618-8524
Health and Welfare: Vacant
Membership/Directory: Marcelle Brown703-371-7552
Neighborhood Watch: Bryan WoodDrWood@huntington-dental.com
Newsletter: Alison Huffstetler757-303-2254
Picnic: Mary Jo Jensen248-245-7224
Planning & Zoning: Karan Cerutti703-778-4442
Public Safety: John Hurley703-799-9353
Transportation: Mark Yonchak703-283-7224
Web: The Hollands.....www.MountVernonCivicAssociation.org
Youth Representative: Vacant