



the BRADDOCK BEACON

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COUNTY EXECUTIVE'S PROPOSED BUDGET CUTS SPENDING, INCREASES TAXES

Last week, County Executive Anthony Griffin released his proposed County Budget for FY 2011, which begins July 1, 2010. County revenue is projected to drop by six percent due to falling residential and commercial real estate values and decreasing sales tax and deed recordation revenues. Along with some spending requirements to address the sustainability of our retirement systems and fiduciary responsibilities, these reductions result in a \$257 million shortfall. To close this gap, Mr. Griffin proposed a number of measures:

- The property tax rate would increase from \$1.04 to \$1.09. The average household would see a slight drop in tax payments from this change, as the average home has decreased in value by about 5 percent.
- The stormwater tax rate would increase from \$0.01 to \$0.015.
- Seperate from, but related to the budget, SewerService Charges would be raised from \$4.50 to \$5.27 per 1,000 gallons, and Water Fees would increase from \$50.97 to \$52.62 per quarter.
- A new vehicle registration fee of \$33 per vehicle would be implemented
- Significant spending cuts: Fairfax County Public Schools (-\$16.3 million), Police (-\$11.6 million), Fire (-\$10.7 million), Community Services Board, which provides services to the mentally ill and intellectually disabled (-\$5.2 million), Park Authority (-\$2.4 million) and Libraries (-\$3.4 million).

Taken together, the County Executive's proposal, and related water and sewer fees, would increase taxes on the average homeowner by about \$95. Some taxpayers would pay even more. For example, while the average home value will drop 5 percent this year, homes in Kings Park, Canterbury

Woods and Stonehaven and other neighborhoods remain unchanged, so the average home in those communities would see an increase of almost \$300 in addition to the car fee. Houses assessed above the county average of \$432,000 would see a greater increase.

The County Executive's proposed budget is just that – a proposal. The Board of Supervisors will vote on the actual budget in April. Between now and then, I am interested in hearing your views. You may send an email to braddock@fairfaxcounty.gov or write the office. I will also hold four Budget Town Halls to gather your input.

From 2000 to 2007, property tax payments doubled as home values skyrocketed. Since 2007 home values have fallen by about a quarter, but property tax payments remain at their peak. The demand for county services and the needs they address are up, but our ability to pay for them is down.

This situation will be difficult for several years and addressing it means making tough choices. I believe that the top priorities of local government should be police, fire, schools, infrastructure and helping those most in need. Programs in other areas may be valuable, but are less necessary and should bear a greater proportion of the reductions. Unfortunately, even the priority areas listed above must face cuts, as they account for the vast majority of the budget. Tax increases fall most heavily on senior citizens and those most in need, and are not the right formula when we are at the bottom of a deep recession.

Government must do what most families and businesses in Fairfax County have done – set priorities and tighten its belt. I welcome your input in this difficult process.



Supervisor John C. Cook

BUDGET TOWN HALLS IN THE BRADDOCK DISTRICT

- Tuesday, March 9 (Sponsored by the Braddock District Council) 7:30-9pm at Braddock Hall
- Monday, March 15 7:30-9pm at Robinson Secondary School Cafeteria with Tessie Wilson
- Saturday, March 20 10-11:30am at Ravensworth Elementary School Gymnasium
- Wednesday, March 24 7:30-9pm at Little Run Elementary School Cafeteria

Hope to see you there!

MORE INFORMATION ON THE FY2011 BUDGET ONLINE

Those looking for more details can find the complete FY 2011 Advertised Budget at <http://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/dmb/>.

You can also sign-up for the one of the Board's Public Hearings on the Budget by visiting https://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/bosclerk/speaker_bos.htm

SUPERVISOR COOK IN THE COMMUNITY

Many of this month's events were cancelled or rescheduled for later dates due to the "Storm of the Century". Supervisor Cook did, however, travel around the affected neighborhoods during the peak of the snow removal process, and will be discussing what he saw at an upcoming "Snow Summit" on March 16th in the Board Auditorium beginning at 3:30 p.m.

On February 3rd, the Supervisor co-sponsored a meeting of the Braddock-Fairfax-GMU forum at Fairfax City Hall. The topic of discussion was the area around Braddock Road and George Mason University.

On February 16th, Supervisor Cook participated in the Braddock District Council's Annual Education Forum.

On February 17th, Supervisor Cook sponsored a meeting of his Wakefield-NVCC Community forum. Dana Kaufman, Director, Government Affairs and Community Relations at NVCC and Delegate Vivian Watts also participated. This meeting addressed issues of parking and transit near the Annandale Campus of Northern Virginia Community College.

On February 18th, Supervisor Cook held a Constituent Day at the

Woods Community Center in Burke. Concerned citizens showed up and talked with him in an informal setting about the issues that concern them and their community.

On February 22nd, Supervisor Cook attended the Lake Braddock Secondary School PTSA meeting. He, along with Braddock School Board Representative, Tessie Wilson, addressed many questions concerning the County and School Budgets.

On February 27th, Supervisor Cook took part in a celebration ceremony honoring Black History Month held at the David R. Pinn Center in Fairfax. The theme of this year's celebration was "Celebrate the Dream: The Changing Face of Leadership".

On March 1st, Supervisor Cook kicked off the first of his Neighborhood College programs, which are being held on consecutive Mondays at St. Barnabas Episcopal Church in Annandale. More about this ongoing series is included in this month's Beacon.

On March 3rd, the Supervisor attended a meeting of the West Springfield Civic Association. Supervisor Cook listened and addressed many of their questions regarding county government.

BRADDOCK DISTRICT BUSINESS COUNCIL

As a small business owner himself, Supervisor Cook wants to ensure that we foster a productive, business-friendly environment here in the Braddock District. To help implement that vision he has established an informal "Business Advisory Council" that has and continues to meet on issues of concern and to hear a speaker on a topic of interest. If you wish to become involved, please contact Kiel Stone at kiel.stone@fairfaxcounty.gov or call the office at 703-425-9300.

LOOKING BACK AT FAIRFAX: CONFEDERATE SPY MARRIES UNION MAJOR

On March 10, 1864, Miss Antonia Ford, a woman who had been arrested in 1863 for spying on behalf of the Confederacy, married Joseph Willard, co-owner of the famous Washington Hotel of the same name. Shortly before the marriage, Willard had resigned as a major from the Union Army and Ford, a resident of Fairfax County, had been released from jail. Miss Ford was suspected of assisting Confederate Colonel John S. Mosby.

On March 9, 1863, in perhaps the most daring and successful raid of the Civil War, Mosby made his way upstairs in the middle of the night into the Gunnell House in Fairfax where Union Army Brigadier General Edwin Stoughton had his headquarters. The house still stands and is now owned by the Truro Church. Stoughton, who had

a few drinks that night, was fast asleep. Mosby rudely awoke the young sleeping general with a smack to his backsides and announced to Stoughton that he was being taken prisoner. Mosby and a handful of his Rangers then left the Union camp with Stoughton and approximately thirty-two soldiers and fifty-eight horses. President Lincoln was furious when he heard the news the next day, mainly because of the horses. "I can make a brigadier general in five minutes," Lincoln proclaimed, "but the horses cost \$125 each!"

Shortly before her marriage, Miss Ford wrote in a letter to Willard: "It seems I was literally thrown in your way by a power above us—call it destiny; I think that a prettier word than fate." When later asked why a pro-Confederate like herself would

marry a former Union officer, Mrs. Antonia Ford Willard answered, "I knew I could not revenge myself on the whole nation, but felt very capable of tormenting one Yankee to death, so I took the major."

Many years later one man cited the importance of Fairfax in the war: "For years and years after the war was over you have no idea of the number of ex-Union soldiers who came out on the trolley to visit Fairfax and the site of their earlier war experiences. Fairfax was the hub of all troop movements...Fairfax was the route they all used."

This feature is brought to you by: Paul N. Herbert, President of the Historical Society of Fairfax County and the author of "God Knows All Your Names."

THANK YOU TO THOSE WHO WENT ABOVE AND BEYOND

As we look back on the blizzard of 2010, our thoughts usually turn to our concerns about streets being plowed or schools being closed. We'd like to take a moment and turn those thoughts toward a positive and recognize some amazing people who, when the situation was not the best, stepped up and helped out their neighbors and friends in need. Three in particular were:

Caby Smith of Fairfax. Mr. Smith was called in when a constituent informed us she had to get her husband to the hospital early on the morning of February 12th. A four wheel drive vehicle was needed to get



him out. We connected her with Mr. Smith, who actually went so far as to make a dry run the day before to ensure that the 3 a.m. pickup would go smoothly. The next morning, it all went well and the patient was delivered to the hospital, had the procedure and is doing well.



Residents of Canterbury Woods join together to clear their street

Another constituent of Fairfax was contacted when a constituent called into the office with a unique situation. The constituent's brother-in-law was scheduled for a bone marrow transplant to treat his leukemia. The donor was the gentleman's daughter. They only needed to get out of their neighborhood so that she could be picked up and driven to Johns Hopkins in Baltimore. Our community volunteer was on standby during the weekend, and in the end, the road was clear enough for the constituent to get out. However, the peace of mind this gave the family during the weekend was a great comfort.

Jim Benton of Fairfax. Mr. Benton assisted Supervisor Cook in getting out into the community to see what areas were still unplowed and dangerous on Thursday, February 11th. They drove around the District and inspected what the conditions were like. The two hour trip proved very informative and problem areas were immediately reported to VDOT.

We also want to recognize all the volunteers who offered their time. Just knowing that someone was ready to help eased a lot of anxious minds. It's service and commitment like this that can bring our neighborhoods closer together.

BRADDOCK DISTRICT RESPONSE

During the snowstorms of 2010, we tried our best to keep the District informed and receive calls regarding the areas and roads that needed specific attention.

- We fielded and responded to over 1500 emails, phone calls and walk-ins and provided hourly updates to VDOT.
- Sent out five nightly Snow Advisories which reached more than 30,000 homes collectively.
- Supervisor Cook spoke with the Secretary of Transportation and participated in daily conference calls with VDOT staff to give and receive status updates.

ADDRESSING THE DAMAGE CAUSED BY MAJOR SNOWSTORM

As the snow from February's storms melts away, we will begin to see some of the damage that was done because of the snow

and some of the snow removal equipment.

The most obvious damage are broken tree branches and downed trees. You may have already been approached by individuals offering to trim and remove damaged trees and shrubs. While some are legitimate businesses, others know nothing about tree trimming. The bottom line is that if someone comes to your door offering their services, you have the right to ask for identification and their license. If the price seems too good to be true, it probably is. Ask for a written estimate for the work to be done.

Ask for proof of insurance and beware of individuals who go door-to-door offering bargains. If you have questions concerning work being done on your trees, contact the

Fairfax County Forest Conservation Branch at 703-324-1770.

Some of you have reported to us that you have experienced damaged lawns and vehicles due to the work of some of the snow removal equipment. Unless you or your community privately contracted for snow removal, those were operators contracted by VDOT doing snow removal. VDOT has asked that you send an email to them at novainfo@vdot.virginia.gov with the time, date and nature of the damage, along with an email address and/or phone number where you can be reached, so that they will be able to contact you. If you'd like, you may copy our office at braddock@fairfaxcounty.gov, and we will keep a record of all concerns received.

MARCH 16TH SNOW SUMMIT

On March 16 at 3:30 p.m. in the Board Auditorium, the Board of Supervisors will be hosting a "Snow Summit" with officials from VDOT to address the snow removal process. The meeting will also be broadcast on Channel 16. The public is invited to attend, but there will be no opportunity for public comment. As a result Supervisor Cook is looking for your input ahead of the meeting, so please call the office at 703-425-9300 or send us an email at braddock@fairfaxcounty.gov with your thoughts.

REGISTRATION STILL OPEN FOR NEIGHBORHOOD COLLEGE

Phase two of the Community Engagement Initiative began earlier this week with the first of two Neighborhood Colleges. The Neighborhood College is ideal for those who want to make a difference but aren't sure where to start. Graduates use this program to learn about county government, help their neighbors, become involved in local issues, take on leadership roles in their communities and volunteer.

The first Braddock Neighborhood College began Monday, March 1 and will run for five consecutive Monday nights, as well as Saturday March 20, at St. Barnabas Episcopal Church. The second Neighborhood College will begin Wednesday, March 24 and will run for 6 consecutive Wednesday nights in Braddock Hall. On Saturday, April 20th, an all day workshop will be held.

Braddock residents interested in participating in the Neighborhood Colleges can still register and should contact my office at 703-425-9300 for further information.

Students:

- [Learn about local government; meet elected officials and leaders](#)
- [Learn what makes Braddock unique and meet community-based organizations](#)
- [See how to build partnerships and consensus](#)
- [Learn effective participation and leadership skills, including engaging diverse communities](#)

Individuals must be able to attend and participate in scheduled classes (held once a week, evenings, for six weeks) and activities.

FAIRFAX COUNTY NEEDS A NEW SAVINGS ACCOUNT

As we grapple with the worst County budget picture in decades, some residents rightly ask, "Is there anything we can do to help cushion this kind of blow in the future?" The answer is yes. Fairfax County needs a savings account; in this case something called a fluctuation reserve. In bad years, the County could draw on this fund, just like a family who sets money aside in good times, to be used in tough times.

Several years ago, the Board correctly established a revenue stabilization fund ("rainy day" fund). This fund is available when unexpected changes occur within a single budget year, after the tax rate has already been set and a budget adopted, creating the prospect of a deficit. The

County also has a Managed Reserve, but this can only be touched in the case of a catastrophic event. These two reserves account for only five percent of revenue, a small figure for a budget our size, and one of the lowest reserve levels amongst jurisdictions with AAA bond ratings.

A fluctuation reserve would offer us greater flexibility, and as a hedge against a serious, multi-year economic downturn, it would strengthen our financial position. Last month, Chairman Bulova joined me in proposing that we study whether to establish such a fund, and the Board directed that the County Executive come before the Board later this Spring with a report and recommendation.

A fluctuation reserve would not be without drawbacks. The criteria for how it would be funded, at what level and when and how funding could be applied during the down years must be carefully considered.

All across our country people are rediscovering the concept of saving. Data from May showed the household savings rate rose to 6.9 percent, the highest since December 1993. The rate in April 2008 was zero. Over the last decade, we developed a culture committed to the credit card, spending now and pushing the bill to the future. Now, we are becoming more frugal. It is time for our government to follow suit and consider the creation of a savings account.

SUPERVISOR COOK IS PLEASED TO ANNOUNCE HIS APPOINTMENT TO THE FOLLOWING COMMITTEES

- Northern Virginia Transportation Commission
- Virginia Rail Express Operations Board
- Metropolitan Washington Council of Governments Air Quality Committee
- Metropolitan Washington Council of Governments Development Policy Committee
- Vice Chair, Board of Supervisors 50+ Committee

SUPERVISOR COOK WOULD LIKE TO RECOGNIZE SOME STANDOUT ATHLETES FROM BRADDOCK

The Robinson Lady Rams Swim & Dive Team for their 1st place finish at the State AAA Meet

Sophie Chase, from Lake Braddock SS, who took 1st place in the 3200M event at State Indoor Track & Field

Jacob Crawford, from Robinson, who won a State Wrestling Championship at the 130lb weight level

FCPS RECOVERING FROM SNOW INDUCED CLOSURES, DISCUSSING WAYS TO MAKE UP FOR LOST INSTRUCTIONAL TIME

Can Spring be far off? I certainly hope not! As we all struggle to recover from the once in a lifetime snowstorm that crippled our area in early February, the school system has and continues to recover as well.

I would first like to thank each and every resident who shoveled their sidewalks, driveways and bus stops in order to allow Fairfax County Public Schools to reopen as soon as possible. And a special thank you goes out to those individuals who also showed up at individual schools to help dig them out. The job was overwhelming, and your help was and is very much appreciated!

Both the Board of Supervisors and the School Board will have “de-brief” sessions on lessons learned from this event. Our hope is that we are not faced with a similar situation again anytime soon, but there is important information we can document



about what we did well, and where we all need to improve for the next natural event – even if it is not snow.

During the February snow storm, Fairfax County Public Schools were forced to close for a total of 7 days. Coupled with the 3 days we missed just before the winter holiday, we have missed a total of 10 days this school year.

By the time you read this newsletter, the Board will have voted on how to make up these days. But no matter what decision we make, all of our students have lost valuable instructional time, and none of our possible options to recover that time will be the same as the original days. I know our teachers will do all they can to make up for the missed time.

Tessie Wilson, School Board Braddock District

COUNTY RECYCLING EVENTS IN MARCH

March 27: Document Shredding, 9 a.m. - 2 p.m., South County Government Center, 8350 Richmond Highway, Alexandria

March 28 - Electric Sunday TV and Computer Recycling Event, 10 a.m. - 3 p.m. at the I-95 Landfill Complex, 9850 Furnace Road, Lorton

OVERALL CRIME DROPS IN 2009

Compared to 2008 Fairfax County experienced an overall drop in index crimes of nearly five percent in 2009. Index crimes, reported monthly to federal authorities, include: murder, rape, robbery, aggravated assault, burglary, larceny and motor vehicle theft.

Violent crimes (murder, rape, robbery and aggravated assault) decreased by 14.6 percent, while property crimes (burglary, larceny and motor vehicle theft) decreased by 4.5 percent.

“I’m pleased to see the drop in overall crime and especially the nearly 15 percent decline in violent crime,” said Colonel Dave Rohrer, Chief of the Fairfax County Police Department.

“One of our key anti-crime strategies is our focus on repeat offenders. Historically, a small percentage of offenders commit a high percentage of crimes, and we have made it a priority to focus on them.”

Preliminary numbers for the West Springfield Police District, which covers a majority of the Braddock District, indicate an approximately 6.2 percent overall drop in index crimes.

According to Captain Bruce Ferguson, the results are a product of residents listening to the message given by the police, by their Neighborhood Watch groups and by their community associations to lock up their cars and homes and to be more watchful of what is going on around them.

BNN EXAMINES THE NEIGHBORHOOD WATCH PROGRAM

This month on Braddock Neighborhood News, Supervisor Cook interviews Master Police Officers JT Frey and Pete Feigleson from the West Springfield Police Station about the neighborhood watch program and community policing in Braddock District. JT and Pete explain how the police department and our neighbors volunteering through neighborhood watch organizations are working together to strengthen our neighborhoods and ensure they remain safe places to live and play.

Our neighbors serving us through these organizations perform a vital role in the neighborhoods throughout our community. Because of the cooperation between these citizens and our exemplary police department, neighborhoods in Braddock District are among the safest in the nation. We owe the brave men and women of our police department our thanks for the difficult and sometimes dangerous work they perform and we owe our neighbors volunteering through neighborhood watch organizations our thanks for their dedication to keeping our neighborhoods safe.

If you are interested in joining or starting a neighborhood watch in your neighborhood, you can contact Officer Frey at 703-644-5026. You can also call our office at 703-425-9300 or e-mail Supervisor Cook at braddock@fairfaxcounty.gov.

Last month, Supervisor Cook interviewed John Dargle, the Director of the Fairfax County Park Authority, and Tawny Hammond, the Director of Frying Pan Park and a well known community volunteer. They discussed the outstanding parks and recreational services we enjoy in Fairfax County and the benefits they provide to our standard of living.

Braddock Neighborhood News airs on Fridays and Sundays at 5 p.m. and Wednesdays at 7 p.m. on Channel 16. You can also watch a streaming video of the show by visiting http://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/cable/channel16/asx/supervisor_cook.asx.

TAX RELIEF ASSISTANCE FOR SENIORS AND DISABLED MARCH 9TH AND 16TH AT BRADDOCK HALL

Braddock District Seniors who are 65 years of age or older, and residents who are permanently and totally disabled, may qualify for real estate and car tax relief in Fairfax County. Individuals may also be eligible for rent relief. To qualify, owners may not have gross income in excess of \$72,000 and may not have combined net assets in excess of \$340,000 excluding the value of their home, its furnishings and up to one acre of land. Full details on the program can be found at: http://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/dta/taxrelief_home.htm

First time applicants have until December 31 of the year that tax relief is being requested to file an application. Returning applicants should file between January 1 and April 1 of this year.

To provide assistance to residents who may be filing for such relief for the first

time or who may otherwise need support in preparing their applications, Braddock residents can meet with staff from the Department of Tax Administration in Braddock Hall in the Kings Park Library on March 9 or March 16 between 10:00 am and 2:00 pm. During this time, DTA staff will be available for private appointments. To make such an appointment, contact Lindsey Smith of my staff at 703-425-9300 or e-mail Lindsey.Smith2@fairfaxcounty.gov.

If you will be filing for tax relief for 2010, it will be necessary for you to bring 2009 Federal and State Income Tax returns and asset statements as of December 31, 2009. If you are a first time applicant and filing for 2009, you will also need to bring your 2008 Federal and State Income Tax returns and your December 31, 2008 asset statements.

AARP TAX-AID PROGRAM AVAILABLE

Trained volunteers are available to assist you in preparing your 2009 Federal and Virginia Income Tax returns. This service, provided again this year by the AARP Foundation, began on the 1st of February and will operate throughout the tax preparation season.

The location closest for Braddock District Residents can be found at the Mason District Government Center, 6507 Columbia Pike in Annandale. Volunteers are available Tuesday, Wednesday & Friday 9:30 AM to 1:00 PM, Monday and Thursday 1:00 PM to 8:00 PM and Saturday 9:00 AM to 1:00 PM

Staffed by over 250 volunteers, this program is provided free of cost for taxpayers having low and middle income.

Bring your returns from prior years, your Social Security cards, statements of earnings for 2009, and the Staff will be happy to assist you in filing. It's for all ages and it is free of charge. You don't have to be an AARP member.

FREE CAREGIVER SEMINARS, MARCH TO MAY

Fairfax County's Free Seminars for Family Caregivers series offers 11 events this spring to help family caregivers of older adults and adults with disabilities throughout the county. Speakers include experts in law, insurance, care management, finances and community resources.

New this spring is a seminar on supporting caregivers of veterans scheduled for March 25. People are welcome to attend one or all of the seminars.

For more information, to register, or to request reasonable accommodations go to www.fairfaxcounty.gov/dfs/olderadultservices and link to Events, e-mail caregiver@fairfaxcounty.gov or call 703-324-5205.

SHERIFF'S OFFICE GIVES REMINDER ON PROJECT LIFESAVER PROGRAM

The Fairfax County Sheriff's Office reminds families and caregivers that the Project Lifesaver program can search for and rescue loved ones who wander due to Alzheimer's, Down syndrome, autism and related diseases and disabilities.

Project Lifesaver clients wear a wristband that emits a silent tracking signal. When caregivers notify the Sheriff's Office that a loved one is missing, a highly trained team responds to the area with state-of-the-art tracking equipment. These efforts have drastically reduced search times to an average of 30 minutes or less.

Project Lifesaver currently has 28 clients and many more coming online. Clients must be residents of Fairfax County, Fairfax City and the Towns of Herndon or Vienna.

For more information, please visit www.fairfaxcounty.gov/sheriff/lifesaver.htm or e-mail shf-projectlifesaver@fairfaxcounty.gov

BRADDOCK OFFICE IS NOW A PRINTER CARTRIDGE RECYCLING DROP-OFF LOCATION

As we all strive to be more ecologically aware, the Braddock District is doing its part by becoming a drop-off site for your used printer ink and toner cartridges. These cartridges, after they are collected, are shipped back to the company, refilled and sold again. In the US, only 5 percent of cartridges end up being recycled and the rest end up clogging landfills around the country.

We will accept cartridges from ink printers or toner ones from laser machines. Bring them to the Braddock Office anytime during regular business hours and we'll do the rest.

Let's all pitch in with this important program.

NATURE'S PALLET: NVSWCD NATIVE SEEDLING SALE

The Northern Virginia Soil and Water Conservation District is holding its annual seedling sale to provide an inexpensive source of seedlings for Fairfax County residents. This year, the District is offering two packages, one featuring shrubs and the other featuring trees.

All seedlings are native to Northern Virginia. The shrub package sells for \$15.95 and includes two each of the following: Arrowood viburnum, Gray dogwood, Red Chokeberry, Eastern redbud and Smooth sumac. The tree package sells for \$10.95 and includes two of the following: Northern red oak, Black gum and Yellow poplar.

These plants are sure to bring a menagerie of colors to your backyard!

Order forms can be obtained at my office or be downloaded at <http://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/nvswcd/seedlingsale.pdf>. Place your pre-paid orders by April 12. For more information, please contact Nick Kokales by phone at (703) 324-1420, or by email at Nicholas.kokales@fairfaxcounty.gov

SAVE A LIFE, DONATE BLOOD

Blood drives are a great way to help out the greater community. Just one blood donation can save three lives. There will be two blood drives in Fairfax County during the month of March:

Inova's blood drive will be held on Friday, March 5, from 8:30 a.m. to 2:00 p.m., in Conference Rooms 7 and 8 at the Fairfax County Government Center. Make your lifesaving appointment today, call 1-866-BLOODSAVES 1-866-256-6372 or visit www.inova.org/donateblood.

Additionally, on Wednesday, March 10, the American Red Cross will hold a blood drive from 9:00 a.m. to 2:30 p.m. at the Norman M. Cole Jr. Pollution Control Plant in Lorton. For more information or to schedule an appointment, call Lyn Mackintosh, 703-550-9740, ext. 253.

VDOT TO FOCUS ON POTHOLE REPAIR IN MARCH

This winter's repeated historic blasts of snow, ice and rain coupled with colder-than-average temperatures have resulted in a proliferation of potholes on Virginia's roads. Following the Governor's directive, VDOT will make pothole repair its top priority between March 1 and March 31.

The agency will use state crews and contractors to conduct a pothole blitz aimed at quickly identifying and repairing roadway hazards, but VDOT is also asking for citizens' help to identify potholes as they form in order to speed repairs. To report a pothole, citizens should visit www.VirginiaDOT.org or call VDOT's Highway Helpline at 800-367-7623 (ROAD).

Potholes form when moisture seeps into pavement, freezes, expands and then thaws. This cycle weakens the pavement. The weight of traffic loosens the pavement and over time the pavement begins to crumble.

A winter of heavy snow or rain and several freeze-thaw cycles may result in a bumper crop of potholes in the spring.

Crews have been working throughout the winter to patch the worst potholes, but pavement repair efforts have been hindered by repeated snowstorms and the frequent freeze-thaw cycle that is creating potholes faster than crews can repair them.

Patching operations are prioritized by pothole severity and location, with some severe potholes on high traffic roads being filled within 24 hours, and most potholes on higher traffic roads being repaired within four days.

Some areas and types of pavements may require more extensive repairs. In these cases, crews will make temporary repairs immediately and will schedule more extensive reconstruction work at a later date.

VDOT has budgeted \$45.8 million for asphalt and concrete patching for fiscal year 2010 (which runs from July 1, 2009 through June 30, 2010). Despite budget challenges, VDOT has not cut back on pothole repair because it is considered a safety program.

BOARD OF SUPERVISORS APPROVE PARKING DISTRICT ON TAPESTRY DRIVE

In a unanimous vote, the Board of Supervisors approved a special residential permit parking district (RPPD) for the 4800 block of Tapestry Drive. Over the last several years, as the enrollment of George Mason University increased, so too, did the number of students parking in the surrounding neighborhoods. Supervisor Cook listened to the needs of the residents in the area, and with their support, asked for the creation of a special district for a specified stretch of Tapestry Drive.

The approval of the RPPD means that block is reserved only for residents of the Kings Park West Townhouses and residents

of the Kingsberry Townhouses, who have an appropriate parking decal. Restricted parking hours will be 7 A.M. to 8 P.M. Monday through Friday and 7 A.M. to 1 P.M. on Saturdays.

The parking district in front of the single family homes on Tapestry, while just adjacent to the newly created district, has a different designation, and the permit to park in one area will not allow parking in the other. Parking decals may be requested by going online to www.fairfaxcounty.gov/fcdot/rppd.htm. Residents should also be receiving notification by mail from the county.

NOTARY PUBLIC NOW AVAILABLE IN THE BRADDOCK OFFICE

A certified Notary Public is now available to sign your documents free of charge. In order to have your items notarized, be sure to have photo identification.