



# The BRADDOCK BEACON

703-425-9300 [www.fairfaxcounty.gov/braddock/](http://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/braddock/) [Braddock@fairfaxcounty.gov](mailto:Braddock@fairfaxcounty.gov)

## BECOME AN ACTIVELY ENGAGED BRADDOCK RESIDENT: ATTEND THE CITIZEN GOVERNANCE CONFERENCE

As we announced in last month's Braddock Beacon, Supervisor Cook will launch his Citizen Governance Initiative at an all-day Braddock District Visioning Conference on Saturday, May 5. Mark your calendars now for this great opportunity that will serve as the launching point for a number of policy focused committees that will help advise Supervisor Cook in making decisions that impact the Braddock District.

While a full agenda is not yet finalized, the structure of the conference is coming into focus. The morning of the conference will provide attendees with the context and knowledge base to begin to see where their input is needed. It will include a presentation on the Braddock District's demographic characteristics, both now and in the future, a review of the current comprehensive land use and transportation plans for Braddock, and a panel discussion

made up of leaders of citizen committees in other districts, so that participants have the background needed to help design Braddock's new citizen-governance structure. The afternoon will be focused on five breakout sessions that will each cover a specific policy area. These are: Land Use and Environmental Management, Transportation, Aging in Braddock, Education and the Fairfax County Budget. Each breakout will be facilitated by individuals with a solid background in the subject with the goal in mind being to lay the foundation for active policy committees.

Our county government belongs to you, the citizens. Take ownership. Don't be a spectator. Please plan to attend the Braddock Visioning Conference May 5, and become a citizen policy-maker.



Supervisor John C. Cook

### ATTENTION HOMEOWNER AND CIVIC ASSOCIATIONS:

Please continue to let us know about your successful Community Engagement efforts. Keep up the good work! Please call (703) 425-9300 or email Ann Sharp at [ann.sharp@fairfaxcounty.gov](mailto:ann.sharp@fairfaxcounty.gov) with your latest information.

## COUNTY EXECUTIVE PROPOSES FY 2013 BUDGET

At the February 28 Board of Supervisors Meeting, Fairfax County Executive Anthony Griffin proposed the Fiscal Year (FY) 2013 Budget. At \$3.52 billion, the budget represents an increase of 1.71 percent from the FY 2012 Revised Budget Plan, showing limited increases in general fund disbursements and direct expenditures.

"The fundamental difference as we move toward FY 2013 is that we are now ready to focus on the future in a much more concrete way as opposed to merely seeing what was on the horizon," said Griffin. "Now is the time to plan ahead in order to move forward with these challenges and the complexities of a growing, diversified population."

The County Executive's proposal will not increase the real estate tax rate, maintaining a rate of \$1.07 per \$100 of assessed value, which

would result in the average taxpayer paying \$33 more than last year. Residential real estate revenue accounts for an estimated 74 percent of the total tax base.

The proposal does increase the storm water service rate from \$0.015 to \$0.025 per \$100 of assessed value. These increases stem from the need to meet amplifying federal and state regulatory requirements.

As education continues to be a high priority in the community, Fairfax County Public Schools has a \$1.68 billion recommended transfer up 4.5 percent over the FY 2012 Adopted Budget Plan

Additional proposed budget highlights include:

- Recommended fare and fee increases:

**Please See Budget on Page 2**

### EMAIL SUBSCRIPTION TO THE BRADDOCK BEACON

If you would like the Braddock Beacon and the Cook Advisory electronically, instead of through mail, please contact us at [braddock@fairfaxcounty.gov](mailto:braddock@fairfaxcounty.gov) and write "Beacon Subscribe" in the subject line.

### BRADDOCK DISTRICT NOW ON FACEBOOK & TWITTER

Be sure to stay up to date on the Braddock District. See: <http://www.facebook.com/pages/Burke-VA/Office-of-Braddock-Supervisor-John-C-Cook/113003565389251?ref=sgm> and on Twitter at [@SupervisorCook](https://twitter.com/SupervisorCook)

## IT'S TIME THE COUNTY STEPS UP AND FACES THE TRANSPORTATION CHALLENGE BEFORE US

At some point in the next few years this Board of Supervisors, and the people of Fairfax County, will need to make a fundamental decision about our County's future. We can continue to ignore the transportation funding crisis that is so very apparent; letting congestion choke off our economy and standing by watching as a lack of State maintenance allows our roads to crumble into dust. Or we can take matters into our own hands and address the problem.

A third way does not exist. The State has made it abundantly clear it will not deal with our transportation infrastructure in any meaningful way and the feds are bankrupt. If we choose to not act as a county we will be choosing failure. Over the next couple decades over a quarter of a million new residents will move to Fairfax County. Why? Because it's a great place to live. If we wanted to deter the new arrivals, I suppose we could work hard at making Fairfax County an undesirable place to live, but that would be quite counterproductive. The problem as it stands now is tremendous. Our roads and transit systems can't handle the current demand. We must choose either to build and maintain infrastructure, or accept accelerating decline in our mobility.

At the Board's retreat in early February, County staff provided a detailed analysis of the County's transportation needs over the next ten years. To meet our needs, they tell us we need an additional \$3 billion in transportation funding - over and above that currently provided for with Federal, State, and County funds - just to achieve a reasonable improvement. That's \$300 million a year, or an amount nearly equivalent to ten percent of the County's general fund.

What would it mean to not meet that funding deficit? Well, roadway improvements to Route 7 (I-495 to Falls Church) and Frying Pan Road (VA 28 to Centreville Road) would not happen; it would mean forgoing new interchanges at Route 50/Stringfellow Road and I-66/Route 28; and right here in Braddock District the widening of Braddock Road (Burke Lake to I-495) would be delayed beyond our lifetimes.

We need to forget and move beyond the tired notion that the State will fund this infrastructure. The General Assembly is controlled by areas of the state with poverty and poor economies. Page County doesn't need more roads, and they certainly aren't going to pay for ours. Hampton Roads consists of cities, not counties, so they get a more favorable funding formula from Richmond already. They also have the authority to raise funds from other sources, such as a meals tax. They won't join us in a vote to change the formulas. That would send their money north. In Fairfax, we are on our own.

Do we have to accept significantly more congestion and crumbling roads? We have a vibrant, growing economy that makes most jurisdictions envious. We have an entrepreneurial business class ready to sprint to the next level of economic development - and provide thousands of good jobs in the process. We have the capacity to provide the infrastructure capable of supporting it. The question, however, remains: are we willing to do what is needed?

For the last three years, County staff has presented both the Board of Supervisors, and County residents, with a detailed plan for meeting our transportation needs. It has outlined the projects needed and presented the Board with funding options. Yes, it would require us all to pay a little more, but the cost of not meeting that challenge has far greater ramifications. If economic growth stalls, we will all lose a lot more. So far, the Board has stuck its collective head in the sand.

Maybe it's time to try something new. Maybe the people of Fairfax County should accept this challenge as our own and address it. Great societies tackle great challenges, they don't ignore them. If we continue to ignore our transportation needs we risk taking Fairfax County backwards. While we cannot literally secede from the rest of Virginia, we can figuratively choose our own road toward success, leaving the rest in our tracks.

I look forward to your thoughts.



## FY 13 BUDGET WILL BE COUNTY EXECUTIVE'S LAST

### Budget Continued from Page 1

School Age Child Care (SACC) fee - 5 percent; Rec-PAC program fee - 10 percent and Fairfax Connector fares - 7 percent.

- \$3.6 million for transportation improvements and subsidy requirements.

- \$0.76 million for Tysons Redevelopment for new and previously unfunded staff positions.

- 2.18 percent Market Rate Adjustment (MRA) for all county employees.

- Net reduction of two county employee positions: recommendation for 34 new positions and abolishment of 36 positions, as part of recommended agency reductions. There is no Reduction-in-Force (RIF) required as a result of these position reductions.

For more information on the FY 2013 Advertised Budget Plan, contact the Department of Management and Budget at 703-324-2391, TTY 711, or access the budget online at <http://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/dmb/>.

### SUPERVISOR COOK'S BUDGET TOWN HALLS SCHEDULED

**March 19 at 7:30 p.m. at Canterbury Woods Elementary School**

**March 28 at 7:30 p.m. at the Gold Cafeteria in Robinson Secondary School jointly with Braddock School Board Member Megan McLaughlin.**

**Public hearings on the fiscal plan will be held in the Board Auditorium of the County Government Center on April 10 at 6:00 p.m., and on April 11 and 12 at 3:00 p.m.**

## SUPERVISOR COOK IN THE COMMUNITY

On February 1<sup>st</sup>, Supervisor Cook attended a celebration of the Chinese New Year at Little River Glen Senior Center. Supervisor Cook made remarks and then sat down to an amazing lunch of freshly prepared Oriental delicacies. Later that evening he addressed members of the North Springfield Civic Association and answered their questions and concerns.



On February 6<sup>th</sup> and 7<sup>th</sup>, Supervisor Cook, along with his colleagues on the Board of Supervisors, attended a retreat where they discussed the many issues facing Fairfax County as they all begin a new term in office. The retreat was held at the Lorton Workhouse.

On February 8<sup>th</sup>, Supervisor Cook attended the monthly meeting of the Braddock District Council.

On February 12<sup>th</sup>, Supervisor Cook was at the Woods Community Center in Burke for the Friends of Sadie Blood Drive. Supervisor Cook rolled up his sleeves and made a donation to this annual event that supports and raises awareness for children who are battling cancer.

On February 15<sup>th</sup>, Supervisor Cook spoke to the members of Boy Scout Troop 1147 about what he does as a local elected official as the boys work toward their Citizenship Badges.

On February 20<sup>th</sup>, Supervisor Cook stopped by the Church of the Good Shepherd to thank volunteers at the Weekend Food for Kids event which was hosted by the Assistance League of Northern Virginia. At the event, families volunteered to pack food supplies to supplement lunches that go to



needy children of Title 1 schools.

On February 24<sup>th</sup>, Supervisor Cook taped his monthly television show, Braddock Neighborhood News. He taped two shows this time which will air in March and April on Sundays at 5 p.m., Wednesdays at 7 p.m. and Fridays at 5 p.m. The March show features Tony Vellucci, who is the Braddock Appointee to the Fairfax County Park Authority Board. He discussed with Supervisor Cook some of the issues and park related events in Braddock. In April the show will feature Charlie Strunk, the Fairfax County Bicycle Coordinator, and Tom Kennedy, the Braddock District Appointee to the Trails and Sidewalks Committee for Fairfax County. They discussed pedestrian and bicycle issues on our local trails, sidewalks and roads and also highlighted the new Fairfax County Bicycle Master Plan.

On February 25<sup>th</sup>, Supervisor Cook joined his colleagues on the Fairfax County Board of Supervisors and members of Fairfax County School Board at the Junior Achievement Finance Park on the grounds of Frost Middle School for their joint retreat. Where and how the two boards could better cooperate was the main subject of discussion.

On February 27<sup>th</sup>, Supervisor Cook addressed the attendees of the Monticello Park Master Plan Public Hearing which was held at Kings Park Library. More on this meeting can be found on Page 5 in this edition of the Beacon

On February 29<sup>th</sup>, Supervisor Cook attended a meeting at Terra Centre Elementary School which focused on an upcoming expansion project that is currently in the planning stages. If you would like additional information please contact Rosemary Ryan at 703-425-9300 or you can email her at [Rosemary.Ryan@fairfaxcounty.gov](mailto:Rosemary.Ryan@fairfaxcounty.gov).

# JOIN US IN CELEBRATING OUR BRADDOCK NIGHTS CONCERT SERIES AND BECOME A FRIEND OF BRADDOCK NIGHTS

Braddock Nights brings free concerts to our community all summer long through a partnership between the Braddock office and the Fairfax County Park Authority. The program receives no funding support from Fairfax County. In the past, performances had been funded primarily through corporate grants. However a decrease in sponsorships prompts an appeal for general support.

This year's program of free performances continues its great tradition of family-oriented, quality entertainment. So join Supervisor Cook and become a Friend of Braddock Nights by filling out the membership form you see below and mailing it to the Braddock Office at 9002

Burke Lake Road, Burke, VA 22015. All donations, payable to the Fairfax County Park Foundation, are tax deductible and are dedicated to underwriting the cost of performer fees and support services.

Supervisor Cook thanks you in advance, and hopes to see you this summer during our Braddock Nights Concert Season at either of our nationally recognized gold-medal award winning parks.

If you were a donor to our Braddock Nights last year and did not receive a T-shirt please contact our office at 703-425-9300 and we will be happy to provide you with one.



Dear Friend of Braddock Nights:

Please complete the following membership form and return it with your donation to the address mentioned below. On behalf of the Braddock Nights, I thank you for your kind donation. As a token of our appreciation, we mail a specially designed Braddock Nights' Friends T-shirt to those contributing \$50 or more.

### Membership Donation:

**\_\_\_ Friend of Braddock District Nights - \$50, Members will receive a Braddock Nights Friends T-shirt at the program at the beginning of the season.**

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Telephone: \_\_\_\_\_ Email: \_\_\_\_\_

Here is my check for: \$ \_\_\_\_\_ (make your check payable to: Fairfax County Park Foundation)

T-shirt size: \_\_\_\_\_

If you wish us to contact your corporation to seek their support, please provide the following:

Company's Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Contact Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Title: \_\_\_\_\_ Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

Mail to:

Office of Braddock District Supervisor John C. Cook  
Braddock District Government Center  
9002 Burke Lake Road, Burke, VA 22015  
(703)425-9300

## RECAP OF RECENT MEETING ON MONTICELLO PARK

On February 27th, in the Kings Park Library Meeting Room, the Park Authority held a public hearing on the Monticello Park Master Plan. This plan proposes converting the open park into a multi-use area that could include an off leash dog area (OLDA), a skate spot, and a recreation area, while still maintaining open space. Approximately 70 people were in attendance with 24 individuals speaking on the plan, 14 of whom expressed support for the plan, eight who raised concerns against and two who had general questions but did not voice an opinion.

Supervisor Cook began the meeting by welcoming everyone and thanking them for being such active and engaged citizens. Tony Vellucci, the Braddock District Appointee to the Park Authority Board, followed and gave a brief overview of the project. After Tony, Andy Galusha, from the Planning and Development Division of FCPA, gave a very informative presentation that chronicled the history of the parcel. He also stated that with any proposed dog park there must be a sponsor group that will raise the funds for the OLDA construction and agree to help maintain and police the area. He added that

over 40 parcels of land were looked at in the District before Monticello was chosen.

Some of the concerns expressed were the severe drainage issue which causes flooding now in neighboring backyards; that the proposed 30 parking spots would not be enough and that people would park in the surrounding neighborhoods; that the egress from the park has never been effective; and that privacy would be compromised with more people up on the park able to look into the neighboring homes.

Those who offered support for the proposed plan stated that Braddock is the only District in Fairfax County without an OLDA; that the sponsor group, Braddock Dogs, had over 150 signatures from people who support this; most people would actually walk minimizing parking as an issue; that this would be an asset to the community and could possibly raise property values; that the community would come together to support and assist the maintenance; and that this proj-

ect would afford the County an opportunity to fix issues like drainage.

The next step is a 30 day period where anyone can offer their input and ideas to the FCPA. Information can be found at <http://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/parks/plandev/monticello.htm>. After the 30 days, the plan will be reassessed before going before the Park Authority Board for a decision. There also may be another public meeting prior to this but has not been scheduled. If you'd like to see the drawing of the proposed plan, or if you need any other information, contact Lindsey Smith at [Lindsey.Smith2@fairfaxcounty.gov](mailto:Lindsey.Smith2@fairfaxcounty.gov) or call the Braddock office at 703-425-9300.



## ANIMAL SHELTER NEEDS "PUPPY PEOPLE" TO CONSIDER PARTICIPATING IN 2ND ANNUAL 'BECOME A FOSTER PARENT MONTH'

Are you interested in helping save lives of puppies, kittens, turtles and an assortment of other animals housed at the Fairfax County Animal Shelter? The Shelter will host a special orientation session for citizens interested in learning more about the organization's animal foster care program. The orientation session will be March 6 from 7:00 to 9:00 p.m. at the shelter located at 4500 West Ox Rd., Fairfax, VA 22030. It is part of the shelter's 2nd annual "Become a Foster Parent Month." To attend, citizens should RSVP to [kathleen.cornell@fairfaxcounty.gov](mailto:kathleen.cornell@fairfaxcounty.gov).

Foster care providers save animals' lives by providing temporary out-of-facility care in their homes for some of the shelter's neediest animals. No special experience is required to become a foster and the shelter provides training, supplies and medical care for the animals. Foster care providers must be 21 years and older and must go through the shelter's volunteer process, which includes a background check and home visit.

Each year, the shelter places between 300 and 400 animals into foster care. The majority of these animals are kittens and cats during the busy summer season; however, the shelter has a high need for foster care providers who can offer short-term care for dogs and puppies as well as for kittens under 4 weeks of age who need to be bottle fed.

The "Become a Foster Parent" campaign begins March 1 and runs through the end of the month. For more information, e-mail [kathleen.cornell@fairfaxcounty.gov](mailto:kathleen.cornell@fairfaxcounty.gov).



## MARCH COMMUNITY EVENTS IN BRADDOCK

### POTENTIAL TURFING OF ROBINSON S.S.

A Community Information Meeting Regarding Proposed Turfing of Robinson Secondary School Athletic Fields will be held March 6 at the school in the Blue Cafeteria, (5035 Sideburn Road) at 7:30 p.m.

Proposed plans to replace two natural surface grass fields on school property with artificial turf will be presented. The first location is at the football stadium for the school. The second location is an existing field near the baseball/softball fields that is located in the southwest quadrant of the school property near Sideburn Road and Commonwealth Boulevard. There will be a brief presentation followed by a question and answer period.

### MASON UPDATES MEETING

There will be a George Mason University-Community Forum on March 7 at Kings Park Library Meeting Room, (9002 Burke Lake Road). The meeting runs from 7:30 to 9:00 p.m. and the agenda includes an update on the Roanoke River Road project, Sustainable Chesapeake Storm Water Management along Rabbit Run and an Update on Kings West Swim Club. Additional topics will also be covered.



### COMMUNITY INFORMATION MEETING FOR ROUTE 29 WIDENING

On March 8 at Eagle View Elementary School, (4500 Dixie Hill Road), from 7:30 to 9:00 p.m. there will be a community information meeting regarding the Route 29 widening. Members of the Fairfax County Department of Transportation and the consultants for this project will have a display of the plans for the widening of Highway 29 from Shirley Gate and Legato Road. There will be a brief presentation followed by a question and answer period.

### TAX RELIEF FOR SENIORS & PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES

The Fairfax County Board of Supervisors is hosting a series of free tax relief workshops in March. Staff from the Department of Tax Administration (DTA) will be on-site to assist residents with filling out the application form, as well as answering questions. They will be at the Kings Park Library Meeting Room on March 19 and March 27 from 10:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m. No appointment is necessary. Real estate tax relief is available for older adults and people with disabilities who meet certain qualifications; qualified residents also may be eligible for car tax and rent relief. For more information on tax relief, go to [www.fairfaxcounty.gov/dta](http://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/dta), or call 703-222-8234, TTY 703-222-7594. If you have questions regarding taxes please call Kalia Sokos at 703-425-9300 or email her at [kalia.sokos@fairfaxcounty.gov](mailto:kalia.sokos@fairfaxcounty.gov).



### NVCC WAKEFIELD CHAPEL FORUM

Supervisor Cook is hosting a meeting of citizens interested in what's happening with Northern Virginia Community College and the surrounding neighborhoods on April 17, 7:30 to 9:00 PM at the Nancy Sprague Technology Center. There's always activity going on at NVCC, and as your neighborhoods are so close to the Accotink Creek, there's always concern about environmental issues in your communities. Representatives from NVCC will be giving updates and Supervisor Cook is looking forward to discussing the concerns important to you. A more specific agenda will be forthcoming, but if you have an specific items you'd like to see addressed, please give Ann Sharp a call at 703-425-9300 or email her at [ann.sharp@fairfaxcounty.gov](mailto:ann.sharp@fairfaxcounty.gov).

### GUINEA ROAD CLOSURE ANNOUNCED

The Virginia Department of Transportation has announced a complete roadway closure on Guinea Road at the bridge on Wednesday, March 7 and Thursday, March 8 between 9:00 p.m. and 5:00 a.m.

### FAIRFAX COUNTY POLICE SPONSOR BICYCLE RODEO

The Fairfax County Police, West Springfield District Station's Neighborhood Patrol Unit will be hosting a bicycle rodeo for grade school aged children (6-12) at the station on Saturday March 31st. The rain date is April 21. The Springfield District Station is looking for volunteers, so if you can help, please let them know. During the Rodeo, children will learn about bicycle safety, and then participate in a challenging obstacle course that is designed to reinforce safe riding. Additionally the police department will have several police vehicles and equipment on display along with a visit from McGruff the Crime Dog.



### 2012 FRIENDS OF TREES NOMINATIONS NOW BEING ACCEPTED

Fairfax County annually recognizes those individuals, schools, youth and adult or civic organizations that have volunteered their time and effort to preserve protect or plant trees. Examples include: tree preservation actions, tree planting projects, and innovative education or maintenance programs. Nominations are due by March 31. Awards will be presented on Arbor Day, April 28. The application can be found at: <http://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/dpwes/environmental/trees.htm>

## BRADDOCK DISTRICT LAND USE UPDATES

• Supervisor Cook moderated a Community Information Meeting on the proposed expansion of the Terra Centre Elementary School in Burke was held on February 29. Fairfax County Public Schools proposes to add approximately 20,000 square feet to the school, including a library, kindergarten, a lobby and classrooms.

The renovation would also include an expanded kiss and ride drop off area, a new Americans with Disabilities Act access to the upper play fields and an expanded hard surface play area. Citizens at the meeting asked for the installation of a wink-o-matic flashing light in front of the school to facilitate pedestrian traffic. A public hearing is tentatively scheduled for April 18 before the Planning Commission at 8:15 p.m. Planning Commissioner Nell Hurley and School Board Member Megan McLaughlin were present to hear concerns.

• A proposal to replan the site of the former Eleven Oaks School was unanimously approved by the Board of Supervisors on February 28. Residential density at five to eight acres was allowed with actual rezoning not to exceed seven homes per acre. This plan would allow up to 49 single family homes on both sides of George Mason Boulevard on land currently owned by Fairfax City, Fairfax County and Inova. Supervisor Cook has asked that a re-zoning plan be delayed until the school buses parked on the site be moved. No action can occur until a re-zoning is passed.

• A Community Information Meeting on a proposal by HH Hunt Inc. to replan a 3.6 acre tract at the northeast corner of Braddock Road and Roberts Road for an assisted living facility to serve up to 90 residents is scheduled for March 12 at 7:30 p.m. at OakView Elementary School. Immediate neighbors have been contacted but any interested resident is invited to attend. No application has yet been filed with the County.

## FOUR COMMUNITY MEETINGS SCHEDULED ON PHASE II OF DULLES RAIL

With 64 percent of construction complete for Phase 1 of the Dulles Corridor Metrorail Project County officials are looking to discuss the second portion of the project with residents. Currently construction efforts are concentrated in Tysons Corner where preparations for construction of a short tunnel, the beginnings of station foundations and installation of the first pier to support the guideway are taking place. Phase 1 will run from the East Falls Church Metro Station westward with four stations in Tysons Corner to the Wiehle Avenue Station at the eastern edge of Reston. Service will begin in late 2013.

Phase II of the Dulles Rail Project extends the line another 11.6 miles from Wiehle Avenue in Fairfax County to Washington Dulles International Airport and on to Route 772 in Loudoun County. New stations will be built at Reston Parkway, Herndon-Monroe, Route 28, Dulles International Airport, Route 606 and Route 772.

**Phase II will include a major rail yard at Dulles Airport and new stations at: Reston Parkway , Herndon Monroe , Route 28, Dulles International Airport, Route 606, Route 772**

Following Supervisor Cook's Board Matter asking for citizen input the County Executive has announced four community meetings that will inform the public about the costs and physical layout of Phase II of the Rail to Dulles project. Each meeting will have a presentation by staff followed by a question and answer session. The briefings presented at community meetings will be posted on the website along with the questions and answers from each community. Also, using social media, anyone who has a question may post it and staff will answer. Additionally an "Ask Fairfax" session has been proposed. The public meetings follow the release of the 100 percent Phase II Preliminary Engineering, Independent Cost Estimate, and the Toll and Revenue Study which was released March 1. The County has 90 days after the release of these documents to make a final decision on this project.



**Monday, March 12, 2012, 6:30 – 8:30 p.m.**

South County Government Center  
Community Room 221A/B  
8530 Richmond Hwy; Alexandria, VA 22309

**Wednesday, March 14, 2012, 6:30 – 8:30 p.m.**

Hutchison Elementary School  
Cafeteria  
13209 Parcher Ave; Herndon, VA 20170

**Thursday, March 15, 2012, 6:30 – 8:30 p.m.**

Westgate Elementary School  
Cafeteria  
7500 Magarity Rd; Falls Church, VA 22043

**Monday, March 19, 2012, 7:00 – 9:00 p.m.**

Fairfax County Government Center  
Conference Room 9/10 (Lobby Level)  
12000 Government Center Pkwy, Fairfax, VA 22035

## SPRING IS AROUND THE CORNER, HOW HEALTHY IS YOUR TREE?

Over the last couple of years, we have heard about, and some communities have seen firsthand, the devastation caused when a mature tree falls on a house.

Trees are an important and valuable resource in an urban environment. Not only do they provide many environmental services, they can add thousands of dollars to the value of a home. That said, trees can be dangerous when they fall. Even perfectly healthy trees can fail in weather that is extreme enough. We can evaluate and monitor trees for signs of disease and structural weakness that can cause them to fall in less extreme or even ordinary weather events.

The very best way for a property owner to evaluate the health and soundness of their trees is to hire a certified arborist to evaluate them. The County has a good website on tree care and a page devoted to hiring an arborist (<http://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/dpwes/environmental/treehazards.htm>; [http://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/dpwes/environmental/hiring\\_an\\_arborist\\_flier\\_final.pdf](http://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/dpwes/environmental/hiring_an_arborist_flier_final.pdf)). Trees are very good at hiding damage and disease, so even healthy looking trees should be examined by a professional. Here are some of the indications of prob-

lems for which a property owner can look:

- Die back in the crown. Branches must make their own food, so branches growing in the shade may die as part of the natural process of tree growth, but dying branches high in the crown are a sign of disease or damage.

- Mushrooms near the base of the tree, especially if they radiate out in lines from the base of the tree, can indicate rot in the root system.

- Shelf fungus or mushrooms growing on the side of the tree are an indication of rot in the trunk of the tree.

- Peeling bark exposing wood, rotten wood or cavities in the trunk are also signs of rot in the trunk of the tree.

- Excessive leaf loss or dead leaves in the tree can be a sign of pests or disease that can weaken a tree.

- Included bark is a sign of weak branch unions. There should be a ridge of bark in the joint between two branches or between a branch and the trunk. This indicates a strong joint that is being properly wrapped by wood as the tree grows. Sometimes the bark dives down into the joint and forms a wedge that weakens the joint. Some trees,

like Bradford Pears, are known for having included bark and weak joints.

- Noticeable change in the lean of a tree. Trees can grow with a lean, usually to reach for the sun, but that lean is stable. When a tree that wasn't leaning starts to lean or a leaning tree starts to lean more, that is an indication that it is becoming uprooted. Sometimes an increased lean will be accompanied by a disturbance around the base of the tree or cracks in the soil away from the lean.

If you see any of these problems you should call an arborist immediately. Trees are valuable living things and they deserve the same standard of care as we and our pets have – a periodic visit with an appropriate health care professional.



"Mulch volcanoes" cause many problems for trees

### AVOID SPRING MULCH VOLCANOES

Once again, Spring is right around the corner and many homeowners are heading to lawn and garden stores for their annual supply of mulch. Mulch mimics the benefits created by the forest floor. The generally recommended mulching depth is two to four inches. Unfortunately, many landscapes are falling victim to a plague of overmulching. A new term, "mulch volcanoes," has emerged to describe mulch that has been piled up around the base of trees. Deep mulch can be effective in suppressing weeds and reducing maintenance, but it often can cause problems for trees according to Jim McGlone of the Virginia Department of Forestry. McGlone warns that over mulching:

- Promotes tree disease – bark is not a good barrier against soil fungi;
- Prevents water from reaching roots – mulch can help hold and infiltrate water into the soil beneath it when spread in a two to four inch layer, deep mulch may not allow water to penetrate and may promote the growth of fungal mats that help shed water;
- Provides homes for rodents – deep piles of mulch are good homes for rodents, particularly if they can burrow in under fungal mats and stay dry; rodents living in mulch piles can gnaw on bark and damage the cambium layer beneath the bark, which can quickly kill young trees;
- Promotes girdling roots – the warm, moist environment of a mulch volcano can induce a tree to start growing roots from the trunk which are poorly formed and can circle or strangle the tree;
- Creates a stink – aerobic decomposition of mulch is the smell of good soil, but deep mulch piles can prevent the penetration of oxygen, leading to anaerobic decomposition which smells like swamp gas.

A good reference for how to mulch trees can be found at this site: <http://www.treesaregood.org/treecare/resources/ProperMulching.pdf>.

## COUNTYWIDE BICYCLE TRANSPORTATION MASTER PLAN

What streets and roads need to be bicycle-friendly? Where should there be on-road bike lanes, off-road trails, and/or other approaches? Where are the difficult or unsafe locations to bicycle? How can cycling be made safer for young people or novice cyclists? How can cycling for short trips, like running errands, shopping, or going to the park or playground become a more attractive alternative?

The last of the Countywide Bicycle Transportation Plan Open Houses will be held the last week in March and will allow you to ask questions of County representatives and other interested individuals who are working toward making Fairfax County more bicycle friendly. The specific time and place will be announced as soon as we receive further details. The committee is looking for suggestions from residents who'd like to have a say in how our future bicycling interests might be met. For the purpose of this project, the County was divided into smaller areas that correspond with typical bike trip distances.

A presentation will begin at 7:00 p.m. for anyone who would like hear about the entire plan. For those who cannot attend the presentation, we encourage you to stop by, take a look at the information that will be available and ask questions. You will also be able to give your input anytime throughout the evening.

## LIVE YOUR BEST LIFE AFTER 50!

The Positive Aging Coalition sponsors workshop series at Reston Community Center. This is designed to support individuals who are thinking about retirement, those transitioning into retirement, and those who have already retired. People in the process of transitioning from their work careers are sometimes called Third Agers because they have one-third of their life left to live after they retire. Each weekly meeting will focus on a different, stimulating topic such as Finding Your Passion & Purpose, Choosing an Encore Career, Your Transition Life Plan, Maintaining Social Connections,

and Your Boarding Pass for a First Class Retirement, just to name a few. The specific course syllabus will be provided prior to the first class. Professionals from around the region who are affiliated with the Positive Aging Coalition will lead the weekly sessions.

To register visit [www.restoncommunitycenter.com](http://www.restoncommunitycenter.com). The series includes five two-hour sessions; Saturdays March 17 – April 21, 2012 (no workshop on April 7th)



## NEW SCHOLARSHIP PROGRAM ANNOUNCED FOR FAIRFAX COUNTY HIGH SCHOOL SENIORS FROM CELEBRATE FAIRFAX, INC.

Celebrate Fairfax Inc., producers of the Celebrate Fairfax! Festival, have announced a new scholarship program offering ten \$1,000 college scholarships to Fairfax County high school seniors. As part of its mission to "Celebrate Fairfax County and Its Communities," Celebrate Fairfax will select scholarship recipients from each of Fairfax County's Supervisor Districts, as well as one at large scholarship. Recipients will be recognized for their community involvement, academic accomplishment, extracurricular activities and demonstrated leadership.

Recipients will be honored at a special Community Spirit Reception at the Celebrate Fairfax! Festival on Saturday, June 9. Guests will include community and county leaders, sponsors, elected officials, Friends of Celebrate Fairfax, members of the CFI Board of Directors and other special guests. In addition, scholarship recipients will be treated to a VIP Experience Package at the 2012 Celebrate Fairfax! Festival. Funding for the Community Spirit Scholarship Program comes solely from donations made by the Friends of Celebrate Fairfax, a group of supporters consisting of corporations, businesses and individuals who provide funding for this and other Celebrate, Inc. initiatives.

Information regarding eligibility and criteria may be found along with the online scholarship application at [www.celebratefairfax.com/scholarships](http://www.celebratefairfax.com/scholarships). The deadline for applications is March 23. Final selection of awardees will be made by the Celebrate Fairfax, Inc. Board of Directors. Grant announcements will be made in May.

In addition to the Celebrate Fairfax Community Spirit Scholarship Program, Celebrate Fairfax Inc. is launching the Friends of Celebrate Fairfax initiative. This initiative will provide support for the scholarship program and other CFI programs and community building efforts. Consisting of corporations, businesses and personal memberships, Friends of Celebrate Fairfax will receive VIP benefits and opportunities.

