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**COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT BEGINS BY
REACHING OUT TO YOUR NEIGHBOR**

Last month, I launched the Community Engagement Initiative - a multi-faceted effort that encourages people to get more connected to each other and their communities, and strengthens community organizations through leadership training, support and connections.

The first part of this effort is the most basic, but perhaps the most important, and it starts with you. We need to get to know each other. Each month, let's commit ourselves to meeting one new person from our own neighborhood. Take a break from raking your leaves to say hello to a neighbor. Stop and talk to your neighbors when taking a walk around the block. If you are ready to take it one step further, volunteer to host a block party. How do you do that? It's easy. Pick a day and time, and draw up some flyers. Then, deliver them to the houses on your street. You can make it potluck - asking everyone to bring a dish to pass - or if you are ambitious you can provide the food. Most importantly, you will foster connections between your neighbors.

The police tell us that the most engaged and connected communities also have the least crime. The same can be said of zoning violations. Communities where people know each other as

friends are going to have less conflict, and neighbors who respect their neighbors are not going to violate laws or impose upon those next door with troublesome conduct. When we are friends, we "police" our own conduct better, and we watch out for the welfare of those around us.

This first step is simple, yet fundamental. It requires breaking ourselves out of our comfort zones a bit. Take a chance to meet that new neighbor. You will be the better for it.

Next month we will build on this effort. So, get out there and meet a new friend!




Community Engagement Kickoff attendees fill out a tabulation sheet. This sheet highlights what residents feel are the big issues facing Braddock.



Supervisor John C. Cook

**THIRD CONSTITUENT
DAY SCHEDULED**

**Thursday November 12,
from 5:00 P.M. to 8:00 P.M.
in the North Springfield
Elementary School cafeteria.**

Constituent days provide a great forum to get out and meet Supervisor Cook and get your questions answered in a relaxed setting. During the previous constituent day at Little Run Elementary School more than three dozen residents came by to talk about issues impacting them and their community. A wide range of issues were discussed, including commercial signs along roads, George Mason University Construction, illegal boarding houses, the lack of transportation funds from Richmond and many others.

Hope to see you there!

SUPERVISOR COOK IN THE COMMUNITY

On October 8th, Supervisor Cook participated in a round table discussion with the members of the Leadership Fairfax Inc. class at Fire Station #40.

Also on October 8th, Supervisor Cook was a guest for dinner at Little River Glen Retirement Community where he dined and chatted with many of the residents.

On October 9th, Supervisor Cook was honored to participate in the Lake Braddock Secondary School Homecoming Parade which worked its way through the community before ending up back at the school.

On October 14th, Supervisor Cook attended the Chapel Square West Community Association Meeting at The Sprague Center. He answered member's questions and addressed many of their concerns.

On the 21st, Supervisor Cook held the kickoff for the Braddock District Community Engagement Initiative. More information on how you can get involved is highlighted elsewhere in this issue.

On October 23rd, Supervisor Cook was a guest at the Women Entrepreneurs' Expo and luncheon. At this event, the Supervisor facilitated a discussion at his

table regarding County and District procedures, and how those could be related to the issues these outstanding businesswomen might be facing.

Also on the 23rd, Supervisor Cook was a proud participant in the 2009 Annandale Homecoming Parade. This parade began and ended at the High School, and wound its way around the local neighborhoods.

On October 24th, Supervisor Cook participated in several Volunteerfest activities and also attended the Annandale Festival. The rain and wind didn't prevent him from getting out and showing his support for Volunteer Fairfax and the wonderful and caring constituents of our community.

On October 25th, Supervisor Cook was able to attend two wonderful seasonal events in the District. He first stopped by Oktoberfest, which was co-hosted by the Stone Haven, Canterbury Woods and Red Fox Forest Civic Associations. After that, he attended the annual Kings Park West Halloween Festival.

On October 29th, he attended one of the Community Dialogues concerning the upcoming FY 2011 budget. This event was held at Woodson HS. A similar

Dialogue will be held on November 14th at Kings Park Library at 10:00 A.M.



On October 31st, Supervisor Cook and Chairman Bulova participated in a ceremony unveiling an historical marker at the David R. Pinn Center, declaring the site a historical landmark.

On November 1st, Supervisor Cook was present for a dedication ceremony at the Trinity Christian School. At this event, the new Gymnasium, Performing Arts Center and Classroom building were unveiled to the public.

SUPERVISOR COOK TO MEET WITH WAKEFIELD CHAPEL ROAD AREA RESIDENTS

On Wednesday, November 18 at 7:00 P.M. at the Sprague Center, Supervisor Cook will be meeting with citizens who live on and around Wakefield Chapel Road. Parking overflow from the Annandale NVCC campus and the increase in traffic along the corridor because of HOT Lanes construction has many residents concerned. And just as the Braddock Mason Forum exists to address issues in the communities around the George Mason University campus, the Wakefield Chapel Road NVCC Forum will work toward fostering better relations between parties in this neighborhood.

BECOME AN ACTIVE PARTNER IN YOUR COMMUNITY THROUGH NEIGHBORHOOD COLLEGE AND THE LEADERSHIP INSTITUTE

Have you ever wanted to become more involved with your neighbors, local businesses and organizations in your community? Have you ever wondered how Fairfax County Government works, or how the Dillon rule affects Fairfax County and other Counties in Virginia? If so, Fairfax County Government has two exciting opportunities for you!

Neighborhood College

The Neighborhood College Program is a multi week program for which Fairfax County Government partners with a homeowners association, civic association, local business or other neighborhood organization to identify community strengths and strategies to solve community challenges. Individuals have the opportunity to learn about demographics and trends in their community, successful strategies for involving diverse communities and opportunities to become involved in organizations in their neighborhood and community. The Neighborhood College

provides a great opportunity to connect and reconnect with neighbors and leaders from other organizations.

Leadership Institute

The Leadership Institute is a one day program designed to bring together leaders from homeowner and civic associations, non-profits and other community based organizations. The goal is to strengthen the organizational capacity of these groups by providing best practice seminars to leaders and an opportunity to learn from others who may have experienced similar challenges in the past. Topics that will be covered during the leadership institute include, but are not limited to: fiduciary responsibilities, social networking with diverse communities, developing a neighborhood plan and vision for your community.

Both programs are free and open to residents of Fairfax County. For more information please contact the following individuals:



David Ellis, the Assistant to the County Executive for Neighborhood Services, and pictured above, wrote this article

Neighborhood College: Sarah Allen at sarah.allen@fairfaxcounty.gov or (703) 324-7926

Leadership Institute: David Ellis at David.Ellis@fairfaxcounty.gov or (703) 324-3501

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT KICKOFF HOPES TO SPUR FUTURE INVOLVEMENT

We kicked off our Community Engagement Initiative October 21 with over 125 people in attendance who learned about ways to get involved in their communities.

Several organizations, such as the Braddock District Council, Neighborhood Watch, the Area Agency on Aging, Volunteer Fairfax, the Park Authority and

Emergency Response sponsored information booths that featured opportunities to become involved in the community.

Attendees were also able to register for two learning opportunities, the Leadership Institute and Neighborhood College, which are described in greater detail in the above article by David Ellis. Those interested in participating

in either opportunity, or in receiving more information, should call the Braddock District office at 703-425-9300 or send an email to Ann.Sharp@fairfaxcounty.gov.



Community Engagement Tip of the Month

Students at North Springfield ES are looking for adults to be a part of their school based mentoring program. The commitment is as little as 30 minutes a week meeting with a student in the school during school hours. A mentor can play many roles, such as a caring adult, career counselor, or teacher and homework helper. If you're interested, please contact Ms. Jennifer Mrowka at 703-658-5500. Make a difference in a child's life!

Support the Annandale High School Culinary Program:

Buy a turkey that is prepared and ready for the oven - your purchase enables us to buy turkeys needy for families in the AHS Community. More information is at www.fairfaxcounty.gov/braddock/

BRADDOCK NEIGHBORHOOD NEWS: COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

Last month, Braddock Neighborhood News featured an interview with Executive Director Jeanne Sanders of Volunteer Fairfax. The interview was in conjunction with the launch of the Community Engagement Initiative and Ms. Sanders is one of the collaborating partners on the project. Viewers learned about the benefits of volunteering, available volunteer opportunities in our community and upcoming volunteer events.

In this month's edition, Supervisor Cook

speaks with David Ellis, the Assistant to the County Executive for Neighborhood Services and Ken Disselkoen, the Director of the Department of Systems Management for Human Services.

Viewers will learn about the benefits of diversity in our neighborhoods and how to reach out through different associations and organizations in our communities. Ellis and Disselkoen also discussed the new community and leadership events being held in the coming year, specifically the Leadership In-

stitute and the Neighborhood College.

Supervisor Cook is excited to have the support of David Ellis and Ken Disselkoen for the Community Engagement Initiative here in Braddock District and hopes you can tune in to learn about the opportunities and resources they offer. Braddock Neighborhood News airs on Fridays and Sundays at 5 P.M. and Wednesdays at 7 P.M. on Channel 16.

BOARD OF SUPERVISORS TO CONSIDER COMMERCIAL PARKING BAN IN RESIDENTIAL AREAS

On November 16, the Board of Supervisors will vote on a proposed ordinance that would prohibit certain vehicles from parking on residential streets in the county. Currently, exceptionally large vehicles like tractor-trailers and dump trucks are not allowed, but recently passed state legislation allows counties to broaden the restrictions.

The proposed ordinance would ban ve-

hicles with any of the following characteristics from residential streets:

- More than 21' long
- More than 8' high, including accessories (such as ladders)
- More than 102" wide
- Gross Vehicle Weight of 12,000 or more pounds
- Any trailer or semitrailer except camping trailer, boat trailer or single axle
- 3 or more axles
- Carrying commercial freight in plain view.

At the November 16 Board Meeting the Board will decide whether to schedule a public hearing for December 7, to take public comment on the proposed ordinance. If the board were to adopt the proposal after the hearing, the ordinance would go into effect February 1.

Additionally, the proposed ordinance would also prohibit vehicles towing a trailer or semi-trailer, except camping

and boat trailers; though there are exemptions for specific instances: moving vehicles, for example.

Both vehicles below would be able to park:



POLICE URGE CITIZENS TO KEEP VEHICLES LOCKED

On November 4, the West Springfield Police Citizens Advisory Committee (CAC) met and found out how safe Braddock is, but that it's still important to keep their car doors locked. The roughly 30 folks in attendance heard Police Captain Bruce Ferguson strongly encourage individuals to keep their vehicles locked and bring valuables, such as GPS devices, inside with them, as GPS theft is increasing.

2009 SCHOOL BOND REFERENDUM PASSES

On Tuesday, November 3, 2009, the voters of Fairfax County voted (70 percent Yes to 30 percent No) to support the \$232,580,000 school construction bond referendum. In addition to funding infrastructure management, renovations and new construction, more than \$5 million will be used to upgrade Kings Park Elementary School.

The Board of Supervisors voted unanimously in favor of including the referendum on the November ballot during the May 4, 2009 Board Meeting.

VETERAN'S DAY ACTIVITIES AT BRADDOCK DISTRICT SCHOOLS

On November 11th, the United States will observe Veteran's Day – a day to remember all of those who have served their country in the armed services and to honor those who currently serve.

All of our schools are required to plan a program to honor our veterans and to explain the true meaning of the day to our students. Here is just a sampling of what some of our schools are planning:

Annandale High School

Principal John Ponton will begin the day by reading an announcement that provides a brief history of the holiday. He will then recognize all of Annandale's faculty and staff who are military veterans, announcing their name, rank and branch of armed services.

In addition, many of the social studies teachers include a special Veteran's Day lesson plan to honor the holiday. One teacher, Greg Commons, lost his son Matt in Afghanistan to enemy fire. His memory will be honored by flying his Fallen Heroes flag at AHS on November 11.

Robinson Secondary

Every year, Robinson holds a very moving ceremony at the James W. Robinson monument commemorating his act of valor and remembering all who have served. Last year a soldier who had served with Sgt. Robinson told the students about the man for whom the school is named.

Laurel Ridge Elementary

Laurel Ridge is planning a joint Veteran's Day/Thanksgiving event. The many ser-

vice personnel who live in the area have the day off, and are invited to the school for a "patriotic" day to say thank you for their service.

Bonnie Brae Elementary

The fourth grade classes of Bonnie Brae honor our brave service personnel past and present. Service personnel are invited, both active and retired.

The program features a boys' speaking choir performing a dramatic, patriotic reading, a singing chorus and recorder band. A medley of patriotic songs and choral speeches will be performed by the 4th grade students. The highlight of the program is the presentation by individual students of certificates of appreciation to our invited military service people, recounting their feats of bravery, military experiences and accomplishments.

Keene Mill Elementary

As soon as the traffic is gone from the front drive, the classes and staff will be called to move outside and form a semi-circle in front of the flag pole. The SCA officers will welcome all. Letters are going home in the Thursday school mail to the community asking parents to spread the word to neighbors, family, friends etc. who may be active duty/veterans asking them to attend. The Patrol members will hoist the flag after which members of our music/band/strings programs will play a musical tribute.

Olde Creek

One activity - a "Wall of Veterans" - in-

volves every child in the school. Each child is given a copy of a flag to color and on the flag they write the name of



family members who have served in the military past or present and include the date or period that the veteran served or is serving. This is a take home activity so that students can have this conversation with their parents. The students then turn in the flags and we hang them up creating the "Wall of Veterans." In individual classrooms each teacher highlights Veteran's Day in a way that is appropriate for their grade level. Any child in the school can participate and they can work as a family to create their flag, reinforcing the importance of the day.

All of the schools in Braddock District – and throughout the county – would welcome your attendance at any of these events.

I urge all of you to remember those who have served our nation – and to especially remember those who are currently serving both here at home and abroad.

ART FOR THE SKY: FAIRFAX STUDENTS CREATE 150-FOOT PANDA



Under the direction of artist in residence, Daniel Dancer, the entire student body of Oak View ES collaborated to form a giant panda which could be viewed from the sky. The students worked together to raise awareness of how what humans do impacts the habitat of the panda. The entire project was supported and paid for by the Oak View PTA.



BRADDOCK DISTRICT STAFF

Ryan Kelly, Chief of Staff

Issues: Parks, Environment, Human Services, Communications

Rosemary Ryan, Senior Staff Assistant for Legislative Services

Issues: Land Use, Zoning, Stormwater, Transportation, Public Works

Ann Sharp, Senior Staff Assistant for Constituent Services

Issues: Zoning Enforcement, Home Owner/Civic Associations, Traffic Calming, Human Services, VDOT Is-

Issues, Relations with GMU and NVCC

Lindsey Smith, Senior Staff Assistant for Administration

Issues: Scheduling, Arts, Technology, Braddock Hall

Kiel Stone, Legislative Assistant

Issues: Communications, Budget, Housing, Revitalization, Board Matters

Ben Bush, Administrative Assistant

Issues: Correspondence, Braddock Neighborhood News, Health

COLLEGE NIGHT IN NORTHERN VIRGINIA

Monday, November 9 6:30 P.M. to 9:00 P.M.

Northern Virginia Community College, Annandale: Ernst Center Forum

You have questions, we have answers. Learn how to:

- Choose the right college or academic program
- Find financial aid and make college affordable
- Complete the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA)

HOT LANES BRIDGE WORK CONTINUES

Work is ongoing at both the Braddock Road and Little River Turnpike beltway HOT lanes interchanges, with current construction focusing on bridge reconstructions. Much of this work begins at 9:30 pm and involves the placement of silver deck pans, which are tray-like structures placed across the new spans to hold the future asphalt/concrete decks.

This work will take 2-3 weeks. In addition, crews are adding to and tightening bolts that connect the bridge infrastructure. These activities cannot be completed over moving traffic and must be done at night. During the past week there have also been night time closures related to installation of a water line at Braddock Road.

This installation will generate additional west bound lane closures in the immediate future, including the weekend.

WEEKEND BRIDGE WORK

When: Friday, November 6 at 10 P.M. through Monday, November 9 at 5 A.A.

What: Ramp closed- see link for detour:

www.vamegaprojects.com/tasks/sites/default/assets/File/pdf/11.1.09/495N_to_620W.pdf

Where: I-495 north ramp to Exit 54B, Braddock Road (Route 620) west

Why: Installing waterline

EXPECT NIGHT TIME DELAYS ON METRO IN NOVEMBER

During November, Metro will replace fasteners, make tunnel repairs and make repairs to concrete slabs underneath the rails. Customers should add at least 20 to 30 minutes of additional travel time to their schedules from Sunday to Thursday nights from 9:30 P.M. to midnight on the Red, Blue, Orange and Yellow lines.

Metro will not conduct weeknight track maintenance on Thanksgiving Day, Thursday, November 26. For more information follow this link: http://www.wmata.com/about_metro/news/PressReleaseDetail.cfm?ReleaseID=4128

Also, make special note to changes on the Blue and Yellow lines in Virginia this weekend. Allow extra time (at least 30 minutes) south of the Braddock Road station 7 A.M. to 6 P.M., Saturday, November 7, and Sunday, November 8. This is especially important for Blue Line customers traveling between King Street and Franconia-Springfield. A special "Blue Line shuttle train" will operate between those stations.

All Yellow Line AND Blue Line trains traveling from the District into Virginia will operate to the Huntington station. If you're a Blue Line rider and want to get to the Van Dorn Street or Franconia-Springfield stations, YOU WILL NEED TO GET OFF at King Street and TRANSFER to a Blue Line shuttle train.

Conversely, if you catch the Blue Line shuttle train at those last two stations of the Blue Line, you will need to TRANSFER at the King Street station to a "regular" Blue Line or Yellow Line train to continue beyond King Street. Metro will also be single tracking between Braddock Road and Van Dorn Street (Blue Line) and Huntington (Yellow Line).

TWO PROGRAMS FOR HOME HEATING ASSISTANCE

Residents who need help to pay home heating bills or who face an emergency heating situation this winter may be able to access assistance from two federally funded programs locally administered by the county's Department of Family Services.

The Fuel Assistance program helps eligible households with the costs of heating their homes. This year, the application period for the fuel assistance program began on Tuesday, October 13, 2009, and closes on Friday, November 13, 2009. Approved applicants will have a one time grant applied directly to the supplier of their heat.

The Crisis Assistance program helps households in emergency situations by pro-

viding primary heat security deposits and funding the repair or replacement of heating equipment. The Crisis Assistance application period begins Monday, November 2, 2009, and closes on Monday, March 15, 2010.

To apply for the heating program you can download an application online at <http://www.dss.virginia.gov/benefit/ea/fuel/forms.cgi>; complete it and fax it to 703-324-8242, or mail it to Fairfax County Department of Family Services – Pennino Building, c/o Energy Assistance, 12011 Government Center Parkway, Suite 232, Fairfax, VA 22035. This application cannot be completed on-line.

Applicants may also call the Department of Family Services' energy assistance phone line at 703-324-7604 (TTY 703-222-9452) and ask for an application to be mailed to them. You can also visit the following DFS locations between 8 a.m.-4:30 p.m., Monday-Friday:

- Fairfax – Pennino Building, 12011 Government Center Parkway, 703-324-7500
- Falls Church – 6245 Leesburg Pike (Route 7), Falls Church, 703-533-5300
- Reston – Lake Anne Office Building, 11484 Washington Plaza West, Reston, 703-787-4900

PARK AUTHORITY TO HOST COUNTYWIDE LISTENING FORUM NOVEMBER 19, 2009 AT THE GOVERNMENT CENTER.

Join in a casual conversation with Park Authority Director John Dargle, Jr. to discuss park topics of concern to you. Do you have a suggestion for streamlining a park process or improving customer service? Maybe you wish to discuss a problem you've experienced at one of our parks or facilities?

This "Listening Forum" is the right place and time for open, sincere and transparent dialogue, as well as a lot of listening by Park Authority staff members and leadership. **The forum will be held in Rooms 4/5 at the Fairfax County Government Center 12000 Government Center Parkway, on Thursday, November 19, 2009 at 7 p.m.**

For more information, call the Fairfax County Park Authority Public Information Office at 703-324-8662. You can also read feedback gathered from previous Listening Forums at: www.fairfaxcounty.gov/parks/listeningforums.htm.

Get involved to improve Fairfax County!

CONSUMER PROTECTION COMMISSION SEEKS WATER SERVICE INPUT

The Fairfax County Board of Supervisors has asked the Consumer Protection Commission (CPC) to investigate the rates of the five municipal water utilities in Fairfax County.

The CPC would like input from members of the public by November 15, 2009. You can help by providing feedback on two questions asked in this survey: <http://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/survey/waterutilities.htm>

www.fairfaxcounty.gov/survey/waterutilities.htm

Because the Braddock District is adjacent to Fairfax City and many constituents are serviced by Fairfax water, Supervisor Cook is very interested in your thoughts. The following link may also be of interest: <http://www.fcwa.org/rates/rate%20comparison%202009.pdf>

DEFRAY THE COST OF FOOD WITH THE SNAP PROGRAM

Many Braddock residents may be facing loss of income during the current economic downturn. To help make it through difficult times there are several programs that provide assistance.

One is the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance of SNAP program which can help to defray the cost of food for your family. <http://www.dss.virginia.gov/benefit/foodstamp.html>

While the application process can be complex, a family of four with a monthly gross income of less than \$2050 could receive up to a maximum of \$668 a month in benefits. The money is placed on a debit card that can be used for eligible purchases and are exempt from state sales taxes. Residents may submit an application to the Department of Family Services on-line (<http://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/dfs>); by mail, or fax.

The following link will take you to a site that may help you determine whether to pursue an application: http://www.fns.usda.gov/FSP/applicant_recipients/eligibility.htm#income

Your application will be reviewed on the day that it is received for possible eligibility, although it may take up to 30 days to actually process your application.