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Dranesville Dispatch

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Letter from Supervisor Joan DuBois

Dear Dranesville District Constituents,

I hope you have either stayed cool or dry during our up and down summer weather. We have seen several flooding issues as a result of the torrential rains but nothing as devastating as other parts of the County. I wonder if our crazy summer weather portends any possible trend for the coming winter season. After two rather mild winters, will we get a major snow storm? Watch the weather channel!

The American Society of Civil Engineers has released its long awaited report on the Dulles Rail tunnel option thru Tysons Corner. The Tunnel Panel has determined that the tunnel is technically feasible; would cost about \$250 million more than the aerial alignment; and may delay the completion of the project one year to perform preliminary engineering and to obtain environmental approvals from the Federal Transit Administration. These recommendations have been sent to Governor Kaine, who will make a final determination on whether to proceed with this option by the end of August.

I believe the tunnel option would benefit Dranesville because it will minimize disruption in Tysons Corner; will impact less private property and minimize utility work. Certainly, the tunnel is more aesthetically pleasing and will better promote pedestrian flow, an issue of paramount importance to many constituents. Of course, balancing these benefits against what may prove to be too high a cost is crucial. A copy of the full report can be found at www.asce.org. As always, I look forward to hearing your thoughts on this and other important community issues.

Finally, tune in to the latest edition of *Dateline Dranesville* where you can receive information on the County's many services for seniors. The program airs Sundays at 5:00 p.m., Wednesdays at 7:00 p.m., Fridays at 5:00 p.m. It can also be seen online through my [Web site](#).

Have a safe and happy Labor Day Weekend!

Joan M. DuBois



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Delinquent Car Tax Bills Should Be Paid Immediately Changes to State Program Will Mean Higher Fees

Residents who are delinquent on their car tax bills are encouraged to pay those bills sooner rather than later. Currently, vehicle owners only pay taxes on 30 percent of the car value on qualifying vehicles.

However, due to changes in the Virginia car tax program, effective September 1 - or sooner if state funding runs out - delinquent taxpayers will be required to pay 100 percent of the full car tax on any outstanding balances for prior year taxes.

The Personal Property Tax Relief Act of 1998 provides tax relief on personal property tax on the first \$20,000 of value for qualifying vehicles. The relief can be applied to any passenger car, motorcycle, pickup or panel truck having a registered gross weight of less than 7,501 pounds. The vehicle must be owned or leased by an individual and not used for business purposes.

While car tax reimbursements are still funded in the future, this is no longer true for delinquent tax years 2005 and prior. If residents do not pay outstanding taxes immediately, they may pay significantly more once the state funding expires.

To pay online or for more information, visit www.fairfaxcounty.gov/dta. For questions over the phone, call the Department of Tax Administration at 703-222-8234, TTY 703-222-7594.

VDOT Six-Year Secondary Road Construction Program

The Board of Supervisors received a report from the Virginia Department of Transportation on Monday, July 31, regarding the proposed Secondary Road System Construction Program for Fiscal Years 2007 through 2012. It is not good news particularly relative to the funding levels.

In the FY 2002 - 2007 program, funding was available in the amount of \$210,544,135.

The current projection of available funds for FY 2007 - 2012 is \$78,270,291.

This is a 40 percent reduction from the \$129,409,393 program, the Board of Supervisors approved in December 2005.

If we proceed on the estimated funding level in the outer years of this program, the annual total will be reduced from \$17,368,095 in FY 2007 to \$9,511,184 in FY 2012. If this projection holds, there will be very limited traffic calming funding beginning in FY 2010 and perhaps money for only one signal installation in the entire County in FY 2011.

Further, over the next four years there would be a \$3.002 million reduction in funding for pedestrian projects.

Real Estate Assessment Field Visits

Va. Code, Section 58.1-3280 gives Department of Tax Administration the authority to make physical inspections of homes for real estate assessment purposes, and the appraisal staff is now out in the field checking on properties. Last fall they embarked on a new program to make field reviews more systematic. Staff will physically inspect nearly 60,000 homes per year. This effort will help validate the accuracy of real estate property records. The increased site visits will greatly support the ability of appraisal staff to make accurate comparisons of similar properties and to analyze the impact of neighborhood sales.

To be easily recognized as official County employees, staff wears their red DTA shirts and presents County ID badges as necessary.

The following neighborhoods are currently scheduled to be visited in July through September

Beverly Manor; Breezewood; Bridle Path Manor; Brookhaven; Carlin Place; Carlin Terrace; Chesterbrook; Chesterbrook Knolls; Chesterbrook Woods; Condon Manor; Crimmins; Elnido; Evermay; Franklin Cluster; Franklin Forest; Franklin Park; Gloucester Place; Greenway Heights; Haver Hill; James Hall; Kings Manor; Kings Manor Towne; Lewinsville; Locust Hill; McLean Hunt; Old Dominion Square; Poplar Place; Reflection Lake; Rokeby Farms; Ruckers Langley; Salona Village; St. John's Woods; Timberley; West McLean; Westmont; Williamsburg Woods; Wolftrap Green.

Do you know someone who would like to receive the *Dranesville Dispatch*?

Email us contact information at dranesville@fairfaxcounty.gov

or visit us online at www.fairfaxcounty.gov/dranesville

Residents Invited to Join Panel Discussions on Living or Working Near Metro Stations

The Fairfax County Planning Commission's Transit-Oriented Development committee is looking for people who live or work near existing or proposed Metro stations and who use Metro, and those interested in transit-oriented development, to share their thoughts and ideas at a meeting on Thursday, September 7.

The Transit-Oriented Development committee is currently working toward setting guiding principles for development around Metro stations. The committee wants input from people who live and work close to stations, commuting by foot, bike or car, in order to better understand mass transit and personal vehicle use; the walkability of a neighborhood; the density of an area; the residential, commercial, civic and industrial uses; and other topics the committee should consider as it works toward formulating recommendations later this year.

All residents are welcome to attend and participate. The September 7th meeting is scheduled for 7:30 p.m. at the Franconia Governmental Center, 6121 Franconia Road, Alexandria.

For more information, including additional meetings, recent presentations by national and local experts, maps and other resources, visit www.fairfaxcounty.gov/planning/tod.htm or call 703-324-2865, TTY 703-324-7951.

Tyson's Task Force Seeks More Community Input

The Tyson's Land Use Task Force has drafted a set of eight Planning Principles that would serve as a guide for managing future growth in the 1700 acre Tyson's area; especially in light of the coming of rail service. The public is being asked to comment on these Principles, which are the result of a series of 20 public community meetings held earlier this year. The deadline for comment is August 18 and comments will be considered by the Task Force on August 28.

To view the list, please visit: www.fairfaxcounty.gov/dpz/tysonscorner/ and click the link to the left that says "Planning Principles." If you feel that any of the draft Principles miss the focus of your concerns about Tyson's Corner, let the Task Force know by calling 703-324-1344, emailing the Task Force at: tysonscornerspecialstudy@fairfaxcounty.gov or by letter at:

Tyson's Corner Special Study, Dept. of Planning & Zoning
12055 Government Center Pkwy., Suite 730
Fairfax, Virginia 22035-5505

The Web site has also been recently revised to make it more user-friendly, allowing more access to a variety of statistics and reports presented to the Task Force. Click the "new" link at the top of the Web site to access that information.

Champions of Character Awards

The Fairfax County Athletic Council's 6th annual Champions of Character Awards program has extended the deadline for nominations to August 31 for this year's awards.

Citizens, teams and organizations are invited to nominate outstanding adults and/or youth who have demonstrated extraordinary service in the sports community while modeling the basic good traits of good character: trustworthiness, respect, responsibility, fairness, caring and citizenship.

Adults and youth participating in any county sports league are eligible, with one coach, one female and one male athlete selected from each magisterial district, and one adult athlete county-wide.

Click [here](#) for the application or visit www.fairfaxcounty.gov/rec/ or call the Department of Community and Recreation Services, Athletic Services Division at 703-324-5522.



The Dranesville Office has two summer interns, Jorge Quinteros (left) and Peter Fay (right). Peter will be a senior at O'Connell High School and Jorge will be a senior at McLean High School. Both have been working with on an array of projects including updating constituent and homeowner associations databases.

County Executive Presents Fiscal Year 2006 Year-End Budget Status and Carryover Review

On July 31, 2006, Fairfax County Executive Anthony H. Griffin recommended carryover adjustments for Fiscal Year 2007, which began on July 1. After adjusting revenues and disbursements for the *FY 2006 Revised Budget Plan*, the balance available is \$19.32 million; approximately 0.6% of the total FY 2006 General Fund. This reflects a very close margin on a budget of over \$3 billion.

The balance available is primarily associated with unanticipated revenue, due in large part to the area's economy, particularly during the first quarter of Calendar Year 2006, as well as rising interest rates, which brought in additional investment income. However, due to changing economic trends, Griffin recommended that the Board hold the \$19.32 million as an available balance for FY 2008 requirements. For the first time it will not be necessary to add to the Revenue Stabilization Fund which has been fully financed at \$94.39 million or 3.0% of total General Fund Disbursements and can be sustained for the foreseeable future through interest earnings generated by the fund.

Other adjustments were limited to only the most critical items for which the costs could not be absorbed within agency budgets. In addition, there were several items that were previously deferred from the [FY 2007 Adopted Budget Plan](#):

- \$8.0 million is included to address non-recurring items in the school budget.
- \$4.6 million for Planning and Transportation Studies and related staff support to guide redevelopment opportunities in several areas of the County.
- \$5.0 million to bolster the Reserve for Catastrophic Occurrences in Fund 501, County Insurance. The FY 2006 ending Reserve for Catastrophic Occurrences is \$11.9 million; however, it has been determined that a reserve of approximately \$15 million is a more appropriate target given the County's risk exposure and potential costs.

Griffin also highlighted several events that have had or will have an impact on the current budget. Among these was the record rainfall during the month of June, which caused severe flooding and generated increased costs for public safety and solid waste removal services. Carryover also includes adjustments that reflect steeper fuel and utility prices caused by turmoil in the Mideast.

The complete carryover budget can be accessed at this link: www.fairfaxcounty.gov/dmb/carryover/fy2006/carryover.htm. The Board of Supervisors will hold a public hearing on the Carryover Budget on **September 11, 2006 at 10:00 a.m.** To speak, go to the following link: www.fairfaxcounty.gov/bosclerk/speaker_bos.htm or call 703-324-3151, TTY 703-324-3903.

Southridge residents in McLean have collaborated with the County's Department of Transportation and Virginia Department of Transportation to develop a traffic calming plan. Due to high vehicular count and excessive speeding, Southridge Drive users will see a raised crosswalk and a speed table installed within the next 30 days. Southridge is a popular cut through between Westmoreland Street and Great Falls Street.

Yield to Pedestrians

Within the next few months Dranesville residents will see “Yield to Pedestrians in Crosswalk \$100 - \$500 Violation Fine” signs at the intersections listed below. If you would like to recommend other intersections, please contact the Dranesville District office.

Intersections must meet the following criteria:

- Be a marked crosswalk where conditions or experience indicate that failure to yield is likely to result or has resulted in pedestrian injuries.
- Be a marked crosswalk with a high number of crossing by children, elderly, or person with disabilities.
- To make drivers aware that failing to yield to pedestrians in Fairfax County can result in higher fines.

Locations Approved for Yield to Pedestrians in Crosswalk \$100 - \$500 Violation Fine Signs

- Beverly Road and Fleetwood Road
- Churchill Road and Raymond Avenue
- Leesburg Pike and Pimmit Drive
- Magarity Road and Anderson Road
- Magarity Road and Great Falls Street
- Magarity Road and Peabody Drive
- Towlston Road and Colvin Run Elementary School
- Westmoreland Street and Haycock Road



The Board of Supervisors recognized Milburn Sanders of Great Falls for his participation, contributions and 17 years of service on the Fairfax County History Commission.

Boards, Authorities and Commissions

Spotlight: History Commission

The Fairfax County History Commission was established by the County of Fairfax in 1969. They help identify, document, record, and preserve our county's historic past. The commission is comprised of 20 members appointed by the Fairfax County Board of Supervisors.

Representatives from Dranesville are Carole Herrick, David Olin and Gary Simanson.

For more information on the history commission visit www.fairfaxcounty.gov/histcomm/ or for information on other boards, authorities and commissions, please visit www.fairfaxcounty.gov/bacs/ or call the Clerk to the Board of Supervisors at 703-324-3151.

Current Housing Market and Next Year's Budget

The Board of Supervisors and the School Board held a joint meeting on July 17, 2006, to discuss the FY 2008 budget, including policy issues such as the desire of the School Board to expand all day kindergarten in light of current changes in the Fairfax housing market. Department of Management and Budget Director Ed Long discussed the current picture which describes a market that is exhibiting a cooling similar to 1990 with a declining number of home sales and a rising inventory. This is resulting in houses staying on the market longer – an average of 56 days between January and June of 2006 which compared to an average of 21 days in 2005. Average sales price appreciation showed a dramatic decrease to only 2.3 percent as of this June compared to 20.9 percent as of June 2005.

There is a marked difference between this slowing and the even greater decrease in house values that took place in the early 1990s when residential assessments actually decreased. The difference in the present circumstance is considered to be largely due to job growth in the current economy. During the nationwide recession in the early 1990s, job growth decreased 0.7 percent and 1.3 percent, respectively, for 1990 and 1991, while the more recent healthy economy resulted in a 4.0 percent increase of jobs in 2005 and estimated increase for the remainder 2006 of 3.8 percent, according to Stephen Fuller of the George Mason University Center for Regional Analysis. Another difference that portends a less ominous impact on the local housing market is mortgage interest rates. They peaked around 10 percent in 1990, but are currently in the range of 6-7 percent.

Overall, residential assessment growth is projected to be just 1 percent in FY 2008. Since Real Estate Taxes comprise nearly 60 percent of total General Fund revenue and other revenue categories are expected to grow only moderately, overall revenue growth is projected to be 3.3 percent in FY 2008. It will be extremely challenging to support current operations, much less provide any service enhancements in the FY 2008 budget with such restrictive growth. For all these reasons, the Board of Supervisors gave the both County Executive and the School Board a targeted cap for next year of 3.5 percent plus a flat additional \$8.0 million for teacher salary increases, giving the schools a total target for next year of 4.05 percent.

Bears are becoming more common in Fairfax County, particularly in the northern, western and southern fringes. Black bears spook easily. Blowing a whistle, clashing two pans together or even yelling will send a bear on its way.

After the bear leaves, citizens should remove any food that may have attracted the bear to begin. "Food" includes: pet food, bird feeders, garbage cans, fruit from fruit trees and vegetables from the garden.

If the bear is near a busy road way or will not leave, citizens should contact the police at 703-691-2131.



In July, the Fairfax County Park Authority cleared a test patch of bamboo from Clemjontri Park in McLean.

The goal of this project was to see if the bamboo could be kept at bay and eradicate mosquito breeding areas.

Little 'Spots' Mean a Lot

Every year I have the opportunity to submit intersections for funding consideration by the Board of Supervisors where minor improvements could greatly enhance either vehicular or pedestrian mobility. These are usually called "spot improvements." Projects currently in design include:

- Old Dominion Drive and Balls Hill Road southbound: dedicated right turn lane.
- Great Falls Street and Chain Bridge Road: restricting and realignment to allow a dedicated right turn lane northbound and installation of pedestrian crossing signals.

I have recently been advised that an improvement long sought by the McLean Planning Committee and the residents of McLean House has received preliminary approval. It will create a pedestrian refuge median in the middle of Beverly Road for pedestrians attempting to access the shops on Chain Bridge Road.

I am always looking for your thoughts and suggestions for such future improvements. Email me at dranesville@fairfaxcounty.gov and I will begin a new list for next year's review by the Transportation Advisory Council. If your suggestion affects a particular community, I request that you secure the support of the homeowner or civic association.

ExtravaCATza

In addition to its regular adoption hours, the Fairfax County Animal Shelter opened on Sundays in July for a special event – **ExtravaCATza!**, which resulted in a 20 percent increase in cat and kitten adoptions for July 2006.

ExtravaCATza! was a collaboration between the shelter, DC Metro No More Homeless Pets, and nine private animal rescue organizations. Two rescue groups appeared each Sunday with additional cats and kittens available for adoption.

Over a 1,000 area residents attended including Supervisor DuBois who adopted a cat. "Extravacatza was a wonderful collaboration between the shelter and the rescue organizations. We adopted a cat (Nora) and she is adorable and very friendly. I was glad to support the event," says DuBois.

For more information on the Fairfax County Animal Shelter and available animals, call 703-830-1100. Visit www.fairfaxcounty.gov/living/animals/ to view pets or read the shelter newsletter, the *Shelter Dish*.



Upcoming Events

Rain Garden Seminar at Meadowlark Gardens

Rain gardens allow stormwater to infiltrate into the ground, slowing its flow and preventing pollutants from reaching local streams and the Potomac River. Learn how to properly locate, design, construct, and maintain a small-scale rain garden, a landscaped area that is designed to capture rain water and allow it to soak into the ground. See a demonstration of rain garden construction. Saturday, September 16, at Meadowlark Botanical Gardens. 8:30 am registration and refreshments, 9 a.m. to noon, \$10. For more information and to register, contact: sally.ormsby@cox.net.

Herndon Friday Night Live

Celebrate the last two Fridays of Herndon's Friday Night Live, the free concert series on the Town Green outside the Municipal building in the Town of Herndon. August 18 will be LRS + Rita Rocks (Rock Cover Bands) and August 25 will be Jah Work (Reggae). For more information, visit www.herndonrocks.com or call 703-481-6133.

McLean Fall Community Flea Market

The McLean Community Center is sponsoring a flea market at 1451 Dolley Madison Boulevard (Route 123, across from J. Gilbert's Restaurant). Saturday, September 9 from 9 a.m. to 1 p.m. Free admission and parking. For more information, visit www.mcleancenter.org or call 703-790-0123.

Herndon Labor Day Jazz and Wine Festival

The 18th annual Herndon Labor Day Jazz and Wine Festival will be held on the Herndon Town Green from 12 p.m. to 6 p.m. on Monday, September 4. Admission is \$3, wine tasting is \$15. This event will feature 10 Virginia wineries, a fine arts show, and 8 jazz and blues acts including Catfish Hodge. For more information visit www.herndon-va.gov or call 703-787-7300.

9-11 Remembrance

The Great Falls Freedom Memorial Committee invites all residents to the 9-11 Memorial Ceremony on Monday, September 11th, commemorating the lives of those who have died in defense of our freedom.

This year marks the 5th anniversary of the 9-11 terrorist attacks on the Pentagon and the World Trade Center. Six Great Falls residents died in the September 11, 2001 attacks.

The ceremony will begin at 11:00 a.m. at the Great Falls Freedom Memorial on the grounds next to the Great Falls Library, 9830 Georgetown Pike, in Great Falls.

(Photo: Great Falls Freedom Memorial)



