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# Dranesville Dispatch

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## Letter from Supervisor Joan DuBois

Dear Dranesville Constituent,

This week's **New Republic** magazine has a profile of the Dranesville community of McLean that many would consider very one dimensional. It is entitled "Welcome to McLean, Home of America's Ruling Class." (<http://www.tnr.com>). While I would never dispute the presence of megamansions in our midst, the article does not paint a holistic portrait of the caring and involved community that I see every day as I attend gatherings throughout this district.

The supportive nature of our community was brought home to me again last month when I attended the funeral of a longtime developmentally disabled resident who had a small apartment over a store in downtown McLean. John Lewis had no family and was tragically killed when he was struck by a car on his way home from a job interview. There were no funds for his burial but local residents and staff from the ARC of Northern Virginia came together to fund a plot at National Memorial Park where friends, case managers and direct care workers provided touching reflections on the life of this wonderful man.

Many of you might not know how diverse our community has become with over 10,000 foreign born residents of 'greater' McLean and Great Falls now calling Dranesville home.

This month, I also heard from many residents during the Board's recent FY06 Carryover Review, expressing strong support for supplemental funding of the Child Care Assistance and Referral Program (CCAR) which provides subsidies for low income working parents. In fact, 70% of the children at the McLean Falls Church Child Care Center receive these subsidies.

Finally, tune in to *Dateline Dranesville* to receive information on the Jamestown 2007 celebration with special guests Delegate Vince Callahan of the Jamestown-Yorktown Foundation and Carole Herrick of the McLean and Great Falls Celebrate Virginia. The program airs Sundays at 5:00 p.m., Wednesdays at 7:00 p.m., and Fridays at 5:00 p.m. It can also be seen online through my [Web site](#).

Sincerely,  
Joan M. DuBois



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## School Holidays 2006 – 2007

October 9	Columbus Day Holiday
November 6-7	Student Holidays
November 22	Two Hour Early Release
November 23-24	Thanksgiving Holiday
December 25 - January 1, 2007	Winter Vacation
January 15	Martin Luther King Jr. Birthday Holiday
January 25-26	Student Holiday
February 19	George Washington Birthday – President's Day Holiday
March 30	Student Holiday
April 2-6	Spring Vacation
May 28	Memorial Day Holiday
June 13	Graduation On or After this Date
June 18	Last Day of School

## How to stay Connected with Fairfax County Public Schools

FCPS provides an e-mail update service for parents, students, and community members interested in receiving regular information from the school system. Called *Keep in Touch*, the service can be accessed from the FCPS home page, [www.fcps.edu](http://www.fcps.edu), and can be tailored to subscribers' interests. By clicking on the *Keep in Touch* link, subscribers can register to receive emergency announcements, including school closures; information about individual schools; budget information; legislative updates; the *Familygram* newsletter; the *Fine Tuning* cable programming guide; the monthly calendar; press releases; School Board business meeting agendas and summaries; and forms for emergency care, enrollment, physicals, and authorization for medication.

Each subscriber can designate up to two e-mail addresses to receive the service. Subscribers can also request information about specific FCPS programs and services. Accounts can be updated at any time, and subscribers can unsubscribe at any time. The information selected by the subscribers is sent via e-mail. More information on the FCPS Web site includes the [FCPS Handbook](#), [lunch menus](#), [transportation](#) information, [cable television schedules](#), information on [academic programs](#) and [special education](#), an [online scholarship database](#), and [information on each school](#).

The FCPS Web site also includes the 24-7 boundary locator service, accessible at [www.fcps.edu/boundary/](http://www.fcps.edu/boundary/), which allows users to type in an address and learn the elementary, middle, and high schools attended by students at that address.

Also available online is an updated [alumni Web site](#), offering a directory, information on reunions, and instructions on how to get a copy of a high school transcript.

## Difficult Run Watershed

Difficult Run is the largest of Fairfax County's 30 watersheds. It is a mix of open space, residential areas, and commercial districts.

The Difficult Run Watershed Management Plan analyzes the quality of the sub-watersheds contained in Difficult Run, builds on previous management efforts, and presents a strategy for reducing the impacts of development.

The Plan began in July 2004, and its intent is to support the county's policies over the next 25 years. It also supports the county's commitment to the Clean Water Act and Virginia's commitment to the Chesapeake Bay Act. The planning process included the participation of a steering committee of 15-20 residents in the Difficult Run watershed. The committee served as a liaison to their communities and organizations.

The Management Plan will assess the watershed's current conditions and provide a consistent basis for evaluation and solutions for protecting, enhancing, and restoring the water systems, habitat and water quality throughout the County.

The Final Draft Workshop for the Difficult Run Watershed has been scheduled for October 18 at the Fairfax County Government Center in conference rooms 2/3. Registration begins at 6:30 p.m., and the workshop runs from 7:00 p.m. to 9:00 pm. Topics will include an overview of watersheds and the Difficult Run Watershed Plan and an Open House for questions for staff and consultants on the status of sub-watersheds in Difficult Run. The workshop will include displays, presentations and group discussions. Residents may view the Final Draft Watershed Management Plan at [www.fairfaxcounty.gov/dpwes/watersheds](http://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/dpwes/watersheds). For more information please contact Krystal Kearns, [krystal.kearns@fairfaxcounty.gov](mailto:krystal.kearns@fairfaxcounty.gov), 703-324-5821, TTY 711.



## Citizens Corps Council

The Fairfax County Citizen Corps Council brings together first responders and other community organizations crucial to emergency preparedness and the development of volunteer opportunities and training courses to meet community needs.

The Council serves as an advisory body to promote federal and state volunteer initiatives, enhance services, facilitate the exchange of information and training, support partnerships, and enhance community pride.

If you are interested in serving as the Dranesville appointee for this Council, contact Pamela Wilks, [pamela.wilks@fairfaxcounty.gov](mailto:pamela.wilks@fairfaxcounty.gov), 703-356-0551.

For more information on the Citizen Corps please visit, [www.fairfaxcountycitizencorps.org](http://www.fairfaxcountycitizencorps.org).

## Bond Referendums

On November 7, the public will be asked to vote on two bond referendums. The first is a \$25 million park bond for land acquisition, the construction and maintenance of trails, and installation of synthetic-turf athletic fields. The second is a public safety facilities bond totaling \$125 million that would allow the county to borrow money to finance the renovation, construction, and expansion of facilities around the county. Buildings on the public facilities bond include the McLean Police Station, the Great Falls Volunteer Fire Station, and the West Ox Animal Shelter.

### West Ox Animal Shelter Renovation - \$17 million



*The Fairfax County Animal Shelter is located at 4500 West Ox Road. To learn more about the animal foster care program, contact [michelle.hankins@fairfaxcounty.gov](mailto:michelle.hankins@fairfaxcounty.gov).*

Despite the dedication of shelter staff and animal control officers, the Fairfax County Animal Shelter facility is struggling to address the needs of our animal population. The shelter opened in 1975 and was last renovated back in 1988. In the past twenty years, the pet population of the county has increased more than 58 %; now serving around 500,000 animals.

Some renovation needs are immediately clear to shelter visitors. For example, there is currently no area for small mammals, birds, and reptiles, as the shelter was originally not designed to handle these species. They are currently housed in an already crowded cat room or often found in hallways. The Humane Society of the United States has determined

that small mammals should not be kept in rooms with cats as it affects their stress levels and overall health. In 2005, the shelter instituted a volunteer foster program to help address the ongoing challenge of animal overcrowding.

Other critical needs are less obvious to the public. It is often common for both shelter employees and animal control officers to share desks and computers due to insufficient space.

A thorough analysis and architectural review of the shelter was done in 2005. Staff drew upon the designs of more modern shelters for ideas. The renovation would nearly double the shelter from 15,600 to 29,000 square feet. The facility currently holds 72 dogs and 50 cats. The new design will hold 30 additional cat cages; 24 indoor/outdoor dog runs; a small animal area; and additional isolation space for sick or quarantined animals. A spay neuter suite is also included to address the important national campaign to fight animal overpopulation.

Residents will receive an informational packet in the mail detailing these projects. For more information on the park and public facilities bond referendums, contact us at [dranesville@fairfaxcounty.gov](mailto:dranesville@fairfaxcounty.gov) or 703-356-0551, or visit [www.fairfaxcounty.gov/opa/bond](http://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/opa/bond).

## Trends in the Housing and Office Building Markets

In July 2006, 1,349 homes were sold in Fairfax County, a decrease of 43.5% from the number sold in July 2005. During this same period, both the average and median sales price declined to \$548,087 and \$485,000 respectively. In July, the number of active home listings was 9,093, approximately 2.5 times the number available in 2005. On average, homes are selling for 95% of asking price. There is a six month supply of homes on the market at this time, representing a balanced market that does not favor either buyer or seller. Homes selling in July were on the market for 59 days according to the Metropolitan Regional Information System (MRIS).

The countywide office vacancy rate at the end of June stood at 8.9%, down from 9.6 % at the end of 2003 and the height of 18.8% reached in 2002 during the tech downturn. When vacancy rates reach approximately 5%, the private sector often begins to consider new speculative construction. More than 900,000 square feet of office space was delivered during the first half of 2006. Leasing activity countywide totaled more than 5 million square feet of space for this six month period.

## Election Officers Needed to Work at Polls in November

The Fairfax County Office of Elections is looking for election officers to work at polling sites for the Tuesday, November 7, general election. The county needs more than 3,000 residents to serve as election officers in its 225 precincts. If you or members of your community are interested in working in this important capacity and would like an election officer application, or need more information, contact the Fairfax County Electoral Board at 703-324-4735, TTY 711, or visit [www.fairfaxcounty.gov/eb/working.htm](http://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/eb/working.htm).

Applicants must be registered to vote in Virginia and cannot hold elective office or be an employee of an elected official. Election officers must be available to work the entire day on November 7, beginning at 5 a.m. and staying until all tallies have been completed and all voting equipment is secured. For information on working split shifts - working only one-half day - visit [www.fairfaxcounty.gov/eb/splitshift\\_requirements.pdf](http://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/eb/splitshift_requirements.pdf).

All officers are required to attend one training class, lasting about two hours, prior to the election. The full-day pay ranges from \$100 - \$200, depending on responsibilities. For further information on the Electoral Board and voting information, go to [www.fairfaxcounty.gov/eb/](http://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/eb/).

You may register to vote year round except during the 29 days prior to a general or primary election. To register online, please visit, [www.fairfaxcounty.gov/eb/vregis.htm](http://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/eb/vregis.htm).

## Fire and Rescue Department Acquired Structure Program

The Acquired Structure Program is one of the many programs used for the training of recruit, career, and volunteer firefighters for the past 25 years. It provides firefighters with a realistic training atmosphere of an actual working residential fire environment while remaining within a controlled training exercise.



*Firefighters prepare to enter a house for a live burn on a house in Beacon Lane in Falls Church. The house was part of the Acquired Structure Program where firefighters participated in a live burn.*

Donated houses that are slated for demolition are acquired after they have met extensive requirements and have been inspected for structural stability. For live burn training, the houses are not completely burned to the ground, and remain the responsibility of the property owner for demolition and removal. Firefighters practice search and rescue techniques, hose line advancement and orientation exercises for operating in zero visibility environment. They also practice more destructive training of cutting holes in roofs for ventilation and breaching walls and floors.

For the training exercise, the interior is completely free of all furnishings, wall coverings and floor coverings. There is only one fire ignited during any exercise. Since July 31,

2005, 9 properties in McLean, 3 properties in Great Falls, and 2 properties in Falls Church have been used in the Acquired Structure Program.

Property owners who donate a structure save money due to the reduced amount of debris requiring disposal. They may secure savings on demolition costs and are able to file for a federal tax benefit for participating in the program.

For more information, contact Lieutenant Michael Whetsell, [michael.whetsell@fairfaxcounty.gov](mailto:michael.whetsell@fairfaxcounty.gov), 703-803-3848. For an application for an Acquired Structure Program at your property, please visit [www.fairfaxcounty.gov/hd/hdapplications.htm](http://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/hd/hdapplications.htm).

## Department of Family Services Volunteer Opportunities

The county's Department of Family Services supports the well-being of families and individuals in our community - especially children, older persons and those who are most vulnerable. Volunteers are key to the success of many DFS programs. Volunteers are especially needed right now to help older adults and adults with disabilities with tasks such as transportation, Meals on Wheels, and home based care; foster child programs; and child mentoring programs.

Please visit our [Web site](#) for more information about these opportunities.

## Tunnel will be Aerial

On September 7, Governor Tim Kaine announced his decision to recommend that the planned Metrorail extension from West Falls Church to Dulles International Airport run through Tysons Corner on an elevated track instead of below ground. The decision hinged largely on federal standards for public transit funding, which apply a cost/benefit analysis that the project apparently was unable to meet. The Dulles project is expected to receive \$900 million in funding from the Federal Transit Administration.

Like many of you, I was a tunnel supporter. I believe that this decision could be a setback for those who have long hoped to create a vibrant walkable community in Tysons by adding a new street grid and bring buildings to the edge of sidewalks. These elements are all considered by experts to be crucial to creating a flourishing downtown.

The Tyson's Task Force ([www.fairfaxcounty.gov/dpz/tysonscorner](http://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/dpz/tysonscorner)) will continue to address this issue. Next steps include the submission of an updated request with the Federal Transit Administration to enter the final design stage, followed by a request to FTA for a full funding grant agreement. Construction is estimated for completion in 2012 and could begin as early as next year. To read the full text of the Governor's press release, please visit: [www.dullesmetro.com](http://www.dullesmetro.com).

Do you know someone who would like to receive the *Dranesville Dispatch*?  
E-mail us the contact information at [dranesville@fairfaxcounty.gov](mailto:dranesville@fairfaxcounty.gov)  
or visit us online at [www.fairfaxcounty.gov/dranesville](http://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/dranesville)

## Building Height

I want to acknowledge the letters and e-mails that I have received from many of you about the issue of building height. In late fall of 2005, county staff received a complaint that a house under construction in Oakton exceeded the Zoning Ordinance height limitation. The investigation into that complaint revealed that some builders, particularly of custom homes, have used a methodology for calculating building height that differs from that prescribed by the Zoning Ordinance. To address this issue, staff issued a "Letter to Industry", describing the correct methodology, which may be viewed on the county Web site at: [www.fairfaxcounty.gov/dpwes/publications/liti/06\\_13.htm](http://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/dpwes/publications/liti/06_13.htm).

At this time, any home currently under construction which has been identified as potentially too high must submit a survey showing that the property meets the 35 foot limit. Approximately 60 homes are out of compliance, and a large number of those are in Dranesville. The Board continues to discuss how to work with homeowners where building permits have been issued by the county. By the end of the month I anticipate being able to respond to those of you who have contacted me on this issue.

## Weekend Road Closure In McLean

For over 5 years, Fairfax County and the Virginia Department of Transportation have worked with residents of the Chain Bridge Forest community in McLean to complete a drainage project that became necessary when approximately 5 homes on River Street were seriously flooded in 2001.

After I secured project funding and the county secured easements for this project, the contractor began work in the late spring. A major portion of this project is the placement of a large culvert under River Street to detain additional water. Although letters will be going out to immediately affected citizens, and a large portable sign will provide more information closer to the date. I wanted to inform you that River Street will be closed to thru traffic from 11:00 p.m. Thursday, October 19, 2006 to 3:00 a.m. Monday, October 23, 2006 to complete this project. Residents of Chesterbrook Woods and Chain Bridge Forest who reside west of Upton Street will be required to exit their communities via Forest Lane or Brookside Drive.

## FY06 Carryover Budget Approved

Following a public hearing on September 11, 2006, the Board of Supervisors completed work on the FY 2006 Carryover budget and made necessary adjustments for FY 2007, which began July 1, 2006. The review showed a balance of \$34.52 million in General Fund revenues, an increase of 1.1 percent over the budget estimate, and a net savings of \$16.35 million in expenditures after adjusting for outstanding obligations. These savings were partially offset by \$31.55 million for necessary administrative adjustments (including \$435,000 for the new Tanker truck for the Wolf Trap Fire Station). This left a potential balance of \$19.32 million or 0.6 percent of the total FY 2006 General Fund budget.

The Board is approaching the FY 2008 budget with extreme caution and voted to set aside \$26.8 million in reserve for FY 2008. This amount included the addition of \$5.0 million to insurance reserves, especially those associated with catastrophic events such as the recent June storms. The Board approved most of the County Executive's proposed adjustments, particularly those related to needs identified during the FY 2007 budget adoption process such as providing \$8.0 million to Fairfax County Public Schools for costs associated with the No Child Left Behind Act.

One area about which I heard from a number of constituents was the possible impact of a \$10.4 million reduction in the Child Care Assistance and Referral (CCAR) program which provides day care subsidies for the working poor; terminating services for up to 1,700 children in October. However, because work is ongoing at the state level to identify funds addressing the shortfall, the Board directed staff not to disenroll children at this time. The Board also identified \$1.0 million, to be held in reserve to potentially assist with flooding in the Huntington community. *Final Motions on the FY 2006 Carryover Review* and the funded list of projects are available on the County's Web site at [www.fairfaxcounty.gov/dmb](http://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/dmb).

## Upcoming Events

Young Soloists Recital - The Music Friends of the Fairfax County Public Library begins their 2006-2007 season of free classical music concerts. September 24, 3:00 p.m. at the Alden Theatre of the McLean Community Center. 1234 Ingleside Avenue in McLean, 703-790-0123. [www.mcleancenter.org](http://www.mcleancenter.org). Other concerts will be held at 3:00 p.m. on November 5 and November 19. For a complete schedule of all library events at sites around the county visit, [www.fairfaxcounty.gov/library](http://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/library).

### Public Safety Awareness Weekend

Fairfax County Police Department and Tysons Corner Center partner to host a Public Safety Awareness Weekend at Tysons Corner. September 22, 11:00 a.m., official introduction. September 23, 10:00



am. - 6:00 p.m. September 24, 12:00 p.m. - 6:00 p.m. Displays, helicopters, vehicles, and representatives from Police Departments, Fire and Rescue, Emergency Management, Federal Bureau of Investigations, Secret Service, and more. Prize giveaway and canine demonstration.

### Neighborhood College - Transitioning to Retirement with Fun and Purpose

September 28, October 5, 12, 19, 26, November, 2, 9, 16. 6:00 p.m. - 8:30 p.m. Herndon Senior Center, 873 Grace Street, Herndon. No charge and light refreshments will be served. Class size is limited call for registration form at 703-787-4962, TTY 711 or pick up a copy at the Herndon Senior Center. Deadline for registration is September 21, 2006.

### Colvin Run Mill Historic Site Fall Activities

Scarecrow Making, September 30 from 12:00 - 2:00 p.m. and October 1:00 - 3:00 p.m. Ice Cream Making September 23 12:00 - 4:00 p.m. 10017 Colvin Run Road, Great Falls. 703-759-2771, please visit: [www.fairfaxcounty.gov/parks/crm](http://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/parks/crm). The Mill is open daily except Tuesday from 11:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m.

*Supervisor DuBois at McLean Volunteer Fire Station 1 for the debut of "Sparky's Hazardous House", an interactive display to educate the public on fire safety. (Left) Reza Golesorkhi, President of the McLean Volunteer Fire Department, (Right) Cathi Tresnicky, CEO of Tesnicky Allstate Insurance in McLean. Cathi presented the McLean Volunteer Fire Department with a \$12,000 check towards the funding for the Hazardous House.*

### Caregiving Can Be Expensive--Do You Have a Plan?

October 3, 7:00 p.m. - 8:30 p.m. Lewinsville Adult Day Health Care Center. 1609 Great Falls Street, McLean. (Use side entrance) For directions only, 703-734-1718. Speaker: Thomas West, CLU, CHFC, Financial Advisor, Thomas West Financial Services [www.fairfaxcounty.gov/aaa/](http://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/aaa/). Click on "Free Caregiving Seminars".

### Forum on Gifted Center Boundaries

October 23 and November 13 in Haycock's cafeteria. 6616 Haycock Road, Falls Church. For more information contact Gary Chevalier [gary.chevalier@fcps.edu](mailto:gary.chevalier@fcps.edu), 703-246-3608. School boundaries will be discussed in a series of town meetings to be held by the Fairfax County public schools.

## Congratulations

To Fairfax County for being named one of the top digital counties in the national for jurisdictions with populations over 500,000 by the Center for Digital Government and the National Association of Counties.

To Fairfax County Board of Supervisors Chairman Gerald E. Connolly for receiving the 2006 Local Distinguished Service Award from the American Public Transportation Association.

To 208 Fairfax County Public School Students who were named National Merit Semifinalists by the National Merit Scholarship Corporation for 2007 including; **Herndon High School** : Nathaniel Coffman. **Langley High School** : Kelsey Larsen, Edwin Lee, Hannah Lynch, Michael Moynihan, Aaron Rosenberg, Alison Thomas-Hollands, and Grace Tran. **McLean High School** : Penelope Burchfiel, Ian Christensen, Eunji Chung, Alexandra Draggeim, Caitlin Norton, Beyang Shi, and Aaron Woo.

To Mark Wheatley, assistant fire chief for operations, who was recognized by the Board of Supervisors for 35 years of service in the Fairfax County Fire and Rescue Department serving the residents of Fairfax County.

## Safety Tips for Flash Flooding

Listen to the radio or television for information. If a flash flood is advised, move immediately to higher ground. Be aware of streams, drainage channels, canyons and other areas known to flood suddenly. Flash floods can occur in these areas with or without such typical warnings as rain clouds or heavy rain.

If you must prepare to evacuate, secure your home. Bring in outdoor furniture, move essential items to an upper floor. Turn off utilities at the main switches or valves if instructed. Disconnect electrical appliances. However, do not touch electrical equipment if you are wet or standing in water.

If you leave your home, remember not to walk through moving water. Six inches of moving water can make you fall. Do not drive in flooded areas. If floodwaters rise around your car, abandon the car and move to higher ground only if you can do so safely. You and your vehicle can be quickly swept away in a foot of water. Six inches of water will reach the bottom of most passenger cars, causing loss of control and possible stalling. Two feet of rushing water can carry away most vehicles, SUVs, and pickups.

For more information about emergencies, visit [www.fairfaxcounty.gov/emergency](http://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/emergency). During or after an emergency situation, visit [www.fairfaxcounty.gov](http://www.fairfaxcounty.gov) or call 703-817-7771, TTY 711.