

Mason Matters!

SPRING 2009

Mason District Supervisor Penny Gross

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A Message From Supervisor Gross

Special Interest Articles:

- **Spotlight by Starlight Concert Schedule**
- **Shop Smart for DTV Converter Box**
- **Police Provide Personal & Vehicular Safety Tips**
- **Bird-Friendly Seedlings Available for Spring Planting**
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LOOK FOR **MASON MATTERS!** THE TELEVISION SHOW

on Cable Channel 16

EVERY THURSDAY AT 7:30 P.M.

EVERY FRIDAY & SUNDAY AT 6:30 P.M.

DAILY ON THE WEB AT WWW.FAIRFAXCOUNTY.GOV/MASON

Dear Mason District Neighbor:

Welcome to the Spring 2009 edition of Mason Matters! I hope you will find the information provided helpful in addressing some of the county-related issues facing you and your neighbors. By the time you receive this newsletter, the proposed FY 2010 county budget will have been released by County Executive Anthony H. Griffin. Economic forecasts for the region and the country continue to be gloomy and, despite the new momentum created by a new Administration and a new Congress, the outlook for any kind of quick turnaround nationwide is dim.

But this unprecedented situation also provides – indeed, demands – an opportunity for reassessment, reorganization, and revitalization of what we do, why we do it, and how we do it. These are questions that the Board of Supervisors, county staff, and community members are examining as we face the difficult decisions of how to provide needed programs and services to our residents. Under state law, localities may not operate in the red; our annual budgets must balance. When anticipated local revenues – derived from real and personal property taxes, sales taxes, recordation taxes, and fees – decline so precipitously, our new Board Chairman Sharon Bulova said in her inaugural speech in early February, “it is even more critical that we work together, in a constructive way, to adopt changes that will bring our budget into fiscal equilibrium” while maintaining the quality of life we value here. Outstanding public education, dedicated public safety agencies, improving our environment, and helping those in most need are worthy and supportable goals to sustain Fairfax County as an exceptional place to live, learn, work, play, and worship. When the Board adopts the FY 2010 budget at the end of April, it will be balanced, but the changes probably will be felt, and shared, by all.

County Executive Griffin and Chief Financial Officer Ed Long will discuss the budget at the Mason District Spring Town Meeting on Wednesday, March 18, at 7 p.m. at the Bailey's Community Center, 5920 Summers Lane in Falls Church. I hope you will plan to attend for the presentation and the question and answer session that will follow. It is always an interesting evening, as Mason District neighbors provide very good suggestions about county services and programs they value with their tax dollars. I look forward to seeing you there.

The economic challenges facing Fairfax County are replicated across the region. The Metropolitan Washington Council of Governments, of which I am chairman this year, adopted two new priorities this year, Regional Workforce Preparation and Economic Sustainability and Recovery, to help retain the region's competitive edge both nationally and globally. A well-educated workforce is important to the economic vitality of the region, and that means both improving existing skills and the ability to change skills as new jobs and green jobs may require. Working together, the region's localities will be able to transcend boundary lines and prepare for the future.

It is an honor and a privilege to serve as your Mason District Supervisor, and I hope you will not hesitate to let me know whenever my staff and I can be of assistance to you. My office is open from 8:30 a.m. until 6 p.m. Monday through Friday, and we stand ready to help with any county-related matter of interest to you.



A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Penny". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a horizontal line underneath the name.



Spotlight by Starlight Summer Concert Schedule

Spotlight by Starlight is a free summer concert series presented by the Friends of Mason District Park. All performances are at the Newton W. Edwards Amphitheatre at Mason District Park, 6621 Columbia Pike in Annandale, on Wednesday, Friday, and Sunday beginning at 7:30 pm. Performances for children on Saturday (not listed below) begin at 10 a.m. Shows are cancelled in the event of rain. For rain cancellation and information, call 703-324-SHOW (7469), or visit www.fairfaxcounty.gov/parks/performances.

JUNE

- 3 Clarence Blues Man Turner (Electric Blues)
- 5 Slightly Something (Acoustic/Pop)
- 7 National Concert Band (Big Band)
- 10 The Oscillators (Jazz)
- 12 Alice Gu Zheng Ensemble (Chinese Music and Dance)
- 14 Washington Balalaika Orchestra (Russian)
- 17 Dixie Power Trio (Jazz)
- 19 Tom Paxton (Folk)
- 21 City of Fairfax "Concert Band" (Big Band)
- 24 The Grandsons (New Orleans Rhythm and Blues)
- 26 Trio Caliente (Latin Gypsy Rumba)
- 28 The Neon Man and Me (Theatre)

JULY

- 1 The Fairfax Symphony Orchestra's Dixieland Band
- 3 Dead Men's Hollow (Bluegrass)
- 5 NVCC Annandale Symphony Orchestra (Summer Pops)
- 8 The United States Navy Band "Commodores" (Jazz)
- 10 Ganga (Music/Dance from Bengal)
- 12 The United States Army Band "Blues Jazz Ensemble"
- 15 Knockout King and Bruce Ewan (Blues)
- 17 Debi Smith (Pop/Folk)
- 19 The Fairfax Symphony Orchestra "Summer Band" (Classical)
- 22 David Bach Consort (Jazz)
- 24 Little Red and The Renegades (Zydeco)
- 26 The Capitol Steps (Satirical Revue)
- 29 Natty Beaux (Jump Blues)
- 31 Eastern Standard Time (Ska and Reggae)

August

- 2 Tonic and Gin A Capella (A Cappella Vocal Music)
- 5 Tom Principato (Blues)
- 7 Andrew Acosta and Speedy Tolliver String (Folk/Bluegrass)
- 9 Falls Church Concert Band (Big Band)
- 12 Tommy Lepson Band (Blues/Soul)
- 14 Ruthie and the Wranglers (Roots/Rock)
- 16 The Winstons Band (Motown)
- 19 MSG - The Acoustic Blues Trio (Piedmont Blues)
- 21 The United States Navy Band "Country Current" (Bluegrass)
- 23 Jennifer Cutting's Ocean Orchestra (Irish/Celtic)
- 26 City of Fairfax Band "Saxophone Quartet" (Classic/Pop)
- 28 Squeeze Bayou (Cajun)
- 30 Kings Park Band (Big Band)

Shop Smart for DTV Converter Box

The federal government's extension of the digital television signal conversion to June 12 allows more time for residents needing to purchase a digital-to-analog converter box. Subscribers to cable or satellite service, or owners of TVs with built-in digital tuners, are DTV prepared. Generally, TVs made after March 1, 2007 have digital tuners. The manufacture date is on the back of the TV. To determine whether a TV has an analog or digital tuner, visit www.DTVtransition.org and click on "Is your TV a DTV?"

When purchasing a converter box, remember to review the box features such as closed captioning fonts, limited or expanded program description, and remote control buttons. Install the converter box and follow the channel scan instructions to receive new digital signals. Some television stations are broadcasting both analog and digital signals now.

Although the \$40 coupon is not needed to purchase a converter box, it provides a cost savings. Because of federal funding limitations, an application for a coupon may be placed on a waiting list. Apply on-line or download coupon applications in many languages at www.DTV2009.gov, or apply by automated phone in English or Spanish at 1-888-388-2009 (877-530-2634 TTY-English or 866-495-1161 TTY-Spanish). Converter boxes may be purchased at local stores' electronics departments, or via the Internet. Most Internet sites will honor the \$40 coupon, but shipping charges may apply.

If a new TV is purchased, recycle the old one, but do not put it in the trash. Recycling information is available at www.fairfaxcounty.gov/recycling. DTV information is available in alternative format or other language by calling the Fairfax County Communications Policy and Regulation Division at 703-324-5900 (TTY 711), or at www.fairfaxcounty.gov/cable.



Mason District Supervisor Penny Gross, who also is the newly elected Chairman of the Metropolitan Washington Council of Governments (COG), is pictured with COG Vice Chairmen Andrea Harrison (Prince Georges County) and Kwame Brown (District of Columbia) at the "Heart Gallery" exhibit on display in the COG Office lobby in Washington, D.C. The exhibit features children from the Freddie Mac Foundation-sponsored and COG-organized Wednesday's Child program. In Fairfax County, foster care and adoption information is available by calling Fairfax Families 4 Kids at 703-324-7656, (TTY 703-222-9452), or on-line at www.fairfaxcounty.gov/dfs.

Photo provided by the Metropolitan Washington Council of Governments' Office of Public Affairs.

Community Notes

➤ AARP volunteers will provide free tax help to residents, until April 15, at the Mason District Governmental Center, 6507 Columbia Pike, Annandale. Walk-in service is available on Mondays and Thursdays: 1- 8 p.m.; Tuesdays, Wednesdays, and Fridays: 9:30 a.m. - 1 p.m.; and Saturdays: 9 a.m. - 1 p.m. All returns are filed electronically. Remember to bring: last year's tax return, a photo ID, your Social Security Card, and your 2008 Economic Stimulus Payment NOTICE 1378. For more information about AARP Tax-Aide, visit www.aarp.org/taxaide, or call 1-888-227-7669.

➤ Neighbors helping Neighbors! ACCA (Annandale Christian Community for Action) a volunteer driven community organization needs your help in serving needy neighbors seeking assistance with food, rent, utility bills, medical assistance, and furniture. To donate food, please deliver non-perishables to 7200 Columbia Pike in Annandale. To donate furniture, call 703-256-9513 and ACCA will pick up your donated furniture and give you a tax deductible receipt. Mattresses/ box springs (single, double, and queen size) sofas, kitchen/dining tables and chairs, chests of drawers/dressers, and microwaves are most requested and needed items.

➤ Alice Ferguson Foundation's 21st Annual Potomac River Watershed Cleanup, the largest regional event of its kind, will be held on April 4, 9 a.m. to 12 p.m. This cleanup will take place all across the Potomac River Watershed. Volunteers are welcome and needed! For more information and to register, call Ginny Harris at 301-292-5665, or visit the Web site at www.potomaccleanup.org/trash_initiative/trash_cleanup.html.

Mason District's Spring Town Meeting

Wednesday, March 18 at 7 p.m.

Bailey's Community Center
5920 Summers Lane, Falls Church

Join your neighbors and friends to talk about the proposed FY2010 Fairfax County Budget. Joining Supervisor Gross as guest panelists are County Executive Anthony Griffin and Chief Financial Officer Edward Long, who will answer questions after their presentations.

SUPERVISOR PENELOPE A. "PENNY" GROSS
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TIME SENSITIVE MATERIAL

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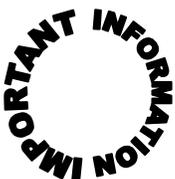
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