



Courier

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2008 Celebrate Fairfax! Kicks Off With Sneak Peek and Karaoke

*"Feeling hot hot hot ...
It's in the air - celebration time ...
I'm hot - you're hot - he's hot - she's hot"
-- "Hot Hot Hot" by Buster Poindexter*

County employees and thousands of residents and visitors were hot, hot, hot; braving temperatures in the 90s to ride the Ferris wheel, eat funnel cake and perhaps win a 3-foot tall neon-pink teddy bear, among hundreds of fun activities, during the three-day Celebrate Fairfax! festival. Held on June 6-8, it was the county's unofficial start of the summer.

The fun - and the heat - started cranking up on Friday, June 6, with the Sneak Peek for county employees, which took place from noon to 2 p.m.

A highlight was the Karaoke contest, where eight talented (or at least not shy) employees competed to win a Celebrate Fairfax! VIP package. **Deirdre Finneran**, Department of Finance, took the prize with her rendition of the 5th Dimension's "Wedding Bell Blues."

Employees also learned more about the Live Well! work force wellness program that launches on July 1 and several agencies earned awards for their booths at the County Expo.



Bill Boyle, Police Department, shared his vocal talents in the Karaoke competition.



Deirdre Finneran belts out her prize-winning performance.



Prescott Barbash and Andrea Khoury set up the Department of Cable Communications and Consumer Protection booth at the County Expo.

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Millennium Forum: Life Lessons for Local Government

By Pat Bangs, Library
Millennium Forum Committee

“What do you have that reminds you of how far you have come?” Neal Petersen, author of the memoir, “Journey of a Hope Merchant,” asked a Millennium Forum audience on May 28. “You have joined an amazing community – an amazing team. You have chosen to be in the public sector. It has not been easy.”

Petersen, who grew up in the shadow of apartheid in South Africa, overcame prejudice, economic disadvantage and physical disability to race a yacht solo around the world. He used his personal story to share the principles of personal and professional success – vision, passion, knowledge, collaboration and determination – that he believes define any successful leader.

“Leaders never quit,” he told the audience as he shared his 18-year journey that began at the age of 5 with a passion for sailing; to the building of his first boat;

through major sailing mishaps and races not finished. Seeing those setbacks as opportunities allowed Petersen to finally complete an around-the-world solo sailing race at the age of 23.

When a swinging boom cut open his forehead, he used a clothespin to close the wound. When a Russian freighter hit his boat, he was advised to abandon the craft; instead he pumped water for 15 days until he reached land. When his 38-foot boat was 2 feet short of qualifying for a race and he couldn’t raise money to buy a new one, he built it out until it was regulation length.

In addition to the need to turn barriers into solutions, Petersen also stressed the role of hard work and determination in his success. “We build success one step, one brick at a time.” He emphasized the role of collaboration as he learned from more seasoned sailors and boat builders and later became a mentor himself.

“We must be willing to do whatever it is going to take to be a part of a



Neal Petersen at the May 28 Millennium Forum.

successful team,” Petersen said. “We sometimes lead from the front and sometimes from behind – directing, pushing people to be their very best through leadership, through example.”

► To borrow videotapes or DVDs of Petersen’s presentation, contact the Employee Lending Library for Video Instructional Services at 703-324-8318, TTY 711, or John.Kiefman@fairfaxcounty.gov. ■

Art in the Pages Showcases Book Sculptures

By Erica Satten, Office of Public Affairs

Schools, public libraries and businesses countywide are showcasing book sculptures this summer as part of the Art in the Pages program implemented by the Fairfax Library Foundation.

The program challenged local artists to create designs for a sculpture of a blank open book that is 4 feet tall and weighs more than 600 pounds. Thirty-one of the sculptures have been placed around the county.

“Art in the Pages brings public art to Fairfax County,” said Bobbi Longworth, executive director of the Fairfax Library Foundation. “It highlights interest in literacy and reading. This is why the book sculpture is so appropriate.”

Almost two years of planning went into Art in the Pages, which was modeled



One of the 31 book sculptures can be found outside the Government Center.

after the 2004 Pandamania and the 2002 Party Animals art displays in Washington, D.C.

Many businesses, individuals and organizations helped make Art in the Pages possible by sponsoring the artists.

After a sponsor approved a design, the artist was awarded a \$1,500 stipend. The artists chose to localize their designs and to depict historical county events and people. Common themes included children’s literature and historic and geographic elements of Fairfax County.

The money raised through Art in the Pages will be used to fund Fairfax County Public Library services and programs such as Fall for the Book, All Fairfax Reads, live homework help, early childhood literacy outreach and Friends Scholarship Fund Awards.

► For more information, go to www.fairfaxlibraryfoundation.org/programswesupport/artinthepages/default.htm. ■

People Like Us...

Meet Kathy Smith, Office of Equity Programs

Kathy Smith is a senior human resources analyst for the Office of Equity Programs. In her position, she advises and counsels employees and managers on concerns regarding discrimination, training on civil rights issues, life skills coaching, mediation and other issues.

Smith began her career in Fairfax County government in 1987 with the Sheriff's Office. She also has been an intern in the Office of the County Executive, and worked in the Department of Human Resources and the Office of Alternative Dispute Resolution. Most of her county career has been in the Office of Equity Programs, expanding her field of interests from mediation and facilitation to life skills coaching.

Favorite part of my job...

... Helping people gain a clearer, more knowledgeable path to help themselves improve their quality of life. Counseling, coaching, mediation and training enable me to do this.

Favorite spot in Fairfax County...

... Ellanor C. Lawrence Park – I've taken many walks there, participated in activities and events, and volunteered in the park. It is a scenic and peaceful place to visit and close to home.

Favorite food...

... Thai, Mexican, my grandmother's shish kebob, cinnamon rolls, monster cookies...mmm... time to do some baking!

Work colleagues would be surprised to learn...

... I love to cook and entertain family and friends.

If I could be a superhero or cartoon character, I would be...

... Road Runner – he is always outwitting the coyote.

When I was a child, I thought I would grow up to be...

... A park naturalist. I love the outdoors and working with people. This may still be in my future when I retire from my current career path.

Who has had the biggest influence in your career with the county?

... **Bill Spencer** (retired), my former boss and friend. Bill is kind, compassionate, conscientious and supportive. He expected great things from his employees and empowered them with tools, opportunities and increasing responsibilities. He was approachable by all employees, willing to listen and provide constructive criticism.



Kathy Smith.

Photo provided by Smith

Words of wisdom you would pass on to someone thinking of pursuing your career path...

... I've found that when you pursue your heart's passion and use the gifts, values and abilities you possess, work is play and life is enjoyed more fully. Pursue human resources if you are passionate about working/helping others through challenges and opportunities. Conduct informational interviews with people in the field to see if it matches your passions and abilities. ■

Be Alert to Summer Storms – Sign Up Today for EAN

The bad storms earlier this month are another reason why employees are encouraged to sign up for the county's Emergency Alert Network at <http://ean.fairfaxcounty.gov>. You have the ability to sign up for either normal business hour emergency weather alerts (M - F, 8 a.m. to 5 p.m.) or 24/7 emergency weather alerts.

Notifications and updates can be sent to any or all of your technology devices:

- ▶ E-mail account (work, home, other).
- ▶ Cell phone (text message costs may



apply - see the FAQ section for details).

- ▶ Pager.
- ▶ PDA.

It also is important to make sure to update your profile, including the building where you currently work. This will be extremely important for

emergency personnel to target specific communications to you in case of an isolated emergency or severe weather events affecting your work location. You will find answers to frequently asked questions at <http://ean.fairfaxcounty.gov/faq.php>.

You also can contact tech support via e-mail at eansupport@fairfaxcounty.gov, or use the Web form at <http://ean.fairfaxcounty.gov/supportform.php>. ■



Board of Supervisors Chairman Gerald E. Connolly (center) joined his staff at Sneak Peek, including (left-right) Matthew Graham, Dominic Bonaiuto, Rhonda Gillis, (Connolly), Steve Elliott, Hannah Doerwaldt, Zack Fields and Claire Cosica.



Christopher Pulley, Department of Community and Recreation Services, and Sharon Arndt, health promotion and privacy coordinator, provide information to employees at the Live Well! information area during Sneak Peek.



Department of Information Technology staff checking out the food stands include (left-right) Charles Spencer, Greg Scott, Aubrey Kenney and Clyde Cole.



Park Authority staff (in dark shirts, left-right) Maria Vasquez, Mary Malof, Chuck Wright, Shannon Wolcott, Jennifer Leeds, Liz Ittner and (front, white shirt) Lorena Camacho, at the Sneak Peek Live Well! information area.



Jim Gorby, director of the Department of Vehicle Services, and one of the employee Karaoke contest "celebrity" judges, announces the contest winner.



Department of Human Resources (DHR) staff (left-right) Johnson Turner, Patricia Carrero, Gina Ash and Patty Shelton placing their agency banner at the DHR booth.

Look for more Sneak Peek photos in the online Courier photo gallery at <http://infoweb/courier>.

Agency Booth Award Winners at Celebrate Fairfax!

There was a lot of sweat, many long hours and flashes of creative inspiration that went into the creation of the county exhibits that participated in this year's Celebrate Fairfax! County Expo.

Judges from several local organizations and companies visited the agency booths to determine this year's best. The Office of the County Executive announced the following winners in each category:

Best in Show - Fairfax Water

Content:

- ▶ First - Department of Information Technology
- ▶ Second - Office of Emergency Management/Citizen Corps
- ▶ Third - Department of Transportation

Communications:

- ▶ First - Sheriff's Office
- ▶ Second - Police Department, Animal Services
- ▶ Third - Police Department, Traffic

Design:

- ▶ First - Department of Public Works and Environmental Services (DPWES), Division of Solid Waste
- ▶ Second - DPWES, Land Development Services
- ▶ Third - Park Authority

Judges Choice:

- ▶ First - Division of Stormwater Management, DPWES
- ▶ Second - General District Court
- ▶ Third - Department of Housing and Community Development. ■



The DPWES Solid Waste Management booth received first place honors for design.

South County Government Center Open House

The Fire and Rescue Department, the Mount Vernon District Station and several county agencies participated in the South County Government Center open house on Saturday, May 31. The South County Government Center, located at 8350 Richmond Highway, Alexandria, houses more than 27 agencies to serve residents in the southern part of the county.

In addition to fun, family-oriented activities, employees provided information on the variety of county services available for older adults, youth and families as well as employment services and e-government resources.

Employees involved in coordinating the successful event included:

- Sarah Allen, Telly Whitfield, Kimberly Cobb, Lillian R. Hidalgo, Maria Franco-Nativi, Ellen Gilchrist, Lee Gillis, Erin Akins, Fatma Watkins, Paula Giammarco, David Peterson, Dan Moon, LaVurne Williams, Robert Clift, Annie Henderson, Kim Abel, Jo Rutledge, Ingrid Parkhurst, Crystal Numan and Victor Mealy. ■**



(Clockwise) Some of the county staff who participated in the open house included (left-right) Lt. David Russell, assistant commander Mount Vernon District Station, MPO Bryan Cooke with K-9 Spicey, and Pfc. Michael Nickolas.

Natashia Hopkins, Office of Public Affairs, and Marcellous Troy show off their newly decorated faces after a visit to the face painting table.

Capt. Mike Kline, commander of the Mount Vernon District Station, welcomes residents to the open house. Behind him is the Voices of Faith youth choir.

Photos by Tyra Garlington



Tuition Assistance Program Update

Revisions have recently been made to the Tuition Assistance Program (TAP) and Language Tuition Assistance Program (LTAP). The changes were made to avoid overlap with training already provided by the county and to promote more efficient and effective use of the funding available for these programs. These changes include:

- ▶ Tuition reimbursement will no longer be made for courses if the training is offered through the Employee Development and Learning Program (as listed in the training catalog; for example: computer courses provided by the Department of Information Technology).
- ▶ The requirement to obtain a “passing grade” is clarified to be a “grade of ‘C’ or better.”
- ▶ All TAP policies now apply to LTAP.
- ▶ The reimbursement amount is set at up to \$1,200 per full-time merit employee per fiscal year rather than basing tuition reimbursement on a per course per semester amount. This allows employees the flexibility to determine how

many courses to take at a time. For employees working less than a 40-hour week, the reimbursement is prorated as follows: employees working 30-39 hours per week are eligible for \$900, and employees working 20-29 hours per week are eligible for \$600.

▶ The application form has been updated to determine how the coursework relates to the employee’s position/career path with the county; whether or not the employee is a full-time or part-time merit employee; the specific type of degree the employee is pursuing and how it relates to the employee’s position/career path with the county. If LTAP is requested, information must be provided indicating how the language training will support customer service. The new application must be signed by both the employee and the employee’s supervisor to help provide a mutual understanding of the employee’s professional development.

Employees may begin submitting applications for FY 2009 on July 1, 2008. Employees may request that funds be reserved for tuition



reimbursement on a first-applied, first-served basis. When available funds are exhausted, interested employees may be placed on a wait list, in the event funding becomes available.

The FY 2009 budget, effective July 1, provides \$335,000 for TAP and \$25,000 for LTAP. The programs were established to attract and retain qualified people for county service, improve the quality of leadership and productivity, and encourage employees to continue their education as a means of improving job skills and enhancing promotional opportunities.

▶ Additional information can be found at <http://infoweb/hr/training/TuitionAssistance.htm#apply>, or contact the Organizational Development and Training Division at 703-324-3394, TTY 703-222-7314. ■

CareFirst Member E-Health Newsletter Now Available

CareFirst BlueCross BlueShield has launched a new monthly e-health newsletter, e-Vitality, exclusively for its members. With a focus on health and wellness, the newsletter is in response to increased member interest in health-related articles and recipes.

Members can register to receive e-Vitality by e-mail and get a variety of health articles and a link to a healthy e-Cooking video each month. Links will be provided to other valuable resources, such as the CareFirst “Find a Doctor” tool, the options discount program, the My CareFirst health and wellness Web site and the member handbook.

Registering to receive e-Vitality is easy:

- ▶ Go to www.carefirst.com/evitality.
- ▶ Enter and confirm your e-mail address and your ZIP code.

Members also can enter their name, address, year of birth, gender and health topics of interest. However, entering this information is optional. CareFirst recommends adding CARE_e-Vitality@hnd-whc.co.mansellgroup.net to your e-mail address book to ensure delivery of the e-newsletter. An e-mail will be sent to you confirming the registration. ■

Briefs

Don't Leave Pets in Cars

A temperature test recently performed by the Police Department Animal Services Division (ASD) revealed frightening results that could cause heat stroke and even death among pets left in cars exposed to the heat. After just 30 seconds on the 95-degree day, the temperature in a passenger car in a parking lot rose to 107.8 degrees. After 10 minutes, the temperature had approached 117.5 degrees.

"Pets in a car have no way to escape the heat," explained **Michael Lucas**, ASD acting commander. "Even with the window cracked open, temperatures can soar leaving pets vulnerable and in a life-threatening situation."

People who leave a pet in a car on a hot day could be charged with a class 1 misdemeanor for animal cruelty under the Code of Virginia §3.1-796.122.

Recycle Rechargeable Batteries

The Employee Recycling Committee (ERC) encourages you to recycle rechargeable batteries to prevent the toxic metals in them from releasing contaminants into the environment.

Rechargeable battery recycling boxes are located in the Government Center, Herrity Building, Massey Building, South County Government Center and all Board of Supervisors' offices.

The boxes are for rechargeable batteries only; household alkaline batteries have been reformulated and no longer contain toxic metals and can go in regular trash.

► For more information visit www.fairfaxcounty.gov/dpwes/recycling/mat-bat.htm.

Uniformed Retirement System Board Election Results

Capt. **John Niemiec** was reselected as a Fire and Rescue Department representative on the Uniformed Retirement System Board of Trustees. He was the only nominee in a recent nomination period, so no election was necessary. His term of office will be July 1, 2008, to June 30, 2012.

The Uniformed Retirement System is one of three county retirement systems responsible for general administration, managing millions of dollars of assets, and ensuring the prompt and accurate payment of retirement benefits for employees.

► Niemiec can be reached at john.niemiec@fairfaxcounty.gov.

Champions of Character Awards Nominations Open

The Department of Community and Recreation Services is accepting nominations for the annual Fairfax County Champions of Character Awards. Nominations may be submitted by individuals, sports organizations, civic groups, schools and the faith community. Nominees may be any player, coach or

parent participating in youth league sports, including interscholastic sports, in the county during the 2007-08 sports year.

► For a nomination form, call 703-324-5533, TTY 711, or visit www.fairfaxcounty.gov/rec/newsandinfo/cofc.htm.

Wastewater Treatment Plant Wins Award for 10 Consecutive Years of Pollution Control

Fairfax County's wastewater treatment plant has won an award for meeting federal pollution control standards 100 percent of the time for 10 years in a row.

The Noman M. Cole Jr. Pollution Control Plant recently received a Platinum Peak Performance Award from the National Association of Clean Water Agencies. This distinction only was given to 64 of the approximately 16,500 U.S. municipal water treatment plants.

The plant removes up to 99 to 99.5 percent of pollutants from 67 million gallons of wastewater treated daily. Federal rules strictly control more than 100 substances that are contained in wastewater. The plant's achievement has protected the water quality of the county's streams and watershed.

Fuel Conservation Tips

Since the price of fuel continues to go up, the Department of Vehicle Services has developed a list of cost-saving measures and suggestions for employees and residents.

Learn how to conserve fuel and maximize your gas dollars — from maintenance to driving tips to what to keep in mind when purchasing a vehicle.

► Go to <http://infoweb/dvs>.



Editing Two Different Parts of a Microsoft Word Document

When editing a large Microsoft Word document, jumping back and forth between sections of the document can be very tedious. To save search time, you can work on two different sections of the document simultaneously by splitting the window.

1. Open a document for editing.
2. Choose "Window" then "Split".
3. A horizontal dividing line will appear in the middle of the screen. Move your mouse up or down to move the split line up or down, and press the left mouse button to set the split.

Your document will now appear in two separate panes inside the Microsoft Word window. You can switch between the two panes by clicking on the document text in the top or bottom pane. As you move around the document in one of the two panes, it will not affect the cursor position in the other pane. You can make changes in one pane, however, and the other pane will change as well because both panes reflect the same document.

If you later want to remove the split, choose "Window" then "Remove Split." ■

IT Service Desk

- ▶ Call: 703-324-HELP (4357), Option 1 TTY 711
- ▶ E-mail: ITservicedesk@fairfaxcounty.gov
- ▶ Online: <http://ITSD>

Get Valuable Tips for Internal Communications From the Office of Public Affairs

Internal Communications 101 for Non-Communicators
Brown-Bag Lunch Presentation – Monday, July 14, noon to 1 p.m.
Government Center – Room 120c



Effective internal communications is important to keeping employees informed and up-to-date on news and changes within your agency. If you have been given responsibility for all or part of your agency's internal communications and you are not a public information officer or communications specialist, this is an opportunity to get some valuable tips. Staff in the Office of Public Affairs will present:

- ▶ Writing an effective internal newsletter - what to do, what not to do.
- ▶ What you need to know before writing for your agency's Web page.
- ▶ The basics of Associated Press style.

To register for the brown-bag lunch, send an e-mail with your contact information to courier@fairfaxcounty.gov; include "brown-bag" in the subject line. Registration is limited to 30 people. ■

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