

Courier

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The Rain Kept Falling

"I am very proud of the efforts of the county staff who put in extraordinary hours and worked quickly and efficiently to assist our residents in need. I saw for myself the compassion and dedication that is the trademark of our county staff."

Chairman Gerald E. Connolly
Board of Supervisors



Supervisor Gerald W. Hyland (right), who spent many hours at the county's shelter at Edison High School, talks to Fire and Rescue staff (left to right) Natalie Bell, Station 9; Shirley Short, Station 37 and Ray Beaver, Station 9.

The rain began heavy and steady on Sunday, June 25 and continued for four days, breaking records and surpassing accumulations of 13 inches in some areas. By the early morning hours on Monday, flooding was causing multiple emergency situations throughout the county, including impassable roads, flooded basements and power outages.

Dozens of Fairfax County residents in the Arlington Terrace community (Mount Vernon District) evacuated their homes as

the water rose, destroying cars and making close to 200 homes uninhabitable. By Tuesday, residents in the Belle View and New Alexandria communities were facing potential flooding from the Potomac River.

See Rain, pages 2 and 3

Onthank Employee Awards

Ten employees were presented with the annual Onthank employee recognition award at the June 26 meeting of the Fairfax County Board of Supervisors. The Onthank award is the county's highest employee award.

Engraved plaques and cash awards were presented to the recipients by Chairman **Gerald E. Connolly** and County Ex-

ecutive **Tony Griffin**. Also presenting the awards were Civil Service Commission Chair **Rosemarie Annunziata**, Onthank Award Committee Chair **Jane Gwinn**, School Board Chairman **Ilryong Moon** and Assistant Superintendent for Human Resources **Kevin North**.

See Awards, page 4

Rain, from page 1

The county quickly responded to the emergency. To assist the affected residents of the Arlington Terrace neighborhood, the county and Red Cross opened an emergency shelter and service center at Edison High School on Sunday, which remained open through Wednesday, June 28. The service center, which served as a one-stop shop for residents seeking assistance from the county, moved to Huntington Community Center on Thursday, June 29 and remained open through the Independence Day holiday.

A series of town meetings were held at Edison High School to answer questions from residents, many of whom were unsure about what steps to take to get back in their homes and begin cleanup and repairs. Another meeting was held at the Mount Vernon RECenter on June 27 to provide information to Belle View and New Alexandria residents about the possibility of flooding and evacuations.

"People were in shock, but they were very appreciative of what the county and Red Cross are doing for them," explained **Carol Frecker**, DFS, who assisted people at the Edison High School shelter.

County representatives at the meetings included Board of Supervisors Chairman **Gerald E. Connolly** and Mount Vernon District Supervisor **Gerald W. Hyland**, as well as staff from the Health Department, the



Program Manager Sandy Ovuka, Department of Family Services, spent days at the service center troubleshooting for Arlington Terrace residents.

Department of Family Services, the Police Department, the Fire and Rescue Department; the Office of Emergency Management; the Office of Public Affairs, the Department of Public Works and Environmental Services and the Department of Tax Administration and Fairfax Water.

Fire and Rescue Deputy Chief **Mike Wood** was designated incident commander to oversee the county's emergency efforts and worked from the command base in the Arlington Terrace neighborhood.

The Alternate Emergency Operations Center at the Government Center was activated to provide coordinated communications and efforts between county agencies and jurisdictions throughout the region. The Office of Emergency Management in conjunction with other staff tracked the flooding and rescue efforts by police to help stranded motorists, and monitored weather conditions and road closures. The Office of Public Affairs



Staff from the Department of Family Services and the Department of Systems Management for Human Services who assisted residents affected by the flooding at the service center at Edison High School included (left to right) Nancy Owings, Carol Frecker, Stephanie Walters and Lynnette Vango.

and other agency public information officers answered an onslaught of media inquiries and distributed a stream of news releases to keep the media and public informed of critical information.

In addition, information was updated regularly on the county's Web site at www.fairfax-county.gov/emergency/flooding.htm. E-mail, cell phone and pager text messages were transmitted to residents through the Community Emergency Alert Network (CEAN). Emergency information also was available in English and Spanish on the county's 24-hour emergency information line at 703-817-7771, TTY 711, and on the county's cable Channel 16. Calls to the information line were answered by staff through the Independence Day holiday.

"A tragedy has struck [in Arlington Terrace] and even with planning, things like this happen," explained **Gerald Jaskulski**, Office of Emergency Management. "Right now it is people first and then we'll put preventative efforts in place to try to make sure it doesn't happen again."

A total of 245 homes, one business and one pedestrian trail were damaged by flooding, with property damage estimated to be more than \$11 million. Last Friday, June 30, the county, in partnership with Volunteer Fairfax, organized a cleanup effort to help residents in the hardest hit areas. ■



Supervisor Hyland and a representative from the Police Department brief residents at the Edison High School shelter. (Photo by Laura Yennie)

"People were in shock, but they were very appreciative of what the county and Red Cross are doing for them."

-- Carol Frecker



Permit Applications Ombudsman Calvin Walker explains the county's permit process to two residents of Arlington Terrace at the service center.

Onthank, from page 1



The Onthank Award winners (holding plaques) and presenters at the June 26 Board of Supervisors meeting.

The awards were presented to **A. Douglas Allen**, Police Department; **Thomas N. Black**, Police Department; **Peter J. Coles**, Herndon High School; **Barbara G. Emerson**, Department of Management and Budget; **Sousan Frankeberger**, Park Authority; **Howard Houghton**, Department of Family Services; **Robert A. Joy**, Fire and Rescue Department; **Edward L. Long Jr.**, Office of the County Executive; **Awilda Perez**, Deer Park Elementary School and **Peter M. Schumann**, Department of Public Works and Environmental Services.

The Onthank Award was established by the Board of Supervisors in 1966 to honor the memory of **Col. A. Heath Onthank** (U.S. Army, retired), the first chairman of the Fairfax County Civil Service Commission. He served in the position from 1957 to 1962 and proved to be a guiding force in the county's merit system. Maintained by the Fairfax County Civil Service Commission, the award recognizes "accomplishments of outstanding worth in advancing and improving public service in the Fairfax County government and school system by an individual county employee." No more than 10 awards may be given in each year.

Since the award was given in 1966, 277 employees have been honored. Nominations are made by private citizens, fellow employees, civic groups, and business and professional organizations.

The following employees were nominated for the Onthank Award:

For the county: **Linda S. Ifert**, Reston Community Center; **Patrick A. Lucas**, Police Department; **Margaret L. Kane**, Community Services Board, Mental Retardation Services and **Sandra J. Ward**, Fire and Rescue Department.

For the school system: **Susan Dodson**, Clifton Elementary School; **Linda D. Duncan**, Waples Mill Elementary School; **Patricia A. Jones**, West Potomac High School; **Kenneth J. Martin**, Key Middle School and **Susan M. Webb**, Hayfield Elementary School.

For more information on the Onthank Awards, contact **Robert Fitzpatrick** in the Department of Human Resources at 703-324-3306, TTY 703-222-7314. ■



Onthank Award Winner Robert A. Joy, Fire and Rescue Department (center), with County Executive Tony Griffin and Board of Supervisors Chairman Gerald E. Connolly.

What You Need to Know About (Yuck!) Mosquitoes

The recent wet weather in Fairfax County may result in a large increase in the mosquito population, according to **Dr. Jorge Arias**, supervisor of the county's Disease Carrying Insect Program.

"If you have torrential rains, it is actually a good thing because the mosquito larvae are destroyed," he explained. "Our problem is the fact that we have received a very large amount of rain in the middle of the summer, when mosquitoes come out more quickly and the standing water could create more breeding grounds."

The Asian tiger mosquito is a growing concern to Fairfax County residents and has proven to be a severe nuisance.

"Ninety-five percent of mosquito complaints we receive from county residents are due to Asian tiger mosquitoes," said Arias.

The Asian tiger mosquito is readily distinguished from other mosquitoes by its characteristic coloring. It is a black mosquito with striking white markings, including white stripes on the legs. This mosquito is an aggressive human biter that rests in foliage during the day (such as ivy, azaleas or other bushy plants around homes), but will readily leave these shady areas to feed on people, even in direct sunlight. Asian tiger mosquitoes are also "container breeders," which means they breed in artificial containers such as tires, buckets, rain gutters, flower pots and any other place that may be available to them around homes.

Control of the Asian tiger mosquito is not always simple. One disregarded or overlooked breeding site can be enough for this mosquito to create a serious nuisance problem. Some ways to ensure extermination is to eliminate standing water around a home. In addition to checking regular places, look in hidden places like under the deck, behind the shed, and in the folds of the tarp that covers the woodpile. Ensure that black corrugated pipes are prop-



The Asian tiger mosquito (Photo provided by CDC)

erly placed so that they don't retain water.

Before enjoying the parks, sporting events, concerts, bike trails and even your backyard, always protect yourself. The best way to avoid being bitten by mosquitoes is to wear long and loose-fitting, light-colored clothing, and to apply an insect repellent containing the active ingredient DEET, Picaridin or oil of lemon eucalyptus to exposed skin, creating a barrier between you and the mosquitoes. Always follow label directions when using repellents.

The county is maintaining a surveillance program on mosquitoes throughout the area as well as promoting a mosquito management public education campaign called "Fight the Bite: Say NO to MOSquitoes." The campaign provides public education materials, including an 18-month calendar with information on West Nile virus and mosquito management.

Because mosquitoes can infect animals with West Nile virus, residents are being asked to report dead birds to the Health Department as part of the surveillance program. Dead birds can be reported by phone at 703-246-2300, TTY 703-591-6435; by e-mail to fightthebite@fairfaxcounty.gov; or by a Web-based reporting form: www.fairfaxcounty.gov/hd/westnile/wnvdeadbird.htm.

For more information on mosquitoes, visit www.fairfaxcounty.gov/fightthebite. To get a copy of the 18-month calendar go to www.fairfaxcounty.gov/hd/westnile/wnvmosqcal.htm ■

-- By Laura Yennie, OPA

Focus on Benefits



HR Central has benefit information. 703-324-4900, TTY 703-222-7314

Life Events Often Mean Benefit Changes

Weddings, births, adoptions – these are all exciting events for employees. However, with all of the planning, ceremonies and celebrations, employees often forget that these life events might also require changes to their county benefits. If you have an upcoming life event, review the following information to determine whether the event may require a change to your benefit elections.

Marriage or Birth/Adoption/Legal Guardianship or Custody of a Child

If you are getting married, or welcoming a new addition to your family through birth, adoption or legal guardianship/custody, you may wish to make the following changes to your benefits:

- Add your new spouse and/or child(ren) as dependents for your county health and dental benefits.
- Name your new spouse and/or child(ren) as your beneficiary(ies) for your county life insurance coverage, deferred compensation plan and/or retirement plan.
- Enroll family members for dependent life insurance coverage.

If the addition of your spouse or child changes your level of coverage, you will see an increase in your monthly premiums. To

review monthly health and dental premiums on the county Infoweb, go to <http://infoweb/hr/benefits/Premiums2006.pdf> or the Benefits Summary Handbook on <http://infoweb/hr/benefits/2006benefitshandbook.pdf>.

To make changes to your retirement plan beneficiary, you will need to contact the Retirement Administration Agency at 703-279-8200, TTY 711.

Remember, you must make enrollment changes within 60 days of the marriage, birth, adoption or assuming legal guardianship/custody. The addition of a newborn or adopted child takes effect on the date of birth or adoption. Coverage for a new spouse or child for whom you assume legal guardianship or legal custody takes effect on the first of the month following receipt of a completed Enrollment/Change Form. If you do not make these changes within the 60-day period, you must wait until the fall open enrollment period to make the changes and your elections will be effective Jan. 1 of the following year. Changes to beneficiary designations can be made at any time. ■

-- By Denise Childress, DHR

DHR Award Winners

Several county employees were recognized for outstanding work by the Local Government Personnel Association (LGPA) at its recent annual Personnelists of the Year Awards luncheon.

The Department of Human Resources team of **Evelyn Grieve, Joyce Ferritto, Jim Moon, Dawn Brown, Cordelia Roberts, Robert Milligan** and **Johnson Turner** were recipients of the Innovation Award for PEAQ (Point and Click Enterprise Ad-hoc Query system), which uses PRISM data to create HR reports.

Kris Miracle received the LGPA SuperStar Award for recognition of her achievement of

the Society for Human Resource Management Senior Professional in Human Resources certification. The SuperStar Award recognizes professional growth in the human resources field to promote excellence in the public sector.

Susan Holsneck received a Certificate of Excellence Award for serving as a crucial and critical member of the LGPA compensation survey audit committee. The award was developed to recognize professionalism and contribution for supporting the Local Government Personnel Association. ■

Briefs

A Great Place for IT!

Fairfax County was named one of the top 100 places to work for IT professionals in the June 19 issue of Computerworld. The county was also ranked number three in the diversity category based on the percentage of women and minorities in IT staff and managerial positions. The special report included companies and organizations with a minimum of 500 employees and a minimum of 75 IT employees based in the U.S. To read the report, go to www.computerworld.com

County Reaps Rebate Funds

Office Depot staff presented county leadership with a rebate check for nearly \$690,000 at the Department of Finance's recent year-end meeting. The rebate is the result of two incentives included in the county's Office Depot contract. The volume incentive enables the county to earn a rebate for a high volume of orders. Through the online ordering incentive, an additional rebate is earned if the county places at least 80 percent of its orders via the Internet as opposed to phone or fax. Money generated from the rebates is credited to the general funds of the county and Fairfax County Public Schools for appropriation by the Board of Supervisors and School Board.

SACC Celebrates Children's Art

During the 2005-2006 school year, the county's School Age Child Care (SACC) program introduced a Resident Artist Program, providing students ages five to 12 with the opportunity to get hands-on experience in photography, writing,

dance and even duct tape fashion, among many other forms of art. SACC showcased the art created by students throughout the year at an event called "SACC Illuminations: A Celebration of Children's Art" on Saturday, June 17 at Old Town Hall in Fairfax. Hunter Mill District Supervisor **Catherine M. Hudgins**, chair of the Human Services Committee, welcomed students and parents to the showcase.

"It's just amazing what children can create when they have tools, mentoring and freedom to express themselves," said SACC Director **Pat Diehl**.



John Michael Gatti (center), a student artist at the Westbriar Elementary School SACC Center, attended SACC Illuminations with his parents, Print Shop Manager Mike Gatti and wife, Darice. (SACC photo by Dan Dildine)

Looking Toward 2013

Fairfax County has officially advanced to the second round of the selection process for hosting the 2013 World Police and Fire Games. In September, the WPPFG Inspection Committee is scheduled to evaluate hotel availability, restaurants, athletic venues and transportation concerns, as well as overall knowledge of the games by government officials and public safety leaders. The Board of Supervisors Chairman **Gerald E. Connolly** noted that

having the games here will "enhance the prestige of Fairfax and generate economic revenue for local businesses." Other locations across the globe in contention include: Denver; Calgary, Canada; Innsbruck, Austria; and Belfast, Northern Ireland. For more information on the games, visit www.cpaaf.org.

No More Decals

Fairfax County residents are no longer required to purchase a \$25 decal and display it on their windshields, which will result in an average savings of \$58 per household. The Board of Supervisors repealed the related article in the Code of the County of Fairfax, effective July 1.

Decals are no longer sold online or at the Government Center. Vehicles properly registered with the Department of Tax Administration are not subject to ticketing for failure to display a county decal on the windshield. Residents can remove the old green decal from last year.

Residents of the towns of Clifton (corporate limits only), Herndon and Vienna, however are still required to purchase town decals.

For more information, call the Department of Tax Administration at 703-222-8234, TTY 703-222-7594. ■

Volunteer!

Be a volunteer that provides practical assistance and priceless companionship to members of your community. Volunteers are needed at the Fairfax Area Agency on Aging. For more information, contact **Trina Mayhan-Webb** at 703-324-5184, TTY 711.

Safety and the Sun

Spending time outdoors during the summer can be an enjoyable experience. However, you should take preventative steps while working or exercising outdoors to protect yourself against ultraviolet radiation (UV) rays and high temperatures.

Managing the Heat

There are several steps you can take to protect against ultraviolet radiation which is known to damage the skin and to cause cancer.

- **Cover up:** Wear light-colored, loose-fitting clothing and a hat to protect as much of your skin as possible and wear sunglasses that block UV rays. Ideal glasses block 99 to 100 percent of the UV rays.
- **Use sunscreen with an SPF of 15 or higher:** The number of the SPF represents the level of sunburn protection provided. An SPF 15 blocks out 93 percent of the burning UV rays. Apply at least 15 minutes before going outside. Reapply every two hours or more frequently if you are participating in activities of swimming or exercising.
- **Limit direct exposure:** UV rays are most intense when the sun is

high, between 10 a.m. and 4 p.m. Limit time outdoors during these hours and seek shade whenever possible.

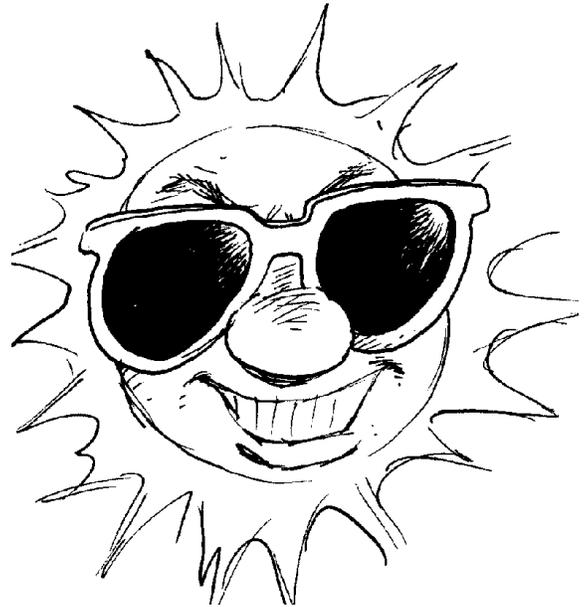
The Best Defense is Prevention

Prepare yourself for time outdoors with a simple defense plan:

- **Drink fluids:** Drink plenty of fluids regardless of your activity level. Water or sports beverages are recommended. Stay away from beverages that contain caffeine, alcohol or large quantities of sugar.
- **Stay indoors:** Stay in an air conditioned environment, i.e., your home, shopping center or library. A few hours spent in air conditioning can help your body stay cooler before you go back into the heat.
- **Bathe:** Take a cool bath or shower to seek relief from the heat.

Protect Others

Keep an eye on family members, friends and neighbors. Pay close attention and check regularly on the following categories of people:



- Infants and young children
- Seniors ages 65 or older
- Mentally or physically challenged

If you have any questions regarding summer-related safety issues, contact **Robert Johnson**, safety analyst, Department of Finance, Risk Management Division, at 703-324-3043, TTY 711, or to Robert.Johnson@fairfaxcounty.gov. ■

Communications Strategy

At Your Request...

The Fairfax County Communication Strategy requires all county publications to include several standard elements, such as the date, department name and contact information, TTY telephone numbers and more.

Publications must also include the county seal accompanied by the phrase "A Fairfax County, Va., publication."

The Office of Public Affairs has

received a number of requests to provide this required statement in other languages. The translation in Spanish is now available in the Publications section of the strategy located on the Infoweb. Translations in several other languages is available by calling the Office of Public Affairs at (703) 324-3187, TTY 711. For more information, send an e-mail to commstrategy@fairfaxcounty.gov. ■

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