

Courier

Inside this issue...

- ◆ FCCC Message From the County Executive - 2
- ◆ Compensation Review Update - 4
- ◆ Pedestrian Safety Month - 5
- ◆ Open Enrollment Information - 6
- ◆ Briefs - 7
- ◆ Outdoor Electrical Safety - 8
- ◆ Fraud Hotline - 8

Open Enrollment Begins Oct. 16

When viewing Courier online, use the active links to get directly to stories.

The 2006 FCCC Kickoff

Make Change With a Dollar

The 2006 Fairfax County Charitable Campaign (FCCC) begins next week on Oct. 16 and runs through Nov. 22. It is an annual opportunity to make a difference and have a lasting impact in our community through pledges of payroll deductions. Each agency will have at least one designated contact person who will distribute and collect pledge forms. If you do not know who your contact is by Oct. 20, check with your supervisor or contact **Paula Harper**, Office of Public Affairs, at 703-324-3199, TTY 711 or paula.harper@fairfaxcounty.gov.

This year's FCCC theme is "Make Change With a Dollar." The goal of the



2006 campaign is to have every county employee pledge one dollar a week, according to **Merni Fitzgerald**, director of public affairs and the 2006 FCCC chair. The FCCC supports more than 845 area

FCCC, page 2

Bonds for Parks, Public Safety

Two bond referendums that will fund construction, renovations and improvements at county parks and public safety facilities are

on the ballot for the Nov. 7 general election. Fairfax County voters will have the oppor-

tunity to vote for or against the referendums. If approved, the referendums will enable the county to borrow a total of \$150 million — \$125 million for public safety facilities and \$25 million to acquire land and improve park facilities.

If passed, the public safety bond referendum will provide funding to address critical space shortages, with the expansion and renovation of three police stations, fire facilities and the animal shelter.

The county's population has more than doubled since the Fair Oaks, McLean and Reston district police stations were built more than 20 years ago. These stations require expansion to accommodate more

"All of these facilities are in dire need of improvements..."

Lt. Andrew P. Hill

Bonds, page 3

FCCC, from page 1

nonprofits and community agencies that are members of the United Way of the National Capital Area.

Your pledge during the FCCC will be deducted from your paycheck beginning with the first pay period in 2007 or you can make a one-time donation by check (\$25 minimum) payable to UWNCA. The contributions are tax deductible.

Examples from United Way of what one dollar a week/\$52 a year can accomplish include:

- ◆ Three hours of respite care for a cancer patient.
- ◆ Three flu shots for uninsured children.
- ◆ 20 weeks of lunches for a homeless person.
- ◆ A new home for an abandoned pet.

"Fairfax County employees have a long history of contributing generously during the FCCC, making a significant impact in our community," explained Fitzgerald. "Many of us were motivated to contribute last year because of the devastation of Hurricanes Katrina and Rita. But it's important to know that nonprofits in Fairfax County that provide vital services to residents every day of the year rely heavily on financial support from United Way."

The list of nonprofits that employees can designate on the pledge form can be found online at <http://infoweb/opa/unitedway>. More information on the United Way of the National Capital Region can be found at www.unitedwaynca.org. ■

The FCCC is
Oct. 16 through
Nov. 22.

From the County Executive



"The need for your support of the Fairfax County Charitable Campaign (FCCC) and the United Way program hit close to home when many residents in the Arlington Terrace community were forced

is an important part of our local United Way program. Through this year's "Make Change With a Dollar" theme, our goal is to have every employee pledge one dollar a week to United Way. Just one dollar a week will have a maximum impact for our neighbors in need, with minimum impact on our wallets.

"Your contribution will help those in our area affected by the next disaster or in need of year-round social services such as child care or health care. All of our dollars together can add up to making a big difference."

Anthony H. Griffin
County Executive

out of their homes and suffered substantial losses during the flooding in June. "The American Red Cross, which receives funding from the United Way, worked side by side with our staff to provide much needed support to our neighbors right here in Fairfax County.

As county employees we are dedicated to helping and serving our residents, it's what we do every day when we come to work. I'm asking that all of us help a little more by supporting the 2006 FCCC, which begins on Monday, Oct. 16. As the largest county in the area, the FCCC

Bonds, from page 1

police officers and the need for updated technology and equipment.

"All of these facilities are in dire need of improvements to accommodate the ever-changing needs of the Police Department. The referendum has come at a critical time as we continue to enhance the essential services provided to the community," explains Lt.

Andrew P. Hill, commander of the Technical Support Division.

The public safety referendum also will allow for the expansion of the Fire and Rescue Training Academy, as well as building a new fire station in Great Falls, currently the oldest station in the county.

"The number of staff that require recruit training, technical rescue, hazardous materials and specialized all-hazards response training has more than doubled since the last expansion of the academy more than 23 years ago," notes Deputy Fire Chief **John J. Caussin Jr.**, Support Services Division.

The population boom in the last two decades also has impacted the county's pet population, which has increased more than 58 percent since the Animal Shelter was built in 1975. The facility on West Ox Road has become overcrowded and cages with animals are piled into hallways and offices. Lack of space also means that animals must often be in the same room as animals that are their natural predators. According to Animal Shelter Director **Karen Diviney**, the shelter receives on average 500 to 900 adoption visits on a Saturday, overwhelming the facilities small community room and 21-space parking lot. \$17 million of the public safety referendum is earmarked for the expansion and renovation of the shelter.

If passed, the parks bond referendum will provide \$10 million to buy more land for parks, \$10 million to install synthetic-turf athletic fields and \$5 million to improve trails and stream crossings.

According to the Park Authority's Deputy Director **Tim White**, available land in the county is becoming increasingly scarce. The bond will enable the authority to continue buying parkland as it becomes available.

He also noted that trails are the most popular of all the park facilities. The countywide trail network provides residents with additional recreational opportunities and a healthy transportation alternative.

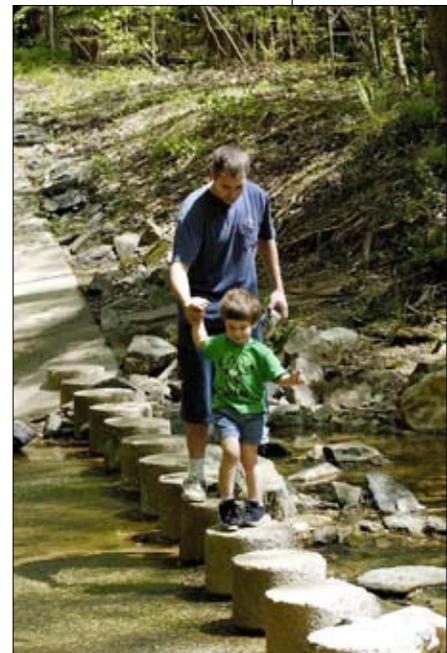
In addition, the parks bond will fund the conversion of up to 12 existing natural turf playing fields to synthetic turf.

"Synthetic turf is a cost-effective way to address the need for additional athletic fields. Their annual maintenance costs are less than that of a grass field and by converting an existing field to synthetic turf, its availability increases by 62 percent," said White.

For more information about the bond referendum, visit the county Web page at www.fairfaxcounty.gov/opa/bond. ■



The crowded Animal Shelter has cages with animals piled into hallways and offices.



Trails are the most popular of the county park facilities as well as a healthy transportation alternative. (Photo provided by Park Authority.)

Compensation Review Update

The data-gathering phase of the compensation review is almost complete. Since early this summer, county staff on the Compensation Task Force have been gathering employee opinions and input to provide to the consultant for inclusion in the final report to the county executive and ultimately to the Board of Supervisors.

Approximately 500 employees attended 28 focus groups held in August and September. There was a mix of randomly selected employees and employees invited specifically to share their experiences and opinions. The "shared experiences" focus groups consisted of members of the Employee Advisory Council (EAC), longtime employees or supervisors, recently hired employees or supervisors, members of a trades job class and department heads.

To date, approximately 200 e-mails, phone messages and letters have been received. The recent employee survey, available Sept. 28 through Oct. 4, generated more than 4,500 responses. Information gathered from the random focus groups is posted on the Infoweb site at <http://infoweb/cex/comptaskforce>.

The consultant, with assistance from the Compensation Task Force and other county staff, gathered a significant amount of data, surveyed other jurisdictions, compared pay ranges and compensation best practices and analyzed data on the county workforce to generate recommendations on changes to county compensation. When these recommendations are finalized more information will be reported in upcoming Courier articles.

In addition to providing a wealth of information on employee opinions, this input revealed a significant amount of misinformation about county compensation practices and data. Staff will be working in the coming months to provide information about compensation but employees should take a few minutes to read these Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ), which address some of the mis-

conceptions. Visit the Compensation Review page on the Infoweb for more information.

More FAQ

Q: What is the Market Rate Adjustment (MRA) Index and how is it calculated?

A: The MRA Index consists of the following components:

- Consumer Price Index (CPI) for the Washington Baltimore area: The CPI represents 70 percent of the index.
- Employment Cost Index (ECI): The index used by the county measures changes in employee compensation for civilian workers. This includes private sector, state and local government employees. The ECI represents 20 percent of the index.
- Federal Wage Adjustment for the Washington Baltimore area: The Federal Wage Adjustment represents 10 percent of the index.

Q: How does the county conduct its annual review of salaries to determine its competitiveness in the market?

A: The market salary survey review usually consists of three components:

- Core: The first component consists of approximately 50 core benchmark classes for which data is readily available, which are common to other employers in the county's market area and which contain fairly large numbers of county employees. This group of classes remains relatively the same year to year and serves as a reference as to how market changes are impacting our pay competitiveness. Survey data for core benchmark classes is obtained from the Local Government Personnel Association Survey (local governments in the Washington Baltimore Metropolitan Area); the Human Resources Association Survey for the Washington D. C. area and the Healthcare Council National Capital Area Wage and Salary Survey (Washington, D.C. and suburban hospitals, as well as home health and long-term care organizations).

- Public Safety: This component consists of a survey of the job classes in the public safety groups. Market pay data and specific benefit-related data are collected from the following



local jurisdictions: Arlington, Loudoun, Montgomery, Prince George's and Prince William counties, as well as the District of Columbia and Alexandria.

•Supplemental: The third component consists of a survey of a supplemental group of benchmark classes. These job classes, typically included at the request of senior management or department directors, are frequently specialized classes, classes unique to Fairfax County government or classes not usually found in local government. Market pay data on these classes is individually gathered from selected employers or sources, as necessary, to provide the most reliable information possible.

In addition to the three components listed above, there is a survey of department director/management classes (generally those on the E pay scale). This survey occurs every two years.

Q: For purposes of this study, what is meant by "compensation"?

A:• Pay for performance (changes, revisions, additions, deletions, but not termination of

program).

- Retirement systems. **
- General employee salary pay plans (E, L, and S scales).
- Compensation philosophy (organizations surveyed; market position, timing of reviews).
- Compensation procedures and processes (within grade adjustments, promotions, anniversary dates, etc.).
- Market rate adjustment calculation and application.
- Re-grading of class specifications.
- Leave programs. *
- Alternative work/flex schedules.
- Variable pay/incentive programs.

*Please note that although health and welfare benefits (medical, leave, etc.) are elements of a compensation system, they are not being covered under this particular study. **The retirement systems and leave policies are being reviewed under separate, but parallel studies. Periodically, the county reviews these systems with other local jurisdictions for competitiveness, implementation, etc. ■

October Is Pedestrian Safety Month

At its Oct. 23 meeting, the Board of Supervisors is scheduled to proclaim October as Pedestrian Safety Month in Fairfax County. Pedestrian safety and mobility are a high priority for Fairfax County and improving pedestrian safety is an ongoing county initiative. October is a good time to raise the awareness of pedestrian safety for drivers and pedestrians and highlight county activities since children are back in school and the days are shortening, requiring all the more vigilance by drivers and pedestrians alike to watch out for each other. Fairfax County works jointly with other jurisdictions and emphasizes the "three E's" approach — enforcement, education and engineering.

Funding and strong support from the Board of Supervisors have provided for improved safety efforts, including pedestrian safety awareness campaigns, the "Yield to Pedestrian" signage program, pedestrian enforcement and education campaigns by the police in

high-pedestrian crash areas, bus stop improvements and additional pedestrian projects in the board's Four-Year Transportation Plan. The county has a pedestrian program manager and this year has added a bus stop coordinator and a bicycle program coordinator.

Last January, the Fairfax County Pedestrian Task Force, consisting of residents, appointed commission members and multi-disciplined staff, presented its final report to the Board of Supervisors. The report, the result of more than a year of work, outlined a plan for implementing safe and effective pedestrian facilities and a coordinated and collaborative education/outreach program.

Information on the county's pedestrian program and a link to the task force report are at www.fairfaxcounty.gov/fcdot/pedestrian.htm. ■



Focus on Benefits



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

Open Enrollment News

During the benefits open enrollment period Oct. 16 through Nov. 17, the Employee Benefits Division will hold a series of open enrollment meetings at various county worksites to provide information about the 2007 benefit plans. During the first 30 minutes of each meeting, representatives from CareFirst BlueCross BlueShield, CIGNA, Kaiser Permanente, Davis Vision, Delta Dental and FBMC will give brief presentations on their benefit plans. The representatives will be available following the presentations to answer individual questions and provide additional information.

After the presentations, the county's health and vision plan providers also will offer health screenings:

Davis Vision - visual acuity screenings.

CIGNA Healthcare - blood pressure, glucose and cholesterol screenings.

Kaiser Permanente - body fat screening/analysis and body mass index (BMI). Using this information, Kaiser will help you compare your BMI to a chart of national average BMIs.

Carefirst BlueCross BlueShield - a nutritionist will provide individual consultations on improving health through diet (lowering cholesterol, blood pressure and sodium intake).

These screenings will help employees assess their current health status, determine if they need to follow up with their doctors and learn what they can do to improve their health. All screenings will be offered free of charge and without an appointment to all county employees, regardless of whether they participate in a county health plan. The open enrollment supplement also is available online at <http://infoweb/hr/benefits>.

New Flexible Spending Accounts Grace Period Effective for 2006

Beginning with the 2006 plan year, flexible spending account participants will have an additional 2-1/2 months after the end of the year to incur eligible medical and dependent care expenses. Under the new rules, partici-

2007 Open Enrollment Benefits Meeting Schedule

Tuesday, Oct. 17

Herrity Building, Rooms 106/107
Presentations: 7:30 – 8 a.m.
Health Fair: 8 – 9:30 a.m.

Thursday, Oct. 19

Government Center, Conference Rooms 9/10
Presentations: 1 – 1:30 p.m.
Health Fair (Conf. Rm. 7): 1:30 – 3 p.m.

Tuesday, Oct. 24

Pennino Building, Rooms 206 A&B
Presentations: 10 – 10:30 a.m.
Health Fair: 10:30 a.m. – noon

Wednesday, Oct. 25

South County Center, Suite 221
Presentations: 11 – 11:30 a.m.
Health Fair: 11:30 a.m. – 1 p.m.

Tuesday, Oct. 31

Government Center, Conference Rooms 9/10
Presentations: 10 – 10:30 a.m.
Health Fair (Conf. Rm. 8): 10:30 a.m. – noon

Thursday, Nov. 2

Judicial Center, Jury Assembly Room
Presentations: 1 – 1:30 p.m.
Health Fair: 1:30 – 3 p.m.

Monday, Nov. 6

Reston Regional Library, Rooms 1&2
Presentations: 10 – 10:30 a.m.
Health Fair: 10:30 a.m. – noon

Wednesday, Nov. 8

Massey Building, A-Level Conference Room
Presentations: 1 – 1:30 p.m.
Health Fair: 1:30 – 3 p.m.

Monday, Nov. 13

Government Center
Presentations (Board Auditorium): 8:30 – 9 a.m.
Health Fair (Conf. Rooms 9/10): 9 – 10:30 a.m.

pants can incur eligible expenses through March 15, 2007 and submit these expenses for reimbursement from their remaining 2006 account balances. Once the 2006 account is exhausted, reimbursements will be debited from 2007 accounts.

The deadline for submitting eligible expenses for reimbursement from 2006 accounts has not changed. All eligible expenses must be submitted by no later than March 31, 2007 to be reimbursed from the 2006 accounts.

If you have any questions, call HR Central at 703-324-4900, TTY 703-222-7314. ■

Briefs

Learn the Secrets of Pro-Active Communication

The Department of Cable Communications and Consumer Protection (DCCCP) invites county staff to attend a seminar on pro-active communication on Oct. 25 from 1:30 to 4 p.m. in the Government Center auditorium. Presented by Michael Angelo Caruso, founder and president of The Edison House, the seminar is an opportunity to improve interpersonal communication skills by sharpening your speaking and listening skills. The seminar also can be seen live on the Fairfax County Training Network, Channel 40. For more information about the seminar, or to request reasonable accommodations, call DCCCP at 703-324-5949, TTY 711.

White Cane Safety Day Observed Oct. 15

Every year, Oct. 15 is a day of special importance for people who are blind or visually impaired. It recognizes the white cane, a tool that has enabled so many blind or visually impaired people to participate in many facets of community life and strive for greater independence. It also demonstrates a commitment by the sighted community to provide equal access to basic services such as employment, housing, community services and transportation.

Drivers are reminded that under Virginia's White Cane Law, drivers of every vehicle must stop before the intersection or crossing area whenever a totally or partially blind pedestrian crossing or attempting to cross a highway is guided by a dog guide or carrying a cane that is predominantly metallic or white in color, with or without a red tip,

unless the intersection or crossing place is controlled by a law-enforcement officer or traffic light. At its Sept. 25 meeting the Board of Supervisors highlighted the significance of White Cane Safety Day in a proclamation and urged Fairfax County residents to support the efforts of the Northern Virginia Council for the Blind.

Book Sale in Oakton to Benefit New Library

The Friends of the Oakton Library invite employees and the community to a used book sale to benefit the future branch of the Fairfax County Public Library. The sale is from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. on Saturday, Oct. 28, at the Unity of Fairfax Church, 2854 Hunter Mill Road, Oakton. A raffle will be held for an autographed copy of bestselling author David Baldacci's latest suspense novel "The Camel Club," as well as for an autographed copy of Dick Francis' hot-off-the-press racing thriller "Under Orders". Proceeds from the sale will be used to purchase equipment, furniture and landscaping after the Oakton Library opens in late 2007.

Mason District Flea Market

The Park Authority and Friends of Mason District Park are sponsoring a flea market on Saturday, Oct. 21, 9 a.m. to 1 p.m. at the park located at 6621 Columbia Pike in Annandale. You can clean out the garage and attic and make some cash. The vendor fee is \$20 per space and \$10 per table. Checks should be made payable to the Friends of Mason District Park.



Ted Bunch

The event is free to shoppers and browsers. For more information call 703-941-1730, TTY 711.

Domestic Violence Awareness Month Events

The county's Domestic Violence Awareness Month Planning Committee will host two programs on Oct. 25 featuring Ted Bunch, a nationally recognized trainer, lecturer and consultant on domestic violence issues.

The morning keynote lecture will take place in the Government Center Board Auditorium from 9:30 to 11:30 a.m. and will examine the role of men in ending violence against women. A community event will take place in the Recital Hall at Robinson Secondary School from 5 to 7 p.m. and will explore strategies for engaging youth in the anti-violence movement.

Bunch is the senior program director of the Safe Horizon Domestic Violence Accountability Program in Brooklyn, N.Y., the largest program for offenders of domestic violence in the country.

These programs are free and do not require any pre-registration. If you need further information about the programs, please contact **Seema Zeya**, Fairfax County domestic violence coordinator at 703-324-7472, TTY 711, or at seema.zeya@fairfax-county.gov

Outdoor Electrical Safety

Electrical accidents resulting from contact with outdoor electrical sources are frequent, according to the National Safety Council and the U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission. Contact with overhead and buried power lines, and outdoor electrical equipment results in nearly 400 electrocutions in the United States each year. Here are some safety tips to keep in mind when working outdoors with electrical equipment.

- **Overhead Lines:** Be careful when working near any overhead power lines. Keep equipment and tools such as ladders and pruning poles at least 10 feet from power lines. Never trim trees near overhead lines

– leave that to the professionals.

- **Underground Utilities:** For a project that involves digging, such as planting trees or building a deck, call your utility locating service before you begin. In Virginia, contact Miss Utility at 1-800-552-7001, TTY 711. Never assume the location or depth of underground lines. This service is free, prevents utility interruption and can help avoid injury.

- **Tools:** Be careful using electrical tools outdoors. Be certain all exterior outlets have weatherproof covers and ground fault circuit interrupters (GFCI) to prevent serious shock injuries. Never use electric yard tools during rain or when the ground is wet. Keep cords and plugs away

from puddles.

- **Extension Cords:** If extension cords are necessary, only use cords that are rated and marked for outdoor use, and are large enough to handle the current needed for the device you are using. Periodically check all cords carefully for exposed wires and make sure they are in good shape (not frayed or cracked). Three-pronged plugs are essential for outdoor work to protect against shock.

For safety-related questions, contact **Robert Johnson**, Department of Finance, Risk Management Division, at 703-324-3043, TTY 711, or to robert.johnson@fairfaxcounty.gov. ■

County's Fraud Hotline

Employees who suspect fraud in the county government are encouraged to call the Fraud Hotline at 703-787-3243, TTY 711, or submit a fraud reporting form available at <http://infoweb/Audit/Reportingfraud1.htm>. You have the option to remain anonymous and county policy specifically prohibits retaliation for reporting fraud.

Fraud is defined by the county as theft or intentional waste or abuse of county funds, property or time. For more comprehensive information, as well as a list of "red flags" visit the Internal Audit Office (IAO) page on the Infoweb.

"Employees should report fraud immediately," explained **Chris Pietsch**, director of the IAO. "Do not attempt to investigate on your own. This may tip off someone and evidence may be altered or disappear."

According to Pietsch, he recently reported to the county executive and deputy executives that in the last 12 months, IAO received 14 allegations of fraud. Each of these allegations was investigated and four instances of fraud were determined. The involved employees no longer work for the county. ■



Courier is published most payday Fridays. The deadline for articles and information is two weeks before publication.



Lisa Connors, editor
 703-324-3197, TTY 711
 E-mail:
lisa.connors@fairfaxcounty.gov, or
courier@fairfaxcounty.gov

See *Courier* online at <http://infoweb/courier>.

Office of Public Affairs
 12000 Government Center Pkwy.,
 Suite 551
 Fairfax, VA 22035-0065
 Phone 703-324-3187, TTY 711
 Fax 703-324-2010,

To comply with the Americans with Disabilities Act, *Courier* will be made available in alternative formats upon request. Please notify editor five to seven days in advance of your requirement.

All rights reserved, 2006.