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### **[Text 9-1-1 - Call if you can, text if you can't](#)**

New capability improves your access to 911 services was raised after the earthquake and major storm in 2011 when calls could not get through but text messages could. Learn details below.

### **[NV Rides - Uber for seniors - but free and no app required](#)**

Mobility is one of the critical issues to our seniors. NV Rides uses technology to match drivers with our seniors mobility needs. They need volunteer drivers. More below.

### **[Upcoming Community Events](#)**

#### **[Hidden Pond Park Community Meeting, September 24th](#)**

Meeting to update the community on the proposed plan for Hidden Pond Park.

#### **[Prescription Drug Take-Back Day Set for Saturday, September 26th](#)**

Clean out your medicine cabinets. Information regarding the Drop off point located at the West Springfield Police Station from 10-2.

**[Friends of Burke Lake Park Information Meeting, September 29th](#)**

Come learn how you can support Burke Lake through community and philanthropic activities.

**[Small Business? Register Today for Vendor Forum, October 8th](#)**

Network and learn how to do business with the County and meet the County departments that purchase goods and services. More info on this free event below.

**Text 9-1-1 - Call if you can, text if you can't**

On September 22, 2015, the Fairfax County Board of Supervisors and county 911 officials announced that Fairfax County 911 would begin accepting texts to 911. Fairfax County is now one of two jurisdictions in the National Capitol Region to accept texts to 911. I first raised text 911 at a Board meeting in September of 2011 in the aftermath of a major storm and the earthquake in Mineral when cell service was unavailable but citizens were able to make texts. At that time texts to 911 were not being received by our 911 center. This was also clear in the tragic Virginia Tech shootings when the students' text to 911 went into cyberspace and were not received. ([BOARD MOTION](#))

As of Tuesday morning, anyone within Fairfax County will be able to have their texts to 911 answered. It is important to note that texts to 911 in other jurisdictions in the region, except Frederick County MD, will currently not be received. This capability can be critical for residents when they have an emergency and are not able to speak - either because it is not safe, you are in danger if you speak, or you are disabled - or if cell service capability is not available but text service is. Please remember that a call is always preferable to a text. "Call if you can, text if you can't," is the new slogan for Fairfax County's new 9-1-1 texting initiative.

I especially want to thank Public Safety Communications Director Steve Souder and his team for their leadership in getting text 911 implemented in Fairfax County and keeping Fairfax County a leader in public safety. I have been an advocate for text 911 for years and I am glad to see that we continue to be on the cutting edge as we move towards full implementation of NextGen911 and pre-notification technology here in Fairfax County. In order to use Text to 9-1-1, you must subscribe to your wireless carrier's text or data plan. How do you do it? In order to text to 9-1-1, you enter the numbers "911" in the "To" or "Recipient" field. The first text to 9-1-1 should be short, include the location of the emergency and request police, fire or ambulance assistance. You then push the "Send" button. You will then have to answer questions and follow instructions from the 9-1-1 call-taker, in which you should always text in simple words, with no abbreviations or slang. Lastly, make sure your text messages are short.

## **NV Rides - Uber for seniors - but free and no app required**

During the community forums we held in preparation of the 50 plus Community Action Plan, one thing was made clear, the biggest issue facing our seniors as they age is transportation and the lack of mobility. It hinders our seniors' ability to age in place and get to necessary medical appointments. Lack of mobility can also lead to isolation and mental health issues. That is why the services provided by NV Rides and their many partners are so critical to our seniors. I was pleased to be able to recognize their efforts at Tuesday's Board of Supervisors meeting. But they need your help. They are in need of non-senior drivers. Please consider volunteering some time in your community. Fairfax County projects a dramatic increase in its older population over the next few decades. By 2020, more than 353,000 residents will be over the age of 50 and more than 87,000 of them will be over 70.

We take for granted driving to doctors' appointments, going to the grocery store and going to the hairdresser and pharmacy. But for some that can no longer drive, these can be impossible tasks. Fortunately, the Jewish Community Center and the Jewish Council on the Aging are working to address these needs. They launched NV Rides on May 19th, 2015.

NV Rides is a network of service organizations that operates a volunteer driver network that impacts not just Fairfax County, but Northern Virginia as well. NV RIDES allows for the service organizations to stay autonomous but lets them receive value-added benefits such as ride scheduling software, marketing support, volunteer coordination support and volunteer background checks, at no cost.

Every month organizations such as Shepherd's Center of McLean Arlington Falls Church, Shepherd's Center of Annandale-Springfield, Reston Community Center, Herndon Village Networks and Mt. Vernon at Home coordinate through NV Rides to provide hundreds of free rides to senior citizens through volunteers who spend hundreds of hours and drive thousands of miles to assist our senior citizens who need assistance.

I like to refer to it as Uber for seniors, except it is free and you do not need an app to get a ride. Their technology leverages the services provided by their many partners that keep their important identities. Since NV Rides launched less than a year ago, their partners have provided 3,795 rides to 243 program participants through the service. Of these rides, 2,256 were medically-related. Altogether, volunteer drivers gave up 2,257 hours of their time to drive passengers for a total of 21,750 miles.

In the time period since NV Rides launched, service providers added 270 riders, and 132 volunteer drivers. While service providers have been successful in expanding their services, the need for reliable rides for non-driving seniors is a constant necessity. NV Rides was one of the 30 plus initiatives in the 50+ Community Action Plan that is well on its way to

successfully meeting the needs of our seniors. Please consider volunteering as a driver for one of these organizations - even if it is just a short time each week or month.

## **Community Meetings**

### **Hidden Pond Nature Center**

Today, September 24th at 7:00 pm at the Hidden Pond Nature Center, park authority staff will be presenting their plans for constructing an educational shelter and parking lot. All are welcome to come and listen to their plans and provide comments. The facility is located at 8511 Greeley Blvd. Springfield, VA 22152 and they can be reached at (703)451-9588.

For further information about Hidden Pond Nature Center, please click [HERE](#)

### **National Prescription Drug Take-Back Day Set for Saturday, September 26<sup>th</sup>**

Turn in your unused or expired medications for safe disposal on Saturday, September 26th at the West Springfield District Station (6140 Rolling Road, Springfield) between 10 a.m. and 2 p.m.

For more information on this program, including other drop-off locations, click [HERE](#)

### **Friends of Burke Lake Information Meeting**

The Friends of Burke Lake Park will hold a community meeting on Tuesday, September 29th, 2015 at 7 p.m. at Kings Park Library (located at 9000 Burke Lake Road in Burke, VA). The meeting will focus on volunteer opportunities to support the lake through community and philanthropic opportunities. The Friends group encourages high school groups, scouts, running groups and walking groups and others who appreciate the natural beauty of this park to attend.

For further information regarding the meeting, please contact:

[friendsofburkelakepark@gmail.com](mailto:friendsofburkelakepark@gmail.com).

### **Small Business? Register Today for Vendor Forum Oct. 8th**

Approximately 45 percent of purchasing in Fairfax County is with small, women-owned and minority-owned businesses. Learn how your small business can successfully work with Fairfax County and network with hundreds of other business owners at the Vendor Forum

on Thursday, Oct. 8th at the Fairfax County Government Center (12000 Government Center Parkway, Fairfax, VA 22035) from 8:30 AM- 2:30 PM.

This free event will include:

- Reverse trade show - meet county purchasers face-to-face.
- Workshops, including "How to Sell to Fairfax County."
- Valuable information on financial management and marketing, and other topics.

In order to register for this event, click on the link [HERE](#)

For more information, contact Jason Im at 703-324-3104.

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