



Mount Vernon Advisor



www.fairfaxcounty.gov/mountvernon

April 2016

Dear Friends,

April has been a busy month! On April 26, the Board of Supervisors officially adopted the Fiscal Year 2017 budget. The budget process is a good opportunity for us as a county to evaluate our priorities and collaboratively find a way to achieve them. I thank all of you who reached out via email, phone calls, or in person to share your thoughts on the proposed budget.

You can read more about the FY17 budget [below](#). As always, I am eager to hear your thoughts. While this year's budget season is over, I hope we will continue a thorough and thoughtful discussion about Fairfax County priorities throughout the coming year.

April has been a bittersweet time here in my office. Our wonderful and dedicated colleague Brett Kenney, my Chief of Staff, has accepted a position working for a local government in North Carolina. Brett and his family have been eager to relocate to North Carolina for some time, and this new position is an exciting professional opportunity for him. Brett has served as the Chief of Staff for the Mount Vernon District Supervisor's Office for more than 12 years, and I have relied heavily on his extensive knowledge of the issues as I work to implement my vision for the future of Mount Vernon. Brett will be sorely missed, but we wish him all the best in this exciting new adventure.

Christine Morin, Senior Staff Aide, will be stepping into the Chief of Staff role. Christine, a Fairfax County native, has served the District for more than seven years and has been active in community groups for more than a decade. She is the natural choice to take on this key staff position.

Before I close, I wanted to remind you to take advantage of this glorious Spring weather to explore some of the many natural, cultural, and historical wonders of Fairfax County. The [Fairfax County Park Authority](#) is a great place to start to plan your Fairfax County adventure!

Respectfully yours in public service,

Dan Storck
Supervisor, Mount Vernon District
Fairfax County Board of Supervisors

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Stay Connected

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Office Hours

Monday -Wednesday, Friday: 8:30 a.m. - 5 p.m.
Thursday: 8:30 a.m. - 7:30 p.m.

Second Saturday Each Month (except August)
Lorton Library: 9 a.m. - 11:30 a.m.
MV Dist. Office: 12:30 p.m. - 3 p.m.
Walk-ins and by appointment

Continuing Our Investment in Fairfax County

The Fiscal Year 2017 Fairfax County Budget, formally adopted by the Board of Supervisors earlier this week, is a valuable investment in the future of Fairfax County, and especially the Mount Vernon District.

- Under the proposed budget, funding for Fairfax County Public Schools will increase more than 5 percent over the FY 2016 budget. These funds will enable the county to fill teacher vacancies and pay Fairfax County educators a competitive rate. It also supports much-needed capital improvements to county schools.
- The budget includes funds to support additional Police Patrol Officers, many of whom will serve Mount Vernon residents, especially when we open the new Lorton Police Station in 2021.
- The budget supports local flood control projects, and it funds initiatives to mitigate the impacts to local streams and the Chesapeake Bay resulting from urban stormwater runoff.
- The budget makes the first of several investments to redevelop the original Mount Vernon High School into a place of higher learning, recreation, and services for Mount Vernon District residents.

The four-cent real estate tax increase proposed in this budget, while necessary to ensure continued delivery of key services, is not an easy pill to swallow. It places a burden on homeowners, particularly those living within a fixed income like seniors and the disabled. I encourage those residents to explore [tax relief programs](#) offered to qualified individuals by the county. My office can help point you in the right direction if you don't know where to start. The Board of Supervisors will engage in a dialogue to expand our tax relief program. I strongly support these efforts.

Increasing property taxes is not a sustainable source of revenue generation over the long term, and the county must find ways to diversify its income. One of the ideas proposed is a Meals Tax, which would levy an up-to-4% tax on restaurant and prepared meals. I support putting a Meals Tax for referendum this November during the Presidential election, when voter turnout is traditionally highest. This will ensure the vote reflects the values of our community.

We also need to address the broken funding system between the state and the county. Fairfax County receives only about 22¢ of every dollar its residents pay in state taxes. A more equitable share of our residents' tax dollars should stay in the county to support local infrastructure and programmatic priorities.

The budget process was an arduous one. I heard from a large number of residents with diverse—and sometimes competing—needs. Overall, I believe the proposed budget was the most effective way to ensure the Mount Vernon District continues to thrive, and that is why I supported it.

Air Traffic Noise

More than a decade ago, my predecessor Supervisor Gerry Hyland along with now State Senator Barbara Favola pushed the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) and the Washington Metropolitan Airports Authority (MWAA) to adopt a regulation that required aircraft to fly ten nautical miles south of Reagan National Airport before they turned toward their destination. Last year, without any input from local communities, the FAA

adopted a new initiative called NextGen, a computer program designed to optimize flight routes nationwide. The effect of this has been that flights now turn after the Woodrow Wilson Bridge over Mount Vernon neighborhoods. From personal experience, the noise is deafening and unrelenting. The previous rule worked for many years and should be implemented again.

The Villamay Community Association and other residents here in the Mount Vernon District have organized to encourage our Congressional delegation to take action on this matter. I am pleased that U.S. Representative Don Beyer has committed to joining the U.S. House of Representatives' Quiet Skies Caucus, and I look forward to working with Congressman Beyer, my Board of Supervisors colleague Jeff McKay, and local communities to find a resolution to this matter.

In order to establish a pattern of nuisance noise, I encourage you to report aircraft noise complaints via Reagan National Airport's [web portal](#). You can also email the FAA Noise Ombudsman at 9-AWA-NoiseOmbudsman@faa.gov. Additionally, the Villamay Community Association has launched a [signature drive](#) to express community-wide concern.

Please share this newsletter with your neighbors and encourage them to sign-up for it, so that I can keep you abreast of developments as they occur. Of course, please feel free to share your concerns with my office by emailing mtvernon@fairfaxcounty.gov.

Shop Local! Farmers' Markets Open in May



Two Mt. Vernon-area farmers' markets will open the first week in May, giving residents access to fresh, locally-grown food.

The Lorton Farmers' Market kicks off its season on Sunday, May 1, at the Lorton VRE parking lot, 8990 Lorton Station Blvd., from 9:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m. Opening Day at the McCutcheon/Mount Vernon Farmers' Market is Wednesday, May 4, from 8:00 a.m. to noon at the Sherwood Regional Library, 2501 Sherwood Hall Lane. Both markets accept SNAP benefits.

Fairfax County farmers' markets are strictly producer-only, meaning that participating farmers and producers may only sell what they raise on their farms or make from scratch. Farmers and producers come from within a 125-mile radius of Fairfax County.

By providing access to locally-grown foods, the Fairfax County farmers' market program strives to improve the health of county citizens, support local food producers, and protect the environment.

Board Appointee Spotlight: Linwood Gorham, Promoting Parks

Linwood Gorham believes passionately in community service. The lifelong Fairfax County resident has served on the Fairfax County Park Authority Board for half a decade, as an officer and board member of the South County Federation for almost 25 years, as a board member of the Mason Neck Citizen's Association, and on a handful of land use committees and task forces. Mr. Gorham has been an ardent supporter of community events, including the Lorton Community Independence Day Parade and the Mason Neck State Park Eagle Festival.

For his service, he has received numerous honors and awards, including being named a Lord Fairfax honoree in the Mount Vernon District for 2010-11, a Volunteer Fairfax Community Champion in 2010, and a recipient of the Northern Virginia Regional Park Authority's Walter Mess Volunteer Service Award in 2009.



And yet, if he had his druthers, Linwood Gorham would prefer to stay out of the spotlight.

“The thing about public service is that it’s really about the service, not about the person committing the service,” Mr. Gorham reflected when asked what drives him to serve. When pressed, he reluctantly continued, “I guess the thing that motivates me is a belief in the greater good.”

Mr. Gorham was selected as the Mount Vernon District Representative to the Fairfax County Park Authority Board in 2011. One of his priorities in this role has been bringing quality sports fields to the district. He cites the development of the Col. Gary F. Smith memorial field at Grist Mill Park as an especially meaningful accomplishment and is advocating for the renovation and expansion of the Mount Vernon Recreation Center in the upcoming 2016 Park Bond.

Some of the Park Authority projects on Mr. Gorham’s agenda to address in the next few years are the stabilization of historic buildings in the county, the removal of the non-historic buildings at the Lorton Nike Missile Site, and the development of a comprehensive and sustainable invasive species removal and prevention program.

Mr. Gorham became engaged in local land-use issues more than 20 years ago, when his community was fighting a development they didn’t believe was appropriate for the area. That first foray introduced him to the plethora of local land-use issues, especially those facing the southern part of the Mount Vernon District.

He was especially drawn to parks and their relevance to youth. In fact, Mr. Gorham cites as one of his proudest accomplishments his work preserving the Pohick Bay pool and advocating for its transformation into what is today the Pirates Cove Waterpark.

“In promoting parks, I hope I’m showing kids what community advocacy can do. I hope I’ve made an impression that encourages them to do something for kids when they grow up. Then the tradition of giving back continues from one generation to the next.”

Fairfax County Honors Community Champions

On April 8, Volunteer Fairfax and the Fairfax County Board of Supervisors honored local volunteer superstars at the 24th Annual Fairfax County Volunteer Service Awards.

Each year, the members of the Fairfax County Board of Supervisors select a volunteer within their district to be recognized with a Community Champions Award. This year, Supervisor Dan Storck honored Mount Vernon District resident Ron Fitzsimmons. Mr. Fitzsimmons is the founder of Alice's Kids, a non-profit organization that provides short-term financial assistance to children in need.



Mr. Fitzsimmons understands first-hand the challenges needy families face.

“The prospect of walking through the halls with holes in our pants or sitting at the lunch table with nothing to eat was a great source of embarrassment to us,” Mr. Fitzsimmons writes in a statement on the organization’s website, aliceskids.org. “Sometimes, to avoid shame, we skipped school altogether.”

Alice’s Kids, which is named after Mr. Fitzsimmons’s late mother, provides a youngster in need with a gift card of up to \$50 to purchase a critical item. The process is anonymous; Alice’s Kids does not ask the child’s name, but rather works through referrals from school staff, charitable organizations, government social workers, and churches.

“Our goal is to do what we can to raise the self-esteem of a child in need. Children with healthy self-esteem feel good about themselves. They do better in school. They are more successful,” says Mr. Fitzsimmons. “We believe a little help can go a long way.”

Local teenage musicians will headline a “Kids Helping Kids” benefit concert to support Alice’s Kids on Saturday, April 30th, at 5:00 p.m. at Saint Aidan’s Episcopal Church, 8531 Riverside Drive, Alexandria.

Election Officers Needed!

Fairfax County needs Election Officers for upcoming elections! Training begins in May. Election Officers must be registered voters in Virginia and complete required training and forms. You may choose to accept the \$175 stipend for a full day or volunteer your time.

[View the “Being an Election Officer” Video](#) on YouTube and [listen to the “Need for Election Officers” Podcast](#) on SoundCloud.

For more information, visit the Office of Elections [website](#) or call 703-324-4735, TTY 711.

First Tee Program Teaches Young People Crucial Life Skills

The Fairfax County Park Authority is partnering with The First Tee of Greater Washington, DC, to offer The First Tee Life Skills Experience Certifying Program, designed for young people ages 7 to 18.

The First Tee uses the game of golf to teach young people how to manage emotions, set goals, resolve conflict, and effectively communicate with others. The program incorporates The First Tee Nine Core Values: honesty, integrity, sportsmanship, respect, confidence, responsibility, perseverance, judgment and courtesy.

Registration is now in progress for the six-week spring session, which will be held Tuesdays, May 10 through June 21, from 5 to 6:30 p.m. at Laurel Hill Golf Club located at 8701 Laurel Crest Drive in Lorton.

Full scholarships are available to participants who qualify for federal free or reduced lunches at school or who have a parent who is an active member of the armed services. For more information, visit the registration page at <https://washingtondc.thefirstteeregistration.org/#/990/events> .



The First Tee of Greater Washington, D.C. is one of 175 chapters around the country and in select international locations. Serving the metropolitan area since 1999, more than 125,000 young people have been impacted through chapter programs and The First Tee National School Program, which is in more than 100 elementary schools in Washington, D.C. and Northern Virginia.

The First Tee is supported by national golf organizations such as the PGA TOUR, the PGA of America, the LPGA, the United States Golf Association, and the Augusta National Golf Club. The First Tee also works with other organizations such as the Tiger Woods Foundation, the National Minority Golf Foundation, the Society of Golf Course Architects, the Golf Course Superintendents Association of America, the US Conference of Mayors, the National Recreation & Parks Association, the US Department of Housing & Urban Development, and many more.

Film Screening Explores *The Other Side of Cannabis*

The Unified Prevention Coalition of Fairfax County will present a screening of *The Other Side of Cannabis: Negative Effects of Marijuana on Our Youth* on Thursday, May 19th at the Angelika Film Center in Fairfax.

The award-winning film features the latest research-based information on why today's marijuana is so harmful; why the adolescent brain is more vulnerable to its effects; negative outcomes associated with early

initial use; and recovery from marijuana addiction. The 60-minute movie will be followed by a panel discussion that will include substance-use treatment providers, a narcotics enforcement officer, and a recovering user.

Advance tickets are \$10 + fee for adults (18 and under free), at <http://upcfilmosc.eventbrite.com>. At the door, adult tickets are \$15. Donations are encouraged. Tickets are not available through the Angelika Film Center website and box office. For more information, please call (703) 938-8723 or visit www.UnifiedPreventionCoalition.org

Serve Your Community! Vacancies on Boards, Authorities and Commissions

The Board of Supervisors has several boards, authorities, commissions, and committees that provide an excellent opportunity for civic education and engagement. Each Board member has a representative on the committees. Current vacancies for the Mount Vernon District are:

- Affordable Dwelling Unit Advisory Board
- Airports Advisory Committee
- Barbara Varon Volunteer Award Selection Committee
- Child Care Advisory Council
- Community Action Advisory Board
- History Commission
- Oversight Committee on Drinking and Driving
- Police Officers Retirement System Board of Trustees

Volunteering on these committees increases citizen participation in our district. If you are interested in serving on a county board, authority, commission, or committee (BAC), please provide a current résumé to Donna.Slaymaker@fairfaxcounty.gov.

For more information, please download the [brochure](#) for a brief guide to BACs. Please note that certain members of BACs must file [financial disclosure statements](#) upon appointment, and annually thereafter.

To subscribe or to change your subscription, send us an email at mtvernon@fairfaxcounty.gov

Please share this *Mount Vernon Advisor* with your friends and neighbors!
