

The Virginia Hills Echo



Circulation 875

Volume 24, No. 2

December 2014

Transportation Bond Approved From Supervisor Jeff McKay

The \$100 million transportation bond approved by voters on November 4 is one of several funding sources we can use to finance our \$1.4 billion in transportation needs over the next six years. These include the small projects that make such a difference in our neighborhoods--turn lanes, traffic signals, directional signage, missing sidewalks, bike lanes, and trails. These projects improve neighborhood safety, access to community facilities like schools and transit, and link neighborhoods, as well as relieving traffic congestion. A number of these projects will benefit our district; please contact my office if you'd like information about specific ones.

In 2013, the Board of Supervisors launched a countywide dialogue on transportation projects and held a series of meetings to gather community feedback. Overwhelmingly, I heard about the need for pedestrian, bicycle, and transit improvements.

I'm sometimes asked if voting for a bond will result in higher taxes. Actually, it's the reverse. We're prudent with our bonds in Fairfax County. Our financial guidelines say that the annual cost of our county's debt service (principal and interest payments) may not be greater than 10 percent of annual combined general fund disbursements. We also maintain our county's net long-term debt at or below three percent of the total market value of taxable county property. This careful debt management is one of the reasons for our triple-A bond rating and it's also why our bonded debt will not contribute to higher local taxes.

Virginia Hills Holiday Movie Night

Come join us for a family movie night Friday, December 12! We'll be at the old Virginia Hills School on Diana Lane at 5:30 PM. We'll play a few fun games, enjoy some hot chocolate, cookies, and other treats, and watch a holiday movie. We ask that you bring one canned food item per person. We will be donating the food items collected to the Capital Area Food Bank, which works to distribute food to those who need it throughout the metro area. They most need items that are high fiber, low sugar, and low sodium. (Visit www.capitalareafoodbank.org for more information.)

Come however you like; pajamas, pillows, and snuggly blankets are encouraged! Hope to see you there!

Meeting Business

Our main focus for our December meeting will be getting the 2014-2015 budget approved. We encourage our community to join us at the meeting and approve the budget so we continue with the support we provide annually. We also encourage you all to become members because without you we won't be able to provide some small but valuable services such as the *Echo*, movie nights and other community events, and neighborhood maintenance like the island at Ronson Dr and Virginia Hills Ave, and the Virginia Hills sign on Telegraph. If you're not a member yet, please join! It's only \$7/year. You can join on the website or with the form on page 3.

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Virginia Hills Citizens Association Meeting

Tuesday, December 9th – 7:30 PM
Old Virginia Hills School, Diana Lane

Speaker: Wil Slaughter, from
Fairfax County Consumer Affairs

President's Corner
Comment from VHCA President Warren
Suyderhoud

Hello again! Well it feels like just yesterday that I was speaking to all of you in September, and now we've just about finished fall. I hope everyone's leaves are picked up—by the way, it's a lot easier to mow your leaves. In fact, it only takes several passes on the mower until you'll see about a half inch of grass mulched leaf litter. If you do this, by springtime, your lawn will look great, and you will have reduced the number of plastic bags in our landfills.

Our next association meeting will be Tuesday, December 9th, and our speaker will be Wil Slaughter, a lead investigator with the Fairfax County Consumer Affairs. I hope to see many of you there. The association meetings occur only five times a year and are a great way to meet some of the members as well as become more familiar with our community. If you have any concerns that you would like to be addressed to Mr. Slaughter before the meeting, you can certainly drop me an email, or better yet, just come to our next meeting!

In our last issue of the Echo, we included a letter from me to ask for your membership support to the association. For those of you that have made a decision to either renew your membership or join the VHCA for the first time, I thank you.

Finally, as we brace for the colder temperatures and winter approaching, I hope that we all try to help each other out especially when we get hit with that real snowstorm. Neighbors helping neighbors (shoveling each other out) really shows of all of us that is a great community to live in. I certainly believe it is.

Sincerely,

Warren Suyderhoud

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Route 1 Transit Study
from Fairfax County Chairman Board of Supervisors
Sharon Bulova

The Virginia Department of Rail and Public Transit (DRPT) has completed a study reviewing transit, roadway, bicycle and pedestrian improvements to Route 1 in Fairfax County and Prince William County. The Route 1 corridor is one of the activity centers which the community has identified for revitalization, and the transportation improvements considered through the study have the potential spark to accelerate this reinvestment.

At the end of October, the Executive Steering Committee for the study endorsed an alternative which would create a consistent six lane roadway in the project corridor; ten foot wide paths for bicycles and pedestrians; Bus Rapid Transit operating in dedicated lanes in the median of the roadway; and an option to extend the Metro Yellow Line to Hybla Valley in the future. I anticipate this recommendation will come to the Board of Supervisors for consideration as the locally preferred alternative in early 2015. You can find more information about this study and the recommendations here: route1multimodalaa.com/.



How Virginia Hills Voted on November 4

For Senate:

Warner	636
Gillespie	353
Other	20

For Congress:

Beyer	596
Edmond	363
Other	50

The proposed constitutional amendment passed with 84% voting yes, and the proposed transportation bond passed with 71% voting yes.

Voter turnout was 45%.

Join the Virginia Hills Citizens Association
for 2014-2015 that began on September 1st.

2014-2015 Membership

Mail to: VHCA, P.O. Box 10837,
Alexandria, VA 22310

I'd (We'd) like to join / renew my (our) membership in the Virginia Hills Citizens Association. Enclosed are the annual membership dues of \$7.00 per household. I am also including a contribution in the amount of

\$ _____.

Name (s) _____

Address _____

City _____

Zip Code _____

Phone _____

E-mail _____

Comments: _____

Checks for dues may be made payable to VHCA or the Virginia Hills Citizens Association.

Recycle Your Christmas Tree

During the first two weeks of January, Fairfax County will pick up your natural Christmas tree less than eight feet in length for recycling. Make sure the tree is free of lights, stands, ornaments, and any other decorations and place it at the curb on trash day next to but separate from regular trash. **Artificial trees should not be included from recycling.**

As always, you can recycle cardboard boxes by flattening them and putting them in your recycling bin. If they're too big for the bin, lay them under the bin for collection. If you can't re-use your gift wrap, it can be recycled as well!

Happy Holidays from the VHCA Officers!

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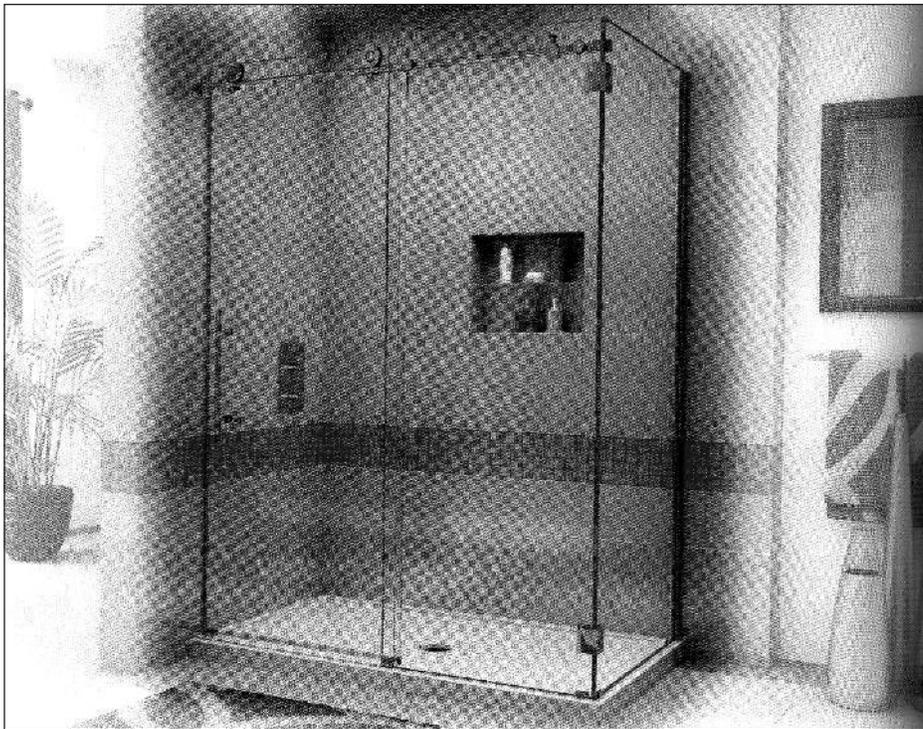
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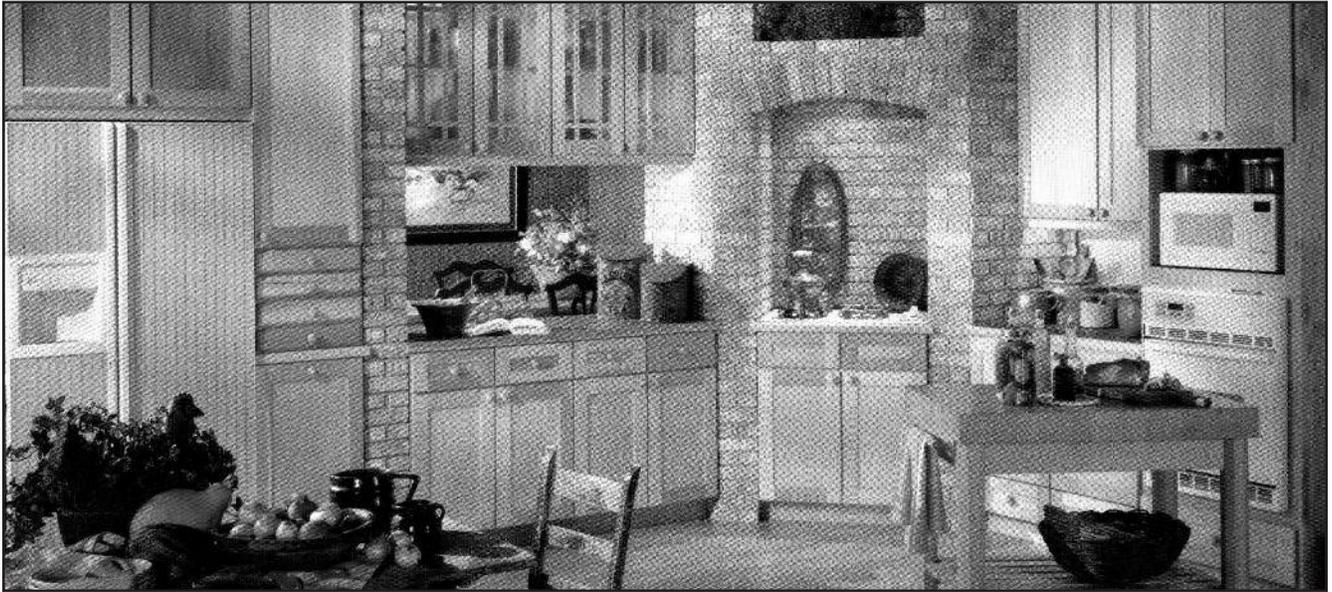
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Santa's Ride

Make a difference in the lives of others this holiday season. For the 28th year in a row, the Fairfax County Police Department motorcycle squad is working collaboratively with the Fairfax County Sheriff's Office, Virginia State Police, Fairfax City Police, Falls Church Sheriff's Office, and the Town of Vienna Police to collect and distribute toys for sick children, as well as local charities such as the Ronald McDonald House.

Please consider donating a new, unwrapped toy, game or book at any Fairfax County Police station before Monday, December 15. These items bring joy and smiles to the many children who are critically ill and unable to be home for their holidays.

The motorcycle officers' "Santa's Ride" collection will take place on December 16; distribution of gifts will take place at Inova Fairfax Hospital on December 17 and Georgetown Hospital on December 18.

Thank you for your generosity and for making a difference in the lives of our community.

Get Your Flu Shot

The Fairfax County Health Department is encouraging everyone 6 months and older, especially people who are at high risk of developing flu related complications, to get their annual flu vaccine. Winter is the typical season for influenza activity, but flu outbreaks can happen as early as October. The flu is different from a common cold, and usually comes on suddenly. According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), people with a chronic illness such as diabetes, heart or lung disease, and people 65 years and older are at greater risk of developing serious complications from the flu compared with young, healthy adults. Flu can be a very serious disease that can lead to hospitalization and sometimes death. An annual flu vaccine is the best way to prevent the flu. The flu vaccine is safe and effective, and cannot cause the flu. While there are many different flu viruses, the flu vaccine is designed to protect against the three main flu strains that research indicates will cause the most illness during the flu season. Additionally, by protecting yourself, you also are protecting your neighbors and those you care about from getting the flu from you.

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A Long Time Coming - and Worth the Wait!
From Supervisor Jeff McKay

October 17 was a banner day for Lee District when the doors to Springfield Town Center were finally opened. The grand opening included many eager shoppers, many of whom got in line as early as 4 a.m. to see the end result of this new revitalized place to dine and shop.

This was no small feat—in fact, it took years of focused dedication from my office and County staff to help usher the mall through a rezoning, many permit requests, and more. Everyone involved with this important project devoted countless nights, weekends, and holidays to ensure that Springfield Town Center would stay on schedule to open in time for the holiday shopping season.

And what a grand opening it was! This \$250 million plus renovation project has already sparked much positive interest in Springfield and the feedback I've received from shoppers and residents has been nothing but positive. I think everyone would agree when I say that

the mall—our sense of place, a cornerstone of civic pride, and a regional draw—is back and better than ever.

Just this month, Chuy's and Nando's Peri-Peri held their own grand openings, and I expect more stores and restaurants to continue opening through the holidays and into the new year. On the horizon, we'll see the late-November opening of Yard House and the 2015 opening of Dave and Busters. This is the first phase of a multi-phase development that will see a mix of retail, commercial, and residential growth, as well as a hotel, open space, and recreational facilities—a true town center.

You may have also noticed the construction taking place along Frontier Drive. That work will create a wider, multi-use space for walkers and bikers alike, as well as a park at the corner of Spring Mall Drive and Frontier Drive to welcome pedestrian, Metro, and vehicular commuters. The mall's developer, Vornado, is also working to repave Frontier Drive. That work should be completed by the end of the year.

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Echo Delivery People Needed

Have you ever wondered how your issue of the *Echo* shows up at your door every few months? It's all thanks to a small but hard-working group of people who hand-deliver each copy from door to door. Our group can always use more help, so if you're interested in helping out your neighbors and getting a nice little bit of exercise five times a year, please email the editor at echo@virginiahills.org.

Echo Now On Line in PDF Format

The articles from the current *Echo* and the previous *Echo* have always been on the Virginia Hills web site in HTML format. While there was interest in putting up the full *Echo* in PDF format so users could see it as it appeared in print, it was thought that the file for each issue would be so big as to make it too cumbersome for most users. With the faster speeds now available from cable and FiOS in Virginia Hills, it now seemed to be a good time, and so it's done!

If you go to the *Echo* page of the Virginia Hills web site, www.VirginiaHills.org/echo.html, you'll see a link to the PDF of the current *Echo* and the archive page for older issues of the paper. On the archive page, you can view each back issue through February 2010 by clicking the link for whichever issue you would like.

Each issue is about 2 megabytes in size. If you are accessing the internet with a dialup connection, an issue will load very slowly. Depending which browser you use and how up to date your version of it is, you should be able to view an issue from within your browser and resize the PDF to see bigger or smaller text. Each issue has been tested to ensure it is readable in the current version of Adobe Reader, so if you're having trouble viewing a particular issue, you can also download it to your computer and view it using Adobe Reader that way.

We have also implemented a search function for the archives using a form of Google's advanced search. You can provide keywords and/or key phrases (using quotation marks around the latter) to find in which of the issues they appear. From the search results, select the one you'd like to view and it will pull up that issue. Once the issue is on your screen, find the exact location by looking at the contents of the issue on its first page or use CTRL-F to search that edition for the keyword again.

The pages for the HTML versions of the articles in each issue are available back to the February 2000 issue. VHCA will consider whether to add them to the archive as well.

Print editions of the *Echo* are available for viewing from the editor and are in the Fairfax Room of the Fairfax County Library.

Secure Your Wireless Network!

The *Echo* published this article in December 2013, and many (estimated to be over half) Virginia Hills Residents are **still** using the WEP encryption system on their wireless network. WEP is old and extremely easy to break into. Once someone has broken into your network, they can not only share your internet service, but they can also access personal files you have made available to your family on your personal network. Windows sets some places on your computer as available to all network users by default.

You should be using WPA2 security or, on an older router, WPA. Most routers come with WEP as the default, and this is very unsafe.

Those of you using the original Actiontec routers that you got with your FiOS service can change to WPA2 in the router's settings. Go to the "Wireless Network" setting, then "Advanced Settings."

If you did not change the user name and password to access the router, you should do this immediately. The default name and password that came set on the router are widely available on the internet. With this user name and password, anyone on your network can access your router's settings and remove your security.

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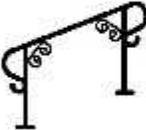


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Message from Supervisor McKay

How many times have you yelled after a car speeding down your neighborhood street? I could fund a month of Starbucks caffeine if I had a dime for every time I wanted to chase after the drivers speeding down my street, oblivious to small children, neighbors pulling out of their driveways, and oncoming traffic.

Neighborhood speeding is a problem throughout Fairfax County—in a county survey done this summer, 80 percent of respondents flagged speeding as a problem. Our police say that on some roads, 82 percent of drivers are traveling ten miles or more over the speed limit. (On most residential roads, the speed limit is 25 miles an hour.)

We all know that speeding is dangerous; we all believe that we're good enough drivers to safely navigate at higher speeds. The reality, though, is that things happen in a split second: the child who darts into the road after a ball, the swerve to avoid hitting a dog or a squirrel, the unexpected debris in the road, the bicyclist who appears out of nowhere.

The U.S. Department of Transportation and the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration have some sobering statistics:

At 20 mph the total stopping distance is 69 feet.
At 30 mph, the distance is 123 feet.
At 40 mph, the distance is 189 feet and that may not be enough distance and time to avoid hitting an object or person on the road.

If you hit a pedestrian:
At 20 mph 5% will die.
At 30 mph 45% will die.
At 40 mph 85% will die.

That's why the County has started a public awareness program called "**Slow down! You live here. We live here.**" to highlight the dangers of neighborhood speeding. Besides driving responsibly, you can participate in the public education campaign by posting eye catching neighborhood yard signs with the **Slow down! You live here. We live here** message in your neighborhood. They're available (at no charge) from my office as well as from the Kingstowne management office.



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Active	3613 Heather Ct	3	1	0	\$334,900		No	0
Active	6601 Berkshire Dr	3	1	1	\$339,900		Yes	0
Active	6520 Berkshire Dr	4	2	0	\$385,000		Yes	0
Active	6409 Virginia Hills Ave	4	2	0	\$390,000		Yes	0
Active	6229 Virginia Hills Ave	4	2	0	\$399,950		Yes	0
Active	3717 Austin Ave	4	2	0	\$449,999		Yes	0
Cnko	6120 The Pkwy	4	2	0	\$385,000		Yes	0
Cnko	6211 The Pkwy	3	2	0	\$399,999		Yes	2
Cont	6309 Gentele Ct	3	1	2	\$275,500		Yes	0
Cont	6119 Algona Ct	3	1	0	\$320,000		Yes	0
Sold	6107 Paulonia Rd	5	2	0	\$300,000	\$320,000	Yes	0
Sold	6627 Dorset Dr	3	1	0	\$338,000	\$340,000	No	0
Sold	6602 Berkshire Dr	4	2	0	\$399,900	\$395,000	Yes	0
Sold	3701 Austin Ave	3	2	0	\$399,900	\$402,400	Yes	0
Sold	6122 Hillview Ave	3	2	0	\$417,500	\$417,000	Yes	0
Sold	6521 Virginia Hills Ave	3	2	0	\$459,900	\$460,000	No	2
Sold	4001 Ronson Dr	4	4	0	\$524,900	\$510,000	Yes	0

All information deemed reliable. Derived from Metropolitan Regional Information System for the period 9/1/14-11/30/14.

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