

News from...

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Mason District Home - Fairfax
County, Virginia

www.fairfaxcounty.gov

Welcome to the Mason District homepage! It is designed for easy use, and I hope you will find the information both helpful and timely.

January 2017

A few items of information for you or your association newsletter:

The Board Corner: Perspectives from Penny – Happy New Year! By all accounts, 2017 promises to be a challenging year – globally, nationally, state-wise, and locally. Regardless of the change in presidential administrations, work at the local level goes on. Serving the needs of the community -- education, public safety, human services, the environment, land use, parks, libraries -- is paramount for Fairfax County government. You can stay connected by using the Fairfax County website, www.fairfaxcounty.gov, for up-to-date information about county programs and events, or email me at mason@fairfaxcounty.gov, for information about topics specific to Mason District.

Here are some "Cheers for the New Year" that might be of interest to you and your neighbors.

- The Fire Department's Yellow Dot program could save your life, especially if you have a vehicle crash or emergency that requires medical attention. Visit your local fire station for a Yellow Dot kit; fill out the booklet, attach a current photo, and place the booklet in the glove compartment of your vehicle. Place the accompanying Yellow Dot in the lower left of your rear window to alert first responders to check the glove compartment for vital medical information. The program is especially useful for seniors and others who may have serious medical conditions. It's easy, and it's free.
- Fairfax County's Department of Public Works and Environmental Services (DPWES) has achieved national accreditation by the American Public Works Association. DPWES is just the 114th agency, out of more than 3000 nationwide, to earn this prestigious recognition. Similarly, the county's Department of Vehicle Services (DVS), which manages and maintains the largest municipal fleet (nearly 6000 vehicles, including school buses) in Virginia, received the Blue Seal of Excellence from the National Institute for Automotive Service Excellence. Both agencies provide 24/7 service to the residents of Fairfax County.
- If your New Year's resolutions include volunteering in our community, check out Volunteer Solutions on the Fairfax County website, www.fairfaxcounty.gov/dfs/olderadultservices/volunteer-solutions.htm. Some tasks take only an hour per week; others may be more intense, but there most likely is a task that fits with, and needs, your skills. Fairfax County wouldn't be the great place to live, work, play, learn, worship, and grow old gracefully without our volunteers!

Dog License Renewal Deadline is January 31, 2017 – If you have not done so already, renew all dog licenses no later than **Tuesday, January 31, 2017**, to be compliant. Penalties for an unlicensed dog are a Class IV Misdemeanor and a fine up to \$250. Visit the Fairfax County Animal Shelter, located at 4500 West Ox Road in Fairfax, to renew and receive the license tags in person. Proof of current rabies vaccination certification and \$10 per license renewal (cost is the same for altered and unaltered dogs) is required. Cash, checks, or credit cards are accepted for payment if licenses are renewed in person at the Animal Shelter. The Animal Shelter is open Tuesday through Friday, 12 p.m. to 7 p.m. and Saturday 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. For more information, call 703-830-1100, or visit the Fairfax County Animal Services Division Web site at www.fairfaxcounty.gov/police/animal.

Fairfax County's Hypothermia Prevention Program in Progress – Because of the successful public-private partnerships that serve the critical needs of chronically homeless persons, the 2016-2017 Fairfax-Falls Church emergency hypothermia shelters are open under a "**no turn-away**" status from now **until March 31, 2017** at all [emergency shelters](http://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/homeless/hypothermia-prevention/emergency-shelter.htm) (www.fairfaxcounty.gov/homeless/hypothermia-prevention/emergency-shelter.htm), based on

freezing temperatures. If you see someone at night who is unsheltered and could be at risk of hypothermia, call the county's non-emergency phone line at 703-691-2131 (TTY 711). Information about the Hypothermia Prevention Program is available at www.fairfaxcounty.gov/homeless/hypothermia-prevention/.

AARP Tax Aide Returns to Mason District in 2017!

Free tax assistance will be available beginning **Wednesday, February 1, 2017**, thanks to AARP volunteers, who will be at the Mason District Governmental Center, 6507 Columbia Pike in Annandale. Because Emancipation Day (April 16) is a holiday in the District of Columbia and will be observed on **Monday, April 17**, the deadline for federal taxes this year is **Tuesday, April 18**. File Virginia taxes before the deadline on **Monday, May 1**. AARP volunteers will provide walk-in service from **February 1 through April 18: Mondays and Thursdays from 1 to 8 p.m.; Tuesdays, Wednesdays, and Fridays from 9:30 a.m. until 1 p.m.; Saturdays from 9 a.m. until 1 p.m.** Please note that walk-in hours will be closed on **President's Day, Monday, February 20, 2017**. All returns are filed electronically. Remember to bring documents, such as last year's tax return, a photo ID, and Social Security cards for taxpayers and all dependents. Residents with illnesses or infirmities, which confine them to their homes, may schedule appointments with AARP for tax preparation services by calling 703-594-6576. For more information about AARP Tax-Aide, visit www.aarp.org/money/taxaide, or call 1-888-227-7669.

Volunteers Needed for DFS VITA Program – The Fairfax County Department of Family Services (DFS) coordinates a regional, volunteer-run Volunteer Income Tax Assistance (VITA) Program, which provides free tax assistance to individuals and families with low incomes. Volunteers are needed from late January to April 2017 for three to five hours, once or twice a week. Multiple locations are available throughout Northern Virginia. Tax preparers and screeners should have experience preparing a tax return, but no experience is necessary for interpreters and greeters. No experience in tax preparation is needed because training is provided. Classroom and/or online training is available through January 2017, and all tax preparers must pass an IRS certification test. For more information about the VITA program, or to register as a volunteer, please visit www.nvacash.org, or call Tatyana Chambers, volunteer coordinator, at 703-533-5702.

VDOT Expands Resources this Winter – The Virginia Department of Transportation (VDOT) is ready for snow season with plow-tracking technology, expanded monitor program, and a new one-stop shop for online resources that are available for residents to use. VDOT has budgeted \$82.7 million for snow removal in Northern Virginia this winter, and the agency's state and contracted fleet is ready with more than 4,500 pieces of equipment.

Highlights for Snow Season 2016-2017

- **One stop-shop for resources:** Visit www.virginiadot.org/novaemergency to access all of VDOT's online information resources, including important messages and updates, news releases, and links to the [customer service center](#), [511](#), and vdotplows.org.

- **Monitor program expanded:** This year, 180 VDOT employees will ride the roads to monitor road conditions and snowplow progress, and more than 30 employees will monitor remotely via the automatic vehicle locator (AVL) equipment.

How You Can Help and Resources

- Monitor forecasts
- Adjust commutes, telework, and avoid driving if possible
- Ensure enough gas, wiper fluid, proper tires, food, water and medicine when driving
- Park in driveways or work with neighbors to park on the same side of the street to give plows room to pass. Watch this video on [how to properly shovel your driveway](#) before the plow arrives
- Give plows room to work
- Stay connected

New this year: virginiadot.org/novaemergency for news releases, important messages, frequently asked questions and links to other resources, including:

- 511virginia.org for road conditions
- vdotplows.org for neighborhood status and locations of plows
- [@vadotnova](https://twitter.com/vadotnova) on Twitter
- my.vdot.virginia.gov or 800-FOR-ROAD (367-7623) to report issues.

Senior Citizen Tax Relief 2017 Workshops Coming to the Mason District Governmental Center - Supervisor Penny Gross, in collaboration with the Department of Tax Administration (DTA), is hosting free tax relief workshops on **March 8 and 10, 2017, from 9 a.m. to 12 noon both days**, at the Mason District Governmental Center, 6507 Columbia Pike in Annandale. DTA staff will be on-site to assist residents with completing the 2017 Tax Relief application form and answer questions. No appointment is necessary. Bring your 2016 tax returns or proof of 2016 gross income from all sources, and all asset information as of December 31, 2016. **Real estate tax relief is available for older adults and people with disabilities who meet certain qualifications.** Qualified residents also may be eligible for car tax and rent relief. For more information, visit the Web site www.fairfaxcounty.gov/dta, or call 703-222-8234; TTY 703-222-7594.

Art Show and Reception at Green Spring Gardens

Come to Green Spring Gardens and see the Asian brush painting of the National Capital Area Chapter of the Sumi-e Society of America at the Horticulture Center and Historic House from February 21-April 16, 1 – 3 p.m. On March 26, meet some of the artists at a reception at the Horticulture Center, and enjoy light refreshments. Free. Green Spring Gardens, 4603 Green Spring Road, Alexandria, VA 22312. Please call Green Spring Gardens at 703-642-5173 for more information.

Mason Matters! The Television Show – The January edition of *Mason Matters!*, the television show that brings you news and information about our Mason District community, hosted by Supervisor Penny Gross, features Lauren Mollerup, district maintenance engineer for the Virginia Department of Transportation's Northern Virginia District, and MPO Richard McEachin, VDOT Liaison and Officer in the Traffic Division of the Fairfax County Police Department. Snow

season has arrived, and as anyone living in the Metropolitan area knows, it can wreak havoc on our region in various ways. Fortunately, governments at all levels monitor weather events so that public safety, transportation, and essential services can be maintained. In Fairfax County, the Virginia Department of Transportation, or VDOT, is the state agency that moves snow off our roads to help ensure our safe travel to our destinations.

Fairfax County's public safety personnel also collaborate with VDOT in providing emergency services to more than a million residents county-wide during snow events, and other inclement weather when needed. So how do these agencies handle such a tall order? *Mason Matters!* airs on Cable Channel 16 every **Thursday at 7 p.m.**, and every **Friday and Sunday at 6:30 p.m.**, and daily on-line at www.fairfaxcounty.gov/mason.

Need a Notary? – Notarial services are available from 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. in the Office of Mason District Supervisor Penny Gross, located in the Mason District Governmental Center, 6507 Columbia Pike in Annandale. **Please call 703-256-7717 to schedule an appointment.**

Mason News and Updates – If you know individuals who would like to receive news and updates about Fairfax County services and events in Mason District, ask them to send an e-mail to masonbosinfo@fairfaxcounty.gov to subscribe. If you do not wish to receive this newsletter, or the news and updates, please send an e-mail and include unsubscribe in the subject line to remove your e-mail address from the subscription list.

The Quick 411 – I got a new TV during the holiday season, so I would like to dispose of my old TV. Can it be recycled? Yes. If your old TV or computer monitor contains a Cathode Ray Tube, or CRT, it must be recycled. Typical CRTs contain four to eight pounds of lead. Recycling a CRT prevents lead pollution in Fairfax County. Do your part by using these reuse or recycling opportunities: Nonprofit donation; Manufacturer take-back programs; Retail store drop-off programs; County electronics drop-off locations at the I-66 Transfer Station (4618 West Ox Road, Fairfax, VA 22030) & I-95 Landfill (9850 Furnace Road, Lorton, VA 22079). For more information and driving tips, visit www.fairfaxcounty.gov/dpwes/recycling/mat-comp.htm.

Happy New Year!