

News from...

SUPERVISOR PENNY GROSS



MASON DISTRICT GOVERNMENTAL CENTER
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February 2018

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

The Board Corner: Perspectives from Penny – County Executive Bryan Hill will present his proposed FY2019 county budget on **Tuesday, February 20**. Most of the development of the proposed budget was done before he assumed office in early January, but the final package will be his proposal. The Board of Supervisors will spend March and April examining the recommendations, and making changes, before adoption of the revised budget on **Tuesday, May 1**. The Board of Supervisors' budget discussions are broadcast live on cable Channel 16, and also on demand at www.fairfaxcounty.gov.

By law, Fairfax County must adopt a balanced budget every year. This is in marked contrast to the inability of the federal government to agree on a budget, relying instead on the fits and starts of multiple Continuing Resolutions, or CRs, to keep the federal government running for a few weeks or months at a time. Local governments can't, and don't, operate that way. Local taxpayers rightly expect credibility, consistency, and common sense from their local elected officials in the use of local tax dollars. Leaders are elected to make the hard decisions, not abrogate that responsibility by kicking it down the road.

Elsewhere in this newsletter is information about the Alexandria-Lincolnia Lions Club. If you have eyeglasses or hearing aids that you no longer need or use, consider dropping them into the Lions Club donation box in my office. Your used specs can provide improved eyesight to those in need.

Some special February dates prompt reminders: Get those flowers and chocolates ready for Valentine's Day, on **Wednesday, February 14**. Then, for Presidents' Day, observed this year on **Monday, February 19**, you can visit Mount Vernon (free admission), home of our first president, George Washington, and learn more about the fascinating early history of Fairfax County.

Reminder: Help Feed Fairfax County Families by Stuffing the Bus – Help families in need of food by donating to "Stuff the Bus," a food pantry giving program operated by Fairfax County that partners with nonprofit organizations, grocery stores, and MV Transportation to restock

depleted food pantry shelves. On **Saturday, February 10, 2018, from 9:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.**, the "Stuff the Bus" program will be at the **Annandale Giant, 7137 Columbia Pike**, and will **benefit the Annandale Christian Community for Action (ACCA)**. Other February "Stuff the Bus" events will be held **Saturday, February 3, 17, 19 (President's Day Monday), and 24, 2018, 9:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.** at local grocery stores. Volunteers for local non-profit food pantries will be available at each store to collect donated food from local shoppers. For more information and a list of donation sites, collection dates, and times, call 703-222-9764; TTY 711, or visit the Web site www.fairfaxcounty.gov/neighborhood-community-services/stuff-the-bus.

Winter 2018 Leadership Series for Civic and HOA Leaders Continues in February and March

– For the past 10 years, Supervisor Penny Gross has hosted a series of meetings for Mason District Civic Association and Home Owner Association leaders. These meetings covered presentations from the departments of Zoning, Health, Police, Fire and Rescue, and Code Compliance. Because they are so popular, Supervisor Gross is offering them again. Topics and presenters may be subject to change because of staff availability. The remaining Winter 2018 Leadership Series schedule is:

- **Saturday, February 10, 2018** – Personal and Community Resilience, featuring personnel from the Fairfax County Animal Control Division/Animal Shelter.
- **Saturday, March 10, 2018** – Learn about the Fairfax County Department of Code Compliance, and Hoarding.

The meetings will be held at **the Mason District Governmental Center, 6507 Columbia Pike in Annandale, from 10 a.m. to noon**. If you can't make one of the meetings, please invite another member of your board. Reserve your seat by e-mail to Fran.Tunick@fairfaxcounty.gov, or call 703-256-7717.

AARP Volunteers Provide Tax Preparation Assistance to Mason District – Free tax assistance is available **now through Tuesday, April 17, 2018 (federal tax returns)**, thanks to AARP volunteers, who will be at the Mason District Governmental Center, 6507 Columbia Pike in Annandale. File Virginia taxes before the deadline on **Tuesday, May 1**. AARP volunteers provide walk-in services on: **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: **No Tax-Aide service on President's Day, Monday, February 19, 2018**. All returns are filed electronically. Bring documents, such as last year's tax return, a photo ID, and all Social Security cards. Residents with illnesses or infirmities, which confine them to their homes, may schedule appointments with AARP for tax preparation services by calling 571-766-6268. For more information about AARP Tax-Aide, visit www.aarp.org/taxaide, or call 1-888-227-7669.

Help Launch a New Community Collaborative: Welcoming Inclusion Network – Are you interested in developmental disability services in Fairfax County? Mark your calendars for the inaugural meeting of the Fairfax-Falls Church Community Services Board's (CSB) new "Welcoming Inclusion Network" (WIN), on **Monday, February 26**, at 6:30 p.m. at the Fairfax County Government Center in Conference Rooms 2 and 3, 12000 Government Center Parkway in Fairfax. Join the CSB as they bring together a diverse group of stakeholders who are interested in, and committed to, advancing employment and day services for individuals with

developmental disabilities. For more information, visit www.fairfaxcounty.gov/community-services-board/news/2018/welcoming-inclusion-network, or call 703-324-7006.

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 2017-2018 Fairfax-Falls Church emergency hypothermia shelters are open under a "**no turn-away**" status from now **until March 31, 2018** at all emergency shelters, based on freezing temperatures. A list of locations is available at www.fairfaxcounty.gov/homeless/emergency-shelters. 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-program. Contact the Office to Prevent and End Homelessness at 703-324-9492, or via e-mail at opehgeneralmail@fairfaxcounty.gov.

The Alexandria-Lincolnia Lions Club Welcomes New Members – The local chapter of the Alexandria-Lincolnia Lions Club, the world's largest service organization, invites you to join them for dinner every **second and fourth Tuesday of the month** at Fratelli Italian Restaurant, 410 South Van Dorn Street in Alexandria. Locally, the Alexandria-Lincolnia Lion Club sponsors an annual art competition for students at Holmes Middle School, assists a local battered women's shelter, provides non-perishable goods and gift cards for a local food bank, and offers a free sight-and-hearing van to test children, adults, and senior citizens. Globally, the Lions Club works to prevent diabetes, assist individuals with sight and/or hearing loss, train companion dogs for the disabled, and are best known for collecting used eyeglasses and hearing aids. For more information, and to RSVP to attend one of the meetings, please call Ralph Cooper at 703-455-9547, or Daniel Duncan at 703-503-1390.

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 now to April 2018 for three to five hours, once or twice a week, at multiple locations throughout Northern Virginia. No tax experience is necessary for interpreters and greeters. Tax preparers and screeners should have experience preparing a tax return, and additional training will be provided. Classroom and/or online training available, 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 and click on the "Volunteers" tab, or call Tatyana Chambers, volunteer coordinator, at 703-533-5702.

VDOT Continues Its Readiness During Snow Season – The Virginia Department of Transportation (VDOT) continues its readiness for snow season with plow-tracking technology, expanded monitor programs, and a one-stop shop for online resources that is available for residents to use. VDOT has budgeted \$84.9 million for snow removal in Northern Virginia this winter, and the agency's state and contracted fleet has salt, brine, sand; and 4,500 vehicles (97 percent of fleet is contracted) to mobilize.

Highlights for Snow Season 2017-2018

- **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:** 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.

Stay Informed:

- [@vadotnova](#) on Twitter;
- virginiadot.org/novaemergency for status updates, FAQs, and other resources;
- 511virginia.org for road conditions and traffic cameras;
- vdotplows.org for neighborhood status and locations of plows; and
- my.vdot.virginia.gov or 800-FOR-ROAD (367-7623) to report issues.

How You Can Help:

- Monitor forecasts frequently;
- Adjust commutes, telework, and avoid driving if possible;
- Park in driveways or park on the odd-numbered side of the street.
- Do not shovel driveways until plows have come through;
- Have enough fuel, wiper fluid, proper tires, medication, and an emergency car kit;
- Be patient: crews need time and room to work.

Reminder: Senior Citizen Tax Relief 2018 Workshops Scheduled at 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 7 and 9, 2018, 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 2018 Tax Relief application form and answer questions. No appointment is necessary. Bring your 2017 tax returns or proof of 2017 gross income from all sources, and all asset information as of December 31, 2017. **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/taxes/, or call 703-222-8234; TTY 703-222-7594.

Mason Matters! The Television Show – Heart disease and strokes kill one in three women each year – more than all cancers combined. There are even greater disparities within the African American and Hispanic population, where heart disease and stroke rank as the number one killer of women. In Fairfax County, we are fortunate to have many outstanding physicians and private medical facilities in the community to meet women's health needs, especially against heart disease. Fairfax County also has several non-profit public organizations that help women achieve heart health. One such resource is Mason District's own Culmore Clinic. Founded in 2007, the Culmore Clinic is a non-profit healthcare clinic serving low-income adults in the Bailey's Crossroads community. The clinic is supported by a diverse group of interfaith volunteers, healthcare providers, and donors, and offers compassionate medical care, counseling services, and referrals for specialists. The **February** edition of *Mason Matters!*, the television show that brings you news and information about our Mason District community, hosted by Supervisor Penny Gross, features Terry O'Hara Lavoie, co-founder of the Culmore Clinic, and Dr. Tarek Abou-Ghazala with the Virginia Cardiovascular Group. *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 8:30 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 in advance to ensure the notary is available to assist you when you arrive.**

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 am planning a home renovation this spring and I would like to hire a contractor to do the work. I want to verify that my contractor has a license, and I have other related questions. Does Fairfax County offer information that I can utilize before I begin my project? Yes. If the project you are planning is valued at \$1,000 or more, the person doing the work must have a valid Virginia Contractor's License issued from the [Department of Professional and Occupational Regulation \(DPOR\)](#). Licenses are issued in one of three classes; A, B, or C. This determines the dollar amount of the contract. Licenses also are issued with classifications and specialties that identify the type of work that may be performed. For information about hiring contractors, verifying that a contractor is licensed, filing a complaint, and more, visit www.fairfaxcounty.gov/landdevelopment/hiring-contractor.