

News from...

SUPERVISOR PENNY GROSS



MASON DISTRICT GOVERNMENTAL CENTER
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December 2018

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

The Board Corner: Perspectives from Penny – Happy Holidays! It doesn't seem possible that 2018 is nearly over, but the calendar confirms that 2019 is on the horizon. The events of 2018 will be a focus of my State of Mason District presentation during the 23rd annual Holiday Town Gathering on Monday, December 10, beginning at 7 p.m., at the Mason District Governmental Center, 6507 Columbia Pike in Annandale. The Holiday Town Gathering is a great way to start the holiday season with friends and neighbors. Live musical entertainment will feature the "Reflections" quartet of the Sweet Adelines female barbershop singers. Refreshments and door prizes will round out the family event. The first Holiday Town Gathering was held in 1996, and I have been delighted with the community response and opportunity for conversation and fellowship during the winter holidays ever since. My staff and I look forward to seeing you there!

Elsewhere in this newsletter you will find volunteer opportunities and other holiday events, including how to care for live Christmas trees in your home. If you decorate your home for the holidays, please be especially careful about use of your indoor fireplace, or outdoor fire pit, too. A frequent cause of house fires during the winter is improperly discarded ashes. Always be sure that the fire is out, and douse any remaining embers with water. Remove the ashes to a covered metal can, never in a plastic or paper bag, and place the can away from the house (not in the garage) until the ashes are collected by your trash company or used in the garden. For more fire safety tips, including candle use, log on to www.fairfaxcounty.gov/fire-ems/fire-safe-holiday-season. If you do have the unfortunate experience of a house fire, get everyone out of the house, and call 911. Belongings can be replaced; loved ones can't.

Have a safe and happy holiday season. Don't hesitate to let me know any time my office can be of assistance.

Gardener's Holiday Open House Set for December 2 – Green Spring Gardens' staff and volunteers invite gardeners of all ages to a Gardener's Holiday Open House on **Sunday, December 2**, 12-4 p.m. Enjoy seasonal music, refreshments, and complete your holiday shopping with gifts and plants for your favorite novice or experienced gardener. Children can enjoy a holiday puppet show by Bob Brown Puppets at 1 p.m. and 3 p.m. for \$5 per person. Advance registration for the show is recommended. For more information, visit the website at www.fairfaxcounty.gov/parks/green-spring, or call 703-642-5173. Green Spring Gardens is located at 4603 Green Spring Road in Alexandria.

Hidden Oaks Nature Center Features Winter Activities – Located at 7701 Royce Street in Annandale, the Hidden Oaks Nature Center offers a variety of winter programs and activities. The **Squirrel's Nutcracker Tea Party** on **Sunday, December 9**, from 2 -3:30 p.m., for ages 4 to adult, features a twist on the classic tale told through the view of a gray squirrel, who has concerns about all the nuts he is collecting. Sip sugarplum tea with gingerbread treats at a sit down tea along with the puppet show. On **Friday, December 21**, from 7-8 p.m., visitors ages 4 to adult can enjoy the **Winter Solstice Campfire** and s'mores, and learn about the cultural history of the solstice. Event canceled in case of inclement weather. Not appropriate for children under 4 years. Children must be accompanied by an adult, who also is registered in the program. For more information, call 703-222-4664, visit www.fairfaxcounty.gov/parks/hiddenoaks, or send an e-mail to Suzanne.Holland@fairfaxcounty.gov.

Mason District's Holiday Town Gathering – Mason District Supervisor Penny Gross invites you to start the holiday season with an evening of musical entertainment, refreshments, and learn about this year's accomplishments on **Monday, December 10, 7 p.m.** at the Mason District Governmental Center, 6507 Columbia Pike in Annandale. The "Reflections Quartet of the Sweet Adelines," will open the festivities. A door prize drawing completes this annual holiday event.

Bailey's Crossroads Community Shelter's Hypothermia Prevention Program

– From **December 1, 2018 to March 31, 2019**, the county's hypothermia program is operational, thanks to partnerships with volunteers, churches, non-profit organizations, and individuals, who donate hot meals, breakfast items, beverages, and snacks. **Meals**, such as one-dish casseroles, soups, salad, entrees, vegetables, bread/rolls, and dessert are needed for **30 people** for the following dates: December 2-11 and December 13-15, 2018; January 2-5, January 7-8, and January 11-19, 2019; and March 10-12 and March 17-24, 2019. Two individuals also are needed to help serve the meals. For more information, and to volunteer, **contact Sherry Edelkamp**, hypothermia coordinator at 703-966-1270 or BaileysHypoShelter@gmail.com. **Clothing**, such as hats, gloves, adult size (new) thermal underwear (L, XL, XXL), coats, scarves, and gloves are needed. For more information, **contact Khristina Koontz** at kkooontz@newhopehousing.org, or call 703-820-7621 ext. 218. If you see someone at risk, call 911. Information about Fairfax County's program is available at www.fairfaxcounty.gov/homeless/hypothermia-prevention-program, or call 703-324-9492.

Join the Police Civilian Review Panel at its 2018 Public Forum – The public is invited to attend the Police Civilian Review Panel's 2018 Public Forum on **Monday, December 10, 2018** at the Mount Vernon Governmental Center, 2511 Parkers Lane, from 7 to 9 p.m. At the Public Forum, learn how to initiate the complaint process, who will investigate complaints, what to expect when a complaint is filed, and receive a 2018 update about Panel activity. The Independent Police Auditor also will be present to explain the Auditor's role in oversight. There will be a 45-minute period for audience participation. The Panel will respond to questions about the complaint form and Panel processes. Ten, three-minute time slots will be available to attendees to comment about issues related to the Panel's jurisdiction (comments on specific complaints may not be presented). Sign-up will be available at the forum on a first come, first served basis. For more information, call 703-324-2502, send an e-mail to PoliceCivilianReviewPanel@fairfaxcounty.gov, or visit the website at www.fairfaxcounty.gov/policecivilianreviewpanel.

Land Use News – Land use items of interest also feature sidewalk connectivity projects:

- Construction of the new permanent **Jefferson Fire Station #18**, located at 3101 Hodge Place in Falls Church, currently is on schedule, and is anticipated to be completed in fall 2019. When the permanent fire station is operational, fire and rescue services and apparatus at the temporary station (currently at the intersection of South Street and Annandale Road), will be relocated to the new station.
- A spot improvement project is proposed on the east side of **Backlick Road, between Hechinger Drive and Industrial Road**, to complete a sidewalk network. The project entails a minimum 5-foot sidewalk, and a northbound left turn lane into the office complex at the intersection of Backlick Road at Industrial Road. Weather permitting, survey work will be done intermittently this month until March 2019 in preparation for the project's design phase.

Tree Care during the Holidays – Living Christmas trees are an option to enjoy during the holidays, and as a landscape feature throughout the year, but they require special treatment. Living trees in containers, or balled and wrapped in burlap, should not be carried by the stem. Allow the tree to adjust to a heated room in an unheated garage or shed for several days prior to bringing it indoors, and for several days before bringing it back outside. Living trees require plenty of water while indoors, and should only remain in the home for no more than 10 days, or they will start to grow. Trees should be planted immediately or, if the ground is frozen, placed in a shallow hole and covered with mulch until it can be planted.

Cut Christmas trees also are popular during the holidays. When bringing a cut tree home, make a fresh, straight cut across the bottom of the trunk, at least 1 inch (or more) above the old base to help the tree absorb water. Keep the tree well-watered to ensure it stays fresh and does not become a fire hazard. Do not place Christmas trees near heat sources such as candles, radiators, fireplaces, or space heaters. Some trees may absorb a gallon or more of water during the first day, so keep the cut trunk immersed in water at all times. When the holiday tree is taken down, it may be disposed of at the curb or recycled for free (for trees less than 8 feet). Trees also may be repurposed for mulch, winter protection for tender vegetation, or burned for fuel. For more information about tree care, contact the Fairfax County Urban Forest Management Division at treemail@fairfaxcounty.gov, or call 703-324-1770; TTY 711.

EQAC Welcomes Your Views about the Environment – The Fairfax County Environmental Quality Advisory Council will hold its annual public hearing about the environment on **Wednesday, January 9, 2019** at 7:30 p.m. in Conference Rooms 4 and 5 of the Fairfax County Government Center, 12000 Government Center Parkway in Fairfax. Residents may share their views about environmental issues of interest and those applicable to Fairfax County. EQAC welcomes verbal/written testimony. To sign up to speak, call the Department of Planning and Zoning at 703-324-1380 or by e-mail at EQAC@fairfaxcounty.gov. Residents who cannot testify in person may submit written testimony by e-mail, or submit video testimony. The deadline to post and upload video testimony (five minutes or less, one video per person) to YouTube, Ustream, or Vimeo, and notify county staff is 5 p.m. on **Wednesday, January 2, 2019**. Send an e-mail with the URL to egac@fairfaxcounty.gov. County staff will present the video at the public hearing. Note: Videos will be screened prior to presentation. Each video must address one or more environmental topics. EQAC's Annual Report about the Environment is available at www.fairfaxcounty.gov/planning-zoning/environmental-quality-advisory-council/annual-report-environment, and general information about the council is available at www.fairfaxcounty.gov/planning-zoning/environmental-quality-advisory-council/.

Winter 2019 Leadership Series for Civic and HOA Leaders Scheduled – For the past 11 years, Supervisor Penny Gross has hosted a series of meetings for Mason District Civic Association and Home Owner Association leaders that feature presentations from various departments in Fairfax County. Because they are so popular, Supervisor Gross is hosting them again in 2019. Topics and presenters may be subject to change because of staff availability. The Winter 2019 Leadership Series schedule is as follows:

- **Saturday, January 12, 2019** – Meet the Commanders and Assistant Commanders from the Mason District Station, Franconia District Station, and the West Springfield District Station.
- **Saturday, February 9, 2019** – Learn how you can be part of Fairfax County's **Community Emergency Response Team** from its coordinator at the Office of Emergency Management.
- **Saturday, March 9, 2019** – Learn about property maintenance from personnel with the Fairfax County Department of Code Compliance, and traffic calming from the Fairfax County Department of Transportation.

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 at mason@fairfaxcounty.gov, or call 703-256-7717.

VDOT is Ready for Snow Season – The Virginia Department of Transportation (VDOT) is ready for snow with plow-tracking technology, and online resources for residents to use. VDOT has budgeted more than \$205 million for winter weather, has more than 700,000 tons of salt, sand, and treatment abrasives, and more than 2.1 million gallons of liquid calcium chloride and salt brine. More than 2,500 VDOT crewmembers, in addition to contractors, are available for snow removal statewide.

Highlights for Snow Season 2018-2019

- **One stop 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.

Stay Informed:

- [@vadotnova](#) on Twitter;
- virginiadot.org/novaemergency for status updates, FAQs, and other resources;
- 511virginia.org for road conditions (local/statewide) 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 road hazards/road maintenance.
- www.virginiadot.org/travel/snow.asp for winter travel information.

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 driveway until plows have come through;
- Have enough gas, wiper fluid, proper tires, medication, and an emergency car kit;
- Be patient: crews need time and room to work.

Acrylic Paintings Featured at Mason District Governmental Center – The Art featured in the Mason District Governmental Center, 6507 Columbia Pike in Annandale, is a collection of acrylic paintings by Deborah Mahnken, a graduate from the University of Virginia, who paints in pastel and

acrylic of rural landscapes, particularly mountains. The artwork is on display in the lobby through **Friday, December 28, 2018**.

Mason Matters! The Television Show – In the winter, a fresh blanket of snow is lovely to see from inside a toasty warm home. Sadly, there are individuals and families who don't have a place to call home, and they experience additional hardships during the winter months. Fortunately, the Fairfax County Hypothermia Prevention Program has successful and vital public-private partnerships, which fulfill a life-saving mission and give our most vulnerable neighbors a safe place to stay and be protected from the elements. The **December** edition of ***Mason Matters!***, the television show that brings you news and information about our Mason District community, hosted by Supervisor Penny Gross, features Tom Barnett, deputy director of the Office to Prevent and End Homelessness, and Dr. J. Wayne Yawn, pastor of the United Baptist Church in Annandale. ***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.

Mason News and Updates – To receive news and updates about Fairfax County services and events in Mason District, send an e-mail to mason@fairfaxcounty.gov to subscribe. If you wish to unsubscribe, 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 sometimes put things in my recycling bin that I assume can be recycled, and I have been wondering what happens to recycled items these days. Can Fairfax County offer any information? Yes, and that's a good question. The worldwide recycling market has changed dramatically in recent months, especially because of "Operation National Sword" in China. Here in Fairfax County, **the local third-party recycling processor says nearly 30 percent of material received is actually trash.** To do our part in this worldwide process, we need everyone to focus on **reducing the amount of contaminated materials placed in recycling bins.** There are ways to help stop the practice of "wishful recycling" – placing items in the recycling bin because you think they probably will be recycled. To learn more, visit www.fairfaxcounty.gov/adjusting-new-recycling-realities-5-ways-you-can-help-stop-wishful-recycling.