

*News from...*

## SUPERVISOR PENNY GROSS



MASON DISTRICT GOVERNMENTAL CENTER  
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**January 2019**

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

**The Board Corner: Perspectives from Penny** – Happy New Year! As 2019 begins, thoughts turn to weather, the Virginia General Assembly session, and new tax forms. In this newsletter, you will find helpful information from the Virginia Department of Transportation (VDOT) about how to prepare for, and cope with, winter weather that we know is in our future. Links to VDOT's resource information may be loaded into your phone or other device so that you can see current updates as needed. Please drive safely, and remember to clear snow from all of your vehicle, not just the windows. Sheets of icy snow can peel off your vehicle roof and become dangerous missiles for drivers behind you.

Each year, the Board of Supervisors prepares a Legislative Program that county leaders submit to the Fairfax delegation to the General Assembly (GA). The package outlines some specific requests for GA action, and highlights priorities for core services, such as K-12 education, transportation, and the state budget. The Board strongly supports increased school funding for support personnel and teacher salaries, as well as for school divisions with high concentrations of English language learners, economically disadvantaged households, and special education and mental health services. The Board strongly opposes state budget cuts that disproportionately target or affect Northern Virginia, and any policies that would divert K-12 education funding away from local public schools. The entire 2019 Legislative Program for FY 2020 may be viewed on-line at [www.fairfaxcounty.gov/boardofsupervisors/](http://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/boardofsupervisors/)

The effects of federal income tax changes in 2018 will become better known this year as local residents and homeowners begin preparing to file their income taxes in the spring. AARP volunteers will provide free tax assistance at the Mason District Governmental Center again this year. Find more information about the AARP Tax-Aide service elsewhere in this newsletter.

May 2019 bring you and yours a New Year filled with happiness, prosperity, and peace.

**January 2019 Winter Leadership Series for Civic and HOA Leaders Features Police Commanders** – On **Saturday, January 12, 2019, from 10 a.m. to 12 noon**, Supervisor Penny Gross begins her series of meetings for Mason District Civic Association and Home Owner Association leaders by welcoming the commanders from the Mason, Franconia, and West Springfield District Stations. The Winter 2019 Leadership Series continues as follows:

- **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 to [Fran.Tunick@fairfaxcounty.gov](mailto:Fran.Tunick@fairfaxcounty.gov), or call 703-256-7717. Please note that topics and presenters may be subject to change because of staff availability.

### **Meal Donations Needed for Bailey's Crossroads Community Shelter's Hypothermia Prevention Program**

– The county's hypothermia program is operational through March 31, 2019, 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: **January 2-19, 2019; and March 17-23, 2019.** Two individuals also are needed to help serve the meals during these evenings. For more information, and to volunteer, **contact Sherry Edelkamp**, hypothermia coordinator at 703-966-1270 or [BaileysHypoShelter@gmail.com](mailto:BaileysHypoShelter@gmail.com). **Donations of coats and scarves (only) would be appreciated.** For more information, **contact Khristina Koontz** at [kkoontz@newhoushousing.org](mailto:kkoontz@newhoushousing.org), or call 703-820-7621 ext. 218. Information about Fairfax County's program is available at [www.fairfaxcounty.gov/homeless/hypothermia-prevention-program](http://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/homeless/hypothermia-prevention-program), or call 703-324-9492. **If you see someone at risk of hypothermia, call 911.**

**Stuff the Bus to Help Feed Fairfax County Families** – After the holidays, community food pantries run low on non-perishable food to assist individuals and families in need within our community. In its ninth year, Fairfax County operates "Stuff the Bus," a food pantry giving program that partners with nonprofit organizations, grocery stores, and MV Transportation to restock food pantry shelves. Fairfax County will host 11 separate "Stuff the Bus" events, beginning **Saturday, January 19 through Monday, February 18, 2019, 9:30 a.m. to 3:30 p.m.** at local grocery stores. Each week a Fastran bus will park at a different location and collect food donations. Volunteers for local non-profit food pantries will be available at each store to collect donated food from shoppers. **On Saturday, February 9, from 9:30 a.m. to 3:30 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).** For more information about the "Stuff the Bus" program 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](http://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/neighborhood-community-services/stuff-the-bus).

**Land Use News** – Land use items of interest feature sidewalk connectivity projects currently in design, and proposed bike lanes in coordination with VDOT's 2019 Road Paving Program:

- **Edsall Road Walkway** – The project entails the construction of approximately 1,060 linear feet of sidewalk along the north side of Edsall Road, between 6416 Edsall Road and Timber Forest Drive. The project includes signalized pedestrian crossings at Timber Forest Drive and Edsall Road, and construction is anticipated to begin in the spring.

- **Medford Drive Walkway** – Approximately 475 linear feet of sidewalk will be constructed, including curb and gutter, along the east side of Medford Drive, from Davian Drive to Four Year Run to access Annandale High School. Construction is projected to begin in the spring.
- **Edsall Road Bridge Reconfiguration** – As part of the I-395 Express Lanes Project, a narrower raised median will be constructed on the Edsall Road bridge to accommodate a new signalized left turn lane from westbound Edsall Road to access the ramp to southbound I-395. The loop ramp at the northwest quadrant of the interchange will be removed to allow improved traffic flow on southbound I-395. The project also includes replacement of a sidewalk on the north side of the bridge, which will be wider and connect to existing sidewalks at Cherokee Avenue and the Bowl America property. After the bridge reconfiguration is completed, westbound Edsall Road will be paved to just east of Cherokee Avenue.
- The **Virginia Department of Transportation** and the **Fairfax County Department of Transportation** will host a public information meeting on **Thursday, February 7, 2019** at 7 p.m., in the Main Community Room of the Mason District Governmental Center, 6507 Columbia Pike in Annandale. VDOT proposes to resurface several roads in the Mason District, and implement striping modifications (where feasible) to improve road safety, provide pedestrian crossings, add parking lanes, and install bike lanes. Construction is anticipated to begin in the spring and completed in early December 2019. Learn about bike lanes and whether your road is on VDOT's proposed list for paving in 2019!

**Tax Preparation Comes to Mason District** – AARP volunteers return to provide free tax assistance to residents of all ages beginning **Wednesday, January 30 through Monday, April 15, 2019 (federal tax returns)**, at the Mason District Governmental Center, 6507 Columbia Pike in Annandale. File Virginia taxes before the deadline on **Wednesday, May 1**. AARP volunteers will provide walk-in service 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 18, 2019.** 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](http://www.aarp.org/taxaide), or call 1-888-227-7669. **Please Note:** A limited number of Mason Tax-aide appointments will be available on Tuesday and Wednesday mornings at 9:30, 10:30, and 11:30 a.m. To schedule an appointment, please **call 571-281-8532 after January 20, 2019**. You will receive a return call to confirm your appointment.

**Fairfax County Park Authority Updates Alcoholic Beverage Policy** – The Park Authority updated its "Policy 306 Alcohol Policy," to allow for expanded alcohol consumption under specific conditions. Alcoholic beverages still are prohibited in all parks and recreation areas unless the sale, use, consumption, or possession of alcohol on the properties are part of a Park Authority program, or approved in advance via a permitting process outlined in the new policy. Policy 306 Alcohol Policy comes in response to an increasing number of requests for alcohol use at park facilities for gatherings and events of all types. The new policy includes an eight-point policy statement governing the use of alcohol. Among the key points, an approved Park Authority Beverage Use Permit is required for any and all public or private rentals, events, and activities with alcohol on Park Authority property. Information about Policy 306 Alcohol Policy can be found online in the Park Policy Manual

at [www.fairfaxcounty.gov/parks/sites/parks/files/assets/documents/administrative/park-policy-manual.pdf](http://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/parks/sites/parks/files/assets/documents/administrative/park-policy-manual.pdf).

**Senior Citizen Tax Relief 2019 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 **Thursday and Friday, March 14 and 15, 2019, 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 2019 Tax Relief application form and answer questions. No appointment is necessary. Bring your 2018 tax returns or proof of 2018 gross income from all sources, and all asset information as of December 31, 2018. **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/](http://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/taxes/), or call 703-222-8234; TTY 703-222-7594.

**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 for road treatments. More than 2,500 VDOT crewmembers, in addition to contractors, are available for snow removal statewide.

#### **Highlights for Snow Season in 2019**

- **One stop for resources:** Visit [www.virginiadot.org/novaemergency](http://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](http://vdotplows.org).

#### **Stay Informed:**

- [@vadotnova](#) on Twitter;
- [virginiadot.org/novaemergency](http://virginiadot.org/novaemergency) for status updates, FAQs, and other resources;
- [511virginia.org](http://511virginia.org) for road conditions (local/statewide) and traffic cameras;
- [vdotplows.org](http://vdotplows.org) for neighborhood status and locations of plows; and
- [my.vdot.virginia.gov](http://my.vdot.virginia.gov) or 800-FOR-ROAD (367-7623) to report road hazards/road maintenance.
- [www.virginiadot.org/travel/snow.asp](http://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 fuel, wiper fluid, proper tires, medication, and an emergency car kit;
- Be patient: crews need time and room to work.

**Photographic Art Featured at Mason District Governmental Center** – The Art featured in the Mason District Governmental Center, 6507 Columbia Pike in Annandale, is a collection of photography by Chris Fedderson, who focuses on unusual compositions of natural areas in parks, arboretums, and botanic gardens. Fedderson is a Virginia-based photographer, who has worked in a variety of media for 30 years, and captures images featuring elements of nature that are often hidden in plain view. The artwork will be on display in the lobby from **Tuesday, January 2** until **Thursday, February 28, 2019**.

**Mason Matters! The Television Show** – Most children grow up in loving homes with parents and siblings who pull together to ensure that all family members succeed. Sadly, sometimes the family unit frays, for any number of reasons, and both parents and children are separated, sometimes for a short time, and sometimes forever. Media accounts of celebrities traveling to distant parts of the world to adopt a child often portray the process as global, rather than a local option for potential foster and adoptive parents. But you don't have to travel to exotic ports – there are many opportunities right here in Fairfax County. 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 Kamonya Omatete, program manager of the Foster Care and Adoption Program, and Oriane Eriksen, Acting Division Director, Children, Youth, and Families Division of the Department of Family Services. *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](http://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](mailto: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** – Does my dog need a dog license in Fairfax County? Yes. **All dogs four months of age or older must be licensed. Licenses are good for the calendar year in which they are issued, and expire on December 31.** New licenses must be purchased by **January 31**. All dog license tags are \$10. License tags are issued free of charge for service dogs that assist residents who are visually impaired, deaf, or need mobility assistance. For additional information, including how and where to obtain your license, visit [www.fairfaxcounty.gov/taxes/dog-license-information](http://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/taxes/dog-license-information). Taxpayers who have purchased license tags in the prior years, automatically will receive a yearly renewal application form in the mail during the month of November.