

News from...

SUPERVISOR PENNY GROSS



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

The Board Corner: Perspectives from Penny – As I write this column, the longest federal shutdown in history, is history! Hundreds of thousands of federal employees across the country, and their families, were, and are, affected, and the overall fiscal damage to communities still is unknown. In Fairfax County, which is home to thousands of career public servants, county programs and non-profit organizations ramped up to provide additional services for federal employees affected by the shutdown.

Furloughed federal workers, who were required to work, could ride the Fairfax Connector buses for free during the length of the shutdown. Passengers simply showed the bus driver a federal identification card with a picture. Residents also contacted the Department of Tax Administration (DTA) to set up payment plans for their personal property tax bills due on **February 15**. State law does not allow for waiver of penalties, so residents are urged to pay as much as they can, and DTA will work with impacted taxpayers to determine the best length of a payment plan. As the shutdown dragged on, the Board of Supervisors discussed adopting a resolution to extend the personal property due date by a reasonable period (not to exceed 90 days). That still may be appropriate, as unpaid federal workers try to re-establish credit and arrangements for missed payments during the shutdown. Simply telling people they are back on the payroll does nothing to remedy the 35 days of everyday living expenses that were missed during the shutdown.

Elsewhere in this newsletter is information about the "Stuff the Bus" campaign to replenish local food pantries with non-perishable food. You can donate on-site at participating grocery stores, or send a monetary donation to various faith and non-profit organizations of your choice. A lot of neighbors need our help; please be as generous as possible.

ACCA Food Pantry Donations Accepted at Supervisor Penny Gross' Office – To help meet increased demands on local food pantries, resulting from the federal government shutdown, **the Office of Mason District Supervisor Penny Gross will collect non-perishable foods for the ACCA** (Annandale Christian Community for Action) **Food Pantry through February 28, 2019**. Donations of unexpired canned goods – soups, fruits, and any kind of beans – pasta and rice, crackers, and cooking oil, are recommended. **Food donations may be placed in the marked boxes at the Supervisor's Office in the Mason District Governmental Center, 6507 Columbia Pike in Annandale. Residents needing food**, and other assistance, may call the **Fairfax County Coordinated Services Planning staff**

at 703-222-0880 to arrange food deliveries and other services. Thank you for your generous help to our neighbors in need.

Fairfax County Seeks Public Insight about Proposed Public Safety UAS/Drone Program – A comprehensive Public Safety Unmanned Aircraft Systems (UAS) Program is being developed by Fairfax County, and the public is invited to learn about the proposal and share their insight at one of six public information meetings that are scheduled throughout Fairfax County. The first meeting is scheduled for **Monday, February 4, 2019** (rescheduled from January 14), from 6:30 to 8:30 p.m. (**presentation at 7 p.m.**) in the Main Community Room of the Mason District Governmental Center, 6507 Columbia Pike in Annandale. Each public information meeting will include a static display of unmanned aircraft, followed by a presentation outlining the program. After the presentation, a question and answer session will be held with representatives from the Office of Emergency Management, the County Attorney's Office, the Police Department, and Fire and Rescue Department.

February 2019 Winter Leadership Series for Civic and HOA Leaders Features CERT Program – Supervisor Penny Gross is hosting a popular series of meetings for Mason District Civic Association and Home Owner Association leaders that feature presentations from various departments in Fairfax County. The **Winter 2019 Leadership Series schedule** 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 are held at **the Mason District Governmental Center, 6507 Columbia Pike in Annandale, from 10 a.m. to noon**. If you can't attend, please invite another member of your board. Reserve your seat by e-mail to Fran.Tunick@fairfaxcounty.gov, or call 703-256-7717.

Stuff the Bus and Help ACCA Help Feed Fairfax County Families – During the winter, community food pantries run low on non-perishable food to assist individuals and families in need within our community. 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)**. Additional "Stuff the Bus" events are scheduled **through Monday, February 18, 2019, 9:30 a.m. to 3:30 p.m.** at local grocery stores. For more information, and a list of donation sites, collection dates, and times, call 703-222-9764; TTY 711, or visit www.fairfaxcounty.gov/neighborhood-community-services/stuff-the-bus.

Shaping the Future Together: Fairfax County Strategic Plan – What should the future of Fairfax County look like? Fairfax County Government is beginning a strategic planning process with our community to shape the future together. Join a **Regional In-Person Community Conversation** between **February 13 – March 6, 2019**, take a five-question online survey, and share the survey/conversation invitation with neighbors, co-workers, family, and friends. **Need assistance to attend?** Arrangements for reasonable ADA accommodations, child care, transportation assistance, and interpretation services can be made by calling Amy Ordonez at 703-787-4962; TTY 711, or by e-mail at Amy.Ordonez@fairfaxcounty.gov. For more information, meeting dates registration, the online survey, and more, visit www.fairfaxcounty.gov/strategicplan.

Made in Fairfax: Small-Scale Production Featured at Upcoming Forum – Fairfax County is exploring the potential of small scale production businesses, such as textiles and beverages to 3D printing and craft products. A second "**Made in Fairfax Forum**" will be held on **Wednesday, February 20, 2019**, from 7 - 8:30 p.m. at the Fairfax County Government Center, Conference Room 9/10, 12000 Government Center Parkway in Fairfax. Findings will be presented from a six-month study about how creative entrepreneurs and the county can collaborate to support this innovative blend of economic and community development. To participate, visit <https://made-in-fairfax.eventbrite.com>. For more information, visit the Office of Community Revitalization website at www.fcrevit.org, send an e-mail to douglas.loescher@fairfaxcounty.gov, or call 703-324-9305; TTY 711.

Disposal of Unused/Expired Medications Available Year-Round – The Fairfax County Police Department has **NEW Prescription Medication Drug Take Back Boxes** at its **eight district stations** throughout Fairfax County, adding to the 12 other sites currently available in the county. Look for the big green box in the stations' lobbies. Guidance for the safe disposal of medicines is available at the Health Department's website www.fairfaxcounty.gov/health/drug-disposal. Questions? Contact the Police Department's Property and Evidence Section, Monday - Friday, 8 a.m. to 4 p.m., at 703-246-2786. Additional information and collection boxes statewide also can be found at <https://knowrxorg/>.

Land Use News – Land use items of interest feature bike lanes/road paving, and sidewalk connectivity projects:

- **POSTPONED - Road Paving and Bike Lanes Meeting** – FCDOT staff is **rescheduling** (from February 7 until the spring) a public information meeting about bike lanes in coordination with VDOT's 2019 Road Paving Program. When determined by VDOT, FCDOT staff will provide a new date and time for the meeting.
- **Sleepy Hollow Road Walkway Project** – The Sleepy Hollow Road Walkway Project is a county-funded pedestrian project that will provide a continuous walkway from Columbia Pike to Leesburg Pike. The project includes upgrades to crossing locations and completion of missing walkway segments near Dearborn Drive, Valley Brook Drive, Malbrook Drive, and from Marlo Drive to Aspen Lane. The revised project plan is expected to be complete by early February 2019, and it incorporates comments received from the public resulting in adjustments to some sidewalk and buffer sections, travel lane and parking lane widths, and removal of two retaining walls to preserve trees. A public information meeting will be scheduled in the coming months to present the revised project plan. For project updates, visit the website at www.fairfaxcounty.gov/transportation/projects/sleepy-hollow-walkway, or contact the design team at 703-877-5745.
- **North Beauregard Street at North Chambliss Street Intersection** – Originally recommended to eliminate the slip lane from North Chambliss Street to Beauregard Street, this intersection improvement project was revised to address pedestrian safety and mobility. The new project entails: extending the island and redesigning the taper length for the right turn into Shackelford Terrace to reduce the crossing distance for pedestrians; adding a sidewalk from Meeting House Way to the entrance of the Lincolnia Senior Center; and add directional signage. If allowed by VDOT, installation of a flashing beacon at the crosswalk, a Do Not Block Box sign and pavement markings at the Lincolnia Senior Center entrance, and traffic signal timing and phasing adjustments at North Beauregard Street and North Chambliss Street will be included.

Bailey's Crossroads Community Shelter's Hypothermia Program in Progress – The county's hypothermia program is in progress **through March 31, 2019**, thanks to partnerships with volunteers, churches, non-profit organizations, and individuals, who donate hot meals, breakfast items, beverages, and snacks. If you would like to donate meals, or help serve them, **contact Jon Nerdig**, volunteer coordinator at 703-820-7621, or jnerdig@newhopehousing.org. **Donations of coats and scarves (only) would be appreciated.** For more information, **contact Khristina Koontz** at kkooontz@newhopehousing.org, or call 703-820-7621, ext. 218. Information about Fairfax County's program is available at www.fairfaxcounty.gov/homeless/hypothermia-prevention-program, or call 703-324-9492. **If you see someone at risk, call 911.**

Tax Preparation Available in Mason District – AARP volunteers are providing free tax assistance **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 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, or call 1-888-227-7669.

VDOT Is Ready for Snow this Winter – The Virginia Department of Transportation (VDOT) has resources available during snow season, which include plow-tracking technology, and online resources for residents to use. More than 2,500 VDOT crewmembers, in addition to contractors, are available for snow removal statewide. 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](http://www.virginiadot.org/customer-service-center), [511](http://www.virginiadot.org/511), and [vdotplows.org](http://www.virginiadot.org/vdotplows.org).

Stay Informed:

- [@vadotnova](https://twitter.com/vadotnova) on Twitter;
- [virginiadot.org/novaemergency](http://www.virginiadot.org/novaemergency) for status updates, FAQs, and other resources;
- [511virginia.org](http://www.virginiadot.org/511) for road conditions (local/statewide) and traffic cameras;
- [vdotplows.org](http://www.virginiadot.org/vdotplows.org) for neighborhood status and locations of plows; and
- [my.vdot.virginia.gov/](http://www.virginiadot.org/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.

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 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. Foster and adoptive parents may be married couples, singles, empty nesters, with biological children of their own, or not. 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 Kamonya Omatete, program manager of the Department of Family Services' Foster Care and Adoption Program, and Oriane Eriksen, acting division director of the Children, Youth and Families Division in 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.

The Quick 411 – I have a U.S. flag that is faded and tattered. Is there a place to properly dispose of U.S. flags in Fairfax County? Yes. All Fairfax County Police stations accept U.S. flags and they are collected twice a year by Police Honor Guard for proper disposal. Additionally, flag disposal boxes now are located at the I-66 Transfer Station and I-95 Landfill Complex. For hours, directions, and additional information, visit www.fairfaxcounty.gov/news2/where-to-properly-dispose-of-american-flags-in-fairfax-county/. The American Legion also will collect flags and conduct a [Flag Retirement Ceremony](#) at its site.