



Greetings from the Occoquan District!

Summer is finally here and I wanted to take a moment to share some information with you and your family about a few things going on in our area.

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Old Bridge Road Pedestrian Improvements and Springwoods Drive Upgrade

As many of you know, we've been working over the past few years to improve pedestrian access along Old Bridge—our community's "Main Street". I'm pleased to inform you that at our April 6, 2010 meeting, the Board of County Supervisors unanimously passed a resolution appropriating proffer funds to pay for construction of a new section of sidewalk on the north side of Old Bridge between Mohican and Cricket Lane. This funding, combined with the state and Federal grant funding we have secured in past years, will allow us to finally construct this new section of sidewalk. If things go according to plan, we should see construction begin in the fall of 2011!

In addition to the pedestrian improvements along Old Bridge, the Board also appropriated proffer funds to upgrade the intersection of Springwoods and Old Bridge Road. Currently, there are two lanes on Springwoods and each of those lanes accommodates drivers wishing to turn left onto Old Bridge from Springwoods. In other words, from Springwoods you can turn left onto Old Bridge from either lane. As a result, those wishing to turn right from Springwoods onto Old Bridge must cue up with those wishing to turn left. This makes it nearly impossible to turn "right on red," even when westbound Old Bridge is clear because there are usually other cars wishing to turn left in the same lane.

To fix this problem, the County will be upgrading the intersection to add a right hand only turn lane from Springwoods onto westbound Old Bridge Road. Prior to VDOT installing safety measures, some drivers had actually been using the shoulder to accomplish the purpose. The proposed construction project will seek to reinforce and expand the capacity of this shoulder area, thereby creating a true right turn lane. This will promote a safer and more efficient traffic flow in this area. Construction for this upgrade will hopefully begin in the spring of 2011.

What Will the Future of Aging Look Like in Prince William County?

The future of aging ... what will it look like in Prince William County? By 2030, Virginia's population of people over the age of 65 is expected to double. Nearly 1 in 5 seniors will be in this age range. How will this impact our community? What does it mean for our government, our businesses, our neighbors?

On June 3, a panel of aging experts will be joined by representatives from business and government to tackle these questions and more. This forum event, the first of its kind for Prince

William County, will be hosted by Westminster at Lake Ridge (www.wlrva.org), a Continuing Care Retirement Community in Northern Virginia. It is free of charge and open to all.

“The big question we all face is *who decides?*” noted Glenn West, Executive Director of Westminster at Lake Ridge. “Who will decide how we in the Prince William County area prepare for the coming age wave? We’re honored to help the panelists kick off a conversation with the larger community and promote a commitment to high-quality services for aging Baby Boomers and seniors.”

Residents and business owners in Prince William County are invited to attend the event. The program is part of a nationwide initiative from the American Association of Homes & Services for the Aging. For More Information please call 703-496-3440.

Plant-A-Row for the Hungry from VCE Representative John Miller

Prince William County Master Gardener volunteers with Virginia Cooperative Extension (VCE) are doing their part to helping needy families. Volunteers are involved in a program called Plant-A-Row for the Hungry, a nationwide campaign developed by the Garden Writers Association of America to encourage local groups to serve the homeless and hungry.

The Plant-A Row for the Hungry efforts in Prince William County were established in 1998 by VCE Master Gardener volunteers. As originally envisioned, the idea was to ask gardeners who were growing vegetables for their families to grow an extra row of vegetables and donate it to the poor. Collection sites were established at several County fire stations. In 2000, after some modest success, the program evolved with volunteers asking for donations from vendors participating in farmers’ markets in Dale City and Manassas. Momentum began to build and in 2002 VCE- Prince William Master Gardeners won the Scotts Company’s “Good Neighbor Gardener of the Year Award” in a nationwide competition.

Today, the Plant-A-Row program is still growing. In our County, the farmer’s markets operate on Thursdays and Saturdays in Manassas and on Sundays in Dale City. At the close of each market event, Master Gardeners approach the vendors and ask for donations of leftover produce. Most agree to let Master Gardeners load containers directly from vendors’ tables. The containers are then loaded into personal vehicles and delivered directly to the Action In Community Through Service (ACTS) food pantry in Dumfries and the SERVE food pantry in Manassas. These two worthy organizations then redistribute fresh produce to poor families living in our county. Last year over 96,300 pounds of produce was donated along with over 700 hours of volunteer time! The market value of this produce, that would otherwise be wasted, is \$154, 000! The next time you see a lot of frantic activity going on at the closing of a farmer’s market, you will know that Master Gardeners are busy with this important project.

Attention Teens: No Car? No Problem

The OmniLink Teen Summer Pass allows you to hang with friends at the local parks and recreation centers, get a summer job, grab movie, shop at the mall, visit the library and more. Get unlimited rides on OmniLink buses and the Cross County Connector between June 1 and September 4, 2010 for just \$30.

Buy your Teen Pass May 17 – August 6, 2010 at the PRTC Transit Center (M-F, 7 am to 7 pm and June 5 and June 12 from noon to 4 pm) or at the Manassas Mall food court on these Saturdays: June 5, 12 and 19 from noon to 4 p.m.

Want more information? Call PRTC at (703) 730-6664 or check us out at www.PRTCtransit.org

Is it Too Hot to Leave Your Pet in the Car? from the Prince William County Police Department

As spring turns into summer and the temperatures soar, the Department's Animal Control Bureau reminds residents to not leave pets unattended in vehicles for even short periods of time.

The number of unattended pets left in cars each spring and summer is unacceptable because pets, like children, are particularly sensitive to heat. In a closed car high temperatures can, *and will*, be fatal to your pets.

Research shows that on an 80-degree day the temperature inside a closed vehicle can reach up to 120 degrees, or higher, in a matter of *minutes*. At such high temperatures animals can become overheated, displaying symptoms such as brain damage, heat stroke and/or suffocation— and death can occur. An animal shouldn't be kept in a car when external temperatures exceed 80 degrees Fahrenheit.

If an animal in a vehicle appears to be suffering, the pet's owner can be fined up to \$2,500 and/or serve up to 12 months of jail time for cruelty to animals under the "deprives any animal of necessary food, drink, shelter, or emergency veterinary treatment" section of the County Code.

The Animal Control Bureau suggests that residents and visitors never leave a pet in a parked vehicle unattended. No errand, even a short one, should cause a pet to suffer from heat exhaustion. Be kind to your pets and leave them at home rather than leave them unattended in a hot vehicle.

If you encounter a pet that appears to be in distress in a parked car, please contact 9-1-1 for immediate assistance. Prince William County wishes you a safe summer with your pets!

Thanks for reading our May E-Update! As always, if we can ever be of service to you, please do not hesitate to contact us.

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