



# THE GAINESVILLE EXPRESS



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**Supervisor John T. Stirrup**  
**Gainesville District**

**June 2008**  
*Volume 19*

Dear Gainesville Resident,

The Virginia General Assembly has reconvened this week in Richmond for a special session to concentrate on transportation funding.

The Governor is proposing to raise about \$1 billion a year through an increase in the motor vehicle sales tax, higher registration fees and a one-cent rise in the sales tax for projects in Northern Virginia and Hampton Roads. Legislators' bills will be available at: <http://leg1.state.va.us/cgi-bin/legp504.exe?083+mbr+H57C>. You can also contact the Senate bills and information line at (804) 698-7410 and House of Delegates bills and information line at (804) 698-7150 for a status of a bill. If you would like to contact your representative, click below to learn how to contact your state representatives: <http://conview.state.va.us/whosmy.nsf/main?openform>.

On the local level I have good news to report on the Route 55 and Gallaher intersection. The new traffic signal is scheduled to flash this week and is expected to be fully operational on June 26<sup>th</sup>.

Please feel free to contact my office at by phone at (703) 792-6195 or my email at [Gainesville@pwcgov.org](mailto:Gainesville@pwcgov.org).

Sincerely,

John T. Stirrup  
Supervisor  
Gainesville District

### **Quarterly Town Hall Meeting Re-Cap**

Supervisor Stirrup welcomed everyone to his eighteenth quarterly town hall meeting on May 22, 2008 at Stonewall Middle School and spoke on three challenges in PWC:

1. Rule of Law Resolution was implemented March 3, 2008. The resolution has been effective; there has been a reduction in homes used as dorms, wait at emergency room is easier, reduction of 800 plus students in PWC schools, 600 inmates have been turned over to ICE. There is a lot of misinformation about the resolution and a distortion in media reports.
2. Budget. Very difficult decisions had to be made due to the downturn in the economy. We had to concentrate on the County's core mission of public safety, education and transportation. The 2008 tax rate increase of \$ .97 per \$100 of real estate property value will amount to about a

\$160 increase per year on property tax. The downward trend is predicted to continue for about three quarters.

3. Virginia House Bill 3202 authorizes Northern Virginia to raise revenue through the Northern Virginia Transportation Authority (NVTA). The Virginia Supreme Court ruled that the authority to impose taxes and fees granted by the General Assembly was unconstitutional. Governor Kaine signed House Bill 1578 to establish procedures for the return of taxes and fees collected by NVTA. Governor Kaine has called for a special session of the General Assembly to address transportation on June 23, 2008.

Supervisor Stirrup introduced panel:

1. Officer Melissa Garza from PWC Police Crime Prevention Unit.
2. Denise Sherlock, Chief Property Code Inspector in the Neighborhood Services Division of Public Works.
3. Brenda Evans, Executive Director of the Prince William Clean Community Council.
4. Lt. Gregory Smith, Prince William County Police Department.
5. Ross Horton, County Attorney for Prince William County.

### **Officer Melissa Garza**

There are 5 officers in the Crime Prevention Unit. Neighborhood Watch is a service of the Prince William County Police Department available to all Prince William County neighborhoods. To participate, contact the Crime Prevention Unit at 703-792-7270, or e-mail the Unit at [crimeprevention@pwcgov.org](mailto:crimeprevention@pwcgov.org), and the Neighborhood Watch Coordinator will mail you a package of information including a book on the role of the Neighborhood Watch Citizen Coordinator. Neighborhood Watch participants work with a police coordinator to set up training meetings. Citizens are trained in what to watch for; what to be suspicious of; identity theft; what you can do to protect yourself against fraud. Once the training is completed, the signs will go up, and your neighborhood will become a part of the Neighborhood Watch program in Prince William County. You are our eyes and ears. Neighborhood Watch neighborhoods are believed to be 20 times safer than those areas without the program.

The National Night Out is August 2, 2008. This County-wide event will have fun for the entire family and will feature food, games, safety exhibits and demonstrations. The event is sponsored by the Prince William County Police Department and the Prince William Crime Prevention Council.

### **Denise Sherlock**

Neighborhood Services assists citizens in an effort to help neighborhoods look their best. Property Code Enforcement, a branch of the Neighborhood Services Division, helps by enforcing codes and ordinances. Typical violations include:

- Zoning Ordinance violations
- Building maintenance code violations
- Inoperable vehicles on private property
- Commercial vehicles
- Spot Blight
- Illegal signs
- Tall grass and weeds
- Dump heap/trash storage
- Illegal accessory structures
- Illegal business
- Over occupancy
- Outside storage of items in the public view

Citizens may report a concern or possible violation by phone at 703-792-7018, or use the online [Complaint Form for Property Violations](#). Please provide as much information as possible (i.e. address, where in yard, make and model of vehicle, normal time of day that the possible violation can be documented).

Inoperable vehicles on the public streets should be reported to the Prince William County Police non-emergency number at 703-792-6500.

Public Works has hired temporary help for the increased tall grass/weed violations. They may not be able to do as many sign sweeps because of the increase in tall grass violations.

### **Brenda Evans**

The Theme for Prince William Clean Community Council is “Start at Home.” Clean Community Council gets 75% of its funding from Prince William County. The Council’s goal is to keep Prince William County clean and safe and be a wonderful place to come home to. Groups or individuals can participate in the “Adopt-A-Spot Program,” “Adopt-A-School Program,” or “Adopt-Your-Neighborhood Program.” The purpose of the “Adopt-A-Spot Program” is to encourage citizens to take responsibility for litter and maintenance. Participants choose a location from the Council’s list of “spots” and agree to clean their spot once a year. Participants can remove popsicle signs from their spot. *Ross Horton* reported the litter crew picks up thousands of signs and said judges have been good about imposing fines. *Ross Horton* does not encourage removing popsicle signs unless you have adopted the spot; the County has an agreement with VDOT to remove illegal signs. *Lt. Smith* said the police cite people putting up signs when they catch them; it’s a misdemeanor offense. Adopt-A-School started in 2006 and participation is for a period of one school year. Adopt-Your-Neighborhood encourages being a good steward in the neighborhood. All Prince William County communities are eligible to participate in the program.

The Clean Community Council encourages abating graffiti ASAP. Always report graffiti to the Prince William County Police Department, 703-792-6500. The police department sends graffiti reports to the Clean Community Council. The Council contacts property owners/victims to offer removal assistance and the Council reports removal to the police department. There were 400 graffiti reports in July 2007. About 25% of graffiti incidents are gang related.

Citizens can volunteer to participate in the “Clean Shopping Center Program” by calling 703-792-6272. Volunteers anonymously survey an assigned center four times a year and report the results to the Council each time the center is surveyed.

Brenda invited everyone to the Prince William Clean Community Council 2<sup>nd</sup> annual Community Appreciation Cookout at Lake Ridge Park 11:30 AM – 3:30 PM June 28. Bring family and neighbors for food, music, fun, games, contests, volunteer recognition and clean shopping center awards presentation. *Patty Mattes* asked if they could do something at the Western end of the County; Brenda said she would see what the Council could do.

### **Question & Answer Session**

·A citizen asked Brenda who is responsible for dead animals on the road; Brenda said it is the Virginia Department of Transportation (VDOT). *Lt. Smith* said to report it to the police and the police will report it to VDOT—police department get good response from VDOT.

·A citizen asked about vendors and solicitors wanting to sell security systems. *Lt. Smith* said vendors should have an itinerate vendors license. Call the police non emergency number, 703-792-6500, to report solicitors wanting to inspect your home for a security system.

·A citizen asked when people go to closing, can they be required to sign an acknowledgement of number of kitchens and that they won’t violate the law? *Ross Horton*—no; if we can prove overcrowding we can take action. Call property code enforcement with specific address.

·A citizen asked the condition of Officer Harrover and questioned activity at 7 – 11 on Coverstone Drive. Lt. Smith reported they have made checks. Citizens can call the police department non emergency number to report loitering. The trespassing law can be used if business backs it up.

·A citizen thanked the police for their help with neighborhood watch.

·A question was asked about the policy for vehicles without decals. Lt. Smith said to report it to the police.

·Many questions were asked pertaining to unwanted delivery of newspapers, particularly The Pulse Newspaper. Ross Horton supplied the following information and suggestions:

- The First Amendment of the U.S. Constitution affords strong protection to the press and severely limits the County's authority to stop delivery of unwanted newspapers.
- However, a citizen has no such limits, because the First Amendment only restricts the actions of governments, not citizens.
- Citizens can send a written request to the newspaper by certified mail stating specifically that he does not wish to have the paper delivered and that if the delivery continues, then the citizen will consider the delivery to be both trespassing and littering.
- If the paper nevertheless continues to be delivered, the citizen can file a littering complaint and a trespassing complaint with the magistrate.
- The Prince William County Code prohibitions on littering are found in Sections 22-145 through 22-155. The trespassing statutes are found in Prince William County Code Sections 16-40 and 16-41.
- Citizens frequently express frustration that they are unable to contact a newspapers' circulation department. The *Examiner's* circulation department can be reached at (703) 738-0762. In addition, the *Examiner* has a web page, <http://www.examiner.com/delivery> that can be used to cancel delivery of the newspaper, although I cannot vouch for its effectiveness. The circulation director for the *PW Pulse* can be reached at (703) 878-8038.



*From left to right: Denise Sherlock, Supervisor Stirrup, Brenda Evans, Lt. Gregory Smith and Ross Horton Supervisor Stirrup's Quarterly Town Hall Meeting at Stonewall Middle School, May 22, 2008*

## **UPCOMING EVENTS:**

### **Board of County Supervisors (BOCS) Meetings**

The BOCS will hold meetings June 24th, July 8th, 15th, & 22nd and August 5th starting at 2:00 p.m. in the Board Chambers at the McCoart Building located at 1 County Complex Court in Woodbridge. Meetings are broadcast live on Comcast Cable Channel 23, and then re-broadcast in their entirety at 7:30 p.m. on the Wednesday, Thursday and Friday following the Tuesday Board meeting and at 10 a.m. on Saturdays and Sundays. To check the meeting schedule and view the current agenda, visit: [PWC - Board Of County Supervisors \(BOCS\)](#)

### **Free Financial Counseling**

Virginia Cooperative Extension's Financial Education Program is offering free and confidential financial counseling.

You can sign up for a free, confidential, personal financial assessment to receive specific information tailored to meet your particular needs. Financial counseling can help enhance or improve most financial situations – from relatively healthy to more immediate and urgent concerns. The one-on-one assessments are free, but registration is required.

- Thursdays – BY APPOINTMENT - Free & Confidential Financial Counseling:  
Dr. A.J. Ferlazzo Building and Sudley North Government Center from 7-8:30 p.m.

For more information about Financial Education call 703-792-6287. The complete schedule of classes and other services is available at <http://www.pwcgov.org/vce/FinEd>.

### **Cooling Assistance Program Begins June 16**

Prince William County's Cooling Assistance Program (facilitated by the Department of Social Services) will begin Monday, June 16, 2008, and continue through Friday, August 15, 2008.

The program assists low income County residents with the purchase or repair of cooling equipment and/or payment for electricity to operate cooling equipment.

Applications may be obtained by calling 703-792-5915 or picked up at Prince William County Department of Social Services at 7987 Ashton Ave., Suite 200, Manassas, VA 20109 or 15941 Donald Curtis Dr., Suite 180, Woodbridge, VA 22191. The deadline for all applications is Friday, August 15, 2008. For more information about the program, please call 703-792-5915 or 703-792-7500.

## **Did you know?**

### **Disaster Preparedness**

The Prince William Chapter of the American Red Cross urges you to take three basic preparedness actions to get "Red Cross Ready" in the event of a disaster such as a hurricane, high winds, flooding or tornado. First, get a kit, next make a plan and lastly be informed. For more information regarding disaster preparedness and first aid kits, call 703-368-4511 or visit [www.pwarc.org](http://www.pwarc.org).

### **Crime Alert: Vacant Buildings**

Due to the number of reports of persons entering vacant homes and commercial buildings, the Prince William County Police Department Crime Prevention Unit urges you to keep an eye on such homes in your neighborhood. Report any suspicious or unusual activity by calling the non-emergency number at 703-792-6500.

## Recent Happenings in Gainesville

### Supervisor Stirrup Appointed To National Transportation Committee

Supervisor Stirrup is a member of the National Multi-Modal Transportation Steering Committee. The goal of this committee is to elevate the cause of transportation infrastructure in our country, pulling together people from across all modes and all regions in the United States to assess the needs of the present and future transportation industry and to begin to promote innovative funding options. He recently traveled to host city Jacksonville, Florida where the two day meeting was held in the City's historic Chambers.

### Supervisor Stirrup Receives Thank You Gifts:



Gabrielle Widawski presented Supervisor Stirrup with a gift as a thank you for his contribution to the Battlefield High School's Chorus trip to Europe. Supervisor Stirrup's Quarterly Town Hall Meeting at Stonewall Middle School, May 22, 2008



*Stonewall Middle School's Dance Team presented Supervisor Stirrup with a gift for his contribution which helped with their attendance at Kings Dominion's Dance Competition. The Dance Team performed their first place dance routine at Supervisor Stirrup's Quarterly Town Hall Meeting at Stonewall Middle School, May 22, 2008.*

## Scott Chambers Rides Across United States



*Scott Chambers*

Scott Chambers, Senior Aide to Supervisor Stirrup, is riding his bike from California to Virginia. The last we heard, he had just crossed the Sierra Nevada Mountains.

### **Newsletter Subscribe/Unsubscribe**

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