

# The Virginia Hills Echo



Circulation 900

Volume 20, No. 3

June 2010

## **VHCA to Decide the Future of the Virginia Hills Sign Lighting at the June Meeting**

Sometime in March, after the snow melted, the Virginia Hills sign on Telegraph Road was vandalized for the second time in four years. A vandal or vandals used a heavy object to break the Plexiglas covers for the lights in the sign and bend the cover frames as well as break the bulbs and damage the bulb sockets. Additionally, the electric box that contains the electric eye which turns the sign on at dusk and off at dawn was damaged. As a result, the sign will require major repair.

President Boulter has been investigating for some years how the sign might be made vandal-proof. While police from the Mount Vernon Station will be paying more attention to the sign area as they make their rounds, it is clear that the current setup is too vulnerable to damage to maintain.

While the search for a better solution is ongoing, it may be that the only solution is a light on a pole aimed to shine down on the sign without shining into windows of nearby homes. This would be an expensive solution for a number of reasons.

Members at the meeting will be asked to decide whether the lighting for the sign should be repaired, replaced, or permanently abandoned. Cost of lighting the sign is about \$14 per month, paid by VHCA.

Preliminary discussion in the April meeting centered on whether VHCA should "allow the vandals to win" and whether VHCA should sink more money into what appears to be a lost or difficult cause. Ideas from the membership will be welcome at the June meeting.

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## **VHCA To Elect Officers at Annual June Meeting**

The Virginia Hills Citizens Association will elect its officers for 2010-2012 at the June 15th meeting (see below). All VHCA members in good standing are eligible to vote.

The current VHCA Executive Committee will offer the following nominations:

President	Ralph Zecca
Vice-President	No nomination
Secretary	Debbie Bodlander
Treasurer	Donna Boulter
Membership Director	No nomination
Echo Editor	Doug Boulter

Members may also make nominations from the floor at the meeting.

VHCA currently has no candidates for vice president and membership chair, and hopes volunteers will step forward. Duties of these offices are as follows:

the Vice President serves as president when the president is unavailable and takes on special projects as designated by the president.

the Membership Director sends out annual membership solicitations, maintains the membership data base (currently in Excel), issues membership cards, and recommends the plan for the annual membership campaign to the executive committee.

### ***Virginia Hills Citizens Association Meeting***

***Tuesday, June 15th – 7:30 PM  
Old Virginia Hills School, Diana Lane***

***Speaker: Amy Wilson,  
Woodrow Wilson Bridge Project***

***Topic: Telegraph Road Interchange and  
Finishing the Bridge Project***

## Crimes Against Vehicles in Virginia Hills

Fairfax County police report that crime is experiencing its usual rise for the spring and early summer. Particularly common are break-ins and vandalism to cars, both of which occurred recently in Virginia Hills. Police ask that you report all crime to them; establishing a pattern is often key to catching the thieves/vandals.

The Mount Vernon Station offers the following tips for deterring thefts:

- Do not leave valuables in your vehicle. Remove portable GPS units from the dashboard, including the cradle. Do not simply place it in the glove box or under the seat.
- Keep a supply of moist towelettes to clean the area of the windshield marked by the GPS suction cup.
- Do not leave laptop computers, cameras, satellite radios or cellular telephones in your vehicle.
- Lock all doors and close windows when leaving the car, even if it is only for a short time.
- Try to park the vehicle in a well-lit, busy area.
- Record the serial numbers to all electronics such as GPS, radios, etc.

Police also warn about gangs targeting vehicle wheels, particularly custom or optional wheels. Many of these wheels (also called rims) may cost over \$1000 for a set of four. Thieves identify a vehicle with valuable rims and strike with a crew at night, quickly jacking up the car onto blocks and removing the rims within a few minutes. While wheel locks offer some deterrent, police note that owners usually leave the "key" in the glove compartment, and thieves can break a window, and have the key almost instantly. Do not leave the key in an obvious place in the interior of the car.

To deter such thefts, police advise parking a car with valuable rims in a garage or in the driveway close to the house instead of on the street. If you must park on the street or in a lot, park in a well lit spot that can be seen from nearby homes and gets a lot of foot traffic.

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Editor	Doug Boulter
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Back page	\$90	Quarter page	\$35
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### Virginia Hills Citizens Association Officers 2009-2010

President  
Vice President  
Treasurer  
Secretary  
Membership  
Echo Editor

Doug Boulter  
Ralph Zecca  
Vacant  
Vacant  
Vacant  
Doug Boulter

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[Echo@virginiahills.org](mailto:Echo@virginiahills.org)

## Members for the Current 2009 -2010 Year Added Since April 1st.

George & Evelyn Beyer, Aaron & Laura Kahn, Jim &  
Kathy Tucker, Warren Suyderhoud.

### 2009-2010 Membership

**Mail to: VHCA, P.O. Box 10837, Alexandria, VA  
22310**

I'd (We'd) like to join / renew my (our) membership  
in the Virginia Hills Citizens Association. Enclosed  
are the annual membership dues of \$7.00 per  
household. I am also including a contribution in the  
amount of  
\$ \_\_\_\_\_.

Name (s) \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_

Zip Code \_\_\_\_\_

Phone \_\_\_\_\_

E-mail \_\_\_\_\_

**Comments:** \_\_\_\_\_

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## Free Summer Concerts in Lee District Park

### June

- 16 Ruthie & the Wranglers (Roots/Rock)
- 23 Machaya (Klezmer)
- 30 Tom Paxton (Folk)

### July

- 07 Annandale Brass Ensemble (Patriotic Music)
- 14 Holy Ghost Tent Revival (Indie Americana)
- 21 King Teddy (Swing)
- 28 David Bach Consort (Jazz)

### August

- 04 Mama Jama (Reggae/Caribbean)
- 11 The Nighthawks (American Roots Music)
- 18 Bill Emerson & Sweet Dixie (Bluegrass)
- 25 Sock Monkeys (Rock&Roll/cover band)

Concerts begin at 7:30 PM and are free. Due to  
construction, this year the concerts will be held on the far  
side of the Rec Center (near the basketball court) where  
the County's Showmobile portable stage will be set up.  
Bring your lawn chairs and blankets.

### Janet's Java Closed

VHCA has learned from nearby merchants that long-time  
sponsor Janet's Java has closed and is out of business.  
It is believed that another coffee shop may located into  
the existing space.

VHCA restaurant sponsors offer VHCA members (who  
present a membership card) agreed discounts. Current  
sponsors, whose ads appear below, are Mike's Italian  
Restaurant on Richmond Highway and Royal Restaurant  
in Old Town. Sponsors receive free ads in the *Echo*.

If you patronize an owner-operated restaurant (chain  
restaurants generally do not take on such sponsorship  
agreements) and would like to see them become a  
sponsor, ask the owner or management if they might  
consider such an agreement. If they are interested,  
please let us know and a VHCA representative will  
contact them.

## Royal Restaurant

**734 N. St. Asaph St.  
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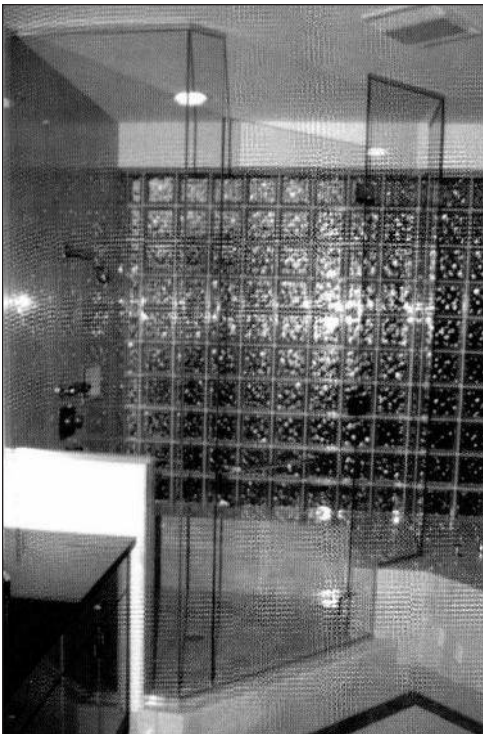
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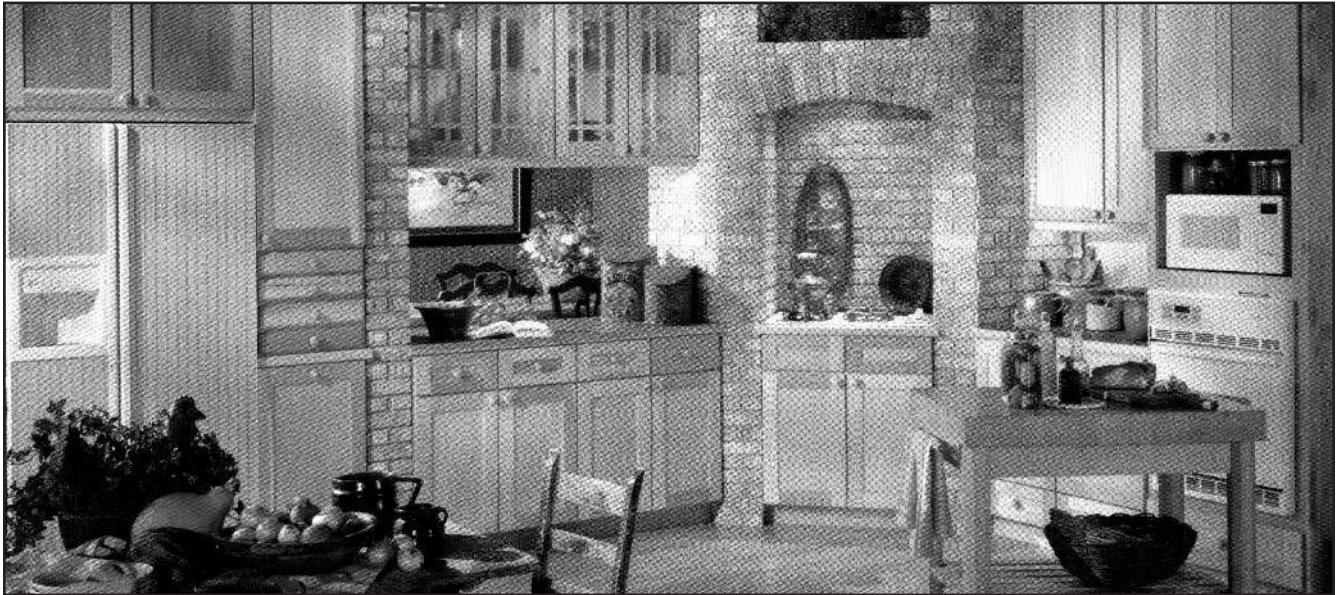
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## **DPWES Conducts Sanitary Sewer Survey**

By this time, most residents of Virginia Hills should have received a visit from members of the Wastewater Division of the County Department of Public Works and Environmental Services (DPWES).

The Wastewater Division is responsible for the sanitary sewers in the County. Sanitary sewers take the runoff from homes and commercial buildings of sewage and "graywater," from showers, tubs, sinks, and washers. The County also maintains a separate system for stormwater, the runoff that results from rain, snow, or groundwater. The two systems don't share any pipes. Storm water goes untreated into streams, rivers, and ultimately the Chesapeake Bay, while wastewater is treated at treatment plants.

While both systems are expensive to build and maintain, wastewater is far more so due to the need for the treatment plants. Under current environmental thinking, stormwater is best allowed to infiltrate back into the ground before it needs to be collected.

Announced by letter to all residents during the winter, the visits were designed to investigate the extent to which homeowners or occupants were putting stormwater into the wastewater system by doing the following:

Draining roof gutter downspouts into the sanitary sewer system or "areaway" drains (drains outside along the perimeter of the house) into the sanitary sewer.

Draining basement sump pumps into basement floor drains and therefore into the sanitary sewer system.

Tapping into the sanitary sewer system by removing the cleanout plug in the large vertical drain line in the basement and running a line into that opening.

Draining air conditioner drain lines into basement floor drains.

According to Greg Rogers, head of the Wastewater Division, the County is not looking to punish homeowners, but is seeking to reduce the need to build more expensive capacity in its sanitary sewer system. It hopes to determine the extent of the problem and to obtain funds to perform some of the fixes. Until this survey, conducted in selected County neighborhoods, the extent of the problem was purely a guess.

VHCA encourages homeowners to eliminate these conditions. Rainwater in gutters, if drained into the sanitary sewer, might cause backups due to all the leaves and other debris coming off the roof. Sump pumps draining into floor drains might easily back up and flood the basement if the sewer were to become clogged. VHCA does not see a need to remediate air conditioner drains which drain into basement floor drains; an air conditioner produces only about five gallons of condensate over the course of the day, the amount that would come out of a downspout in a minute during a heavy rain. VHCA notes that it is never a good idea to open a cleanout plug unless you do need to have your sewer pipe cleaned.

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## **Message from Supervisor McKay: \$10 Million Breakthrough in Telegraph Road Widening**

VDOT's worsening financial situation has been bad news for commuters on Telegraph Road. With BRAC implementation only a year and a half away, we couldn't wait any longer to do something about the severe congestion on the section of Telegraph Road between South Van Dorn Street and South Kings Highway.

At the April 27 Board of Supervisors meeting, the BOS voted unanimously to fund the widening of this short 1,500-foot section of the roadway. (As roads are still a state responsibility, VDOT has agreed to design, acquire the right-of-way, and build the section.) With 13,000 additional BRAC employees (4,500 to Fort Belvoir and 8,500 to the EPG) relocating to this section of the County, inaction was not an option.

Funding for this project comes from Fairfax County through \$8.5 million in 2007 BRAC Transportation Bond funds and \$1.5 million in C&I funds. There are still a number of steps before construction can begin, from environmental review to right-of-way acquisition. Citizen information meetings are planned for this summer with a public hearing in late September. I wish the process were quicker but VDOT has assured us that it will fast track the project.

In tough fiscal times I am glad we could find the necessary funding for this key road project. I cannot think of a project that provides a better bang for our buck. This relatively small road project will make a huge contribution to unclogging a Telegraph Road bottleneck and it's long overdue.

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### Recent Virginia Hills Real Estate Market Activity

Status	Style	Address	BR	FB	HB	List \$	Close \$	Bsmt	Gar
ACTIVE	Rambler	6403 WILCOX CT	3	1	1	\$389,000		Yes	
ACTIVE	Rambler	6513 ENFIELD DR	3	2	0	\$299,900		No	
ACTIVE	Rambler	3703 HEATHER CT	3	2	0	\$379,999		Yes	
ACTIVE	Other	6615 BERKSHIRE DR	3	2	0	\$269,900		Yes	1
CNTG/NO KO	Rambler	6507 DORSET DR	3	2	0	\$219,900		Yes	
CNTG/NO KO	Rambler	6611 THE PARKWAY	4	3	0	\$396,500		Yes	
CNTG/NO KO	Cape Cod	6214 SANDLIN CT	4	2	0	\$250,000		Yes	
CNTG/KO	Colonial	6114 ALGONA CT	4	2	0	\$225,000		Yes	
CONTRACT	Rambler	3709 AUSTIN AVE	3	2	0	\$250,000		Yes	
CONTRACT	Rambler	3601 OAKWOOD LN	4	2	0	\$389,000		Yes	
CONTRACT	Split Level	3600 OAKWOOD LN	4	2	1	\$265,000		Yes	
CONTRACT	Rambler	3607 AUSTIN AVE	3	2	0	\$210,900		Yes	
SOLD	Rambler	6524 VIRGINIA HILLS AVE	3	2	0	\$419,900	\$408,000	No	
SOLD	Raised Rambler	6502 DORSET DR	4	2	0	\$247,000	\$270,000	Yes	
SOLD	Raised Rambler	6307 PROSPECT TER	5	2	0	\$349,000	\$345,000	Yes	
SOLD	Rambler	3704 AUSTIN AVE	5	2	0	\$260,000	\$240,000	Yes	2
WITHDRN	Rambler	6507 ENFIELD DR	5	3	0	\$500,000		No	1
WITHDRN	Rambler	3704 TRIGGER CT	3	1	0	\$250,000		Yes	
WITHDRN	Rambler	6411 GENTELE CT	4	2	0	\$399,999		Yes	
WITHDRN	Raised Rambler	6104 PAULONIA RD	3	2	0	\$250,000		Yes	

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