



The COLUMNS



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HELPING IN THE AFTERMATH OF HURRICANE HARVEY

by **LOUISE TURTON**

Most of us, when hearing about a devastating natural disaster such as a hurricane, tornado or earthquake, wish we could take part in providing aid. Our innate desire is to help with the human needs that follow these types of disasters and provide immediate relief to those affected.



Larry and Melinda Clapp (left) and Bob and Louise Turton in Houston, Texas.

My husband Bob and I, along with our friends Larry and Melinda Clapp, all Museum District residents, were given the opportunity to do just that by helping residents of Houston, Texas after Hurricane Harvey swept through that city. We are all members of Ironbridge Church in Chesterfield which provided travel to Houston and linked us up with a non-profit called Eight Days of Hope (8DOH).

8DOH exists to demonstrate the love and hope of Jesus Christ by serving those in need. They typically partner with a local church in a devastated community and set up a base camp for receiving, housing and feeding hundreds of volunteers from all over the US who come to be

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PRESIDENT'S COLUMN

DEAR NEIGHBORS,

I am honored to serve you as the 2018 president of the Museum District Association. Like my fellow MDA board members and those of you who support the MDA, I love this neighborhood. I couldn't wish for a more charming, walkable, livable community than ours and I am thrilled to be able to contribute to it in this way.

As a 12-year resident of the neighborhood, I have been active with the MDA for several years and have served on the board since January 2014. In my role as chair of the MDA's zoning and land use committee, I worked with residents and developers as they were making investments in their properties significant enough to require special permission from the city. It was our role to ensure the neighborhood benefitted from only quality, appropriate development that would bring lasting positive benefits to the Museum District. We did this by drawing on the time and expertise of neighborhood volunteers, partnering closely with the relevant city staff and facilitating the efforts of individuals wishing to contribute to the neighborhood.

This is the same approach I would like to bring to my role as president. I'm consistently impressed with the quality of the individuals on our board and those who assist the MDA in other roles, such as our wonderful house tour and newsletter committees (I mean how great is this edition of *The Columns* new look and layout!). Of the many terrific things that my predecessor -- the wonderful MA Powers -- did during her two years as MDA president, building up our board and committees may be her greatest contribution.

I want to continue this positive momentum and so I ask you to consider participating with the MDA in some capacity this year. While we will be keeping you up to date on volunteer opportunities through this newsletter and weekly emails, I encourage you to contact us with your ideas on ways that you would like to improve our neighborhood and how we can work together to make that happen. I want the MDA to be a vehicle for channeling your energies and passions for improving our community into reality.

One thing I'm passionate about is our urban forest. The trees in our neighborhood add to the Museum District's character, providing beauty for residents to enjoy and refuge for wildlife. In addition, they provide the very practical benefits of improved air quality, increased property value and natural shade, which can help reduce summertime air conditioning costs.

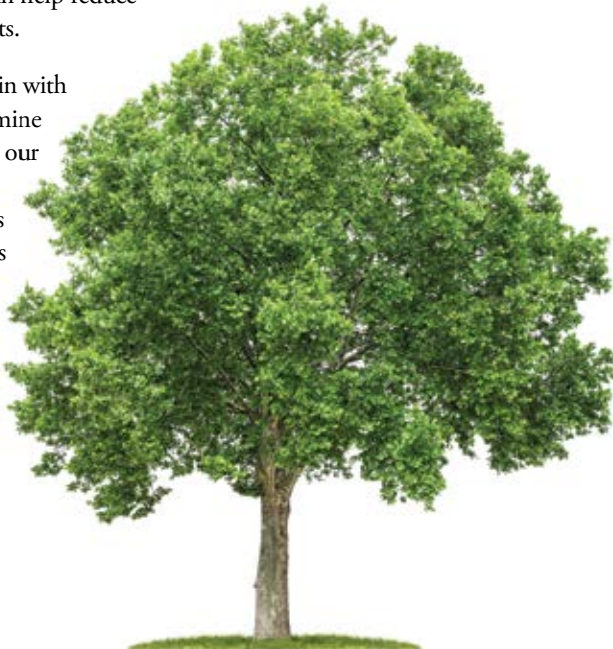
Every new MDA president comes in with a goal or a legacy in mind. I want mine to be an increased appreciation for our urban forest and a significant increase in the number of new trees planted in our neighborhood. Just as politicians in past have promised "a chicken in every pot," my commitment to you as your 2018 MDA president is "a tree in every well." This spring we will be launching a new initiative to partner with our residents to make that happen -- so stay tuned!

*Sincerely,
Stephen Versen*



**STEPHEN
VERSEN**

*2018 MDA
Board President*



MUSEUM DISTRICT ASSOCIATION
Founded 1964
PO Box 7186 • Richmond, Virginia 23221
804-410-1632 • museumdistrict.org



The mission of the Museum District Association is to unite, protect and advance the interests of the neighborhood in order to realize its potential and improve the quality of life in the neighborhood and community.

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

- President** **Stephen Versen**
MDApresident@museumdistrict.org
- Past-President** **MA Powers**
- Treasurer** **Karen Redford**
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- Secretary** **Sharon Considine**
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- Code Enforcement** **Debbie Kearns**
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- Environment** **Matt Hogan**
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- Museum District**
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COMMITTEE MEMBERS

- House Tour** **Karen Lebo**
MDAhousetour@museumdistrict.org
- Newsletter** **Liz Bryant and
Scott Cannady**
MDAnewsletter@museumdistrict.org
- Newsletter Ads** **Steve Jones**
MDAnewsletterads@museumdistrict.org

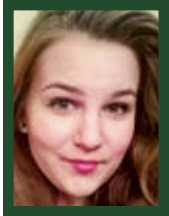
To reach any of our board members by phone, please call 804-410-1632 and leave a message stating the person you wish to reach.

The board meets at 7 p.m. on the third Monday of most months at All Saints Presbyterian on Grove Avenue. If you would like to make a presentation to the board, please email or call the president.

MDA BOARD OF DIRECTORS WELCOMES TWO NEW MEMBERS



The Museum District Association is pleased to announce the addition of **Debbie Kearns** to the position of code enforcement. Debbie is a 14-year resident of Chesterfield, VA, who recently moved to Grace St. with her husband Tom and son Joseph. As a retired New York City police officer, Debbie is committed to bringing her experience navigating policies and procedures to our city, with a view toward further enhancing our wonderful neighborhood.



The MDA board also welcomes **Rachel Komlenic** as a public relations consultant. Rachel works and volunteers at the VMFA, Virginia Historical Society and the Children's Museum of Richmond. She loves attending activities in the neighborhood and being part of the Museum District community. Rachel brings a myriad of marketing and branding skills to the association. We look forward to working with Rachel to enhance our outreach in an effort to engage more residents and businesses in the area.



MARK YOUR CALENDAR

MDA TRAFFIC MEETING

Thursday, February 15, 6 to 8 p.m.,
All Saints Presbyterian Church,
3000 Grove Ave. If you have any concerns regarding driving, bicycling or walking in the district, please attend this meeting. Richmond City Councilman Andreas Addison and other public officials will be present to hear our concerns.

MDA SPRING TOWN HALL

Wednesday, March 14, 6 to 8 p.m.,
Temple Beth El.

MDA ALLEY CLEAN-UP

Saturday, April 21, meet at 7:45 a.m.
at Albert Hill Middle School

SPECIAL THANKS TO RETIRING MDA BOARD MEMBERS

With the new year, the MDA bids farewell to three board members.

Colleen Hewitt served as secretary for the past few years. We will miss Colleen's wisdom and sense of humor.

Linda Dunn served as code enforcement director for the past three years and was ready with a smile and eagerness for her work. Fortunately, Linda will continue to represent the entire 1st District in 2018 on the Clean City Commission.

Melissa Oefelein is leaving the board after two-and-a-half years of service in a variety of positions including safety chair and communications director. Melissa will be missed for her willingness to step in whenever needed at our annual events.

Thank you to each of these fabulous women for their service to our neighborhood.



HISTORIC HOUSE PLAQUES AVAILABLE FOR PURCHASE

Properties located within the nationally registered West of the Boulevard Historic District may be issued a West of the Boulevard plaque. At the time that the Museum District neighborhood was added to the historic registry the name was the West of the Boulevard Historic District, therefore plaques reflect this historic name. Plaques are \$75 and are available only for properties within the district. To order yours, visit the MDA website at MUSEUMDISTRICT.ORG. Under Resources, go to Marketplace, and you will see a link for house plaques.

The **COLUMNS** A Publication of THE MUSEUM DISTRICT ASSOCIATION

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- Scott Cannady Content Editor
- Scott Fields Graphic Designer
- Louise Turton Distribution Coordinator
- Ben Hopkins Sales/Writer
- Steve Jones Sales/Writer
- Justin Sizemore Writer
- MA Powers Writer

QUARTERLY ADVERTISING RATES

- 1/8 Page (3.67" x 2.4") \$125
- 1/4 Page (3.67" x 4.9") \$200
- 1/2 Page (7.5" x 4.9") \$335
- Full Page \$575
- 2-Page Spread \$1095

We offer a 10% discount for advertisers who pay for one year in advance.

Contact our Advertising Manager Steve Jones at MDAnewsletterads@museumdistrict.org.



MUSEUM DISTRICT - RICHMOND VA



At the Visual Arts Center of Richmond's **ArtVenture Summer Camp**, kids aged 5-14 make art with the help of Richmond's most prominent professional artists.

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Join us Sunday, 13 May 2018 for the 24th Annual Museum District Association

MOTHER'S DAY HOUSE & GARDEN TOUR

Now's the time to get involved in the MDA's only annual fundraising event!

- to volunteer (and receive a free ticket, exclusive tour preview, and fab thank-you party invite): HTvolunteer@museumdistrict.org
- to suggest a home (yours or one you admire): MDAhousetour@museumdistrict.org
- to learn about tax-deductible sponsorship and advertising opportunities: HTsponsor@museumdistrict.org
- for general information: www.museumdistrict.org

HELPING IN THE HURRICANE

(continued from page 1)

part of a Rapid Response Team (RRT). The main task of the RRT in Houston was to remove waterlogged, moldy building materials and belongings from homes. Although properly “mudding out”



each home was the initial goal of the RRT that we were part of, an even more important goal was giving adequate time to show love and concern to those affected by the widespread flooding. Sometimes this entailed just listening to the homeowner's

story and providing comfort to them, most of whom had lost everything. Each individual RRT was led by an experienced disaster relief volunteer who was responsible for team harmony and safety, and for homeowner satisfaction.

A typical work day began with breakfast and a devotion at 7 a.m. and getting to the job site by 8 a.m. Teams would return to the base camp by 5 p.m. for a much-needed shower in a shower trailer specifically designed to be pulled to disaster sites. Our nightly dinner was prepared by another group of volunteers and took on the flavor of the region where the volunteers were from. Cajun cooking and Tex-Mex style meals were some of the culinary delights that graced the food tables. We and the Clapps concur that the time following dinner was the high point of each day. During that time, families who had been helped on that particular day and invited to eat dinner with the volunteers were given the opportunity to share their stories and experiences. This time was a huge encouragement to all who came to help.

Bob and I, along with Larry and Melinda, felt that we were given an amazing opportunity to be the hands and feet of Jesus by using shovels, brooms, hammers and crowbars so that the people of Houston would not lose heart. This quote by Ann Voskamp sums up how we felt: “When we show up for others, joy shows up in us. God shows up in us – and we are the ones fulfilled.”



THE MAIN TASK OF THE RAPID RESPONSE TEAM IN HOUSTON WAS TO REMOVE WATERLOGGED, MOLDY BUILDING MATERIALS AND BELONGINGS FROM HOMES.



MUSEUM DISTRICT STAR AWARDS

by **MA POWERS**

Each November the Museum District Association board of directors recognizes one resident and one city employee who have demonstrated exceptional support to the neighborhood throughout the year. The 2017 recipients were recognized at the annual meeting for their continuous energy and willingness to assist residents whenever possible.

Barbara Booth, Belmont branch librarian, was honored as the Richmond city employee for being a community visionary and



providing a focal point for our community. Barbara works daily to provide a safe and clean facility for learning and entertainment. She sees that there is a constantly evolving schedule of events and activities with classes and opportunities for all ages. Barbara also supports community projects and allows the library to serve as collection location for school supplies and nonprofit agency donations.

Anne Grier of Monument Avenue was honored as the Museum District resident for her continuing support and participation



by delivering the quarterly newsletter, *The Columns*, and serving as a MDA Mother's Day House & Garden Tour volunteer. Anne also helps with the annual alley clean-up events and has been extremely instrumental in making our *This Week in the Museum District* email successful.

Thank you to both of these extraordinary women for being joyful and valuable members of the neighborhood.

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BUSINESS SPOTLIGHT

BOUTIQUE FITNESS FINDS A HOME ON SHEPPARD STREET

by **MA POWERS**


The rapid success of BOHO Cycle in the Museum District is not the result of happenstance or good fortune, but rather that of meticulous planning and product knowledge. AnnMarie Grohs conceived the idea of indoor cardio fitness back in 2012. As a runner herself, she was looking for an intense alternative that could be done year-round, in any weather. At the time, Richmond did not have any specialized cycle studios. Within one year, AnnMarie grew her idea into a reality and opened the first specialized cycling studio in the city.

AFTER EXTENSIVE IMPROVEMENTS TO THE SPACE, 32 BICYCLES WERE INSTALLED AND IN 2013 CLASSES BEGAN.

AnnMarie snagged the spot at 714 N. Sheppard because of its size, walkability and community feel. She observed that residents of the Museum District live, work and play in their community and she knew she could contribute to that lifestyle. After extensive improvements to the space, 32 bicycles were installed and in 2013 classes began. Because the neighborhood is uniquely positioned between downtown and the West End, cyclists can easily stop on their way to and from work for 50 minutes of high-intensity, music-filled spinning. There are 25 instructors that offer a variety of classes throughout the day. Riders arrive on foot, bicycle and car from close by or as far away as an eight-mile radius. The demand has been great and there have often been wait lists for peak-time classes. After careful analysis of her riders, AnnMarie opened a second location in Church Hill just a few months ago.

The Church Hill studio is housed in the new Patrick Henry Square development at 313 N. 24th St. and offers a variety of classes with 21 bikes. Riders that utilize this location come mostly from within Church Hill, Rocketts Landing, Varina

and Mechanicsville. When asked about the challenges of opening a second studio, AnnMarie is quick to cite only her own personal doubts. It's hard to imagine that this successful, bright-eyed, energetic woman could have any personal doubts. Her career background includes event planning and the restaurant industry. Obviously she has been able to hone her business experiences, couple them with her passion for fitness and quickly move past any self-doubt. Grohs has created a business that has become an indispensable part of the daily lifestyle of hundreds of local exercise enthusiasts.

Grohs' latest adventure is BOHOCore, a health coaching service designed to help you reach goals with food, nutrition and fitness. There are BOHO coaches that will customize a program for each participant, whether or not they ride with BOHO Cycle. With Grohs' energy and foresight, there is sure to be more in store for the Museum District and the city of Richmond. For fitness in the neighborhood, stop by the bright blue building on Sheppard or look for information at Bohocyclestudio.com. 





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In addition to books, e-books, recorded books, and DVDs, we offer programs and classes, meeting room use, wireless Internet access, fax service, and public use PCs.

**The Belmont Library is located at
3100 Ellwood Avenue.**

BELMONT LIBRARY EVENTS

Technology Q & A

Bring in your laptop, Kindle, Nook, iPad, or cell phone and get help from staff during a 30-minute session **each Wednesday noon – 2:00 pm**. Registration is required. Please call 646-1139.

Financial Aid for College

A GRASP representative will be at Belmont on **Wednesday nights from 6-8 pm** to assist those interested in exploring/applying for financial aid for college. Please call (804) 527-7772 (GRASP office) for an appointment.

Library Yarns

If you like to knit or crochet, join this fun time of creativity at the Belmont Library. Bring your portable handwork project for an informal group experience. Teens and adults are welcome.

Thursdays 10:30am - 12:30pm.

Book Babies (2 sessions)

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Mondays, 10:00 am – 10:30 am
Mondays, 10:45 am – 11:15 am

Toddler Time

Interactive story time for ages 18-36 months with an adult.

Mondays, 11:30am - 12:00pm

Preschool Storytime

Interactive songs, stories, and rhymes for ages 3-5 with an adult.

Thursdays, 4:00pm - 4:45pm

Paws to READ

Readers through grade 5, sign-up to read with one of our Paws to READ dogs. Practice your reading skills in a low-stress environment and enjoy your canine reading buddy. Sign-up is required. Please call 646-1139

Monday, January 8, 2018 6:30pm - 8:00pm

Monday, February 12, 2018 6:30pm - 8:00pm

Monday, March 12, 2018 6:30pm - 8:00pm

Monday, April 9, 2018 6:30pm - 8:00pm



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More information can be found at RichmondPublicLibrary.org.



ELLWOOD THOMPSON'S DEEPENS ITS ROOTS IN THE MUSEUM DISTRICT

by **SCOTT CANNADY** and **MA POWERS**

Residents of the Museum District likely love Ellwood Thompson's Local Market for its fresh, healthy eats and its fun and fanciful environment, but the relationship just got even better. Ellwood Thompson's operational offices now make their home in the circular building at 3540 Floyd Ave., one block south of the store location. The 1950's mid-century architectural gem was designed by Washington, DC architect David Yerkes for Dr. William Higgins and his son Dr. William Higgins, Jr. The building served as medical offices for nearly 70 years until it was recently purchased by Rick Hood, the owner of Ellwood Thompson's.

Hood, a trained architect turned grocer, was not deterred by the extensive work needed to restore architectural features and convert a clinic setting to a business center. His oversight of the project has ensured that every part of the building was lovingly restored to provide necessary space for staff offices, cooking classes, garden parties, yoga classes and whatever else gets cooked up by Hood and his creative team.



THE EXTERIOR OF THE CIRCULAR BUILDING IS COMPRISED OF CROSS-MOTIF, CUSTOM-MADE CONCRETE BLOCK AND BRICK

ELLWOOD THOMPSON'S OPERATIONAL OFFICES NOW MAKE THEIR HOME IN THE CIRCULAR BUILDING AT 3540 FLOYD AVENUE.

The exterior of the circular building is comprised of cross-motif, custom-made concrete block and brick which has been meticulously cleaned and restored. The interior walls, made mostly of slim wood panels, have been stripped down to original fashion. Door openings, offices and examining room spaces have been largely maintained while being repurposed and tastefully retain their original, minimal aesthetic. Dr. William Higgins, Jr. was not only a physician, but he was also a furniture maker. A few of his original, mid-century furniture pieces, including a foyer table, remain in the building. His son, Harrison Higgins, continues the family craft as a maker of fine furniture in Scott's Addition.

The outdoor spaces surrounding the building are a huge surprise as they are hidden behind the exterior walls and visible only after entering the building. Giant windows allow views of the courtyards and patios designed by Charles Gillette. An invoice from Gillette, issued in 1954 for \$75, hangs in a frame on the circular interior hall.

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ELLWOOD THOMPSON'S

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Surrounding the framed invoice are other original renderings and sketches of the building as well as letters written between the Higgins and other physicians practicing at the time.


It's quite fitting for a natural grocer and health enthusiast to own and occupy this particular building with a long history as a place of healing. When Hood talks about his start in the grocery business it is clear that he cares deeply about people and the environment. He actually got into the grocery business somewhat by accident. Trained as an architect, Hood has always been a maker of things and an entrepreneur by design. He met his former partner Eric Walters by chance at a local organic grocery store called Vitamin Complex on Grace St. in the mid-70s. Hood and Walters collaborated to open an organic grocery store called City Market at the corner of Patterson and Libbie avenues. They moved this store to its current location at the corner of Ellwood Ave. and Thompson St. and renamed it for the new location. Walters eventually sold his share of the store to Hood.



ELLWOOD THOMPSON'S HAS BEEN A STAPLE OF QUALITY, LOCALLY SOURCED, ORGANIC, NUTRITIOUS FOOD FOR 25 YEARS.

Ellwood Thompson's has been a staple of quality, locally sourced, organic, nutritious food for residents of the Museum District, Carytown and the city of Richmond for 25 years. The success of the store in a fiercely competitive market can be attributed to its ability to meet the specific needs of the community. Hood and his team believe in continually evaluating the variety and sources of food offered at his store and making changes when needed. Ellwood Thompson's prides itself on being responsive to its customers and its local growers. Its mission extends beyond offering excellent, nutritious, prepared food at a fair price, to also treating its employees and its customers with respect and allowing them to participate in the life of the store. Community is the over-arching principle of Ellwood Thompson's. Every decision made seems to be in the context of the immediate and greater community.

Ellwood Thompson's is much more than a grocery store. It now offers a full-service meat and seafood department, an in-house bakery, extensive hot and cold food bar with vegan and vegetarian options, a coffee and juice bar, a made-to-order sandwich station called CREATE and The Beet, a cafe-style event space.

Ellwood Thompson's is a true community partner. Rumor has it that even more exciting offerings are planned in 2018. 

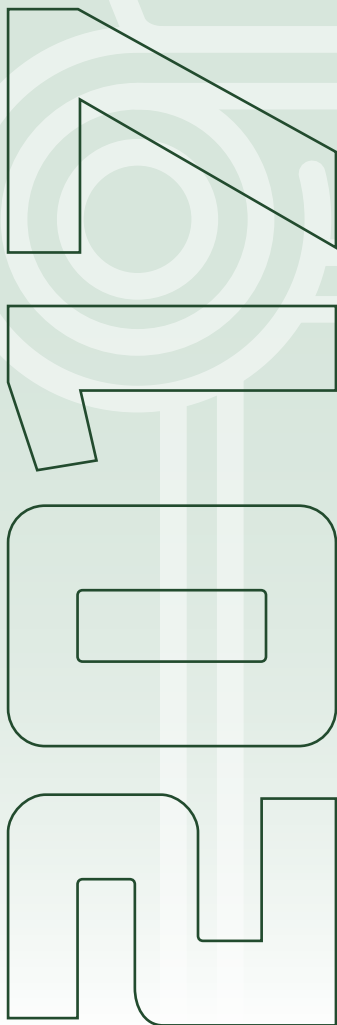


THE
MUSEUM
DISTRICT



MDA: WORKING FOR YOU IN OUR NEIGHBORHOOD

by **MA POWERS**



Have you ever wondered why membership in the Museum District Association is important or what the MDA actually does? If so, then take a look back at **SUCCESSES FROM 2017.**

- **YEAR-ROUND TURF REJUVENATION** took place on the Roseneath median including installation of a series of posts to prevent vehicles from crossing the median and damaging property.
- Museum District signature **BLUE STREET SIGNS** were inventoried, new signs were ordered and a replacement program began.
- A new MDA logo was created with a custom-designed column. **HOUSE FLAGS** were made available to residents and a Zazzle site was launched with items unique to the Museum District and RVA 23221.
- **THE COLUMNS** newsletter was redesigned and plans were put into place for a full-color publication.
- A **NEIGHBORHOOD WATCH PROGRAM** was implemented for the entire district.
- The zoning and land use committee reviewed and made recommendations regarding six special use permits for development within the district.
- *This Week in the Museum District* **EMAIL PROGRAM** continued, reaching about 1,000 residents each Monday with information pertinent to residents.
- A **MEMBERSHIP SOFTWARE PROGRAM** was purchased and use began in late 2017.
- The **MDA COLLABORATED WITH CITY HALL AND VCU** on several projects regarding land use and zoning issues, either in or close by the district.
- A variety of **SOCIAL AND BUSINESS ACTIVITIES** were hosted including: National Night Out, two town hall meetings, two alley clean-ups, Spring Fling, Family Summer Kick-Off, Adopt-A-Tree, and the annual meeting of the MDA.
- The **23RD ANNUAL MOTHER'S DAY HOUSE & GARDEN TOUR** attracted an unprecedented number of tour-goers and allowed for one of the largest financial contributions ever from the MDA to non-profits in the immediate area.
- The MDA proudly continued support of the **MUSEUM DISTRICT WOMAN'S CLUB** as it hosted a calendar full of informative and fun programming.
- The MDA **SERVED AS A LIAISON FOR RESIDENTS AND SCHOOLS**, helping residents to be aware of important issues within schools and specific needs. A portion of the house tour proceeds were set aside for the establishment of a **MDA SCHOLARSHIP PROGRAM.** 

ASSESSMENT VS. VALUE - IS IT RELEVANT?

More often than not, both buyers and sellers of real estate bring the assessed value of a property into the conversation and try to relate that value to the amount of the offer, in the case of a buyer, or the listing price, in the case of the seller. In reality, the assessed value of a property does not relate very well to the market value.

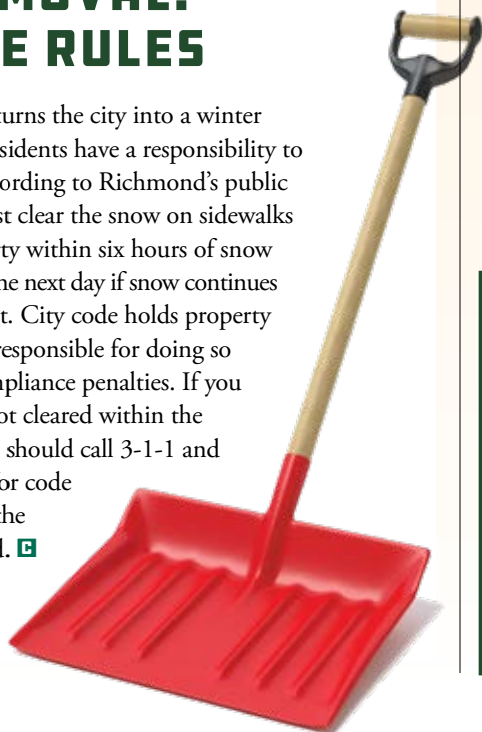


STEVE JONES
Joyner Fine Properties

In economic terms, the assessed value (the value placed on a property by the local jurisdiction for tax purposes) is a “lagging” indicator of value. Legally, the taxing authority can assess the property up to the current market value, however that is an ever-moving target. In an environment of rising home prices like we are enjoying now, the assessment will understandably “lag” behind the actual market value as the taxing authority can only base the assessed value on what has already happened. As home prices level out, the assessed value will be more closely aligned with the actual market value and, as one would expect, as home values are on a decline the assessed value can often be above the actual market value. In markets where there is a rapid decline in home values and the assessment is substantially behind the market and above market value, homeowners have the option to challenge the assessment and perhaps reduce their tax liability. If you feel your assessment is inequitable with similarly assessed properties, you may file an appeal with the City assessor’s office. **Q**

SNOW REMOVAL: KNOW THE RULES

When Mother Nature turns the city into a winter wonderland of snow, residents have a responsibility to clear the sidewalks. According to Richmond’s public works website, you must clear the snow on sidewalks adjacent to your property within six hours of snow stopping or by 11 a.m. the next day if snow continues to fall through the night. City code holds property owners and occupants responsible for doing so and subject to non-compliance penalties. If you see sidewalks that are not cleared within the allotted timeframe, you should call 3-1-1 and enter a service request for code enforcement/DPW so the matter can be addressed. **Q**



100TH BIRTHDAY PARTY ON KENSINGTON

by **SCOTT CANNADY**

Neighbors of the 3000 block of Kensington Ave. had been talking about having a celebration for the 100th anniversary of the construction of their homes for several years. After much wine-fueled discussion on porches it was finally decided by several couples to create an action plan and start assigning duties. Kensington neighbors gathered historical information on their homes, applied to the city to block off the street, rented barricades, found a local band -- Rattlesnake Shake, paid for a large banner, used social media to get the word out, got local food trucks to provide food and refreshments, collected money and searched for local business sponsors. The resulting party on October 21 was a great success and a really great way to meet your neighbors.

Kensington neighbors would like to especially thank their local business sponsors for their generous donations:

- 7-Eleven on Sheppard St.
- Bandazian & Company
- Belmont Pizzeria
- Buddy’s Place
- Carroll’s Auto Service
- Chiocca’s
- John Colan, Attorney at Law
- Steve Jones, Joyner Fine Properties
- Level Restaurant & Bar
- The Stables at Belmont
- David Word Automotive

If other Museum District blocks would like to have similar parties to celebrate milestones and would like more information both good and bad about the process, please contact Steve Jones or Scott Cannady through the Museum District Association for more information. **Q**



CORD CUTTING 101

HOW TO SAVE MONEY AND YOUR SANITY AT THE SAME TIME

by **BEN HOPKINS**

Thinking of cutting cable? You're not alone. A September 2017 study estimated that 22 million Americans will have cancelled cable or satellite TV by year's end. Another study back in September of 2016 (September must be a good month for studies) showed that the median expenditure for pay TV was \$103. When we made the big snip last February at my house, our bill was \$157.95 per month, including rental of our set-top boxes and DVR service.

If you're thinking of joining the Cord Cutting Revolution, here's a quick rundown of what you'll need to make it happen:

- **HDTV Antenna** – for local stations
- **Streaming Service** – internet-based TV with cable channels and original content
- **Streaming Device** – shows streaming content from the internet on your TV

ANTENNAS

None of our major channels is currently available on streaming services (more on those later), so you'll need an antenna. But which kind? We tried one of the popular flat antennas that you attach to the wall in your house, but trees, buildings and Lady Luck limited our reception to CBS6, whose Broad St. tower we can see from our front porch. There are a LOT of HDTV antennas out there, and the selection can be a little daunting. That's where antennanet.org came to my rescue.

All I had to do was type in my address and it not only showed me which local channels I could get, but also where their transmitters were located and suggested the range of antenna I needed using color codes developed by the Consumer Electronics Association. There were links to four different sites where I could shop for an antenna, but you can also find them on Amazon and just about any consumer electronics e-tailer. Given the limited stock I found at bricks and mortar retailers, I definitely recommend making this purchase online.



After some online research and price comparison, I settled on a refurbished Mohu 60 antenna for \$99.99 from crutchfield.com. I had it installed on my roof, and voila! 28 local stations in glorious over-the-air digital HD.

STREAMING SERVICES

Streaming services are the internet's version of cable TV. There are six main services, all with varying channels and add-ons like HBO, etc. The major players are:

- **DirecTV Now** – AT&T's entry into the streaming content market
- **Fubo TV** – an independent player, great for soccer fans and anyone who isn't addicted to ESPN
- **Hulu and Hulu with Live TV**
- **PlayStation Vue** – despite the name, this service supports all streaming devices except the Microsoft Xbox One X
- **SlingTV** – the least expensive basic service
- **YouTube TV** – a more "curated" selection of channels, not yet available in Richmond

There's an excellent article on businessinsider.com that compares all six of these services. Just go to the search box on the site and type in "6 stream live tv compare" and you'll see the article by Jeff Dunn.

STREAMING DEVICES

Streaming devices take content from your streaming service and display it on your TV. Your choices are:

- **Apple TV**
- **Amazon Fire TV**
- **Google Chromecast**
- **Nvidia Shield**
- **Roku**

There's a great article on tech site zdnet.com that compares the latest versions of these devices. Go to the search box on the site and type "2017's top five TV media-streaming devices."

Happy streaming! 

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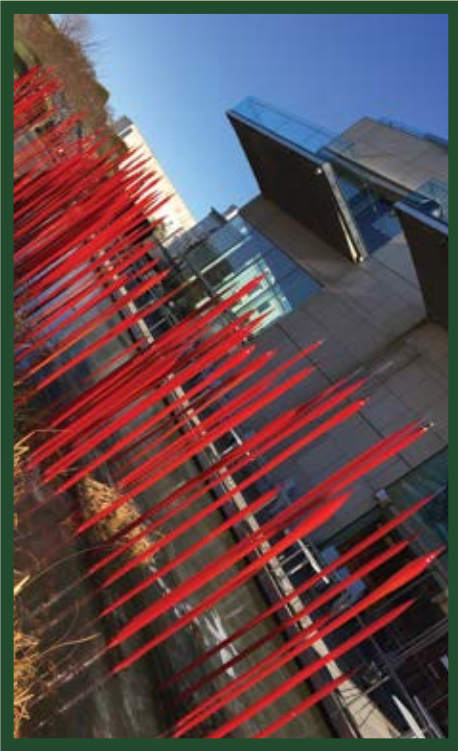
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VMFA GARDENS: A PLACE OF BEAUTY IN OUR CITY



by **AMANDA SCUDDER**

Enjoying the grounds of the VMFA is a favorite pastime for locals and visitors alike. With three-and-a-half acres of well-tended lawn, gardens and paths, the grounds are a beloved gathering spot for people of all ages, any time of day, in any season. It is hard to imagine that the sculpture garden was once hidden behind a gate, out of sight and mind unless an event happened to draw us in. Thankfully, when the museum expansion was underway, plans for a fence were abandoned in favor of a new vision – an open park for the community to enjoy.


The E. Claiborne and Lora Robins sculpture garden now provides the neighborhood with unparalleled access to art. Where else can you contemplate a Chihuly over morning coffee and admire the glow of the moon on Chloe's ethereal face? The neighborhood has clearly embraced this space as their own. Crowds gather for yoga on top of the hill, which is actually made of Styrofoam blocks covered by topsoil, cleverly concealing the parking deck from view. Neighbors visit at brightly colored café tables. Toddlers look for fish in the

**WHERE ELSE CAN YOU
CONTEMPLATE A CHIHULY
OVER MORNING COFFEE
AND ADMIRE THE GLOW
OF THE MOON ON CHLOE'S
ETHEREAL FACE?**

(continued on next page)

**ARE YOU CONCERNED ABOUT TRAFFIC IN THE MUSEUM DISTRICT?
DO YOU EVER FEEL UNSAFE CROSSING THE STREET OR RIDING YOUR BIKE?**

The Museum District Association is hosting an important meeting regarding traffic hot spots in the neighborhood.



If you have any concerns regarding driving, bicycling or walking in the Museum District, please attend this meeting on

Thursday, February 15 | 6-8 PM
at All Saints Presbyterian Church
3000 Grove Avenue

VMFA GARDENS

(continued from previous page)

Gottwald Reflecting Pool. Dogs sniff for squirrels under twin 80-year-old willow oaks. Even on the coldest day in January, neighbors walk the paths, waving to friends in the Best Cafe.

These glorious grounds are maintained by a dedicated team of two – Horticulturalist and Landscape Manager Bill Chappell and Horticultural Assistant Leila Ehtesham. The duo also relies on volunteers who pitch in to pull weeds and tend the gardens. Anyone interested in volunteering or sharing comments and ideas about the grounds can contact Bill directly at bill.chappell@vmfa.museum.

To continue to improve the interaction between people and place, the VMFA is working with Project for Public Spaces, a New York-based non-profit founded to connect people, ideas and expertise to create vital, community-centered places. Creating places for people to sit, mingle, congregate and engage brings public spaces to life, and a lively public space draws people in. This is a win-win: the more loved and used a public space is, the less likely it is that vandalism will occur; the more opportunities people have to interact, the stronger the community becomes.



IN THE SPRING, THE HORTICULTURE TEAM HOPES TO EXTEND THE GARDENS TOWARD GROVE AVENUE, ADD MORE TREES AND FLOWERS, AND MAKE REPAIRS TO THE REFLECTING POOL.

In the spring, the horticulture team hopes to extend the gardens toward Grove Ave., add more trees and flowers and make repairs to the reflecting pool. The education department also has a host of family-friendly events planned. Once the renovation and expansion of the Robinson House is completed, it will house VMFA offices, a visitors' center and the Greater Richmond Chamber of Commerce. All of these efforts are designed to increase the accessibility, interest and connectedness of the VMFA campus. There is a gardens and green spaces fundraising campaign underway to support many of these efforts. Contributions can be made online at www.vmfa.museum/support/gardens-greenspaces.

There is no doubt that the Museum District is fond of the VMFA, and the affection is mutual. "We want the VMFA to be as dynamic outside as it is inside," Bill says, "and the neighborhood is the key. It is exciting to see neighbors enjoying the gardens, interacting with each other and with visitors. This is the community's place." ■



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GETTING INVOLVED ON CITY BOARDS

by **SCOTT CANNADY**

As a Museum District and City of Richmond resident, you have an opportunity to utilize your particular skills and experience by participating as a volunteer on local government and non-government boards, commissions, committees and task forces. These organizations provide guidance, policy and advisory support to your government.

As stated on the City of Richmond's web site, "membership and service on these entities provides individuals with additional opportunities to participate with and learn more about local and regional government and other non-government entities. Service on an entity enables individuals to use their education, experience, skills and abilities on behalf of their community and all interested individuals are invited and encouraged to apply to serve."

Each task force, board or commission has individual membership terms that range from a few months for project-oriented ones to a few years for more long-term ones. Subject to an individual entity's governing, incumbents may also be considered for reappointment at the conclusion of their terms and generally may serve up to two successive full terms unless otherwise prohibited.

The amount of individual time commitments vary from entity to entity and could range from a few hours to 20 or more per month. Meeting times, dates, locations and frequency are scheduled as required.

Oversight of appointments to boards, commissions and task forces is provided by one of the six Richmond City Council standing committees that an entity is assigned to, which is assisted by a Richmond City Council boards and commissions administrator.

Information regarding the many local and regional government and non-government entities to which Richmond City Council appoints members can be found at: <http://eservices.ci.richmond.va.us/applications/boardscommissions/index.aspx>

Individuals interested in being appointed by Richmond City Council to serve are invited to review the descriptions, purposes and individual membership requirements and vacancies of those entities and apply online via the Richmond City Council boards and commission webpage. This webpage also provides information about the appointment process: <http://www.richmondgov.com/CityCouncil/CouncilBoardsCommissions.aspx>

The list on this page identifies the boards and commissions that have vacancies for the next quarter (4/1/2018-6/30/2018). Information about the process for applying for membership and relevant qualifications can be found at: <http://eservices.ci.richmond.va.us/applications/boardscommissions/AllBCVacancies.aspx>

To see which boards and commissions have vacancies for the next quarter (4/1/2018-6/30/2018), and for information about the process for applying for membership and relevant qualifications, please visit: <http://eservices.ci.richmond.va.us/applications/boardscommissions/AllBCVacancies.aspx> 

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ALL BOARDS & COMMISSIONS VACANCIES FOR NEXT QUARTER (4/1/2018 - 6/30/2018)

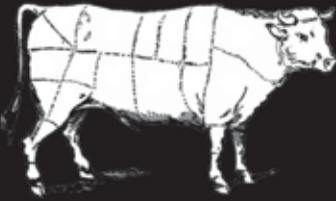
- Citizen Advisory Commission On Alternatives to Incarceration
- Citizens Transportation Advisory Committee (MPO)
- City Personnel Board
- City Planning Commission
- Clean City Commission
- Commission of Architectural Review
- Community Criminal Justice Board
- Economic Development Authority
- Ethics Reform Task Force
- Green City Commission
- Lewis Ginter Botanical Garden, Inc.
- Maggie L. Walker Initiative Citizens Advisory Board
- Maymont Foundation
- Metropolitan Richmond Air Quality Committee
- Minority Business Enterprise and Emerging Small Business Advisory Board
- Richmond Ambulance Authority
- Richmond Behavioral Health Authority
- Richmond Redevelopment And Housing Authority
- Richmond Regional Planning District Commission
- Richmond Retirement System
- Safe And Healthy Streets Commission
- Senior Connections, The Capital Area Agency On Aging, Incorporated
- Sister Cities Commission
- Slave Trail Commission
- Task Force on the Establishment of a Human Rights Commission
- Technical Advisory Committee to the Richmond Area Metropolitan Planning Organization
- Urban Design Committee
- Urban Forestry Commission

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*except March 25 & April 1



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Q&A WITH DAWN ADAMS, NEW MEMBER, 68TH HOUSE DISTRICT

by **SCOTT CANNADY**

Q: WHAT WERE YOUR IMMEDIATE THOUGHTS AFTER YOU REALIZED YOU WON THE RACE FOR DELEGATE OF THE 68TH DISTRICT?

A: My immediate thoughts were that of amazement and responsibility. I felt both grateful and in awe of the magnitude of the job ahead.

Q: WHAT ARE THREE THINGS YOU WANT YOUR CONSTITUENTS TO KNOW ABOUT YOU?

A: I truly want to represent all people in the district irrespective of party. I work really hard, no matter what I am doing. I put my whole heart and effort into it. My motivation for this is purely policy driven, not political. I want to help make good policy decisions for the Commonwealth.

Q: WHAT ARE THREE THINGS YOU WILL BE FOCUSING ON DURING YOUR FIRST GENERAL ASSEMBLY SESSION?

A: Legislation that focuses on the health of the Commonwealth, educational parity and communicating the decisions I make on behalf of the district.

Q: ARE THERE ANY ISSUES SPECIFIC TO THE MUSEUM DISTRICT YOU WILL BE ADVOCATING FOR DURING YOUR FIRST TERM?

A: I think that all major issues affect the Museum District. Of course, legislation that protects the James River comes to mind as most directly affecting the area.

Q: HAVE YOU SPOKEN WITH DEL. LOUPASSI TO DISCUSS WITH HIM THE ISSUES HE THINKS ARE IMPORTANT TO HIS FORMER DISTRICT?

A: I have put it out there directly and indirectly that I would like to have that discussion with him.

Q: HOW CAN YOUR CONSTITUENTS CONTACT YOU?

A: Through my website at DelegateAdams.com, or directly via the House email DelDadams@house.virginia.gov. 



"I TRULY WANT TO REPRESENT ALL PEOPLE IN THE DISTRICT IRRESPECTIVE OF PARTY. I WORK REALLY HARD, NO MATTER WHAT I AM DOING. I PUT MY WHOLE HEART AND EFFORT INTO IT."

NICHOLE ARMSTEAD: NEW CITY TREASURER

by **LIZ BRYANT**

As of January 1, Richmond has a new treasurer. Taking over a job where she can in large part write her own responsibilities, Nichole Armstead says she will look for ways to increase efficiencies in the office, as well as planning financial literacy outreach into the city schools and helping citizens learn how to better budget their money, make their money stretch and be more fiscally responsible.

"I feel like we have our finance director who is overseeing the city's money," she said. "So let's help our citizens to be empowered."

Community involvement is high on her list of priorities.

"One thing I'm looking to put together is what I'm calling the financial empowerment board," she said. "I'd like to get a group of individuals within the community, whether it be financial advisors, leaders, that talk about how we can really reach out to our community and really help them financially."

Armstead, a VCU graduate, spent 17 years at the Federal Reserve working in procurement and asset management. You might

say public service is in her blood. Her father Chuck Richardson was a long-serving member of Richmond City Council. Members of her family played an important role in the civil rights movement. Her aunt and uncle on her mother's side were part of the Richmond 34, where 34 Virginia Union University students held a peaceful sit-in at the lunch counter Thalheimer's department store in 1960. And her parents were among the first students to desegregate John Marshall and Henrico high schools.

"So my family on so many levels has been active in really helping to help launch people forward," she said. "So I felt like this is almost my legacy, like I wasn't looking for this, but I have a passion to help people and it's innate."

Anyone interested in learning more about the financial empowerment board should contact the city treasurer's office at 804-646-6474. 



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✓ **THINKING OF SELLING?
 WHAT TO KNOW; HOW TO START**
 Wednesday, February 7, 5:30 - 7pm, 3311 W Cary Street, RVA

✓ **Downsizing: ARE YOU READY?**
 Tuesday, February 27, 5:30 - 7pm, 3311 W Cary Street, RVA

✓ **INVESTMENT PROPERTIES:
 WHAT YOU SHOULD KNOW**
 Wednesday, March 14, 5:30 - 7pm, 3311 W Cary Street, RVA

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SCHOOLS AMENDMENT PASSED BY VOTERS: NOW WHAT?

by **JUSTIN SIZEMORE**

On election day, Richmond voters overwhelmingly approved a proposed amendment to the City’s charter that would, if approved by the General Assembly, require the mayor “to present to the City Council a fully-funded plan to modernize the city’s K-12 educational infrastructure consistent with national standards or inform City Council such a plan is not feasible.” This “fully funded” plan would have to be created within six months and “cannot be based on the passage of new or increased taxes” for the purpose of modernizing schools.

The General Assembly, which convened on January 10, must adopt legislation approving the measure before its amendment of the City’s charter becomes effective. Former delegate Manoli Loupassi (R-68th district), who campaigned hard for the measure’s passage, lost his own bid for reelection. But citing the overwhelming support for the measure – which Richmond voters approved 85 to 15 percent – state senator Glen H. Sturtevant, Jr. (R-10th district) has pledged to introduce legislation to adopt the ballot measure and give it the force of law. It is not yet clear as of press time if the measure will have a patron in the House of Delegates.

In early December, after the ballot measure was approved by voters, the School Board approved a five-year \$224 million plan to build five new schools and renovate two others. This plan is more modest than the one required by the ballot measure, which would require a plan



to “fully modernize” all 44 of the City’s schools. Moreover, the City has yet to fund the \$224 million plan.

In late November, a spokesman for Richmond Mayor Levar Stoney told the *Richmond Times-Dispatch* that the mayor “does not think that we need the General Assembly to tell us how” to accomplish school modernization. “Rather,” the spokesman added, “it is our position that all options should be on the table when it comes to our schools.” The spokesman added that “we shouldn’t have to rob Peter to pay Paul, or wait to declare ‘failure’ before the city can consider revenue options.”

THE ROLE OF THE NEW SHERIFF ANTOINETTE IRVING

by **JUSTIN SIZEMORE**

On November 7, Antoinette Irving was elected sheriff of the City of Richmond, garnering 62 percent of the City’s vote in a three-way race in which her opponents, independents Nicole Jackson and Emmett Jafari won 26 percent and 7 percent, respectively. Irving was the favorite going into the general election after her upset win over 11-year incumbent



C.T. Woody in the June Democratic primary. In that race, Irving defeated Woody by a much closer margin of 52-48 percent.

Irving, who grew up in Creighton Court and graduated from Armstrong High School, retired from the Henrico Sheriff’s office in 2015, where she attained the rank of major after a 26-year long career.



During the campaign, Irving told voters she plans to bring restorative justice and improved inmate mental health and drug treatment services to the City Jail. Irving also told reporters that she would work to improve staff morale by reforming the hiring and promotion processes, and that she would expand the jail’s re-entry programs for ex-offenders and reduce recidivism by working with returnees and their families.

The sheriff is one of the five so-called constitutional officers who are selected by voters every four years in every county and independent city in Virginia. (The other four are the commonwealth’s attorney, treasurer, commissioner of revenue and clerk of the circuit court.) The office of sheriff was instituted in 1634, and prior to 1776, Virginia sheriffs were appointed by the crown as the King’s representatives to keep the peace. The office of sheriff has been an elected position since 1851.

Each sheriff’s office is empowered by statute to enforce the laws of Virginia within that sheriff’s locality. The sheriff’s office functions as the primary law enforcement agency in those localities that do not have a police department. In Richmond (like other larger localities), the primary responsibility for law enforcement falls to a police department, led by a chief who is selected by City Council. In Richmond, the sheriff’s primary responsibilities are overseeing the jail, providing courthouse security, and service of process in civil and criminal cases.

MEMBERSHIP FORM

YES! I would like to become a member of the **MUSEUM DISTRICT ASSOCIATION.**

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▲ ADDRESS _____

▲ CITY/STATE/ZIP _____

▲ PHONE _____

▲ EMAIL ADDRESS* _____

*By providing your email address, you will be joining the MDA eNewsletter distribution list.

Check here if you DO NOT want to receive email updates about MDA events

I would like more information about volunteering with the MDA. Volunteer opportunities are detailed in the "About" section of our website: **MUSEUMDISTRICT.ORG**

NOTE: *Members who do not live or own property in the Museum District are non-voting FRIENDS of the MDA.*

YOU CAN JOIN ONLINE! Just visit **MUSEUMDISTRICT.ORG** to pay with a credit card via PayPal.

✓	TYPES OF MEMBERSHIP	AMOUNT
<input type="checkbox"/>	INDIVIDUAL MEMBERSHIP	\$15.00
<input type="checkbox"/>	INDIVIDUAL SENIOR MEMBERSHIP (65+)	\$10.00
<input type="checkbox"/>	HOUSEHOLD MEMBERSHIP <i>(includes two members)</i>	\$25.00
<input type="checkbox"/>	HOUSEHOLD SENIOR MEMBERSHIP <i>(includes two members - 65+)</i>	\$15.00
<input type="checkbox"/>	BUSINESS MEMBERSHIP <i>(includes two members)</i>	\$35.00
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TOTAL ENCLOSED		\$ _____

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 Department of Public Works
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 Building Permits and Inspections 804-646-6955
 Utility Bills 804-646-4646

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 Police Non-emergency 804-646-5100
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 Police – 3rd Precinct 804-646-1412

CITY SERVICES

If you have a non-emergent concern, please use the mobile app SeeClickFix or RVAOne to report the issue. Using the SeeClickFix app, you can mobily notify the City of issues such as vacant properties, overgrown lots, potholes and traffic light abnormalities. Similarly, you can submit a variety of requests directly to the city online through the RVAOne website.

Also available to notify the City of concerns is the 311 Call Center, accessible from 7 a.m. to 7 p.m. Monday through Friday.

CITY COUNCIL

Andreas D. Addison,
 1st Voter District Councilman 804-646-5935
 andreas.addison@richmondgov.com
 Liaison: Chelsi Bennett, chelsibennett@richmondgov.com
 Kimberly B. Gray,
 2nd Voter District Councilwoman 804-646-6532
 kimberly.gray@richmondgov.com
 Liaison: Craig K. Bieber, craig.bieber@richmondgov.com
 Parker C. Agelasto,
 5th Voter District Councilman 804-646-5724
 parker.agelasto@richmondgov.com
 Liaison: Amy Robins, amy.robins@richmondgov.com

For information on City Council meetings,
 visit <https://richmondva.legistar.com/Calendar.aspx>.

SCHOOL BOARD

Jason Kamras, School Superintendent 804-780-7710
 Elizabeth Doerr, Richmond 1st District 804-929-6624
 edoerr@rvaschools.net
 Scott Barlow, Richmond 2nd District. 804-929-6571
 jbarlow3@rvaschools.net



Patrick Sapini - Vice Chair &
 Richmond 5th District 804-929-6930
 psapini@rvaschools.net

To watch school board proceedings and meetings:
 Go to: <http://www.boarddocs.com/vsba/richmond/Board.nsf/Public>

VIRGINIA GENERAL ASSEMBLY

House of Delegates, District 68: Dawn Adams 804-698-1068
 House of Delegates, District 71: Jeff Bourne 894-698-1071
 Senate, District 9: Jennifer McClellan 804-698-7509
 Senate, District 10, Glen Sturtevant 804-698-7509

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