



WARDS CORNER CIVIC LEAGUE

CROSSROADS

Serving: Colony Point, Hariton Court, Merridale, Pinehurst,
Restmere, Rose Gardens, Sussex of Norfolk,
Virginia Gardens and Wexford Terrace

May, 2006

CIVIC LEAGUE MEETING

MONday

may 15, 2006

7:00 PM

norfolk fitness and wellness CENTER

Agenda

CURB APPEAL

TANNERS CREEK Horticultural Center

General discussion-bring your
questions/comments

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Jim English jenglish@odu.edu

By the time you receive this edition of the newsletter we will have elected an 8-member city council. We will have elected our Mayor by popular city vote. This elected mayor will for the first time in Norfolk's history have been elected by Norfolk citizens rather than from the other members of city council. While the mayor has always represented the best interest of city and its residents, this newly elected mayor will truly represent us all as we have now had a voice in electing him our mayor. We wish him well. We will also have elected our representative from Ward #1 to represent our area and our needs on city council. Our best goes out to this person whom we have elected. May all of our elected city council members serve us well.

I know all of us are concerned and frustrated about the steady increase in our property assessments and little apparent relief in sight of our property taxes being lowered to offset this increasing tax burden. Some of those running for this year's council race had promised to reduce our real estate taxes by 20 cents or 30 cents. Our own Ward #1 candidates had also promised to do so. The City Manager has prepared a budget advocating a real estate tax decrease of 5 cents. So the question is: what is a realistic reduction in the real estate tax? Is it 5, 20 or 30 cents or higher or lower? What is a realistic growth in city government with

respect to city personnel salaries, improvements to neighborhoods, schools and infrastructure as well as the task of dealing with the obscene increase in gas and oil prices to fuel the police, fire, rescue and city vehicles driven daily as well as heat and air condition our city schools and facilities. I would point out here that the proposed city budget includes 1.3 million dollars for improvements to the Wards Corner area. These include \$300,000 for an increase in hours for the Norfolk Fitness and Wellness Center; \$500,000 for installation of mast arm signals at the Little Creek Rd and Granby Street intersection; and \$500,000 to commence implementation of activities resulting from the blight study in the E. Little Creek Road corridor from Wards Corner to Southern Shopping Center.

There are no easy answers to prepare and adopt a fair and equitable city budget that keeps the city moving forward and at the same time doesn't burden its residents. All council members are fighting for their representative areas as well as the city at large. Combined with this is the ever diminishing flow of money from the federal government to the States and localities over the past 6 six years to fund the war machine in Iraq, the Middle East and fight terrorism via the Department of Homeland Security. As the Federal government reduces money to the States, the States are then forced to reduce the dollars coming to the local jurisdictions. The cities in Virginia are hard hit with this reduction. Again this trickle down effect has hit Norfolk hard. Now add to that the loss of the Ford Plant in a couple of years and you can readily see that the city has a huge economic problem on its hands. While building the economic development engine in this city has certainly helped offset our tax burden somewhat, it clearly does not solve it or fill in the widening gap of revenues and expenditures. So while the increases in our real estate assessments are in part due to the economic boom from development so too are the real estate taxes and additional fees for services a way of filling that widening gap of revenue resources to expenditures needed to keep the city running. So what can we do? Talk to our elected officials about your tax burden, attend the budget public hearings when they are held and voice your concerns, and take advantage of city services, as well as those that can help you lower your tax burden if you are eligible. If you would like to get a better understanding of the proposed city budget from where the money comes from to where the money

goes I would suggest you visit the city website at <http://www.norfolk.gov> and click on the links to the proposed 2007 budget. There is a video on this site of the city manager's presentation to the city council as well as the narratives of the city budget. We may all have our own ideas of what the city should spend and cut on this budget. The only way to have them heard is to voice your concerns to city council. Otherwise you can't complain when the budget is adopted.

As Chair of the Norfolk Environmental Commission T/A Keep Norfolk Beautiful I would like to announce the following to you:

Turn in your techno-trash!

Keep Norfolk Beautiful, in partnership with Waste Management, Inc. and the Norfolk Division of Waste Management is coordinating an Electronics Recycling Day on Saturday May 20th. Norfolk residents can drop off their used electronics equipment between 8am and 4pm at the WHRO parking lot (Hampton Blvd. & 49th Street) free of charge.

A list of acceptable items is below:

Computers	Mice	Monitors
Cables	TV's	Printers
Personal Digital Assistants		Stereos
VCR's	DVD players	Scanners
Video equipment		Radios
Flat panel displays		Phones
Video game players	Copy machines	
Fax machines	Cell phones	
Answering machines	Tape recorders	
Reel to reel tape players	Toasters	
Medical electronics	Surveillance equipment	
Microwaves		

For more information, please contact Keep Norfolk Beautiful at 441-1347.

Finally as we approach the end of the first half of the civic league year we hope to have two very good programs in May and June. As indicated in this newsletter, the folks at Tanners Creek Horticultural Center will present a program on enhancing your property's "curb appeal". In June I hope to have our newly elected popular Mayor join us for a presentation and an opportunity to answer your questions. That is not confirmed yet at this time.

Thanks for being good neighbors, Jim English

NEIGHBORHOOD YARD SALE

Cruise around the neighborhood on Saturday, May 6, from 8-2. Your neighbors are having a yard sale and you may find some real treasures!

HELP NEEDED

Can you donate a few hours each month to help deliver our newsletters to homes in your area? Our second vice-president, Linda Spear, brings them to your home the first week-end of the month for you to distribute that week-end or shortly after to your assigned homes. Areas where there is no currently assigned person are the 100-300 blocks of Burleigh Avenue, and the 100-400 blocks of Maycox Avenue. Jim English also e-mails a copy to league members. Call Linda at 402-8583 if you can help.

We want to make our Civic League meetings interesting and enjoyable, providing you with information about your neighborhood and city. If you have suggestions for meeting topics, please forward them to our secretary, Joan Griffey at t.jgriffey@verizon.net, or to Barbara Ross, the newsletter editor, at bookworms@whro.net.

GOT MAIL??

Are you bothered by daily pleas from mortgage and credit card companies beseeching you to refinance your home or obtain a credit card with a higher limit? These companies are now required by the federal government to provide a PRESCREEN & OPT-OUT NOTICE on these solicitations with a number (1-888-567-8688) that you may call and elect not to receive future requests. When you call, you will be asked to enter your social security number. Linda Spear, our Vice President, has verified the site's legitimacy. The Federal Trade Commission website provides additional information regarding this ruling which took effect August 2005. Go to: www.ftc.gov/opa/2005/07/prescreenoptout.htm,

SPRING CLEAN-UP

In conjunction with Clean the Bay Day, our "Adopt-a-Spot" area will be spruced up on Saturday, June 10, at 8:00 AM. Meet at the corner of Ruthven and W. Little Creek Roads. Extra hands are always welcomed-and needed. Call Ray Duron at 423-4337 with any questions.

HIGHLIGHTS FROM OUR SECRETARY'S MINUTES

Joan Griffey

April 17, 2006

Newsletter ideas/comments-Barbara Ross
(Bookworms@WHRO.Net or 489-1024)

-PACE officer, Lt. Jackson, reported: 7 shoplifting incidents, 5 larcenies, a hit and run, 2 assaults, 1 threat to do harm, 1 domestic assault, 2 auto accidents, attempted robbery at AJ Gators, robbery at Alantec Bank and 74 offenders were given summons from traffic radar surveillance. Trucks at the Workforce Development Center were given warnings not to park on the property.

-Candidates for Mayor Election on May 2 were introduced: Mayor Paul Fraim and Daniel Montague. Mr. Fraim was unable to be present because of issues associated with the Ford Plant's closing. Mr. Montague, a Sherwood Forest civic league past President and retired steelworker, spoke of his proposals for this candidacy: a living wage, quality of life issues, Bay Oaks Park, anti light rail, school reputation, library site, TV exposure for open government, WC special tax district, police pay, taxes, 20-30 cent reduction in taxes, Ford Plant losses. He believes in change and progress.

-Candidates Barbara Saunders and Don Williams vying for the Ward 1 Council seat were introduced. Mr. Williams spoke of his tenure/advocacy as Councilman and addressed these issues: Greater Wards Corner Comprehensive Plan, problem between Southern Shopping Center and Wards Corner Business area, Titus-town improvements, blight study of Texas Streets, Norfolk Fitness and Wellness Center, lowering of taxes of at least \$0.20. Mrs. Saunders, a member of WC Infrastructure Committee, former candidate, UVA grad in Political Science, touched on tax deferments, a \$0.30 reduction in taxes, dropping of council meetings, night meetings, charter changes, teacher salaries, police and fire equipment, Titustown corridor, matching program for business improvements. Questions concerning tax deferments, codes, social issues, NE corner (Little Creek and Granby) property eyesore, library for downtown, crime rate stats on line, monies lost from Ford Plant closure, incentives for builders and developers.

-Barbara Thierry announced a Community Yard Sale for Saturday, May 6 from 8AM 'til 2PM on various streets in the civic league.

WCCL Board of Directors

President	Jim English	423-7154
1 st Vice Pres.	Jennifer Demmin	423-1911
2 nd VP./Nwsltr. Dstn.	Linda Spear	402-8583
Secretary	Joan Griffey	440-9508
Treasurer	Ray Duron	423-4337

Important Phone Numbers

Police Emergency	911
Police Non-Emergency	441-5610
Pace Officer	664-6921
Police Red Sector	664-6914
Code Enforcement	664-6532
Environmental Health	683-2712
Sewer Backup	823-1000
Waste Management (Call here for large pickups)	441-5813
Norfolk Cares Call Center (Don't know what office to call on the problem?)	664-6510

TREASURER'S REPORT

Beginning Balance			\$1220.17
+ funds received	\$320.00		
-funds disbursed	\$114.73		
Ending Balance			\$1425.44

WCCL MEMBERSHIP

Annual dues are \$5.00. Our dues' year runs from January 1 through December 31. If you are a continuing member and you have not renewed your membership for 2006, please submit your payment at a meeting or mail to the Treasurer, Ray Duron, at 530 Sterling Street, 23505. If you haven't joined yet, please consider doing so now.

<p>Name: _____</p> <p>Address: _____</p> <p>Phone #: _____</p> <p>E-mail _____</p>
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Our June meeting will be the last until September.