



# MONROE MANORISMS

December 2004 ♦ Volume 9, Issue 4

## I. A FEW WORDS FROM THE BOARD

by Gordon Jarratt



### *Happy Holidays!*

We extend holiday greetings and warm wishes to all Monroe Manor families and friends. We hope everyone has a joyous holiday season, a happy new year, and a wonderful 2005!

### *Annual Meeting Held in November*

Monroe Manor Home Owners Association, Inc. held its annual meeting on November 17. Hunter Mill District Supervisor Cathy Hudgins spoke to members about several local community issues (see page 4). The terms of two Board of Director positions had expired and were up for election (the incumbents were **Rich Schwarzkopf** and **Tom Haselhorst**). Tom Haselhorst announced his decision to step down from his position. After nominations and voting, Rich Schwarzkopf and **Doug Barbee** were elected to the Board of Directors.

### *Congratulations to Doug Barbee!*

Doug Barbee has been elected to the Board of Directors. As previous Chair of the Architectural Review Committee, Doug has provided outstanding service to our community. He has dedicated many hours to the timely and effective review of all exterior construction and landscaping requests.

Of course, each homeowner's compliance with the covenants and construction standards and guidelines is important to maintain the beautiful neighborhood we enjoy. But the ARC's role is also critical towards the successful implementation of the community standards that we expect. Thanks for your leadership Doug!

### *Board Accolades for Tom Haselhorst & Mary Wolf!*

After eight years of service to the Board and to the community, Tom Haselhorst has stepped down from his Director position. Tom has served the community for the past three years as Treasurer. He has helped establish improved (yet safe) investments for the HOA's reserve fund balances. He also worked closely with Zalco on budget reviews as well as the transition of the financial statements to a new accounting system. Prior to being Treasurer, Tom served as the HOA Vice President and President. He is an original HOA board member with his tenure dating back to when the HOA was released to homeowner control from the builder.

Tom has provided many hours of support on various community issues. His cost conscious perspectives and business background have benefited the community in many ways. Tom – many thanks for your support of the HOA!

After three+ years of service to the Board, **Mary Wolf** announced that she would step down from her Director position following the annual meeting. Mary has provided very valuable service to the HOA as Vice President. She has worked tirelessly with the landscaping and grounds maintenance vendors to keep the main entrances and common areas looking beautiful. She also initiated and maintained the Monroe Manor Contractor listing. Another visible contribution was her leadership on the tot lot equipment refresh and landscaping. Even with a team to help out, there were a myriad of details that Mary tackled and resolved.

Mary has provided tremendous support to the HOA and the community in many areas. She has always been willing to engage with others, listen to different perspectives, serve as a “mediator,” and help the community reach amicable or acceptable solutions. Mary – we will miss you!

### **Officers**

The Board of Directors met subsequent to the annual meeting, and the following Officers were elected:

- President: Rich Schwarzkopf
- Vice President: Gordon Jarratt
- Treasurer: Doug Barbee
- Secretary: Jerry Chickillo

### **Budget for 2005; New Assessment Rate**

Zalco and the Board of Directors have been working hard on the 2005 budget. The HOA is incurring a number of increased expenses (both in 2004 and projected in 2005) that will result in a dues increase. Some of these costs are related to increases in fuel, increases in tipping fees at municipal landfills, increases in labor costs, inflation, and annual increases negotiated in several multi-year contracts.

Note that the three contracts supporting the primary community needs represent about  $\frac{3}{4}$  of the HOA’s total recurring operating expenses:

- Curbside solid waste, recycling, and yard debris removal (AAA - 37%)
- Common area grounds maintenance and landscaping (Peter’s - 24%)
- Property and financial management (Zalco - 15%)

We have experienced cost increases in each of these three contracts, which are annually recurring expenses.

Some of the other “periodic” cost increases include:

- Replacement reserves study (legally required every 5 years)
- Legal fees
- New Tot Lot equipment and landscaping (funded mostly from reserves and partially by the operating budget)

Based upon these increases, Zalco’s financial

analyst proposed a 2005 budget that would have required a dues increase to \$52 per month. Treasurer Haselhorst analyzed the proposal and concurred that the overall increase in contracted expenses supported the higher monthly dues. The Board worked the numbers again and decided to reduce several expenses in the proposed budget. The net result is that the Board approved 2005 dues to be \$50/month (assessment billing is aggregated at \$150/quarter). A copy of the 2005 budget should have been received by all homeowners on December 1.

### **The new assessment is effective January 1, 2005.**

Due dates for quarterly assessment payments are:

- January 1
- April 1
- July 1, and
- October 1

Payments must be received by the 15<sup>th</sup> of the month in which they are due to avoid penalties.

Over the years, your Board has worked hard to manage costs and keep expenses down. Here is the 10 year history of Monroe Manor monthly dues:

1996	\$44.00
1997	\$47.50
1998	\$48.00
1999	\$48.00
2000	\$45.00
2001	\$45.00
2002	\$45.00
2003	\$46.67
2004	\$46.67
2005	\$50.00

When possible, the Board has voted to lower monthly dues in some years. To a certain extent, the HOA experienced several years of “economy of scale” as many homes that were not part of the original Winchester development plan were added to the community. As homes along the “west” side of Monroe Manor Drive, Fox Hound Court, and one half of Fox Woods Drive were developed and joined the HOA, some expenses (like common area grounds maintenance and landscaping) were spread out among more households. This resulted in periods of lowered dues or several years without

increases. When viewed over the 10 year period above, the average annual dues increase has been less than 1.4% per year.

### ***New Tot Lot Project Now Complete!***

*by Mary Wolf*

If you haven't been to the new tot lot yet, please stop by and check it out. Both the new play equipment and the landscaping are now fully installed and complete. We have had nothing but great feedback, so we think you (and your tots!) will be pleased. We were able to replace the old play equipment with much nicer, state of the art equipment. We no longer have the concern of arsenic treated lumber, and it turns out that our old play equipment had termites and some of the wood was rotting anyway, so our timing was perfect.

The new play structure includes: 2 bucket swings and 2 belt swings, a double slide, a curved slide, a 'bedrock' climber, talk tube, steering wheel panel, map panel, bubble panel, play store, tic-tac-toe panel and a crawl tube. The structure is made of high quality PVC coated steel and plastics (almost all earth tone colors – green/tan) which have excellent warranties and should look great for the next 10 years (hopefully longer). In addition, there is a new bench with backrest a square table with four bench seats, as well as a new trash can with a lid (to hopefully address any bee issues). There is also a sign inside stating that the structure is for residents only, no running, and no use after dark, etc.

The plantings around the tot lot currently are a bit smaller than we had hoped to be able to afford, but our logic was that it was better to replace the old scraggly plantings and several diseased trees. In 1-2 years the new plants will grow and look terrific.

Also note that the gate to the tot lot will now swing open all of the way! Special thanks go to **Gordon Jarratt, Jessica Jarratt, Kevin Halsey, and Drew Mehan** for fixing the door (removing, re-cutting, and re-hanging), and for installing the new latch.

For those of you with young children who will be able to enjoy the new tot lot, be sure to say thanks to the following neighbors on the committee who

made this happen: **Susie Belttari, Beth Casey, Dianne Ficarra, Joanne Gryski, Kristen Patel, Laura Plank, Bonnie Schwarzkopf, Tracy Silk and Gloria Spencer.**

If anyone has any questions regarding the tot lot feel free to contact Mary Wolf.

### ***Landscaping Contract Awarded***

The grounds maintenance (landscaping) contract represents about ¼ of the HOA's annual operating expenses. Since it was up for renewal, the Board requested multiple bids. After reviewing three competitive offers, the Board awarded Peter's Landscape, Inc. a three year contract to provide common area services such as grounds maintenance, mowing and turf care, mulching, tree & shrub care, leaf removal, trash bag removal, and periodic ditch/spillway cleaning. In addition to their knowledge about our community needs and property areas, Peter's has provided very good overall service and been responsive when unique requests or situations arose.

### ***Audit Contract Awarded***

Ahlberg & Company, a CPA firm in McLean, has again been selected to perform the annual audit of the HOA's financial statements for the year ending December 31, 2004.

### ***Community Asset Maintenance***

Based upon recommendations from the reserves study, the Board has contracted to provide the following special repairs and maintenance:

- Power wash the foot bridge
- Power wash and seal the Monroe Street side of the front entrance fence
- Tuck point with mortar the two front entrance walls and the six columns to secure loose stones.

The 2004 reserves study has projected future common area maintenance needs like these, which the Board will continue to use as a guide.

### ***Christmas Tree Collection by AAA***

AAA has scheduled Christmas tree pickup for Monday, January 3 and Monday, January 10. Residents must remove all tinsel and ornaments

and place their trees curbside. Trees that are not collected on these two dates may be placed at the curb on a regular pick-up day after January 10.

Note that solid waste pickup during and after the holidays is at a much higher volume than the rest of the year. Delays may result because of additional mid-day trips to the disposal facility to unload the collection truck. In addition, inclement winter weather can adversely affect service. AAA customer service can be reached at 703-818-8222.

### ***Monroe Manor Directory Update***

We will update the Monroe Manor Directory in 2005. Laurie Gibson will once again lead this task. More details will be provided in the March newsletter.

### ***Supervisor Cathy Hudgins Attends Annual Meeting***

Hunter Mill District Supervisor Cathy Hudgins spoke with Monroe Manor residents and answered questions at our November 17 annual HOA meeting. Some of the highlights included:

#### Roads/traffic signals:

- The intersection at Monroe Street and West Ox Road will receive a future traffic signal (possibly in 2006)
- The intersection at West Ox Road and McLearen Road will also receive a future traffic signal (also several years out)
- The intersection at New Parkland Drive and West Ox Road is not a candidate for a traffic light (but the other two future lights on West Ox should help “break up” the traffic flow at this intersection)
- VDOT is studying lane alignment issues at the intersection of Monroe Street and Fox Mill Road (no immediate improvements expected)
- When Fairfax County Parkway is widened to six lanes in the future (again several years out), an environmental study will likely be required to determine if the increase in traffic and noise level would require the installation of sound barriers for residents living near the Parkway. [Note: highway improvements built with federal funds automatically require noise abatement studies and funding for barriers (if

warranted). Highway improvements funded solely by Virginia state and local funds do not require the noise study, and in most cases funding for noise barriers is not provided. VDOT will pay for 50% of sound barriers, but local governments typically want their 50% share (funded by limited budgets) to go into road building rather than sound barriers.]

#### Schools:

- A new “Coppermine” elementary school could possibly be constructed as early as FY07 (with early funding being provided by an FCPS land sale). This would relieve overcrowding primarily at McNair (and possibly some at Floris)
- Westfield High School may receive funding for an extension design in 2005, with construction completed by 2007
- No imminent proposals to change any of the three school boundaries (Westfield, Rachel Carson, or Floris) are currently known.

#### Metrorail:

- Phase I of the Metrorail extension to Reston now has generally secure government funding commitments (25% local share, 25% state, and 50% federal)
- The Phase I Wiehle Avenue Metrorail station may be open by 2011
- The local government portion for the Phase II extension (from Reston through Herndon to Dulles Airport) will be funded by a second special tax district comprised of commercial property owners surrounding the Dulles rail corridor (businesses and property owners are voluntarily taxing themselves because they will receive enhanced building and land values after rail is constructed)
- Property development surrounding our local Herndon-Monroe Park and Ride is already zoned properly and mostly built out. When a Metro station is constructed here in the future, we will likely experience little local re-development (if necessary, the existing parking structure can be expanded).

So when will Phase II of Metrorail to Dulles be completed? Answer -- still many years from today.

### ***Home Sales Prices Increasing***

Home ownership in Monroe Manor continues to be an excellent investment. Did you know that 14 Monroe Manor homes have been sold in the past 17 months? Recent sale prices were between \$475,000 – \$780,000 (average \$627,000). Each of these homes was originally purchased during 1993-1998 for prices between \$289,000 – \$378,000 (average \$334,000). Based upon this sample, average sales prices have increased between 64% - 106% over an average ownership period of 8 years (average 86% increase).

### ***Neighborhood Vandalism – Keep Front Lights On***

On October 10, 2004, a Monroe Manor family in the 12800 block of New Parkland Drive found their vehicle vandalized. This was the second time in one year they have experienced this problem. The Franklin Farm area has also experienced a recent increase in vandalism incidents.

All incidents like this need to be reported to the Fairfax County Police Department. Dial 911 for high priority emergencies. Lower priority incidents or suspicious activity reports should be called in to 703-691-2131. Upon request an officer will be dispatched. Residents with specific concerns should also contact the Reston District Police Station (which patrols our local Oak Hill area) at 703-478-0904. You can either make an in-person visit (at 12000 Bowman Towne Drive, near the Reston Library), or you can request an officer visit in your home. A good contact is **Crime Prevention Officer Robyn Jones (703-478-0799)**. Please also report all incidents to the Board at [MonroeManorHOA@cox.net](mailto:MonroeManorHOA@cox.net).

**All residents are reminded to please keep your front lamp posts turned on and in working order to help deter vandalism and crime.**

### ***Snow Removal in Monroe Manor***

It is wintertime, and we can again expect several big snowfalls. The HOA has previously explored privately contracted snow removal services. However the costs seemed excessive and would require a further dues increase, so this has not been pursued further. Here are some tips and reminders

about snow removal and snow plowing:

- When snow is forecast, consider parking your cars in the driveway. Vehicles parked in the streets and cul-de-sacs hamper the progress and effectiveness of snow plows.
- The pipe-stems in Monroe Manor are privately owned driveways, and snow removal is the responsibility of the adjacent property owners.
- Snow removal for all other Monroe Manor streets is the responsibility of the Virginia Department of Transportation. If your street has not been plowed after a reasonable period of time, you may report it to VDOT at 703-383-2800 or 703-383-8368. Note that snow plowing along residential subdivision streets like ours is a lower priority than the plowing of highways and primary streets. VDOT's Northern Virginia office can be reached via e-mail at: [novainfo@virginiadot.org](mailto:novainfo@virginiadot.org)
- Snow removal along the sidewalks is the collective responsibility of all residents. Please think about the safety of school children and remember to clear all sidewalks along the front of your home. Failure to do this means that children have to walk in the streets to get to the bus stop. In past years, many homeowners have teamed up to also shovel the snow along the sidewalks which are not directly in front of a home. Thanks to all of the volunteers who look out for the safety of our children!
- When shoveling the end of your driveway and front sidewalks, consider tossing the snow into the yard (not in the street). Why? Because more snow in the road means more snow pushed back into your driveway when the plow comes along!

After a snowfall, each resident can help with the restoration of services such as mail and newspaper delivery, and solid waste collection and recycling. Please remember to “dig out” the area within 10 feet of your mail box and ensure there are no obstructions (such as snow mounds or vehicles). Try to provide some space between the location of your mailbox, and the location of the solid waste bins and recycling containers. Your service providers will appreciate it.

### ***Fairfax Water -- Winter Tips & Rate Increase***

The Fairfax County Water Authority has changed its name to Fairfax Water. Here are some of their winterization tips to help prevent frozen pipe disasters:

- Water pipelines going to outside faucets should be turned off and drained
- Consider wrapping or insulating your water pipes, especially those near outside walls and spigots
- Eliminate drafts by caulking any openings near water pipes
- If you will be away from your home, leave the heat at a reasonable level
- Locate and mark the main water cutoff valve for your home (typically in our basements near the main water line entry to our homes).

More winterization information is available at:

[http://www.fairfaxwater.org/current/winter\\_tips.htm](http://www.fairfaxwater.org/current/winter_tips.htm).

Fairfax Water is proposing to raise water rates by a nickel (from \$1.40 to \$1.45 per 1000 gallons) effective April 1, 2005. The average total annual household water bill would increase about \$4.80 per year. Fairfax Water's customer service number is 703-698-5800. Details about the test results for the purity and quality of our tap water are in the 2004 water report: [http://www.fcwa.org/water/ccr/water\\_report\\_2004.pdf](http://www.fcwa.org/water/ccr/water_report_2004.pdf).

### ***Herndon Observer & Herndon Times Circulation***

The *Herndon Observer* recently changed our newspaper service from U.S. Postal (mailbox) delivery to home (driveway) delivery. The *Herndon Times* continues with driveway delivery. Most residents enjoy the "home town news" flavor of these local papers, along with their good coverage of local school team sports. Note that if you want to stop *Herndon Observer* delivery (either for a few days or permanently), you can contact circulation at 703-437-5886 or at [www.observernews.com/index.shtml](http://www.observernews.com/index.shtml).

*Herndon Times* circulation can be reached at 703-437-5400 or at [www.timescommunity.com](http://www.timescommunity.com).

### ***Local Transportation Improvements, and Metrorail to Reston Remains on Track***

In November 2004, Congress approved a \$388 billion federal spending bill. Included was \$25 million for the preliminary engineering to extend Metrorail from West Falls Church with five new stations between Tyson's Corner and Reston (Wiehle Ave). With this federal government share (local and state funding for this phase was already provided), completion of this detailed design phase of the project is assured.

Other transportation improvements funded in the federal bill include:

- Traffic light synchronization along Route 50 between eastern Loudoun County and the intersection with Interstate 66 (near Fair Oaks Mall)
- Traffic light synchronization along Route 28 between Manassas and Route 7
- Traffic light synchronization at 20 intersections west of Tyson's Corner along Route 7, and
- \$1 million to study the impact if I 66 West from Rosslyn to the Fairfax County border (at Falls Church) was widened.

### ***Large Development Proposed Across from McLearen Square Shopping Center (some local school information included)***

The land surrounding the "EDS building" is being proposed for a new "Town Center" development. The 161 acre parcel is located south of McLearen Road, west of Centreville Road, east of Route 28, and north of Wall Road. It would be across the street from the western part of the Chantilly Highlands subdivision (near Kinross Circle). Portions of the proposal would be upscale and similar to the new Fairfax Corner development (a very nice retail, restaurant, office use, town home mixed development off of Monument Drive near Fair Oaks Mall).

The current zoning on the property is for commercial office use. The proposed development would request a change in zoning to allow a mixed use including 50% office, 45% residential, and 5% retail business. No residential or retail land use had previously been planned for this area. This is primarily because of the noise contours around

Dulles airport (industrial or office zoning is preferred around commercial airports). As a result, important public facilities such as schools and parks have not been provided for this area.

The residential proposal is for 960 new dwelling units (290 single family attached town homes, and 670 multifamily unit apartments). Some residential units would be located above retail businesses and restaurants. There would be a central plaza in the town center. The village setting would theoretically allow many people to live, work, shop, and play within one local community. Four baseball diamonds and a soccer field are proposed on 11 acres on the southern portion of the parcel.

The proposed residential units would result in approximately 260 new students for the school system (153 elementary, 35 middle, 72 high school). The proposed "Coppermine" elementary school would accommodate 950 students and relieve overcrowding at both McNair and Floris Elementary schools. Although "Coppermine" is in the FCPS FY2005-2009 Capital Improvement Plan, construction funding has not been approved and the anticipated opening date is September 2010 (this date could change based upon the recent school land sale – see "local school news").

Westfield, Chantilly, and Centreville High Schools are grossly overcrowded with a combined capacity deficit of over 1400 students by the 2008-2009 school year. Bond funding has been approved for construction of a 24 classroom addition at Westfield, and for semi-permanent modular additions at Chantilly and Centreville, but this construction still cannot absorb new students from the proposed residential dwelling units. If additional residential use was to be approved, planning officials strongly encourage that a new high school site (requiring 60-70 acres) and construction funding first be identified.

Several public hearings would be held before any type of zoning change would be approved. County zoning and planning staff find many merits to the proposal but ultimately do not recommend

approval until the school capacity deficit is addressed.

This link shows a map of the proposed town center:

[http://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/gov/bos/sud/apr\\_pdf/04-III-6DS.pdf](http://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/gov/bos/sud/apr_pdf/04-III-6DS.pdf)

Here is the preliminary staff analysis of the proposal:

[http://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/gov/bos/sud/apr\\_pdf/6DS\\_PRELIMSTAFFREPORT.pdf](http://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/gov/bos/sud/apr_pdf/6DS_PRELIMSTAFFREPORT.pdf)

***Do you have a winter coat you no longer need? Donate it to charity and receive a tax deduction***

Reston Interfaith and Supervisor Cathy Hudgins are partnering for the 3<sup>rd</sup> year to sponsor the 2004 Hunter Mill District Winter Coat Closet for adults and children in need. The Winter Coat Closet is open from now until February 12, 2005.

Reston Interfaith is looking for donations of new and "gently used" winter coats. They should be in good condition (used coats should be dry cleaned before donating). Both child and adult sizes are needed (XLs are especially appreciated). All donations are tax deductible. For more information contact Faye Yu at 703-481-8276 or [Faye.Yu@restoninterfaith.org](mailto:Faye.Yu@restoninterfaith.org)

***Reminder: Tis the Season...***

Do you receive the daily local newspaper? Do you have a regular yard worker, or person to help with house cleaning, or child care provider? Do you have home delivery of dry cleaning or groceries? Don't forget to remember these dedicated and helpful people that provide you with services throughout the year. If you feel inclined, they would appreciate your gratuities during the holiday season.

***Air & Space Museum Expands***

During November and December 2004, the Udvar Hazy Air and Space Museum has significantly expanded. The existing aircraft and artifacts in the aviation hangars have been spectacular. Now they have opened the 53,000 sq. ft. James S. McDonnell [space hangar](#).

This was previously inaccessible because of the

space shuttle Enterprise's refurbishment. With that project complete, 113 large space artifacts along with 500 smaller artifacts have been installed in the exhibition hall. The space hangar has four main themes: rocketry and missiles; human spaceflight; application satellites, and space science. In addition to the Enterprise, some of the larger space artifacts include an instrument ring segment of a Saturn V rocket, a Space Shuttle main engine, cruise missiles, satellites, and space telescopes.

In addition to the new space hangar, 21 additional aircraft have been added to the 82 previously on display in the aviation hangers.

### ***2005 Board of Director Meetings***

Here are the scheduled 2005 Monroe Manor Board of Director meetings:

- February 16
- May 18
- August 17
- November 16 (Annual HOA Meeting)

Meetings are generally held quarterly, at 7:30 pm on the 3<sup>rd</sup> Wednesday of the month. Residents are welcome to attend. Please contact a Board member to confirm the specific time and location.

## **II. ARC NEWS**

*by Doug Barbee*

### ***Special Note from the Architectural Review Committee Chairman***

After five and a half years of serving on the ARC, the past four as the chairman, I will be vacating my position on the ARC in December 2004. I have been elected to join the Monroe Manor HOA Board as the new Treasurer of the community. I would like to thank all residents of Monroe Manor for their efforts in working with me and the rest of the ARC to ensure that our community remains one of the most desirable areas in which to live. I would also like to sincerely thank the other members of the ARC, past and present, for their time and unselfish support in reviewing and approving plans, performing inspections, helping neighbors work out issues regarding changes in the community, and generally making my job a whole lot easier.

A new ARC chairman, as well as a replacement for my position representing the homeowners on Fallon Drive and Brafferton Court, should be appointed soon. I hope that all of you will continue to support the ARC by submitting all proposed changes to the exterior of properties to the ARC, via Zalco, on an approved application form with details of the change(s) attached, before you or your contractor begin work. As always, if you have any questions, please don't hesitate to ask an ARC member or attend one of their meetings. Remember that all ARC submissions must be received by Zalco by the last day of the month. ARC meetings are typically held during the 2<sup>nd</sup> week of each month at an ARC member's house. For the exact date and location, please contact your ARC representative.

Again, thanks for the support over the years, and I look forward to the opportunity to continue to serve the neighborhood as a member of the Board.

*Note: The ARC will be assessing its vacancy and be working with the Board to select a new ARC Chairman.*

## **III. COMMUNITY EVENTS**

*by Judy May*

**Sunday, December 12 4:00pm - Men's Annual Football Event** Once again it will be held at Glory Days in Fox Mill Plaza - not original but always a good time. We need someone who can go at 3:30pm to hold the table. Glory Days will not allow us to have a reservation - let us know if you can help. Come enjoy the holiday and cheer on the Redskins with some of your neighbors.

**Friday, December 17 7:00pm - Annual Monroe Manor Ladies Gathering** at 2508 Tatnuck Court. It's a chance to relax and socialize with your neighbors and if you care to, participate in a holiday gift exchange. If you have a favorite appetizer or dessert recipe, please bring a sampling to share (if you're stretched for time, just come and enjoy--beverages will be provided). If you would like to participate in the gift exchange, bring a wrapped gift (\$10 max.).

For planning purposes, please RSVP to Janice

Micka by Tuesday, December 14 and let her know what you will be bringing. Thanks and we'll see you there!

**Looking ahead to 2005:**

**May** – Annual Progressive Dinner will be coordinated by **Judy May**.

**Spring Outdoor Family Event** – Need an idea and a coordinator.

**Summer Happy Hours** – Need a new coordinator for the 2005 summer season.

Remember the best way to keep in touch is through e-mail. If you are not getting social updates, or want to stop getting social updates, please send an email to Judy May .

***Special Events, Local Festivities, and Holidays!***  
*By Gordon Jarratt*

**December:**

- 1 (thru Jan. 8) – Miracle of Lights (Bull Run Park)
- 8-15 Hanukkah
- 9-12 – Sesame Street Live (Patriot Center)
- 10-12 – Christmas Show (Dulles Expo)
- 10-26 – Washington Ballet The Nutcracker (Warner)
- 11 (and Dec 18) – Reston Carriage Rides
- 12 – Monroe Manor Men's Football Event (4:00 pm at Glory Day's Grill, Fox Mill, Redskins football )**
- 17 – Monroe Manor Ladies' Holiday Celebration (7:00 pm at 2508 Tatnuck Court, Janice Micka's home)**
- 17 – Maggie Sansone's Celtic Holiday Celebration (Herndon's Industrial Strength Theatre – Sunset Business Park)
- 17-19 – Gem & Jewelry Show (Dulles Expo)
- 18 – Santa Paws (Pet Photos at Reston Town Ctr.)
- 18 – Santa's Workshop (Herndon Community Ctr.)
- 19 – Hayrides with Santa (Frying Pan)
- 21 – Winter begins
- 22 – Hayrides with Santa (Frying Pan)
- 23 – Doc Scantlin & his Imperial Palms Orchestra ("Big Band" event at Swizzle, Ronald Reagan Building, 1300 PA Ave., D.C.)

- 24 – Water Skiing Santa and his Kick Boarding Reindeer (1 pm, Columbia Island Marina; Lady Bird Johnson Park, Potomac River)
- 25 – Christmas Day
- 26-30 – Adventures of Tom Sawyer (Kennedy Ctr.)
- 26 (thru Jan 1) – Kwanzaa
- 26 (thru Jan. 2) Auto Show (D.C. Convention. Ctr.)
- 29-30 – Holiday Concerts at Sully Historic Site
- 31 – New Year's Eve
- 31 – First Night Leesburg (nice family event)

**January:**

- 1 – Happy New Year!
- 1-2 – Custom Motorcycle Show (Dulles Expo)
- 6 – Doc Scantlin & his Imperial Palms Orchestra ("Big Band" event at Swizzle, Ronald Reagan Building, 1300 PA Ave., D.C.)
- 8-9 – 13<sup>th</sup> Annual Winter Hunt County Antiques Show (Holiday Inn Leesburg)
- 14 – Lee-Jackson Day
- 14-16 – Camping & RV Expo (Dulles Expo)
- 17 – Martin Luther King Day
- 20 – Presidential Inauguration Day
- 21-23 – Washington Golf Show (Dulles Expo)
- 28-30 – Sugarloaf Craft Festival; also Home Decorating Expo (Dulles Expo)

**February:**

- 2 – Ground Hog Day (did he see his shadow?)
- 9 – Ash Wednesday
- 12 – Abraham Lincoln's Birthday
- 14 – Valentine's Day
- 17 – The Barker of Seville (Blue Sky Puppet Show at the Worldgate Movie Theatre)
- 19 – Almost Recess A Cappella Experience (Industrial Strength Theatre)
- 21 – President's Day Holiday
- 21 – Yogi and the Rainbow (Backpack Puppets at the Worldgate Movie Theatre)
- 22 – George Washington's Birthday
- 24-27 – Home & Garden Show (Dulles Expo)

**March:**

- 10-13 – National Capital Boat Show (Dulles Expo)
- 17 – St. Patrick's Day
- 18-20 – Horse Show – 2<sup>nd</sup> Annual Equine Event East (Dulles Expo)

- 20 – Palm Sunday
- 20 – Spring begins
- 27 – Easter Sunday
- 27 – The Easter Bunny!

**IV. LOCAL SCHOOL NEWS**

*by Gordon Jarratt*

***Westfield and FCPS SAT Scores***

SAT scores measure basic verbal and mathematical abilities, and abilities to reason, that students have acquired over many years both in and out of school.

Test scores should not be the sole measure of instructional quality or comparisons between school systems. Here are the average Westfield SAT scores for the class of 2004, along with those from other local public high schools (reported by FCPS):

<u>High School</u>	<u>Verbal 2004</u>	<u>Math 2004</u>	<u>Total 2004</u>
<b>Westfield</b>	<b>537</b>	<b>554</b>	<b>1091</b>
Oakton	578	591	1169
Herndon	547	555	1102
Chantilly	543	560	1103
Centreville	531	563	1094
Thom. Jeff.	739	756	1495
FCPS Avg.	557	570	1127
VA Avg.	515	509	1024
USA Avg.	508	518	1026

Note that FCPS-reported scores are more accurate (and slightly higher than) those scores reported by the College Board. The FCPS-reported scores:

- Exclude students who took the SAT at an FCPS school, but reside in other jurisdictions
- Exclude home-schooled student scores
- Exclude students who took the SAT but did not graduate with their class of 2004
- Only count the highest score if a student took the SAT multiple times.

***FCPS Announces Land Sale***

The School system has agreed to sell 35.5 acres of surplus land in the Pohick area to home developer Van Metre for \$12 million. This land was originally proffered to FCPS in the 1960s for future new school construction. But there was a catch – the agreement stipulated that the land would return to the developer if a school was not built.

With acquisition of the former D.C./Lorton prison property (now called Laurel Hill), FCPS decided to build a needed south county high school at Laurel Hill instead of the vacant land in nearby Pohick. Some residents are upset about forested land being given back to developers. But with these specific proffers, the School Board had little choice.

So how does this affect Monroe Manor? Well the \$12 million sale means that FCPS will be able to accelerate a number of new school building projects. One of these may be the new “Coppermine” elementary school (capacity 950 new students near the River Birch Road & Coppermine Road intersection).

This proposed school may now be able to open two years early and help relieve some of the elementary school overcrowding that is being experienced in our nearby schools, particularly McNair. “Coppermine” elementary may also relieve any significant overcrowding at Floris Elementary.

***FCPS to Purchase Headquarters Building***

Fairfax County has the 12<sup>th</sup> largest school system in the country. The Fairfax County Public School’s operating budget for 2004-2005 is \$1.8 billion.

In November, FCPS proposed to spend \$160 million for two school administration headquarters buildings in Merrifield. School officials initially said that consolidating 1,300 employees from 17 sites around the county would save \$5 million over a 30 year period and make school operations more effective. Later, when the School Board approved the plan, school spokesman Paul Regnier indicated that the plan to consolidate headquarters may break even rather than save money. The following week,

School officials stated a new analysis showed the project would save \$47 million over 30 years.

Funding for the new complex would come from bonds issued by the county's Economic Development Authority. Debt payments would come from funds currently used to lease office space, savings from the travel budget, and funds that would have been used to maintain existing administrative buildings (many are very old).

The current proposal is to move 642 employees from seven buildings to a 209,000 sq.-ft. building in the 8000 block of Gatehouse Road in Merrifield. In addition, FCPS would like to buy an adjacent 3+ acre parcel on which a second building would be constructed. This building would co-locate 659 more employees from ten other locations.

Regnier stated that the project would not affect plans to build new schools. The 17 existing FCPS buildings (14 owned; three leased) would be converted into schools or sold. Any revenue would be used for school construction or renovation. The consolidation proposal would also eliminate about 40 staff positions over five years because fewer administrative, clerical and janitorial employees would be needed.

The Fairfax County Board of Supervisors was surprised it had not been briefed in advance about the proposal. Supervisors have final approval authority for the FCPS headquarters transaction. They asked the schools to further address several concerns such as cost projections and plans to keep moving more students from trailers into permanent classrooms. Currently, 9,493 of the County's 166,000 public school students take classes in 700 trailers located outside of the main buildings. The trailer replacement strategy includes both new addition construction as well as "semi-permanent buildings" that are attached by hallways to main buildings. Officials state these provide a much better academic atmosphere than the trailers.

On December 6, the County Supervisors approved a portion of the School's request. They agreed to spend \$62.8 million to purchase the existing building and adjacent land. FCPS was told to return later with more financing and cost/benefit information before the request to build a second building on the land

would be considered.

### ***Gifted and Talented Program***

Fairfax County Public Schools is hosting three information nights for parents interested in learning more about "gifted and talented" programs and services. Meetings will be Jan. 11 at Langley High School, Jan. 13 at Edison High School, and Jan. 19 at W.T. Woodson High School. For more information, call 703-846-8670, or link to <http://www.fcps.edu/DIS/gt/connections.htm> .

### ***No Child Left Behind***

A Herndon parent received answers to several specific questions about the No Child Left Behind law and the recent impact on student transfers between several local schools (McNair, Oak Hill, and Fox Mill Elementary).

This link has the details: <http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/articles/A25309-2004Dec1.html> .

## **V. ANNOUNCEMENTS**

### ***Monroe Manor Contractor List***

Effective December 2004, **Kathy Lawson** has agreed to maintain the Monroe Manor Contractor List. Hey neighbors, the list still needs your input! Have you hired contractors for:

- Basement finishing
- Brickwork/stonework
- Carpentry
- Countertops/Granite
- Draperies/window treatments
- Dry wall/plastering
- Heating/AC
- Patios
- Plumbing
- Roofing
- Sprinkler systems (lawn)
- Sunroom/patio enclosures
- Tile
- Window cleaning/installation/repair

If so, please send a note with the contractor information to Kathy Lawson so she can update the listing. Thanks!

### ***Hokies and Wahoos are Bowl Bound!***

("special sports dispatch" for all Monroe Manor UVA and Virginia Tech alumni, students and fans,

by Gordon Jarratt)

Congratulations to both the University of Virginia Cavaliers and Virginia Tech Hokies for their outstanding 2004 NCAA college football success. Both had winning seasons, both are ranked in the top 20 nationwide, and both are playing in post-season bowls!

Background for UVA:

- Pre-season projections to finish 3rd in the ACC (Atlantic Coast Conference)
- Pre-season national rankings were 16<sup>th</sup> in the AP poll (“sports writers”)
- Pre-season national rankings were 19<sup>th</sup> in the USA Today/ESPN poll (“coaches”).

Actual results for UVA’s regular season:

- Finished 4<sup>th</sup> in the ACC (5-3 ACC; 8-3 overall)
- Nationally ranked 18<sup>th</sup> in the AP poll
- Nationally ranked 18<sup>th</sup> in the USA Today/ESPN poll
- Nationally ranked 18<sup>th</sup> in the BCS.

The Cavaliers delivered on the preseason predictions and had a great season. They will be playing on Monday, December 27 in the **MPC Computers Bowl** against Fresno State (5-3 WAC; 8-3 overall). This Bowl (formerly the Humanitarian Bowl) will be played at Bronco Stadium in Boise, Idaho (2:00 pm on ESPN; 30,000 capacity; estimated payout is \$750,000).

Fresno State finished the season 3rd in the Western Athletic Conference and is coming in with a five game winning streak. This will be the Bulldog’s 6<sup>th</sup> consecutive bowl game, and the Cavaliers’ 3<sup>rd</sup> consecutive bowl appearance. Virginia vs. Fresno State should be a very competitive match-up.

Background for Virginia Tech:

- Pre-season projections to finish 6<sup>th</sup> in the ACC
- No pre-season national rankings in either the AP or USA Today/ESPN polls (the Hokies were left out of the 2004 pre-season Top 20 for the first time after six consecutive years of rankings).

Actual results for Virginia Tech’s regular season:

- Finished 1<sup>st</sup> in the ACC (7-1 ACC; 10-2 overall)

- Nationally ranked 9<sup>th</sup> in the AP poll
- Nationally ranked 9<sup>th</sup> in the USA Today/ESPN poll
- Nationally ranked 8<sup>th</sup> in the BCS.

The Hokies beat all pre-season projections and had a fantastic season. They have claimed the 2004 ACC league title – finishing in first place over 11 teams in their inaugural year, and receiving an automatic Bowl Championship Series berth. They will be playing on Monday, January 3 in the **Sugar Bowl** against Auburn (8-0 in the SEC; 12-0 overall). Auburn is the Southeastern Conference Champion and has an impressive undefeated season. The Tigers are currently ranked 3rd in the AP and USA Today/ESPN polls, and the BCS.

Here are the top four BCS championship bowls:

- FedEx Orange Bowl (Jan. 4 – national championship -- USC [12-0] vs. Oklahoma [12-0])
- Nokia Sugar Bowl (Jan. 3 – Auburn [12-0] vs. Virginia Tech [10-2])
- Tostitos Fiesta Bowl (Jan .1 – Utah [11-0] vs. Pittsburg [8-3])
- Rose Bowl (Jan. 1 – Texas [10-1] vs. Michigan [9-2])

The Sugar Bowl will be played at the Superdome in New Orleans, Louisiana (8:00 pm on ABC; 75,000 capacity; estimated payout between \$11-14 million). The Hokies are coming in with an 8 game winning streak (including a win over Virginia, and an upset victory over Miami). This is the 12<sup>th</sup> consecutive bowl appearance for Virginia Tech, and their 3<sup>rd</sup> appearance in the Sugar Bowl.

With an undefeated season, the Tigers were disappointed they were not invited to the championship game (Auburn has a 14 game winning streak). The Hokies will have a challenging game ahead.

Congratulations again to both the Wahoos and the Hokies!