



The Community Advocate

Virginia Beach Council of Civic Organizations

P.O. Box 9252 Virginia Beach, VA 23450-9252

<http://vbcco.org>

March 2010 Volume 51 - Number 3

March's General Meeting Topic:

What does the Planning Commission have Planned?

A panel discussion with the city's planning commission. Find out what they have been planning!

March 10, 7pm to 8:30pm

*Meyera Oberndorf Central Library
4100 Virginia Beach Blvd*

Other Important Dates:

CCO's Board of Directors:

March 24, 7 pm to 9 pm

*Meyera Oberndorf Central Library
4100 Virginia Beach Blvd*

Please mark your calendars for these upcoming meetings:

April 14 **Does Richmond Love Me?** Annual meeting with State Delegates & Senators.

May 12 **Light Rail**—Meet the new President of HRT. Find out his plan for Light Rail in Virginia Beach.

Any CCO member-in-good-standing may reprint any article from the CCO newsletter or website provided that no changes are made to the article and that CCO is cited as the original source. Non-members may request permission to reprint CCO articles.

All VBCCO meetings will begin at 7pm at the Meyera Oberndorf Central Library

VBCCO's Annual Awards Banquet Saturday, March 6 6 p.m. Westin Town Center

There are still tickets available.

Go to:

<http://vbcco2010banquet.eventbrite.com/>

A Message from the President

Hello to Everyone

Where does the time go? Our annual Awards Banquet is coming up on Sat. March 6, 2010. We have been working hard to put together a great event. Our M. C. will be Tom Schadd with News Channel 10. Our Congressman Glenn Nye, will be presenting our hard working members with their well deserved awards.

Our Advocacy Task force is looking to get our members opinions and views on different issues facing our City. They have been putting together a plan to gather input in an open and fair way, so that we get a true representation of our views as the leading Homeowners organization in our City. I will keep everyone up to date as the plan comes together.

I look forward to seeing everyone at the Awards Banquet. This is our time to look at just how much we help our City to be the best place to live in Virginia. Good food, good folks, and a good time. See everyone there.

SamReid

Community Calendar

City Council Meetings:

Tuesday, Mar 9 6 p.m.
Tuesday, Mar 23 6 p.m.
Council Chambers,
Building 1

March 6

**Annual Awards
Banquet**
Westin Town Center
Email Jay Kerr at
jkerr@vbcco.org for more
Information and discount
Tickets

March 10

**General Membership
Meeting**
7 p.m.
Meyera Oberndorf
Central Library

March 20 & 21

Shamrock 1/2 Marathon &
8K Run
www.shamrock.com

Mark your calendars:

July 14

Party in the Park
*Mark your calendars for
this annual event to be
held at Mount Trashmore.
Check the newsletter in
the upcoming months for
more information!*
****SPONSORSHIP
OPPORTUNITIES ARE
AVAILABLE****

City Seeking Caregivers

The Virginia Beach Respite Care Program for the Elderly is looking for respite caregivers. The program provides in-home relief to caregivers of the elderly and impaired individuals.

Respite caregivers are paid for their services and can work as much or as little as they choose. It is helpful to have some experience working with individuals who have memory impairment. No nursing or home health aide credentials are required, but a caring and kind attitude is necessary.

The program will hold its annual training Monday, March 29 through Friday, April 2 from 9 a.m. to 2 p.m. The classes will be held at the Virginia Beach Higher Education Center, 1881 University Drive, Room 218.

In order to participate in the training, interested individuals must complete an application and a face-to-face interview. Participants must also undergo a criminal record check and fingerprinting at the city's expense after they complete the training program.

Respite care is part of the city's Senior Adult Services Division within the Department of Human Services' Mental Health Substance Abuse Division.

For more information and/or an application, call (757) 385-4135 or (757) 385-4128.

Book Drive

The Old Coast Guard Station is housed on 25th street in the 1903 Life Saving Station. It helps preserve the history of Virginia's Coastal Community, especially the resort community of Virginia Beach. On May 1st we will have the second annual Book Sale. The She Crab Soup Cook Off will be next door at the 25th street park. Last year over 4500 books were collected. Books sold for \$.50 to \$1.00 and \$1600 was raised to help support this preserver of history. In order to do it again, we need book donations. Books are being collected at the home of Zoe and Tom Fisher at 625 Surfside Avenue for the next two months. Tom can also come to your home to pick them up, 422-1223. Please use this opportunity to clear off bookshelves, get rid of cookbooks, children's books VCRs, DVDS, puzzles, etc. All books not sold are donated to the Judeo Christian Outreach Shelter. This is an easy project that helps preserve our history! Thanks in advance! Tell your friends and other organizations!

Mulch and Feed your Gardens for Free

In Today's throwaway society, there is absolutely no need to go out and purchase mulch material for your [garden](#), unless it is for the particular aesthetic appearance, "The Look", sake of the mulch material.

Were you aware that there are a number of mulching materials that you can obtain from around your own community that are free, and some of which can even be even delivered to you for nothing as well.

Impossible you might say. Well I mulch my gardens fairly heavily, and I never pay a cent for the mulch material. As a matter of fact, most of the mulch is willingly delivered to my home for nothing. As the former owners are only too glad to see the back of it, as it would cost them money, time and effort to find other ways of getting rid of it.

I also combine these outside sources of mulch with my own compost, weeds and other [organic](#) matter mixed through to achieve a great result in my garden, and so all that it costs me is time and effort.

So what am I talking about? While some of the below list is delivered free, other items I pick up myself, depending on time, circumstances, importance etc.

Grass Clippings from other people in the area or from [lawn-mowing](#) contractors.

Wood shavings from local wood turners and carvers, (Do not use shavings from treated timber).

Small amounts of solid fill from friends who are excavating. This is to assist in raising garden beds, in my heavy clay soil.

Light prunings from [shrubs](#) which is shredded by me or put whole into garden

Heavier sticks and logs, which are turned into [trellis](#), garden stakes, garden edges, seats, frames, log planters etc. while they slowly decay.

Newspaper, cardboard, non-rubber carpet underlay, and even carpet and carpet squares. Which is put under other mulch to prevent grass and weed regrowth

Animal manures sometimes mixed with straw from places like Racetracks and Showgrounds, Pony Clubs, Stables etc. I contact them well beforehand to see if any is available.

To this I also add my own weeds, throwing away some which can still be a potential problem, or burying them below the bottom most layer of mulch material to stop them regrowing.

Another item I add is any old potting mix from deceased plants or when repotting plants.

RESPONDING TO GRAFFITI

Your reaction to graffiti should be immediate. All the negative impacts of graffiti – instilling fear, costing time and resources to remove it, lowering property values, etc, are lessened if action is taken sooner rather than later.

Record it

The advice is to never remove graffiti until the police have documented it. However, if there is a delay in their arrival and you urgently need to remove it, taking extensive, date-stamped color photographs of the graffiti will be helpful for the police. Be detailed in your notes of the location or other specific information.

Report it

Don't assume that someone else has reported or will report it. Please call the police to report graffiti anytime you see it, and *especially* if you see someone in the act. The police photograph, inventory and analyze all graffiti. They may work with neighboring law enforcement to apprehend offenders or turn the case over to the Police Department's Gang Unit and appropriate follow-up is conducted by unit detectives.

Remove it

Remember, quick removal is the way to discourage graffiti, and it is much easier to remove when fresh. If the vandalism is on your property, you are responsible for removing it. If it is on another's property, please call the property owner so that they promptly remove it.

Cont. on next page

CA DAY 2010

The Southeastern Virginia Chapter of Community Association Institute has been active in the Hampton Roads area since 1981 as America's Advocate for Responsible Communities. We are a nonprofit organization whose purpose is to provide education, legislative advocacy and to act as a clearing house for ideas and practices that encourage the successful operation and management of all types of residential common interest communities in the area. CAI has about 29,000 members in 56 chapters throughout the United States and in several foreign countries. The Southeastern Virginia Chapter has over 650 members and represents approximately 75,000 residents in the Hampton Roads.

We write to extend you a *complimentary* invitation to attend CA Day 2010. Please mark your calendar for:

CA DAY 2010
Taking the Mystery out of Community Association Living
Virginia Beach Convention Center
Saturday, March 27, 2009
8:30 a.m. – 4:30 p.m.

Our trade show will offer 15 classes for all attendees presented by professionals in the Hampton Roads area. A hot breakfast and lunch buffet will be served and gives you a chance to meet our members and guests.

As a leader in your community you will not want to miss this special event. To take advantage of this *complimentary* invitation pre-registration is requested. Please visit our website at www.sevacai.com/CADAY to learn more about this event or to register.

Cont. from previous pg It is easier to remove the graffiti than to repaint. Below is a table that describes the most effective removal method for different surfaces and defacing materials.

Surface	Method of Graffiti	Removal Method
Painted wood or metal	Pens	Denatured alcohol or Lift Off or similar product
Painted wood, concrete or metal	Spray paint	Denatured alcohol or repaint
Traffic signal boxes	Any	Lift Off or similar product
Unpainted concrete, stucco or aggregate	Pens or spray paint	Lift Off or similar product, then water under pressure with a wire brush
Glass or plastic	Pens, spray paint or stickers	Window scraper, then denatured alcohol
Unfinished wood	Spray paint	Carefully sand paint off wood

Caution!

- If you use chemicals, follow manufacturer's instructions and wear proper protective equipment. Some removers may damage some painted surfaces.
- If you choose to remove gang-related graffiti, be aware that gang members may take offense to your actions. It's best to remove gang graffiti during early daylight hours with a partner.

BURGLARIES & INCREASED THEFTS OF LARGE SCREEN TV'S

The Virginia Beach Police Department Crime Prevention Unit would like to remind you:

When you take your new TV home, DO NOT LEAVE THE BOX BY THE CURB for trash pickup, because this can advertise to potential thieves that you have a new TV they may want to steal. Cut up the box and place it in your trash or recycle bin, or dispose of it at a cardboard recycling drop off location.

Write down the serial number, brand, and model number of the items and keep that information in a safe place.

Remember to watch out for your neighbors and report ALL suspicious activity. Call 9-1-1 for crimes in progress, or 385-5000 for non-emergency police reports.

Being a fairly lazy gardener, I throw the material around a bit at a time, as they are available, and let nature mix them for me. On a couple of occasions I have received a bit too much wood shavings so these became path material between some of the garden beds, with a heavy underlay of newspapers. People even tell me that it looks and feels good underfoot.

Never put a large amount of fresh animal manure on any garden, as it will burn any plant around it. Be extremely sparing or let it age first for a few months before applying it to the garden.

I have been living in my new house for about fifteen months, and the mulch layer in all my gardens (there were no gardens originally), is about 10 cm or 4 inches deep. None of which I have paid for and little that I have had to even pick up for myself.

People are even starting to comment on how fast the plants in my gardens are growing in the local heavy black clay soils, and they are surprised when I tell them that I have never bothered to fertilise the plants. The reason for this is that the earliest laid mulch material, is now broken down into plant nutrients and is now feeding my plants as a plant nutrient soup aided by the soil life which has suddenly started appearing in my gardens.

Another benefit that has started to appear in the last few months is the arrival of insect eating wildlife into my garden. Predatory insects and birds are now visiting my gardens on a regular basis, where I saw none this time last year. Bees and butterflies are also starting to visit many of the plants, which have come into flower for the first time this year.

So what can you do to start locating your own supplies of free mulch material, well here are a number of suggestions.

Put a little sign near your gate, something along the lines of 'Organic mulch required', or 'Lawn clipping wanted'. There are sure to be a number of local people who are currently throwing theirs away in your community or even local area. Never mulch solely with grass clippings as they form an impenetrable layer that air and water cannot get through. Always mix it with other things to stop it 'thatching', just like a roof over the soil.

See if you can get into contact with local people who are into woodturning and carving, or even local sawmills. And come to some arrangement about unpreserved wood shavings.

Check the local phonebook for local showgrounds/racetracks/stables etc, to find out if any have stable or manure waste to give away, for people willing to pick them up

In other words, start talking around the place that you are after mulch materials and they will soon start coming to you.

The only caution with using other peoples waste material is the chance that you might also import other peoples [pests](#) and weeds. I have rarely found it a problem because of heavy mulch on mulch routines. But it is possible.

One point being that when you first start applying mulch to your garden you may see some nitrogen deficiencies occur in some plants. This is because the organisms that are breaking down the mulch material are using up all the available resources of it during the initial breakdown. Once you have gotten past this time the old composted material provide more than enough nitrogen for future processes.

Another thing to be careful of is not to bury or mulch up against the stems of wanted plants, as it may cause further problems for your plants in rot problems around the collar of the stems.

So get out there and talk around the community, find the contacts, believe it or not they will be as grateful as you to solve their particular problems of waste reduction. As well as that, you may start making some new friendships out of the deal; I know I have.



BRIEFINGS

The RAC received Briefings on two projects. First, the Laskin Gateway Project, a city capital project that is underway. Commissioners thanked Staff for having formatted the information in a clearer manner than what had been presented prior. (The PowerPoint should be on the City website.) Second, JT's Grommet Park, a playground for the handicapped that would be on the beach at Rudee Inlet. It is hoped that it may be built in the Spring.

STRATEGIC PLANNING

The RAC will hold a strategic planning meeting on Thursday, March 4 at 3 P.M. at the Virginia Beach Convention Center.

As always, the public is welcome to attend. Seating for residents is in the rear of the room, behind the tables for Commissioners and Staff. Refreshments are offered.

WHO SITS ON THE RAC? (Insight)

One of the biggest changes during my tenure on the RAC has been the composition of the Commission.

In 2004 it was a mix of Resort businessmen, design professionals, white collar businessmen, and a few other residents. Since then, Resort businessmen have taken a larger proportion of the seats. Being the CCO representative, that has produced some challenges. First, it's now *much* easier to try to amend or kill some in committee than before the full RAC. With a committee endorsement, an item normally passes. Second, there are fewer Commissioners willing to weight heavily resident concerns vs. Resort business concerns.

MEMBERSHIP FEE DUE

All Virginia Beach Council of Civic Organizations (VBCCO) member organizations are reminded that the 2010 membership fee was due in January. Those member organizations not on the adjacent VBCCO MEMBERS IN GOOD STANDING list will become in good standing upon report of receipt of payment of the 2010 membership fee. Those members that have not done so are requested to mail a check for \$25 payable to VBCCO to:

VBCCO Treasurer
P.O. Box 9252
Virginia Beach VA 23450-9252

VBCCO Members In Good Standing

Aeries on the Bay••Alanton••Aragona Village
Avalon Hills••Avalon Terrace/Woods••Back Bay Pungo
Bay Breeze Villas ••Bay Lake Pines••Baycliff••Bellamy Plantation
Bellamy Woods••Bellwood Estate•• Birchwood
Birdneck Lake Homes••Birdneck Point ••Blackwater
Brigadoon••Brighton on the Bay•• Broad Bay Island ••
Cambridge Courts•• Cape Henry Shores•• Cape Story By The Sea
Carolanne Farm•• Cavalier Park/Bay Colony•• Charlestowne Area
Chelsea-Green Hill Farms/Meadows ••Chesapeake Beach
Chesapeake Colony••Columbus Station •• Columbus Station East
Croatan •• Cypress Point••Framingham Village ••Glenwood
Great Neck Estates•• Great Neck Meadows•• Green Run••Homestead
Kempsville Greens••King's Grant••Lago Mar••Lake Shores
Lake Smith T-HP-GS••Lakeview Park••Lamplight Manor••Larkspur
Laurel Cove••Level Green••Linkhorn Cove••Linlier
Little Haven••Little Neck Cove••Lynnhaven Woods
Manchester Village•• New Castle-Princeton•• North Alanton
North Virginia Beach••Ocean Park•• Oceana Gardens
Park Place••Pembroke Manor••Pembroke Meadows••
Princess Anne Crossing••Princess Anne Plaza••Ridgela
River Haven••Rudee Heights••Salem Woods••Sandbridge Beach
South Shore Estates••Southall Quarter••Stratford Chase
Thalia••Thoroughgood Colony••Three Oaks ••Trantwood Lakes
The Villages••Wellington Woods •• Wildwood
Square••Witchduck••Wolfsnare Plantation •• Woodstock