

Arlington County Civic Federation

The civic voice of Arlington for 82 years

Newsletter

March, 1998

Volume 82, No. 7

March Meeting:

Budget

7:30 pm, Tuesday, March 3rd
John T. Hazel Conference Center
Columbia Arlington Hospital
1701 N. George Mason Drive

The ACCF Revenues and Expenditures Committee has been laboring for the past month in intense sessions to bring you an exciting program on March 3rd.

Each year the R&E Committee scoops up early copies of the County budget, distributes them to all Committee members, splits up the chapters and over a period of one month with four long Sunday afternoon and evening sessions examines the budget, asks myriad questions of Budget Director Richard Averett and works through the budget chapter by chapter to make final recommendations to the Federation. The Schools Committee examines

the School budget and contributes its own recommendation for school expenditures.

This year the County Board required each Department head to supply "Green Pages" with their choice of what to cut if a 5% reduction were necessary. In addition, some "Goldenrods" (named for the color of the paper they are printed on) contain all budget increases requested by the Department that were approved for inclusion in the budget by the County Manager. The R&E Committee has examined the green and goldenrod pages and will be making recommendations to you on all of them.

(Continued inside)

Budget - Continued from page 1

The R&E recommendations will be in the form of a fully balanced budget, assuming the Committee has been able to agree on a full package. If so, it will ask whether the Federation prefers to consider its budget recommendation as a whole package, or vote on each Departmental segment. For the past two years the Federation has preferred to do that, acknowledging that any additions proposed by delegates from the floor would have to be balanced by cuts somewhere in the package to make the budget balance. Proposed cuts without an offsetting increase somewhere else could be balanced by reducing the tax rate.

In previous years when the R&E committee recommendation was not voted on as a package the sessions were long and tedious as delegates often proposed additions, usually without a corresponding cut and therefore resulting in an increase in the tax rate. Since most of those increases were not destined to be adopted by the County Board in any event, the package approach has been adopted by the required two-thirds margin. Program issues are often carried over from one year to the next, and the Federation urges anyone with a keen interest in particular budget items to join the R&E Committee to make sure that all views are reflected during the Committee's arduous work schedule rather than raised as last-minute changes. However the Committee believes that the package approach requires a very well balanced budget recommendation, and at press time its work was still intense and unfinished.

Water Program is a Hit

The Federation's February meeting on Arlington's water and waste water treatment issues was one of our most interesting ever. Stan Schachne had lined up a varied array of speakers, and the result was most informative. It was evident that Congressman Jim Moran has been working hard on preserving operational stability for the water system run by the Army's Corps of Engineers. To assist the Corps in financing much-needed upgrades for the system, he has arranged a financing mechanism that will permit the Treasury to make loans to the Corps to be repaid from water customer fees. This will permit needed upgrades so that the Corps can continue to operate the system.

Some highlights: County Board member Paul Ferguson attended the meeting. Questions from the floor elicited indications that the chicken growers in the Shenandoah Valley who are polluting the Potomac's waters are not always rigorous in pursuit of voluntary pollution restrictions, and that the State will continue to permit Arlington County to dump raw sewage into Four Mile Run during periods of heavy rains as long as the County continues to make at least some effort to improve its storm water management.

We are looking for more equally good topical programs for the Federation's schedule.



Ann Rudd is Washingtonian of the Year

In its January issue, *Washingtonian* magazine has honored Civic Federation Special Events Committee chair Ann Rudd by designating her a Washingtonian of the Year. The article, accompanied by a nice photo of Ann, commends her for her work as Executive Director of AMEN, Arlingtonians Ministering to Emergency Needs. This privately-funded, all-volunteer program aids Arlington residents who have fallen out of the safety net, with a limited amount of assistance to pay their rent or cover emergency needs for someone who has lost a job or had some other disruption in their lives. You can reach Ann to make a donation at 536-8270. Congratulations, Ann!



Can We Reach Renters?

Most civic associations find it difficult to interest renters--particularly apartment tenants --in their neighborhood activities. The Federation's Executive Committee has begun looking into possibilities of cooperating with Arlington's Tenant-Landlord Commission on a joint program to interest more renters in joining their neighborhood civic association. Executive Committee members Ed McWethy and Randy Swart had an initial discussion of this idea with the Commission in February, and hope to have something to report soon.

Briefs

Zoning: The County Board approved a new site plan for the undeveloped Pentagon City area that the Federation had opposed.

Infill Housing: The Board of Zoning Appeals denied a new pipestem on 23rd St. N. The Federation passed a resolution in February asking the BZA to deny the request.

Banquet: Planning continues for the Federation's annual Banquet on Saturday, April 25th. Please mark your calendar. You will be receiving a formal invitation soon.

Traffic Calming: The citizens' group working on a new traffic calming program for Arlington is preparing to meet in a work session with the County Board to confirm their direction. If confirmed, they plan to produce a mid-term report asking for comment from citizens and groups. Bill Gearhart, David Jones and Randy Swart continue to represent the Federation on the group. The new Chief of Police is rumored to be taking a long look at the margin above the speed limit where Arlington police officers begin ticketing speeders on neighborhood streets, possibly reducing the current 10 MPH (no tickets until the speeder is doing 35) to 6 MPH.

Coming Up

April Meeting: Nominating Committee

**April 25th - Annual ACCF Banquet
Please mark your calendar now!**

USA 32



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c/o Swart
4611 Seventh Street South
Arlington, VA 22204-1419

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FRANCES FINTA
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FRANCES FINTA
3317 23RD ST N
ARLINGTON VA 22201-4310

Channel 31 Statistics

A Cable TV survey reveals that:

- 89% are aware that channel 31 covers Arlington subjects.
- 59% watch Channel 31.
- 83% say it has increased their awareness of community issues.
- On a scale of 1 (useless) to 10 (extremely valuable), 81% ranked channel 31 at 5 or above, with 9.8% giving it a perfect 10 and 1% scoring it 1 for no value at all.
- The most-watched programs in rank order are County Board meetings, history programs, police and fire reports, County Line video magazine, other County meetings, Remarkable Libraries!, Your Exercise Buddy and College/Career Workshop.

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