

Arlington County Civic Federation

The civic voice of Arlington for 82 years

Newsletter

January, 1999

Volume 83, No. 5

January Meeting:

County Board Visit + Amateur Radio Towers

7:30 pm, Tuesday, January 5th
John T. Hazel Conference Center
Arlington Hospital
1701 N. George Mason Drive

We are pleased that the members of the Arlington County Board have accepted our invitation to be with us for their traditional visit at our January meeting. We have asked the Board Members for statements of their plans and priorities for the new year, followed by a question-and-answer period.

Following the county Board visit we will consider a report from the Land Use and Zoning Committee on the subject of new County regulations proposed for backyard amateur radio towers. Please contact Committee Chair Bill Gearhart at 522-2276 if you need details prior to the meeting.

As usual, we are planning the meeting to start promptly at 7:30 PM and end as close to 9:30 as possible.

Followup on the Federation's Legislative Package

The Legislation Committee report adopted at our November meeting was forwarded to the Arlington County Board and presented to them at their December 12th meeting by Committee Chair Nancy Graham and President Randy Swart.

Nancy's presentation included information on our process and the substance of our many recommendations. Randy highlighted our recommendations on repealing the law that established the Virginia baseball stadium authority, our stance on airport noise and flight restrictions, and our opposition to continued importation of trash into the State.

On January 4th the same Federation representatives will present the ACCF package to our State legislators at their public hearing prior to the 1999 legislative session in Richmond. This is the annual session where the Arlington delegation seeks public input. It will be held in the County Board meeting room at the Courthouse, beginning at 7 PM.

Reagan National Airport and the FAA's November Meeting

by Martha Moore
Lyon Village

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A Federal Aviation Administration meeting in November on its TRACON radar consolidation plan for Reagan National, Dulles, Andrews, and BWI drew 100+ people to complain about an increase in noise and overflights in the past year. Highlights:

Noise abatement procedures call for planes to fly over the river when they take off and land. The boundaries are 10 miles north of the airport (near Chain Bridge) to 5 miles south of the airport (Mount Vernon). This does not apply during certain weather conditions, and pilots are apparently turning over land sooner following an incident in which a small plane crashed on the White House grounds. Controllers cannot track that because their radar screens do not provide that level of detail.

There is no curfew at night. [See following CAAN article] There is a night noise limit. Planes that do not meet the night noise limits can be fined about \$4,000 if they use the airport during night hours, and four have been. But the daytime noise abatement procedures appear to be "recommended" only.

There are many "authorities" involved in the noise abatement problem: the FAA, the Metropolitan Washington Airport Authority (MWAA), Council of Governments (COG), and CANANDA. Many attendees cited the confusing process and the lack of responsiveness to complaints. Some authorities believe that improving the noise situation for

one area would shift the problem to another. Noise abatement was turned over to the FAA, where it does not get sufficient attention. Congressman Jim Moran and Senator Chuck Robb were identified as two people who were interested in the noise abatement problem at National. Robb was the only senator who voted against the FAA appropriations bill, protesting the proposed increased landings, takeoffs, and extended flight boundaries proposed by Senator McCain, provisions later rejected by the House.

The definition of noise is complex.

MWAA's noise measuring device in the Spout Run area picks up levels of 65 to 80+ decibels. But the noise standard takes into account how noise spreads. The night time noise standard is based on what noise level will wake up a normal person. Jim Pebley, President of the Waycroft-Woodlawn Civic Association, said that the new TRACOM design rules allow for an increase of 3 decibels without changing the noise abatement procedures, and to the human ear three decibels is perceived as double the noise energy. The FAA agreed to look at the guidelines.

Plane exhaust is entering the air intakes of some Rosslyn high rises. The FAA said there were no applicable pollution standards.

If you would like to take up the sword, please note the following local contacts:

* Citizens Against Aircraft Noise, Sherwin Landfield, 525-0005 or the CAAN number, (301) 320-5905 nonoise@caan.org

* County Board member Barbara Favola, the Arlington representative to COG, opened the FAA meeting. 228-3130 countyboard@co.arlington.va.us

*Article from Rumblings, the Newsletter of
Citizens for the Abatement of Aircraft Noise*

(Note: we added the "Reagan" to National)

Curfew Clarification For Reagan National Airport

Citizens often call and ask us why the airlines are not observing the nighttime curfew at Reagan National Airport. CAAN would like to clarify that issue. There is **no** curfew at National. There is only a limitation on the noise an airplane can make in taking off or landing between 10 p.m. and 7 a.m. That restriction limits the take off noise to 72 dBA and landing noise to 85 dBA (it's a little known fact that most aircraft make more noise landing than taking off). Presently, only three aircraft types satisfy these limits, and have been certified by the FAA for night traffic at National. They are the Boeing 757, A320, and MD-90. These planes can fly any-time, day or night, into or out of the airport. Implicit in this type of restriction is the potential for many more night flights as airlines decide to market such flights.

Schools Committee Asking for Your Views on Issues

The Schools Committee has developed a survey form for Federation delegates to find out what your views are on schools issues, and what issues you think deserve special attention from your Schools Committee. The forms will be passed out at our January meeting. If you miss the meeting, contact Co-Chairs Roger Meyer (671-3655 rdmeyer@aol.com) or Terri Prell (820-3782 prellth@webtv.net) for a copy.

Traffic Calming Report Accepted by County Board

The green-cover report to the County Board issued by the Ad hoc Committee on Traffic Calming (a copy of which you received) was discussed by the Board on December 16th. The ACCF resolution on the program had been previously transmitted to the Board and was presented during the discussion.

The Board decided to approve the establishment of a Subcommittee on Neighborhood Traffic Calming under the Transportation Commission, tasking it with the development of detailed guidelines for the program, which the Board will then consider for final approval. So far, the Board has accepted most of the recommendations of the Ad Hoc Committee, except for the call for requiring mandatory court appearances in cases of speeding on neighborhood streets.

The Federation will have a representative on the Subcommittee when it is formed.

John Morton Funeral Set for January 7 and 8

John Morton, husband of Tommye Ring Morton, our longtime Secretary, passed away after a long illness in late December. His funeral service will be held at Arlington Funeral Home, 3901 Fairfax Drive, on January 7th (viewing 6-8 PM, service at 8 PM). He will be buried in Arlington Cemetery with full military honors at 3 PM on January 8th.

February ACCF Meeting: February 2nd
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