

The Charter

Spring is in the Air!

Warmer weather means more outdoor activities for residents and visitors to the Town of Dumfries. The Town is excited to offer a variety of upcoming activities FREE of charge to the public, beginning with our Multicultural Festival on May 9th. For more upcoming events, see our community events calendar on page 8.



The Town of Dumfries would like to thank Monte Stevens for his service to the Town. Monte came to us after retiring as a Master Sergeant from the U.S. Marine Corps and has been an integral member of the Public Works Department. Monte was presented with a Commendation of Service at the Dumfries Town Council meeting on April 7, 2015.



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**Real Estate Taxes
Due by June 5th!**
See page 8 for more
information on how
to submit payment.

Mayor's Message



I hope this newsletter finds you well and that the cold and snowy weather of the winter is finally behind us. I know Spring is going to bring a bunch of activity to Southeastern Prince William County.

It is important the Town Council and Staff have citizen participation in our government. We need your input to decisions we make concerning the budget, zoning and text amendments and when we are planning events. Just as important is when citizens volunteer their time to help with Town activities such as parades, concerts or our various festivals. One of the best and rewarding ways to get involved is on one of our various boards and commissions. We have vacancies on the boards and commissions that require qualified citizen involvement. Please visit our Town website for more on becoming involved in the community: <http://www.dumfriesva.gov/government/boards-commissions>

“We need your input to decisions we make concerning the budget...”

The Mayor is the chief elected executive official of the Town. The Mayor is first among equals on the town's legislative body. The Mayor chairs the council meetings, signs governing documents, makes ceremonial appearances, and carries additional responsibilities as per the Town Charter and State Statute.

Mayor's Contact Information
703-895-4715
hongforeman@dumfriesva.gov

There has been a lot of activity in our Town with sidewalks, gutter, curb and street maintenance being installed; thanks for your understanding. We still have quite a few projects for FY2016 as well. These projects have been long overdue and with progress comes a little discomfort in our ability to get around Town; we're going to get through this together. Dumfries is changing for the better and we should be proud of our progress.

Lastly, we are entering into the Fiscal Year 2016 Annual Budget process. The Town Manager will post the schedule for meetings with the Town Council, however a key to this process is for citizen input. I started this newsletter by saying citizen (to include business owner) involvement is necessary in any planning of the Town Government, and I will end my salutation by saying we govern for you, with you and because of you. I have never forgotten you are our most precious resource, as I volunteer my time to our Town, I ask for your involvement as well. We are modernizing our Town for a better tomorrow. Thank you for allowing me to serve.

S/F
Jerry
Gerald "Jerry" Foreman



Mayor Foreman with Ms. Speights' Class, Mayor's Reading Challenge Overall School Winner

Reading Challenge Winners Announced

Late last year, Mayor Foreman issued a challenge to the students at Dumfries Elementary School to read as many books as possible by March 26, 2015, and the results were astounding! Each grade level, 1st through 5th grade, were issued the challenge and the winners were awarded with a pizza party at the school. Mayor Foreman was on hand to award the winners with certificates to display recognizing their achievements. The Mayor's Reading Challenge will be an annual competition which will include other area schools in the future. Mayor Foreman and the Town of Dumfries would like to congratulate the winners on their hard work and encourage each student to continue reading as much as possible because knowledge is power! The winning classrooms are listed below:

- * 1st grade Ms. Speights' class with 352 books read
- * 2nd grade Ms. Burnett's class with 331 books read
- * 3rd grade Ms. Lanzetta's class with 116 books read
- * 4th grade Ms. Bertrand's class with 70 books read
- * 5th grade Ms. Burno's class with 294 books read

The Importance of Reading

Reading with your child improves academic performance

So much of your child's education relies on his or her ability to read and read well. Children with strong reading skills generally thrive in all academics. The amount of experience that 5 year-old children have with books is directly related to their reading comprehension at seven and 11 years old.

The real link to improved academics seems to lie in the verbal interaction that occurs between adult and child during reading.

Make sure you explain and clarify as you look at, point to and label objects in the book. Ask your child questions and let him or her make predictions about what will happen next in the story. Through answering children's questions and giving them focused attention, they learn new vocabulary; clarify misunderstandings; and expand surface-level understandings.

For more reading resources and information, visit:

<http://readingfoundation.org/>

**Informational material courtesy of ReadingFoundation.org*



Message from the Town Attorney

I want to inform you of a relatively new law that increased the penalties for individuals who send or read text messages or emails while driving a car in the Commonwealth of Virginia. A violation of the texting while driving law is a traffic infraction punishable, for a first offense, by a fine of \$125 and, for a second or subsequent offense, by a fine of \$250. So, when you are driving your car around town, remember to refrain from sending or reading text messages or emails. It's simply not worth risking the possibility of having to pay court fines and costs or, worse yet, getting into a terrible car accident. Be safe and have a wonderful Spring!

-Olaun Simmons
Town Attorney

Proposed Zoning Regulations Amendments On The Horizon

In recent months the Zoning Administrator has received direction from Town Council to revise the Off Street Parking regulations, Sect. 70-13 (f), and to add two new definitions to Definitions Sect. 70-1. Town Staff receives complaints that the Town does not have the adequate regulations to enforce vehicles parking on grass surfaces.

The Town's current Zoning Ordinance loosely prohibits parking on the grass in the front yard, but does not prohibit parking vehicles in the grass elsewhere on a lot. The new ordinance may restrict parking in both commercial and residential neighborhoods to concrete, asphalt, paving stones or other like durable surfaces only.

Two new definitions are proposed to be added to the Zoning Ordinance. A definition for *Improved Parking Surface*, and *Vehicle* will be included in the proposed language.

Improved Parking Surface will be defined as:

"An area used for the parking or storage of vehicles that is overlaid or otherwise paved with concrete, asphalt, paving stones or other hard surfaced durable material in such depth as to prevent rutting in the wettest conditions and which is approved by the Director of the Department of Public Works of the Town of Dumfries or Town Council. Grass, dirt, soil or wood chips will not qualify as improved parking surfaces. Gravel does not qualify as an improved parking surface for any business zoning districts"

Vehicle will be defined in the Zoning Ordinance as:

"Every automobile, motor vehicle, trailer or any other device, upon, or which any person or property is or may be transported or drawn upon a street, highway, waterway or airway and shall include automobile, bus, truck, tractor, motor home, farm machinery, motorcycles, scooters, mopeds, all-terrain vehicles, boats, aircraft, recreational vehicles, golf carts, go-carts, trailers, campers, camper shells, wheeled towing frames, semi-tractor trailers, or truck beds."

The proposed regulation changes will be discussed at the coming Planning Commission and Town Council work sessions. A copy of the proposed ordinance is available by requesting Laura O'Dell. If you have any questions, comments, or concerns, please don't hesitate to contact Laura O'Dell at 703-221-3400 or by email at lodell@dumfriesva.gov

Town Trailer Ordinance

The Dumfries Police Department wants to remind citizens of the Town Ordinance regarding trailers being parked on public streets within the Town limits.

Town Code 62-131 (a) states, “no person shall park or leave unattended any commercial vehicle on any public highway in any residence district as defined in Code of Virginia, 46.2-100, as amended.” The Town Code Sec. 62-131 (b) (1) - (8) the definition of “commercial vehicle” includes, “any trailer or semi-trailer, regardless of whether such trailer or semi-trailer is attached to another vehicle.” The Code of Virginia 46.2-100, defines a trailer as, “every vehicle without motive power designed for carrying property or passengers wholly on its own structures and for being drawn by a motor vehicle, including manufactured homes.” **Town Code 62-131 (a)** applies to any type of trailer, whether it is attached to a vehicle or parked by itself. Examples include trailers of any size/type, flatbed trailers, U-Haul trailers, boat trailers (with and without a boat attached), smokers, etc. This ordinance applies to all trailers, regardless of how the trailer is registered (personal, business, rental company, etc.)

Town Code 62-2 indicates a violation of 62-131 (a) is considered a traffic infraction with a penalty of not more than \$250.00. Every alleged violation of 62-131 (a) will be investigated and acted upon by the Dumfries Police Department. Trailers found to be in violation of 62-131 (a) will be ticketed and tagged with a 48 hour tow tag. Trailers that are not removed from public streets prior to 48 hours from the date/time the tow tag is issued, will be towed.

It is important to note Town Code 62-131 applies to public roadways only. Trailers parked on private streets and streets maintained by HOAs fall under civil guidelines of the corresponding HOA.

This, and all Town Ordinances, may be found on the Town Web Site, www.dumfriesva.gov

Dumfries Dog Ordinance

The Dumfries Police Department wants to remind citizens of several Town Ordinances regarding civic responsibilities in controlling dogs in your possession.

Town Code 10-30 requires all dogs leaving the property where they live must be on a leash and in the control of a responsible person.

Town Code 10-31 requires dog owners obtain a license tag from the Prince William County Animal Control Bureau.

Town Code 10-32 requires any person who knowingly allows any animal in their possession to urinate or defecate on the property of another without their permission must immediately clean up the excrement.

This, and all Town Ordinances, may be found on the Town Web Site, www.dumfriesva.gov



Pedestrian Safety

The Dumfries Police Department wants to remind citizens warmer weather means more people will be out on foot and on bicycles.

Driver behaviors that are known to contribute to vehicle crashes with pedestrians and bicycles include, but are not limited to the following:

- *Speeding*
- *Running red lights*
- *Running stop signs*
- *Driving without headlights at night*
- *Driving with headlights when visibility is reduced, such as rain, fog, and situations when a driver can't see 500 feet away*
- *Failure to yield to pedestrians*

Actions by drivers and pedestrians that will reduce risks include:

- *Using crosswalks*
- *Obeying traffic signals*
- *Looking left-right-left before walking, riding, turning, or changing lanes*
- *Slowing down*
- *Stopping for pedestrians*

By working together, we can reduce traffic accident crashes involving pedestrians on bicycles.

Let's all work together to make Dumfries a safer place to live, play, and work!

Spring Safety Tips from the Police Department

Warmer weather means people will open their windows to let in fresh air. The Dumfries Police Department wants to remind citizens about a potential child safety issue where children fall out of open windows in homes. Help avoid falls by remembering window screens are designed to keep bugs out, not keep children inside. Window screens can give way to the weight of a child quickly!

The National Safe Kids Campaign recommendations:

- *Move chairs, cribs, beds, and furniture away from windows and draperies. Remember children can fall from a window opened as little as 5 inches.*
- *Install window guards on all windows in your home. Be sure these guards meet ASTM standards for emergency egress in the event of a fire. Never rely on window screens to prevent falls.*
- *Never leave young children alone on changing tables, sofas, or other furniture.*
- *Open windows from the top.*

For more information and ideas on preventing safety hazards for children in the home, please visit the Safe Kids website at www.safekids.org

Internet Safety

In today's technology age, criminals are finding creative ways to steal your identity. Be wary of these schemes and avoid becoming a victim. Below are some common ways thieves attempt to steal your identity online:

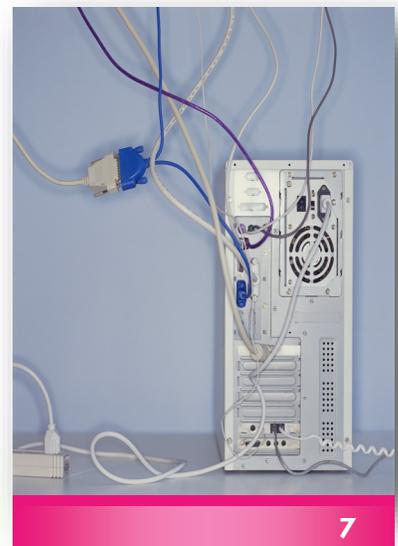
- *Be wary of “free” downloads like wallpaper, music, and icons, which often contain adware or spyware criminals use to steal information from your computer.*
- *Emails offering services or opportunities that seem too good to be true often contain viruses within the links of the email that will ruin your computer*
- *“Phishing” schemes often look like “official” correspondence from your bank, credit card company, or other company where you have an account and will warn of expiring passwords or past due balances and seem threatening in nature.*

Technology Tips

Just like the underlying motivation of the programmer in writing the virus, possible actions of a computer virus are limited only by the imagination. There are some common side effects to watch for however which might indicate the presence of a computer virus on your system.

If any of the following symptoms apply to your computer, it is advisable to complete a system scan using an up to date anti-virus program:

- *Your computer runs unusually slow or freezes*
- *People receive emails from you which you did not send*
- *You get pop-up messages or advertisements*
- *Slower than usual network or Internet speed*
- *Computer files mysteriously appear or disappear*
- *Your homepage changes and cannot be changed back*
- *Your hard drive free space keeps shrinking*



Town Council

Mayor Gerald Foreman

Vice-Mayor Willie Toney

Councilman Charles Brewer

Councilwoman Helen Reynolds

Councilwoman Gwen Washington

Councilman Derrick Wood

Councilman William Murphy

Contact Us

Administration 703-221-3400

Public Works Ext. 116

Zoning & Planning Ext. 118

Community Services Ext. 144

Info Technology Ext. 115

Police 703-221-1111

www.dumfriesva.gov

www.facebook.com/dumfriesva

Community Calendar

Senior Luncheons - 3rd Friday each month
Simpson Community Center - 12:30 pm

Community Commonwealth Day
April 25, 9 am in Ginn Park

Multicultural Festival
May 9, 11 am in Garrison Park

Bike to Work Day
May 15, 7 am (Pit Stop in the Community Center)

Parks + Rec Basketball Tournament
May 16, 12-4 pm in Ginn Park

Parks + Rec Concert in the Park
June 28, 3-6 pm in Garrison Park

Town of Dumfries

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Dumfries, VA 22026

Phone: 703-221-3400

Fax: 703-221-3544

E-mail: info@dumfriesva.gov



Real Estate Taxes Due

The 2015 first half real estate tax bills will be mailed May 5, 2015. All bills are due on or before the close of business on June 5, 2015. Payments not received by the due date will be assessed a ten (10%) percent penalty. If you have a mortgage on your home, your mortgage company typically pays your real estate taxes and you will not receive a bill from the Town. Payments can be mailed to the Town of Dumfries, 17755 Main Street, Dumfries, Virginia 22026, or for your convenience there is a drop box located next to the front door of Town Hall.

Another payment option is Official Payments. To pay online visit www.officialpayments.com or to pay by phone call 1-800-2PAY-TAX. Use Jurisdiction Code 6234.