

# Delegate Ken Plum's *Virginia E-News*



*Delegate Plum with representatives of Virginia's technology industry on Nanotechnology Day 2008 at the Capitol.*

February 13, 2008

## Commentary

### **A Call for Change and Service Kenneth R. "Ken" Plum**

His words were a clarion call for me: "Ask not what your country can do for you but what you can do for your country." That was just-inaugurated President John F. Kennedy speaking on January 20, 1961. I was 19 years old standing in the foot-deep snow at the United States Capitol listening to the words that would forever influence my life. With already a strong interest in politics I became convinced that day that government service was my calling. Less than a decade and a half later I announced my candidacy for public office.

Recently I have heard again a call for hope, for higher ideals, for positive change, and that is what attracts me to Senator Barack Obama and his bid for the presidency. When Caroline Kennedy endorsed Senator Obama and said how her father had inspired others, I thought that she really did not realize how true her words were. I have met many others of my age who see the same attraction in Barack Obama as I do. And I have met young people who are attracted to his message of hope.

Candidate Obama's path to the White House will not be easy. As he said in his victory

speech following his win in the South Carolina primary:

“We are up against decades of bitter partisanship that causes politicians to demonize their opponents instead of coming together to make college affordable or energy cleaner; it’s the kind of partisanship where you’re not even allowed to say that a Republican had an idea – even if it’s one you never agreed with. That kind of politics is bad for our party, it’s bad for our country, and this is our chance to end it once and for all. We are up against the idea that it’s acceptable to say anything and do anything to win an election. We know that this is exactly what’s wrong with our politics; this is why people don’t believe what their leaders say anymore; this is why they tune out. And this election is our chance to give the American people a reason to believe again.”

Governor Timothy M. Kaine was the first governor to endorse the Presidential bid of Obama. He sounded a similar theme at the opening session of the General Assembly last month:

“We are sent here by our constituents to address the challenges of our day, some as old as our government, and others beyond the imagination of the founding fathers. And we are sent to work through our honest differences of opinion to craft solutions that do the most good for the greatest number of Virginians. The art of compromise and working together is not a weakness. It is a sign of our dedication to getting things done.”

These are the kind of words that led me to becoming involved in government service long ago and that continue to inspire me to continue. These are the kind of words that I hope will take Senator Barack Obama into the White House where he can bring about the changes this country desperately needs.



**Around the Capitol with Delegate Ken Plum**

The General Assembly has passed “crossover,” the time when each house must have completed legislation introduced by its own members and must then start considering bills that passed the other house. to see how legislation of interest to you has fared, visit <http://legis.state.va.us>. Each house will announce its version of the budget early next week. With the continuing decline in revenue, there is not likely to be much good news in the budget.

A coalition of organizations representing health-related concerns released the results of a poll recently conducted in Virginia. The poll found that 75 percent of Virginians support a law to “prohibit smoking in most public places, including workplaces, public buildings, offices, bars and restaurants.” Even 40 percent of smokers support such a law. A bill to prohibit smoking in public places has passed the Senate. Hopefully, House members will have seen and considered the poll results to know what their constituents expect of them. I will vote for the bill.

A subcommittee by a vote of 2-4 defeated a bill I introduced on behalf of Fairfax County to permit the County to include sexual orientation in its Human Rights ordinance. Currently the Fairfax County ordinance prohibits discrimination in housing, real estate transactions, employment, public accommodations, credit and education on the basis of race, color, religion, sex, pregnancy, childbirth or related medical conditions, national origin, age, marital status or disability. Testifying against the bill were representatives of the Family Foundation and the Catholic Diocese of Richmond.

## Delegate Ken Plum's Weekly "Virginia Report" on Reston Comcast Channel 28

View Delegate Plum's *Virginia Report* online at <http://www.rctv28.com/videosVR.htm>.

Tune in to Reston Comcast Channel 28 on Tuesdays at 7:30 p.m. and on Wednesdays at 10:30 p.m. for “Delegate Ken Plum's Richmond Report.”

## Announcements

The **Fairfax County Human Rights Commission** is accepting nominations for its 30th annual Human Rights Awards **until Friday, March 18**. The awards recognize individuals, nonprofits or businesses that **advanced human rights** in Fairfax County in 2007. Call 703.324.2953, TTY 703.324.2900 for a nomination form. Nominations can be submitted by email to [cathy.boone@fairfaxcounty.gov](mailto:cathy.boone@fairfaxcounty.gov); by fax to 703.324.3570; or by mail to the Human Rights Commission, 12000 Government Center Parkway, Suite 318, Fairfax, VA 22035-0093.

**Herndon-Reston FISH, Inc.** is seeking to **hire a manager for The Bargain Loft**, a thrift shop in Herndon that provides funding for the FISH Family Assistance Program. For more information about the position and to obtain a copy of the job description, email FISH at [hrfish@gmail.com](mailto:hrfish@gmail.com).

**Congratulations to the Fairfax County Board of Supervisors** for having adopted a **green building policy for county facilities**. The policy requires that buildings be constructed to **meet**

**minimum green building standards, if not exceed them.** Fairfax County will use the U.S. Green Building Council's Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED) rating system. At a minimum, **county buildings over 10,000 square feet will be required to reach Silver level LEED certification.** For more information, contact the Fairfax County Office of Public Affairs at 703.324.3187, TTY 711.

**Did you know that:**

- One of every three Virginians lives in Northern Virginia
- Half of the Commonwealth's residents were born in other states or countries.
- by 2030 one in every five Virginians will be 65 or older.

**For more facts about Virginia, visit [www.coopercenter.org/demographics](http://www.coopercenter.org/demographics).**

The Fairfax County Solid Waste Management Program will host **hazardous waste clean-up days for any small business** within Fairfax County **which qualifies as a "Conditionally Exempt Small Quantity Generator"** on Wednesday, **April 9**, Wednesday, **July 23**, and Wednesday, **October 1** at the I-66 Transfer Station Complex from 9 a.m. until 2 p.m. A complete list of participation rules, materials accepted and associated disposal costs can be found on the Fairfax County Solid Waste Management Program's web site at [www.fairfaxcounty.gov/recycling](http://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/recycling).

**Fairfax County Women's Shelter** provides **safety and services** for families experiencing domestic violence. For more information, call 703.435.4940; TTY 703.435.1235.

**Low-cost, butterfly friendly trees and shrubs** are now on sale through the Northern Virginia Soil and Water Conservation District. Selections available this year will help improve yards, protect the environment, and attract butterflies. For an order form, visit [www.fairfaxcounty.gov/nvswcd/seedlingsdale.htm](http://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/nvswcd/seedlingsdale.htm) or email [conservationdistrict@fairfaxcounty.gov](mailto:conservationdistrict@fairfaxcounty.gov). Seedling packages cost \$17.95 and contain 12 bare-root trees and shrubs and 2 packets of wildflower seed for a wonderful assortment of trees, shrubs, and flowers.

## Calendar of Events

Attend a **Rally for Children – "Children Matter – Quality Matters"** this **Friday, February 15, 3:00 to 4:45 p.m.** in Grand Ballroom C at the Hyatt Regency Reston, sponsored by the Virginia Association for Early Childhood Education.

Bid on treasures from the past at **Reston Museum's "Attic Auction" on Thursday, February 28, 5:30 p.m.** Live bidding begins at 6:30 p.m. Visit [www.restonmuseum.org](http://www.restonmuseum.org) for more information about the Museum.

**The Carbon Trading-Green Building Connection**, a "Build Green Virginia" Event of Virginia Sustainable Building Network, will be held on **March 6** in Fairfax. The event is sponsored and hosted by Dewberry at its headquarters, 8401 Arlington Boulevard. Registration has begun on-line at [www.vsbni.org](http://www.vsbni.org). For more information, contact Annette Osso, VSBNI President, at [osso@vsbn.org](mailto:osso@vsbn.org).

The Virginia chapter of the **American Planning Association** will hold the opening session of its annual conference on Wednesday, **March 26**, at the Reston Town Center. Topic of the conference is **"Creating Healthy Communities."** Keynote speakers on the opening day will be Reston founder **Robert E. Simon** and **best-selling author Richard Louv**. For information and registration go to [www.vaplanning.org](http://www.vaplanning.org).

**A statewide strategic summit on Virginia's workforce development** system, "Pathways to Workforce Readiness," to improve the readiness and competitiveness of Virginia's workforce at home and around the globe will be held on **Tuesday, April 1, Greater Richmond Convention**

**Center**, 9:00 a.m. to 2:30 p.m. Visit [www.shrmva.org/conferenceworkforcereadiness.htm](http://www.shrmva.org/conferenceworkforcereadiness.htm) for more information and registration.

Attend the **Best of Reston Awards Gala and Dinner on April 24**. The 2008 Best of Reston Honorees are John Coleman, The JBG Companies, the Volunteer Medical Providers of the Jeanie Schmidt Free Clinic, Ruth Overton, The Reston Garden Club, Tetra Partnerships, and VISTA Wealth Strategies & Judy Redpath. The Awards and Gala are **produced in partnership by the Greater Reston Chamber of Commerce and Reston Interfaith**. Last year's Best of Reston event **raised more than \$300,000 for Reston Interfaith**. Watch here for details about this important event.

The topic of Fairfax Futures' **4th annual School Readiness Symposium**, to be held on **Saturday, April 26 in Fairfax** will be **"Resilient, Resourceful and Ready: the Importance of Social and Emotional Competence for Young Children."** Dr. Daniel Gartrell will be keynote speaker. For more information go to [www.fairfax-futures.org](http://www.fairfax-futures.org).

**Authorized and Paid for by Kenneth R. Plum**

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Delegate Kenneth R. Plum | 2073 Cobblestone Lane | Reston | VA | 20191