

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



Photo by Dr. Michael McKee

Delegate Ken Plum and Senator Janet Howell presented John Coleman with a General Assembly Resolution at the 2008 Best of Reston Gala and Awards. Coleman was selected as one of Reston's "Best" for his service to the community and his commitment to improving the lives of others. An employee at South Lakes High School, he has been an avid supporter of the students and has sponsored many student clubs and activities, has worked diligently to help deter gang activity and drug usage, and has been a positive role model and mentor for young people. Congratulations to 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 2008 Best of Reston honorees, all of whom received General Assembly Resolutions.

**May 7, 2008**

**Commentary**

**Major Move Forward for Dulles Rail  
Kenneth R. "Ken" Plum**

Rail in the Dulles Corridor made another major lurch forward with federal approval to begin final design. U.S. Secretary of Transportation Mary Peters and Federal Transit Agency (FTA) Administrator James S. Simpson notified the U.S. Congress last week that the project was approved having met federal standards for cost efficiency, construction and expected ridership.

A collective sigh of relief was heard from the Governor's office and throughout the region for the approval that was a long time coming following a rigorous scrutiny by a skeptical federal agency. The project represents the single largest design-build contract in the history of the FTA's New Start Program. Its 23-mile length is almost a quarter as long as the original 103-mile Metro system.

When I stood at the Sheraton International Hotel with a group of community and business leaders in August, 1998 to announce the formation of the Dulles Corridor Rail Association (DCRA) to advocate for rail in the corridor, I had no idea that the approval process would take so long and be as challenging as it has been. In a prophetic statement, the first draft plan for DCRA stated that "major public support will need to be sustained for eight to ten years in order to ensure that successive generations of political leaders enjoy an environment in which positive decisions can be made" regarding the project.

In carrying out their responsibilities as stewards of the public purse, the FTA asked tough questions about the project costs, schedule and benefits and contracted with private consulting firms to verify that the answers were accurate. Even with the approval to move into final design, Secretary Peters made it clear that issues related to the upkeep and maintenance of the current Metro system and the need to adhere to project schedule and costs were essential before a full funding agreement could be approved.

Plaudits are in order for many people who made this step in the approval process possible: Governor Kaine could not have been more dedicated and tenacious in continuing negotiations with the federal authorities when the project seemed lost; members of Congress and most notably Senator Warner and Congressman Wolfe for insisting that the federal officials work with the state; and the thousands of individuals, businesses and organizations who joined in the *Dulles Rail Now!* campaign led by DCRA that flooded the White House and the Department of Transportation with phone calls, emails, and letters including a couple of full-page newspaper ads that helped to move the project forward.

Work is already underway in relocating utilities at Tysons Corner. Engineers are completing the design. Planners are at work on smart land use decisions that will utilize the strengths of the rail system. As rail moves forward, our community is blessed with another feature that will enhance the quality of life of all who live here.

## **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>.**

**Tonight – Wednesday, May 7 at 10:30 p.m. –** Patty Nicoson, President, Dulles Corridor Rail Association – "Big News in the Dulles Corridor"

**Tuesday, May 13 at 7:30 p.m. and Wednesday, May 14 at 10:30 p.m.** – Senator Janet Howell – "A Discussion About the 2008 General Assembly's Actions - What Passed, What Failed"

## Climate Change Citizen Action

Dominion Virginia Power continues its partnership with Home Depot stores in Virginia to promote the use of Compact Fluorescent Lights (CFLs). Save \$1.50 on each individual CFL you purchase or \$3.00 on each multi-pack at participating Home Depots. Dominion reports 1,194,181 CFLs have been sold through the program as of last month — that equates to 71,916 cars off the road for one year, 412,440 tons of CO2 not emitted, and \$68,595,951 saved over the life of the lights. CFLs use about 75% less energy and last about 10 times longer than regular bulbs. Visit [www.dom.com](http://www.dom.com) to learn more about energy conservation.

**Ecofriendly cleaning products are readily available.** Clorox has a new line called Green Works that is certified by the EPA and the Sierra Club. Other products include Seventh Generation and Ecover from Earth Friendly Products at Whole Foods. **Know any earth-friendly cleaning products?**

*Please **send your suggestions on cleaning up our environment** to [?kenplum@aol.com](mailto:kenplum@aol.com) along with any **websites that you find useful** on understanding and stopping climate change. Your suggestions will be **printed here for others to consider.***

## Announcements

**"Top of the Town,"** one of the **top fundraising teams** for the American Cancer Society **Relay for Life**, is **recruiting additional members**. Have a **fun experience while raising money for cancer research**. For more information contact the Team Co-Captain, Ken Plum, at 703.391.2978 or [kenplum@aol.com](mailto:kenplum@aol.com)

The **Reston Town Center is now hosting a Farmers' Market every Thursday, 3:30 to 7:00 p.m.** for locally grown fruits and vegetables, locally raised meats and poultry, and local foods from bread and cheese to salsa and sausage. Learn more at [www.smartmarkets.org](http://www.smartmarkets.org).

The **Reston Farmers Market opens this Saturday, May 10**, at the Lake Anne Village Center from 8:00 a.m. until noon **through November 1**.

## Calendar of Events

Are you new to Reston? **"Get to Know Your Reston Association (RA),"** an event for **newcomers** and those not-so-new to Reston, will be held on **Thursday, May 8, 7:00 to 9:00 p.m.** at the Reston Association Main Conference Room, 1930 Isaac Newton Square. Information will be available about **RA and its many services, amenities, and programs available to you**. Meet staff and Board members, and find out about volunteer opportunities.

Light refreshments will be served; door prizes will be awarded. RSVP to Ha Brock, RA Volunteer Coordinator, at [habrock@reston.org](mailto:habrock@reston.org) or 703.435.7986.

The National Association of Letter Carriers will be **collecting non-perishable food items like canned meats and fish, canned soup, juice, pasta, vegetables, cereal and rice on Saturday, May 10**, to help families in need in our community. You can help by **placing your food donation at your mailbox on May 10 before your letter carrier arrives**. It will be taken to the Post Office and then delivered to local pantries.

The **State Arboretum of Virginia Annual Garden Fair will be held May 10-11, 9:00 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.** More than **80 vendors will offer unique plants for sale** to help support the Arboretum that is located in Boyce, about 30 minutes west on Route 7. For more information, visit ?[www.virginia.edu/blandy](http://www.virginia.edu/blandy).

If you have **early-stage Alzheimer's or a memory disorder**, join the Alzheimer's Association at a **gathering for people with dementia to talk about living with the disease**. "The Emerging Voice of Alzheimer's - A Town Hall Meeting" will be held on **Monday, May 12, 9:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m.** at the Grand Hyatt Washington Hotel. To register go to [www.alz.org/townhall](http://www.alz.org/townhall) or call 703.766.9007.

The **Fairfax County Department of Transportation** is developing a **10-year comprehensive Transit Development Plan (TDP) for Fairfax Connector and Metrobus service** in the county and wishes to **receive public comments** about this plan at a public meeting scheduled for **May 14, 6:30 p.m., at the Northern County Government Center** in Reston. For more information or to submit comments about the Transit Development Plan, visit the Fairfax County website at [www.fairfaxcounty.gov/fcdot.tdp.htm](http://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/fcdot.tdp.htm) or call 703.324.1500 to record your comments.

The **Fairfax League of Women Voters** members and guests will be discussing the **restoration of the voting rights of ex-felons** at their May meetings. The evening meeting in Reston will be on **Wednesday, May 14 at the Reston Museum at Lake Anne at 7:30 p.m.** The meeting is free; no registration is required, and all are welcome. Call Wendy at 703.319.4114 or go to [www.lwv-fairfax.org](http://www.lwv-fairfax.org) for more information about the topic and other meeting locations.

The Virginia Department of Transportation (**VDOT**) has announced that **proposed secondary street acceptance requirements** are available for public comment. The requirements ensure that streets accepted into the state system for **perpetual public maintenance provide long-term public benefit**. The regulations and additional information can be found at [www.VirginiaDOT.org/projects/ssar](http://www.VirginiaDOT.org/projects/ssar). There will be a **public hearing on the regulations on May 14, 5:30 p.m.** at the Northern Virginia Community College, Ernst Cultural Center forum Area, 8333 Little River Turnpike, Annandale, VA 22003.

Join hundreds of bicycle commuters to celebrate **Bike to Work Day on Friday, May 16, 6:30 to 9:00 a.m. at the Reston Town Center**. Each year since 2002, cyclists have gathered at the Town Center for a **free breakfast, raffles of bike-related prizes, and bicycling information handouts** including the new Fairfax County Bike Map to be unveiled on Bike to Work Day. Pre-registered riders also get a free t-shirt. Delegate **Ken Plum and Hunter Mill Supervisor Cathy Hudgins will greet the riders at 8:00 a.m.** Register at ? [www.waba.orga](http://www.waba.orga).

The **Northern Virginia Fine Arts Festival** sponsored by GRACE is **May 17-18**. More information is at ?[www.restonarts.org](http://www.restonarts.org).

Make an appointment at **Reflections of You - Fairfax Salon and Spa for May 18 for a**

**"Cut-a-thon" to raise money to assist the family of one of the stylists,** Tisa Robbins, who **lost their Navajo reservation home to fire.** Visit [www.ROYSalon.com](http://www.ROYSalon.com) or call 703.591.5306.

The Opening Ceremony for the **American Cancer Society's Relay for Life in Reston will be held on Saturday, May 31, 1:00 p.m.** at the **athletic field behind South Lakes High School.** The Relay will go all day, all evening, and through the night, ending the next morning. Come join the fun! **Delegate Ken Plum's "Top of the Town" team always welcomes new members or visitors.** This is a great way to make new friends while raising money for cancer research. **Come visit the "Top of the Town" tent to say hello on May 31.**

The Virginia Department of Game & Inland Fisheries will hold a **Conservation Landscaping Workshop & Charlette, "Techniques for Urban Design," on Thursday, June 5, 8:15 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. at wetland Studies and Solutions, Gainesville, VA** ([www.wetlandstudies.com](http://www.wetlandstudies.com)). This workshop is primarily intended for Northern Virginia professionals working in the **Planning and Zoning, Community Development, Landscape Architecture and Landscape Design fields.** Others involved with land-use issues or landscaping practices may also participate, such as directors and specialists from Soil and Water Conservation Districts and Park Authorities. Learn up-to-date information about land conservation methods that protect, improve, or minimize adverse impacts to wildlife habitat and water quality. **Participants will be eligible for CEU's.** Each participant will receive a set of materials containing fact sheets, plant lists and in-depth background information as well as a "Low-Impact Development Tutorial" CD, a "Rain Gardens Technical Guide" CD and the "Reining in the Storm" DVD. Call 804.367.6989 or email [Carol.Heiser@dgif.virginia.gov](mailto:Carol.Heiser@dgif.virginia.gov) for details about registration.

Attend the **Rotary Senior Senior Prom** on Saturday, **June 21, 2:00 to 4:30 p.m.** at St. Joseph's Church in Herndon. This dress-up event is for **anyone who has reached 50 or better - and their families** - and will feature **great food and music.** Call 703.437.5886 to RSVP.

The **14th Annual Rucker Memorial Golf Tournament** will be held on **July 14 at Hidden Creek Country Club,** Reston, VA. Proceeds **benefit the programs of Reston Interfaith, Inc.** For questions or to get involved, phone 571.323.9582 or email [amy.mcdowell@restoninterfaith.org](mailto:amy.mcdowell@restoninterfaith.org).

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

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