



Inside this Issue

City Schools Amendment on November Ballot 5

Business Profile:
The Barking Lot 7

GRTC Pulse Update 9

Selling Your Home in a Seller's Market 11

Magic Boots 13

North Thompson Street Historic District Established 15

Pet Safety for the Holidays . . 17

Halloween Etiquette 19



Mark Your Calendar!

Upcoming events in and around the Museum District

General Election Nov. 7

MDA Annual Meeting . . . Nov. 16

Fan Holiday

Home Tour Dec. 8-9

Church Hill

Winter Festival Dec. 8-10

State and Local Elections and Candidates Information for the Museum District

By Scott Cannady



Here's what you need to know to be prepared to vote on November 7

Date and Time of Election	November 7, 2017, 6 a.m. – 7 p.m.
Voting Location	Visit the Virginia Board of Elections “Where do I vote?” page at http://www.elections.virginia.gov/voter-outreach/where-to-vote.html .
Deadline for Registration	October 16, 2017
Deadline to Request an Absentee Ballot	Tuesday, October 31, 2017
Voting Locations	Go to the Virginia Department of Elections website at http://www.elections.virginia.gov .
Determining Your District	Go to the “Who is My Legislator?” page of the Virginia General Assembly website at http://whosmy.virginiageneralassembly.gov/ .
Candidate Information	Virginia Department of Elections at http://www.elections.virginia.gov .
	Ballotpedia at https://ballotpedia.org/Main_Page .
	League of Women Voters of Virginia at http://www.lwv-va.org .
	Virginia Public Access Project at http://www.vpap.org .

President's Column

M.A. Powers, 2017 MDA Board President

This is my eighth and final president's column! I must say that there is some relief in handing off the daily responsibilities to my successor, Stephen Versen, who will become president in January. However, there are some aspects that I will miss greatly. After two years as president, I have grown accustomed to having the inside track to what is going on in the city and speaking with some authority while representing the residents of the Museum District. I thrive on knowing what is happening in Richmond and sharing that knowledge with you. I also very much enjoy getting to know our public officials and their visions for the city, as well as knowing them as real people with their own families and personal aspirations.



My number one goal as president has been to engage residents and bring people together to keep the Museum District a strong and viable neighborhood for living and working. I will continue these efforts in 2018 as past president to the board and as a member of The Columns newsletter committee and the Mother's Day House & Garden Tour committee. I will continue to serve because I have been inspired by Richmond and its leaders. City Hall often gets a bad rap. Two years of diving into Richmond government has revealed to me that the vast majority of our public servants strive for what is best for the residents of Richmond.

Mayor Levar Stoney, while recently addressing neighborhood association presidents, summarized my own observations from my time as president of the Museum District Association when he said, "Richmond is only as strong as its weakest neighborhood."

We are fortunate to live in a strong neighborhood, full of vibrant businesses and concerned, engaged residents. We have the strongest of the city schools in our district or close by. We have the MDA to advocate for our needs and concerns and to act as vehicle to gather us together. I urge you to join the MDA because when you do it allows your association to help others and provides greater opportunity to get involved in issues that you care about. I urge you to join a neighborhood committee or attend a neighborhood event such as our Annual Meeting on November 16. For more information, visit our website at museumdistrictassociation.org or our social media platforms.

It's been a privilege to serve as the president of your association. See you in the neighborhood.

Museum District Annual Meeting

Thursday, November 16

Refreshments at 6:00 p.m.
Meeting at 7:00 p.m.

Temple Beth-El
3330 Grove Ave.

(Please enter from Roseneath Rd.)

The guest speaker is Ellen Parker, Richmond's Public Art Coordinator

Please join the Museum District Association for a review of 2017, meet neighbors and local elected officials and discover what is happening in the RVA art scene.

The annual meeting is open to all residents. Members will cast their vote for the 2018 board of directors. Everyone is encouraged to attend and join for 2018. You can join online at museumdistrict.org or at the door.

Please respond by Monday, November 13 to RSVP@museumdistrict.org.

For more information, contact mdaprograms@museumdistrict.org or call 804-410-1632.

Museum District Association

Founded 1964

PO Box 7186 • Richmond, Virginia 23221

804-410-1632 • museumdistrict.org

The Mission of the Museum District Association is to unite, protect, and advance the interests of the neighborhood in order to realize its potential and improve the quality of life in the neighborhood and community.

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

President **Margaret A. Powers**
MDApresident@museumdistrict.org

President Elect **Stephen Versen**
MDApreselect@museumdistrict.org

Treasurer **Karen Redford**
MDAtreasurer@museumdistrict.org

Secretary **Colleen Hewitt**
MDAsecretary@museumdistrict.org

At Large **Sharon Considine**
MDAatlarge@museumdistrict.org

Business Liaison **Jennifer Fleming**
MDAbusiness@museumdistrict.org

Capital Projects **Jason Difilho**
MDAcapitalprojects@museumdistrict.org

Code Enforcement **Linda Dunn**
MDAcode@museumdistrict.org

Museum District Association Communications **Melissa Oefelein**
MDAcommunications@museumdistrict.org

Environment **Matt Hogan**
MDAenvironment@museumdistrict.org

Membership **Claire Sanderson**
MDAmembership@museumdistrict.org

Museum District Woman's Club Liaison **Jessie Reuben**
MDAwclubliaison@museumdistrict.org

Programs **Sue Patow**
MDAprograms@museumdistrict.org

Safety **Ron Russ**
MDAsafety@museumdistrict.org

School Liaison **Hannah Abbey**
MDAschools@museumdistrict.org

Technology **Kevin Bojarski**
MDAtechnology@museumdistrict.org

Zoning **John Reyna**
MDAzoning@museumdistrict.org

Committee Members House Tour **Karen Lebo**
MDAhousetour@museumdistrict.org

Newsletter Ads **Steve Jones**
MDAnewsletterads@museumdistrict.org

To reach any of our board members by phone, please call 804-410-1632 and leave a message stating the person you wish to reach.

The board meets at 7 p.m. on the third Monday of most months at All Saints Presbyterian on Grove Avenue. If you would like to make a presentation to the board, please email or call the president.

ADVERTORIAL

CALL FOR NOMINATIONS

2018 MDA Board of Directors

The Museum District Association is now taking nominations for the following positions on its 2018 Board of Directors:

Secretary

The secretary records and stores meeting minutes and orders supplies for the board.

Code Enforcement Director

The code enforcement director works with residents and city officials, when problems arise, to ensure safety and cleanliness in the neighborhood.

If you're interested in serving on the board or want to nominate someone, contact the president at

MDApresident@museumdistrict.org

NEWSLETTER COMMITTEE

- Liz Bryant Content Editor
- Scott Cannady Content Editor
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Museum District - Richmond VA

ELECTIONS (continued from page 1)

Statewide Elections



GOVERNOR

Incumbent	Party	Candidate
No	Democratic	Ralph S. Northam
No	Republican	Edward W. "Ed" Gillespie
No	Libertarian	Clifford D. Hyra

LIEUTENANT GOVERNOR

Incumbent	Party	Candidate
No	Democratic	Justin E. Fairfax
No	Republican	Jill H. Vogel

ATTORNEY GENERAL

Incumbent	Party	Candidate
Yes	Democratic	Mark. R. Herring
No	Republican	John D. Adams

Virginia House of Delegates Elections in Districts within the Borders of the Museum District

68TH DISTRICT (localities with precincts in the 68th - Richmond City, Chesterfield County, Henrico County)

Incumbent	Party	Candidate
No	Democratic	Dawn M. Adams
Yes	Republican	G.M. "Manoli" Loupassi

69TH DISTRICT (localities with precincts in the 69th - Richmond City, Chesterfield County)

Incumbent	Party	Candidate
Yes	Democratic	Betsy B. Carr
No	Republican	Jacob A. "Jake" Croker

70TH DISTRICT (localities with precincts in the 70th - Richmond City, Chesterfield County, Henrico County)

Incumbent	Party	Candidate
Yes	Democratic	Delores L. McQuinn

71ST DISTRICT (localities with precincts in the 71st - Richmond City, Henrico County)

Incumbent	Party	Candidate
Yes	Democratic	Jeff M. Bourne

City of Richmond Elections

REFERENDUM

Proposition A "Fulfilling the Promise of Equal Educational Opportunities" (see article in this issue)

COMMONWEALTH'S ATTORNEY

Incumbent	Party	Candidate
Yes	Democratic	Michael N. Herring

SHERIFF

Incumbent	Party	Candidate
No	Democratic	Antionette V. Irving
No	Independent	Nicole D. Jackson
No	Independent	Emmett Johnson Jafari

TREASURER

Incumbent	Party	Candidate
No	Democratic	Nichole Ona R. Armstead
No	Independent	Michelle R. Mosby
No	Independent	L. Shirley Harvey



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City Schools Amendment on November Ballot

by Justin Sizemore

On November 7, Richmond voters will be asked to consider a proposed amendment to the City's charter related to "Fulfilling the Promise of Equal Educational Opportunities." This measure, if approved by voters in November and the General Assembly in its 2018 session, would give the Mayor six months "to present to the City Council a fully-funded plan to modernize the city's K-12 educational infrastructure consistent with national standards or inform City Council such a plan is not feasible."

There's just one catch: the plan must be "fully funded," but "cannot be based on the passage of new or increased taxes" for the purpose of modernizing schools.

According to the City's Facilities Needs Report, the price tag for modernizing Richmond's aging schools will exceed \$500 million. That is more than two-and-a-half times the school system's entire \$195 million budget for 2018. As the Richmond Times-Dispatch reported in August, Richmond's debt capacity, which the City uses for capital projects like school construction, is maxed out through at least 2021.

Richmond political consultant Paul Goldman, who drafted the ballot measure, does not dispute that the cost of modernizing schools will be substantial. Asked where he expected the mayor to find that kind of money, Goldman said in an interview that "I don't tell the mayor what to do, but you can do it and you have to make choices."

"There are 4,000 people working for the City," added Goldman. "Someone can come up with a plan." Goldman also cited recent examples of funding that could be eliminated, such as the once-planned downtown ballpark and a possible replacement for the Richmond Coliseum.

First District School Board representative Liz Doerr agrees that fixing the schools should come ahead of many other funding priorities. She also says that the City "needs to prove that it's a good custodian of taxpayer dollars." However, says Doerr, "Richmond is asked to do more and more with less and less."

The age of Richmond's educational infrastructure does not help things. More than 80 percent of Richmond's school buildings are more than 20 years old and about two-thirds of them are between 50 and 70 years old.

Doerr also cites figures indicating that the City has for years been underinvesting in facilities maintenance, spending just a fraction per square foot of what Henrico and Chesterfield counties spend maintaining their schools, which were much more recently built.



According to the City's Facilities Needs Report, the price tag for modernizing Richmond's aging schools will exceed \$500 million.

Given the half-billion-dollar price tag of reversing years of deferred maintenance, Doerr says, "I'm not sure how you get there without revenues at least being part of the conversation."

Asked for comment on the November initiative, Jim Nolan, spokesman for Mayor Levar Stoney, issued a statement confirming that the mayor "is committed to working with the City Council and School Board through the RVA Education Compact to develop a school facilities plan that includes a responsible and sustainable funding solution."

More information about the Compact is available at: <http://www.richmondgov.com/Mayor/documents/EducationCompactProposal.pdf>

You can find the Richmond Facilities Needs Report at: <https://www.rvaschools.net/cms/lib/VA02208089/Centricity/Domain/863/CommunityPresentationFacilitiesNeedsReport.pdf>

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The Barking Lot

by M.A. Powers

Steve Boschen was 16-years-old when he worked as a part-time dog groomer. In his young adult years he worked in a variety of positions but couldn't quite settle on anything that felt right. In 1990 he had a vision that would bring his career full circle. On March 19 of that year, Steve opened The Barking Lot in an alley building off of Belmont. He had only \$15 remaining from \$3,000 his father gave him to start the business. It was just Steve and the old bathtub pulled from a rundown house atop a pedestal his father and a friend had built.

Within two years, Steve was so busy that he had to hire help. Five years later he expanded into what is now the Belmont Pizzeria building and in 2004 he purchased the current building that houses the salon. His most recent expansion includes a salon inside Fin & Feather on Lakeside Ave. that opened about five years ago.

The most gratifying part of the job for Steve is providing quality care for pets. His focus has always been on the health and well-being of every dog and cat that comes through the door. The business has never been just about appearance. Ironically, Steve has a short-haired, low maintenance, Boston Terrier named Fred who is 8-years-old this year. They live in the Lakeside area in the family home built by Steve's grandfather in 1925.

Steve shared some changes he has seen in his 27 years as a business owner in Museum District, mostly centered around The Devil's Triangle. "It was pretty rough after dark back in the 1990s," he said. "It was not unusual to hear gun shots at 1 or 2 a.m." Even with the crazy stuff happening a block away, Steve felt safe and looked after in his location. There was a



The Barking Lot, located at 606 N Belmont St.

tattoo shop next to him that opened about the time he closed for the day. Between dog grooming and tattooing, there was nearly always someone around to keep an eye on the Belmont businesses. The Patterson Express was in the same location as today and a laundromat occupied The Black Hand building. The intersection of Patterson and Belmont seems to have long been a thriving spot in the Museum District.

Advice from Steve: do not neglect your pet's grooming needs in between professional visits. This means identifying the proper brush for your pet and brushing often to stimulate new skin growth and to keep the coat healthy. If you can, start grooming your pet at a young age so that it becomes accustomed to grooming and enjoys it.

The Barking Lot is open Tuesday through Friday 7:30 a.m. to 5:30 p.m., which allows owners to drop their pets off on the way to work and pick them up at the end of the day. They are also open on Saturdays from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. Services for dogs and cats: bathing, brushing, nail clipping and grinding, ear cleaning, skin treatments, haircuts, anal gland expression (important, but yuck!) and pretty much anything else.



Jan, James and Finley Shea

Special Thanks to James Shea

by M.A. Powers

James Shea joined the MDA board of directors two years ago in the capacity of Newsletter Editor. At the time this meant overseeing all responsibilities of the newsletter including writing, editing, formatting, publishing and distribution. James was part of a collaborative effort to restructure the system and create a newsletter committee. We are grateful for his vision, leadership and dedication to the neighborhood, as well as his dry wit. Best wishes to James, his wife Jan and their adorable baby girl Finley, as they start the next chapter of their lives in Chesterfield County.

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3100 Ellwood Avenue, Richmond, VA 23221

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5403 Monument Avenue, Richmond, VA 23226

Tuesday, November 14, 2017 at 7 p.m.

Tuesday, December 12, 2017 at 7 p.m.

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GRTC Pulse Update

by Liz Bryant and Scott Cannady

We reached out to officials at GRTC for an update on GRTC Pulse and how Museum District residents will be affected by the new service. Here's what we found out.

We're hearing the term BRT and Pulse.

What's the difference?

BRT stands for Bus Rapid Transit. GRTC Pulse is the service name used to identify our Greater Richmond region's BRT system.



When is GRTC Pulse scheduled to be completed, what is the total cost and what are the funding sources?

June 30, 2018 is the target date for completion. Costs and funding sources are:

- TIGER (FTA/USDOT) \$ 24,900,000
- City of Richmond \$ 7,600,000
- Henrico County \$ 400,000
- DRPT/VDOT (*Commonwealth of Virginia*) . . . \$ 32,016,000

TOTAL CONTRIBUTIONS \$ 64,916,000

What is the route and what will the stops be?

GRTC Pulse will travel 7.6 miles along Broad St. and Main Str., from Rocketts Landing to Willow Lawn. There are 14 stations. With the exception of the two terminus points (Willow Lawn and Rocketts Landing), each station has both an eastbound and westbound station platform. GRTC currently estimates it will take approximately 35-37 minutes to travel the entire route from Rocketts Landing to Willow Lawn. Information on station locations can be found on the GRTC website at ridegrtc.com/brt.

What will be the best way for a Museum District resident to board GRTC Pulse?

For those residents in the north Museum District closer to Broad St, or those comfortable with walking or biking, the

best way to board GRTC Pulse will be at the Cleveland St. station. For residents who need to ride a bus to connect to GRTC Pulse, there will be two routes servicing the Museum District, the new Patterson 76 and the new Grove 77. Both routes will take riders to the local stop closest to the Science Museum station. Existing service will also change when GTRC Pulse service begins.

The Monument 1 will be discontinued and no service will replace it. The Patterson 2 will be replaced by the Patterson 76, a new route that operates from Broad into the Museum District, reaching Patterson as it continues across I-195 into the West End. The Patterson 76 will operate once an hour, seven days a week, until 7 p.m., providing a consistent connection from the Museum District to the GTRC Pulse Science Museum station. In the southern Museum District on Grove, the Grove 16 will be replaced by the Grove 77. The Grove 77 will operate once an hour, seven days a week, until 7 p.m., providing a consistent connection from Grove to the GRTC Pulse Science Museum station. New route schedules are being finalized. Please visit the GRTC website at ridegrtc.com/brt.

What are the fare rates and how will tickets be purchased? How will the cost to ride GRTC Pulse vary from the current bus rider cost? Will weekly or monthly passes be available?

The fare rates are listed in the chart below. Bus passes will be available at ticket vending machines at every GRTC Pulse station. Passes can also be purchased at GRTC's online Transit Store. Additionally, riders can purchase bus passes at RideFinders (1013 E. Main St.) and at participating merchants. For information on online purchases and a list of merchants please visit ridegrtc.com.

The cost for riding GRTC Pulse is the same as riding GRTC's local fixed route service. GRTC offers one-day, seven-day or 30-day unlimited ride passes. In addition to these unlimited passes, a rider can also purchase one-ride passes at all ticket vending machines.

GRTC FARE GUIDE					
Fare Type	Local Route	Local Reduced Senior Disabled Medicare Minor	Henrico Express	Petersburg Extended Express	Extended Express Chesterfield 82
One Ride	\$1.50	\$0.75	\$2.00	\$3.50	\$6.00
One Ride Pluse	\$1.75	—	—	—	—
One Day Pass	\$3.50	\$1.75	\$4.50	\$7.00	—
7 Day Pass	\$17.50	\$8.25	\$22.50	\$35.00	—
30 Day Pass	\$60.00	\$35.00	\$80.00	—	—



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Selling Your Home in a Seller's Market

by Steve Jones

There are many strategies to consider when selling a home. The strategy that you and your Realtor decide to use can depend on the overall market climate, time of year, price range, location and your needs regarding timing and finances.

In the current sellers' market that we have in the Museum District you will see many sellers employing a strategy that seems effective and efficient. Given that there is a substantial pool of buyers that would like to live here, the goal is to create a sense of urgency among them to act before the opportunity to buy your home goes away. As always, pricing is critical. Your Realtor has valuable and current market knowledge to provide you with a price range where your home would most likely sell. Pricing your home at a price that can be justified by recent sales is important as other Realtors and their buyers have access to the same information.

The urgency is created by exposing your home to the market for a short period of time before any showings are allowed, typically around three days, followed by an open house for the first showings. The most common approach is to list your house in the MLS on Thursday with an open house the following Sunday. This will make sure that all potential buyers

have a chance to prepare to see the house and be in a position to make an offer should they feel the need.

The final step is to state a specific time shortly after the open house when any offers will be reviewed. This essentially gives buyers a deadline to make an offer and usually weeds out anyone considering a lowball offer.

In this market, this strategy usually results in a very busy open house and many interested parties. This could be a contributing factor to the fact that half of the homes in the Museum District are selling for more than the listing price and that they are selling, on average, in less than a week.

Not all strategies work all of the time or in all situations, but in a hot market this might be worth consideration.

To illustrate current market trends that suggest a seller's market in the Museum District, in the third quarter of 2017 there were 11 houses and 9 condos sold. That is a bit down from 20 homes in 2016 and that speaks to the lack of inventory. The most expensive sale was 3200 Grove Ave. which sold at \$775,000. Single family home sales ranged in price from \$287,000 to \$775,000 and condos ranged from \$130,000 to \$227,000.

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Tour historic Richmond-decorated homes and enjoy the holidays of yesteryear. \$25 per Tour ticket in advance/ \$30 the day and "Will Call" at St. John's Church Parish Hall (noon to 4 pm). Shuttle service is offered between each home beginning at St. John's Church.

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Magic Boots

by M.A. Powers

On September 15, 12-year-old Museum District resident, Charlie Laughlin, boarded a plane for a weekend trip to Haiti. Charlie and his mother Anna carried with them over 300 pounds of donated soccer equipment. The bags were filled mostly with cleats and jerseys for over 100 girls who were waiting to participate in a soccer camp, some of them for the first time in their lives. The donated equipment came largely from Charlie's teammates at local soccer club, FC Richmond. Charlie's vision, Magic Boots, had become a reality!

Once in Haiti, Charlie joined his father Jeff, a Richmond pediatric dentist and soccer enthusiast, who was already on the ground conducting local medical clinics. Early the next morning, over 100 girls from four local high schools were lined up an hour early for the inaugural Magic Boots Day event. First, the girls were properly fitted with a refurbished pair of cleats, new socks and a new FC Richmond soccer jersey. Dressed in their new soccer gear, the girls participated in a half-day soccer clinic under the direction of Charlie and his dad. The girls developed their skills in dribbling, passing and shooting, as well as participating in a local "World Cup" tournament. Volunteer coaches attended the event and will continue to support the girls in their soccer development throughout the school year.

The girls that participated are part of a program developed by Restavek Freedom, an American organization that works with local authorities and child advocates to identify restavek children. Restavek, from the French language, means to stay with, but the current Haitian word is used to describe a child that stays with another person or extended family member and is treated as property and exploited for labor. Restavek Freedom provides the girls with schooling, engages families and raises awareness internationally of the dangers associated with modern day restavek.



Charlie Laughlin (right) helping a new friend in Haiti



Many of the girls had never been part of an organized sporting event and many did not wear shoes on a daily basis. Because of this their feet tended to spread out and they needed larger cleats than expected. There were a couple of dozen girls who did not receive cleats during Charlie's visit so he is continuing to collect donations to send to Restavek Freedom in Port Salut, Haiti.

When asked about his motivation for creating Magic Boots, Charlie said, "My hope is to level the playing field for kids who love the world's greatest game - soccer!"

Charlie will continue to refurbish and distribute sports equipment to children in need around the world. He is currently in the process of completing paperwork so that Magic Boots will be recognized as a non-profit agency and capable of receiving tax-deductible donations. Until then, if you wish to donate cleats in larger woman's sizes or smaller men's sizes, email Charlie at magicboots10@gmail.com or follow them on Instagram @[magicbootscharlie](https://www.instagram.com/magicbootscharlie).



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North Thompson Street Historic District Established

By Sarah Krumbein

On June 15 a new historic district was created within the Museum District. The North Thompson Street Historic District encompasses seven buildings nestled between Broad St. and Monument Ave. along North Thompson Street.

Following World War II, like most southern cities in the United States, Richmond grew very rapidly. Much of this growth occurred in the larger metropolitan area, prompting the city to continue annexing portions of the surrounding counties. In the late 1940s and 1950s, working class and middle class families moved out from central Richmond. Increased use and popularity of the automobile improved the mobility of these citizens. Car sales rose steadily after the war; in 1955 alone nearly eight million cars were sold in the United States.

The increased population in newly developing suburbs led to residents venturing into the city in their automobiles, which created seemingly unavoidable traffic and congestion downtown. In response, commercial businesses opened farther out from the city's core.

The North Thompson Street Historic District provides an example of this trend for one of the larger service industries in the city: insurance. In addition to the economic contribution they made to the city, these service and financial establishments comprised an important industrial asset. Partially because some companies had voiced interest in relocating outside the city, in

1954 Richmond's City Council changed the zoning of approximately 20 acres in the city's West End to "T Transitional District" or a "quiet business" zone. This allowed for the operation of "offices for insurance men, attorneys and other businesses and professional groups" within the city limits. Plans to build in the North Thompson Street Historic District began immediately.

The majority of the buildings in the North Thompson Street Historic District were constructed in the mid- to late-1950s. The buildings were designed in the International Style, a distinct shift from the buildings in the adjacent district (West of Boulevard Historic District). They do, however, complement the Modern Style, eight-story building at 3600 W. Broad St. which was formerly the home of the Seaboard Railroad Company.

Each of the buildings are good examples of the International Style on a small scale with flat roofs, windows set flush to outer walls, smooth ornamented wall surfaces and asymmetrical facades.

The district continues to accommodate soft industry except for one vacant building which is being redeveloped into 26 residential units.

For more information about how the area was designated by the Virginia Department of Historic Resources visit their webpage at www.dhr.virginia.gov and click on "Register Listings by City and County."



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In addition to books, e-books, recorded books, and DVDs, we offer programs and classes, meeting room use, wireless Internet access, fax service, and public use PCs.

**The Belmont Library is located at
3100 Ellwood Avenue.**

Storytimes

Book Babies (infant-17 months) – Mondays at 10:00 & 10:45 AM

Toddler Time (18-36 months) – Mondays at 11:30 AM

Preschool Storytime (ages 3-5) –

Mondays at 4:00 PM (July 31-Aug 31)

Thursdays at 4:00 PM (starting September 21)

Family Storytime (all ages) –

Saturday, November 11, December 9, and January 20 at 10:30 AM

Lego Club

3rd Tuesday of the month at 4:30 PM

We provide the LEGOs – you provide the imagination! For grades K-6 with a parent.

S.T.E.M.

Tuesday, November 21, December 12, and January 23 at 4:30 PM

Join us for our monthly STEM program focused on science, technology, engineering, and/or math for ages 6-12. Visit or call Belmont to learn about this month's project. Space is limited. Please call to register. 646-1139

Paws to READ

2nd Monday of the month from 6:30-8:00 PM

Readers through grade 5, come read with one of our Paws to READ dogs. Practice your reading skills in a low-stress environment and enjoy your canine reading buddy. Sign-up is required. Please call to reserve your 20 minute session. 646-1139

Homework Help

Wednesdays from 5:00-7:00 PM

Volunteers will be available to help students of all ages with homework, projects and literacy skills! Sign up for a 30-minute session by calling 646-1139

Master Gardener Help Desk

Wednesday, November 1st from 4:00-6:00 PM

Have all your gardening questions answered by local Master Gardeners.

DIY Teen

Wednesday, December 13th at 4:30 PM

Teens ages 12-18, come get creative! Make origami cards and duct tape gifts. Perfect for the holidays! Sign-up required. Call 646-1139 to register.

GRASP

Wednesdays at 6:00 PM

A GRASP representative will be at Belmont on Wednesday nights from 6-8 pm to assist those interested in exploring/applying for financial aid for college.

Library Yarns

Thursdays at 10:30 AM

Bring your portable hand projects to Belmont for a fun, informal group experience. Knitters of all levels are welcome.

Tech Q & A

Wednesdays from 12:00-2:00

Bring your computer, smart phone, or other device and all tech questions to Belmont. Call 646-1139 to reserve a 30 minute session.



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Extended summer hours: Monday through Saturday; Mondays & Wednesdays 12 - 8 p.m.; Tuesdays, Thursdays & Fridays 10 p.m. - 6 p.m.; Saturdays 10 a.m. - 5 p.m. **More information can be found at RichmondPublicLibrary.org.**

Pet Safety for the Holidays

by Liz Bryant

Halloween through New Year's is a holiday rush. Parties, decorations, food and presents all make for an enjoyable time of year. But the very things that can be fun and festive for people, can pose a real threat to our animal companions.

The American Veterinary Medical Association recommends the following seven ways to make the holidays safer for our four-legged friends:

1. Keep people food out of the reach of your pet, and ask your guests to do the same.
2. Make sure your pet doesn't have any access to treats, especially those containing chocolate, xylitol, grapes/raisins, onions or other toxic foods.
3. Don't leave your pet alone in the room with lit candles, a decorated tree or potpourri.
4. Keep holiday plants (especially holly, mistletoe and lilies) out of reach of pets.
5. Consider leaving the tinsel off your tree if you have a cat.
6. Secure your Christmas tree to keep it from falling over if your dog bumps it or your cat climbs it. Hanging lemon-scented car air fresheners in the tree may deter your cat from climbing it.
7. Provide a safe place for your pet to escape the excitement (such as a kennel, crate, perching place, scratching post shelf or hiding place) if you're entertaining guests. If your pet is excitable or scared, consider putting your pet in another room with some toys, their litterbox and a comfortable bed.

In addition, package wrappings – ribbons and tape especially – can be enticing, so keep those well out of reach. With increased visitation in your house, be careful that your cat or dog doesn't slip out an open door.

If there is a medical emergency, time is of the essence. Your own veterinarian should be contacted, and there are two 24-hour, seven-day-a-week emergency veterinary centers near the Museum District:

1. Veterinary Emergency and Specialty Center. Located in Carytown at 3312 West Cary St. Their phone number is 804-353-9000.
2. Dogwood Veterinary Emergency & Specialty Center. Located just west of Target and Barnes & Noble at 5918 W. Broad St. Their phone number is 804-716-4700.

On the lighter side, if you're looking for pet-appropriate holiday activities to enjoy with your best friend, consider the GardenFest for Fidos at Lewis Ginter Botanical Garden. On November 30 and January 4, leashed pets are welcome to join their families for the Dominion Energy GardenFest of Lights. For times and ticketing information, please visit the Garden's website at lewisginter.org. Another option for holiday socializing is at Stony Point Fashion Park where leashed pets are welcome in the outdoor areas of the mall and in some stores, depending upon individual store policy.



Flash Macie-Linker enjoys wearing his pet-safe Halloween costume.

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Halloween Etiquette

by Liz Bryant

On October 31, ghouls and goblins will take to the streets, some in search of treats, others in search of tricks. While safety is the primary concern, good behavior ranks a close second. Here are five ideas to ensure good fun on All Hallows' Eve:

1. If you're trick or treating, dress in costume. Come on, it's Halloween after all. But keep it fun and scary, not inappropriate or creepy.
2. Those of you giving out the treats, when you run out of candy, turn off your porch light. Same if you're not participating. Porch light off is the recognized signal for "don't trick or treat here." Because it's Halloween and late-night tricks have been known to happen, go ahead and turn your light back on after the trick or treating has wrapped up.
3. Treats should be in original packaging. And keep it to candy. You may be well-meaning giving out fruit, but for safety reasons it will be tossed by parents when the kids get home. Plus, remember, it's Halloween and kids like candy.
4. Consider non-candy treats for kids with allergies or sensitivities. Glow bracelets or rings, for example, are inexpensive and fun. That way everyone gets to join in the festivities.



5. "Trick or treat" requesting treats and "thank you" upon receiving treats are the magic words. And it may even earn you an extra candy bar or two.

For safety recommendations, the American Automobile Association has a great list for drivers, parents and children. Visit their site at <http://exchange.aaa.com/safety/child-safety/halloween-safety/#.WcpYmORe7IU>.



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