



## Keeping Citizens Informed and Involved September 9, 2009

### VBparents.com Hits the Web

Are you looking for fun and free activities for you and your children? Want to make sure your child is prepared for school? Not sure what to do when your child throws a temper-tantrum?

**VBparents.com** is just what you're looking for.

For the past year, a number of city agencies and community organizations have been working together to launch **VBparents.com** – a comprehensive, online resource bursting with news you can use.

Learn how to register your child for kindergarten. Which questions to ask when choosing a child care provider. How to make everyday activities learning experiences.

“The City of Virginia Beach is committed to being a community for a lifetime -- one where our children will live, work and play for generations to come,” says Jenefer Snyder, Virginia Beach Ready to Learn Coordinator. “The city recognizes the importance of investing in its littlest citizens early in life so they grow into engaged and active adults. We hope that VBparents.com will help guide our little ones and aid the city in its mission.”

The site is targeted to parents of children from birth through age 12. It includes information about early learning, school readiness, health and nutrition and local resources. Many pages include printable documents, links to Web resources and videos. On the home page, you'll find an array of articles geared to helping you raise your child in Virginia Beach. The site also features an event calendar with fun things that you and your family can do together. Visit often because the information will change frequently.

Want to check out the site? Visit [www.VBparents.com](http://www.VBparents.com). For more information, call (757) 385-4197 or (757) 385-0144.

### See Scenic Stumpy Lake; Greater Public Access Planned

Eight years ago, the City of Virginia Beach bought Stumpy Lake from the City of Norfolk. It's huge and it's gorgeous. The 1,422 acres includes vast tracts of forest, wetlands and, of course, the big, beautiful lake.

Most visitors just golf there, but you can walk through Stumpy Lake, too. Several years ago, a nonprofit group called Citizens for Stumpy Lake worked with the city to build a walking trail that winds through forested wetlands

Now, Stumpy Lake is about to become even more accessible.

The city is building a boardwalk, with scenic overlooks, as part of a project to improve the dam at Stumpy Lake, on the southeastern edge of the lake. The boardwalk will be eight feet wide and 450 feet long. New parking for the boardwalk will be created on the old pump house site, directly across Elbow Road.

The work is under way and dam improvements are scheduled for completion in spring 2010. The boardwalk will provide an excellent opportunity to observe the wide variety of bird

species that frequent the lake. Because of the variety of birds present, Stumpy Lake has been identified as a viewing site on the Virginia Birding and Wildlife Trail.

The city Department of Parks and Recreation manages the natural area. The state Department of Conservation and Recreation has documented Stumpy Lake's unique plant and animal species and has developed management strategies to sustain the natural community. Urbanization surrounding Stumpy Lake, and the property's strategic location at the headwaters of Gum Swamp, make it a valuable natural area that needs to be actively managed to ensure its continued vitality.

The city Parks and Recreation Department is updating and refining the Stumpy Lake Master Land Use Plan to include additional public access opportunities like kayaking, fishing and expanded trail systems. The city will solicit public comments at different stages during the update period.

### Help Create a Sustainable Community for Future Generations

Some of the top architects in America are coming to town and they want to hear from you. Then they will help Virginia Beach create a sustainable future for generations to come.

The American Institute of Architects will hold a **Community Forum on Monday, Sept. 14, 6:30 to 8 p.m.** at the Virginia Beach Convention Center. The institute's Center for Communities by Design selected Virginia Beach as one of 10 cities to participate in its 2009 Sustainable Design Assessment Team Program.

To pre-register, call 385-4899 or e-mail [cbernick@VBgov.com](mailto:cbernick@VBgov.com).

Since its initial visit to Virginia Beach in May, the American Institute of Architects has put together a specialized team of experts from across the country to help the city with the issue of sustainability. After the Sept. 14 meeting, the team will recommend strategies in the areas of green economic development and energy, transportation and complete streets, local agriculture, and urban design and village centers.

The team will present its initial outline of recommendations on **Wednesday, Sept. 16, 6:30 p.m.**, at the Virginia Beach Convention Center, 1000 19<sup>th</sup> St.

**What makes a community sustainable?** According to the American Institute of Architects, a sustainable community meets the economic, physical, social and environmental needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet those needs. The City of Virginia Beach seeks to become such a community by fostering opportunities for alternative energy, efficient multi-modal transportation, progressive economic development, local sustainable agriculture and seafood, rich historical heritage and local cultural identity.

“This program is an exciting step towards realizing the vision of Virginia Beach as a model of comprehensive sustainability and total quality of life,” said Virginia Beach Mayor William D. Sessoms, Jr.

For more information or to preregister, contact Clay Bernick at [CBernick@VBgov.com](mailto:CBernick@VBgov.com) or 385-4899, or Ross Brockwell at [RBrockwe@VBgov.com](mailto:RBrockwe@VBgov.com) or 385-1535.

### **City Auditor Helps Improve Efficiency**

Ever wonder if the programs and services your tax dollars support are being run as efficiently as possible? The Office of the City Auditor is keeping an eye on that. Most recently, the office reviewed all the health care claims processed by Optima for the city and school system, and found an accuracy rate of 99.8 percent. In the past year, audits have been conducted of the Heron Ridge Golf Club contract, a grant to the Newtown Cultural Life Center, the Sheriff's Office Supplemental Retirement plan, and more. To read all the audit reports issued to date, visit [www.VBgov.com/auditreports](http://www.VBgov.com/auditreports).

### **Diamond Springs Road Bridge Replacement Work Continues**

The new northbound bridge on Diamond Springs Road, located just south of Little Creek Naval Amphibious Base, is open to traffic. New traffic patterns will be in place to shift all the traffic from the southbound bridge to the new northbound bridge. Once traffic has been shifted, construction of the new southbound bridge will begin, with completion scheduled for April 2010.

Diamond Springs Road will continue to be reduced to one lane of traffic in each direction. Haden Road will remain closed at Diamond Springs Road while the southbound bridge is being replaced. Advanced warning signs will be posted.

For more information, please contact Chris J. Wojtowicz at (757) 385-4131 or [CWojtowi@VBgov.com](mailto:CWojtowi@VBgov.com).

### **13th Annual Neptune's Fall Wine Festival**

Saturday and Sunday, Sept. 12 and 13  
Noon to 5 p.m.  
31st Street Park at the Boardwalk  
Tickets: \$25 in advance, \$30 at the gate  
Ticket information: 498-0215 or [www.neptunefestival.com](http://www.neptunefestival.com)

Enjoy great Virginia wines with gourmet food, live music and specialty vendors. Against a stunning oceanfront backdrop, it's a true autumn favorite. Admission includes a commemorative wine glass and tastings during the event. Advance ticket sales end at noon Friday, Sept. 11.

### **Stihl Lumberjack Championships**

Saturday, Sept. 19  
Noon to 4 p.m.  
Mount Trashmore Park

Flying wood chips, razor sharp axes and roaring chain saws make the Stihl Virginia Beach Lumberjack Championships a one-of-a-kind event. Lumberjacks from across the region will compete. Admission and parking are free.

### **The Most Valuable School Supply is Free: A Virginia Beach Public Library Card**

Start the school year right. Get a library card for each child – and yourself! They're free. Only card-holders can check out materials at all city libraries. Or stay home and access *reliable* online library resources, including journals, magazines, newspaper articles, encyclopedias and specialized search engines. Come to any Virginia Beach public library with proof of a current Virginia address and show a photo ID.  
[www.vbgov.com/libraries](http://www.vbgov.com/libraries).

### **Transportation Forum for Seniors**

Friday, Sept. 11 – 10 a.m. to noon  
Kempsville Recreation Center  
800 Monmouth Lane  
Sponsored by the Mayor's Commission on Aging

Topics will include light rail, how public transportation affects senior citizens, and other recent initiatives. Speakers will include Mayor William D. Sessoms, Jr. and representatives from Hampton Roads Transit and the Virginia Department of Transportation, followed by a question-and-answer period. Refreshments will be served. For more information, contact Mike Aschkenas at (757) 463-6941 or [rracket@aol.com](mailto:rracket@aol.com).

### **City Council Meetings**

#### **Workshop**

Sept. 15 – 4 p.m.  
Council Conference Room  
City Hall, 2nd Floor

#### **Formal Meetings**

Sept. 22 and Oct. 13 – 6 p.m.  
City Council Chamber  
City Hall, 2nd Floor  
Preceded by informal session  
Time to be determined

Citizens are invited to speak at the end of the first formal meeting of the month (Oct. 13) on non-agenda items.

#### **Community Summit**

Oct. 5 – 6 to 8:30 p.m.  
Virginia Beach Convention Center, Rooms 5-A, B, C

#### **City Council Review of Community Summit**

Oct. 6 – 8:30 a.m.  
Virginia Beach Convention Center, Rooms 4-D, E

Need more information about the City Council?  
Call the City Clerk's Office at 385-4303  
or visit [www.VBgov.com/city\\_hall](http://www.VBgov.com/city_hall).



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