

Since 1919 Dedicated to Responsible Citizenship and the Improvement of Local Government

BULLETIN



Next Meeting

**12 noon – Wednesday
October 7, 2009**

NEW DAY & LOCATION!

**The Colony Club is located at
10 East Franklin Street**

There is free parking in the rear or on the street. Directions — Approach headed East (one way street) on Franklin Street; left on Foushee; right into the Colony Club lot off of Foushee (this right turn is into an alleyway that runs parallel mid-block between Franklin and Grace Streets). Colony Club spaces are marked and all are on perimeter of lot. Proceed into Colony Club entrance —green awning leads into courtyard; proceed up courtyard to double glass doors.

Lunch is \$16 for members and \$20 for nonmembers.

Please call (545-6656) to make your reservation.

Candidates for State Offices: Spending Cuts Can't Continue, Virginia Needs Tax Reform

Michael Cassidy, executive director of The Commonwealth Institute for Fiscal Analysis, will expand on his recent Richmond Times-Dispatch Commentary article at the noon, October 7, meeting of the Richmond First Club.

Virginia needs tax reform, he wrote. Our system is outdated. Spending cuts are a “one dimensional strategy.” He will describe his suggestions for how Virginia can bring in more revenue and stop cutting essential services. Even before the recent budget cuts, Cassidy wrote that Virginia has cut more than \$33 for every \$1 raised in new revenue.

Cassidy brings a wealth of experience to his conclusions. He was an analyst at the Virginia Department of Planning and Budget as well as the U. S. Office of Management and Budget where he handled policy development, regulatory and legislative

review and budget process and execution for a wide variety of social policy programs. He began his career in tax policy for the federal government and worked for PricewaterhouseCoopers in their government consulting practice.

A graduate of Georgetown University, Cassidy has a master's degree in public policy from the College of William and Mary where he was a Thomas Jefferson Fellow.

The Commonwealth Institute is a non-profit think tank focusing on independent research, analysis and public education on budget and tax issues.

Richmond First Club meets at the Colony Club, 10 E. Franklin Street. Parking is available in the rear.

For more information or to make reservations for the luncheon meeting, call Pat Ryan at 545-6656 or email patryan@kw.com. Lunch for members is \$16, and \$20 for nonmembers.

Join us to hear what Mr. Cassidy has to report.

Nancy Finch, Program Chair

Reminder: To help us coordinate our planning with the Colony Club dining staff —

***Please RSVP for the monthly meeting
in a timely manner!***

Pat Ryan — 545-6656 — or email: patryan@kw.com

A Message from the RFC President

Dear Members:

This will be an exciting year for the Richmond First Club. The Board has voted to do a major overhaul of the webpage. We have contracted with Rick McKeel of Fidato Management Group to do the work. First Vice President Nancy Finch led a Webpage Committee working with Rick on the design of the webpage, and on setting up a monthly webpage maintenance program. She was assisted on the Committee by Brenda Finley, Bulletin/Newsletter Editor, and Mike Brooks. The webpage is to be a key element in the Club's identity and communication strategy, particularly as a means for potential new members to learn more about the Club.

The Club continues its modernizing program with its Bulletin/Newsletter. In the future it will be an e-Bulletin or e-Newsletter. It will be emailed to all members. Special arrangements will be made if a member does not have email. But the good thing is that there will still be continuity: Brenda will continue as Editor. Pat Ryan will continue as membership chair. She will handle membership inquiries from the webpage and will maintain the Club membership list. Len Morrow will continue as Public Relations chair.

There are many civic problems in the Richmond Metropolitan Area that need addressing. To contribute to getting the public and the candidates for the General Assembly to focus on them, Richmond First Club in collaboration with Leadership Metro Richmond, the League of Women Voters, Partnership for Housing Affordability and WCVE radio will sponsor a forum for candidates in House of Delegates districts where there is a contest. This will be a chance for the candidates to explain what they see as the main issues facing the Richmond Region and to explain what they hope to get done in the General Assembly.

The Board adopted Redistricting as the initial theme for Club meetings this year. The traditional way to redistrict is for the majority party to draw all districts to protect its members, to give them safe seats. This has two unfortunate results. In party contests, the extreme elements of each party are more motivated to attend conventions and primaries, with the result that the candidates favor the extreme wings of their parties more than the center. This hampers public business because the parties cannot bridge the gap between their extreme wings enough to compromise on providing good and timely solutions to government problems. Secondly, since most members are in safe districts, it becomes more and more common for them to run unopposed.

This year Club meetings will be held on Wednesdays at noon at the Colony Club, 10 East Franklin Street. The Colony Club has a parking lot for the early birds, and if it is full, on-street parking is usually no problem. It should be a fun year. I look forward to seeing you at our next meeting on Wednesday, October 7, 2009.

Frederick S. Fisher, President

House Candidates in Challenged Races Invited To Participate in WCVE Public Radio Forum

Invitations have been issued to 19 candidates for the House of Delegates to participate in a forum that will be broadcast from the studios of Public Radio Station WCVE (88.9 FM) Thursday, October 22, from 7-9 p.m.

Seven area House of Delegates members are being challenged for their seats. Two House races are open without an incumbent.

The forum is sponsored by the League of Women Voters, the Partnership for Housing Affordability, Leadership Metro Richmond and the Richmond First Club.

Moderators for the forum will be Bill Miller, WCVE Public Radio station vice president and general manager, and Dan Rosenthal, Public Radio producer.

The two-hour broadcast will provide candidates an opportunity to be heard by more than 10,000 in the radio audience. Questions on issues of importance to area constituents will be posed by the moderators.

An audience of about 200 will be in the studio for the forum. A reception will be held after the forum.

In a joint statement, leaders of the four sponsoring organizations said the forum is being held to allow voters to hear from candidates in contested House of Delegates elections for the 2010-2012 term.

House members who face opposition are: Delegates R. Lee Ware Jr. of Powhatan, John M. O'Bannon III of Henrico, Joseph D. Morrissey of Highland Springs, W. R. Janis of Glen Allen, and G. Manoli Loupassi, Delores L. McQuinn and Jennifer L. McClellan all of Richmond.

Challengers are Gary Reinhardt (Ware), Tom J. Shields, (O'Bannon), James O. Towey (Janis); William K. Grogan (Loupassi); Henry Otis Brown (McQuinn); Silver Persinger (McClellan) and Michael A. Gage (Morrissey). Seeking the Richmond seat formerly held by Del. Frank Hall are Ernesto V. Sampson Jr., Betsy B. Carr and L. Shirley Harvey. Seeking the Hanover County seat previously held by Del. Frank Hargrove are John A. Cox and Robert N. Barnette Jr.

For additional information call Lynn Bivens, Partnership for Housing Affordability, 804-422-5075 or lbivens@RAREaltors.com.



**Be advised that our mailing address is:
Richmond First Club
P.O. Box 344 – Richmond, VA 23218-0344**

***Changes of name, address, telephone number or email address go to
Pat Ryan patryan@kw.com who is charged with
producing the membership directory.***

Thank you!

Reflections — If missed the September 2009 meeting — Here is what our speaker said!

Bipartisan Redistricting After the Census — One Chance Remains: the 2010 General Assembly

“The public needs to be active,” the Rev. Doug Smith, executive director of the Virginia Interfaith Center for Public Policy, told the Richmond First Club at its September meeting. Smith referred to attempts to move bipartisan redistricting legislation through the General Assembly and into law before the 2010 census results in new legislative and congressional districts. Attempts have failed for several years. Smith said the 2010 session provides one more opportunity for a bipartisan commission that would fairly draw lines in communities of interest.

Every statewide candidate, Republicans and Democrats, supports bipartisan redistricting, Smith said. Redistricting legislation passes the Virginia Senate but has been stymied in a House of Delegates, Privileges and Elections subcommittee where the bills are killed and never make it to full committee, much less the House of Delegates.

Citizens, Smith said, need to let their legislators know they want an end to protection of seats in Congress and the Virginia General Assembly by the party in power that has resulted in growing political polarization and governmental gridlock.

The Virginia Redistricting Coalition, organized by business, community and political leaders joined to fix “the broken system” that now allows, as Smith said, “elected leaders to choose their voters rather than voters choosing their elected leaders.” Since last year, the work of the Coalition on redistricting has been shifted to Smith’s Interfaith Center for Public Policy. A fervent advocate of the need for bipartisan redistricting, Smith described modern gerrymandering, the age-old practice of both parties in drawing political lines to favor their party. The use of computers has brought new sophistication to the practice. A result, Smith explained, are Legislative districts that often result in legislators representing widely disparate areas that remove elected leaders from their constituents and lessen the opportunity for responsive government. Twelve states have independent bipartisan commissions that draw the lines for Legislative and Congressional districts which, then, must be approved by the legislature.

Smith pointed out that under the present Virginia system, few elected leaders are challenged for their seats. As a result election in a gerrymandered district is often tantamount to staying in that office. In 2007 just 17 of 140 seats (House and Senate) were in serious competition. The number is similar in this year’s 2009 election for the House of Delegates. Citizens should contact the following legislators, Smith said, to urge their support of bipartisan redistricting legislation: Delegates Bill Howell, Morgan Griffith, Chris Jones, Steve Landes and Kirk Cox. To learn more, visit: <http://www.fixthelines.org/>. 

Application for Richmond First Club Membership (or Annual Renewal)

I am familiar with and will subscribe to the purposes of the Richmond First Club. I understand that members are expected to participate actively on a club committee and are encouraged to attend the club meetings as often as possible. I certify that I am a registered voter in the Richmond metropolitan area (Richmond, Chesterfield, Henrico and Hanover) and by signing this application, and upon being accepted for membership by the Board, I agree to fulfill the membership obligations set forth above.

Name: _____ (Name or Nickname used) _____

Home Address: _____

Business Address: _____

Name of Business: _____ (Position or Title) _____

Home Phone: _____ Business Phone: _____ Fax: _____

Email: _____ Preferred mailing address (please check one): Home Business

Signature of Applicant: _____ Date: _____ Enclosed \$ _____

Member Sponsor: _____ Date: _____

Annual Membership Dues \$85 (plus paying separately for each of 10 monthly luncheons attended.) — OR select the “Gold Star” membership with dues of \$210 annually (\$210 includes the fee for 10 monthly luncheon meetings as well as your dues). — If you attend all meetings you realize a savings of at least \$55 per year and don’t need to remember to bring a check each month for your lunch! Look for the members with a gold star on their badge — they took advantage of the new “Gold Star” membership benefit! Please mail to Richmond First Club — PO Box 344 — Richmond, VA 23218-0344.

Partnership for Smarter Growth

Mark your calendars for Sunday -- October 25, 2009! The Richmond First Club is partnering with the Partnership for Smarter Growth through sponsorship of **PSG's 2nd Annual River City Saunter: Choices and Opportunities for Growth -- A bus tour and regional community celebration.** Plan to attend!

Join citizens, elected officials, and nonprofit and business leaders as Partnership for Smarter Growth takes us on a journey through the Richmond Region. Discover how our communities can thrive when we plan wisely for growth and celebrate Richmond's best with local food and music, a Live Tree Auction, and a Silent Auction.

PSG's River City Saunter is part of the *Voices for Transportation's Choices* project, educating and involving citizens in shaping the future of our communities. The purpose of the event is to raise awareness about the opportunity and the need to reinvest in existing infrastructure and to embrace a multi-modal philosophy.

The bus tour will take participants down 3 major growth corridors to illustrate an emerging pattern: our rapid consumption of farmland, forests, and open space for development has left the urban and inner suburban core languishing.

After the bus tour, participants will enjoy a Regional Community Celebration in the iconic abandoned parking lot of the once thriving Cloverleaf Mall, one of the first suburban retail centers in the region local..

Local heavy hors d'oeuvres, cider and tea, and local music will provide a backdrop to our land use and transportation educational fair featuring our partners and highlighting our message of revitalization and citizen participation.

The **Richmond First Club is a proud sponsor**, joining other valued partners including First Market Bank, The Sierra Club, Richmond Association of REALTORS, Rails to Trails Conservancy, and Alchemy, LLC.

- **Who:** Individuals, organizations, and businesses partnering and sharing ideas for smarter growth.
- **What:** Educating and informing citizens, local leaders, and the community about local opportunities for renewal, citizen engagement, and sustainable prosperity
- **Where:** *Stoneridge*, formerly Cloverleaf Mall, 2701 Midlothian Turnpike
- **When:** Sunday, October 25, 2009 -- 2:00 p.m. Registration/ Sign-in
- 2:15 - 4:00 p.m. Choices and Opportunities for Growth: A Guided Bus Tour of Key Richmond and County Corridors
- 4:00 - 6:00 p.m. Renewal and Sustainable Prosperity: A Regional Community Celebration of Smarter Growth Solutions.
- Featuring Educational Exhibits focused on Land Use and Transportation, food, music, live tree auction, and silent auction to Celebrate the Region.
- **How:** To RSVP and purchase your \$25.00 ticket, visit www.psgrichmond.org, email RSVP@psgrichmond.org, or call 804-644-4774.
- **Why:** Smart Growth means wisely building quality of life and local economies.

Organization overview:

Partnership for Smarter Growth (PSG), created in 2004 by and for the citizens of the 9 localities in the Richmond region, exists

to leverage constituency power to change the way we think and act about our natural and built environment.

- PSG is a grassroots educational non-profit organization dedicated to equipping citizens and decision makers with the tools they need for effective smart growth advocacy.
- PSG works toward a region connected by vibrant, vocal citizen groups monitoring and influencing better land use and transportation planning.
- Local citizen group leaders as well as regional and state-wide activists and experts comprise PSG's Steering Committee.
- Where and how we grow has deep and far-reaching social, economic, health, and environmental impacts.

Across the nation, land use and transportation are considered separately, resulting in sprawling development patterns that erode our viability, resources, and sense of place.

Grounded in stakeholder collaboration, smarter growth means reinvestment in existing infrastructure, more transportation and housing choices, and conservation of our historic, cultural, and natural heritage.

PSG works to create a self-sustaining groundswell of citizen engagement in planning to enliven the democratic process and to channel growth to help, not harm, our communities.

Project Overview:

Our *Voices for Transportation Choices* project will create consensus and awareness for better land use and transportation planning to benefit all citizens in the Richmond region, through the following activities:

1. Citizen Leadership Education Programs: Providing citizens with the tools and support they need to be effective advocates for smarter growth
2. PSG Richmond Regional Land Use and Transportation Work Group: Unifying leaders and experts across the region to craft and implement a proactive strategy for smarter growth and regional cooperation
3. Community Outreach Meetings for Bike and Pedestrian Prioritization: Bringing together state, regional, and local planners; citizens; and elected officials to create a "Top Five" list of bike and pedestrian projects for each locality and for the region.

Join us on October 25th and learn!

by Sheila Sheppard (Partnership for Smarter Growth)

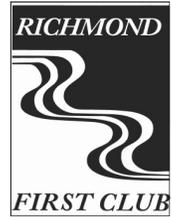


Watch your e-mail inbox for a special announcement — that indicates the Richmond First Club's all NEW web site is complete. It is nearly ready!

We think you will be impressed.

www.richmondfirstclub.org/indexnew.html

2009-2010 Board of Directors



President: Fred Fisher 804-786-1929 fsfisher@aol.com
1st VP: Nancy Finch 804-272-6188 nancyfin@comcast.net
2nd VP: *vacant*
Secretary: Jonathan Macdonald 804-272-1442 jbmacdon@hotmail.com
Treasurer: Louis Matherne 804-213-4205 lmatherne@vablood.org
Newsletter: Brenda Finley 804-272-9004, brenden.associates1@juno.com
At Large: Rayford Harris 804-321-7944, vsuteach@verizon.net
At Large: Len Morrow 804-358-7355 lmorrow3@verizon.net
At Large: Pat Ryan 804-545-6656, patryan@kw.com

Education Committee:

Need new chairperson

Membership Committee:

Pat Ryan (Chair) 804-545-6656, patryan@kw.com

Website Committee: Nancy Finch, Brenda Finley, Mike Brooks

The public is welcome to attend meetings, which are generally held on the first Wednesday of each month. Please call or email Pat Ryan to make a reservation — 804-545-6656, patryan@kw.com.



**Mark your calendar now
for the monthly luncheon
meetings of the Richmond
First Club's 2009-2010
Fiscal Year.**

November 4, 2009

December 2, 2009

January 6, 2010

And the first Wednesday of every month in the spring.

The Club meets on the first Wednesday of the month. Members are welcome to attend the monthly meetings of the Board of Directors — usually held on the Monday afternoon following the Wednesday membership luncheon meeting.

If you plan to come, you will be provided with an opportunity to offer your ideas, concerns, and/or other areas of interest. You may be looking for a way to become more involved in the club, or head up a committee.

Please call or send an e-mail message to the President (above) for directions and to be included on the agenda.

Richmond First Club

Our Mission

The club's founders shared a common vision of a permanent organization that would inform the public and political leaders about a broad range of civic issues, policies and solutions.

The spirit of enlightened activism that initially inspired the formation of the Richmond First Club in 1919 carries on today in its active study of and involvement in issues currently affecting the Richmond metropolitan area.

During its 80-plus year history, the club has provided leadership on a number of issues critical to the quality of governance in the metropolitan areas. All the region's citizens have benefited from the club's energy and diligence.

The club pioneered the idea of cooperation among the political jurisdictions in the metropolitan areas. The club completed comprehensive studies advocating regional cooperation as early as 1981.

The lifeblood of the club is its committee structure, where members focus on and research civic issues vital to continued development in the region. Thorough and nonpartisan studies have been published by these committees, assisting in many high-profile accomplishments over the years.