



THE LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS® OF MONTGOMERY COUNTY, VIRGINIA

BULLETIN

Volume 42, Issue 3
October 2013

P.O. Box 10133, Blacksburg, VA 24062-0133
<http://www.lwvmcva.org>

These League Forums are co-sponsored with the Montgomery County, Radford City, Floyd County branch of the NAACP, NRV chapter of the Virginia Interfaith Center for Public Policy, and the News Messenger.

House of Delegates

Thursday, Oct. 17
7 p.m.
Town Council Chambers,
Blacksburg Town Hall

Moderator Beth Obenshain, former executive director, New River Land Trust and Roanoke Times editor

Seventh District

Twelfth District



Rush



Abraham



Yost



Harder

Montgomery County Board of Supervisors/ School Board

Wednesday, Oct. 23
7 p.m.
Board of Supervisors
Meeting Room, County
Government Center,
Christiansburg

Moderator: Wayne Worner, education consultant, retired Virginia Tech faculty

Board of Supervisors:

District A: Incumbent Annette S. Perkins is unopposed

District C: Incumbent Gary D. Creed
and challenger Tacy L. Newell

District D: Incumbent James D. Politis, and challengers
Michel T. "Todd" King and Michael B. Miller



Creed



Newell



Politis



Miller



King

School Board

District A: Gunin A. Kiran is running unopposed

District D: Incumbent Jamie M. Bond and challenger Thomas "Tom" Zuckerwar



Bond



Zuckerwar

The League of Women Voters, a nonpartisan political organization, encourages the informed and active participation in government, works to increase understanding of major public policy issues, and influences public policy through education and advocacy.

The League of Women Voters never supports or opposes candidates for office, or political parties, and any use of the League of Women Voters name in campaign advertising or literature has not been authorized by the League.

Contact the League

President
Judy Snoke
552-5273

judy_snoke@comcast.net

1st V-P: (program chair)

Amy Mauldon
951-1534

amauldon@gmail.com

2nd V-P: (voter service chair)

Mary Houska
552-2717

mfdh@aol.com

Treas: June Schmidt

552-1590

schmidtj@vt.edu

Sec: Julia Lewis

961-2655

cisco@warmhearthva.org

Directors: (elected)

Bobby Littlefield (*action*)

951-1418

bobbilittle65@gmail.com

David Scheim (*publicity*)

320-8013

dscheim@comcast.net

Bev Fleming

951-1527

bev_fleming@hotmail.com

Directors: (appointed)

Darlene Allen

(*Facts for Voters editor*)

552-0279

dfallen01@gmail.com

Mary Ann H. Johnson (*Bulletin editor,*

Facebook)

552-0133

jnayram@vt.edu

Alison Wilson (*membership*)

557-1253

alisonhwilson@verizon.net

Off-board portfolios

Action co-chair

Mary North

382-8374

mhnorth@msn.com

Finance chair

Harriett Cooper

552-3446

chayabrona@verizon.net

President's Message from Judy Snoke

Busy Time for League with Forums, Plans for Action, and More

After the successful forum last month, our Open Government Study Committee, led by Carol Lindstrom and Darlene Allen, is gathering information to reevaluate and update our League's current Open Government position in light of changes in communication technology. This committee is tasked with preparing a revised Open Government position to be brought to the membership for a vote at the May 15, 2014 Annual Meeting.

Action

Our Action Committee is preparing to MOVE forward! At the first meeting, Sept. 12, participants reviewed League guidelines for Action and made note of the crucial differences between "lobbying," or naming specific bills and asking for committed favorable votes to our position, and "advocacy," or emphasizing our perspective on an issue without specifying any current bills – thus staying within the League policies and philosophy. This is important in the use of funds and IRS guidelines.

We decided to organize our Committee into mini issue-specific teams so that we could more easily recruit League members and interested citizens who would like to join our efforts to influence policies and legislation. The issues we want to tackle include: Health Care, Voting Rights, Education, Environment, Agriculture, Open Government, Women's Right to Choose, Planned Community Growth, Criminal Justice, and Prisons.

Contact Bobbie Littlefield if you want to be included in any of these issue teams.
540 961 1418 bobbilittle65@gmail.com.

Volunteers needed!

<http://www.lwvmcva.org/>, our website, has been updated to the easy to use format adopted by regional and national affiliates of the League of Women Voters. Our Facebook page, League of Women Voters of Montgomery County, is also easy to use and attractive. However, we need volunteers to help maintain these important services. Mary Ann Johnson and Judy Snoke are both eager to find volunteers!

We are still organizing for our programs in January, Natural Resources, Planning, Sustainability, and Impacts of Growth in Montgomery County, and March, LWVUS Agriculture Study. If you are interested participating in the first one, please contact Meghan Dorsett. If you are interested in the latter, please contact Judy Snoke.

Voting Registration Review

Persons can vote in Virginia if they are citizens of the United States, residents of Virginia, at least 18 years of age by the date of the next general election, have not had their civil rights removed and are registered to vote in Virginia.

If you are already registered to vote, you do not have to re-register unless you have moved or changed your name. You can check to see if you are registered by going to the State Board of Elections (SBE) web site: www.vote.virginia.gov/search.

If you have a current Virginia driver's license or ID issued by the DMV, you can register or update your registration online by going to: www.vote.virginia.gov/.

You can download, print and complete the SBE registration form and take or mail it to your local voter registration office. The Montgomery County registration office is located on the first floor of the County Government Center in Christiansburg.

You can obtain a copy of the form at your local voter registration office, DMV, or other government office and complete it in person or mail it to your local voter registration office.

If you do not receive a voter card within 30 days, contact the SBE or your local voter registration office.

Voter Guide

Blacksburg Town Council and Mayor

2013 Blacksburg Town Council Candidates and Mayor (the Mayor is unopposed):



Anderson



Chachra



DeMotts



Newcomb



Rordam

Mayor Ron Rordam - I have raised a family in Blacksburg and run a successful business since 1981. I have spent the last twenty-one years serving the Town of Blacksburg as Planning Commissioner, Council member and Mayor. During my eight years as Mayor we have seen tremendous progress in Downtown and, most recently, First and Main. Our neighborhoods are thriving and new, twenty first century businesses are growing. Twenty one years is a long time to serve/ but it is my goal to always look at challenges from a fresh perspective, try new solutions, and not be afraid of positive change.

Susan Anderson - A native of Virginia and the oldest of four sisters, Susan Anderson moved to Blacksburg in 1980 after graduating from Mary Washington College with degrees in mathematics and classical civilization. She earned a masters degree in mathematics in 1982 from Virginia Tech, where she has been teaching ever since.

Susan was elected to Town Council in 2006, re-elected in 2009, and served as vice mayor for two two-year terms. She understands that effective service on town council requires enormous energy, organization, a keen sense of responsibility and a strong work ethic. These are traits that Susan possesses.

Please visit www.AndersonForCouncil.com.

Krisha Chachra - I currently serve my hometown as an active Blacksburg Town Council member. For the last four years, I've helped Blacksburg grow in creative, responsible ways and built strong relationships with residents and businesses. I'm an advocate for a vibrant downtown and have a leading role in supporting First & Main and the South Main corridor. I serve as Chair of the Tourism Council and sit on several boards and committees. Outside of council, I'm a published author and regular columnist for NRV Magazine and President and Founding member of Up on the Roof, Blacksburg's largest creative professionals mixer.

April DeMotts – April DeMotts came to Blacksburg in 1999 to attend Virginia Tech. After graduation, she began working in property management in Blacksburg and has managed apartment communities both downtown and in the Tom's Creek corridor for a decade.

Her volunteer pursuits include the Executive Board of the New River Valley Apartment Council, the Executive Board of the Virginia Apartment Management Association, Vice-Chair of Blacksburg's Housing and Community Development Advisory Board and volunteering with Sustainable Blacksburg to coordinate battery/CFL/printer cartridge recycling for Downtown Blacksburg's businesses.

April lives with her son, Price, and enjoys yard work, live music and spending time with friends.

Cecile Newcomb - Cecile Newcomb was elected to Blacksburg Town Council in 2009 and currently serves on:
Blacksburg Planning Commission (Certified)
Blacksburg Environmental Quality and Land Use Committee
New River Valley Planning District Commission

During her first two years on Town Council, Newcomb served on the MBC Development Corp.; Downtown Blacksburg, Inc.; Downtown Revitalization Committee; Corridor Committee; Historic District Task Force; Arts & Cultural District Task Force. She is a native and long-time resident of Blacksburg, also having lived in San Diego, CA; Ithaca, NY; Boulder, CO and Calgary, Alberta. Newcomb has coached cross country and track teams at BHS and BMS,

and volunteered in Montgomery County Public Schools. Cecile's son is serving in the United States Marine Corps Reserves and attends Virginia Tech. Her daughter is a student at NRCC and a waitress at Sal's Restaurant. Cecile is also a full-time student at NRCC with plans to transfer to VT to complete her Bachelor's and Master's degrees.

Newcomb is a cycle instructor at The Weight Club, and the former founder and owner of Rest Assured Housing Management, Inc. Newcomb is the former co-founder and Business Director of Energy Check, a division of Shelter Alternatives, Inc.

Candidates were asked to respond to one question: What is your vision for Blacksburg by 2020? Assuming that Virginia Tech and the Corporate Research Center continue to grow as they have recently, please consider the direction you would want to guide the Town in planning and public investment so that the lives of its citizens are enhanced.

Mayor Ron Rordam - As my response is limited to 300 words, I will be as succinct as possible.

As we look forward, we need to always remember that strong neighborhoods form the backbone of Blacksburg. We must look for ways to protect and reinvigorate our distinct, unique neighborhoods.

Virginia Tech's growth will come from Graduate Students. Our ordinances must encourage high quality, mixed use developments that include housing for these residents.

The CRC's growth will also present opportunities for other parts of town, We should invest in gigabyte broadband to support these companies, it will be important to engage in Private Public partnerships for more structured parking in areas that can support this business development. These areas include Downtown, South Main and University City Blvd sections of town.

Investment in indoor and outdoor recreation for all citizens will be an important component for quality of life. We should work with the South Main Merchants Association to continue the resurgence of that area as a commercial and retail hub.

Town government should work with residents, businesses, and property owners to develop a plan for North Main corridor past Price's Fork Road. Our Downtown and University City Blvd need our support to keep their positive momentum going.

Many of these goals are a continuation of policies already in place. Blacksburg and the surrounding region has received numerous awards for quality of life, housing stability, and business opportunities. These accolades did not happen by accident, but because we have planned and implemented those plans. I look forward to continuing this successful effort.

Susan Anderson - Our shared community values and collectively developed Comprehensive Plan can guide us to a bright future. With citizen engagement and thoughtful leadership we can realize our vision of a vibrant, diverse, sustainable, livable, and truly "cool" Blacksburg where the interests and well-being of our citizens and environment come first.

The wise management of growth and development that will ensure economic viability and community livability must involve strict adherence to our zoning laws and Comprehensive Plan. Growth should be directed toward clustering and in-fill; diverse housing options should be encouraged; green space preservation should be valued; and specific tax incentives should be used to attract businesses compatible with our shared community values.

I envision that Blacksburg in 2020 is not just a great university town but a safe, supportive, stimulating place to live for children, teens, families, young and older professionals, and retirees; cultivates a sense of community among its diverse population; has abundant recreational opportunities yet preserves green space and natural areas; has great public transportation and extensive walking and biking trails; has a broad range of retail businesses, light manufacturing, professional services, research centers, and creative enterprises; is a hub for the visual and performing arts.

I envision a vibrant downtown that is rich in public spaces and events with readily available public parking; is full of locally owned, unique retail businesses and galleries; has outdoor, casual and fine dining; includes the mixed-use redevelopment of the old Blacksburg Middle School site.

I envision a rich array of neighborhoods offering diverse housing options, including workforce, senior, and young professional housing; being protected from commercial encroachment and cut-through traffic; featuring sidewalk and trail connections, pocket parks, and green space.

I envision a better Blacksburg for us all.

Krishna Chachra - As our town grows, I continue to advocate for a creative vision for Blacksburg. I support forward-thinking initiatives such as broadband to the homes and WiFi downtown. We must celebrate our local talent. One idea I have is to use our new College Avenue promenade to host "An Idea Walk" where instead of having conferences indoors we can showcase our budding entrepreneurs by setting up easels and flip-charts to share their creative ideas to the curious public who might end up supporting them. We must invigorate the creative spirit that our Town was built on! Outside the already successful events, more energizing things that celebrate ideas and concepts will enhance the lives of our citizens.

As the Town Council's liaison to First & Main, I envision the South Main corridor to grow as a robust commercial center and destination for tourists that will also benefit our Downtown and other areas of our community. I played a key role in advising the developers throughout the IMAX & Frank Cinebowl approval process to make sure they were communicating with the neighbors and our planning department. For future development, I propose having a Design Studio - a place where developers can learn about Blacksburg's design standards, setbacks, style guides and public art (all of which we will have to adopt) etc., so it becomes part of the developer's "DNA". This will be easier for developers to understand our definition of good design and make the application process with the Town more efficient.

I think as Tech, the CRC and our service industries grow, we will see a rise in the need for more professional housing. The Town is looking into a Housing Trust which would eventually offset the cost of developing housing that is affordable to our lower to middle income professionals.

April DeMotts - My vision for Blacksburg in 2020 includes increased recreation opportunities and an increased focus on families. In seven years' time, the Blacksburg Children's Museum should be a reality and I would like to see an equal investment into a teen center/club for music, food, pool tables, dancing, etc. We cannot enhance the lives of citizens if there aren't dedicated safe spaces for children to mingle and socialize.

Additionally, we must invest in neighborhood infrastructure to manage stormwater problems and connect homes by sidewalk, bike paths and walking trails. I envision more connected neighborhoods that give citizens more access to pedestrian and bicycle travel in our residential areas.

Most importantly, Blacksburg will not be able to attract new residents, new businesses and new tourism if we do not address one of our greatest concerns---access to affordable housing is a critical issue. I envision expanded housing options for all income and age groups within Blacksburg by 2020. It is imperative that our young professionals, families, seniors and workforce are able to buy, eat, work and live locally---we cannot do that until we solve our housing problems.

Finally, I envision Blacksburg in 2020 with an increased diversity of retail options. We have a vibrant and historic Downtown and, with the opening of the Center for the Arts at Virginia Tech, we will have a large tourism draw that will encourage continued investment in Downtown. I would like to see new retail and commercial development along the South Main Corridor in the area within and surrounding the First and Main chopping center. Our population will benefit from a lively and eclectic mix of retail, business and service industry investment in locations on the south end of Blacksburg. Maximizing the potential of this area is critical to our community development and smart growth.

Cecile Newcomb - A community that provides educational, cultural, and athletic opportunities as well as employment options for all citizens, and excellent quality of life that attracts and retains businesses, talent and people of all ages here in town.

My priorities on Blacksburg Town Council

- Responsible growth and planning with adherence to our Comprehensive Plan
- Sound fiscal management and careful stewardship of taxpayer dollars
- Support for local business; improving relationships between the Town and Business community
- Preserve the integrity of neighborhoods and property values
- Accomplish intelligent economic development that is sustainable for the long term
- Facilitate the development of athletic fields and facilities for multiple sports and age levels
- Protect our quality of life and environment through careful planning, codes and enforcement
- Support for mass and alternative transportation, including pedestrian and bicycle
- Support police, fire, rescue facilities and operations
- Promote the arts district, downtown, and retail centers
- Continued town progress toward Cool Cities goals of energy savings and reduction of greenhouse gases and carbon emissions
- Conservation and integrity of public parks, trails and land
- Promote a spirit of cooperation between all segments of the Blacksburg community

Voter Guide

Christiansburg Town Council and Mayor

2013 Christiansburg Town Council Candidates and Mayor (Mr. Barber is unopposed)



Bishop



Franusich



Hall



Huppert



Stipes



Barber

These answers are taken directly from the candidates' responses, "copied and pasted;" the responses are never edited.

“Sam” Bishop II - Served 28 years with Blacksburg Police Department. Retired as Police Captain

- U.S. Army veteran. Served 6 years active duty and 15 years Army reserves (Retired SFC)
- Life member of Christiansburg Rescue Squad
- Attend Asbury United Methodist Church in Christiansburg.
- BS degree in Management Human Resources from Bluefield College
- Christiansburg has always been my home.

Commitment

In the military and with the police department, my job experience included leadership roles. I will use information and experience to make sound and fair decisions on behalf of the citizens of Christiansburg.

David Franusich - David Franusich, 32, has lived in the NRV for nearly 15 years. A graduate of Virginia Tech, he now works as a graphic designer and web developer. He is currently a member of the Christiansburg Planning Commission, and is on the development subcommittee. He is also the co-founder of Downtown Christiansburg, Inc., a non-profit dedicated to promoting downtown. He is married to his amazing wife, Christina, a life-long resident of the area. David is running for town council because he believes Christiansburg is at a pivotal time, and needs forward-thinking, open-minded leadership. He believes that a strong new direction must be set for the town's future.

R. Cord Hall - I am a lifelong resident of Christiansburg and Council member for three years. I am married to Kourtney Hall and the proud father of three girls. I attended Radford University for my BS in History and Political Science, earned my JD from the University Of Virginia School Of Law and remain employed with Gilmer, Sadler, LLP. in Pulaski County.

I attend church at Grace Life and appreciate serving the community through a variety of ways, including the Safe Haven Board of Directors, the Domestic Violence Committee of Pulaski County, being an avid girls softball coach, and as a Guardian ad litem for children throughout the New River Valley, earning Guardian ad litem of the year honors for 2013 from CASA, a program of NRV CARES.

Steve Huppert - I have lived in Christiansburg over 35 years. Both of my daughters attended K-12 in Christiansburg, and I was a teacher, coach, and guidance counselor in Montgomery County for over 30 years.

I have completed two terms on the Christiansburg Town Council. Currently, the liaison for the town council with the Christiansburg Planning Commission.

I retired from the Army Reserve, after 28 years, as a Lieutenant Colonel. Served with the 101st Airborne Division in Viet Nam.

I would like to see Christiansburg continue to grow and prosper and maintain the small town atmosphere of the community.

“Brad” Stipes

- 48 years old; 40 years as a local resident (early-career pitstops in Loudoun County, VA and Raleigh, NC)
- Grew up in Blacksburg, attended Montgomery County Schools, and graduated from Virginia Tech
- Eagle Scout
- Currently on the backside of rearing a large family with my wife, Michele (3 in local colleges, 2 at CHS, and one in 4th grade).
- Licensed Civil Engineer practicing in Transportation and Traffic Engineering
- Prior to election to Council in 2006, served on Town’s Planning Commission for 7 years and coached Rec League Baseball for 8 years
- Problem-solving and results-oriented mindset in public service
- Driven to pass along to future generations a Town that is vibrant, livable, affordable, and as attractive as possible in which to live, work, and play

D. Michael Barber has a deep and abiding love for and faith in the Town he has called home for his entire life. Mike has been long been active in the Christiansburg community: as a member of Kiwanis Club, a lifelong member of the Christiansburg Presbyterian Church, and as a member of the Christiansburg Town Council, including two terms as the Vice Mayor. Mike knows the ins and outs of Town government, having served on numerous Town committees, including Central Business District, Finance, Street, and Water and Sewer. He has also served as the liaison to the Christiansburg Recreation Commission and on the Steering Committee for the Rosa L. Peters Playground. Mike has a long history of involvement in the economic health and development of Christiansburg and surrounding areas, including serving as the President of the New River Valley Development Corporation and as a member of the Board of Directors of the Montgomery County Chamber of Commerce. As Mike often says, “As a life long town resident, with children and grandchildren living in Christiansburg, Erlene and I want the very best for our family just as we want the very best for your family.”

*Candidates were asked to respond to one question: **What is your vision for Christiansburg by 2020? Assuming that Montgomery County continues to grow as it has done recently, please consider the direction you would want to guide the Town in planning and public investment so that the lives of its citizens are enhanced.***

“Sam” Bishop II - I see Christiansburg becoming a town where small and large businesses would like to come and set up operations. Since the town has the interstate close by it will make it easy for freight to be shipped in and out. Once we have businesses established, citizens will look at staying in Christiansburg, and others would look at moving here. In the long run this will be an area where young people will want to stay and call home. I see Christiansburg continue growing to offer activities for families to enjoy. Clean, safe walking trails/paths, sporting activities. With more businesses and families moving to town, this would mean more taxes and revenue. This will help the town in maintaining a workable budget, without over taxing citizens.

David Franusich - Montgomery County is one of the fastest growing areas in the commonwealth, and Christiansburg is taking on a lion’s share of that expansion. Our tax base has been growing and will continue to grow— what can we show for it? What do we want to show for it? We can’t keep existing development patterns the same as population and housing demand grows. We need to ensure that Christiansburg is ready to be the beneficiary of the ongoing growth surrounding the Virginia Tech community, as well as urbanizing pressures in the eastern part of the county.

I envision a Christiansburg that is becoming a model community for other towns in the region and state; a 21st-century town that provides its residents with the amenities and infrastructure that people expect of a modern municipality. I see an intelligently planned and upgraded road system, alongside ever-increasing pedestrian connectivity. Families would be able to safely walk or bike to eat, shop, and see live music in a burgeoning downtown, the revitalized heart of our community; or to spend a sunny afternoon in one of the new parks that have just been opened. We would begin to see people seek out Christiansburg, both as a tourist destination, and as a place to settle down and call home (not just a bedroom community to Blacksburg and Virginia Tech). I envision a forward-thinking town government that leads by

example, and is willing to use creative means and outside-the-box thinking in order to continually be improving.

Seven years is not a lot of time in the life of a town, but I feel that in 2020, with the right leadership, Christiansburg could be well on its way to fulfilling its potential.

R. Cord Hall - Many may recall that Council passed a Vision 2020 protocol covering many facets of future development; however, a key component not included was sufficient public input as this was completed at a Council retreat in 2008. Council must engage the citizens when making these long range plans, but what follows is my personal vision.

I desire to see Christiansburg establish a town park we can be proud of and financed without increasing the tax burden on citizens. I would like safe connectivity throughout our community with pedestrian accommodations ensured. To this end, two months after taking office I moved that we accept the VDOT SSAR-requirements, which was unanimously approved. Further, we must ensure that taxes remain reasonable and not serve to further hamper the efforts of our citizens or local businesses. I am yet to approve of a town budget due to what I call inefficient use of funds at certain levels and feel that a tax increase this past year on real estate was not warranted. Moreover, the town would be well served by examining the utility behind acquiring city status. There is a moratorium in place until 2018 under Virginia Code, allowing the Town adequate time to study the measure in the interim period.

Approximately two years ago I advocated for expanding the number of our local planning commission, resulting in an extremely dynamic and capable group, evidenced by the number of matters referred by Council. This expertise would be utilized when examining city status as noted above and for ensuring an updated Comprehensive Plan every three to five years in lieu of waiting upwards of ten years historically. Our Planning Commission has already proven instrumental in this regard.

Finally, the principles of an open and transparent government must be reinforced. Only by ensuring that all information is accessible to the public can we guarantee a well informed citizenry capable of holding Council accountable for their actions. Backroom deals with little or no discussion must remain a figment of the past and have no place in Christiansburg.

Steve Huppert - I don't think there is any doubt that Montgomery County and Christiansburg are going to continue to experience growth in the coming years. It was recently reported that by 2030 an additional 10,000 homes will be built in the area. Growth like this stimulates the economy of the community.

With growth the town will receive additional responsibilities in a number of areas. One area is transportation. With rapid growth come congestion and traffic problems. Anyone who has driven in Northern Virginia knows how traffic and congestion can affect a community.

A goal of the town planners in the coming years should be to maintain the road and traffic conditions within the town. Maintaining roads in the town will have a direct impact on the future growth and livability within the community. Constant planning and improvements will give Christiansburg the ability to grow and prosper.

The town also needs to stimulate additional forms transportation. The bus systems should be constantly upgraded and expanded. Passenger rail service should be encouraged. Bike and walking trails are other means to provide transportation for the citizens of Christiansburg.

With constant planning Christiansburg will continue to grow and prosper.

“Brad” Stipes - My original impetus for seeking elected office in Christiansburg was to address the need for community connectivity that was lost during two decades of rapid commercial and residential growth, primarily evidenced by the lack of outdoor amenities, including bicycle/pedestrian facilities and park spaces. Since elected in 2006, I have focused attention on the expansion of the Huckleberry Trail to the Recreation Center and the downtown area (the trail connection to the Recreation Center will be complete by Summer 2014); the completion of the Route 114 (Peppers Ferry Road) improvements, including sidewalks and bicycle lanes; and the installation of “glass doors” (open government) on town hall. Significant progress has been made in all three of these areas, namely:

1. Huckleberry Trail extension will be complete to the Recreation Center by Summer of 2014, with plan design underway to extend the trail to the Aquatic Center and downtown as funding is secured.
2. Completion of the Route 114 (Peppers Ferry Road) improvements, following nearly 20 years of non-progress. Note: these improvements include complete bicycle/pedestrian amenities that will directly connect thousands of town residents to the Huckleberry Trail, the NRV Mall, and the commercial areas of North Franklin Street).
3. Town ordinance updates that now require bicycle and pedestrian accommodations for all new developments.

4. Focused sidewalk development in core downtown neighborhoods that increase connectivity and alternative transportation for present and future generations of citizens.
5. A completely revamped town website that includes useful, current information about all town activities; public notification/alert systems; on-line bill payments; and opportunities for citizen involvement/input at all levels of decision-making in town affairs.
- 6 Hiring a Public Relations Manager that facilitates the efficient flow of information from Town Hall into the community and serves as a “coach” to town council about opportunities to reach more citizens in creative ways to be a part of the decision-making process on town affairs.
7. Expanding the size and scope of work of the Town’s Planning Commission, including the designation of two historic areas; subcommittees for Development and Comprehensive Plan Development; and the recently completed 2013 Comprehensive Plan for the town ... the road map to our future. Our current planning commission is now second to none.
8. The purchase of 60 acres of strategic real estate along Route 114 (the Truman Wilson Farm) for an extensive Town Park that is adjacent to the Huckleberry Trail extension and will prove to be a “game-changer” in the area of outdoor recreation and will serve the citizens of Christiansburg for generations to come.

With these advancements in place, and a soon-to-be-adopted 2013 Town Comprehensive Plan, my focus for the next four years will actually be more of the same ... carrying out the vision in our Comprehensive Plan and passing along to the next generation of citizens a town that is vibrant, livable, affordable, and as attractive as possible in which to live, work, and play. By the year 2020, therefore, I fully expect that more elements of our new 2013 Comprehensive Plan will be showcased to the benefit of our citizenry.

Simply put, I would like to continue serving on council to continue the results-based momentum described above and help to shape a town future that is decidedly better and brighter than before.

D. Michael Barber - is dedicated to making Christiansburg a great place to live, shop, and raise a family. He strongly believes that as the Town moves forward and faces the challenges of being a progressive and growing community, it is important to study new and innovative ways of improving the quality of life in Christiansburg for all residents--from considering city status to developing the best recreational facilities, parks, and playgrounds to providing the best emergency services. Mike is dedicated to preserving the integrity of our neighborhoods and encouraging innovation in the development and delivery of services, including constantly improving communication with citizens and the business community, and providing public access and input in the process of decision making. He was a strong proponent of priority-based budgeting, a budgeting process that involved significant citizen input and was actively involved in the Comprehensive Plan citizen input process. A strong supporter of open government, Mike is committed to listening to the concerns of Christiansburg citizens and finding ways to address their issues and concerns.

For more information on the 2013 Election, including links to the videos of the four Candidate Forums, Voter Guides for all 2013 candidates running for office from Montgomery County, and other voter information, go to the League of Women Voters of Montgomery County Website: www.LWVMCVA.org. The Blacksburg Town Council Forum video will be available on Blacksburg’s Comcast cable local station, WTOB, Channel 2. WTOB will also carry the video of the House of Delegates Forum. The County station will broadcast three of the Forums: Christiansburg Town Council, House of Delegates, and Board of Supervisors/School Board. The Christiansburg Town Council Candidate Forum will be replayed on Montgomery County’s local access cable channel 190. Voter Guides for the Town Council election, the Board of Supervisors & School Board elections and the 7th & 12th House Districts will be available in print at all Montgomery County libraries. Voter Guides for the Virginia Governor, Lt. Governor, and Attorney General candidates and the 7th and 12th House Districts candidates are on www.VOTE411.org.



Blacksburg Town Council Candidates Forum

from Judy Snoke

Blacksburg Town Council meeting room

I recommend that you watch the Forum when it is replayed on WTOB Channel 2 in Blacksburg. Small caveat is that technical problems may have made Susan Anderson's voice difficult to hear...Judy

The Town of Blacksburg Candidates Forum, held Oct. 3, provided interesting insights into the issues facing the town and priorities of the four candidates vying for the three open seats. The questions posed by League members and members of the audience brought a wide range of topics to the floor. Out of respect to the League non-partisan policies and the high degree of consensus among the candidates, this review of the meeting will focus on topics, not individual comments.

Candidates expressed a strong commitment to the current Comprehensive Plan with its policies on:

- Sustainability
- Green growth protecting the environment and the health of citizens
- Affordable housing to enable community workers to reside in Blacksburg
- Housing for people of all ages and economic levels
- Expanded parks and recreation opportunities for all ages

All candidates expressed confidence in the fiscal health of the Town and its resources.

Questions raised the concern of over-building in undergraduate student housing. Will new apartment complexes lead to deterioration in older facilities? The possibility of establishing a fund for the rehabilitation of older housing stock was mentioned.

Attendees asked about plans for the school land on Patrick Henry Drive. Participants agreed that this would be a perfect location for expanded outdoor recreation facilities.

Questions were raised about developments on Grissom Lane that threaten a low-income "trailer park." One of the candidates expressed strong sympathy and support for the hard-working residents of the neighborhood and pledged to see that the communities' needs for low-income housing would be met.

Speeding and through traffic in neighborhoods, especially the Southgate Dr. area was also raised by questioners. Speed bumps have been used to quiet traffic. The planned connection to town from the 460 by-pass has been designed to shuttle football and research traffic away from residential, cross-town routes.

Economic development was the focus of the final part of the program. The recent availability of high speed Internet and WiFi in the downtown area are seen as important economic development initiatives. Future building construction will include conduits to facilitate wide spread high-speed Internet service to homes and businesses. First and Main is now beginning to reach its potential as a shopping center. The North Main St. area will be the focus of development attention.



Judy Snoke, after the Blacksburg Town Council Candidate Forum, with representatives from two of the co-sponsoring organizations, (top) Mary Lough of the NRV chapter of the Virginia Interfaith Center for Public Policy and (lower) Alvin Humes, president of the NAACP. The News Messenger also is a sponsor.

Use Vote411.org to get information about candidates in all local and state elections



The League of Women Voters offers a nonpartisan election resource that has a great deal of information about almost all of the elections.

Anyone can go to the website at www.VOTE411.org and find detailed candidate information, including candidates' direct responses to issue-related questions.

To use the website log onto www.vote411.org.

It will ask your location. Type in your address and click on the "Search" button. A map pointing out your location will appear.

Confirm your location. At a screen listing the districts in which you vote—Congressional and state including both the House of Delegates and Senate in Virginia.

Select your preferred language. It is available in two languages, English and Spanish.

It will take you to side-by-side listings of elections. You can read the answers from the candidates side-by-side.

Candidates who have not responded are listed with the note that they have not responded.

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Nov. 5

Calendar

- Oct. 8, 11 am League Board of Directors, Community room, Blacksburg branch, Montgomery-Floyd Regional Library.
- Oct. 10, 7:30 pm Christiansburg Town Council Forum Christiansburg Town Council Chambers, Christiansburg Town Hall 100 East Main St. Christiansburg
- Oct. 17, 7 pm House of Delegates Forum, Blacksburg Town Council Chambers, Blacksburg Town Hall, 300 S. Main St. Blacksburg
- Oct. 23, 7 pm Forum for Board of Supervisors/School Board, Board of Supervisors Meeting Room, County Government Center, 755 Roanoke Street, Christiansburg.

Bulletin Sponsors

Warm Hearth Village, Blacksburg's Retirement Destination - (540) 552-9176

Runabout Sports – A Great Place for Shoes (540) 552-9339

Education Programs & Services LLC – Wayne “Dempsey” Worner (540) 552-8807

Companion Animal Clinic, Inc., Blacksburg (540) 552-6800

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