



"While Patty Carpenter was out working for the Chesterfield County schools getting a bond issue through, Finkbeiner was making down payments on his endorsements."

OPINIONS

Reader sees politicking in school board endorsement

Dear Editor,

In his [Aug. 15] letter to the editor, fellow Republican Larry Miller describes in a duplicitous and self-serving manner the vote by the Chesterfield Republican Committee to slam the door in Patty Carpenter's face [in the Midlothian school board race].

I was at the same meeting [and] what I saw as a clever political maneuver by Eric Finkbeiner to tie the endorsement of himself to that of the four Republicans running for school board in the other magisterial districts and to insist that this package not be divided up. I moved that each magisterial district vote on its own candidate. Miller describes this as a desire by the party leadership not to support Dianne Pettitt, Omarh Rajah, David Wyman and Marshall Trammell. That's nonsense. Miller knows perfectly well that there was never any question about those four being endorsed if any school board candidate was endorsed. If the decision to endorse a Midlothian school board candidate had been made only by Midlothian Republicans, Patty Carpenter would have gotten the endorsement. That's why the Finkbeiner camp insisted that the endorsements be bundled.

Note that Miller lives in the Dale District. The Finkbeiner motion was made by Mike Thomas, who lives in the Clover Hill District. I live in the Midlothian District.

Miller's candidate for Midlothian school board, Finkbeiner, is an influential political insider and a professional lobbyist employed by the politically powerful McGuire Woods lobbying and law firm. He helped set policy in the George Allen administration, working on such policy matters as environmental issues and treatment of state employees. He has been endorsed by a number of Republican officeholders, every one of which he has either raised money for, directed money to, or has donated heavily to. As one wag put it, "While Patty Carpenter was out working for the Chesterfield County schools getting a bond issue through, Finkbeiner was making down payments on his endorsements."

Finkbeiner established his concern for the Chesterfield County schools by getting himself onto the County Council of PTAs and then skipping all, or nearly all, of the meetings of the council during his term. But he notched that one on his resume.

Why does Finkbeiner want to be on the Chesterfield School Board? The answer is simple. If elected, his four-year term will end in 2011. In 2011, the General Assembly seats will be redistricted, and Chesterfield will get another seat. Finkbeiner can ask his friends in the General Assembly to place that new district where he can easily capture it. In the run-up to 2011, the school board position will give him the opportunity to develop name identification and build a political base.

Carpenter is not a professional politician. Carpenter is first a mother. She also runs her own small business. She goes to all manner of meetings and activities related to the schools and their operation.

Miller supports Finkbeiner because he is viewed as "a true and loyal Republican." I support Carpenter because she is good for the Chesterfield County schools, Chesterfield County and its citizens.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Where were the roots?

Dear Editor,

Just a comment concerning the [Aug. 15] article on some improvements to the water's edge land at Waterviews [at the Reservoir]. What caught my eye was the number of 1-2 foot high stumps that were visible from Hurricane Isabel.

This storm came through our woods, and every few seconds there was this awful sound at first, a crack and then a crash. [The photo showed] the trees weren't broken off, so that they had to be cut and left with stumps in the ground. It didn't get the young trees; it got the biggest of them all, and they weren't broken.

[What I experienced during Isabel was] whole trees laid down on their sides with roots attached coming up out of the ground. The only small trees that got hit were ones the large ones fell onto, and it wasn't that many, and most of them didn't break off. The woods in Chesterfield County are still full of these large uprooted trees and will be for a long time to come.

So to say Isabel took out the young trees and left the large ones puzzles me.

M. Keller
Chester

Lack of enforcement is jeopardizing reservoir

Dear Editor,

For those who are not sure about who's right and who's wrong when it comes to water quality or the phosphorus levels, or even how well the county is or isn't enforcing the Upper Swift Creek Plan, come to Lakepointe. It's like living in Camelot with a cesspool as the mote. If you want to see how our water quality is being sacrificed by developer after developer and how inept the county's enforcement of the present code [is], take a ride down Duckridge Blvd.

The BMP [ponds that collect runoff] on our property is approximately three-quarters of an acre in size, but it's not for Lakepointe's use. We are getting the runoff from the Winterpock Shopping Center, Firestone, Goodyear, Wendy's, Rite-Aid and both sides of Hull Street Road [including] the new construction for Hancock Village. When it rains, our pond becomes a sea of bright orange. We get a collection of trash that will fill several large bags just from the shoreline. Last week, we found a beer can with six syringes stuffed inside.

This pond is only about 35 yards from the reservoir, and when it rains, the pond overflows. Last year, due to the enormous flow of silt, we developed an island in the pond. Following numerous calls, the county reluctantly had someone dredge about one-third of the pond. With the ever increasing runoff, we have another island.

Once again I complained, and on Aug. 10, three employees from the company [working on the turn lanes for Hancock Village] slipped in, and when I asked, I was told the silt was not theirs. Then we had the big storm on Aug. 16, and our spillway looked like a Category 5 rapids run. Again I called the county. This time two employees came from the company that is overseeing the [Hancock Village] project. Surprisingly, they agreed we have a problem, and said they would take steps to have it corrected. I have been informed they are going

to attempt to vacuum the silt. Vacuuming the silt just pushes the problem off until the next rain.

Who really cares about water quality enough to solve the problem, stop the out-of-control growth, and plan for drinkable water for the generations to come? Do the candidates running for the board of supervisors or is all the talk just to get your vote? Until the average Chesterfield resident draws a glass of water that looks like my pond, I don't think we can count on them. We hear that wetlands need to be preserved, and yet the county allows developers to go to a so-called land bank and buy their way into using wetlands. If a developer feels he can't meet the pollution standards, he can go to the county and pay pollution money and once again circumvent the rules. All a developer has to do is throw a little money around and it looks like a feeding frenzy at the zoo.

Is allowing unchecked rezoning the price we all must pay to see Chesterfield destroyed? We need to stop allowing our county officials to continue this foot-dragging and give us a [land use] plan that will put us on track to correct our water, transportation and land use problems. Then we must demand enforcement without exception.

Jerry Stroud
Lakepointe

Story brings volunteers

Dear Editor,

Thank you for recently offering Chesterfield CASA the opportunity to highlight our need for volunteer advocates. As a nonprofit program serving abused and neglected children in Chesterfield and Colonial Heights, CASA must find ways to make the local community aware of our work and reliance on citizen volunteers. Within a day of the paper's distribution last week, several of your readers called expressing interest in our upcoming volunteer training class that was featured on your pages. Thank you for recognizing CASA's contribution to the community and helping us spread the word that abused and neglected children need advocates to ensure they have safe, permanent homes.

Holly Abbott
Chesterfield CASA

Letters to the editor can be e-mailed to letters@chesterfieldobserver.com, mailed to P.O. Box 1616, Midlothian, VA 23113, or faxed to 744-3269. Letters should include the writer's phone number and home address, but neither will be printed. For complete guidelines, visit www.chesterfieldobserver.com and click on "letters policy."

Corrections & Amplifications

In an Aug. 22 story on campaign financing for the race for the 11th State Senate District, we reported that incumbent State Senator Steve Martin had raised \$125,000 compared to \$41,000 for Independent Roger Habeck for the first six months of the campaign. Martin has amended his report, increasing the amount to \$169,495. Democrat Alex McMurtrie and Independent T. Hank Cook did not file a report for this period.

The dreams and reality of Meadowville Park

By Faith McClintic

DEVELOPMENT MANAGER

MEADOWVILLE TECHNOLOGY PARK

CHESTERFIELD DEPARTMENT OF ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

Editor's note: This is the fourth and final article in a series from the county's Department of Economic Development.

Meadowville Technology Park is an emerging development located in Chesterfield's southeastern quadrant at the juncture of Interstate 295 and Route 10. The Meadowville site includes 1,300 acres, some of which border the James River and approximately 2.5 miles of Interstate 295 near the Varina-Enon Bridge. The property's river frontage contains steep overlooks that provide spectacular views of the river, bridge and surrounding property.

The evolution of Meadowville began over 10 years ago with a vision of county officials looking to initiate a long-term development opportunity that would create jobs and generate non-residential tax revenues for Chesterfield well into the future. The park, originally proposed for semiconductor manufacturers and other high-tech companies, has been positioned for immediate development, with the county's life-to-date investment of \$35 million

providing "ready-to-go" sites to interested companies. This includes construction of utilities and road infrastructure, completion of environmental studies, development of master plans, and purchase of the remaining optioned properties back in 2005. The property, technically under the ownership of the Economic Development Authority of Chesterfield County, is now considered one of Virginia's most marketable, attractive and viable sites, particularly for water-intensive users or technology companies. And, after a revision to the park's master plan in June 2006, Meadowville is now being promoted as a mixed-use development ready to accommodate office, research and development, technology-based, and industrial users.

After years of diligent and concerted marketing efforts, Meadowville is also gaining national and international recognition among targeted-industry sectors such as life sciences, microelectronics, information technology, as well as site location consultants. This was demonstrated with the exciting news of Meadowville's first anchor tenant in November 2005 when Northrop Grumman Information Technology announced its plans to locate in the park. Less than a year after construction began on the 193,000+ square

see MEADOWVILLE, page 14

Tom Van Auken
Bon Air