



## County spends too much taxpayer money

Dear Editor,

I believe that when government wants to raise your taxes, it ought to be candid about it. Chesterfield County has elected to hold the tax rate [about ] steady but as real estate assessments continue to increase year after year, the end result is the same: more money out of my wallet. Generally, I believe government's appetite for taxes is insatiable.

But, it's time to put the government on a diet. We need to work harder at separating essential from non-essential services, streamlining costs, and every day confront the presumption of government growth.

Our economic freedom tomorrow depends on our willingness to stand up to new taxation today.

**Chris Winslow**  
Midlothian

### Hampton Park residents respond to previous letter

Dear Editor,

I am responding to a letter by Mr. Yeatts appearing in your paper on Apr. 2. I am a Hampton Park resident and was frustrated by his letter. I can't speak for everyone that lives in this neighborhood, but I would like to let Mr. Yeatts know that most of us are not interested in attending new schools. We are interested in remaining in the same high school and middle school feeder patterns with the communities that we play, work and worship with.

We are interested in creating school boundaries that would alleviate overcrowding for as many children throughout the county as possible. Concern for our children, and all children throughout the county, motivates us to attend redistricting meetings and voice concerns about the county's poor policies regarding school boundaries and locations.

We are a neighborhood full of parents, teachers and school administrators that are involved in every level of school. With all of this in mind, I would agree that you were correct in stating that we are an "affluent neighborhood." However, I would equate this with our drive and passion regarding our children and their schools (new or old) and not our incomes.

**Jeannette McCormack**  
Hampton Park

Dear Editor,

A "Mike Yeatts" from Midlothian recently wrote to chastise Hampton Park residents for vocalizing their desire to have our children be considered for inclusion at Tomahawk Creek Middle School. Intimating that we are a bunch of superficial snobs, who are, of course, only interested in Tomahawk because it is a new building, he went on to utilize a good portion of his "letter" pedantically lecturing about the difference between a school and the material it is actually constructed of, with a rather holier than thou attitude regarding the necessity of parental involvement.

Perhaps Mr. Yeatts could use some assistance with those observational skills he claims were employed at the meetings he attended, because as anyone present can attest, every Hampton Park resident who spoke made consistent and repeated references to the fact that feeder patterns, and not new construction, was the impetus for our favoring Tomahawk

over Swift Creek [Middle School].

In addition, I would think that a fellow as obviously erudite as Mr. Yeatts would allow that the sheer number of residents from our community that took the time to attend the numerous meetings in this regard would more or less negate the need for a lecture on parental involvement.

Finally, as to the issue of passing one school in order to attend another, unfortunately, because there are no consistent or sensible attendance boundaries or zoning parameters currently in place in this county, it would appear that this is exactly what the school board is promoting in an attempt to fill Tomahawk, while leaving all other middle schools well over capacity.

Just like you, Mr. Yeatts, we are merely advocating on behalf of our children in order to ensure their educational future. We just choose to do so by arming ourselves with the facts, as opposed to resorting to public mudslinging and misrepresentation. Perhaps you should spend a little time in Hampton Park. We would be happy to instruct you on how to avoid the latter.

**Debbie Kearns**  
Hampton Park

### Board action on primary votes necessary

Dear Editor,

Our supervisors were far from "looking for trouble," as stated in Mr. Miller's letter [Apr. 2], when they voted on a resolution asking the State Board of Elections to count the 299 votes written on plain paper when the official ballots ran out on Primary Day. For Mr. Miller to just say that he believes "we all think everyone's vote should be counted" does not go very far to help those citizens who were denied the basic tenet of our democracy. While counting the votes only addresses part of the many problems that occurred (how many citizens could not get the plain paper ballots?), the resolution [Midlothian Supervisor Dan] Gecker put forward was a strong and courageous stand on behalf of the citizens he represents. Better representation of we citizens and less "good old boy" chumminess between government offices is one of the reasons this new board is in place.

As one of the many, many citizens who contacted my elected representatives with concerns about the voting problems that occurred on Primary Day, I am thankful that the board of supervisors took the time to listen to our concerns, gather information and take action on behalf of all the citizens of Chesterfield (even while working diligently to improve the transportation mess and bloated budget left us by the previous board).

**Wendy Austin**  
Midlothian

### Brandermill may force residents to join pools

Dear Editor,

I recently reviewed the Feb. 4 Brandermill Community Association (BCA) board meeting minutes concerning the proposal to impose a universal pool access fee on the residents of Brandermill. I am appalled at the thought that the elected "stewards of the community" might impose what amounts to a

"tax" on the residents of the community. One would think that the community should have a vote on such a far-reaching issue! Brandermill is not a growing community – it is a matured community with a majority of residents who do not and will not use the pools. There should be a community vote to prove or disprove this statement.

I have researched a number of surrounding communities to determine how many pools, the number of members and the number of households each has. It may be a shock to the "stewards" to know that there is no community, which competes with Brandermill, that has access to more than one pool complex.

Brandermill residents have access to three separate BCA-run pools. They also have access to one golf club pool, a YMCA indoor-outdoor pool complex, a Woodlake indoor-outdoor-pool complex and a fitness center pool, just to name a few.

The argument that these three Brandermill pools help keep our property values and in fact increase that value, in my opinion, is unfounded. To my understanding, through my limited research, there is no qualified report or study that demonstrates such a theory.

Here is a list of some of the communities that have access to pools. None of these communities require its residents to belong to the pool or impose a universal access fee: Bay Hill Pointe, Birkdale, Deer Run, The Highlands, Loch Braemar, Meadowbrook, Queensmill, Raintree, Salisbury, Smoketree, Walton Park, Windsor Park and Woodlake.

As a suggestion, why not have the board determine if there is a need for three Brandermill pools? My conversation with the communities listed above revealed the belief that Brandermill has too many pools for the population of the community. I come from a small town of 20,000. We had one pool, and that pool accommodated the population very nicely. Even on the very hot days, the pool accommodated the masses. There has to be a more productive way to provide those in Brandermill with access to swimming.

In my opinion, it would be a grave mistake to unilaterally impose a pool tax on the residents of Brandermill. The BCA board should examine every aspect before it proposes this tax. Then put the proposal to a vote and let the residents determine what is good for the community.

**Tom Leonard**  
Brandermill

*Letters to the editor can be e-mailed to [letters@chesterfieldobserver.com](mailto: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. All letters may be edited for clarity or space.*

### Corrections & Amplifications

**Clarification:** In the Apr. 2 issue in a story on road connectivity, the Chesterfield Observer identified Virginia Department of Transportation (VDOT) officials as saying existing neighborhoods could be taken out of the VDOT road maintenance system if they do not connect with new neighborhoods. However, the Commonwealth Transportation Board has taken that provision out of the proposed regulations. "Once you're in the system, you're in," said Nicholas Donohue of Gov. Tim Kaine's office.

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