



Greens of Virginia

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THE DOLLARS AND SENSE OF ETHANOL

Jim Blythe, Fredericksburg Greens

The current situation with gasoline prices reminds me of the old saying about the weather – “Everyone complains but no one is willing to do anything about it.” We Greens understand that our current so-called energy crisis is entirely self generated. As Pogo once memorably remarked, we have met the enemy and he is us!

Our dependence on overseas supplies of oil, the unstable international situation, and greedy oil companies, have all combined to drive gas prices up at the pump, and we can be quite sure that more price increases are on the horizon.

As Greens we should all work to solve the current energy crisis by utilizing bio-renewable, low polluting and high energy fuels to break the deadlock that overseas oil currently has on our economy.

One such fuel is ethanol. Ethanol is a clear, high octane, low polluting fuel which can be obtained by the distillation of corn. Pure ethanol is 100 octane, which provides more energy than both regular and so-called high octane gasoline.

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ARLINGTON GREENS FIGHT WIDENING OF I-66

... and help petition for a moratorium on further building construction or condo conversion in Arlington County

Don Rouse & Kirit Mookerjee,
Arlington / Courthouse Greens

Members of the Arlington/Courthouse Greens have been active in opposing the widening of Interstate 66 within the Beltway, which brings with it the threat of eminent domain and the taking of additional land, homes and green areas adjacent to the right-of-way. Through participation in civic groups and addressing public forums conducted by the Commonwealth Transportation Board and other official groups, Greens have contributed to actively spotlighting the preordained nature of the “study period’s” conclusion; namely that widening the existing roadway is the best alternative to improve the current daily bottleneck. In fact, HOV lane designations and alternative rail or public transportation options have not been seriously considered to-date.

The Virginia Department of Transportation's (VDOT, read Department of Highways) corrupt study of I-66, “*Idea66*”, was ordered by Congressman Frank Wolf, who controls Virginia’s share of Federal transportation funds, to find in favor of widening the highway. Wolf receives the majority of his campaign funding from the building and transportation industry. Road construction is a money maker for large corporations and for developers who build sprawl along the right-of-way. Even before the study was completed, Wolf was quoted as saying “widening of I-66 is a done deal”. Even now, before any public decision is released on widening, VDOT is surreptitiously proceeding with plans for widening under the euphemism, “spot improvement”. Although the term “spot improvement” is nowhere defined, VDOT is using it to

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ROCKBRIDGE GREENS REFERENDUM CAMPAIGN SUCCESSFUL

Eric Sheffield, Rockbridge Greens

The Rockbridge Greens were one of the lead organizations in organizing a referendum on staggered terms for the Rockbridge County board of supervisors.

The referendum was opposed by a majority of the current supervisors. One even stated publicly that “Only a few losers and has-beens want this.” Lacking support from the supervisors to place the question on the ballot, we were forced to get petitions signed by 10% of registered voters. Over 1600 petitions were turned in to meet the requirement of 1200.

A broad coalition was formed supported by all three political parties, numerous civic groups, and our entire general assembly delegation. It was strange indeed to see posters with “Paid for by the Rockbridge Green Party Committee” printed on them at the tables of both the Republicans and Democrats throughout the campaign season.

On election day several of us worked the polls urging a “yes” vote. Final result: the referendum passed with an 87% yes vote. Staggered terms will thus begin in Rockbridge County following the 2007 election! Thanks to all volunteers who helped make this petition drive a success!

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My Successful Run for Local Office

Phil Hyre, Arlington / Courthouse Greens

It was late October, 2003 when friend and fellow Green Eric Sheffield (Rockbridge) called to ask if I might be interested in running for an open seat as a Director of the Natural Bridge Soil and Water Conservation District. This Conservation District consists of Rockbridge County, the City of Lexington, the City of Buena Vista, and the towns of Goshen and Glasgow. He pointed out that Lexington elects two Directors and that there was only one candidate running leaving one seat uncontested. "It should be an easy matter to get elected as a write-in candidate," he said. And it was. I was already planning to work the polls for another candidate the following Tuesday, election day, so I printed out some strips of paper with my name on them and passed the strips out to voters that I knew personally or who seemed likely to vote for me.

When the votes were counted, I was the winner by a large margin. Out of the twenty-seven votes cast for the position I was running for, I received twenty-five. Two other write-in candidates received one vote each. I suspect that if I decide to run for another term, the competition may well be stiffer.

Conservation Districts are charged by the state to work on a local level to improve water quality and reduce soil erosion. Most of our work is with farmers helping them reduce "non-point source pollution" through the cost-share funds we disburse. Typical projects include planting riparian buffers, fencing cattle out of streams, drilling wells or developing springs as alternate water sources, planting cover crops and cross-fencing pastures to encourage rotational grazing. Conservation Districts work with other state and federal agencies on many of these projects. We also contribute to environmental education in the local school districts.

Being a Director of a Conservation District has been a good experience. Having been accustomed to working on environmental and political issues from the "outside", it has been an interesting experience for me to make decisions with others who identify strongly with the mainstream. Currently serving as vice-chairman, I've tried to bring a more consensus based decision making process to our monthly meetings. Greens looking at a local elective office where both getting elected and making a positive difference are real possibilities, should check out their local Soil and Water Conservation District. Meetings are open and the public is always encouraged to attend.

Arlington Greens Fight Widening of I-66

Continued from p.1

widen over four miles of highway, and treating it as though it were in the same category as filling in potholes. This way, they can avoid any serious environmental impact study. Our public officials, both locally and state-wide, are going along with this scam. One must ask whether they are doing this to benefit their corporate constituency.

Greens are asking all citizens to let their elected officials (at the County Board or State legislature) know where they stand on this important issue. Further, the Arlington Greens have asked (through the GPVA activism list) for the development within the Green Party of Virginia of a cooperative network, so that Greens state-wide may help one another in opposing I-66 widening, I-81 widening,

In the past three years, Arlington County has lost 47% of its affordable housing stock.

I-64 construction, and all other proposals for freeway construction which serve only to benefit large corporations, increase sprawl, overdevelopment, and the destruction of land, the places where we live and our quality of life, and which do absolutely nothing to ameliorate the adverse conditions of gridlock on our highways which are only increased by road construction.

Additionally, Greens are major participants in an ad hoc, grass-roots, community petition drive, *Matthew 25*, spearheaded in part by the Community Church of God in Arlington, for a moratorium on any further building, demolition, or condo conversion in Arlington, until controls can be put in place to serve existing affordable housing. In the past three years, Arlington County has lost 47% of its affordable housing stock. This petition has hit a raw nerve among single family homeowners in Arlington as well as renters, who see what is going on around them, and nearly 1,000 signatures were accumulated in just the first few short hours of initial activity.

The petition reads as follows :

A petition to stop the destruction of housing here in Arlington - We the undersigned residents, voters, and neighbors of housing victims in Arlington County call upon the County Board as an emergency measure and act of moral responsibility, in response to our housing crisis, to deny for as long as necessary all permits for demolition (tearing-down) any existing structure in the county, including existing rental housing, multi-family housing, duplex housing, existing detached single-family housing; townhouses; and commercial structures; and to declare a moratorium for the same period on the approval of rental housing conversion to condominiums. The moratorium must stay in effect for as long as it takes to provide adequate housing for Arlington residents, and to develop the requirements and ordinances that will make this possible.

As a result of the gentrification of every area in Arlington, prices for houses and townhouses anywhere



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A MESSAGE FROM THE EDITOR

Dear Greens,

We are excited about the road ahead, and looking forward to a more regular schedule of newsletters which document our progress, but this depends on you — keep sending in your articles, photos, and artwork!

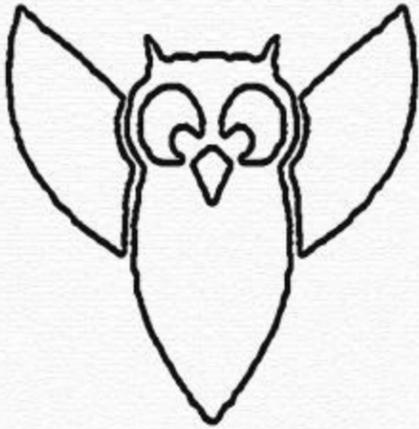
Here's what we're looking for:

1. Candidate news
2. GPVA business news (Calls for volunteers and candidates, candidate guidelines and deadlines, Officer elections, Upcoming GPVA events, meetings and agendas, Major GPVA policy and platform decisions, meeting notes & press releases, Committee decisions / notices, Welcoming new members)
3. Local Reports & Upcoming Events
4. Book Reviews
5. Personal Expressions (Observations, experiences, reactions and opinions, Original poetry and artwork, Motivational and inspirational pieces, Words from the officers)
6. Photos of GPVA members in action (please remember an accompanying blurb)
7. GPVA members' direct actions and ongoing collaborations with other groups
8. National and International Green News
9. Activism Opportunities

Preference will be given to articles which describe what we are doing here in Virginia, though feature articles of a national scope will serve as well. However, we need express permission from all authors. All authors retain their copyrights, but submissions may be edited for length, content, and wording.

The newsletter has also been authorized to accept Green-friendly advertising in order to become financially self-sustaining.. Please write to editor@vagreenparty.org for an application.





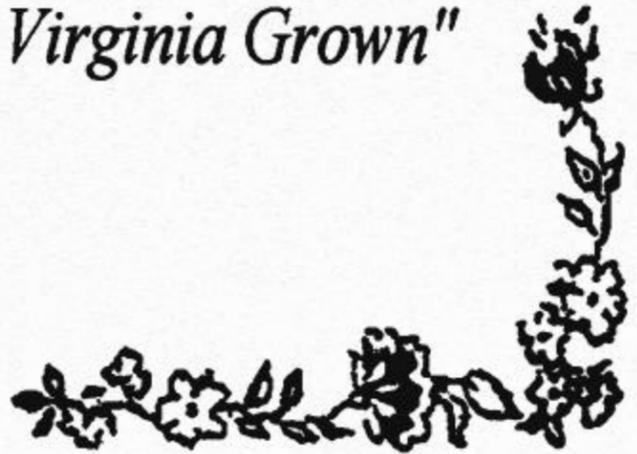
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close to this area have skyrocketed in recent years. Additionally, units which had offered affordable rents to county workers and others have been transformed into higher priced condominiums. Petitions were circulated in English and Spanish at a meeting in Buckingham, one of the oldest garden apartment complexes in the United States, where residents were informed that they would be moved out for conversion of their apartments to condominiums. Some of these residents, some elderly, some disabled, have previously been turned out of their apartments, and this is at least their second relocation.

The County Board has recognized the problem of dwindling affordable housing, but has been slow to respond, favoring the "roundtable" approach where developers and other groups come to a compromise agreement to provide a few units of housing; or, as a substitute, contributions toward a housing fund. The housing fund, however, is useless when there is no housing to purchase, and in any event, developers historically, routinely, circumvent or ignore these agreements. They also run to the State government for legislation or court rulings to negate them.

It is our intention to continue our plea on the GPVA Activism list for a state-wide Green response to what is happening. This is not only a state-wide problem, but a national and international problem. There is no affordable housing for people making less than \$100k a year; none for persons on a fixed income, seniors, our children, public employees, fire fighters, police and medical personnel, military personnel, students, blue collar workers, or the low

income workers paid to clean the yards and toilets of the gentrified home owners. As one of our volunteer organizers, who was herself displaced, said, "What the community is saying is you are not worth anything to us, we don't want you anymore". When people are forced out of their homes by rising housing prices and related rising taxes, there is no place for them to go. Conditions are the same in most localities, certainly in Northern Virginia. In our flier pleading for assistance we state:

"Your friends and neighbors, and quite possibly you yourself are being adversely impacted by the loss of housing that you can afford, the conversion of the places you rent into high priced condominiums, the destruction of apartment buildings to build high rises and town houses that most people can't afford, and the destruction of single family homes to be replaced by McMansions. If we can't afford to live here, where will we go? It is not only the ethical responsibility of our public officials to put a stop to this; it is their, and our, moral duty."

If you have an idea how we can coordinate state-wide action on these matters, please contact Don Rouse at don_rouse05@comcast.net, or respond on the Activism list.

For more info on Arlington/Courthouse Greens meetings or other events, email us at info@arlingtongreens.org.

Things you have to believe to be a Republican today.

- Jesus loves you, and shares your hatred of homosexuals and Hillary Clinton.
- Saddam was a good guy when Reagan armed him, a bad guy when Bush's daddy made war on him, a good guy when Cheney did business with him, and a bad guy when Bush needed a "we can't find Bin Laden" diversion.
- A woman can't be trusted with decisions about her own body, but multi-national corporations can make decisions affecting all mankind without regulation.
- The best way to improve military morale is to praise the troops in speeches, while slashing veterans' benefits and combat pay.
- If condoms are kept out of schools, adolescents won't have sex.
- Global warming and tobacco's link to cancer are junk science, but creationism should be taught in schools.
- A president lying about an extramarital affair is an impeachable offense, but a president lying to enlist support for a war in which thousands die is solid defense policy.
- Government should limit itself to the powers named in the Constitution, which include banning gay marriages and censoring the Internet.



Deconstruction: Balancing Green Values and Vocation

Paul S. Hughes, Rockbridge Greens

Background

Most Greens are constantly striving to live by the Ten Key Values of the Green Party. It is a daily battle, however, since profits, stock prices, market competition, and rampant consumerism are constantly extolled by the corporate media and marketing campaigns in today's corporate dominated society. One way to begin turning around this unsustainable economic system is to choose a vocation that allows you to be more true to your own values, rather than those of a corporate employer, while still earning a decent living. Warning: This may require you to become more satisfied with quality of life opportunities, learn how to use your increased leisure time to pursue new interests and spend more time with family and friends, and get used to a reduced level of material goods and services.

I may have found that balance in the deconstruction company I started in 2004. I say "may" because the "jury is still out" on whether it becomes sufficiently profitable to support my family. The general "rule of thumb" for start-up small businesses is three years to reach the break-even point, and I still have another 1½ years to go. But the overall trend looks favorable.

My company, DeConstruction Services, LLC, was formed following eight months of diligent market research and the retention of a national expert in the field for the first several months of operation. Starting your own business is not necessarily suitable for everyone as they seek the right "values/vocation" balance in their lives. It usually requires tens of thousands of dollars in start-up capital and some prior knowledge and experience in small business management, preferably in the field in which one's business will be operating.

Nevertheless, for those of us who have chafed under employers who took credit for our ideas without giving us credit, failed to amply compensate us for our services, made unrealistic demands on our time, and were generally less knowledgeable about the work than us, the psychic benefits of "being your own boss" can be reward enough. Others, however, may not have the personal savings to undertake such an endeavor, and instead may prefer to seek employment with entities which embody their principles – a food or day care cooperative, government service, a cause-related nonprofit organization, etc. Under either vocational avenue, we are helping build an alternative, more equitable and participatory economic system that will eventually evolve out of the current corporate-controlled, "free market"-based system that is proving to be unsustainable economically, politically, and environmentally.

Deconstruction Process

DeConstruction Services, LLC was created as an alternative to traditional "crunch and dump" demolition that uses heavy equipment (e.g., a front-end loader) to level a house and load it out in trucks in 1-1½ days. The material, including mercury in the thermostat, chloride in vinyl siding, asbestos on the floor tiles, and arsenic in the treated wood deck, are

dumped at a commercial landfill from which these toxic chemicals will leach over time into our groundwater supply. In addition, Freon from central air conditioners typically escapes immediately into the atmosphere when the connecting lines are cut. In contrast, deconstruction captures these toxic chemicals through re-use (vinyl and deck material), recycling (mercury, Freon), or proper disposal (asbestos incineration).

Our company's deconstruction work is performed exclusively on residential structures. The process entails the manual disassembly of the house in the reverse order from the way it was constructed – last in, first out. First, everything is removed from all interior surfaces (walls, ceilings, floors) including carpets, oak flooring, window and door trim, floor and ceiling molding, fireplace mantle, light switch plates, return air duct covers, light fixtures, ceiling fans, kitchen cabinets, appliances, kitchen countertops, vanities, mirrors, toilets, bathtubs, plumbing fixtures, and shower doors. This is referred to as the "skim" phase.



Next, all interior doors are removed, retaining them in their jambs for convenience when they are reused. Nails are removed from the trim and molding pieces and bundled in similar sized lengths with duct tape. Oak flooring is denailed using a specialized "denailing gun" that shoots the nails back out of the board leaving the board undamaged. Our salvage rate for oak flooring is over 90%. This flooring is likewise bundled in similar sized lengths. For some houses, this may be as much as we are contracted to do.

For a "whole house take-down" or major renovation, the next step is removal of all drywall or plaster from the walls and ceilings. Unfortunately, because of the age of the houses that we are usually deconstructing, there is a strong likelihood that these surfaces have been painted with lead-based paint at some point. Therefore, not even the gypsum drywall can be recycled as a soil amendment to yards, gardens, or landscape planting to which children and pets might be exposed. It must be placed in a debris dumpster. In any case, at this point all that remains of the interior is the sub-flooring and 2'x 4' studs delineating the former rooms.

The next step is to remove the roof shingles (usually asphalt) for loading into a separate roll-off container, which goes to a company that melts them, uses a magnet to remove the nails, and uses the product as road patch. The sub-roof boards (and eventually the sub-flooring boards, furring strips, etc.) are loaded into a separate roll-off used exclusively for "clean wood", that is, wood that has not been painted, treated, shellacked, or varnished, which, after being ground up and denailed, is used by a wholesale landscaping company for wood chips on jogging trails and children's playgrounds. All ferrous, aluminum, and copper metal is separated and recycled, included some of the newer copper-insulated wiring. Following removal of the sub-roof, the rafters and trusses are removed, denailed, and stacked ready for site removal. The same holds true for the ceiling joists, floor joists, and 2'x 4' wall studs. Plumbing pipes, electrical wiring, and heating and air conditioning ducts are removed as the walls and flooring come out. Clean insulation is also bagged and saved.

All of the reusable material and appliances are donated to nonprofit groups, like Habitat for Humanity

or Community Forklift, reused by the owner in their newly constructed home, or given to friends or neighbors. Our company is neutral on where the material ends up as long as it isn't in a landfill. Our contract is with the owner for the purpose of salvaging and recycling as much reusable product as possible and maximizing the owner's charitable tax deductions. We prepare a final portfolio for the owner containing a detailed product inventory of items donated, our estimate of their value (generally 50% of Home Depot's price), the applicable IRS donation form, and "before-during-and after" photographs of the deconstruction process and items removed.

Benefits and Savings

The advantages of this type of work for property owners, the community, and the environment are numerous. For the property owner, these include: a tax credit earned on the charitable donations of material, reductions in the number of expensive mixed debris roll-offs (the most expensive kind), elimination of costs for all donated material picked up and transported by the receiving charitable organizations, reductions in the cost for roll-offs containing sorted homogeneous material, and good neighbor relations with those for whom the house and its previous residents are still a part of their neighborhood history and lives.

For the community, reusable building materials and appliances are made available at substantially reduced prices for homeowner repairs and remodeling, landlord repair of rental units, and remodeling and renovation companies authorized by their clients to use second hand materials. Also, the money the charitable organizations make on the sale of the reused material is channeled into their primary mission, such as purchasing products needed in building affordable housing. With over half of our work crew residing in the inner city, this work has become a stable source of employment that helps them meet their family obligations, acquire job readiness skills, and develop experience on a construction site that can open up later employment opportunities in the construction industry. It also provides the owners a decent return on their investment.

From an environmental standpoint, recycling approximately 80% of the structure and its foundation saves space in our increasingly scarce commercial landfill space and certain toxic chemicals are prevented from entering our groundwater, the atmosphere, or from contaminating the land. By reducing society's need to mine the resources needed to manufacture new products to replace those that are salvaged, the energy involved in transporting raw materials to the factory and the product's manufacture, sales, distribution, and installation is saved and the energy entropy cycle slowed, along with reductions in the amount of carbon dioxide and other gases causing global warming.

In short, a profitable deconstruction is a "win-win-win" situation for all involved and, for someone like me whose major concern is the environment, it provides a great deal of satisfaction to know at the end of the day that you are helping to reduce the negative impacts *homo sapiens* are having on our finite planet. There are many other kinds of work that are environmentally sustainable, personally fulfilling, and that provide a stable income. Hopefully, this article will stimulate readers to think about these, what kinds of vocational changes might be appropriate in their lives, and what they might do to bring them about.





Solving the Transportation Gridlock

James Blythe, Fredericksburg Greens

Our newly elected governor has indicated that he is seriously interested in addressing the transportation gridlock which currently grips northern Virginia. Unfortunately, the solutions which he has been discussing to date involve additional road building and more HOV lanes.

Greens who live in northern Virginia understand that more roads will never solve our transportation problems, and that the state of Virginia will never be able to build enough roads to handle the expanding number of vehicles generated by our burgeoning population. Even more importantly, we Greens also understand that more road building will simply lead to more pollution, traffic congestion and a reduced quality of life.

It is long past time to adopt a new approach. It is time for the Commonwealth of Virginia to adopt a Green solution to the region's increasingly frenetic traffic problems; time to adopt a low cost system of low polluting, highly efficient, integrated mass transportation systems which would efficiently move workers from the suburbs to the Washington metro area and back again.

It is ... time to adopt a low cost system of low polluting, highly efficient, integrated mass transportation ...

What would a Green solution to northern Virginia's gridlock look like? First, it would build varied, redundant transportation systems and integrate them into a seamless whole throughout the region. Second, it would utilize public mass transit systems to move large numbers of people quickly and efficiently. Third, it would reduce the impact of accidents or local power outages on the entire network.. Finally, it would utilize only bio-sustainable green fuels (such as ethanol) to reduce pollution and to minimize fuel costs.

A Green solution to northern Virginia's growing traffic gridlock would extend Metro to Fredericksburg and Manassas, utilizing the medians of I-66 and I-95 to do so. It would fund the construction of monorail lines feeding into Metro stations from the outlying counties, running inside the medians of existing state highways, such as Route 28. It would purchase high speed ferries to operate on the Potomac between Fredericksburg and Washington D.C., and construct ferry ports at Aquia Harbor, Fort Belvoir, and Crystal City. It would ensure that these ports were also tied into the Metro system by monorail lines.

The end result would be that a commuter in northern Virginia would have only to get to a local highway in order to access a monorail line which would tie into the regional transportation grid. It would greatly reduce current commuting times, commuting costs, and pollution, while simultaneously improving productivity and the quality of life.

The Governor wants to invest over one billion dollars a year in transportation improvements for the Commonwealth of Virginia. I agree. But this money should be invested in Green solutions, and not wasted on more roadbuilding.

Greens Vow to Defend Reproductive Rights After SD Bill

GPUS Press Release, March 7, 2006

WASHINGTON, D.C. — In the wake of news that South Dakota has outlawed most abortions, Green leaders pledged party support for efforts to stop Roe v. Wade from being overturned.

"This is a widely anticipated major step in the radical Republican agenda to repeal women's rights," said Nan Garrett, co-chair of the Georgia Green Party and spokesperson for the National Women's Caucus <<http://greens.org/gp-uswomen/>> "The Green Party and its candidates support full reproductive rights for women. If these rights are repealed or limited by a Supreme Court decision upholding the South Dakota law, we will hold accountable all those Senators who either supported or refused to filibuster the confirmation of Judge Roberts and Judge Alito."

On Monday, South Dakota Gov. Mike Rounds signed the bill, which was passed by the state legislature in February after supporters argued that the recent appointment of Justices John Roberts and Samuel Alito made the Supreme Court more likely to overturn reproductive rights. The bill outlaws all abortions, including those performed in cases of rape or incest, except when necessary to save a mother's life.

Greens called the South Dakota strategy part of a larger effort by extremist Republicans to abolish freedom and equality for women, cancel privacy rights, and create law based on sectarian religious precepts.

For the Green Party, the right of women to control their own bodies is non-negotiable, and Greens call it essential for every woman to have the right to safe, legal abortion on demand <<http://www.gp.org/platform/2004/socjustice.html#998980>>.

If Roe v. Wade is overturned and reproductive rights can no longer be guaranteed at the federal level, we will fight to keep abortion legal in all 50 states and the District of Columbia," said Cara Jennings, Green Party member and candidate for City Commission (District 2) in Lake Worth, Florida, in a March 14 election. "The Green Party is on the side of the majority of Americans, who don't believe that the clock can be turned back 40 years."

MORE INFORMATION

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Ethanol

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Historically, ethanol has been used to fuel high performance race cars, but more recently the domestic automobile manufacturers have been producing a wide variety of Flexible Fuel Vehicles (FFVs) which are required by law to be able to operate on a fuel mixture of up to 15% ethanol. Adding ethanol to gasoline reduces the amount of pollution generated by such vehicles.

Ethanol is produced by the simple process of distilling corn. A distilled bushel of field corn contains about 2.5 gallons of pure ethanol. A ton of field corn contains 40 bushels, which equates to about 100 gallons of ethanol. Local wholesale prices for field corn vary between 40 and 80 dollars a ton, depending on the time of year. Consequently, depending on the fuel type used for distillation, a gallon of ethanol could be produced for less than a dollar!

Moreover, ethanol is a bio-renewable resource. Thousands of family farms in Virginia already grow corn as a commodity crop, which means that thousands of tons are currently wasted or put into storage due to low commodity prices. If a state market were established for corn meant to produce ethanol, corn prices would rise, and farms would grow as much as was needed to supply demand. Clearly, such a cheap, domestically produced fuel source

A distilled bushel of field corn contains about 2.5 gallons of pure ethanol.

would not be susceptible to overseas supply disruptions, and could be produced in whatever quantities were necessary.

So, why isn't everyone in Virginia already using ethanol? The primary reasons have to do with the existing fuel supply and distribution network. At present, most of the commercial ethanol in this country is produced in the Midwest by large grain commodity companies and trucked (by tankers using gasoline!) to distribution points on the East Coast. These distribution points are typically gasoline stations owned by large oil companies. Consequently, the ethanol sold at these stations is, not surprisingly, priced higher than their gasoline!

Therefore, a Green solution to the current so-called energy crisis is readily available. It would consist of the construction of ethanol distillation plants by local governments throughout Virginia, as well as legislation requiring all gasoline stations in the state to sell ethanol at a state-set price. It would further require that all government vehicles (county and state governments, as well as school districts) be fueled by ethanol. The money saved by eliminating constantly rising fuel bills would be a powerful incentive for local government construction of such plants. The reduction in air pollution and freedom from constantly rising fuel costs would motivate the general public to convert to ethanol fueled vehicles. Finally, the use of locally grown corn for ethanol production would drive commodity corn prices up throughout the state, thereby providing economic benefits to family farms.

Consequently, a Green solution to the current fuel crisis is within our grasp. Let's all work together to make locally produced ethanol a viable option in Virginia!





Issue	Green Party	Republicans	Democrats
Pro-Choice	Support Greens support full access to abortion , with funding, for all women in the U.S. and around the world.	Oppose Republicans: Bush opposes abortion, ordered a ban on US funds for overseas agencies that offer abortion.	Support? Democrats: Support abortion rights -- but Clinton signed the same ban in November, 1999. Gore favored outlawing late-term abortion in the US.
Strict Standards on GMOs (Genetically Modified Organisms)	Support Greens support thorough testing and strict controls of all GMOs.	Oppose	Oppose
Corporate Agriculture	Oppose Greens support family-scale farms, diversified, sustainable agriculture that emphasizes organic growing methods.	Support	Support
Increase Automobile Fuel Efficiency	Increase Standards. Advocate vastly increased fuel efficiency standards, a "gas guzzler" tax on new inefficient vehicles, and a "gas sipper" rebate on efficient vehicles.	Maintain Inadequate Standards	Maintain Inadequate Standards
Drug War	Oppose	Support	Support
Labor Unions and a Living Wage	Support A living wage, democratic workplaces, and strong unions. Urge repeal of Taft-Hartley Act .	Oppose Republicans oppose raising minimum wages and have worked to weaken unions.	Lip Service Only Democrats undermined NLRB under Clinton, exported US jobs, supported NAFTA, WTO. They claim to support unions but refuse to overturn Taft-Hartley Act restrictions on union organizing.
World Trade Organization (WTO)	Oppose Greens oppose the WTO because of its anti-democratic power to overturn labor, environmental, and human rights protections.	Support	Support
NAFTA	Oppose	Support	Support
Fast Track	Oppose	Support	Support
Handouts to Wealthy	Oppose Greens support progressive taxes (relief for low-income and working people); would move funding from military spending to environmental and social needs, including assistance for the poor.	Support Bush's tax cuts will give the richest 1% over \$470 billion (36% of \$1.3 trillion in cuts) over the next 10 years. Passed the Bankruptcy Bill favoring credit card businesses over consumers.	Support Democrats proposed a \$1.35 trillion tax cut, compromising with Bush, and helped pass the Bankruptcy Bill . Clinton signed the Welfare Reform Act, cutting aid to the poorest Americans .
Death Penalty	Oppose	Support	Support
Military spending	Decrease Call for sharp reductions in military spending with funds redirected into social and environmental needs.	Increase Pushed for increases and enactment of "Star Wars" National Missile Defense. The Bush administration is full of people with direct ties to military industry.	Increase Gore proposed even greater increases in military spending and he supported Star Wars.
Increased Accounting Oversight .	Always Supported Supports fundamental changes in the way publicly traded companies' financial records are audited.	Oppose	Opposed until the Enron scandal broke.





Issue	Green Party	Republicans	Democrats
Patriot Act	Oppose Law gives too much power to President and undermines civil liberties. Law will NOT help prevent terrorism.	Support	Support
War with Iraq	Oppose Opposed to removing a foreign leader with violent means that will endanger the lives of civilians and threaten to destabilize the entire Middle East region.	Support Most Republicans in congress supported a full scale invasion of Iraq.	Support Less than a handful of Democrats openly criticized George Bush's calls for an invasion.
Kyoto Treaty - Global Warming	Support Support rapid reduction of global Greenhouse gas emissions. Support Kyoto Treaty ; higher efficiency standards; conversion to renewable energy sources.	Oppose Oppose any reduction in greenhouse gas emissions. Bush withdrew the U.S. from the Kyoto Treaty.	Oppose and Failed to Act. Failed to act on global warming in 1990s. Clinton and Gore sabotaged the Kyoto Treaty in November, 2000, demanding higher US greenhouse gas emissions.
National Health Insurance	Support Single-payer national health insurance , with guaranteed treatment and medicine, and with choice of doctors and hospitals.	Oppose	Oppose Clinton and Gore deleted plans for universal health care from the Democratic platform.
100% Publicly Financed Elections - Real Campaign Finance Reform	Support Greens will not accept corporate PAC contributions. Propose comprehensive campaign finance reform, with full public financing of elections to remove the influence of big money .	Oppose Accept big checks from corporations, including defense contractors, oil companies, insurance and drug firms, etc.	Oppose Democrats say they support campaign finance reform but they do not advocate for 100% publicly financed elections - while they continue to accept big checks from corporate PACs.
Telecommunications Deregulation - Giveaway of public broadcast spectrum to private companies.	Opposed to Deregulation Supports the creation of substantial public space for non-profit use of airwaves.	Supported Supported the giveaway of public airwaves to private companies.	Supported Supported the giveaway of public airwaves to private companies.
Bank Deregulation and Banking Reform	Opposed to bank deregulation.	Supported bank deregulation.	Supported bank deregulation.
Enron Contributions to Party National Committees (2001)	\$0	\$114,752	\$102,050
Enron Contributions to Current Members of Congress, 1989-2001	\$0	\$761,000 158 Members	\$368,000 98 members
Financial Sector and Credit Card Industry Donations	\$0	\$440,119	\$287,000
Election Reforms	Support Greens support proposals to provide free air-time to all candidates, enact instant run-off voting ; and establish independent monitoring of elections.	Oppose	Oppose
Reform the Presidential Debate Commission	Support A new citizen-controlled debate commission should be formed to handle all future Presidential debates.	Oppose	Oppose Did everything they could to keep third party candidates out of the Presidential debates in 2000.





Working Americans Face 'Robber Baron' Economy

Working Americans must stand up to growing monopoly power of corporations, say Greens.

Consolidated corporate power has created financial hardship for middle- and low-income Americans; Greens call for repeal and reform of laws privileging large firms.

GPUS Press Release, March 1, 2006

WASHINGTON, D.C. -- Green Party leaders urged all Americans to stand up to the growing monopoly power of corporations, which has created financial hardship and ruin for working Americans and families.

"The 2006 midterm elections, at national, state, and local levels, must address the crisis of consolidated corporate power, and how it's hitting Americans hard in their bank accounts," said Aimee Allison, Green candidate for Oakland (California) City Council, District 2 <<http://www.aimeeallison.org>>. "Debt is at record levels, and a medical emergency or a job loss can spell financial ruin for American families. When companies merge at the national and global level, when Wal-Mart swallows up local economies and puts small business owners out of business, then words like 'free market' and 'competition' are a joke."

Greens asked working Americans to support several urgent measures to restore financial stability and protection for citizens and to limit corporate power:

Recent bankruptcy bills, which give financial institutions nearly unlimited power over middle- and low-income Americans facing financial hardship, must be overturned.

"The House bankruptcy bill passed in April, 2005, allows creditors to demand higher payments before and after bankruptcy, drives up bankruptcy filing fees and minimum payments in repayment plans, and also lets millionaires escape their debts by hiding their money in exemptions and trusts," said John Eder, elected Green Independent member of the Maine House of Representatives (Portland) <<http://www.RepJohnEder.com>>. "The bill was passed by Republicans and by 72 House Democrats without amendments that would have blocked abuses of bankruptcy laws by companies like Enron. 90% of bankruptcies are the result of employment, illness, or inadequate health insurance. This bill was a victory for credit card companies and banks, and a crushing defeat for the rest of us."

According to the Center for Responsive Politics, financial and credit firms gave more than \$7.8 million in individual and PAC contributions during the 2004 election cycle to both Republicans (64%) and Democrats (36%).

A national health insurance system will remove control by HMOs and insurance firms over U.S. health care, and will guarantee quality coverage for all Americans.

"HMOs and insurance firms make decisions based on profit, not on our need for health care," said Donna J. Warren, who is seeking the Green nomination for Lieutenant Governor of California <<http://www.donnawarren.com>>. "They refuse to cover people who are considered at-risk -- people with prior medical conditions, older Americans, and those who can't afford coverage. That's why over 45 million Americans, including millions of working people, aren't covered. The only remedy is a single-payer national health insurance system. Unfortunately, most Congress members get too much money in contributions from these corporations, so

corporations over working people and override labor, human rights, and environmental protections.

Greens stressed that income for Americans under 45 has fallen dramatically between 2001 and 2005, and that people of color have been disproportionately hit by cuts to the social safety net.

"We're in a new 'Robber Baron' era," said California congressional candidate Byron De Lear (28th District) <<http://www.delearforcongress.org>>. "While competition between powerful companies has dwindled under corporate-friendly policies, working people compete for fewer jobs, benefits disappear, unions are weakened, and small businesses don't stand a chance."

"But we can't even begin to fight predatory corporate power until we expel all Democrats and Republicans in Congress, in state legislatures, and in city councils who take marching orders from corporate lobbyists," said Mr. DeLear. "The Green Party and its candidates refuse all contributions from corporations, and we're fighting for campaign finance reforms that allow Green and other noncorporate candidates a fighting chance to compete in elections."

MORE INFORMATION

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they refuse to challenge corporate power and profit with a single-payer plan."

Americans must work to preserve their job benefits and public 'social safety' protections, beginning with repeal of Taft-Hartley restrictions on workplace organization and rejection of Republican attempts to privatize Social Security.

Conservation of energy and targeted carbon taxes will not only help curb the advance of global warming and make the U.S. less reliant on foreign oil, they will prevent oil companies from gouging consumers while drawing record profits.

Greens noted that, while Americans suffered higher prices at the gas pump, companies like Exxon Mobil set U.S. records for quarterly and annual profits in 2005. <http://money.cnn.com/2006/01/30/news/companies/exxon_earns/?cnn=yes>

Greens also call for an end to the status of corporations as 'persons' according to a 19th-century interpretation of the U.S. Constitution; legislation to prevent corporations from evading payment of taxes and escaping punishment when they break the law; stronger local economic control for communities facing invasion by Wal-Mart and other big chain stores; and renegotiation of international trade pact-like NAFTA and FTAA which privilege

"America's Younger Workers Losing Ground on Income: From 2001 to 2004, Median Income Fell 8 Percent for Householders under 35" By Mark Trumbull, The Christian Science Monitor, February 28, 2006
abcnews.go.com/Business/CSM/story?id=1664971

"Racial Poverty Gaps in U.S. Amount to Human Rights Violation, Says U.N. Expert" By Haider Rizvi, OneWorld US, November 30, 2005
<http://us.oneworld.net/article/view/123107/1/unhchr.ch/hurricane/hurricane.nsf/view01/68E2DD8540B09F7DC12570BA002FE0FD?opendocument>

Green Party rebuttal to President Bush's 2006 State of the Union Address (Video News Release)
gp.org/video/2006stateofunion/video.google.com/videoplay?docid=777759195181147321&q=green+party

The Fredericksburg Green Party
meets on the
1st and 3rd Sunday of each month at 4pm
in Meeting Room #2 of the Main Branch
Central Rappahannock Regional Library
1201 Caroline St.





The Venezuelan Bolivarian Revolution: Are You Watching?

Paul Hughes, Rockbridge Greens

Having been intrigued by Venezuelan President Hugo Chavez's Bolivarian Revolution for several years now, I open the Washington Post every morning to learn of the latest developments in the Bush administration's attempt to oust him. I have watched with considerable consternation at what I see as very one-sided reporting and editorials from the U.S. corporate-controlled media depicting Chavez as possibly the next Castro and undermining U.S. interests in Latin America. Secretary of Defense Donald Rumsfeld has gone so far as to compare Chavez with Adolph Hitler. So, it was not totally unexpected when I read a "news" article in the Washington Post last November 23 that read more like previous Post editorials or a leaked CIA briefing document than a news article.

The subject of the article was ostensibly to report on Venezuela's announcement that it was going to provide heating oil to several northeastern and Midwest U.S. cities at a 60% discount to low-income families this winter. With oil prices at an all-time high, Middle East supplies becoming more problematic by the day, and the failure of Congress to pass any increases in its subsidized heating oil program for low-income families, this seemed like a pretty charitable thing to do. No doubt, there was a political rationale to it as well – embarrassment of the Bush administration and Congress for failing to help low-income families and senior citizens get through the winter and not wanting to interfere with record profits being enjoyed by the major oil companies.

However, when you're a country that accounts for 11% of the U.S. oil imports and your national government owns one of the major oil production and refining companies operating in the U.S. (Citgo), it gives that country a little more leverage in its relationship with a global military and economic behemoth like the U.S. Below is the letter I submitted to the Washington Post on November 26, 2006, realizing there was very little chance that its editorial page editors would allow such a contradictory view to its (and the Bush administration's) long-held belief that Chavez was a "dictator who had to go".

"Dear Editor:

Washington Post readers can be forgiven for wondering whether they were reading a CIA press release masquerading as a news article in Justin Blum's piece "Chavez Pursues Petro-Diplomacy" (November 23). Venezuelan President Hugo Chavez has been a leading critic of American-style capitalism favoring capital over people. In a story describing an announcement by Citgo Petroleum Corp. (a Venezuelan government-owned enterprise) that it will provide discounted heating oil this winter to low-income residents in Massachusetts and New York, Mr. Blum's stream of anti-Chavez statements accuse Chavez of:

- "providing (discounted heating) oil for low income people 'for political gain'" (*even though the U.S. aid to other countries is provided for this very same purpose all the time*);

- "using a windfall created by soaring oil prices as a diplomatic tool" (*What nation doesn't use its assets to further its foreign policy objectives?*)
- aiming "his petro-diplomacy directly at the United States, partly in hopes of embarrassing the Bush administration" (*Congress had just failed to add funding for U.S. low-income energy assistance program even though an unusually cold winter is forecast*)
- "stok[ing] the flames, particularly among the more marginalized communities in the U.S., with his energy assistance plan" (*Is the U.S. "stoking the flames" by providing assistance to other nations when their governments fail to act on behalf of their poorest citizens?*)
- "having little success using oil to unite Latin America against the U.S." (*Is it a wrong to criticize U.S.-style capitalism as widening the gap between the rich and the poor or to promote humanitarian aid and Latin American regional unity?*)
- "using oil revenues to fund popular social programs in Venezuela" (*Is it a crime to use Venezuelan oil profits to better the lot of its people mired in poverty or to expand its oil revenues from new sources, such as Brazil, Nicaragua, and China?*).

Mr. Blum seems to be adopting the Bush administration's position that Venezuelan oil (the fifth largest oil exporter in the world, accounting for 11%-15% of U.S. oil imports) belongs only to the U.S. Following the U.S. government's (a) support for a April 2002 failed coup attempt of Chavez's administration and premature recognition of the coup leaders (and just as hasty a withdrawal when it was seen to have failed), (b) refusal to publicly repudiate Pat Robertson's August 2005 call for President Chavez's assassination, and (c) continued efforts to undermine his administration despite Chavez's continued election victories, we can hardly be surprised when President Chavez begins using more of his country's oil revenues to diversify Venezuela's customer base and to strengthen Venezuela's national security.

It's time the Bush administration recognized that the interests of other countries do not necessarily have to coincide with that of the U.S. Or is the Bush administration's paranoia about Venezuela really about our control of *their* oil? Or does Chavez have a reason to be sufficiently concerned about U.S. designs on his country's oil to warrant his finding new "allies"? Maybe this is the story Mr. Blum should be investigating."

I include this letter in its entirety for several reasons. First, writing it required me to "do my homework" so I could write knowledgeably about my subject and to be able to responsibly refute some of the clearly biased statements of the reporter. I gained substantially more knowledge about this particular oil subsidy program as well as the undermining U.S. policy towards Venezuela. On the oil program, I learned that by cutting out all the "middlemen", Citgo was able to sell directly to non-profit distributors and save the consumers 60% off the regular price. Overall, the program was expected to save families \$184 on a 200-gallon winter delivery, or \$10 million in each municipal market in which it operates. However, the resulting embarrassment by Congress (which has not managed to

generate any serious congressional hearings about the obscene level of oil company profits over the past two years) suddenly found its voice when Congressman Joe Barton (the largest recipient after Tom DeLay of oil and gas company campaign contributions) decided to hold hearings on why Citgo was able to sell its heating oil so inexpensively.

Other issues of policy interest include:

- the U.S. role in the attempted coup of Chavez
- the role of our tax-supported National Endowment for Democracy in financing the business elites and many of the opposition leaders of the coup
- evangelist Pat Robertson's call for Chavez's assassination
- the substantial efforts the Venezuelan government under Chavez has made to bring medical care, education, and knowledge of democratic governing principles to the poor (60%+) and illiterate in his country
- the broad efforts of the U.S. to undermine the Chavez government diplomatically and economically at every opportunity
- the growing network of Bolivarian (named after Simon Bolivar – the George Washington of Latin America) Circles that the Chavez government has promoted to encourage local participative (vs. representative) democracy and worker-owned cooperatives as a means for achieving local economic sustainability
- the degree of support Venezuela's Bolivarian Revolution and its national leader enjoy within the U.S., and
- the Venezuelan government's so far unsuccessful request to extradite longtime anti-Cuba terrorist and CIA operative Luis Posada Carriles.

As I write this article, a National Solidarity Conference on Venezuela is occurring in Washington, DC at which Peter Camejo, Ralph Nader's running mate in 2004, is one of the featured speakers. This followed an earlier solidarity day for the burgeoning number of Bolivarian Circles in the U.S. on February 14, and an earlier conference of the Bolivarian Circle Network. In addition, local (e.g., St. Louis, Wisconsin, New York) and national Green Party members have been early supporters of the Bolivarian Movement and the environmental, participative democracy, and sustainable economic development principles upon which it is based. Other supportive progressive organizations include Global Exchange, the Center for Economic and Policy Research (Michael Weisbrot), A.N.S.W.E.R., Alliance for Global Justice, the Maryknoll Office of Global Concerns, the School of the Americas Watch, and scores of others.

The subtitle of this article, "Are You Watching?" has a double meaning – the literal one, as in "Are you aware of these developments and are you monitoring them?" and a second one referring to whether you, as a Green Party member, are JUST watching or are you willing to demonstrate your support for a genuinely revolutionary cause? My hope is that by becoming more informed about the true direction President Chavez is taking his country, the more we all can become informed counterweights to the daily anti-Chavez diatribes from the Bush administration

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Northern Virginia's Transportation Crisis

Audrey Clement, Arlington / Courthouse Greens

Traffic congestion is a big problem in Virginia, but nowhere is it bigger than in Northern Virginia. Get into your car at rush hour on a Friday night and try to navigate any of the major arteries into or out of Metropolitan Washington—I-66, the Beltway (I-495), Arlington Blvd (U.S. 50), Lee Highway (U.S. 29), the Dulles Toll Road (Rte. 267), Chain Bridge Road (Rte. 123), Little River Turnpike (Rte. 236)—and you won't make much headway. The roads are bumper to bumper with cars as far as the eye can see. The Virginia Department of Transportation (VDOT) has addressed the problem by constructing new roads and widening others. But still the cars keep coming. In fact it has been demonstrated that more roads attract more cars, producing a vicious cycle that not only does not alleviate congestion, but generates more development, more pollution, more run off and a degraded quality of life.

In recognition of the problem, newly elected Governor Tim Kaine held a series of transportation forums at town hall meetings across the state in the two months following his election. The result was a decision to seek from the General Assembly an amendment to the state constitution that prohibits raids on the state's Transportation Trust Fund to meet non-transportation needs, as well as a proposal to increase transportation spending by \$1 billion per year through increases in car fees, taxes and fines, much of which will be used to build or widen roads in Northern Virginia. Despite the evidence that more money to build more roads will do nothing to alleviate congestion in the long run, the Kaine administration has opted for business as usual in dealing with the transportation crisis. But the Kaine administration isn't the only culprit.

On January 18, the Metropolitan Washington Council of Government's (MwCOG) Transportation Planning Board (TPB) voted to approve almost \$10 million for the design phase of a project to implement "spot improvements" along the I-66 corridor between the Potomac River and the Beltway (I-495) in Arlington, Va. The spot improvements currently underway would actually widen I-66 by extending the merge lanes for westbound traffic along more than four miles of the 6.5 mile corridor in Arlington County.

VDOT argued before the TPB that spot improvements were mandated by the "I-66 Inside the Beltway Feasibility Study" otherwise known as the *Idea66* Study, which recommended widening the westbound lane of I-66 in March, 2005. However, Allen Muchnick, President of the Arlington Coalition for Sensible Transportation (ACST) says that the spot improvements outlined in *Idea66* were far less extensive than what is now proposed. He and other advocates of alternatives to widening I-66 suspect that VDOT is using the spot improvements project to accomplish widening on a de facto basis in the face of growing opposition from Arlington residents.

Arlington County Board member Chris Zimmerman successfully lobbied TPB to insert an amendment into the spot improvements funding measure that would require VDOT to: ensure that spot improvements don't preclude a third Metrorail track and express bus operations; certify that the project com-

plies with the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA); and certify that all construction occurs within the existing right-of-way. Yet Zimmerman himself voted against the measure, probably because he knows that VDOT cannot possibly meet these requirements and still proceed with road widening.

If the residents of outlying counties on the I-66 corridor support road widening, why are Arlington residents and their elected officials so opposed? The answer is that the four lane divided highway abuts residential neighborhoods on either side of the roadway. In some places there is less than ten feet of space between the road and the right-of-way, making it difficult or impossible to widen the road without encroaching on park land and private property.

Also, the cross sectional maps in VDOT's *Idea66* study show that whereas sixteen additional feet are required to construct an additional automobile lane and fourteen additional feet are required to construct additional Metrorail track in the median that divides the four lane corridor, at most twenty additional feet are available within the existing right-of-way. Thus if VDOT opts to add an additional travel lane, it will effectively preempt construction of additional track needed to provide Metrorail express service to the outer suburbs. The need for such service is dictated by the ongoing construction of a new Metrorail line from West Falls Church near the Beltway to Dulles International Airport. Commuters from Dulles and the suburbs beyond it can't be expected to patronize the Dulles Metrorail Extension unless their travel time can be optimized with express service into DC.

Yet another disturbing aspect of road widening demonstrated by the *Idea66* study's own travel forecast model analysis is that while widening may temporarily alleviate congestion on I-66, it will dump traffic onto other already congested arteries in the Arlington area. Using vehicle/capacity or V/C ratios as a measure of congestion, the travel forecast model analysis showed that widening will dramatically reduce V/C ratios on I-66 while forcing V/C ratios up elsewhere in the vicinity. The *Idea66* study itself says:

From a regional demand perspective, the concepts [widening solutions to congestion] proposed have relatively little effectiveness at meeting the overwhelming demand for travel in the study area and along I-66, although they can help to improve the overall capacity on this segment of I-66 (p. 6-8).

This is simply transportation planning jargon for the conventional wisdom that more pavement attracts more cars in densely populated areas.

So if VDOT's own analysis shows that road widening is a doubtful solution to the problem of traffic congestion in Northern Virginia, why is Governor Kaine pushing a dedicated Transportation Trust Fund and an increase in transportation spending of \$1 billion a year? The building industry is a large part of the answer. Recently angered by a related Kaine proposal to allow local governments to link land use decisions to the availability of adequate transportation, the builders descended on Richmond en masse to lobby against the measure. The Washington Post quoted home builder chief lobbyist Mike Toalson, who said: "That's the death of our industry's growth. We urge the House not to fall for these populist, so-called quick fixes" (WP, 1/17/06, B1).

The Post correctly characterized Toalson's remarks as hysterical and later published statistics obtained by the Virginia Public Access Project revealing that developers had contributed over \$1.4 million to state legislators on the Senate Local Government and the House Counties, Cities and Towns Committees over the past decade. In return these committees have defeated all slow growth legislation submitted for mark up and deny any connection between the contributions and their antipathy for such legislation. The Post quoted Delegate Robert G. Marshall of Prince William County, who said that the House committee was "a funeral pyre for all those bills" (WP, 1/30/06, B1).

What this means is that after only a few weeks in office, Kaine is in trouble. He has already antagonized the biggest lobby in the state. Unless he can appease it in some way, his proposal to link road building with local land use is destined to die in committee. Perhaps Kaine thinks he can persuade developers that so long as the transportation budget is big enough, local communities can build the roads needed to accommodate new development. Thus the linkage of land use with transportation availability will become a non-issue, on paper if not on pavement.

Of course, once the new communities are built and the roads widened to accommodate them, congestion will worsen, leading to more frustration, AND to the real culprit, namely the public. Even a greedy developer has no rational objection to mass transit as an alternative to road building, as long as mass transit services the development and the residents of the development are willing to use it. The reason why developers routinely oppose alternatives to road building is that they know better than the rest of us that people are ADDICTED to their cars. Even in Arlington, Va., where public transportation is readily available, this is the case. A few anecdotes should suffice to prove the point.

I was waiting for the bus two blocks away from my new apartment in Arlington, Va. a couple of years ago, when one young resident of the complex proudly informed another resident of the same complex that she'd just made a down payment on her first car. "Great," said the other resident. "Now you won't have to wait at this bus stop anymore."

Last week I conversed with a government client at an employer hosted lunch conveniently located at Skyline Plaza, which is a major transportation hub in Arlington, Va. The government client, who lives in McLean, was impressed that I commute to work via the W&OD bike trail. "I'd love to bike to work," he said. "But there aren't any bike trails near me. I'd have to drive to Vienna and bike in from there. It's not worth it." He'd also ruled out taking the bus down Route 7 because "it stops every two blocks." When I advised him that Metro could afford express buses if there were sufficient demand, but not otherwise, he said, "Yea. I know. It's a vicious cycle." End of discussion and end of the possibilities for mass transit as a solution to road widening in Northern Virginia. If this sounds like a pessimistic assessment of the prospects for more mass transit in Northern Virginia, it is. But consider that the REAL victims of this morass are those who opt to sit on the arteries of Northern Virginia in their cars. Consider that every time you opt to take the bus, bike to work or walk home from a bus stop or Metrorail station, you are not only helping the environment, you are helping yourself to a healthier, more enjoyable day than the schmuck who sits in his/her car.





Revolution

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and the corporate media, and help educate those with whom we interact daily about the true facts of Venezuela's transformation.

You can Google "**Bolivarian Circles**" to find out what is needed to have your local Green Party take the lead in forming a local group that will attract qualified speakers and a wider audience than would be possible by just forming another Green Party committee. Second, "**Start Speaking Out**" – write letters to the editor (some will get published!) demanding more balanced reporting, as well as your congressman asking that he or she demand that the Bush administration stop its misinformation campaign about Venezuela, hold hearings on the role of the National Endowment for Democracy's role in the failed coup attempt, and our government's continued efforts to interfere in Venezuela's domestic politics. Ask them if they would permit the Venezuelan government to sponsor such covert activities in the U.S. to influence the direction of our government? Third, participate in some way in the "**Cuban/Venezuelan Support Demonstrations**" planned for April 9, 2006 as a way of showing our solidarity with people of these countries and the need to end the economic boycott of Cuba. Fourth, become a part of the "**Citgo Buycott**" by promoting the purchase of Citgo products among your friends and family at every opportunity, knowing that its profits are helping fuel many of the social developments being undertaken by the Venezuelan government. Finally, consider sponsoring and signing up for a "**Reality Trip**" to Venezuela sponsored by such groups as Global Exchange (Deborah James), the Womens International League for Peace and Freedom (WILPF), and Witness for Peace that last 7-10 days and cost approximately \$1,200 plus airfare.

Once every 20-25 years a genuine revolutionary opportunity comes along that holds the promise of really making a difference in the way we humans relate to one another and our planet. I think what is happening in Venezuela could be "the real McCoy". Take a look at it and tell me what you think (phughes1@cox.net).

Issues in which Locals of the Green Party of Virginia are Involved

- The Green Party is the only party fully committed to peace!
- Opposition to the "Patriot" Act.
- Opposition to the Mattaponi River Dam / Prince William Reservoir
- Health Care
- Traffic Reduction/Rail/Anti-Sprawl
- Affordable Housing
- Living Wage
- Identification of the Worst Local Polluters
- Saving the Crow's Nest Peninsula

Get Involved !

Color Me Green

Jim Blythe, Fredericksburg Greens

In my early voting life I was an independent, often voting for candidates from both the Republican and Democratic parties, based on my evaluation of their platforms and personalities. As a young adult in my early 20's, I believed that most politicians had the best interests of their constituency at heart. I also thought that if they strayed from the public interest from time to time at the behest of public interest groups, they could be brought back to the correct path by appealing to their conscience.

As I grew older, however, I became increasingly skeptical of the Republican Party. The Irangate scandals, the invasion of Panama, and the bombing of Lebanon during the Reagan years, the first Gulf war against Iraq by Bush I, and the increasingly shrill tone of Republican public discourse in the 1990's moved me increasingly toward the Democratic Party, which, if not perfect, at least still embodied, (I thought) the interest of the common citizen.

The advent of the present Administration, however, provided a rude awakening. The hysterical overreaction to the attacks on the twin Towers, the Attorney General's continuing attempts to circumscribe personal liberties in the name of national security,

and, worst of all, the President's unprovoked, illegal and unjustified invasion of Iraq all persuaded me that something was seriously wrong with our national leadership. Even worse, in the first three years of the so-called war on terror, the Democrats proved to be willing accomplices of the Bush administration! Even as late as the 2004 Presidential elections, the Democratic Party could not bring themselves to condemn the occupation of Iraq!

It is now quite clear to me that neither of the two majority parties is seriously interested in representing the interests of the common citizen. Both parties are captive to the funding provided by their respective special interest groups and consider the public interest an annoying hindrance to their pursuit of personal advantage. Sudden crises, such as the destruction wrought on New Orleans by Hurricane Katrina, are perceived as political issues to be managed, rather than problems which must be solved. In short, the national interest has been subsumed by a clamorous array of special interest lobbyists.

Consequently, I am now convinced that the Green Party provides the only credible alternative to the two major parties in our political system today. Our refusal to accept special interest money, along with our commitment to grassroots democracy, ensures that local citizen interests are truly represented at every level. We can all be proud to be members of the only uncorrupted political party in America today!

The Green Party needs YOU to run for office !

Run for local office —

- Most of the battles over sprawl are fought at the local level.
- It's a great way to get involved in your community.
- It's easy to get on the ballot for school board and town and city council elections.
- Greens have won local offices. In 2004, Don Langrehr won a seat on the Blacksburg town council!

Run for Congress —

- Many Congressional elections are uncontested in Virginia.
- Give Virginians the chance to vote Green and vote for civil liberties, universal health care, bringing our troops home from Iraq, and a better environment.

Get in touch with the
Candidate Exploration Committee
 at cec@vagreenparty.org
 or with your local group (see back page).

The sooner we start working on your campaign, the better are your chances of winning and bringing Green values into our government!



**Don't forget to register for the
2006 National Green Party
Meeting
July 27th-30th
Tucson, Arizona
www.gp.org**



Greens' 10 Key Values

Grassroots Democracy: Citizens have the right and responsibility to participate in the environmental, political, and economic decisions that affect our lives.

Social Justice: Everyone should share in the fruits of our society, regardless of gender, race, sexual orientation, class, age, or disability. We work for a world in which all can live free of fear and discrimination.

Ecological Wisdom: Whatever we do to the web of life, we do to ourselves. We advocate stewardship of our resources for the continued health of our communities and our planet.

Nonviolence: We reject violence at all levels of society, from the family to the nation. We promote peace by working for justice and by advocating non-violent resolution to conflict.

Decentralization: Concentration of wealth and power in the hands of the few contributes to social and economic injustice as well as environmental destruction. We call for the return of local decision-making so individuals and communities may act in their own best interests.

Community-Based Economics: We support the strengthening of local communities by encouraging economic self-reliance in all ways practical.

Feminism: We call for cooperative ways of interacting to replace the cultural ethics of domination and control. We actively promote equal rights for all citizens.

Respect for Diversity: We support the cultural, ethnic, racial, sexual, religious, and spiritual diversity among all people. We also cherish and encourage the preservation of the Earth's biodiversity.

Personal & Global Responsibility: As individuals, we strive to be mindful of our inter-connectedness, to consider the effects of our actions and lifestyle choices on the Earth and its inhabitants.

Future Focus & Sustainability: For love of our children, we consider the long range consequences of current actions. For the sake of future generations, we seek to create a society which meets the needs of everyone within the natural limits of the Earth.

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Membership

The Greens of Virginia welcome all persons who are committed to the Greens' Ten Key Values. Membership is open to anyone, regardless of gender, age, race, religion, nationality, sexual orientation, or handicap. Members receive our newsletter and other mailings, and are invited to attend our meetings and public forums. *We look forward to meeting you!*

YES, I am committed to the Greens' Ten Key Values and would like to become a member.

Name _____ Home Phone _____

Address _____ Email Address _____

County _____

Districts : Congressional _____ State Senate _____ House of Delegates _____ Local _____

Please let us know your expertise in any area which you are willing to promote either the GPVA or one of its locals:

Please select the local most appropriate for you (See the list to the left). If there is no local in your area, choose the Greens of Virginia At-Large. All members of these affiliated locals are also members of the Greens / Green Party of Virginia.

Unlike the Democrats and Republicans, the Green Party accepts no corporate contributions. We rely on the generous support of citizens like you. Please consider contributing \$25, \$50, \$75, or \$100 to help us work for community-based democracy.

Contribution (optional) \$ _____ Employer (if donation this year exceeds \$200) _____

Federal law requires us to collect the name, address, occupation and employer from donors contributing more than \$200 per year. Please include this information with your check. You must be at least 18 years of age in order to contribute. Contributions to the Green Party of Virginia are not tax deductible.

Thank you for your support! Please return this form and optional contribution to :

**The Green Party of Virginia, P.O. Box 7316 Falls Church, VA. 22040
or sign up on our website at www.vagreenparty.org**