

Town of Vienna, Virginia



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NEWSLETTER

January, 1969

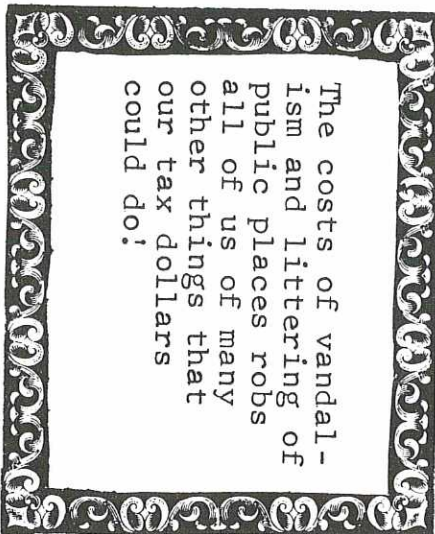
STREET SIGNS

This year the town of Vienna has spent between \$700 and \$800 replacing street signs which were stolen or defaced. These signs are expensive and some have been replaced two and three times.

The next time your youngster brings home a sign to hang in his room, ask yourself if you can afford it. It will show up on your next tax bill.

Young people should also be alerted to the fact that it is against the law to tear down signs posting property for re-zonings, etc.

These signs are required by law to inform the public of pending action which they may want to dispute or concur with. If they are missing, they must be replaced.



The costs of vandalism and littering of public places robs all of us of many other things that our tax dollars could do!

* * *

Fellow Citizens of Vienna:

The increase of vandalism during the past year in Vienna has disturbed all of us. This is particularly brought to mind during the Christmas Season when outside decorations have been damaged and stolen.

I received a letter from one concerned citizen who suggested a curfew in the Town. I don't feel we are in need of a curfew in Vienna. I don't think we need to resort to that, or that parents would want to abdicate their rights and responsibilities to that extent.

A curfew would be grossly unfair to the majority of our young people who do obey the law and do what is right.

It is my hope that we can bring the concepts of decency and respect for public and private property to those youths who might be tempted, and to make parents increasingly aware of the responsibility of knowing what their children are doing, why they are out at night, and where they are.

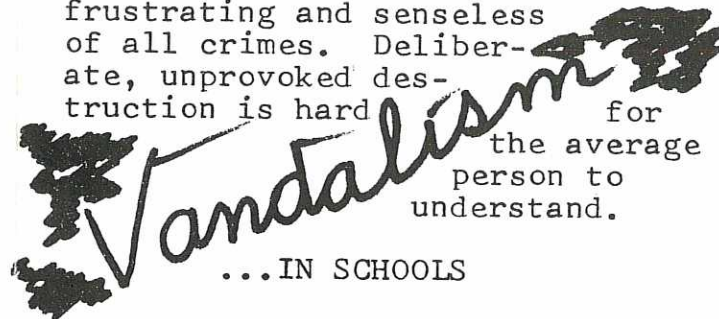
Community pride and respect cannot be imposed by ordinance - it must be developed by people.

If we can do this, we can solve Vienna's relatively minor vandalism problems without resorting to methods which would work a real hardship on the outstanding majority of our youth.

Sincerely,

James C. Martinelli
James C. Martinelli
Mayor

Vandalism is one of the most frustrating and senseless of all crimes. Deliberate, unprovoked destruction is hard for the average person to understand.



...IN SCHOOLS

Last year, school vandalism alone cost Fairfax County about \$115,000. During the first five months of this fiscal year, it has cost about \$45,000. Destruction ranges from sprayed paint and broken windows to smashed equipment and ripped books.

The School Board is going to spend \$500,000, (the cost of a new elementary school), to install electronic warning devices in the schools this coming year.

\$310,800 will be spent on exterior safety lighting. Board Chairman, William S. Hoofnagle says that repairing damage caused by vandals is amounting to about 1 cent on the tax rate. This is money out of every citizen's pocket which could be used for more important services.

...IN VIENNA

While Vienna's problem is not yet of major proportion, in

CALENDAR OF EVENTS

Mon., January 13 - 8 P.M.
Public Hearings

a. Rezoning request for property on Pleasant St. from RS 16 to RTH.

b. Amendment to Chapters 5 & 16 of Title 15 zoning - transitional parking.

c. Appeal by Arby's International from decision to deny construction of restaurant on Maple Ave.

Wed., January 15 - 8 P.M.
Planning Commission

Thurs., January 16 - 8 P.M.
Architectural Review Board

Mon., January 20 - 8 P.M.
Inauguration Day Holiday

Wed., January 22 - 8 P.M.
Planning Commission

Mon., January 27 - 8 P.M.
Council Meeting

Mon., February 3 - 8 P.M.
Recreation Advisory Committee

Mon., February 3 - 8 P.M.
Council Meeting

Tues., February 4 - 8 P.M.
Commission on Human Rights and Community Relations

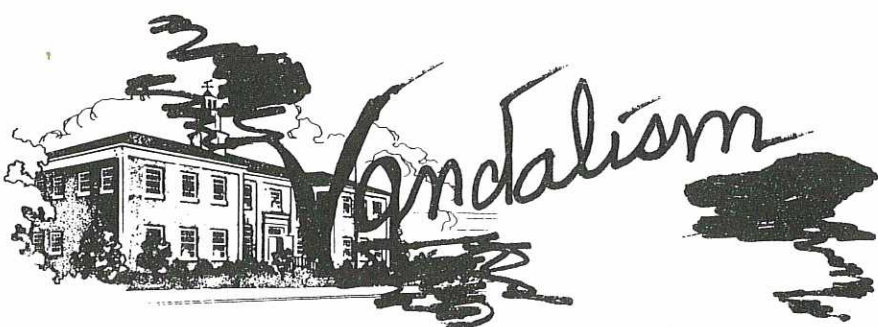
Tues., February 11 - 8 P.M.
Planning Commission

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Incorporated in 1890

the first 11 months of 1968, the Vienna Police Department closed 172 vandalism cases involving juveniles, and made 80 arrests. Last year there were 118 reported cases, so the rate is increasing. Many minor cases, such as damage to mailboxes, fences and outdoor equipment often are not reported, but add to the ugliness of the overall picture.

Besides schools, which are County owned, Vienna's chief targets for vandals are automobiles. Private homes come second, with damage to shrubbery, broken windows and paint on doors and porches.

A communication from Fairfax County Juvenile Court states that the crime rate in the County is at its highest peak in our history and statistics indicate that 15-17 year olds are our No. 1 offenders.

...WHY?

It cites the confusion of the world situation, changing moral standards, and a breakdown in discipline and respect for law and order as the prime causes.

Young people are seeking expression, identity or escape through anti-social acts. Parents are confused about their own roles and responsibilities with the consequent breakdown of controls and respect within the home.

...WHAT IS THERE TO DO?

Schools and law enforcement officers are doing what they can to prevent vandalism, but parents are still the final source of authority.

Children must be taught, from their earliest years, to respect not only their own home and property, but the property of others as well. Youthful spirits can be channelled into more constructive activities with a little thought and help from parents.

Activities are offered by schools and the Vienna Community Center for those who wish to take advantage of them. But the final responsibility does not rest with the municipality, but with the parents.

...PENALTIES

State law now makes parents financially liable for damage by their children. A year ago the general assembly passed two bills relating to parental responsibility. One provides that the governing body of a Town may institute an action and recover from the parents of a minor, damages suffered by reason of the willful or malicious destruction of, or damage to public property. The second provision gives the same right to property owners other than governing bodies.

The Fairfax County School Board has asked the general assembly to increase the amount for which parents of school vandals may be sued by a Virginia school board. The present ceiling is \$300. In recent cases the School Board has requested the court to release the names of juveniles involved and those of their parents.

"We've tried every other means," Dr. Hoofnagle said, "this senseless destruction of public property has got to stop."

* * *

SOME SUGGESTIONS FOR SOLUTIONS

Many parents ask, "What can we do?" Here are a few suggestions.

1. Know where your children are.
2. Know what your children are doing, who their friends are. Welcome their friends into your home.
3. Try to interest teens in a sport or hobby, and work with them at it.
4. Give them responsibilities at home, and insist that these are carried out.
5. Help them to find a job, if they have time on their hands.
6. Set a time for them to be home, and stick to it.
7. Let them know that you love them, not by giving them things, but by being generous of your time and attention.

It takes a lot of hard work to raise children to be good citizens, but with a better world as the end result, it seems worth it.



VIENNA IS YOUR LIVING ROOM

Would you allow your children to break coke bottles on your kitchen floor? Do you throw wrappers and empty the ash trays on your living room rug? Do you toss your empty beer cans out the window to litter your front yard?

Most people are particular about the condition of their home and their yards. And yet, many of these same people think nothing of dropping their trash on public roads, parking lots and sidewalks, or allowing their children to.

These places too, are a part of your "living room" and you spoil it for yourself as much as for everyone else by littering. It is such a very little trouble to carry a bag in the car for trash, or to use the waste cans provided in public places. What a neat world it would be if everyone were as careful outside the home as they are inside it.

Our "My Kind of Town" campaign has substantially reduced litter along our streets. There is still room for improvement, however. This year the Town of Vienna spent an estimated \$3000 on picking up trash and trying to "Keep Vienna Beautiful."

We are all gradually sinking into a mire of man made pollution. Our air, our water, our cities reek with it. Let us at least take the responsibility for our own litter, and keep our "living room" clean.

