

## Quarterly Public Report for WNRN Public File

A-- During the 2nd quarter (July 1, -September 30 2011), WNRN News reported on and followed the following stories which other local print, broadcast media and governmental agencies found of interest to the City of Charlottesville and surrounding counties:

### **Health Care Reform**

On 9/9/11

Virginia's court case seeking to overturn the Federal health care plan had been dsmissed. A three-judge panel on the 4th circuit US Court of Appeals did not rule on the merits of the case, in which Virginia Attorney General Ken Cuccinelli argued that the Obama-health care law was unconstitutional. Instead, the Court ruled that Cuccinelli and the Commonwealth of Virginia did not have standing to bring the suit. Cuccinelli vowed to appeal the decision.

### **Earthquake/ Hurricane Irene**

On 8/23/11

An earthquake struck Central Virginia at 1:51 PM on August 23rd. The five point nine magnitude quake struck nine miles south of Mineral, twelve miles south-south-east from Louisa, or thirty-four miles North West of Richmond. The quake's epicenter was approximately one kilometer deep. There are reports of building damage in Mineral and at ceiling tiles fell at nearby Fluvanna High School. Meanwhile, several structures in Richmond have been damaged including a fallen stairwell on North First Street downtown. We can confirm there were power outages in Crozet and in Charlottesville's Fashion Square Mall. Also in Charlottesville there was a temporary loss in 911 services which has now been restored. The North Anna Nuclear Power Plant has not been damaged from the nearby epicenter. The plant was taken off line by automated safety systems and is currently running on diesel generators and there is no apparent damage.

On 8/23/11

An earthquake struck Central Virginia at 1:51 PM on August 23rd. The quake has been now downgraded to a five point eight magnitude quake which struck nine miles south of Mineral, twelve miles south-south-east from Louisa, or thirty-four miles north west of Richmond. There was a two point eight aftershock an hour later. The quake's epicenter was approximately three point seven miles deep. There are reports of building damage in Mineral and Louisa where officials are doing a building by building inspection to check on all residents. Also, ceiling tiles fell at nearby Fluvanna High School. Several structures in Richmond have been damaged including a fallen stairwell on North First Street downtown. We can confirm there were power outages in Crozet and in Charlottesville's Fashion Square Mall. Also in Charlottesville there was a temporary loss in 911 service which has now been restored. There is a gas leak in Charlottesville which has closed the streets around the intersection of 10<sup>th</sup> and West Main. The North Anna Nuclear Power Plant has not been damaged from the nearby epicenter. The plant was taken off line by automated safety systems and is currently running on diesel generators and there is no apparent damage.

On 8/24/11

The largest recorded earthquake in the old dominion in more than a century shook central Virginia shortly before 2pm on August 23rd. The 5.8 magnitude quake has been followed by aftershocks of 2.8, 2.2, 4.2 and 3.4 near the epicenter of the initial trembler, just few miles southwest of mineral. The earthquake was felt throughout central and northern Virginia, in Washington D.C, Philadelphia, New York City and as far north as Rhode Island. Three buildings were destroyed in Culpeper as a result of the earthquake and the city has been placed under a state of emergency. The following schools are reporting closures on August 24th due to the quake...Louisa County Public Schools, Germanna Community College, Orange County Public Schools and Culpeper County Public Schools.

On 8/24/11

Made from 91-thousand tons of Maryland marble the Washington monument was presumably damaged during August 23<sup>rd</sup>'s 5.8 magnitude quake. The national park service says engineers have found a crack near the top of the Washington monument that they presume occurred during the quake. A monument spokesperson said the attraction will be closed indefinitely to keep the public safe.

On 8/24/11

Following the earthquake on August 23rd, two reactors at the North Anna Nuclear Power Station in Louisa County were taken off line automatically by safety systems. The dominion operated power plant is being run off three emergency diesel generators, which are supplying power for critical safety equipment. Dominion reported shortly following the earthquake that Surry Power Station in Southwest Virginia continued to operate safely. However, the power company's newest station, Bear Garden, in Buckingham County shut down automatically. The nuclear regulatory commission and dominion are sending people to inspect the plant.

On 8/24/11

Culpeper's historic downtown business district is currently being looked at for damage due to the 5.8-magnitude earthquake that happened on August 23rd. Reports are saying that at least four historic buildings in Culpeper were seriously damaged, while over a dozen had structural and cosmetic damage. Culpeper County closed their courts and public schools on August 23rd and only asked essential workers to work.

On 8/25/11

Damage from the August 23<sup>rd</sup> earthquake is still being assessed in Culpeper, Virginia. Many roads have been closed to people and vehicles as the sidewalks and roads bear the evidence of the quake. Only one building in the county has been declared beyond repair. As a safety precaution the power has been turned off for many of the downtown Culpeper businesses. It was reported that the quake only caused two minor injuries in Culpeper.

On 8/25/11

The fifth and largest after shock from the August 23<sup>rd</sup> earthquake was felt by Charlottesville and the surrounding areas at one oh seven on the morning of August 25<sup>th</sup>. The US Geological Survey says the after shock was a four point five magnitude tremor. The Geological Survey says that this tremor originated about five miles south of Tuesday's epicenter in Mineral, Virginia.

On 8/25/11

Charlottesville insurance agents have been busy due to Tuesday's earthquake. Calls have continued from policy holders wanting to know if earthquake coverage is available in their area. The verdict is that basic property insurance does not cover earthquakes, as they are rare in Virginia. Basic policies also do not cover flood damage in Virginia. This kind of coverage is available, but it must be specifically requested by the policy holder.

On 8/25/11

The Old Dominion is now in a state of emergency. Governor Bob McDonnell issued the declaration this morning in advance of Hurricane Irene which is expected to hit Virginia this weekend. Residents of the Commonwealth who live east of Interstate 95 are being advised to take precautions or evacuate. At this point there is not a mandatory evacuation posted, however state agencies are already preparing. VDOT is ready to clear roads that might be blocked with debris by having chainsaw crews from the Department of Forestry on standby. Also the Virginia National Guard is positioning personnel to assist if needed. For information about preparing for Hurricane Irene, visit [VAemergency.gov](http://VAemergency.gov). For general information about the storm, dial 211.

On 8/26/11

As Virginia prepares for hurricane Irene, emergency management officials don't believe a large-scale evacuation will be necessary. Though governor McDonnell gave local governments the authority to issue mandatory evacuations, the only areas to have done so are low-lying Sandbridge, in Virginia Beach and areas of Norfolk. The department for emergency management said yesterday afternoon they are expecting less of a surge than that of Hurricane Isabel in 2003.

On 8/26/11

Hurricane Irene has weakened slightly but is still making its way towards America's east coast at about 14 miles per hour, and those areas to be affected are scrambling to prepare for landfall. New York mayor Michael Bloomberg said city citizens should think about moving out of low-lying areas, and the big apple's mass transit system may shut down as the storm arrives on Sunday. Many U.S. Airlines are cutting flights to and from eastern airports, even moving aircraft from the area, and encouraging travelers to consider changing flight plans or postponing trips. Airlines affected include southwest, U.S. Air delta, American, and United.

On 8/29/11

The Virginia Emergency Operations Center is working hard to help the local governments that are asking for assistance in the aftermath of hurricane Irene. The Virginia Department of Transportation is working to remove debris from the roads and repair broken traffic signals. The Virginia Department of Social Services reported that less than three thousand people are in shelters and the numbers are steadily decreasing. The storm has left over two point five million people without power and the power may be out for over a week.

On 8/29/11

Amtrak crews are working hard to clear the railways for travelers after this weekend's hurricane Irene. The storm caused debris, flooding, and power issues along the northeast railroad system. Many services for today have been canceled as the problems are fixed and more cancellations are expected. Passengers who already have tickets can contact Amtrak for refunds or exchanges. Amtrak asks that its customers stay up to date with cancellations via their website.

On 8/29/11

Dominion Virginia Power is making some headway in getting all Virginians back on power. There are currently more than six-hundred-thousand people still without power after Hurricane Irene. All of the hospitals in the Commonwealth are back to full power though as of August 29th. Dominion says on their web site that ninety-to ninety-five percent of all Virginian's will be online by Friday and everyone should be back on line by Saturday. Nearly one point two million people in the state have had their power cutoff by Hurricane Irene.

On 8/30/11

Residents of Chesterfield County and other metro Richmond areas will find that cleaning Irene's damage is not as simple as building a bonfire. Though the amount of debris is significant, it is illegal to dispose of it by burning, because in Virginia, an open fire ban is still in effect, as it is every year, from May until the end of September. Also, local public services do not plan to perform curbside debris removal, but Chesterfield, Henrico, and Richmond offer disposal services – free of charge in Chesterfield - at six separate locations.

On 8/30/11

The effects of the August 23<sup>rd</sup> earthquake are still being felt in Louisa County. Parents of county school children packed into Louisa County Middle School on August 29th for a public meeting with the school board and superintendent. The most pressing issue is the new schedules. Both Thomas Jefferson Elementary and Louisa County High are closed for the rest of the school year, which means two-thousand kids will be moved to other buildings. Even with the planned mobile units to ease overcrowding, middle and high schoolers will have to attend school on alternating days. Now, their school day will go from eight to five and will include every other Saturday.

On 8/30/11

There are still thousands of people in Virginia still without power, cable, and phone service. On August 30<sup>th</sup>, Verizon and Comcast announced that most customers will have their cable, internet and or phone services restored once the power is back on in their area. In most instances the utilities share poles that were damaged by Hurricane Irene. Dominion Virginia Power says that sixty-six percent of people who lost power are now back on the grid.

On 8/31/11

Dominion power has been working day and night since Hurricane Irene came through town last Saturday and officials are counting on having the lights back on in 90 percent of customer's homes by Friday. Dominion has fielded 1.2 million calls since the storm and understands people's frustrations. But in its second-largest restoration ever, dominion is working to remove huge numbers of trees from power lines while coordinating the movements of 7,000 workers, many from out of state. Among other damage, Irene took out 27 big transmission lines.

On 8/31/11

Louisa County preliminary damage assessments began last week, to check damage caused by the earthquake that happened August 23<sup>rd</sup>. The estimates to damage in Louisa add up to over seventy-million-dollars, including over fifty-seven-million dollars in damages to public school structures, and over eleven-million to residential structures. The damage to public schools and government structures are covered by insurance, however a majority of the residential structures were not. State officials rejoined local damage assessment teams Monday, and say that the assessments are an ongoing effort.

On 9/2/11

Estimates of damage to residences in Louisa County from last week's earthquake continue to rise. As of Tuesday, county spokeswoman Amanda Reidelbach reported that there had been more than 800 reports of damages topping twelve million dollars. Reidelbach, who encouraged county residents to report damage, no matter how minor, to a county hotline at 540-967-3496, said she expected the damage total to rise. Following the 5.8 magnitude quake last week, there have now been nearly two dozen aftershocks.

On 9/6/11

Power crews are now going door to door to restore service to those still without power in the Richmond metro area. As of September 5<sup>th</sup>, fewer than fifteen customers in the area are offline. Workers from twenty different agencies worked on thirty-five thousand sites in sixteen-hour days, including Labor Day, to help those without power. Residents are now keeping track of Hurricane Katia as she sweeps through the Atlantic, but specialist Todd Kimberlain thinks it is unlikely that Katia will make landfall.

On 9/6/11

Recent severe weather has had more than a human effect. It appears that the high waters of Hurricane Irene pushed a bottlenose dolphin into a freshwater river near the Chesapeake Bay. The dolphin became stranded in the Diascund Creek off the Chickahominy River, and he was found dead there yesterday. A team from the Virginia Aquarium and Marine Science Center will perform a necropsy.

On 9/7/11

Earthquakes and hurricanes could delay the start of the 2011 school year for many Virginia students but not stop it from happening. Some 150,000 students in Richmond and the counties of Chesterfield, Hanover and Henrico sat for the first bell of the school year on September 6th. Because of earthquake and hurricane damage in recent weeks, students in some districts will be starting their year later this week and some even next week. Even in the big districts that opened yesterday, there were plenty of problems, from power outages and spoiled food to minor structural damage.

On 9/9/2011

A new report from the Nuclear Regulatory Commission has found that g-forces from movement recorded during last-month's earthquake was more than twice the design limit for the North Anna nuclear power plant. During peak acceleration, the quake, with an epicenter only 11 miles away, caused a shaking force of .26 g, but the plant itself was designed only to withstand shaking of 0.12g to 0.18g. Despite exceeding the maximum design capacity, inspections have not shown any significant damage. The plant currently remains shut pending a final determination as to damage.

On 9/9/2011

President Obama is heading to Richmond. Scheduled to arrive later this morning at Richmond International Airport, Mayor Dwight C. Jones plans to be on hand to thank the President for federal assistance in response to damage from Hurricane Irene. Obama's agenda will take him to the University of Richmond where he is expected to give a speech about jobs and the economy. Free tickets are available to the public on a first-come-first served basis.

On 9/23/2011

Two \$50,000 donations from local groups have been pledged to earthquake relief in Louisa County. The big checks come from Dave Matthew's Bama Works and the Louisa County Community Fund, which is administered by the Charlottesville Area Community Foundation. Many residents anxious to have access to funds to repair chimneys as the winter approaches may have to wait; County officials say that until it's clear how much Federal Disaster Aid will be provided, the money won't be available.

On 9/26/11

The Louisa group, Not on Our Fault Line is planning a protest on Tuesday at noon in Richmond in front of Dominion Power headquarters. The protest is against Dominion Power's plan to restart the North Anna nuclear reactors. The reactors have been sitting idle since last month's earthquake. The group wants a complete safety examination and upgrades at the nuclear plant.

## **Route 29 Western By-Pass**

On 7/7/11

The US 29 Western Bypass has been put off since 2006 by a very small, yet powerful minority in Albemarle County. Now, the Albemarle County Board of Supervisors is in the process of making plans to construct the bypass. The road will be 6.2 miles long and will be a limited access road to avoid the commercial area of Rt 29.

On 7/11/11

The Albemarle County Board of Supervisors had a majority vote amongst themselves for the new Western Bypass. They plan to go ahead with the project without the public's input, costing the area 270 million dollars. State legislators agreed to the plan as well. The road will run through established neighborhoods and very close to the main source of Charlottesville and Albemarle County's public drinking water.

On 7/13/11

The Charlottesville Board of Supervisors held a public meeting on the proposed Western Bypass of US 29 in Albemarle County. A coalition of 14 Chambers of Commerce is urging state officials to build the bypass, referring to the project as a "catalyst of economic development for a large part of Central and South-side Virginia. Many supporters believe the bypass would benefit other portions of the state by creating a more efficient North-South flow of goods, services, and people, while spawning more tourism and travel.

On 7/14/11

Over one hundred people voiced their concerns the night of the 13th, debating the proposed Western Bypass of Route 29 in Albemarle County. Some residents were visibly angry with the Albemarle County Board of Supervisors for their approval of the bypass. Local novelist, John Grisham, spoke to the assembly saying that he suspects a deal with other counties had been made to approve the bypass.

On 7/21/11

Commonwealth Transportation Board voted to provide funding for the construction of the Albemarle Country Western Bypass of Route 29. The bypass will allow for commercial and thru traffic to avoid the fourteen traffic lights along 29. Albemarle County Board of Supervisors Member Ken Boyd scheduled a meeting to hear resident's thoughts and answer questions from the community on July 26<sup>th</sup> at Baker Butler Elementary.

On 7/27/11

The funding of the Western Bypass grabbed the attention of Jeffrey McKay, a Fairfax County Supervisor. McKay wrote a letter saying he wanted proponents of the bypass to "show us the money," referencing the unfunded transit projects across Virginia. He then said that the "poor choices in how [the commonwealth] allocates transportation dollars smacks Northern Virginia in the face." The final public hearing on the matter was scheduled for 4:00PM, July 17<sup>th</sup> in the Albemarle County Office Building.



On 7/28/11

Yesterday, July 28<sup>th</sup>, was the last day to allow area businesses express the need for the Route 29 bypass over the radio. Ads, which ran for two weeks, cost about \$4,500. The ads were timed to play to the maximum number of listeners sitting in traffic, and said, "The US 29 Western Bypass would take 7,000 vehicles, many of them big, heavy trucks, off of our main street." The North Charlottesville Business Council President said that the bypass will allow for safer travel in Charlottesville.

On 8/4/2011

Controversy continued to surround the bypass construction. Morgan Butler, senior attorney for the Charlottesville-based Southern Environmental Law Center, uttered concern that "key information was routinely disclosed [by the Metropolitan Planning Organization] at the public hearings only after the public comment sessions had closed." State Secretary of Transportation, Sean Connaughton, however, has promised \$197 million for the bypass and \$32 million for a widening of U.S. 29.

On 9/8/11

Virginia Department of Transportation officials began the early planning process for the Charlottesville bypass yesterday. Contractors are expected to submit their proposals in the next month for the construction which is may take up to take five years to complete. The new road will branch west from route 29, routing traffic away from downtown Charlottesville. Some residents have complained about a possible loss of business, while others welcome the prospect of less traffic and noise.

On 9/21/2011

Internal documents released under the freedom of information act reveal that Virginia Department of Transportation Engineers calculated an estimate well above the amount for construction of the western bypass of u.s. 29 in Charlottesville. The Commonwealth Transportation Board voted 6-2 in july to allocate \$197 million dollars to the project. Just before the vote Vdot officials estimated the cost at \$436 miliion. That could leave Vdot with a need to identify at least \$191.8 million in further funding to complete the project as currently proposed.

## **Opal Page Stabbing**

On 7/15/11

Thursday, July 14<sup>th</sup>, in a Nelson County Circuit Court room, a man accused of killing a 73-year old retired teacher's aide plead guilty. Austin Griffin is an Afton resident who plead guilty to first degree murder after stabbing Opal Page to death in an attempted robbery and burglary in 2009. Griffin was indicted last year and charged with capital murder, and will serve three consecutive life sentences. The death penalty was taken off the table when Griffin took a plea deal.

On 7/18/11

Christopher Meeks, the second man charged in the death of Opal Page in Nelson County, was expected to plead guilty following Austin Griffin's own guilty plea. The pair was charged with capital murder after Opal Page was found, stabbed 26 times in May of 2009.

On 7/20/11

With a similar plea agreement to the one Austin Griffin entered into, Christopher Meeks followed in the footsteps of his co-defendant and plead guilty to capital murder, breaking and entering, and robbery, in connection to the brutal death of 73-year-old Opal Page. The plea agreement allowed Meeks to avoid a possible death sentence; instead, Griffin and Meeks were each issued three consecutive life sentences in prison.

B – In accordance with perceived community needs, WNRN broadcast programs devoted to the following during its one-hour Sunday Morning interactive talk/call-in show during the quarter. Live guests representing government or community organizations were in the studio for all of the following:

- 3 local librarians and one bookstore owner discuss reading, w/ suggestions for all ages and how to find new interests for children and adults.
- David Hannah of *Wild Virginia* explains the past, present and future planning of Shenandoah National Forest.
- *The Hook's* senior editor, Courteney Stuart shares news and updates on local stories.
- Charlottesville's *Center for Non Profit Excellence* explains non profit vs charity, and the importance of small and large non-profits in a community.
- Members from Charlottesville's School Health Advisory Board discuss the need for better nutrition (less sugar) in the public school cafeterias.
- Mental Health concerns and the method of 'consumer support' with members from *On Our Own*.
- Q&A w/ Charlottesville City School Superintendent Dr. Rosa Atkins and Alb Co School Superintendent Dr. Pam Moran.
- 'Ask-the-Attorneys' provides free legal information from three local lawyers.
- Weldon Cooper Center for Public Affairs explains their recent report on the danger of high-cost financial services (payday lenders) and risk they pose to families.
- Dr. Mike Feitz (Georgetown Veterinary Clinic) answers calls about pets.
- Lives and careers post 9/11 are examined with an EMT, a teacher and a parent.

Rick Moore  
WNRN Public Affairs Director  
October, 2011

## C -- PSA report for Q3 of 2011

AS of 07/1/11	
Salvation Army Food	TFN
Kluge-Ruhe collection	07/30/11
Popular Forest	07/04/11
Science Museum of Richmond	11/15/11
Piedmont Housing Alliance	07/22/11
Charlottesville Future fund	08/19/11
Virginia Institute of Autism	07/22/11
Cville Center for Peace and Justice	07/10/11
As of 07/05/11	
Play On Theater	07/11/11
As of 07/07/11	
Meals on Wheels	07/31/11
As of 07/27/11	
Piedmont Housing Alliance	8/9/11
Fluvanna SPCA	9/10/11
North Branch School	8/16/11
Friends of Lynchburg Dog Park	8/3/11
As of 08/01/11	
Citizen's Police Academy	8/25/11
As of 08/09/11	
2011 Government Services Day	9/30/11
AIDS Walk 2011	9/30/11
As of 08/14/11	
Recovery at St. Johns	08/20/11
Writerhouse	08/26/11
UVA Intra Mural Sports	8/30/11
As of 8/27/11	
The Arts Council of the Valley	9/10/11
Staunton Downtown Development Assoc.	9/3/11
Jefferson Madison Regional Library	9/30/11
The Shady Grove coffeeshouse	9/10/11
As of 9/12/11	
2011 Charlottesville HeartWalk	10/16/11
Play Theater	10/5/11