

# Money time

Transportation took center stage, but legislators still bring home the bacon

By Garren Shipley  
Daily Staff Writer

They may have spent most of the 2007 General Assembly talking about transportation issues, but area lawmakers did find time to bring home state funding for a number of local projects.

"It was probably the most success we've had with a budget bill in a long time," said Del. Clay Athey, R-Front Royal.

Chief among those successes is securing "cost of competing" funding for Winchester and Frederick County schools.

Athey, along with Del. Beverly Sherwood, R-Winchester, and Sen. H. Russell Potts, Jr., R-Winchester, all asked for the two systems to be included when additional funds for salaries are handed out.

Their addition to the mix this year funds the state's share of a 10 percent bump in pay for teachers, should local governments decide to kick in their portion.

The three legislators also won a language change that requires the Virginia Department of Transportation to kick-start the environmental paperwork needed for the Va. 37 "eastern loop" project.

House Bill 1650 doesn't contain a specific appropriation for the work, though. It includes the project with a number of others to be funded out of a \$300 million pool.

"That's an amendment we're going to have to keep on for a number of years" to be sure VDOT follows through, Athey said.

Legislators also won significant earmarks for local nonprofits. Sherwood secured \$200,000 for the Shenandoah Valley Discovery Museum's eventual relocation to Jim Barnett Park in Winchester.

"We are very pleased with that," said DeDec Barbour, the director of the museum's capital campaign. With the new money from the state, the project is about 40 percent to its goal.

Donors have pledged \$4.8 million to the project to date, with significant announcements to come soon, she said.

"The intention of the exhibits will remain the same," Barbour said. "We'll bring those same experiences to the new museum, only with updated exhibits and a lot more to offer." The new site will have a ceremonial groundbreaking April 21.

Del. Todd Gilbert, R-Woodstock, also won significant funding for a number of local organizations,



Alan Lehman/Daily

Paleontologist Geb Bennett shows fossils to Elille Shollenberger, left, Hannah Thede, Chase Roltsch, and David Foeckler, all 4-year-olds, at the Shenandoah Valley Discovery Museum on a field trip with their class from the Little Sheep Preschool, of Front Royal, on Wednesday. The museum received \$200,000 from the 2007 General Assembly session.

**BEHIND**

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received in the 2006 fiscal year. Leading the list is Fairfax County, which received more than \$17 million last year.

Simon made it "very clear that there are consequences if we do not comply with the law," Emblidge told the board Wednesday at its monthly business meeting. The state has sent letters to school divisions emphasizing that they must comply.

Because the state Department of Education is responsible for ensuring that local school divisions follow NCLB rules, the federal department also could withhold state Title I administrative money if that doesn't happen. Virginia received \$2.1 million in such funds in fiscal 2006.

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on U.S. 340/522. The site plan was modified for a 7-11 convenience store instead of a fast-food restaurant, which was originally proposed.

Planning Commissioner David McDaniel, who represents the Happy Creek District, voted against the change because of the traffic impacts.

The convenience store would generate 6,511 trips per day, as opposed to 4,429 trips for the restaurant, according to the Virginia Department of Transportation.

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**Money**

Continued from B1

including \$100,000 for the Camp Roosevelt Civilian Conservation Corps Legacy Foundation.

The money will be used to create exhibits at a museum under construction in Edinburg near the site of the first CCC camp to be established under the New Deal. Rep. Bob Goodlatte, R-6th, secured a \$2.7 million federal earmark last year to help pay for construction.

Gilbert said he was "absolutely delighted that he was able to be of assistance" to the foundation and other groups for which he secured funding.

None of the awards are a done deal just yet. Gov. Timothy M. Kaine has the power to veto or amend individual line items in the budget, which legislators will either approve or defeat for the last time on April 4.

But legislators say the odds look good, given that the bill passed with a minimum of debate in both the Senate or House of Delegates.

Bringing home money from Richmond isn't something to be happy about, said Whitney Duff, the Virginia director of Americans for Prosperity, a conservative, limited government lobby.

"Virginia taxpayers work hard for their money and don't deserve to see their tax dollars going to fund pet projects to try and curry favor with voters," she said. "Governing well should not be about who can bring home the most bacon."

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**Legislators bring home the bacon**

While they didn't bring home all of what they asked for, the six legislators who represent the Northern Shenandoah Valley did succeed in getting several million dollars set aside for local school systems, charitable institutions and other projects.

The following is a partial list of the items of local interest included in House Bill 1650, which amends the current two-year budget. The bill is on its way to Gov. Timothy M. Kaine's desk.

Kaine can either veto or amend individual items, which legislators will consider in a one-day session on April 4.

**Del. Clay Athey, R-Front Royal**

► Warren Coalition Free Wheeling Handicapped Playground, \$25,000

► Belle Grove Plantation, \$25,000

► Mary's Family, \$25,000

► John Singleton Mosby Foundation, \$12,500

**Del. Todd Gilbert, R-Woodstock**

► Camp Roosevelt Civilian Conservation Corps Legacy Foundation, \$100,000

► Scrabble School Preservation Foundation, \$12,500

► New Market Area Library, \$12,500

► Shenandoah Arts Center

Foundation, \$17,500

**Del. Joe May, R-Leesburg**

► Funding for a centralized system to accept electronic campaign finance reports, \$43,520

► Barns of Rose Hill, \$50,000

► Clermont Charitable Trust, \$25,000

► Clarke County Historical Association, \$17,500

► Greenway Court, \$50,000

► Civil War Site Preservation Fund, \$200,000

► Additional funding for James Madison University, \$1.6 million

**Del. Beverly Sherwood, R-Winchester**

► Shenandoah Valley Discovery Museum, \$200,000

► Our Health, \$40,000

► Celebrating Patsy Cline, \$10,000

**Sen. Mark Obenshain, R-Harrisonburg**

► Statewide library Internet filtering software, \$190,000

► Collection of pass-through withholding taxes from out-of-state entities, \$125,000

**Sen. H. Russell Potts, Jr., R-Winchester**

► Additional funding for James Madison University, \$1.6 million

**Deputy**

Continued from B1

cost-of-living raise of 2 percent across the board for employees. Another proposed increase is 2.5 percent for step raises, which is for employees who meet or exceed expectations based on their last evaluation.

projected to increase by 15 percent. Warren County Administrator Douglas P. Stanley said that the county hopes to limit the increase to 10 percent.

The county has set a May 1 deadline to adopt its budget.

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*In Loving Memory of Shel Wood*

*August 26, 1965 - February 28, 2006*

*Life is funny and very unfair*

*Family, Friends drift apart only to think there's one more day. In a moment's time it's all changed. Everyone points the finger, but no one takes the blame. In my heart I know you left too soon, but God has plans... we've not to question.*

*I wish I had just one more day, then maybe everything would be just right. It's so hard to let go and say goodbye, but now it's time for me to say...*

*Spread your wings and fly away. Now it's time to be free.*

*Love Always and Forever*