

RESTON'S IDENTITY ON THE WEB

By William Nicoson

Reston may not be an incorporated town like Herndon, but, like Herndon, it has a web site. And by its web site is a community known.

Designed by Digital Communities, Inc., the site known as "The Reston Web" (<http://restonweb.com/>) offers information on movies, other entertainment, dining, community groups, sex offenders and links to a realtor on line who'd love to help you. It sponsors a message board called "Reston Perspective Forum" where you can post a new discussion topic or join an ongoing discussion. You can trade views on the merits of restaurants and health clubs, debate the expansion of St. John Neumann or lash out at the serial rapist. A recent post by Fraser Gallery in D.C. invites Reston artists to exhibit work influenced by Salvador Dali. Have Reston artists, like Reston politicians, a reputation for the surreal? More about the politicians later.

Prominently featured on The Reston Web are coming community events. This is a hazardous service for web masters because events that come also go, and nothing damages a site's credibility as much as stale and useless information. As late as Mar. 15, the site's home page still invited surfers to show up at Reston Community Center on Feb. 22 to provide budget input and to attend an exhibition at The Greater Reston Arts Center which closed Mar. 6.

Links to prominent Reston organizations are also offered. A click on the RCC logo brings up its web site where the posted "Theatre Season" shows nothing scheduled in March and only 24 performances, combining categories of "Comedy", "Dance", "Music", and "Theatre", throughout the season from September '98 through April '99. If accurate, that schedule suggests a valuable asset is badly under-used. My guess is that the original schedule was posted online and never revised to reflect new offerings. That would be consistent with the posted list of RCC governors which predates the last RCC election by including, for example, Jo Ann Rose (who chose not to run and is now unfortunately deceased) and Vera Hannigan (who was defeated).

The Reston Web also provides a link to Reston Citizens Association. The most prominent item on the RCA home page is a hyper-text link to "RA Board Member Vera Hannigan's Report to the Community". This is the letter answered last week by all other eight Reston Association directors with a devastating refutation of Mrs. Hannigan's five principal points. Last time I looked, the RCA web site made no mention of the answer published by the other eight RA directors. Somebody just hadn't found time to put it up, I guess.

If it sounds odd in the first place that RCA's web site should offer a link to information provided by an RA director on RA matters, it's worth noting that, for unknown reasons, The Reston Web provides no link to the RA web site (www.reston.org/) unlike sites for RCC, GRACE, RCA and Town Center. Even if it did, of course, eight RA directors, believing the information false and misleading, would never authorize it to be posted.

Which raises the question: did RCA directors authorize the link to such information on the RCA web site? And the further question: is this, at last, a vast right-wing conspiracy (or at least a vast virtual right-wing conspiracy) to affect the outcome of RA elections now underway?

William Nicoson is a former director of RA and a former publisher of Connection Newspapers.