

# Fauquier Times-Democrat

Fauquier County's Hometown Newspaper Since 1817

Year ... No. 43 Phone (540) 347-4222 Wednesday, October 28, 1998 Times Community Newspapers 50

## Election Preview

### VOTERS' GUIDE


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**THIS WEEK**

cheduled! ... scheduling, in place for a year, will be evaluated in the coming weeks. ... working?

**See Page A8.**

family members ... year-old ... etcher, killed ... go in a car ... t, is ... alized with a garden and a gathering of ... nds and



Erica Fletcher

**See Page A4.**

## Scars of a modern age



Times-Democrat Staff Photo/F.B. Gassle

**STILL STANDING:** Beverley Mill in Thoroughfare Gap was a haven for sharpshooters during the Civil War.

**SPECIAL SECTION**



For the ... e of Cars

l-new special section reves week. Collectors, ... d hobbyists and folks ... t plain love the feel of a ... g wheel share their ... iasm for the county's four- ... d beauties. ... so a Weekender cover ... n the nuts and bolts of car ... tion.

**See Special Section and Page C1.**

**SPORTS**



**TOO LATE:** Firefighters extinguish the afternoon blaze.

## Historic mill gutted by fire

By JOHN TOLER  
Times-Democrat Staff Writer

Although Prince William County fire investigators have completed only a preliminary investigation of the fire that destroyed the interior of the historic Beverley Mill, they are certain it is a case of arson.

▲ See related story, Page A9

In the meantime, history lovers, a local builder, and a growing number of private citizens — many heart-broken over the potential loss of the familiar landmark — are rallying to save what is left of the imposing structure that has stood in Thoroughfare Gap since 1742.

An examination of the structure is scheduled for Wednesday by William Davies, an engineer from Richmond who specializes in saving historic structures.

Davies, who was called to evaluate the mill by a group connected with the Friends of Bull Run, will assess the damage and determine if the remaining structure can be saved.

### Fire sweeps the mill

The fire was called in to Prince William Fire at 4:02 p.m. Thursday by a motorist passing by the mill on Interstate 66.

**See FIRE, Page A9**

## Town chief quits

### Remington mayor cite court ruling

By BRIAN MINTER  
Times-Democrat Staff Writer

Alan Anstine resigned as mayor of Remington on Monday, explained that questions re deputy sheriffs serving as officials were behind his deci

Anstine is a Fauquier deputy sheriff, as is Remington cilwoman Kim Ellis. Both the county detention center.

"It's the thing to do," said about his decision. "It really

What brought on his sudgnation was a recent court r Prince William County. A sheriff there was serving as cilman in the town of Dumfri

**See ANSTINE, P**

## Filling i

By BRIAN MINTER  
Times-Democrat Staff Writer

The sudden and unex departure of Alan Anstine not left Remington with mayor. Kim Ellis, who w town's vice-mayor, is no mayor.

This leaves a council vacant. At the council's meeting, which is schedul Nov. 16, council members appoint someone from the to fill that seat. A major the council must agree e person selected.

The council must also

**See MAYOR, Pa**

# FIRE

From Page A1

The beginning of the fire was also witnessed by Elaine Wiser, Broad Run postmistress, whose office is across Route 55 from the mill.

Wiser was not aware of a problem until she saw a large cloud of black smoke come out of the lower part of the mill. Seconds later, flames were shooting out of the lower level windows.

"It was very windy, and the smoke cloud passed over the interstate," said Wiser "I called 9-1-1 ... it was very scary and very sad. I just stood outside and cried."

Emily Morgan, executive director of the Friends of Bull Run, was at her office on Beverley Mill Drive when a passerby stopped, alerting her to the fire.

"That was at 4:12 p.m., and I got down to the mill about three minutes later," said Morgan. "By then, it was fully involved. The fire spread incredibly fast."

The first firefighting units arrived on the scene shortly afterward, but were unable to control the blaze.

The fire burned through the roof, and ventilated by the numerous broken windows, quickly consumed the heavy wooden floors and chestnut beams of the building.

Small brush fires started around the flaming structure, threatening the woodlands surrounding the mill and the mountain behind it.

Fire officials stopped the Norfolk-Southern trains that periodically pass on the tracks adjacent to the mill, and stationed a platoon of firefighters along the track and on the hill behind the mill to prevent the fire from spreading.

Passers-by stopped on Route 55 to witness the fire, standing in silence as the roof caved in and the burned-out floors and charred milling equipment crashed to the basement.

Morgan, joined by other bystanders, watched as the fire raged. "It was heart-wrenching," she said.

According to Capt. Steven Kersse, of the Prince William County Department of Fire and Rescue, more than 30 companies from Prince William, Fauquier and Loudoun counties responded to the blaze, many sending tankers to supply a continuous flow of water for the fire fighting effort.

The last unit departed the scene at 12:54 a.m. Friday. There were no reported injuries.

## Fire no surprise

For many, the fire did not come as a complete surprise.

"There has always been a



Times-Democrat file photo

**HAPPIER TIMES:** Beverley Mill, as it was in the early 1970s.

lot of activity back there," said Capt. Ernie Little, of the Prince William County Fire Marshal's Office. "Tucked back in there, the old mill has been a party scene for teenagers for years."

"Because the mill was an historic structure, the federal Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco and Firearms has been called in to investigate," said Little.

For the past 22 years, The Plains businessman and former fire chief George Beavers Sr. has been the caretaker of the mill, which is owned by Athalie "Joan" Irvine Smith of California.

Beavers was particularly upset by the fire, which happened in spite of his best efforts.

"We've spent thousands of dollars to try to secure that building," said Beavers. "We've tried to seal it with heavy steel doors, stone and cinder block ... but they still get in."

## Damage assessments

Robert W. Wilson, director of Prince William County Public Works, had a crew survey the damage Friday morning. County inspectors determined that the building was unsafe as it stands, and marked it off with tape.

Despite rumors to the contrary, Wilson is not requiring that the remaining structure be torn down; nor is he under any pressure from Norfolk-Southern to do so.

"Railroad officials have

determined that there is no danger," said Wilson. "They are voluntarily slowing down when they pass the scene."

Glenn Miller, a principal with Miller Bros. Inc., a contracting firm in New Baltimore, has offered his company's services — at his cost — to save the mill.

"I went to the mill on Saturday morning with George Beavers, and the building is safe," said Miller. "It won't fall."

Miller first wants to strengthen the remaining walls of the building by "banding" it between the third and fourth floors.

"The biggest threat will be this winter," said Miller. "The stones at the top are open to the weather, and if water gets in behind them and freezes, more will fall."

Covering the upper stones with a new roof or waterproof membrane and closing-in the windows — which lost their wooden lentsils in the fire — should be the minimum accomplished before cold weather arrives, according to Miller.

"But I can't go there until I get permission," said Miller. Right now, I'm in a holding pattern."

Miller's offer has been reassuring to others interested in saving the mill.

"We hope that restoring the mill will become a grass-roots effort, a community project," said Kathleen Higgins, secretary of the Friends of Bull Run.

# History up in smoke

By JOHN TOLER  
Times-Democrat Staff Writer

In honor of the U. S. Bicentennial in 1976, Joan Irvine Smith replaced all of the broken windows in Beverley Mill, had the place cleaned up, and brought one of the former mill workers back to give tours of the place.

It was a wonderful experience for those who took the tour.

Too bad vandals entered the mill a week later, kicking out every window in the place.

In the 22 years since then, George Beavers Sr. of The Plains has matched wits with trespassers bent on violating historic Beverley Mill.

Last Thursday, time ran out, as arsonists set a fire that totally gutted the interior of the mill. Beavers is frustrated and angry.

Partly due to its prominence in Thoroughfare Gap, and partly because of its secluded location, keeping intruders out of the mill has always been a problem. Even closing up the doorways hasn't worked.

"We once installed a steel grate over the main opening, instead of a solid door, so they could see there was nothing inside," recalled Beavers. "We secured it with a big lock and half-inch chain, so that they couldn't use bolt cutters."

"Well, they came back with a torch, cut the chain and stole the whole thing."

Sometimes, intruders don't get away.

"Prince William County police have caught people inside the building, doing everything from simple trespass to rappelling off the roof," Beavers recalled.

A fire in the mill two years ago alerted Beavers to the possibility of major destruction, but there was little more he could do.

Capt. Ernie Little of the Prince William County Fire Marshal's

See MILL, Page A15

third year by the School Board at its October meeting to give school officials more time to collect the data Harrison referred to.

The Block Scheduling Committee at Fauquier High met yesterday to begin the process of evaluation and Liberty's committee will be going through the same process. Data will be collected in the form of surveys, test scores, grades and attendance.

Surveys are one of the most important pieces of data, said Anzivino. So far, student and parent feedback has been mostly positive about block scheduling, according to school officials. Events like the upcoming Block Scheduling Forum at Fauquier High are designed to maximize that input.

After studying the data, each school's committee will make a recommendation to the principal. Sites and Harrison will meet with Superintendent Dallas Johnson before a recommendation is brought before the School Board.

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**MILL**

From Page A9

Office doesn't know who started the fire yet, but characterizes the area around the mill as a long-time hangout for young people.

He is also aware of intrusion by a "satanic group," which has attached some mystical significance to the mill. Graffiti on the walls bears this out.

Random destruction has also hit the offices of the Friends of Bull Run nearby. Two years ago, a four-wheel drive pickup parked overnight in front of the office was totally destroyed by vandals.

The youthful perpetrators who had also broken into a school during their rampage were apprehended, and confessed to destroying the truck.

"They were supposed to make restitution, but we never got a penny," said Friend of Bull Run Executive Director Emily Morgan.