

ALL THE NEWS
NONE OF THE PAPER

Rappahannock News eEdition
try it free for four weeks



RappNews.com

the Rappahannock News on the Web

- HOME
- TOPICS ♦
- ARCHIVES
- EVENT CALENDAR
- THIS WEEK'S eEDITION

- [Contact Us](#)
- [Advertise](#)
- [Subscribe](#)
- [Sign Up for Email Updates](#)

Rappahannock Forecast

Today



Clear
27°/14°

Wednesday



Mostly Cloudy
30°/19°

Thursday



Chance of Snow
28°/18°

Follow Us!



Advertisement

Indulge Your Senses
In a Place of Beauty and Timelessness

Enjoy artisanal wines, locally grown foods, shops, galleries, historic villages, inns and B&Bs, fine dining, arts, and outdoor adventure.

Rappahannock
A COUNTRY OF VIBRANCE

Virginia is for Lovers ♥ VisitRappahannockVA.com

Upcoming Events

- Jan. 22, 2013 7:00 am
[RAWL spay/neuter](#)
Amisville
- Jan. 25, 2013 5:00 pm
[Amisville Methodist spaghetti dinner](#)
Amisville
- Jan. 26, 2013 11:00 am
[Oysters, art and wine festival](#)
Sperryville
- Jan. 26, 2013 6:30 pm
[Celebrity waiters dinner](#)
Sperryville
- Jan. 27, 2013 1:00 pm
[Wakefield open house](#)
Flint Hill

[View All Events](#)

This Week's Paper



All the news

For the current week's full Rappahannock News — usually available by 9 p.m. Wednesdays — check out our new [eEdition](#), where you can sign up for your four-week free trial subscription!

Popular: Last 30 Days

[Out-of-control car plows into bikers: one dies](#) 530 view(s)

[150 Years Ago This Week: Bloody Murfreesboro](#) 331

view(s)

- [Superintendent resigns effective April 1](#) 320 view(s)
- [Virginia ignores marijuana reform proposals](#) 314 view(s)
- [Driver charged in fatal crash](#) 271 view(s)

Recent Comments

- Cindy BP on [Virginia mulls tuition for undocumented immigrants](#)
There is no such thing as an undocumente...
- Mine instead of import our nrg on [Keep uranium mining ban. Sen. Ruff says](#)
Uranium mining is safe and poses negligi...
- [Teresa Boardwine on Facebook](#) on [Keep uranium mining ban. Sen. Ruff says](#)
Belle Meade School is going to Richmond ...
- [Older »](#)

List Articles by Category

Select Category

RappNews on Facebook

Sign Up

Create an account or [log in](#) to see what your friends are doing.

[Virginia mulls tuition for undocumented immigrants | Rappahannock News](#)
 3 people recommended this.

[Is uranium mine scaring people from Southside? | Rappahannock News](#)
 55 people recommended this.

[Miller's deeds helped to make Rappahannock what it is today | Rappahannock News](#)
 10 people recommended this.

[Our 2012 Citizens of the Year | Rappahannock News](#)
 68 people recommended this.

[Life after 50: It works in Rappahannock | Rappahannock News](#)
 10 people recommended this.

[VPA opposes moving public notices online | Rappahannock News](#)
 One person recommended this.

[Democrats rap Cuccinelli over federal law | Rappahannock News](#)
 33 people recommended this.

Facebook social plugin

User Login

Username

Password

☐ Remember Me

[Log In](#)

- [Lost your password](#)

VPA opposes moving public notices online

Photo/Video/Audio

Jan. 20, 2013

By [Staff/Contributed Reports](#)

Like

1

1

By **Michael Schuster**

Capital News Service

RICHMOND – At their annual lobbying day, members of the Virginia Press Association opposed two House bills that would let local governments post their public notices on their websites instead of publishing them in local newspapers.

The VPA, which represents the state's newspapers, says the bills are a threat to the public's access to government information.

"We're just not to the point where this is a sensible decision," said Ginger Stanley, executive director of the VPA. "Newspapers have permanence, and websites can easily crash or be hacked into."

Public notices are official announcements about public hearings, government contracts, proposed laws, zoning applications, court proceedings and other matters. By law, governments must publish these notices in local newspapers; you'll often find them in the classified-ads section.

But in recent years, legislators and other state officials have been pushing to relax or remove the requirement that these legal ads be printed in the paper. For example, House Bill 1378, proposed by Delegate Mark Cole, R-Fredericksburg, would allow localities in Virginia to publish the notices on a secured government website instead. That's one of the bills opposed by the VPA.

Some state officials would like to move the notices online to save money – and because fewer people are reading newspapers.

Cole says his bill is a logical step in keeping with technological trends.

"We're just moving from a paper environment to an electronic environment, and we want to move forward with 21st century technology," Cole said.

Opponents of HB 1378 argue that government websites can be unreliable and that not everyone has Internet access. They also say a website posting does not have the authenticity of a printed legal advertisement. They say governmental notices should be printed by an independent entity – the local newspaper.

In addition, opponents say that without proper management, online information can be altered by hackers or other people. Public notices printed in a newspaper are more readily available for all citizens, the VPA said in its 2013 "Capitol Discussions" pamphlet.

The Virginia Coalition for Open Government, which promotes transparency in government, supports the VPA on the issue.

"Some areas in Virginia do not have Internet capabilities, and print-based methods are more thorough and easily reached by a larger number of people," said Megan Rhyne, the coalition's executive director.

On Thursday, a subcommittee of the House Committee on Counties, Cities and Towns discussed HB 1378 and a similar measure, HB 1373, by Delegate Christopher Head, R-Roanoke. Head's bill would let localities with at least 50,000 residents meet the public notice requirements by utilizing their websites, radio or television systems.

Proponents say their proposals would save local governments money. However, the VPA and its allies attended Thursday's meeting to argue otherwise.

"Last year, the town of Damascus spent \$723 on print-based public articles, which provided more than 2 million views," Stanley said. "The cost of printing public notices in the paper is very low, and the ability to reach such far-extending populations has been proven."

On a voice vote of 11-0, the subcommittee combined HB 1373 and HB 1378. The panel is looking to revise wording of the legislation so localities would have the option of publishing public notices in print or on the Web.

Capital News Service is a student news-gathering program sponsored by the School of Mass Communications at Virginia Commonwealth University.

On the web

Follow Us!



**THE WHOLE
PAPER ONLINE?**

**Click here for
THE eEDITION**

Popular: Last 30
Days

- [Out-of-control car plows into bikers; one dies](#)
530 view(s)
- [150 Years Ago This Week: Bloody Murfreesboro](#)
331 view(s)
- [Superintendent resigns effective April 1](#)
320 view(s)
- [Virginia ignores marijuana reform proposals](#)
314 view(s)
- [Driver charged in fatal crash](#)
271 view(s)

RappNews on
Facebook

To track or comment on the bills involving public notices, visit the Richmond Sunlight website:

- 1. <http://www.richmondsunlight.com/bill/2013/hb1373/>
- 2. <http://www.richmondsunlight.com/bill/2013/hb1378/>

Post to Facebook

1

Like

1

1

This entry was posted on Jan. 20 at 8:29 p.m. and is filed under [Capital News Service](#), [Media](#), [Politics/Government](#), [THE NEWS FEED](#). You can follow any responses to this entry through the [RSS 2.0](#) feed.

Leave a Reply

Your email address will not be published. Required fields are marked *

Name *

Email *

Website

Comment *

Post Comment



Photo: Firing up a tradition



Photo: A toothy grimace



Photos: A white (and gray) Christmas



Photo: Sworn to shop

Sign Up Create an account or log in to see what your friends are doing.



Virginia mulls tuition for undocumented immigrants | Rappahannock News

3 people recommended this.



Is uranium mine scaring people from Southside? | Rappahannock News

55 people recommended this.



Miller's deeds helped to make Rappahannock what it is today | Rappahannock News

10 people recommended this.

Facebook social plugin



Photo: 'Smokey' poster artists

Rappahannock Media

- [Contact Us](#)
- [Advertise](#)
- [Subscribe](#)
- [Sign Up for Email Updates](#)

Your Privacy

[Rappahannock Media Privacy Policy](#)

Sites We Like

- [Virginia News](#)

**THE WHOLE
PAPER ONLINE?**

**Click here for
THE eEDITION**

© 2009-2013 Rappahannock Media

