

U.S. ARMY

Golfers, museum fight over Belvoir

By William C. Flook
Examiner Staff Writer

A site favored for the U.S. Army's national museum would wipe out half of a Fort Belvoir golf course touted as one of the region's only affordable facilities for many military retirees, prompting the vets to push for saving the endangered holes.

The Gunston Course, one of Belvoir's two 18-hole courses, is the top candidate to be home to the National Museum of the U.S. Army, planned to contain about 150,000 square feet of exhibits and cost \$200 million.

Patrons of Belvoir's recreational facilities are distressed by the expected destination of the museum, especially after they lost the base's South 9 course to construction of a new military hospital.

"There are many retirees who go to the golf courses — they consider it a way of life," said Ronald Snyder, a retired Army colonel and member of Concerned MWR Patrons, a group seeking to preserve the course.

"When the South 9 course was lost, there were many people that were very disturbed, very up in arms over it," he said. "We just feel

that to take and erode military benefits when there is a viable alternative is not the right thing to do."

Both sides say they're working together toward a mutually beneficial resolution that could involve moving the lost 9 holes at Gunston to an adjacent spot. But it's unclear exactly who would carry out the relocation and pay for it.

"We're just trying to build a museum," said museum spokeswoman Lt. Col. Diane Varhola. "We consider the golfing community. ... We're just kind of limited in what we can do."

The Army is considering three sites at Belvoir for the museum, though the Gunston site is considered the best. A report detailing all three is expected by the end of July.

The museum was once slated to sit across the street from the South 9 course. But after a scandal involving shoddy outpatient care broke at Walter Reed Hospital, Congress ordered construction of the medical facilities that would replace Walter Reed at its 2011 closure to be expedited.

That meant the Army needed to find a quick, suitable spot for the new DeWitt hospital, and chose the South 9 course.

wflook@dceaminer.com

Residents sue over D.C. checkpoints

By Scott McCabe
Examiner Staff Writer

Four D.C. residents have filed a lawsuit to stop the District's controversial military-style checkpoints used to bar outsiders from crime-ridden neighborhoods.

The lawsuit asserts that the roadblocks are unconstitutional, and seeks to eliminate the data collected from law-abiding residents who tried to drive through the Trinidad neighborhood early this month, said plaintiffs' attorney Mara Verheyden-Hilliard of the Partnership for Civil Justice.

"The complete program is flatly unconstitutional," she said.

The District created the first "neighborhood safety zones" in the Trinidad neighborhood in Northeast Washington earlier this month to fight crime.

Police used roadblocks to funnel vehicles to a checkpoint at 1400 Montcello Avenue, where officers demanded drivers' IDs, asked where they were going and turned away those who didn't live there or have a "legitimate purpose" for visiting, such as a doctor's appointment or a church visit.

Police say they turned away 46 of the more than 700 vehicles that tried to pass through checkpoints. One person was arrested for driving

with an open alcoholic container.

William Robinson, a retired teacher who for 50 years has lived on Montello Avenue, one block from the checkpoint, was told he could not drive to his home without providing his driver's license, according to the lawsuit.

Community organizer Linda Leaks told police she was taking political materials to a meeting but was barred from proceeding when she would not provide information about the meeting, the lawsuit said.

"The District's military-style roadblock system ... is neither constitutional, nor effective," the lawsuit said.

"There is an urgent need to tackle the problems of violence, street crime, unemployment and education. This roadblock does not address any of them."

District officials defended the program, noting that there were no shootings in the neighborhood during the six-day operation. D.C. Police Chief Cathy Lanier testified earlier this week that she would use the checkpoints again.

Interim Attorney General Peter Nickles said the complaint read more like an editorial than a legal document.

"It's overblown and full of rhetoric," Nickles said. "This is not a police state."

smccabe@dceaminer.com

EDUCATION » ENGINEERING

Fledgling physicists fire away at U.Md.

By Leah Fabel
Examiner Staff Writer

Catapults will sling and hackey-sacks will soar this afternoon as the University of Maryland hosts a national engineering design competition focused on attracting high school-aged minorities to the growing profession.

But "catapult" is too imprecise a term for these fledgling physicists.

"A catapult is pulled and then let go," explained Tariq Blakey, a sophomore at Bethesda-Chevy Chase High School. "A trebuchet works on its own weight."

Blakey and his team huddled around a large table in a university physics lab strewn with wooden blocks, screw bolts, hot glue and twine, putting the finishing touches on their 2-foot contraption to go up against more than a dozen others in today's battle.

Nearby, another team experimented with attaching a sling to a piece of rope tied to their trebuchet's arm, essentially extending the arm and gaining critical leverage for the launch.

"If we could see whose could knock the other ones down, that'd be pretty cool," said Jacob Lefler, a junior at Silver Spring's Kennedy High School.



High school students launch a tennis ball with their trebuchet at the University of Maryland's Center for Minorities in Science and Engineering. - Andrew Harnik/Examiner

Behind the medieval-style excitement, the university is using the event to attract more blacks and Hispanics to its engineering programs.

Current minority enrollment numbers are depressing, said Bruk Berhane of the university's Center for Minorities in Science and Engineering. Of 600 students in next fall's freshman engineering class, only 47 are Hispanic and only 25 are black.

To combat the trends, the center is focusing on reaching minority students at a younger age through initiatives like this summer's first-time engineering camp for 30 area students, culminating in today's competition.

According to groups like the Ar-

lington-based National Society for Black Engineers, the efforts are paying off. In two years, their membership has doubled to 30,283, said coordinator Latoya LiGonde. Junior membership for middle and high school students has tripled, she said.

"It's our generation's job to get more minorities in engineering," said Annkia Harding, a trebuchet-building junior from Springdale's Flowers High School. "We have to be forceful about it."

Harding rattled off physics formulas, without forgetting the most important task at hand.

"We going to storm some castles later," she said.

lfabel@dceaminer.com

ADVERTISEMENT

Do Replacement Windows Really Save You Money?

According to the US Department of Energy, "45% of your utility bill goes for heating and cooling." And some sources estimate over 40% of a home's energy loss is through windows and doors. Furthermore, **the cost to air condition your home has just risen an additional 8% ON TOP** of the already imposed increase since the deregulation of energy. Startling enough?

Every few years new guidelines are imposed on window manufacturers to meet the energy-star ratings that allow a window to bear the Energy-Star seal. But, many homeowners' windows don't meet these guidelines... and that's a MINIMUM qualification for the most energy efficient window. At Thompson Creek, we have specifically engineered our product to go years beyond that guideline, allowing you to have a superior window in your home and save you money year after year after year. AND, as a local manufacturing company, we custom make each of our windows to work well in our DC, Maryland and Virginia environment.

This is also how we are able to provide you with the best quality product at the most competitive price — We simply cut out the middle man, outperform our competitors, confidently stand behind our product, and save you money.

Our Pledge... Our Guarantee at Thompson Creek is to save you at least 30% of your annual fuel consumption. What does this mean? To Erin Lyon of Annapolis, it means \$621 in her pocket that she didn't have before she used Thompson Creek to replace her windows. **What does it mean to you?**

Call today and let our Energy Savings Analyst perform a Free, No-Obligation Energy Analysis to show you just how much money you can save.

Call Thompson Creek Manufacturing at 866-572-7335 for more details and let us help you save money. Call by June 21, 2008 and receive 10% off. MHIC# 125294 VA#2705-117858-A