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## BRIEFS: NEWS NEAR YOU

Wednesday, Dec 05, 2007 - 12:08 AM

**Louisa** The Louisa County Planning Commission has recommended for approval the rezoning of 63 acres in the northwest part of the county from agricultural to planned unit development. The property owner, Strickland LLC of Charlottesville, requested the change for a mixed-use commercial and residential development in the Gordonsville area. The panel made its recommendation last month.

**Hanover** The Road to Revolution State Heritage Trail Consortium, organized through legislation sponsored by Del. Christopher K. Peace, R-Hanover, has been awarded a \$5,000 marketing leverage grant from the Virginia Tourism Corp. This funding will provide information on the trail, which links historic sites associated with the life and times of Patrick Henry. Many of the sites are in Hanover.

**Richmond** Richmond National Battlefield Park and Maggie L. Walker National Historic Site ornaments are prominently displayed on this year's official White House Christmas Tree. The tree is the centerpiece of elaborate decorations celebrating the theme of "Holiday in the National Parks." The ornament from the Walker site was decorated by Richmond artist Jay Sharpe. The ornament from the battlefield park was decorated by Richmond artist Paul DiPasquale. Both artists attended the White House reception hosted by first lady Laura Bush on Nov. 28.

## AROUND THE STATE

**Fredericksburg** Students enrolled in a philanthropy course at the University of Mary Washington yesterday awarded \$10,000 in grant money provided by Doris Buffett, sister of billionaire investor Warren Buffett. The class awarded \$7,500 to National Housing Trust/Enterprise Preservation Corp., which plans to provide tutoring services to elementary students who live in a low-income apartment complex operated by the nonprofit organization. Fredericksburg Counseling Services Inc. received a \$2,500 grant to fund the Bounce Back Group, a resiliency program for children who live in homeless shelters. The grants were funded by Doris Buffett's Sunshine Lady Foundation, which provided the class with \$10,000 to award as it chose. Doris Buffett funds similar courses at four other colleges, including the University of Virginia..

**Lexington** Firefighters battling a blaze in the George Washington National Forest since Saturday now say they anticipate having it contained by Friday. The fire, in Botetourt and Rockbridge counties, has consumed about 700 acres but has not threatened any houses. Despite gusty winds Monday that hampered their efforts, firefighters have the fire 50 percent contained, according to the U.S. Forest Service. The fire is in the Smith Flats area of the national forest but has also blackened about 200 acres of private land. About 120 firefighters, including smoke jumpers from Idaho and Montana, are working to build a line around the fire.

**Oak Grove** George Washington Birthplace National Monument will sign an agreement tomorrow with Sulgrave Manor, in England, to become sister parks. The National Park Service commemorates Washington's 1732 birth at the Westmoreland County park. Sulgrave Manor was built by Washington's

great-great-great-great-great grandfather and was home to George's great-grandfather, John, before he emigrated to Westmoreland County in 1656.

**Roanoke** A clerk at the Williamson Road Pawn Shop was shot and wounded during a robbery Monday, Roanoke police said. The clerk was taken to a local hospital for treatment. Police said the robber, who may have had an accomplice, made off with firearms from the pawn shop.

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