**MARY MARGARET WHIPPLE**

 If someone were to try and describe Senator Mary Margaret Whipple with one word, ‘humanitarian’ just may be the perfect word. Born in Watseka, Illinois, Senator Whipple grew up in College Station, Texas. She attended Rice University, received her BA in English from American University in Washington, DC, and earned a Master’s Degree from the George Washington University. While attending American University, Senator Whipple gained the confidence to pursue a Master’s degree after answering a question in class and impressing a professor who advocated that she continue in her studies.

 A former instructor at NOVA (Northern Virginia Community College), Senator Whipple has always been determined to improve the welfare and future of our youth. Whipple began her career of public service as a volunteer in her daughter’s schools. She was then appointed to the Arlington County School Board in 1976 and became Chairman in 1978. Senator Whipple continued her efforts for change by running for office and getting elected to the Arlington County Board (ACB) from 1983-1995. During her time spent with the ACB, Mary Margaret took an active interest in transportation issues, serving on the Washington Metropolitan Area Transit Authority Board of Directors as member from Arlington in 1985 and from 1988 until her election to the Senate at the end of 1995. A major reason Senator Whipple ran for Senate was because, “I felt that my strong ties and valuable experiences within the local communities while on the County Board would allow me to help make decisions that would improve the lives of the people, considering I knew firsthand how they would be affected through the various programs.” Senator Whipple represents the 31st district in the Virginia State Senate, which includes Arlington County north of Columbia Pike, the City of Falls Church, and eight precincts in eastern Fairfax County.

 In addition to an already impressive career’s work, Senator Whipple is also very well known for her environmental legislation including the “Wetlands Protection” bill and has been named “Legislator of the Year” by the Chesapeake Bay Foundation. Senator Whipple is also a member of the Board of Trustees of the Arlington Community Foundation and an Honorary Member of the Board of Scenic Virginia. She is a member of the Arlington Branch of the American Association of University Women, the Arlington Kiwanis Club, the League of Women Voters, the Arlington Historical Society, the Committee of 100 and the Arlington Commission on Aging.

 Four terms later, Senator Whipple is retiring in 2011. Even after her retirement, she will remain active within the Arlington Community Foundation (www.arlcf.org), designed to improve the living conditions and environment of the community by providing grants to non-profit organizations and scholarships to students pursuing higher education.

 A resident of Arlington County since 1964, Mary Margaret Whipple is a member and elder of the Church of the Covenant, Presbyterian, where she currently serves on the Board of Deacons. The Senator is married to Thomas S. Whipple, whom she met at Rice University, and is the mother of two daughters who are graduates of the Arlington Public School system. She is the proud grandmother of three boys and two girls.

