

Stratford Landing Newsletter

Stratford Landing Mount Vernon District Fairfax County August 2010

Bimonthly Newsletter

Membership Drive Begins Right Now!

Yes it is that time of the year again and we are asking the Block Captains to start gathering the membership signups and dues. Ten dollars is due to your block captain and we also want to update any information on you that may have changed. If you do not know who your block captain is, call Mary Lou Hoffman, (703) 360-7267, or Ken Pribyla, (703) 619-1385. We are looking to finish the drive by 15 October so we appreciate you getting your dues and information in early. Thanks.

Block Captains Take Note! Please turn in money and information to Mary Lou or Ken and please update your email address or phone number if you don't have email. We plan to keep you informed via email and the phone so it is important for us to have good contact with you. We thank you for all you do for our neighborhood.

Candidates Night and Annual Meeting Set for October 19th

Mark your calendars for the SLCA Annual Meeting and Candidate night

set for 19 October. There will be more detail in the October newsletter, but rest assured we will have the usual lineup starting with the candidates' forum hosted by Gerry Hyland starting around 7pm. The SLCA meeting should start around 8pm and we will cover a number of issues to include Budget and election of Committee members. We hope to see you all there.

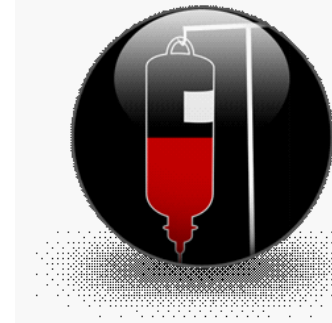


Interested in Joining the Committee?

Just a reminder that according to our bylaws individuals intending to stand for an office with the association have until 15 September to file their candidacy. So, if you are interested please contact Ken Pribyla, (703) 619-1385 and we will get you signed up. Of course, we do take nominations from the floor the night of the meeting—otherwise yours truly would not be typing this right now.

COMMUNITY BLOOD DRIVE, Aug 7th

Many of our newer residents are not familiar with the fact that Stratford Landing has been conducting community blood drives for the last 17



years to provide part of Mount Vernon Hospital's blood needs, and, in

fact, the needs of INOVA's entire Northern Virginia system.

Hundreds of resident drives and mobile drives are run by INOVA throughout the year at the hospitals, businesses and churches, but we are proud to say that we are the ONLY citizens' association that sponsors its own community drive. Based on the frequency that repeat donors can donate (at least 56 days between donations) our drives are held the first Saturday of each even-numbered month. They are held in the Blood Donor Center at Mount Vernon Hospital from 7:30 am until 12:30 or 1 pm. We have a tremendous number of

wonderful loyal donors, and we can't thank them enough. We have a number whose gift figures have exceeded three gallons---and one who has exceeded 13--- and that is just the amount given since we began our drives 17 years ago!

There is always a need for blood. There are no real substitutes for it. Not only are the needs for it because of accidents, but after every operation performed, there is a need for blood replacement. Life is precious. Each of your donations represents a life saved or a life prolonged.....If you have never given, haven't given lately. or thought you can't give, why not give it a try? Call me, Jack Shawn, if you want more information, or want to say, "Yes, I'll try on August 7. Sign me up".....We are especially proud of some of the second generation community teenagers (aged 16 and older) who are now giving. My telephone number is 703-780-4752.

CERT is Coming

Community Emergency Response Team (CERT) Training begins again in September. This is a very worthwhile training course and can develop a considerable emergency response cadre of folks who live right here in Stratford Landing ready to respond to their neighbors emergency needs in those minutes before the County teams can get here.

Training will be held in the Community Rooms #2 and #3, Mount Vernon Governmental Center, this fall for five consecutive Monday evenings. The training is open to Fairfax County resi-

dents who are at least 18 years of age.

If you are interested please call Tony Magro, (703) 780-7480, and visit the following website for more insight into the training, <http://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/oem/citizencorps/cert.htm>

crews followed correct arboricultural practice, and that most of their pruning cuts were properly done. We also learned that Dominion is pruning its right-of-way—15' either side of the power line—more aggressively to prevent power outages like we had last winter.

SLCA Movie Night at the Pool

When: Friday, August 13th at or around 8:30pm (it needs to be reasonably dark).
Where: At the pool**
What: SLCA will supply popcorn and lemonade. Please bring your own blankets or low chairs, and other snacks you may want.



Please check the website, www.stratfordlanding.org, as the date gets closer. The movie title will be announced there.

** You do not need a pool membership to attend; all community members are welcome.

McGlone pointed out that urban forestry is about “the right tree in the right place.” The time to avoid future conflicts with power lines is when a tree is planted. Here are some suggestions for planting wisely.

First, DO plant trees. Trees “green” and cool the neighborhood, add to the value of your property and make it far more pleasant to be outside in the summer. They provide shade and reduce energy consumption for air conditioning. They provide habitat for birds.

Second, when you select a tree, be mindful of the eventual size of that species and plant accordingly. Dominion recommends that trees or shrubs planted under or within 15' of a power line should

grow to 20' tall or less when mature. Small to medium trees (20' to 45' tall) should not be planted within 15' of power lines. Trees that grow taller than 45' should be planted farther still. (*Dirr's Hardy Trees and Shrubs* by Michael Dirr is very helpful in evaluating different species of trees for planting. This book is available for checkout at Sherwood Hall Library.)

Third, do not select tree species that lack structural integrity. Silver maples shed big limbs and are not desirable

Trees and Power Lines

Several Stratford neighbors called in distress about the severe pruning that Dominion Power's crews gave trees in our neighborhood over the past few weeks.

When we saw the trees, we were pretty shocked too, and contacted Jim McGlone (Urban Forester for the VA Department of Forestry) to take a look. He inspected trees in several parts of our neighborhood, and said that—even though the results look ugly—the

trees to plant. Bradford pear trees eventually will bust apart, falling and damaging whatever is in the way—including power lines. (This tree is also a very invasive exotic tree, and should never be planted for that reason. The grounds of the Little Hunting Creek pump station have been invaded by hundreds of Bradford pears.)

Fourth, keep your trees healthy. Big trees can benefit from an occasional visit by a certified arborist, to evaluate their health and pruning needs. Remove ivy or other aggressive vines growing up a tree (Virginia creeper will not damage trees). Ivy and some other very aggressive vines, such as Oriental bittersweet, will eventually kill the tree, by overtopping it, or girdling it and trapping moisture and disease near its bark. In high wind, a mass of ivy acts as a sail and can bring a tree down. To remove ivy, simply cut each vine at the base of the tree

and again about 3' up. You do not have to pull the ivy out of the tree—eventually it will die and fall on its own.

Neighborhood Stickers

Many of you will remember the SL bumper stickers we used to pass out with newsletters, directories, etc., but will also note that we haven't seen any in some time unless your Block Captain has a horde and supplies you with them. We do not have a formal program for these little neighborhood identification tags, however would like to hear from you whether you desire their continuation. Our membership chair, Mary Lou Hoffman, has a small stash and can get them to your Block Captains if you desire them. So, please let your Block Captain know how you feel about the

sticker and after compiling the “sense of the neighborhood” during the membership drive, I will let you know how serious we are going to get about the program.

I Have a Secret Admirer— Pumping Station Update

Actually it is not an admirer but someone took the trouble of stamping an envelope,

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addressing it to me, and dropping it directly through my mail slot. No indication of who it might be but they were concerned about an official notification by Fairfax County of the pending Planning Commission (PC) and Board of Supervisors (BOS) meetings over the next few months. These meetings are the wrap up to the Area Plan Review I have mentioned several times before. As most of you know, Little Hunting Creek Pumping Station is a subject of this review and as I told you before the site has been characterized as a pumping station for now and the future. The letter some of you received was simply a formality to let you know of the public hearings dealing with all the nominations for land use in the Mount Vernon District. The most recent hearing was on July 14 where the PC reviewed all the nominations and heard from the

Leah Chapla

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public regarding them. They finalized the report on July 28 and will send on their recommendations to the BOS. It is a process like any bureaucracy and takes a lot of official meetings, etc., to put this five year planning cycle to bed. Bottom line: the pumping station nominations as amended by the county staff and the task force will stand on the way to the BOS and our pumping station will remain characterized as a public use facility planned as a sewage pumping station and nothing more. We will continue to monitor the process and will hopefully have a finish to the process by the October annual meeting. So, I hope I have sufficiently answered my secret 'admirer'.

Phantom Tree Trimmer



This is truly an interesting place to live and never ceases to amaze me the variety of goings on up and down the lanes of our neighborhood. However, the early morning (July 22 at approximately 0600) tree trimming of one of our neighbor's property in the vicinity of Wittington and Highgate leaves me almost speechless. However, I will make the effort. What were you thinking? When did common courtesy depart the premises? A simple knock on

Unless your dog can do this, carry a bag and a leash and use them!



(With apologies to Chase Holloway)

the door would have alerted the residents to the impingement of your movement along the sidewalk and your fear of Holly tree scrapes. I happen to be a frequenter with my leashed dogs of that very stretch of sidewalk and have to say it was one of the least obstructive segments in our area. While your trimming job was very neat, leaving the cuttings on the ground where they fell was in bad taste. Finally, this is a reminder to us all that we need to consider our neighbors who walk our streets and sidewalks and make sure they are unimpeded in their progress and to remind us that we have the skills of communication and should use them before we trespass to assuage our own need to show ownership of the common grounds. Be nice out there, please.

Latest on Route One and BRAC from our Transportation Delegate

Our Transportation Chair, Howard Bowdring thought it was time we updated everyone on the latest and greatest happening with Fort Belvoir and Route One. In July the MVCCA Transportation committee heard from Col. Mark Moffatt, Deputy Garrison Commander for Transformation and BRAC at Fort Belvoir. He will con-

tinue to oversee the BRAC implementation after the change of command at Fort Belvoir on July 7, 2010. (The new Commander is Col. John J. Strycula.)

Currently, there are approximately 29,000 personnel/employees at Fort Belvoir (Main Post and Rivanna Station), and approximately 7000 residents, mostly on South Post. Most residents work in Washington D.C., the Pentagon, or areas outside the post. After implementation of BRAC, 19,400 personnel will be added at all Fort Belvoir locations: Main Post [3,500], Belvoir North Area or Engineering Proving Ground [8,500], Mark Center [6,400], Rivanna Station [1,000]. The army expects the additional personnel, except the 8,500 personnel going to the Engineering Proving Ground, to travel on US Route 1.



Currently, about 35,000 daily vehicle trips occur in and out thru 7 gates. To accommodate

double the number of vehicle trips per day, two-lane Belvoir, Pohick and Gunston roads are being widened to four travel lanes. In order to reduce the number of employees driving onto the post, Fort Belvoir needs more user friendly public transportation.. While a REX bus comes on base, one sec-

tion of Fort Belvoir will not have bus service with today's bus schedules. Personnel/visitors who take VRE to Lorton will find no bus service to Fort Belvoir. Those who ride the Metro to Franconia-Springfield must take a bus that takes 45 minute to make 14 stops before reaching Pence Gate.. The lack of convenient shuttle connections will discourage commuting via mass transit. An express shuttle to the Lorton VRE was successfully tried with private funding for 3 months,, but there was no public funding to continue it.

The post is working with Chairman Bulova to vary the timing of Route 1 traffic lights by time of day to move traffic more efficiently, but no resolution has been reached.

More teleworking or telecommuting could reduce the number of daily commuters, as could allowing more flexibility in duty hours.

Generally, the Fort Belvoir work hours are from 8am to 4:30 pm, which results in the entire workforce arriving within an hour window. Other military installations in the DC area spread the time that one can start working, spreading out the traffic. Fort Belvoir is contemplating various solutions.

Parking at Fort Belvoir is not always close to where people work. An internal shuttle is a possibility, but in the past civilians would not use shuttles, while non-commissioned officers did. The possible use of bicycles, Segways, golf carts, trails, and electric cars to get to lunch, etc. were discussed at the transportation committee meeting.

Question: What about transit stations at security gate with shuttles onto base?

Answer: Transit stations were discussed; but security requirements are

a problem. It would be hard to place public transits in a secured area.

The Gunston Road vehicle bridge over US Route 1 connecting both sides of Fort Belvoir is being redone with a span that will accommodate 6 travel lanes on US 1. Having a Metro running south of the bridge is not favorable as the cost of a station at the US 1/Fairfax County Parkway would be astronomical. Thus, the current thought is to have a Metro station at the Hospital.

Question: On gate closures during the day: are there plans to alleviate jams on US1 traffic?

Answer: There are no plans to change the current gates, with the exception of the Lieber Gate replacement (access to North Post with tie in to Gunston Road - on hold pending funding). The gate near Woodlawn Plantation is particularly sensitive politically and it will not open again.

The replacement for Lieber Gate will have vehicles turn onto the parade ground and then make a 90 degree turn to the

gate. This allows sufficient marshaling area and adequate vehicle inspection station. Construction is planned to start in 2011.

Fort Belvoir Community Hospital at Pence Gate: The new hospital will have 120 beds, compared to 40 in the old, and is served by two parking garages on either side of the complex totaling 3500 parking spaces. About 1800 parking spaces will be reserved for patients, but it was questioned if 3500 parking spaces would be enough considering staff (2000 from Walter



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Stratford Landing

Reed) and medical personnel, as well as visitors.



Transportation overview for the Belvoir North area: With Virginia money, the Fairfax County Parkway from Rolling Road to Fullerton should be completed by November 2011. The Hooes Road extension to the Franconia-Springfield Parkway is due to open in Spring 2012. Federal stimulus money is funding vehicle access from Franconia-Springfield Parkway and HOV access from Boudinot Drive.

Updates on Road Projects in our Area; Fairfax County Parkway - S and W border of Fort Belvoir is under construction. Two lanes in each direction from Rolling Road to Fullerton are scheduled to open in November 2010.

BRAC/US Route 1 - Before the July 4th break, the House passed a Supplemental Appropriations bill containing the Moran/Van Hollen language putting US 1 funding in a Defense Department account that can be accessed by Fairfax and USDOT. The Senate is expected to pass this bill the week of the 12th following the July 4th recess and then send it to the President.

Mulligan Road - The intersection at US Route 1 and Roy Rogers will be straightened so that Route 235 ties into Mulligan Road, which goes to Tele-

graph Road. Instead of waiting for two lanes in each direction being built, the plan is to open Mulligan Road with one lane in each direction in June of 2011.

Lots going on over the next couple of years and we thought you would be interested in a more detailed description of it all. If you have any questions or comments, please contact Howard Bowdring, (703) 780-4320.

Volunteers Needed

The Reading Connection (TRC) is a nonprofit organization based in Arlington, VA dedicated to improving the lives of at-risk children and families by helping them create and sustain literacy-rich environments and motivation for reading. TRC could not possibly do its work without the help of its many read-aloud volunteers. Read-Aloud volunteers spend an hour each month reading with kids and engaging them in conversation and related activities. Read-Aloud programs are held in emergency and transitional housing shelters, domestic violence safehouses, and affordable housing community centers throughout Arlington, Alexandria, Southeast DC, and Reston. For more information, contact Courtney Kissell at ckissell@thereadingconnection.org or apply online at www.thereadingconnection.org

Article submitted by Celia Boertlein (cboertlein@aol.com), site coordinator for TRC program at Mondloch House

Celia's Budget Report

Balance on Hand as of 7/19/10 was \$3,121.35.

Major deposits this quarter (July through September) include \$720.00 from advertising (prepaid 6 issues for Leah Chapla).

Paid membership for 2009-2010 is 649.

Major expenditures for this quarter include rental of equipment for Movie Night (\$941.28) and maintenance of neighborhood common areas (\$135.00 per month for 7 months).



Feathered Friends

Bird parents have been busy raising their babies. Our proximity to Little Hunting Creek increases the diversity of species in our neighborhood. During June and July, 45 species of birds were seen in Stratford Landing, including Canada Goose, Wood Duck, American Black Duck, Mallard, Great Blue Heron, Green Heron, Turkey Vulture, Osprey, Mourning Dove, Chimney Swift, Ruby-throated Hummingbird, Belted Kingfisher, Red-bellied Woodpecker, Downy Woodpecker, Northern Flicker, Eastern Phoebe, Great Crested Flycatcher, Eastern Kingbird, White-eyed Vireo, Blue Jay, American Crow, Northern Rough-winged Swallow, Barn Swallow, Carolina Chickadee, Tufted Titmouse, White-breasted Nuthatch, Carolina Wren, House Wren, Blue-gray Gnatcatcher, American Robin, Gray Catbird, Northern Mockingbird, Brown Thrasher, European Starling, Chipping Sparrow, Song Sparrow, Northern Cardinal, Indigo Bunting, Red-winged Blackbird, Common Grackle, Brown-headed Cowbird, Baltimore Oriole, House Finch, American Goldfinch, and House Sparrow. For more information about birds in our area, visit www.eBird.org and www.allaboutbirds.org.



In Memoriam

Longtime residents of the community were saddened by the news since our last newsletter of the death of Lowell Shearer, a resident of many years. Quite active in the community, he served for a short time as President of Stratford Landing Citizens Association. Some of our “second generation” residents will remember him as a popular coach in the youth athletic programs. Our sincere condolences go out to his wife Phyllis.

The community was also saddened to learn of the death several months ago of Frances Bielawski, longtime resident and wife of Mel Bielawski of Cavendish Drive. Mel has authored several books including one devoted to Frances’ long illness and his experience as her loyal caregiver. Our sympathy goes out to Mel and his family.

Stratford Landing

Stratford Landing Executive Committee Officers

Ken Pribyla, President
703.619.1385
kprib@verizon.net

Celia Boertlein, Treasurer
703.360.3735
CBoertlein@aol.com

Sue Kosciuszko Massey, Vice President
703.360.8576
skmassey@aol.com

Claire Kluskens, Secretary
703-780-3282
ckluskens@verizon.net

Committee Chairs

Howard Bowdring,
Transportation & Community
Improvements (Acting)
703.780.4320
hbowdring@yahoo.com

Mary Lou Hoffman, Membership
703.360.7267
mlnhoffman@aol.com

Ed Gonsalves, Rules & Parliamentarian
703.619.5152
egonsalves@adclawfirm.com

Heather Westphal, Recreation Co-Chair
703.360.5258
hlw1421@yahoo.com

Dana Deighton, Recreation Co-Chair
703.799.0664
ddeighton@live.com

Angela Meyers, Recreation Co-Chair
703.887.8387
ahazuda@yahoo.com

Association Delegates

Chad Coneway, Budget & Finance
703.360.1511
chad.coneway@cox.net

Patrick Meyers, Planning & Zoning
202.306.7868
mrpkm@hotmail.com

Betsy Martin, Environment & Recreation
703.360.0691
betsy@folhc.org

Jack Shawn, Health & Human Services
703.780.4752
jwshawn@verizon.net

Education- Vacant

Joan McLellan, Work Force Housing
703.360.5034
aj Joanmclellan@aol.com

Tony Magro, Public Safety
703.780.7480
tmagro10@gmail.com

Terri Maloney, Consumer Affairs
703.780.3454
t2maloney@aol.com