

Stratford Landing Citizens' Association Newsletter

Stratford Landing • Mount Vernon District • Fairfax County • February 2008

Coming Soon: Verizon FiOS Set to Appear in Stratford Landing

Stratford Landing residents seeking more technological options will soon get their wish. Contractors for Verizon are set to begin excavating to install new fiber-optic cables.

Within two years, Stratford Landing residents will have access to Verizon FiOS. This fiber-optic technology provides consumers with nearly unlimited bandwidth for internet access, voice communication, and video. It is a more reliable service that is less susceptible to inclement weather and is easier to maintain.

Verizon contractors will excavate in public rights-of-way or in the utility easements next to or on private property. This legal right to work in the public easement must be granted by either the local government or VDOT. Verizon must receive permission from owners to complete any work on private easements.

Homeowners concerned about work to be done in their yards should know that contractors are required to follow rigorous procedures to perform this work. Before excavation begins, you will see colored markings in your yard. These Miss Utility markings indicate to the contractor where public underground utilities are buried.

You will receive a series of door hangers on your front door before the work begins and while the work progresses. The notices will contain information about the project and alert you about any steps that you might need to take. For example,

if you have a sprinkler system or any private underground utilities, you should mark them once you see that the public utilities have been marked. That is an indication that the excavation crews will be in the vicinity within a few days to a week. The name of the contractor will be provided along with a number for inquiries about the project. Verizon promises that their contractors will take every reasonable precaution to minimize disruptions.

Excavation work should be completed in a day or two. If any damage

occurs to your property, the contractors are committed to repairing any damages.

To see a listing of the current month's construction locations, visit: www22.verizon.com/about/community/va/technology/tech_index.html. Information about Verizon FiOS can be found at: www22.verizon.com/content/consumerfios/about+fiostv/about+fios.htm. Verizon will notify customers when the service will be available after the installation of the fiber-optic cables.

Stratford Landing Prepares for Spring Fling

Put on your walking shoes, ready your bike, and dig out those Easter egg baskets. The Stratford Landing Spring Fling is almost here!

This year residents can celebrate the arrival of spring with an egg hunt in the park and a bike parade. If you don't have a bike, don't worry. Walkers, strollers, wagons, and pets are all welcome. Just don't forget to decorate!

The event is scheduled for Saturday, March 15 at 3 p.m. in Stratford Landing Park. The parade route is still being determined. For more information, visit our website, www.stratfordlanding.org, or watch for the signs.

Join Your Neighbors for a Potluck Dinner

Mark your calendars for Friday, April 18 from 6 to 7 p.m., and join your neighbors at Stratford Landing Elementary School for the first annual Stratford Landing Community Potluck Dinner.

In addition to great food and fun, retired Admiral Hank Corley has graciously volunteered to set up a table with very interesting research about the neighborhood and its land dating back to George Washington. If you have any old pictures, construction brochures and/or maps, please bring them to share. Of particular interest are newsletters and Stratford Landing phone directories from the years 1965-1985. Children's activities are also being planned.

To ensure that a variety of foods are available, families with last names beginning with A-M please bring a main dish. Families with last names beginning with N-Z please bring a side dish or dessert. The civic association will provide drinks and paper products.

Stop Sign Issue Leads Committee to Review Issues, Amend Rules

The four-way stop sign vote at the annual meeting and referendum over the summer have been the subject of great debate. So much so, that the SLCA Board and concerned citizens were asked to come to Supervisor Gerry Hyland's office in January 2008 to discuss the issues and procedures in which the voting took place.

The meeting was very productive, and everyone was given the opportunity to speak. And as a result of the meeting, a SLCA Rules Committee was convened on January 10, 2008, to review the issues and make recommendations to the SLCA Executive Board.

The committee, led by Parliamentarian Ed Gonsalves, discussed and voted on issues pertaining to bylaw procedures, referendums, and annual meeting procedures. Specific issues

discussed and voted on during the meeting included:

1. The annual meeting notice for the November 13, 2007, meeting was written on a half sheet of paper. The committee found that this did meet bylaw requirements. The committee voted to recommend that the executive committee amend Rule 4.3 to add flexibility to the manner of notice of the annual meeting.

2. The bylaw infraction requires the annual meeting to be held on a weekday evening. The committee voted that the October 27, 2007, meeting violated Rule 4.1 of the bylaws. They noted that this violation was brought to the attention of the board prior to the meeting but was overlooked.

3. The committee reviewed the following statement, which was given as an argument for the four-way stop

sign in the October newsletter: "The executive committee voted unanimously for this change in December 2006." The committee voted that the above statement was a mischaracterization of the executive committee, and it was not intended to be an endorsement or recommendation of how the community should vote. As a result of this, the committee voted to recommend that future statements in the Referendum Notice concerning the executive committee be limited to the following: "The majority of the executive committee voted to bring the issue before the community for consideration."

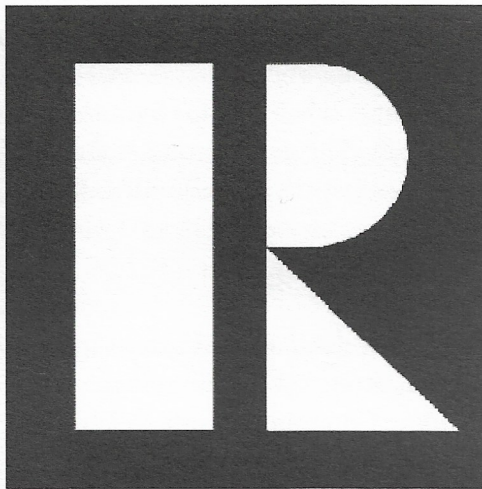
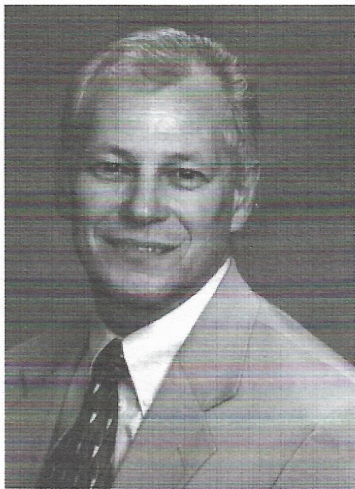
4. The rules committee voted that there must be a quorum present at the time a vote is taken.

5. The rules committee noted a number of procedural errors with regards to Roberts' Rules during the annual meeting and made the following recommendation: "Parliamentarians are required to familiarize themselves with Roberts' Rules of Order and to be prepared at any SLCA meeting or concerning the notice for any referendum to raise points of order concerning violations."

6. The committee found that some items in the referendum concerning the four-way stop sign contained anecdotal accounts and failed to identify the source. They recommended that the executive committee solicit opposing viewpoints to be presented to the community. They also recommended that all narratives reference facts, analysis, or anecdotes and require identification and attribution of their source.

7. The rules committee also addressed the overall presentation of the stop sign referendum to the community. The committee voted that it believed the two votes taken favored

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the installation of two additional stop signs at the intersection in question and fairly reflected the sentiment of the community as a whole concerning this issue.

The following three recommendations were made to the SLCA Executive Board:

1. The annual meeting votes on the stop sign referendum should be reported to Supervisor Hyland as reflective of community sentiment on the issue.
2. The errors that occurred during the conduct of the referendum and annual meeting should be reported to the community.
3. The rules committee should review all notices of future referenda

before they are furnished to the community to ensure factual accuracy and compliance with the bylaws.

On January 15, 2008, the SLCA Executive Board reviewed the minutes from the rules committee meeting. The board voted in favor of the recommendations provided.

The actual minutes describing each issue and how each vote was taken are posted on the SLCA website, www.stratfordlanding.org. Copies will be made available to anyone who would like to review them. To receive a copy, contact any of the Stratford Landing Executive Board members.

The executive board acknowledges that errors were made in the presentation of the four-way stop sign issue to

the community. In an effort to prevent future errors, the executive board has reviewed the process by which the referendum and voting were conducted on this issue. Notwithstanding these errors, the executive board has determined that a majority of the community is in favor of the four-way stop sign at the intersection of Camden Street and Cavendish Drive. Consequently, the executive board will be submitting all of information cited above, including the results of the four-way stop sign vote, to Supervisor Hyland's office. The board will ask that Supervisor Hyland proceed in requesting that a four-way stop sign be installed.

Holiday Winners Announced

Congratulations go out to all of the winners in the 2007 Stratford Landing Holiday Decorating Contest. Winning homes included:

Category 1—Prettiest During the Day: 2318 Wittington Boulevard.

Category 2—Most Kid Friendly: 2313 Creek Drive.

Category 3—Prettiest at Night: 2506 Duxbury Place.

Category 4—Most Original: 8706 Highgate Road.

Category 5—Best Overall: 8608 Cotswold. This was a new category this year.

Honorable mention: the homes on Duxbury Place. Every year on Christmas Eve the streets of this cul-de-sac and all of the driveways are lined with lights. The only explanation that we could find was that this thoughtful group of neighbors was creating a landing strip for Santa.

We would like to take this opportunity, on behalf of the children and families of Stratford Landing, to thank you for all of your planning and hard work. We are confident that Santa could not find a place to land as wonderful as the one you make year after year.

A special thanks also to Mary Lou Hoffman and her committee for judging the houses in the contest.

Leah Chapla

703.929.4875 (cell phone & voice mail)

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**Old Town Historic District
400 King Street * Alexandria, VA 22314**

Mount Vernon at Home Moves Forward

Mount Vernon At Home (MVAH) is moving forward with plans to help local seniors safely and confidently remain in their homes for as long as possible.

The newly formed organization will hold a large public meeting describing its services in May. The date and location of the May meeting have not yet been finalized.

Services offered by the organization will include immediate access to homeowner repair experts, medical assistance

persons/groups, and cultural and social activities.

In an effort to spread word of its services, MVAH will also be hosting small focus groups in area subdivisions.

For more information, or if you would like to be included in a focus group, please contact Kae Wells at (703) 360-6159 or by email at wells2600@verizon.net or MVAH president Mary-Carroll Potter at (703) 768-6590 or by email at marycarrollpotter@verizon.net.

Give blood at Inova Mount Vernon Hospital on April 5, 2008, from 7:30 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. Contact Jack Shawn at (703) 780-4752 or wendell.shawn@cox.net if you have questions or plan to donate.

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SLCA Treasurer's Report

The SLCA's balance at the beginning of the fiscal year, October 1, 2007, was \$10,667.71.

As of January 26, 2008, the balance on hand is \$12,421.21, including receipts for the fiscal year of \$7,911.00 and disbursements of \$6,157.10.

Primary receipts included membership dues for 636 households and \$1,500 from advertising in the October and December newsletters.

Primary disbursements were \$1,098.32 for community activities, \$1,000 for D & O insurance deductible (carryover from FY '07), D & O insurance policy renewal costs of \$1,608.00, and \$1,331.40 for printing of the October and December community newsletters.

In other news, SLCA Treasurer Celia Boertlein attended the November and January MVCCA Budget & Finance Committee meetings as representative of the SLCA. At the November meeting, Brian Heffern and Katie Horstman from the Fairfax County Budget Office gave a presentation at the state of the county budget.

With residential home assessments declining, it is predicted that there will be no growth in general fund revenue for fiscal year 2009. This will result in an estimated \$120 million shortfall in the non-education budget alone. No estimate has been made yet for the shortfall in the education budget.

At this time, the county doesn't expect an increase in taxes. Instead, the county is planning cuts to balance the budget. There were no specifics on which budget items would be affected.

The proposed county budget will be published for comments on February 25. Public hearings are scheduled March 31 through April 2.

Mount Vernon Genealogical Society to Feature Research Specialists

Over the next two months, the Mount Vernon Genealogical Society (MVGS) will feature experts in accessing genealogical records at its monthly meetings.

On Tuesday, February 19, 2008, the MVGS will meet at 1 p.m. in room 112 of the Hollin Hall Senior Center. The meeting, which is free and open to the public, will feature a presentation entitled "Access to Archival Databases (AAD): Using the National Archives Electronic Records on the Web for Your Family Tree."

Lynn Goodsell, an archivist, and Daniel Law, an archivist specialist, will present the program. Both Goodsell and Law work in the Electronic and Special Media Records Services Division at the National Archives in Washington, D.C.

The National Archives and Records Administration's (NARA) Access to Archival Databases (AAD) resource provides online access to a selection of NARA's electronic records. Specifically, they deal with databases containing records that identify specific people, events, or activities. These are the types of records genealogists use. In their presentation, Goodsell and Law will demonstrate how to use AAD, the types of records on AAD that are of particular interest to genealogists, and how these records can lead to other sources of genealogical information.

The following month, the MVGS will feature a presentation entitled "National Environment and Your Family." This program will be presented on Tuesday, March 18, 2008, at 1 p.m. in the Hollin Hall Senior

Center. Featured speakers include the National Archive's Constance Potter and Dr. Kenneth W. Heger, Ph.D.

Potter, an archivist, specializes in federal records of genealogical interest. She has lectured at a host of genealogical workshops. She is also a contributing editor to "Genealogy Notes" in *Prologue*. Dr. Heger is manager of the Family and Community History program at the National Archives. He speaks regularly at national genealogy conferences and has published articles on family history.

In their presentation, the speakers will discuss the impact weather has had on families within the U.S. and in Europe, and they will explain how weather can influence your

own family's history. Potter and Dr. Heger will also demonstrate how you can use records from places such as the Department of State, the Signal Corps, the General Land Office, and the Weather Bureau when researching the weather and the environment.

MVGS is a nonprofit organization and has over 260 members residing in Alexandria, Fort Belvoir, the counties of Fairfax, Prince William, Montgomery, and Prince Georges, as well as several states. Additional information about the meeting and MVGS can be found at www.MV-Genealogy.org/. Any questions about the program should be directed to Harold McClendon at 703-360-0920 or haroldm@erols.com.



Tom Pleimling

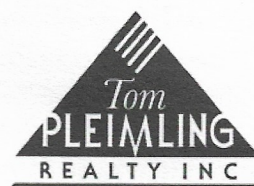
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Get Involved in Your Community

We want to hear from you! We have a lot of wonderful people in our community that donate their time and money to different charities around the area. If you or someone you know in Stratford Landing is participating in a charity or raising money for one, we want to help. If you are raising money for a charity, we will be happy to post the information and links to your home page on our website. Contact any of the SLCA Executive Board members, and we will help you spread the word.

Stratford Landing Website Updates

The SLCA will create a "Community Postings" page on the website where events and fundraisers not directly sponsored by the SLCA can be posted. Community members may send requests for postings to webmaster@stratfordlanding.org. The SLCA reserves the right to determine which activities to post. We hope this will help to inform the community about additional activities in the area.

Mount Vernon Hospital Needs Your Help

The Mount Vernon Hospital is still looking for volunteers in many departments. Even if you can only do 4 hours a week they want to hear from you! Please call Shelia Barnes to discuss further at (703) 774-7260. Volunteers really do make a difference.

Get to Know the Stratford Women's Club

The Stratford Woman's Club (SWC), founded in 1972 by local lady residents, has 45 members active in the community and surrounding area. Our task is to promote the civic, cultural, social, educational and physical environment of the community. The SWC is non-political and non-partisan.

SWC members collect food and clothing for the homeless and provide a Christmas breakfast at the Mental Health Centre for 50 attendees. Each person receives a gift-wrapped, new warm shirt.

Each year, the SWC donates to the libraries of five local schools. The group also supports other needy causes. They raise funds through raffles, bean soup mix sales, and many other activities.

Since 1972, a total of \$32,000 has been donated to Inova Mount Vernon Hospital, \$400 to Carl Sandburg Middle School, and \$400 each to the two area high schools. This amount represents a legacy from former SWC president Nancy Condon.

The SWC also enjoys an annual day bus trip to an interesting part of northern Virginia, and has two active bridge groups. The group meets once a month at the Presbyterian Church, on Fort Hunt Road. The SWC would be delighted to welcome new members who share its worthy goals. For more information, call Membership Chairman Mary Lou Hoffman at 703-360-7267 or President Gwendoline Niebergall at (703) 780-7426 or geenebs@cox.net.

Stratford Landing Citizen Starting Foundation for Autism

My name is Miriam Snedecor, and I'm a Stratford Landing mom who has a son with autism. Because we have been fortunate enough to get him into various therapies, he's made incredible improvement and may have an opportunity to be mainstreamed into kindergarten later on this year. I know that would not have been possible without him receiving early intervention.

My family has been fortunate enough to provide my son with what he needs to reach his full potential, but I know there are many more families not as fortunate who have to make the decision to pay for their living expenses over their child's therapy.

Every child on the autism spectrum should have the same opportunity as my son, which is why I am starting a foundation for Fairfax County residents to help them pay for therapy their children need to reach their full potential. I'm not asking for money right now, but I do need help to get the foundation started. I need legal advice, grant writing advice, investment advice, etc. If you have any experience in working for or establishing a foundation and are willing to help out a little, please contact me at 703-799-2278 or mmsnedecor@cox.net. Any help would be greatly appreciated.

Thank you. Miriam Snedecor

