

Stratford Landing Citizens' Association Newsletter

TIMMONS

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

SLCA to Host Timely Community Public Safety Meeting

To promote member awareness, the Stratford Landing Civic Association (SLCA) is hosting a presentation on personal and public safety Thursday, June 5, from 7:30 to 8:30 p.m.

The meeting will be held at the Mount Vernon Government Center (police station) on Parkers Lane. Featured speaker is Master Police

Officer Robbie Clift, who is a crime prevention officer at the Mount Vernon District Station.

The timing for this meeting could not have been more appropriate. Recently, there have been multiple incidents where automobiles have been broken into in and around Stratford Landing. If thieves begin to see our

neighborhood is an easy target, they are not likely to stop. The goal of this meeting is to pass on tips that will keep this from happening.

Please join us to see how you can avoid becoming a victim of crime against your property or family. Do not let yourself become a victim!

Be Proactive: Protect Yourself Against Home Burglaries

With vacation season upon us, many people will be leaving their homes unattended for extended periods of time. And if anything can ruin a great vacation, it is that constant worry about how things are going at home.

For your own peace of mind, why not try some of these strategies to

keep your home safe?

First, always make your home look like you are there. Install timers to make your lights go off and on at appropriate times of the day. This will give your home a lived-in look while you are away

Second, invest in good locks. A high quality, one-inch deadbolt

lock on every outside door is a basic requirement. Speaking of locks, never leave your home unlocked—even for a brief trip to the store or a visit to the neighbor. Thieves can move in an out of your home pretty quickly.

Never hide a key outside your home. Instead, leave an extra key with a trusted neighbor or friend. And never put a name or address tag on your house or car keys. This is an open invitation to any thief lucky enough to find a stray key to your home or car.

When you are away, plug a radio into a timer and set it to an all-talk station. Leave the volume low. This will give a would-be burglar the impression you're home and that you're talking to someone.

Another proactive thing you can do is to call the police at the Mount Vernon District Station to schedule a free home-security inspection. You can reach them at 703-360-8400.

Finally, be an active participant in the neighborhood watch program. Nothing is more effective against crime than an entire neighborhood on the look-out for suspicious activity.

Watch Out for Pedestrians!

Temperatures are on the rise, and school will be out in a few weeks. Add these things together, and there are guaranteed to be a lot more people on the streets.

In addition to devoted walkers out enjoying their evening strolls, more children will be playing near the streets. Children will also be riding bikes and crossing streets at all hours of the day and evening.

With this in mind, we hope that everyone will use good judgment when moving throughout the neighborhood this summer. Walkers should approach intersections carefully, and be aware of their surroundings. Bike riders should stop

at all intersections and ride facing on-coming traffic. Drivers, please obey all traffic signs and drive at the posted speed limit of 25 miles an hour. And remember: pedestrians always have the right of way when speed limits are 35 mph or less.

If you find that people are driving too fast or are not following posted signs on your street, take action. Notify Allen Rubinstein, who is with our neighborhood watch program, or Ken Pribyla, the SLCA executive board member in charge of transportation. Either of these men can notify the proper authorities at the Mount Vernon District Station.

55 Alive Driver-Training Course Set

As a service to the community, the SLCA is offering the 55 Alive Mature Driving Course once again this summer.

The course, sponsored by the American Association of Retired Persons (AARP), is a review of driving rules, including any recent changes, and good driving techniques. It places special emphasis on the way aging could affect older drivers.

This course was offered in 1996, 1999, 2002, and 2005, and will be sponsored again in June of 2008. It is offered every three years to coincide with the renewal schedule for older drivers' safe driving certificates. Certificates awarded through the program have become the basis for car insurance rate reductions with some insurance companies. USAA offers this benefit. Please check with your own insurance company to see if they also participate.

The 55 Alive course is scheduled to run for eight hours over two evenings. It will be held at the Fort Hunt Elementary School library on June 11 and 12, beginning at 6 p.m. The course costs \$10, which is payable by check or cash at the beginning of the first class. You must attend both sessions to be eligible for the certificate.

As sponsor, AARP sets the rules and provides the instructor. Maximum class size is 40. In past years, the class has been well attended.

Please email Mike Avila at Eagledo36@aol.com with your name, address, and phone number to reserve your seat. Or, call him at 703-619-5220. Preference will be given to Stratford Landing residents. Applicants from other communities will be accepted on a space-available basis.

Fort Hunt Park Concerts are Back

Do you enjoy the sultry sounds of jazz, the rhythm of rock, or the fun of folk? If so, you'll find something to enjoy at the Fort Hunt Concert Series.

The concerts, which are free and open to the public, are generally held on Sundays during summer months from 7 to 8 p.m. at Fort Hunt Park. Call 703-289-2500 for more information.

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Community Yard Sale Nears

It's spring-cleaning time again! This year, don't just empty your basements and attics of their clutter. Sell your treasures at the Stratford Landing Community Yard Sale.

The event is set for Saturday June 14, from 8 a.m. to 12 p.m. Anyone may participate. The SLCA will sponsor ads in the local paper and on craigslist on the Internet.

For those who do participate, please consider donating any unsold items to United Community Ministries (UCM). Donations are received Mondays, Wednesdays, and Saturdays from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. at the Back Porch Store, located at 7838 Richmond Highway (in the Crossroads Shopping Center). Good luck, and happy selling!

Executive Board Opportunities Available

Would you like to be more involved with the neighborhood? The SLCA is looking for people to fill immediate openings on the executive board. There will also be openings for elected positions in October, as well as an opening for a newsletter designer. If you are interested or would like to know more, please contact Melissa Cramer at 703-360-1687 or Charlie Herrmann at 703-799-0511.

Members Enjoy Potluck

The first annual Stratford Landing potluck dinner was held Friday April 11, and it was a huge success.

Over 100 people attended, and they represented the entire spectrum of Stratford Landing life: families with very small children; groups of older kids; residents of 20-plus years; newcomers; empty nesters; and retired folks. All in all, it was wonderful to have such a large group come together to mix and mingle and promote community spirit.

In addition to the great variety of tasty foods to eat, attendees visited three tables set up with information from members of the community. Linda Brown was there to answer any questions about her upcoming garden tour. Betsy Martin, a member of The Friends of Little Hunting Creek, reminded us that the following day was the annual creek clean up. Retired Admiral Hank Corley was there, and he answered many questions from residents interested in the history of our community.

Just for the kids, Mr. Magic, a local magician, volunteered his time and preformed a 45-minute magic show. This was a huge hit with the kids. Also, Greta Gonzales—an extremely talented local face painter—volunteered her time to do face painting for the kids. She stayed long after most people went home and clean up was completed to ensure that no child was disappointed.

A special thanks goes to everyone who participated in the potluck, the members of the community who helped set up and clean up, and Beth Bates and Tara Quadman who did a wonderful job planning and executing the evening. We can't wait until the next potluck!



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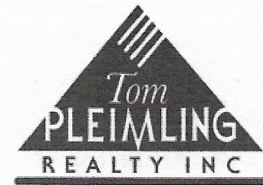
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Reminder: New Parking Rules Go into Effect

On March 10, 2008, the Board of Supervisors designated the entire Mount Vernon Magisterial District as a Community Parking District. Community Parking Districts (CPD) prohibit the parking of watercraft, motor homes, campers, trailers, vehicles with more than three axles, vehicles with a GVWR over 2,000 lbs., and vehicles transporting in excess of 16 passengers (except school buses) on public streets in residentially zoned areas. Violators can be fined up to \$40 and may be towed at the owner's expense.

Exemptions include: vehicles used by federal, state, or local public agencies to provide services; commercial vehicles discharging passengers, performing work or providing services; and vehicles temporarily parked, for up to 48 hours for the purpose of loading, unloading, or preparing for a trip. See the *Code of the County of Fairfax*, Chapter 82, Article 5B, for more on the program and exemptions. To report a violation, please call the police non-emergency number at 703-691-2131.

Work Together to Protect Stratford Landing Community Parks

The SLCA has been working with the Fairfax County Park Authority on ways to keep our local parks in top-notch condition. At the top of our list is standing water. We will keep you posted on that one.

Meanwhile, there are several things you can do to show respect for both your neighbors and the environment.

- Clean up after your pet, and remember that dogs must be kept on a leash.
- Clean up all of your trash;.
- Follow posted times. Parks close after dark, with the exception of the tennis courts..

- Remember that the following are not allowed on park property: alcoholic beverages, motorized vehicles, and hunting.
- Finally, it is illegal to discharge a firearm in the area.

If you witness any suspicious vehicles or activities in or near our parks, call the non-emergency number at the Mount Vernon District Station. It is 703-691-2131. You will not be considered a nuisance.

Next Stratford Landing Movie Night in the Works

Planning for this summer's movie night, a wonderful summer tradition sponsored by the SLCA and the Stratford Recreation Association, is underway. The exact date is still being discussed, but count on joining us at the pool at the end of July or the beginning of August. We will post

signs throughout the community once we know for sure.

When you come, please bring canned goods or nonperishable food items, which we will donate to United Community Ministries. Visit our website, www.stratfordlanding.org, for updates, or contact a board member.

Stratford Landing Executive Board

The SLCA executive board holds its regular meetings monthly at Walt Whitman Middle School on the first double-digit Tuesday of the month. Any special meetings, including the Octo-

ber annual meeting, are held at Stratford Landing Elementary School. Dates and times will be publicized in advance. Members are encouraged to attend.

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