



STRATFORD LANDING

Mount Vernon District, Fairfax County
October 2016 Newsletter

Fall is officially here!



Letter from The President

Bring on the leaves!

As I go through my calendar today, I see a busy fall ahead. We have a number of great activities and events planned for the SLCA, as well as all the wonderful events that are taking place in our area. This time of year is always a little bittersweet as I see students returning to college and school buses on the streets once again. I wish I could just get one more week in at the beach.

We had our “Goodbye to Summer, Hello Fall Soirée” on September 17. I really enjoyed myself and it was fun to get to know more residents of our community. I like hearing from you and hearing your thoughts and ideas. Of course, there were plenty of tempting treats. Thanks to all who attended and to all who pitched in to make it a wonderful evening!

SLCA 2016-2017 Membership Drive Update

Our fall membership drive happens during the months of September and October each year. As a result, a large part of September was spent contacting households for renewal, reaching out to new residents, and raising awareness about the many benefits of SLCA for our community. We hope that you’ve received one of our many reminders - through the newsletter, a letter to your home, the posts on NextDoor, a reference to our website, or a visit from your Block Captain. We’ve expanded our communication avenues in an effort to reach all of you. But now it’s your turn to reach out to us. Have these methods of communication been effective? How can we improve?

In the next issue of the newsletter we will provide an update on our annual membership drive, as more checks and payments continue to trickle-in throughout the month of October. In the meantime, feel free to contact our Membership Chair, Sarah Linden, if you’d like to voice a concern, offer a suggestion, or just want to let us know how we’re doing. We’re excited about the new year and the many exciting fall activities we have planned! Remember, it’s never too late to join SLCA!

For more information:
www.stratforlanding.org/aboutslca

Contact Sarah Linden:
stratfordlandingcitizensassoc@gmail.com



Letter from the President (cont'd)

I also want personally thank those who showed up in the August heat to help with our entrance signage clean-up. Hopefully you all have noticed the difference. We intend to keep up with this effort, we will paint the signs in the spring, and revisit upgrading the signs in the near future through a community-wide fundraiser. Stay tuned for more details after winter hibernation!

Recently, I had the pleasure of meeting with Officer Robert Urps to interview him for this issue of our newsletter. I hope you enjoy learning more about him and his many years of work in our community. What struck me the most during our conversation was how much he stressed the importance

of community involvement as a way to maintain the integrity and safety of where we live.

As we head in to fall we continue to work hard on our membership drive and the plans for our annual meeting, to be held October 18 from 7-9pm at Fort Hunt Elementary School. Please see the back of this issue for more details. Our guest speaker will be Officer William Williamson. Officer Williamson is a police officer who covers our neighborhood. I hope you will join us and look forward to seeing you there.

- Kim Fairchild, SLCA President

Get to Know Officer Robert "Bubba" Urps: Crime Prevention Officer

Last May, I attended the basic training session for the Neighborhood Watch Program. The program was conducted by MPO Robert Urps. I found the evening session to be very informative, and enjoyed hearing Officer Urps educate us on how to make our neighborhood a safer place to live. As a result of my attendance, I decided to ask Officer Urps if he would agree to an interview for our newsletter so that we might learn more about him and his work in our community.

Some of you may already know Robert Urps. He was born and raised right here in this area and even attended West Potomac High School. During his senior year, after some of his friends fell victim to crime, he decided that he would like to become a police officer so he could make a difference where he grew up. In addition, he was inspired by the fact that his brother had become a police officer in Washington D.C.

Officer Urps has served for 25 years at the Mount Vernon Station, starting out as a patrol officer. He was the School Resource Officer at West Potomac from 1998 to 2000, after which he served as a detective for 14 years. Now his title is Crime Prevention Officer. One of his many tasks is to help set up Neighborhood Watch Programs. From my own experience in speaking with him, this is a very busy man.

In his spare time he enjoys spending time with his wife and four children, and even once in a while makes a trip to a

Virginia vineyard with his wife. He describes himself as a movie buff, and mentioned the original version of "Razors Edge," "Apocalypse Now," and the series "Jesus of Nazareth" as some of his favorites. Additionally, he teaches Sunday school and does a lot of volunteer work for his church. I was interested to learn that after he retires from police work he hopes to become a pastor.

When asked who was the most important role model in his life he answered "my father, who gave me his work ethic." He said one of the things he has done in his work he is most proud of is helping a homeless woman who had asked him for \$2.00. Years later he received a letter from her saying that his help had actually helped her get her life back on track.

I asked Officer Urps what he thinks the most important thing Stratford Landing residents can do to maintain the integrity of what I call our "little hamlet" just east of Route 1. He quickly and without hesitation answered "Get involved. Yes you need to go to kids' sports and activities, but it is also critical to balance that with sharing in the every day work in your community." I have reflected on that statement many times since we met. Certainly, being president of the SLCA is a juggling act for me as well with family and work. But then most things that are worth it require that kind of effort.

Entrance Signage Clean-Up

On Saturday, August 20th, Stratford Landing residents joined forces to clean-up the entrance signage. Trees were cut, shrubs were trimmed, branches were hauled, and unsightly weeds were removed. A local resident donated mulch to be placed around the entrance signs, while another donated his time and handy chainsaw skills to remove some unsightly trees. The most important contributions were all of the time and sweat that went into the clean-up. We can't thank those who showed-up enough for their hard work. We hope to make this an annual event, so that we can continue to keep our community beautiful!



Fairfax County Meals Tax Referendum

On Election Day, November 8, the ballot will include a referendum on authorizing the county whether or not to proceed with a 4% meals tax. If the measure passed, the Board of Supervisors has stipulated that Fairfax County Public Schools will receive 70% of the revenue generated, while the balance will go to county services, capital improvements, and property tax relief. It is estimated that over \$90M in new revenue would be generated in the first year. A meals tax does not apply to groceries; however, prepared food such as deli items and salad bar will count. Nearly all of our surrounding jurisdictions have a meals tax in place, including Arlington County (4%), the City of Alexandria (4%), and the District of Columbia (10%). The County estimates 28% of the new revenue stream will come from non-Fairfax residents.

Mosquitoes & Zika

We all want to keep Zika virus out of our community, and the key to that is to control the mosquitoes that transmit it. According to the Virginia Cooperative Extension Service (www.ext.vt.edu/), the key to controlling mosquitoes is removing any standing or stagnant water where they can breed, in buckets, gutters, water-gardens, birdbaths, kiddie-pools, tree-holes, puddles, corrugated plastic drain pipes, garbage cans, flowerpot saucers, tarps or sheets of plastic, etc. Mosquitoes do not survive in water sources that support fish or beneficial aquatic life, such as frogs or dragonflies. They are not found in streams, rivers, or moving water. They can breed in as little water as a bottle capful.

To spray or not to spray? Fairfax County's Health Department advises, "If mosquitoes are biting, you may want to spray your yard with an EPA-registered insecticide, particularly the places where mosquitoes like to hide, such as bushy green plants, ivy, other ground-covering plants and bamboo." However, the Virginia Cooperative Extension Service recommends against yard spraying. Eric Day, manager of Virginia Tech's Insect Identification Lab, says spraying insecticide in your yard can provide only temporary relief. If you do not remove the standing water that allows mosquitoes to breed, they will be back in a few days. He points out that insecticides used to spray mosquitoes also kill pollinators and other non-target insects. Bug zappers are also not recommended by VCE because they kill very few mosquitoes.

According to a presentation by Virginia Extension Service, Virginia Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services, and Arlington Regional Master Naturalists, individual property treatments offer only short term benefits and increase pesticide exposure to people, pets and wildlife. Many adult mosquito control products are toxic to mammals, fish, aquatic life, birds and/or bees. Mosquito-killing fogs, sprays, and aerosols should be used with caution, should be based on mosquito surveillance data, and should be applied over large areas, not individual yards. The bottom line in prevention by eliminating the standing water where mosquitoes breed. The most effective control is directed at the immature life cycle stages (e.g., Mosquito Dunks). Spraying yards to control adult mosquitoes should be done with caution, if at all, as a last resort and for temporary relief. When mosquitoes are biting, use DEET, picaridin, or oil of lemon eucalyptus on exposed skin.

UPCOMING EVENTS

Jack & Betty Shawn Blood Drive

WHEN: Saturday, October 8, 2016
WHERE: INOVA Mount Vernon Hospital
2501 Parkers Lane, Alexandria, VA 22306
TIMES: Slots available from 7:30am to 12:30pm

Please choose an available slot on the INOVA eDonor system or feel free to get back to me via email or phone call to the number below with your preferred time(s).

Website URL for Sign-Up:

<https://www.inovabloodsaves.org/index.cfm?group=op&step=2&opid=16573&opidh=C-CFD7082A9E1967E6815EAF7AAB-2085D&idt=42632.7227778>

Thank you for your continued support!
- Steve Schlacter
Email: stephen.schlacter@gmail.com
Phone: 703.587.5695

Fall Yard Sale - Saturday, October 15 8am - Noon

The Fall 2016 Stratford Landing Community Yard Sale will be held Saturday, October 15 from 8 am - Noon. With the success of the spring yard sale, it seems only fitting to have a second to clean out those closets before winter! Make sure to send your address and list of items to be sold to recommitteechair@gmail.com as soon as possible for use in advertising. A rain date is tentatively scheduled for Saturday, October 22nd, 2016.

SLCA Annual Meeting - Tuesday, October 18 Fort Hunt Elementary School, 7-9pm

Our Annual SLCA Meeting will be held Tuesday, October 18th from 7-9pm in the cafeteria of Fort Hunt Elementary School. Our guest speaker will be William Williamson, a local police officer assigned to our neighborhood. If you have not renewed your membership, you can do so at the meeting. Please bring \$10 cash (not check) so that your voting rights will be immediately active.

Halloween Parade - Saturday, October 22 Stratford Landing Park, 3-4:30 pm

Calling all witches, ghosts, vampires and other spooky creatures. It's time for the annual kids Halloween Parade & party! Put on your favorite costume and come out for spooktacular time to include fun, food and games. Full details to follow on the SLCA website.

Election Day - Tuesday, November 8 Polls are open 6am - 7pm

It's important to call attention to Election Day this year, no matter who you're voting for. Because of crowds and the on-going construction at Stratford Landing Elementary School, officials will be supporting drive-thru voting measures, and are encouraging residents to consider use of Absentee Ballots if possible. For more information, please refer to the county website at:
<http://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/elections/upcoming.htm>

Traffic Calming Measures - Update

Fairfax County still intends to complete the traffic calming studies that needed to be revisited at the requested intersections by the end of October. We will provide and update regarding a path forward for appropriate measures after the studies are complete.

Obituary for Thomas Arthur Grant September 29, 1931 - September 3, 2016 (84)

Tom died peacefully in his sleep in his home surrounded by his family. He was born in San Francisco, CA, to Hazel & Claude Grant & is survived by his wife of 51 years, Patricia Burrell Grant; his daughter, Lori K. Grant; his stepson, Richard B Frye, Jr; granddaughter, Monique Grant-Olsson; and extended family. Tom served as an Auditor in the US Army Audit Agency for over 30 years, reaching the Senior Executive Service & achieving many prestigious awards. He graduated from Hartnell & San Jose State Colleges & received his Masters Degree in Auditing from Michigan State University. He is remembered fondly for his love of his family, his devotion to the US Army & its history, the famous Washington Redskins & the Nationals.