



# STRATFORD LANDING

Mount Vernon District, Fairfax County

## From the President

I recently visited some family members in Central Pennsylvania who live in a small town. It is a charming little one street town that until recent times sat out in the country amidst farmland. Now, if you look around the area you will see large industrial storage buildings across the street from the local Volunteer Fire Department. This little town is literally being squeezed out by commercial sprawl. The residents are fighting for their existence at this point and trying desperately to save their town. They have raised thousands of dollars for community improvement and received an \$85,000 grant to move a historical home back away from the street. Trucks are unlawfully barreling through their streets in a "No Trucks" zone as the homeowners sit vigilantly on a neighbor's porch and count the trucks passing through. It made me think about how vulnerable a community can become and how impressive the will of the residents was to fight for their quality of life.

I have served as President of the SLCA for the past four years and this will be my last President's letter. At our annual meeting on October 22, a new President will be elected as well as several new board members. As I prepare to step down, it has caused me to reflect The SLCA volunteers provide you with e-Blast alerts with important news and safety updates. on my experience of the last four years. I have helped people address mail fraud and drainage issues, worked with VDOT to get sidewalks and sightlines cleared, helped organize community events, attended community meetings, help settle disputes between neighbors, helped set up our Neighborhood Watch Program and oversaw the installation of a speed hump and the cleanup of one of our neighborhood signs. I am fortunate to have had a board with members who have tirelessly taken on more than one responsibility and I am very grateful for all their hard work. We don't have enough space in this newsletter to list all the tasks that the board takes on. We are also fortunate to have the assistance of our block captains. Their support plays a major role in the success of our membership drive and provides a conduit for communication. Clearly there is always work to be done and, in all honesty, the hardest part of this job has been getting more people to volunteer.

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## SLCA Annual Meeting

Tuesday, October 22, 7 pm

Stratford Landing Elementary School Cafeteria

- Update on the GW Parkway Safety Study from Representative Beyer's office
- Candidates Night – Who's Running and What are They Saying
  - SLCA Elections
  - Budget approval

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## Annual Membership Drive Begins September 1

It is time for the SLCA's annual membership drive. Please print the membership form in this newsletter or go to the neighborhood website ([www.stratford-landing.org](http://www.stratford-landing.org)) and renew or join right now. I know this simple task can easily be forgotten in your efforts to return to school routines and all the responsibilities we must address every day but your Block Captains and I would like to wrap this up on Oct. 1<sup>st</sup> to ensure we are ready for the annual meeting in October.

If everyone renews and/or joins the SLCA by October 1st then we will leave you alone until next September. I promise! If you renew or join by October 1st you will be a member in good standing and can vote at this year's annual meeting which is scheduled for October 22nd.

Why join? Here is what your \$10.00 membership fee supports:

- The SLCA's annual dues to the Mount Vernon Council of Citizens' Associations (MVCCA) which is where we have representation on the standing committees that make important policy decisions and recommendations to the county's elected officials and staff on issues that affect local school planning, zoning, housing, the environment, public safety, transportation and more.

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### A Bump in the Road (on Camden)!

Many of you have experienced the recently constructed Speed Bump (actually a Speed Table) in the vicinity of 8620, 8621 and 8700 Camden Street.



Speed bumps and speed tables are Fairfax County's approved Traffic Calming Devices to reduce vehicular speed in residential communities. Their purpose is to increase safety for all residents and pets but especially smaller children. Regarding the differences between speed bumps and speed tables, speed bumps are constructed 3 inches high at the center and span 12 feet from start of the rise to completion. Speed tables are the same 3 inches in height but span 22 feet from the start of the rise to completion. Speed tables, like the one on Camden, offer a more gradual Traffic Calming Device.

The process to construct the Speed Table on Camden was both lengthy and labor intensive. It included a joint effort between the Stratford Landing Citizens Association (SLCA) and the Fairfax County Department of Transportation (FCDOT) that lasted two and a half years.

The effort actually began in October 2016. As a result of numerous complaints from residents about speeding on Stratford Landing (SL) roadways, SLCA requested Fairfax County assistance to help reduce vehicular speeds. The following month, November 2016, FCDOT conducted formal surveys of Camden St., Cavendish Dr., Childs Ln., and Londonderry Rd. All four (4) roadways met the threshold for Traffic Calming Devices since they showed (1) a volume between 600 and 6000 vehicles per day and,

(2) vehicles reached an average speed of 30 mph or greater.

Additionally, each roadway met the minimum requirement for volume with Cavendish topping the list at 1,896 vehicles in a 24 hour period. As a result of SL Surveys, in March 2017, FCDOT drafted a proposed Traffic Calming Plan that added a total of seven (7) speed bumps and/or speed tables on Camden St., Cavendish Dr., Childs Ln., and Londonderry Rd. Each roadway had two (2) proposed devices except Cavendish, which had one (1).

To facilitate the County's Plan, in the spring of 2017 SLCA convened a SL Traffic Calming Team to accomplish the leg-work and coordinate with FCDOT. The Team, which was headed by John Horn, included Chris Bahret, John Bioty and Nancy Knoblauch. Shawn Ghee later replaced Nancy Knoblauch as a working member and John Bioty assumed Chairmanship duties mid 2018.

To proceed with the County's Plan, approval signatures had to be obtained from home owners directly adjacent to speed hump or speed table locations. If one homeowner approved and the other (directly across the street) did not, that disqualified the location. As imagined, speed humps or speed tables are hot-button issues. The SL Team soon learned that neighborhood households were either for them or against them. In several cases, it was noted that homeowners could be both: *i.e. "I'm for speed bumps; only not in front of my house."* Ultimately, the speed table in the vicinity of 8700 Camden was the only one endorsed for construction by home owners on both sides of the street.

On November 2018, FCDOT, in conjunction with SLCA, held a Town Hall Meeting at the Stratford Landing Elementary School Cafeteria on Riverside Road. The purpose of the meeting was to answer questions regarding the proposed Camden speed table and explain the voting process to approve, or disapprove, its construction. FCDOT also defined the voting population as "those residents between Wittington and Londonderry Rd, as well as residents at 2306 and 2318 Wittington and 2305 Londonderry". In total, 30 SL households received voting ballots on December 1<sup>st</sup> 2018 to be filled out and mailed directly to the Fairfax County Mount Vernon District Office by December 21, 2018. To approve the construction of the speed table on Camden, FCDOT required that a minimum

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**Membership Drive** (continued from page 1)

- The SLCA volunteers provide you with e-Blast alerts with important news and safety updates from across our “community watch” network. You also receive ongoing communication and neighborhood news via the newsletter, the SLCA website and Facebook page. The SLCA volunteers also provide the neighborhood directory and the Sweet List of recommended service providers and contractors endorsed by our neighbors.
- The SLCA is a resource for your community-related questions and concerns. We maintain strong relationships with the Fairfax County Police Department, the Park Police and other organizations.
- And, the SLCA provides annual community events to ensure that our neighborhood of 770 homes feels friendly and welcoming to everyone who lives here. The SLCA sponsors the annual Easter Egg Hunt, a community yard sale, a summer picnic, blood drives, watershed clean-ups along Little Hunting Creek, and Santa on the fire truck every December.

The SLCA exists to serve and strengthen our community by providing a forum for sharing information, connecting neighbors, promoting activities and fostering civic engagement for those who live here. Please renew or join today. And yes, we do need you to complete the membership form again this year. It is the best way to ensure that our records are accurate.

Let’s care for our community together!  
 Kathy Lehner  
 SLCA, membership chair

**President’s letter** (continued from page 1)

I like to frequent our local Goodwill Store. They play a recording regularly that quotes Margaret Meade as saying “never underestimate what a handful of committed people can accomplish.” We are very fortunate to live in our little hamlet here east of Route 1. Forbes cites such things as pride in ownership, low crime, good schools and older established neighborhoods with longtime residents that create stability as the keys to a good neighborhood. If you Google how to

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to immediately improve your neighborhood, one of the things they suggest is to start a neighborhood organization and a crime watch.

I have encountered some residents who have never heard of the SLCA and some who don’t believe a neighborhood association is relevant or necessary in current times due to social media, Nextdoor, Facebook and tweets. Article 1 in the SLCA Bylaws states that “The purpose of the Association is to promote the civic interests and general welfare of the residents of the Stratford Landing community.” As we move forward, based on my experience of the last four years, I believe that there is a place for the SLCA and that it is important for our residents to stay involved. We need to make sure we speak to our neighbors and check in on our elderly, report something when we see it and walk around the block. I saw what that little town in PA is doing with their handful of committed people. We are the caretakers of this land that is deeply rooted in our historical past. I am grateful to be a part of that and honored to live in Stratford Landing.

**A Speed Bump** (continued from Page 2)

of 50 % of the distributed ballots be returned, and of that 50%, 60% had to approve the speed table.

On January 4, 2019 the Mt Vernon District Supervisor notified SLCA that the Camden Speed Table was approved. Supervisor Storck’s Office informed SLCA that 80% (24 ballots) of the 30 ballots issued had been returned. Additionally, 23 of the 24 ballots received (96%) approved the Camden Speed Table. Those results were incorporated in the County’s Traffic Calming *Plan* for 2019 and endorsed by the Fairfax County Board of Supervisors in March 2019. Construction on Camden began the week of June 10<sup>th</sup> and the Speed Table was fully operational on June 17, 2019

Question: You might ask if the Camden Speed Table is effective in slowing down traffic on that roadway? As one Camden resident put it:

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*"I live next to the speed table, and I wanted to tell you that it is totally working!! Even though it is much less intimidating than what you find in a grocery store parking lot, all cars slow down significantly. I watch it every day because I find it fascinating. Thank you for your work to protect our community!!!"*

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**SLCA Blood Drive**

The next Jack and Betty Shawn Blood Drive is Saturday, October 05, 7:30 - 12:30 at Inova Mount Vernon Hospital. Appointments available via web, using Sponsor Code 3018, or contact Stephen Schlacter:  
[Stephen.schlacter@gmail.com](mailto:Stephen.schlacter@gmail.com) or 703-587-5695

<https://inovabloodsaves.org/mobile/index.cfm?group=op&step=2&opid=22791&opidh=5B13394A064378695ECEE6045BB5C5D7&idt=43646.4878472>

**Mount Vernon House and Garden Club**

Membership Coffee of the Mount Vernon House and Garden Club will be on. Wednesday, September 11, 2019 at 9:30am at Hollin Hall Senior Center, 1500 Shenandoah Road (behind the gas station and 7-11) Please attend our welcome back after summer coffee and hear about our programs for the year.

**Newsletter Editor Needed**

SLCA is in search of a newsletter editor. The newsletter comes out six times per year. Most information is provided by the board and MVCCA delegates so it's primarily a matter of formatting. Easy right? If you can provide this valuable service, please contact Kim Fairchild at [slcanewpres2015@gmail.com](mailto:slcanewpres2015@gmail.com)

**Election of Board Members at SLCA Annual Meeting**

Please consider joining the SLCA team. Positions are listed in the right hand column (Delegates to the MVCCA are appointed). Fresh ideas are welcome and needed! Board meetings are once a month and kept to less than an hour. If interested, please contact Nominating Committee Chairman Cole Smith at [stratfordlandingnw@gmail.com](mailto:stratfordlandingnw@gmail.com)

**Officers**

**President: Kim Fairchild**  
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**Vice President: Cole Smith**  
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**Standing Committee Chairs**

**Membership: Kathy Lehner**  
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**Rules: Keith Kettell**  
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**Comm. Improvements & Transportation: Vacant**  
**Events: Vacant**

**Delegates to MVCCA**

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