

THE LANDING PAGE

The Official Newsletter of Stratford Landing

SLCA Leadership

Christopher Morgan, President
Dan Rasgus, Treasurer
Becky McCullough, Secretary
Doug Zimmerman, Public Safety
John Bioty, Transportation
Nicole Vitale, Recreation
Stori Zimmerman, Membership
Leah Chapla, Planning and Zoning
Glenn Ferri, Historian/Website
Keith Kettell, Rules

The Stratford Landing Citizens' Association is a not-for-profit, non-partisan team of volunteers founded in 1959 to promote the civic interests and general welfare of the residents of the Stratford Landing community. Membership is open to all who live within Stratford Landing and leadership opportunities are currently available.

Visit: <https://www.stratford-landing.org> or scan the code below to join today.



SCAN ME

A Letter from the President

Christopher Morgan, President

Very recently, the sump pump in our basement failed and we ended up with some very minor flooding in the basement. While I had replaced the sump pump as soon as we moved in and it was still relatively new, the recent low temps had caused a freeze in the discharge pipe, which, through no one's real fault, caused the pump to stop. Cleaning it up and making the repairs was not exactly how I wanted to spend my weekend.

While I was repairing pipes and making trips back and forth to Village Hardware, I kept finding other things in the basement that needed work. And so more weekends and evenings were consumed. Pipes were replaced, cut, and soldered, wires were re-routed, wood was cut, nailed, and screwed. Then there was some drywall, some primer, some paint, and even some wallpaper. By the end of it, we ended up with a finished laundry room area in our basement.

I didn't set out to start this project and wouldn't have made the investment if it weren't for that happenstance flooding.

Like me in our 1958-built home, I hope you were able to spend part of your winter fixing things up and making repairs, even if it's not what you were hoping for. As we all enter into the spring, we find ourselves in better shape and with greater improvements than we had going into the dark winter weeks.



Little Hunting Creek Clean-Ups

Neighbors and the Friends of Little Hunting Creek have been hosting invasive vine-pulling events and clean-ups on the weekends at the nature preserve at 8610 Stockton Pkwy. Contact Betsy Martin at betsy@folhc.org to be included in her email distribution list for announcements on when clean-ups are taking place.



Annual Easter Egg Hunt was a Hopping Good Time

A special thank you to Nicole Vitale, SLCA Social Chair, for putting together a fantastic 2024 Easter Egg Hunt! With generous sponsorship from Alexandria Children's Theater, this event has grown considerably in the three years since it was brought back to Stratford Landing. Neighbors young and old enjoyed an Egg Hunt, specialty drinks from local favorite, The Little Well, and a special visit from the Easter Bunny!

Events like this are possible through the work of our volunteer Board members and the annual dues we assess for membership in SLCA. We hope you will continue to support our community.



Stratford Landing Public Safety Update

Doug Zimmerman, Public Safety Chair

I hope everyone is having a safe and productive Spring 2024. In recent meetings with the Fairfax County Police Department (FCPD), it was noted that the most common criminal activity in our area remains episodic vehicle burglary. These are crimes of opportunity that usually occur when a vehicle is left unlocked. So please lock your vehicles and secure your valuables.

The Fairfax Police also stated that one of the best tools for solving crimes in our area are doorbell and outside cameras. They highly suggest installing cameras, such as Ring, Nest, Blink, Arlo, or Eufy. FCPD said that if there were older residents who were not comfortable installing these cameras, they would be happy to come out and assist with installation.

Is there interest in a neighborhood watch? FCPD stated that if there were 10 or more individuals interested in taking part, they would be happy to come out and help set up the program. This program would include a briefing on how to conduct a watch, what you can and cannot do as part of the watch, and the delivery of neighborhood watch signs for posting in the neighborhood which could act as a deterrent for crimes of opportunity, like vehicle theft. If you are interested in participating in a neighborhood watch program, please reach out to me at publicsafety@stratford-landing.org.

Public Safety is looking to set up a women's self-defense seminar in mid-May. This seminar will be available for females ages 13 and older. This seminar will be held at Potomac Kempo – Huntington Dojo. The owner of the dojo, Renshi Geoff Gibbs has over 25 years of self-defense training and will focus on responses to specific situations and threat avoidance. Look for a flyer on the SLCA Facebook page in the next few weeks. We will have 24 spots available for the seminar, and the sign-ups will be on a first come first-serve basis with the priority going to SLCA members.

If you have questions about this event, please reach out to me at: publicsafety@stratford-landing.org.

Stratford Landing Community Directory

We are excited to announce that a paper copy of the Stratford Landing Community Association Directory will be available this fall. The directory will consist of a list of residents organized by names, and then a separate list organized by street.

We will be asking residents if they would like to have their phone numbers and email addresses published. Of course, you may opt-out. All other information found in the directory will come from public resources.

Another feature of the new directory will be a space where children of residents in school may offer their services for hire. For example, babysitting, dog walking, mowing, etc. We will put together a list of jobs and families can decide which of the services they would like to offer.

We will also be offering paid advertising opportunities to local businesses. Page rates will be forthcoming.

We are excited about this project. We expect to deliver the Directory this fall. We will be advertising the new directory through the website, as well as with a hand-delivered flyer that can be completed and returned to me at my home on Creek Drive. We want to make sure all residents have the opportunity to share or opt out of having their information in the directory.

The directory will be free to all Stratford Landing Citizens' Association members. You will receive it with your 2025 renewal.

Welcome New SLCA Board Members

Dan Rasgus, Treasurer

Dan Rasgus is a northern Virginia native, born in Washington DC and raised in Falls Church. He earned his bachelors degree from Old Dominion University and his masters degree from James Madison University. He currently works for the Department of Navy as a subject matter expert in cybersecurity. He lives with his wife, Stephanie, and his two kids, Cecilia (4) and Neil (2) on Culpeper Road. In his spare time, he likes to lift weights, spend time outdoors overlanding, listen to music, watch comedies, and, of course, play with his kids.

Becky McCullough, Secretary

Born in Canada, I grew up in Ottawa, Ontario, the nation's capital (interestingly with a size and feel similar to Alexandria!). I went to college at the University of Toronto, where I obtained a B.Sc. in Statistics and Psychology. I spent the first 12 years of my career in Toronto in the financial investment industry.

I married Brian McCullough in 1998, and soon after, Brian's company offered him a job in Newport News, VA. As I was 5 months pregnant with our daughter Hailey and about to go on leave, we decided what the heck - it was a great opportunity, and we leapt at it. We thought we would live in Williamsburg, VA for a couple of years then go back to Canada. (Ha!)

We absolutely loved living in Williamsburg, and our second child Max was born there. I settled into the role of stay-at-home mom, and got involved in the kids' schools, running auctions and events, etc. In 2009, Brian's job brought us to Alexandria, where we bought our first house in Waynewood. With the kids fully settled in school, I got involved with PTA and volunteering (eg Team Rep for the Waynewood Swim Team). During this time, though, I was also itching to get back into a profession.

In 2013, I got my real estate license. For the past 10 years I have been having a blast doing what I love! I've flipped a few houses, done \$100M in sales, moved twice (locally) and had the time of my life.

In 2020, we bought a house on Creek Drive in Stratford Landing, and renovated it completely. Brian, our rescue dog Mosey, and I are absolutely in heaven and couldn't be happier in this neighborhood! We've been empty nesters for a couple of years, and when the request for volunteers came up for the SLCA, I was excited to throw my hat in the ring.

We are also members at Mount Vernon Country Club, where Brian is on the board of directors, and I have held executive positions in the ladies groups and run different events. If we're not enjoying our house on the creek or working, we are usually there chasing little white balls!

I look forward to supporting the SLCA.

SKATING ANYONE ?

We hope that you have been down to see the progress on the skating rinks. We have the benches, the stoves, the wood, the outline of the two rinks; one of which is nice and large; we have an offer to receive coaching for a hockey team--lights will be going in soon, and by the first of the year we ought to be ready to go. Let us say it again--fathers--your children will be using this, the only rink of its kind in the entire county. It'll save you having to drive miles and miles and pay to permit your children this fun. We've already had a skate exchange on a miserable rainy day and swapped over 25 pairs. It's going to take a lot of work to keep this thing going--either we get your help, or we're simply going to have to pay Teen Club members for their work each night. The Club has already VOLUNTEERED to monitor and man it during operating hours--if you have not volunteered, we're simply going to have to ask you to contribute--the last

Flashbacks

Glenn Ferri, Historian

Flashback - Skating Rinks

Did you know that Stratford Landing used to have its very own skating rinks?! They were located in Stratford Landing Park, behind Stratford Landing Elementary School. They were constructed each year by neighborhood volunteers, including the Teen Club, who monitored and maintained them. Our own civic association, as well as those of Riverside and Waywood made financial contributions.

The newsletter clipping you see is taken from the December 1970 edition, announcing their near completion in the first year of operation - "the only rink of its kind in the entire county". The next month's newsletter (January 1971) proudly tells us the rinks are in full operation from 3 pm to 8 pm every day. In addition to the rinks themselves, there were benches, lighting, wood stoves, and over the years, pickup hockey games at night.

The September 1974 newsletter says that "a couple of years from now, or possibly even next winter" the County will open "a year 'round ice-skating facility ... in the District Park next to Martha Washington Library on Fort Hunt Road" but that "this year, though, we'll go it alone". The new facility mentioned came to be the Mount Vernon Rec Center, which includes an indoor NHL-sized hockey rink. The Rec Center is currently being renovated to include a second rink in addition to other impressive amenities and upgrades.



Photo Credit - Jay Spiegel

Osprey Cam

Neighbor Jay Spiegel has upgraded his OspreyCam to a new setup. Anyone is able to observe the nest which is placed on a post in Little Hunting Creek off of Stockton Pkwy. The Axis Q1786-LE camera is mounted high up on the chimney of his home.

Its vantage point is 220 feet from the Osprey nest and elevated 33 feet higher than the nest. The resolution is spectacular and the ospreys are quite active.

The link to the live video is below.

www.littlehuntingcreek.org

Transportation Talk

John Bioty, Community Improvements and Transportation Chair

Right-of-Way at the Camden-Londonderry Intersection.

There have been quite a few complaints about the traffic right-of-way at the Londonderry-Camden Intersection. Some believe there's a 4-Way Stop at that intersection but only Londonderry traffic is required to stop; Camden traffic proceeds through that intersection without stopping.

Motorists and pedestrians alike, agree there should be a 4-Way Stop at the Londonderry-Camden intersection but there's not. While Londonderry traffic is required to stop before crossing the Intersection, Camden traffic is not required to do so. SLCA is aware of instances where motorists believed there was a 4-Way stop at that intersection. In such cases, Londonderry traffic proceeded through the intersection thinking Camden traffic would be stopping. This resulted in near misses and screeching tires. What adds to the confusion is that the intersection just prior (Camden-Wittington) and the intersection just after (Camden-Cavendish) are 4-Way Stops.

Nearly two years ago SLCA requested a 4-Way stop be implemented at the Camden-Londonderry Intersection to alleviate this situation. Virginia Department of Transportation (VDOT) however denied the request stating that regulations require a minimum distance between 4-Way Stops. The Camden-Londonderry Intersection did not qualify because it's too close to the 4-Way stop at Camden-Cavendish.

If you are travelling on Londonderry and approaching the Camden intersection, please know that Camden Traffic is not required to stop. Most SLCA residents are now familiar with the right-of-way traffic at the Camden-Londonderry Intersection. As a helpful reminder, however, Londonderry Stop Signs have a yellow rectangular sign notifying motorists that "CROSS TRAFFIC DOES NOT STOP".



Fairfax Connector Bus Service Resumes Operations

On February 22nd, 2024 at 9 AM, the Fairfax Connector ceased operations due to a strike by its drivers. Six hundred thirty (630) Fairfax Connector workers walked off the job. The strike continued until March 5th when a tentative agreement was reached. Bus operations resumed Friday March 8th, 2024.

Although the "Connector" is Fairfax County's primary bus service, it is owned and operated by Transdev - a large private sector transportation company. Transdev's bus drivers, however, are unionized and belong to the Amalgamated Transit Union (ATU) Local 689 of the AFL CIO. Their previous contract with Transdev expired in November 2023.

A month prior, October 2023, renewal talks began between Transdev and ATU 689. According to ATU 689, talks did not go well and as a result, the strike occurred. ATU 689 workers said that they needed more competitive wages, retirement security, additional sick leave, and balanced rights between workers and management.

Transdev responded by indicating their offer included a 19.5% pay increase over the next 36 months, 90% health care coverage, 50% dental and vision cost coverage, minimum work hour shifts, 11 paid holidays, 2 additional sick days and a generous 401K plan.

Ultimately, ATU Local 689 and Transdev reached a tentative agreement Tuesday, March 5 following an all-day bargaining session over a new contract. Fairfax County, a stakeholder in this matter, was not directly involved in labor negotiations. Resolve of this strike was between Transdev and the Amalgamated Transit Union (Local) 689. A federal mediator was also involved.

On March 6th, Fairfax County Board of Supervisors Chairman Jeffrey McKay shared the following statement:

"We're pleased that Fairfax Connector service is expected to resume soon for the system's 26,000 customers, on a contract agreement between the Amalgamated Transit Union (ATU) Local 689 and Transdev. Last week I requested the assistance of a federal mediator to help resolve the impasse between Transdev and the ATU. The mutually agreeable solution that resulted from this effort not only respects the exemplary work of the system's drivers and mechanics but ensures that we are moving forward in a fiscally responsible and sustainable manner that benefits our residents."

The Fairfax Connector offers relatively low cost Transportation to the County. Many of us have ridden the 101 Bus that serves routes between Mount Vernon and the Huntington Metro. Our community has been temporarily impacted by having to find alternate transportation to/from work during the walkout. Especially hard hit were families requiring in-home medical care whose providers use the "Connector" to travel to the Mount Vernon area.

SLCA is grateful that a successful negotiation has ended this transportation road-block.

Calling All Future Board Members

SLCA has some exciting things planned for our neighborhood and we would like for you to be a part of it! We're always looking for community members to become involved as Board members or Committee Members. We rely on the time and talents of our neighbors to improve the quality of life in Stratford Landing and beyond. *If you would like more information or are interested in taking the next step, please reach out to our President, Christopher Morgan at president@stratford-landing.org.*



Welcome Stratford on the Potomac and Stratford IV Residents

At the previous SLCA General Membership meeting in October, we amended our by-laws to allow people who technically don't live within the historic Stratford Landing boundaries to join as Associate Members.

This makes many more families eligible to join, receive our newsletter, and participate in our events. Visit www.stratford-landing.org for more information.

Contact Us

Executive Committee:

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Contact treasurer@stratford-landing.org for details.

