

4/9 BLOOD DRIVE

8 AM-12:30 PM

INOVA MT VERNON HOSPITAL PARKING LOT

4/10 EASTER EGG HUNT

3:30 PM

STRATFORD LANDING PARK

CREEK CLEAN-UP

1 PM EVERY SUNDAY

8610 STOCKTON PARKWAY

THE LANDING PAGE

The Official Newsletter of Stratford Landing

SLCA Leadership

- Christopher Morgan**, President
- Matt Dunne**, Vice President
- Celia Boertlein**, Treasurer
- Jarrett Brant**, Secretary
- Patricia Barron**, Public Safety
- John Bioty**, Transportation
- Keith Kettell**, Rules
- Nicole Vitale**, Recreation
- Stori Zimmerman**, Membership
- Leah Chapla**, Planning and Zoning
- Glenn Ferri**, Historian/Website
- Anne Holloway**, Social Media

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.



A Letter from the President

The warm weather has returned, the world has re-opened, and green is showing up everywhere in Stratford Landing. It's time to get out and enjoy the Springtime.

Please take the time now to clear the area around and above your sidewalks from overgrown foliage, branches, and bushes. We appreciate our walk-able community and need to keep our sidewalks clean and open. Keep bushes back around 12" from the sides of sidewalks, and trim overhead branches to allow 8' or more of clearance.

We welcome Nicole Vitale as our new Recreation Chair. Nicole and her family are eager to get involved and, more importantly, involve other families from the neighborhood in events, socials, and activities. She has already planned our Egg Hunt and I can't wait to see everyone at that fun event.

Involvement begins with you. There are multiple volunteer and service opportunities available in the neighborhood and it's the best way to meet the community. If you or your neighbors are not receiving SLCA emails, contact me at president@stratford-landing.org now.



Invasive Vine Pulling

The SLCA, the Friends of Little Hunting Creek, and the Northern Virginia Conservation Trust are working to remove invasive vines from NVCT's Little Hunting Creek Preserve at 8610 Stockton Parkway (adjacent to the pump station).

Sessions are being held on Sundays at 1pm. Anyone can attend and learn what plants should be removed. It's a great stress relief to pull vines, chop weeds, and wack away at stems.

It's our goal to activate that space for better community usage, so please stop by so we can all "pull together".

We Need Your Help

Two years ago, the SLCA undertook a capital improvement project to replace the three wooden entrance signs on the borders of our neighborhood. As many of you know, the signs had inconsistent branding and had significant rot and decay. These signs were original and had been placed approximately 50 years ago. The new entrance signs augment the natural beauty of our community.

Due to the generosity of neighbors, we raised enough funds to replace and install new wooden sign panels, which look great, and are able to retain the existing character of Stratford Landing.

During installation, it was discovered that in many areas the brick pillars on each sign showed signs of water damage, cracking, and staining.

New zoning laws in Fairfax County would now make it infeasible to replace the signs if they become too damaged and collapse.

Because of the wear and damage, we believe now is time to repoint the six pillars, ensuring they stand for another 80 years. The repointing process would include masons grinding out the existing mortar, replacing it, and sandblasting the brick faces.

In addition to the need for repointing, we have several other "wants" in regards to the entrance signs. These include the addition of new shrubs and plants, having the hedges trimmed with a long-term gardening contract, and non-permanent timed solar-powered lighting.

In order to accomplish this project and repair the sign pillars, we're beginning a fundraising campaign and asking residents to step up to help beautify Stratford Landing. While all donations are appreciated, we're asking neighbors for a contribution of \$100.

Donations will be accepted via the lockbox at 8815 Stockton Parkway.

Ideally, we can conclude this campaign and have the signs re-pointed by the end of April, so if you're able to donate, please do so today. A list of donors will appear in our next newsletter.

As a reminder, every member of the SLCA Board and all Block Captains are unpaid volunteers who donate their time to serve the neighborhood.

FAQ

Q: What is the cost of this project?

A: Based on the comparable quotes, we've received, the re-pointing alone for the 3 signs will cost under \$10,000. New plants and trees will be at least \$2,500 per sign. On-going landscape maintenance will be around \$1,000 per year. That does not include any reserve funds, any long-term maintenance, or any secondary capital improvements such as lighting.

Q: I own a masonry business, or I know a good one.

A: That's great. While we have collected several quotes already, please share your referral with us.

Q: What happens if we don't re-point the sign pillars?

A: Because of water damage, it's very likely the signs will eventually crumble and fall over. Should that occur, we would likely not be able to legally replace the pillar due to new zoning rules (but maintenance activities are permitted). Considering the significant project and funds used to replace the wood just 2 years ago, that would be a shame.

Q: What would happen with any "extra" donations?

A: Any and all donations will be used for improvements within Stratford Landing. If there is a surplus from the cost needed for the signs, the Executive Committee will communicate other potential projects for all members to review. This is your money and will remain in your neighborhood. If you have suggestions for other uses, please let us know.



The brick pillars supporting the three new Stratford Landing entrance signs are in need of repair. Replacing the pillars would be infeasible with Fairfax County's new zoning laws.



American Robin Photo Credit: Claire Kluskens

Animal of the Month

Claire Kluskens, Contributor

The American Robin is often considered a welcome sign of spring but some of them stay in our area all winter long! During the spring and summer, they build as many as three different nests that are cup-shaped and made of dead grass, twigs, moss, and mud. They lay eggs that are blue or blue-green. The baby birds hatch naked (without feathers) from the eggs after two weeks. Just two weeks after hatching the babies are fully feathered and ready to leave the nest although they still need a parent's help to learn how to find food. Robins eat earthworms, other insects, snails, and fruits, such as holly berries, chokecherries, honeysuckle berries, and juniper berries. You often see Robins foraging on suburban lawns like ours—hopping a few steps, then stopping, then maybe pulling a worm from the ground. Robins are common but they face many dangers. Shockingly, only half of the robins alive in 2022 will survive to 2023. You can give them a better chance of survival by eliminating pesticides and herbicides from the lawn care products that you or your lawn service uses. The beautiful musical song of the American Robin is a string of 10 or so clear whistles assembled from a few often-repeated syllables. You can listen to some examples of their songs and learn more about them at https://www.allaboutbirds.org/guide/American_Robin/sounds.

Flashbacks

Glenn Ferri, Historian

Flashback – 1892

Anyone trying to visit the Mount Vernon estate before 1892 would have had a difficult time arriving overland. But in that year, we have the opening of the Washington, Alexandria, Mount Vernon Electric Railway line – the first streetcar line in Northern Virginia. It connected Washington and Alexandria to the Mount Vernon Estate, with many stops along the way. It followed the route of the present-day George Washington Memorial Parkway as far as Collingwood Road where it turned away from the river, crossed Ft. Hunt Road and Elkin Street to follow present-day Wittington Boulevard. From there it crossed Little Hunting Creek and went on to Mount Vernon circle.

The railway line opened in 1892. In 1906 there were 30 daily trains between Washington and Mount Vernon with a total of 1,743,734 passengers. The line was discontinued in 1932 when the George Washington Parkway was opened.

The photo of the trolley terminal at Mount Vernon was taken some time between 1910 and 1920.



Trolley Terminal at Mt. Vernon, VA

Call for Submissions

What would you like to contribute to our bi-monthly newsletter?

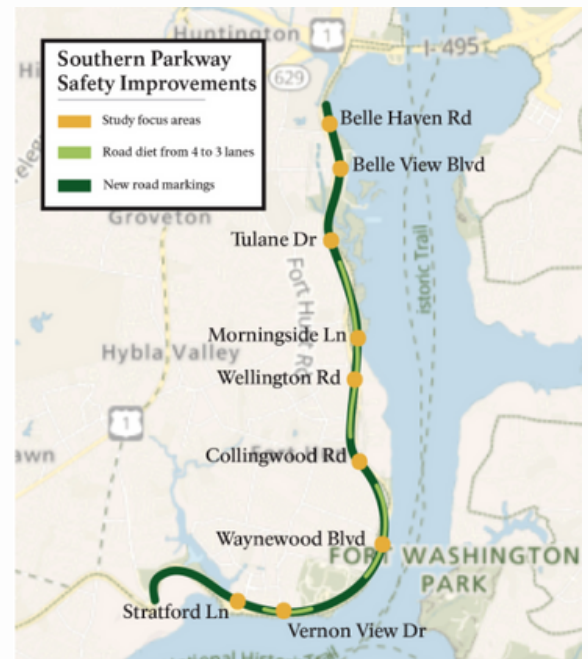
The content of this and future editions of The Landing Page come from neighbors like you. What are you willing to create and share? Can you write Foliage of the Month? Share your favorite seasonal recipes? Do you have a penchant for creating crossword puzzles or sharing snaps of the area? Reach out today and let us know what talents you want to showcase to Stratford Landing and beyond.

Transportation Talk

John Bioty, Community Improvements and Transportation Chair

George Washington Memorial Parkway (GWMP) Update – Most of us have had the opportunity to experience the Road Diet on the George Washington Memorial Parkway. As mentioned in the April/May 2021 SLCA Newsletter, the “Road Diet” involved reducing the Parkway to a single southbound “through lane” between the Tulane and Stratford Landing intersections for “Traffic calming”. Traveling southbound, the Road Diet begins at the Tulane intersection and continues past Morningside Lane, Wellington Road, Collingwood, Waynewood Boulevard, Vernon View, Lucia Lane and opens up at Stratford Lane. The lane configuration at Stratford is not impacted by the Road Diet. The right lane, closest to the curb, is the through lane.

The overall intent of the Road Diet is to increase safety. Although this is an adjustment to previous Parkway travel, the National Park Police (NPP) reports that the Road Diet is doing what it was intended to do. To date, statistics are positive on the increase in safety and decrease in accidents and reckless driving incidents. The current Parkway complaint, however, seems to be downed trees. Clean up from the January snowstorm is behind plan. Parkway officials state that tree cleanup is scheduled to be accomplished in the near future.

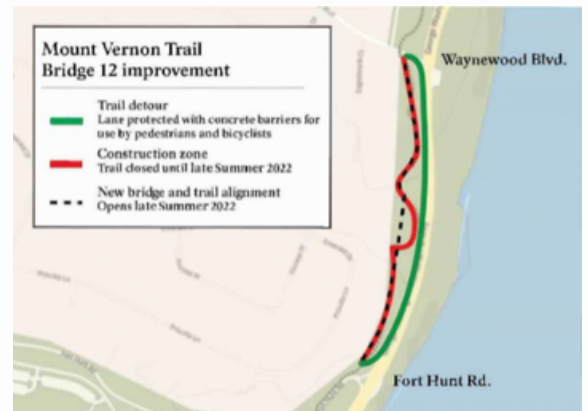


Bridge 12 on the Mount Vernon Trail is getting a “Makeover”

The National Park Service (NPS), in partnership with the Federal Highway Administration and the Virginia Department of Transportation, will begin a project to replace Bridge 12 and realign the Mount Vernon Trail to improve safety near Fort Hunt Park. During the project, trail users will be detoured around the construction area.

The NPS will straighten trail curves that lead to Bridge 12, located approximately 400 yards north of Fort Hunt Park. The bridge will be relocated, allowing for a straighter alignment and a reduced grade leading to and from the bridge. Realigning the trail, replacing the bridge, and laying new trail asphalt will reduce the severity and frequency of bike crashes on this section of the trail.

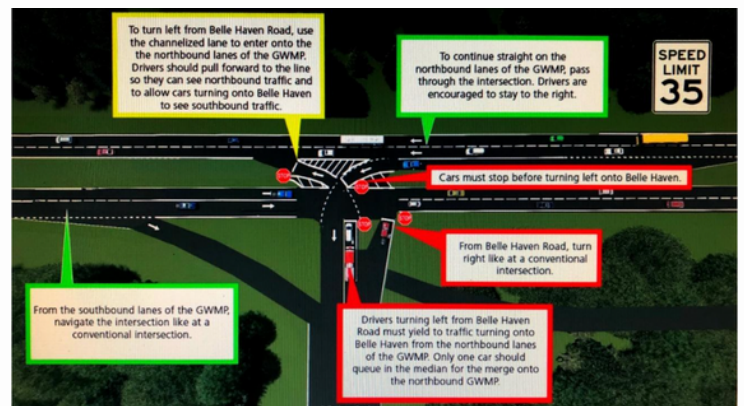
During this project, which is expected to begin soon and be completed in late summer, trail users will be detoured on the adjacent southbound section of the George Washington Memorial Parkway near Waynewood Boulevard. To protect trail users on the detour, concrete barriers will be placed on the roadway and drivers will be guided into one lane. Trail users and drivers should expect temporary, short-term closures and should follow trail signs and directions from onsite flaggers.



GWMP Intersections at Belle Haven Road and Belle View Boulevard

Due to complaints about right-of-way traffic at two Parkway intersections, the National Park Service has published an “info-graph” along with instructions for motorists on how to safely negotiate Parkway intersections at Belle View Boulevard and Belle Haven Road. Instructions and a downloadable copy of the “info-graph” can be found at: <https://www.nps.gov/gwmp/learn/management/southern-george-washington-memorial-parkway-safety-study-next-steps.htm>.

NPS Chief of Staff, Aaron LaRocca stated that “stops signs” and “left turn - yield to median traffic” have been implemented for the Belle Haven Road and Belle View Blvd Intersections and this has eliminated much of the confusion. A graphic of the NPS published “info-graph” is shown here.



SLCA Easter Egg Hunt

Nicole Vitale, Recreation Chair

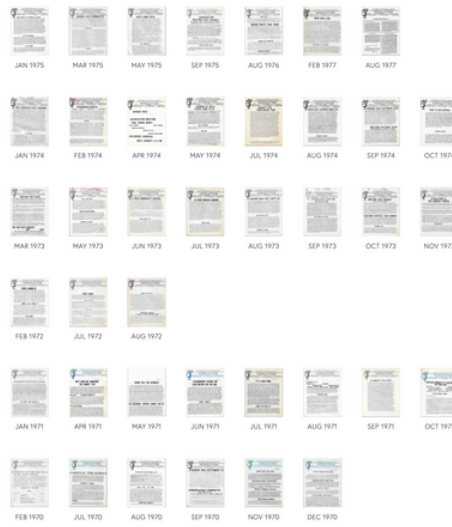
The SLCA Easter Egg Hunt will be held on Sunday, April 10, 2022 at Stratford Landing Park. We are excited to resume this family fun event after a few years off due to the pandemic.

The hunt will begin at 3:30pm. Please come ready for fun and with baskets for gathering eggs!

Our Recreation Committee is looking for volunteers to assist in preparing for this event. Please email Nicole Vitale at recreation@stratford-landing.org if you are interested in helping. There will be an Easter egg stuffing party at her house on April 9, the Saturday prior to the event, and we are also looking for assistant bunnies to help set up. More information will be posted on our Facebook Page.

Archive Newsletters Now Online

We've collected, scanned, and posted archive newsletters dating back to December 1968. These documents offer a terrific glimpse into the history of our area, our citizens' association, and community issues from the past. As we move into the future of Stratford Landing, it's great to take a minute to look back and see from where we've come. Thanks to Webmaster and Historian Glenn Ferri for leading this project.



Visit: <https://www.stratford-landing.org/slca-newsletter>

New Rules for Bamboo

Fairfax County to enact fines for bamboo spreading onto adjacent properties.

Starting in January, the county will be enacting fines of \$50 - \$200 per day, capping out at \$2,000 per year, if bamboo from your property spreads into either an adjacent property or into a public right-of-way.

"Bamboo owners" are subject to the fines even if the current property owner did not plant the bamboo, or if the bamboo initially spread to your property from another.

Enforcement is based on a "complaint" model where the county expects citizens to report violations to the Department of Code Compliance.

Please be aware that bamboo is prevalent in Stratford Landing, and removal is time-consuming and very physically demanding. Please do not use any herbicides marketed for bamboo removal as they are not safe for children, and are very hazardous in our high water table and water systems.

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Celia Boertlein, Treasurer
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Christopher Morgan, Environment & Recreation
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Contact treasurer@stratford-landing.org for details.

