

January 2018

Vol. 48, Issue 1

Kings Park West Civic Association

On behalf of the Kings Park West Civic Association Board, I would like to wish you a Happy 2018!

Many KPW homes were festively decorated during the holidays. The entryway wall and community signboard were adorned with holiday wreaths, thanks to Laura Hall and Linda Reamy. In addition, the decorating committee was out and about in KPW, tasked with the job of naming the holiday decorating winners. As usual, there were many beautiful homes to choose from, making their job difficult. The following are the winners of the Holiday Lights Contest:

Best Overall Decoration Winners

- 10159 Tapestry Court
- 5214 Noyes Court
- 5237 Morley Court

Best Kids Delight Decoration Winners

- 5118 Thackery Court
- 5059 Dequincey Drive
- 5010 Wheatstone Drive

Congratulations to all of our winners – you have bragging rights for the year! Thanks to everyone for making our neighborhood look so festive this time of year. And a special thanks to Caroline McDonald and her committee volunteers.

I hope you had an opportunity to attend the community meeting hosted by Supervisor Cook regarding the future of the former Northern Virginia Training Center site on Braddock Road across from Burke Station Road. Since KPW is adjacent to the property (across from Rabbits Branch), the future development of this site is important to our community. Erickson Living has announced its intent to purchase the 78-acre site, and is proposing to build a resident continuing care community (you may be familiar with Greenspring Village in Springfield and Ashby Ponds in Ashburn, which are local Erickson Living communities). Since the property has been owned by the Commonwealth of Virginia, it was not subject to Fairfax County regulations. Therefore, Supervisor Cook has established a taskforce to assist in the County’s comprehensive planning process for the site with a focus on land use, environment, transportation, public facilities, housing, and parks and recreation. Frank Cumberland has kindly volunteered to represent Kings Park West on this taskforce. Frank, a long-time resident of KPW, is currently the Civic Association Board Secretary, and he has assisted with many neighborhood initiatives. The Taskforce will develop options for the comprehensive plan that will be presented to the community at a public meeting in the spring that will be organized by Supervisor Cook.

Community Calendar	
Citizen Advisory Council.....	Feb 6
Valentine’s Day.....	Feb 14
President’s Day.....	Feb 19
KPWCA Board Meeting.....	Feb 20
Herald Deadline.....	Feb 28
Citizen Advisory Council.....	Mar 6
Begin Daylight Saving Time.....	Mar 11
Braddock District Council.....	Mar 14
Herald Delivery.....	Mar 17
St. Patrick’s Day.....	Mar 17
Easter Egg Hunt.....	Mar 18

Continued on Page 7

KINGS PARK WEST CIVIC ASSOCIATION

P.O. Box 7114, Fairfax Station, VA 22039-7114

www.kpwca.org

OFFICERS

President	Jeanmarie Roberson	703-425-1286
Vice-President	Steve McCarty	703-978-0222
Secretary	Frank Cumberland	703-426-2868
Treasurer	Jim Mays	703-978-0317
Members-At-Large	Adrienne Barna	703-323-0518
	Mary Crowder	703-239-2581
	Jonathan Reiser	571-423-8030

COMMITTEES

B.A.G.G. **Vacant**

Community Support Services

Consumer Affairs	Mary Hovland	703-946-1775
Dumpster Day	Mary Hovland	703-946-1775
GMU Student Liaison	Vacant	
Neighbor Assist	Bruce Wallachy	703-401-0275
Welcoming	Melissa Morgan:	welcome@kwpc.org
Zoning, Code, Safety	Jackie Agnew	703-862-8471

Communications

Herald Newsletter:

Display Editor	Leah Larson-Taylor	703-283-0208
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NW Coord.	Tara Mooney	tarajmooney@yahoo.com
Parks & Lakes	Sarah Lennon	703-978-5608
Invasive Species	Greg Sykes	703-426-8246
Signs, St.s, Sidewalks	Jeff Root	703-323-4438

Special Activities

Easter Egg Hunt	Pack 1967	
Halloween Festival	Jeanmarie Roberson	703-425-1286
	Keith Jodoin	kjodoin@gmail.com
Scholarships	Gayle Ostrom	703-323-0206

Email Addresses for KPWCA Inc.

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Treasurer	Treasurer@kwpc.org

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Consumer Affairs	Consumer@kwpc.org
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B.A.G.G.	BAGG@kwpc.org
Parks & Lakes	Parks@kwpc.org
Signs, St.s, Sidewalks	St.s@kwpc.org
Neighborhood Watch	Watch@kwpc.org
Scholarships	Scholarships@kwpc.org
Neighbor Assistance	NeighborAssist@kwpc.org

HERALD STAFF

Editor	Editor@kwpc.org
Classifieds	Classified@kwpc.org

Advertising See Below

General Information

Community Association	Info@kwpc.org
	KPWHO@kwpc.org

How Do I Advertise in The Herald?

CLASSIFIEDS: KPWCA Newsletter classified advertisements for the March 17th issue must be received no later than February 28th by Ejona Lika, 9810 Bronte Drive, Fairfax, VA 22032, or email classified@kwpc.org. Please print clearly, and include payment to KPWCA. Furnish your name, address, and phone number. Rates: KPWCA members, \$2 for each 15 words; nonmembers, \$5 first 25 words, plus \$3 for each additional 15 words. Found items listed free.

ADVERTISEMENTS: KPWCA Newsletter Advertisements are received by Samantha Juni; please email editor@kwpc.org. Contact Samantha for rates.

How Do I Get My News in The Herald?

The easiest way to get your news items in The Herald is to e-mail the editor at editor@kwpc.org. We invite items on neighborhood schools, churches, organizations, and other noteworthy neighborhood news. News items and letters will be published if deemed suitable and as space permits. We reserve the right to edit any item submitted to The Herald. Acceptance of news items does not constitute endorsement by KPWCA.

The Herald

Published eight times yearly by the KPWCA.

NEXT DEADLINE is February 28, 2018

for delivery on March 17, 2018

Note: Acceptance of articles and advertising does not constitute endorsement by KPWCA, nor liability for products or services advertised in its publications.

SUBSCRIPTIONS: If you are moving out of the neighborhood and want to keep in touch with what's happening, gets a subscription. Send \$20 per year to:

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P.O. Box 7114, Fairfax Station, VA 22039-7114.

How Do I Join the Kings Park West Civic Association?

Send your name, address, and phone number, along with a check for \$20.00, to KPWCA, P.O. Box 7114, Fairfax Station, VA 22039-7114. Members receive the Community Directory and support from community programs such as Neighborhood Watch, Scholarship Awards, community social activities, Parks & Lakes Clean-up, and a free subscription to The Herald. Alternatively, go to www.kpwca.org and pay using PayPal.

Volunteer Opportunities

Herald Classified Ads Coordinator: *2-4 hours per issue.* Receives and organizes all classified ads by coordinating communication with interested parties, manages and submits fees, and maintains the ads and payment records database. Please contact classified@kpwca.org.

Herald Display Ads Coordinator: *2-3 hours per issue.* Coordinates communication with interested parties for business ads, manages and submits fees, and maintains the payment records database. Please contact editor@kpwca.org.

Parks & Lakes Committee: We are looking for 3-5 motivated members to help plan and organize twice-a-year park/lake clean-ups. *A few hours per month in the months leading up to the April and October clean-ups.* Please contact Sarah Lennon at parks@kpwca.org and/or sarahjlennon@gmail.com.

B.A.G.G. Coordinator: *1-2 hours per month.* Coordinates annual contract for common area maintenance, coordinates purchase/delivery of mulch for common areas, coordinates common area clean ups with volunteers, monitors the KPW subdivision signs and signboards for maintenance and arranges for repairs. Please contact Jeanmarie at president@kpwca.org.

Neighbor Assist Volunteers: *As needed.* Looking for friendly callers (a great way to volunteer without having to leave your home), computer experts to provide IT assistance, and handyman volunteers. Contact Bruce Wallachy at wallbdc@gmail.com or call 703-401-0275.

Road Raiders: *1/2 hour each month.* Performs common area clean-up around neighborhood once per month early Saturday mornings. Please contact Sarah Lennon at sarahjlennon@gmail.com.

Invasive Management Area: *3 hours a few times per year.* Details at www.grsykes.com/main.php?page=32. Send an e-mail to greg@grsykes.com and ask to be on the volunteer distribution list.

Royal Lake Community Vision Plan Coming Soon

By Tony Vellucci

The Friends of Royal Lake (FORL) are a group of dedicated individuals focused on working with both the Park Authority and the Department of Public Works and Environmental Services (DPWES) to make improvements at Royal Lake. In 2017, FORL sponsored an online survey and met several times with County staff personnel from the Park Authority and DPWES to gain an understanding of how to make improvements at the Royal Lake parks.

FORL prepared a draft master plan which encompassed the four Royal Lake parks – Lakeside Park, Kings Park West Park, Pohick Creek Stream Valley Park and Royal Lake Park. Modeled after other Park Authority master plans, the plan identified community-defined improvements to the park, and was advertised via social media.

In November, the Friends group presented an overview of the master plan to Braddock District Supervisor John Cook, to make him aware and seek his support. Supervisor Cook recommended that rather than write the master plan for the Park Authority, another approach might be to identify a Community Vision Plan which would contain a significant amount of input from the original master plan, but worded in such a way that laid out a better-defined description of the community needs and wants. FORL agreed, and is currently restructuring the master plan to be a Community Vision Plan. The plan is important, because it will identify specific projects, and ask the Park Authority to program funding in support of those projects. The funding may need to come from the planned 2020 Park Bond, so it will be important to identify our needs early so that they are factored in to the list of projects.

The plan should be available by the end of January for final community review and comment. The Friends group anticipates a final community meeting sometime in mid to late February to ratify the Community Vision Plan, and will then meet with Park Authority staff afterwards to discuss the projects and identify a tentative timeline for their accomplishment.



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THE GARDEN CORNER

By Charlie Boring

Okay, winter is upon us and we urban gardeners have contracted our annual affliction, not unlike the flu, that I like to refer to as “lack-of-growing fever,” or LOGF. As many of you may have noticed, the symptoms of LOGF start to appear in December, when the gardener starts to fidget, look out the window, and sometimes go onto the internet to search for gardening information. The LOGF victim may have visions of growing tomatoes or zucchini. I myself have had such an experience, but this year, my vision was of my beautiful hard-neck garlic plants growing in my urban, Kings Park West garden. When I discussed growing garlic with my spouse, she said that she could buy garlic at the supermarket for less than a dollar a bulb. She also posed the question that if we grew our annual requirement of garlic, how could we preserve it so that it would be good for the entire year.

Extending the preservation time of garlic can be achieved in several ways. After harvesting my 2017 garlic crop in June, I braided the garlic bulbs together in bunches and hung them in my unheated shed to cure. The shed is well-ventilated and not too hot in the summer. I have a small space heater in the shed that is set for 38 degrees to prevent freezing during the colder weather. As of this writing, we have used much of the 2017 garlic harvest, since we share it with friends, but we still have perhaps a third of the harvest that remains in good condition, ready to use.

One reason that I like to grow my own garlic is because the garlic that you purchase in the supermarket is soft-neck garlic, which is not as savory or as strong a flavor as the hard-neck varieties that I grow. I planted Bavarian, German White, Romanian Red, Silver Skin and Korean Mountain. I also planted some garlic rounds in a pot. Garlic rounds are the small single-clove bulbs that grow the first year after planting bulbils produced by hard-neck garlic varieties. These rounds will grow into small bulbs whose cloves can be planted the following fall to produce larger bulbs. Good sized bulbs are achieved the third year.

You can also store garlic over the winter by placing the bulbs in cold storage. Once the upper garlic leaves have browned and died back, your garlic is ready to harvest. Leave the garlic cloves out to dry slightly in the sun for a few days. If the weather does not cooperate, bring the cloves inside and spread them out in a single layer in order to allow the outer skins to dry out. After a few days, hang the garlic in a cool, dry place until ready to use. The garlic cloves should last through the winter for use in cooking. Care must be taken to keep the area cool, but not freezing, and out of direct sunlight.

Garlic cloves can also be stored in extra virgin olive oil in a sealed jar in the coldest place in your refrigerator for short periods of time. Storing garlic in oil is not a long-term solution to winter storage; this garlic can be used like fresh garlic. If you are looking for a long-term solution, the container must be frozen in small batches to keep it fresh. The garlic-flavored oil can be used for cooking or salad dressings, and is a favorite dip for Italian bread. If your heart is set on storing the garlic in olive oil, dry it first so that there will be no risk of any contamination or spoilage. Unpeeled whole cloves – leave the peels on and place them directly in the freezer after harvesting or purchasing. When you need to use them, thaw them out, peel, and consume. Chopped – peel the skin off of your cloves and chop them into even pieces. You can form it into any shape you wish, so long as you wrap it very tightly in a plastic bag or wrap. When you need to use it, you can grate it while frozen or simply break off a piece.

One of the more interesting ways to store garlic is to place the cloves in vinegar or wine and put them in the fridge; use a dry white wine, or if using vinegar, white vinegar is best. It will keep for three to five months in the fridge. If you use this method, keep a watchful eye for any unusual growth on the surface of your container. This is usually mold or yeast forming due to a higher than ideal temperature, so make sure your fridge is cold enough.

Remember, there are some tasty reasons for growing your own garlic. If you did not plant your garlic in the fall, it is not too late – plant it in early spring as soon as the ground has thawed.

I have found that if you wear a clove of garlic around your neck, vampires will leave you alone. Since I have never been attacked by a vampire while wearing garlic, it must be true! Happy gardening!

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New Shade Trees in the Park

Paul Gross / Tony Vellucci

As part of the final activities of the dredging and restoration of Royal Lake, the Department of Public Works and Environmental Services (DPWES) planted trees at Royal Lake just before Christmas. While the initial plan had envisioned the planting of nineteen trees, mostly on the two man-made islands, project cost underruns enabled the DPWES project manager to purchase additional trees. All told, the DPWES contractor planted over fifty maturing trees.

Trees were planted on the two new islands and in the meadow (near Rabbit Branch). After some growth next spring and summer, the overall appearance of the two new islands should substantially improve. Additionally, three red oak trees were planted at Lakeside Park near the picnic and playground area to provide shade for that area of the park. Although we will have to wait a little while for real shade, it is a step in the right direction.



The planting of these three trees was not in the initial planting schedule, but they were planted at the request of the Friends of Royal Lake (FORL), and the decision was supported by DPWES and the Park Authority. As many people may remember, during several of our planning meetings in 2017, the community expressed a strong desire for more shade in the playground and picnic area. After discussions with DPWES project environmentalist John Palmer and Park Authority Area Manager Ed Richardson, they were pleased to support this additional planting. We thank DPWES and Park Authority staff – John and Ed – for quickly responding to our request over the holidays. Also, thanks to Tony Vellucci for taking the lead for FORL.

There were many other individuals involved in this project, such as DPWES Project Manager Janet Grubb-Webber, and Assistant Project Manager Joseph Riley-Ryan. So, if you would like to say thank you to the many County employees who worked on the project, send an email to Supervisor Cook at Braddock@fairfaxcounty.gov. Also, please consider sending an email to both FCPA and DPWES. FCPA has an email account that the public affairs folks go through every day – parkmail@fairfaxcounty.gov. As emails are received, they route the emails to the appropriate division/branch. Although DPWES does not have an email account, a website email form can be submitted. Again, public affairs folks route the request as appropriate. You can find the form here: www.fairfaxcounty.gov/contact/MailForm.aspx?agId=32.



Continued from Page 1

The recent arctic blast reminds us that it is officially winter, with a potential for snow/sleet/ice events. The Virginia Department of Transportation is responsible for snow removal on the roads in our neighborhood. There is a new web tool that shows the status of plowing in Fairfax County. Once it snows at least two inches, you can find out the status of plowing in the neighborhood at novasnowplowing.virginia.gov. In addition, we ask that you please keep your sidewalks cleared along your property. It is most helpful to our neighbors who walk to school, work, or need to walk the dog.

The Civic Association looks forward to another great year! Please consider volunteering this coming year to keep the Civic Association programs active and robust. I can be reached at president@kpwca.org.

Sincerely, Jeanmarie Roberson

Concerts at Good Shepherd

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This is the 6th fabulous season of concerts by **prominent regional and national artists** with something to fit every music taste. Join us for three (3) superb concerts in February (Valentine Concert & Dance), April, and May.

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Single ticket sales at \$30 adult (\$15 student) will be available at the door.

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Tower House ~ Valentine Concert ~ Sunday, Feb. 11, 2018 6:00 p.m.

Our popular Valentine program features the dynamic Tower House 11-piece Dance Band presenting music from the '60's, '70's, '80's through to current top 40's hits, along with delicious food in a cabaret setting.

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"Gloria" ~ by John Rutter ~ Sunday, April 15, 2018 10:15 a.m.

The Good Shepherd Senior Choir, along with organ and brass, will perform Rutter's *Gloria*, a lively setting of the Gloria text and one of the most popular compositions by this well-known composer. *Gloria* will be integrated into the Church Service to enhance the liturgy. There is **no admission charge**.



Patagonia Winds ~ Sunday, May 13, 2018 6:00 p.m.

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Q/As from the “Native Meadows” Series

By Greg Sykes (greg@grsykes.com)

The [Native Meadows series](#) generated many inquiries and positive feedback from readers. Thank you! Here are some of the questions and answers:

Q: Does the word “meadow” only include sunny sites? My backyard has about two hours of partial sun due to high trees. Is there a native meadow for the shade?

A: Natural meadows are expansive and lack tall vegetation such as trees, so the plants growing here desire sun (preferably six or more hours of mid-day sun) or partial sun. Shaded spots, like what you describe, are "open woodlands." Plants selected here should favor shade but can be "bright shade" species instead of those that love dark areas.

Q: Can meadow plants be used in sunny medians between the sidewalk and street?

A: Medians are often easements, so a utility company can rip them up at any time. Whatever is done on an easement should neither block access by utility workers nor interfere with the provided services. Furthermore, anticipate that plants could be stomped upon by people and "watered" by passing pets. Understanding the preconditions, tough native meadow species can be good median plants, especially along quiet roads where pollinators have a reduced chance of splattering against speeding vehicles.

Even within a tight space, the median can have limited biodiversity so that the different plants flower at staggered times of the year. Some excellent species (with bloom periods) include moss phlox (*Phlox subulata*, spring), woodland stonecrop (*Sedum ternatum*, spring), wild petunia (*Ruellia caroliniensis*, throughout summer), orange coneflower (*Rudbeckia fulgida*, mid-summer), New England aster (*Symphotrichum novae-angliae*, late summer), and blue-stem goldenrod (*Solidago caesia*, late summer). Remember to add grasses, which characterize the mini-meadow! Purple Muhly (*Muhlenbergia capillaris*) and little bluestem (*Schizachyrium scoparium*) are good grass choices.

Some points to consider include:

- Select species that grow no higher than two to three feet tall – low enough to spot a toddler running down the sidewalk. Doing so keeps a clear line of sight between other vehicles and pedestrians.
- Reduce the chance of bites and stings from spiders and insects as people deliver or collect mail. Keep vegetation at least one foot away from the actual mailbox; growth touching the support post is all right.
- Please be polite and trim back any foliage and branches that protrude onto the sidewalk area, especially when the plant sports thorns.

Q: Would you explain why you do not recommend wood or bark mulch [from [Part 1](#) of this series]? I used bark mulch on top of newspaper late in the fall. Then, in the spring, most of the newspaper was gone. If I am



Figure 1. Good native meadows attract more than insect pollinators and their predators. This male goldfinch (*Spinus tristis*) feeds on orange coneflowers growing on a median. Notice the seeds still sticking to the bird's beak.

in a hurry, I use black plastic that kills any vegetation except English ivy. I have the same piece of black plastic that I reused for years.

A: Bark or especially wood-based mulches are not recommended for several reasons:

- 1) They take a long time – sometimes years – to decay.
- 2) The decomposing species tend to be undesirable, such as stinkhorn mushrooms (smell bad), artillery fungus (shoot spore packets up to approximately 30 feet away, leaving dark spots everywhere), and termites (not a species one wants to attract close to the house).
- 3) They offer no nutritional value to the soil. Wood is primarily cellulose, which is a sugar that the wood-eating organisms turn to water, carbon dioxide, and/or methane. Wood mulch releases insufficient amounts of phosphates, nitrogen compounds, or trace elements to nourish the soil.
- 4) The microbes metabolizing the wood draw essential elements from the soil since the cellulose lacks what is needed to survive. That means that wood mulch actually robs the soil of nutrients.

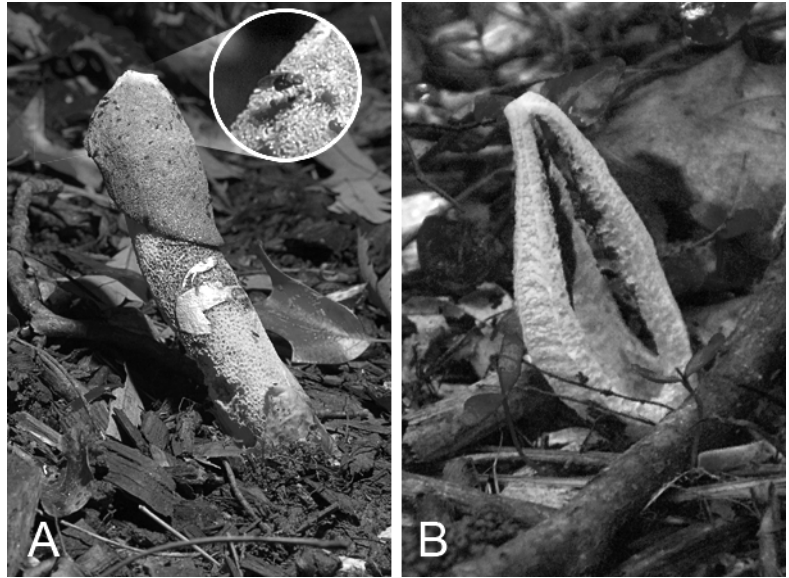


Figure 2. These two stinkhorn mushroom species, (A) common (*Phallus impudicus*) and (B) stinky squid (*Pseudocolus fusiformis*), are photographed growing out of old wood chips. Their smell attracts flies (inset) and other insects, which distribute the spores.

Temporary plastic tarps (kept for three to four months) can "cook" the shallow-rooted weeds beneath them, but need to be in place during summer months for maximum efficiency. The newspaper and heavy leaf mulch application to create new gardens over existing lawn is the preferred technique since it allows water to continue percolating into the ground, it feeds the soil, and there is nothing to remove later. An undesirable practice is laying down plastic, including plastic bags or tarp, and covering them with mulch or soil. The plastic obstructs the flow of water, nutrients, gas exchanges, and mobility of beneficial soil critters. Even the synthetic, "permeable" landscaping fabric frequently clogs. Furthermore, the plastic stays to pollute the environment. Weeds end up growing on the top mulch layers anyway, so people start a vicious cycle of plastic-mulch-plastic-mulch sandwiches.

Q: Is there a good resource where I can see if the plant I'd like to get is native?

A: An excellent Virginian website is the Digital Atlas of the Virginia Flora (vaplantatlas.org/). It shows a given species' distribution down to the county level. This site works best when using the plant's binomial or scientific name. The USDA's plant database (plants.usda.gov/java/) is much like the Digital Atlas' data though applied across the country, so it is a great resource to share with out-of-town friends and relatives, too! Depending on the map's zoom level, it also shows the counties in which the plant occurs, though some states completely light up if the species occurs anywhere within state lines.

Keep your questions coming!

For further reading and links to additional resources, see the full article by scanning the QR code with your smart phone or go to: www.grsykes.com/pdf/eco-articles/80_2018-01.pdf



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Pack 1968 News



Pack 1968 ended the year with our festive pack meeting, which featured several fun games, including sock snowball throw, singing statues, and a scout version of corn hole. The highlight of the meeting, though, was watching the top popcorn sellers choose various leaders to receive a whipped cream pie in the face. **Overall Pack Top Seller: Brayden Gernatt; AOLs: Isaac Juni; Webelos: Jonah Burke; Bears: Jake and Luke Francis; Wolves: Noah Klein; and Tigers: Leandro Garcia.**

Thanks to our KPW community for supporting scouting this year. Kings Park West is a great place to live, and it is the support of the community as well as the pack volunteers that allow us to provide a quality program for the boys that helps them make new friends, learn new skills, and understand the value of service to the community.

The boys received their pinewood derby car kits as presents,

and are looking forward to racing them in our January Pinewood Derby. After various den meetings spent learning about tools and building various items such as birdhouses and bookends, in late December, many boys met to witness the use of a band saw to cut derby cars.

Here, they learned about patience, problem solving, and cold weather gear. It was sub-freezing temperatures, but spirits were full of excitement as the block of wood became the start of their car. The hot chocolate and popcorn helped too.

And though it is quite chilly outside, summer camps are just around the corner. Geshen day camp and Goshen overnight camp are some of the highlights of the year for a Cub Scout. After all, what boy doesn't love bows and arrows, sling shots, BB guns, sports, and did we mention climbing? If you have a boy in kindergarten through fourth grade, and would like to learn more about camps or the Pack, please contact our Cubmaster, Michelle Huber, at (703) 323-1580, or email her at cubmaster.pack1968@gmail.com.



Update on Neighbor Assist in Kings Park West

First, one of our handyman volunteers has accepted a job that precludes him from offering his services for free to you, our KPW residents. Thank you, Chick, for all of the work and help you have provided to our community. You will be welcomed back with open arms, if in the future you have the option to join us. We will miss you!

There are still three volunteers left, so we ask you to continue to spread the word about our services. We could use a couple of handymen or handywomen who have some personal experience with doing tasks around the home. Please get in touch if you would like to offer your services; we try to match the tasks to the volunteer. In some cases, we have had to decline due to the size of the task, or if the task would be better suited for a professional. However, it never hurts to ask us, and we will provide advice even if we cannot accomplish the task.

We ask that those in KPW who can help others with snow removal to please let us know, as we have senior neighbors who need help. This is a paid program; the requester and provider will negotiate the charge. We maintain a list of providers, and when a resident requests this service, we send them the list of providers to call. If you are interested in providing snow removal, or if you need assistance with this, please call (703) 401-0275, or email NeighborAssist@kpwca.org.

The computer assistance service has also assisted a number of residents. With the various scams and malware on the Internet, computers have become vulnerable. One suggestion for you: do not do financial work on a computer that is used for surfing or your regular email – it is too easy for crooks to steal your information. Recovery is a very difficult task, and prices for simple computers (rebuilt computers, e.g.) are fairly inexpensive for some peace of mind. And before you click on a message indicating that your computer has been infected with a virus or any other strange message from someone you do not know, ASK someone else first. It is likely to be a scam!

In recognition of our many KPW residents who help nearby neighbors, we salute you! Thank you for being involved and helping. With your continued help, along with the Neighbor Assist program, we can continue to provide services that make our community better.

For those of you who are not registered for Nextdoor.com, we recommend that you consider it. KPW has its own Nextdoor group, meaning that only KPW residents can participate. The purpose of the program is to share local information about events in KPW, to ask for advice, to request help, to sell personal items, etc. Other surrounding communities have their own. However, you can send messages to other surrounding communities if you wish. It's a great tool to stay aware of KPW activities. It is not designed as a commercial advertisement, and those that appear are removed. Try it out!

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Get Off the Couch*A roundup of family friendly weekend events around the region...***January 20-21****Astronomy Festival**

Saturday 5:30 - 7:30 pm. Here's a chance to stargaze and look through a telescope at Riverbend Park. There will be storytelling around the fire pit, info about constellations, and other fun activities. Hot chocolate and snacks will be available for purchase. Canceled in the event of snow or rain. \$6 pre-registration, \$7 day of the event.

www.fairfaxcounty.gov/parks/riverbend-park/

January 27-28**Family 4-Pack at Clay Café Chantilly**

Sunday: Family of 4 Special: Up to 4 people in a family can paint for a \$15 flat studio fee, unlimited time. Bring your kids, spouse, aunts, uncles, brothers, sisters, cousins or grandparents. 13894 Metrotech Dr., Chantilly, (703) 817-1051, claycafe.com/special-offers/

February 3-4**Chocolate Lover's Festival**

The City of Fairfax presents the 26th annual Chocolate Lovers Festival. Children's events, chocolate tastings, samples, and a showing of Willy Wonka's Chocolate Factory. Saturday 10 am-5 pm (chocolate pancake breakfast at 8 am), Sunday 12 - 4 pm. Throughout Downtown Fairfax. www.chocolatefestival.net

Tet (Lunar New Year) Celebration

Join the Vietnamese community of NoVa for a joyful celebration of the New Year. Musicians, traditional Vietnamese food, Lion Dance, and children's activities. \$10 admission, children under 6 **Free**. Dulles Expo Center. 10 am -11 pm. www.tetfestivalva.com

February 10-11**Chinese New Year Festival**

Saturday 11:30 am – 3 pm. The Smithsonian American Art Museum and the Chinese Embassy presents a family-friendly event to welcome in the Year of the Dog. Enjoy paper cutting; bristle dolls; dough sculpting; a display of painting the inside of snuff bottles by Beijing Folk Artists; calligraphy. **Free** 800 G St. NW, Washington, D.C. www.si.edu/Events/Calendar/?trumbaEmbed=view%3Dev%26eventid%3D125747499

February 17-18**Smithsonian TechQuest: Race to the Moon**

Saturday 10:30 am – 4 pm (also March 10 & 17). The game explores the exciting race to space by the first American astronauts and the challenges of landing the first human on the moon. The game involves hands-on activities about launching a rocket, setting a course and landing safely on the moon. Smithsonian TechQuest is suitable for ages ten and up. **FREE**

www.fairfaxfamilyfun.com/events/smithsonian-techquest-race-moon-2018-02-17

February 24-25**Greenberg's Great Train & Toy Show**

Visit the largest and longest-running model train and collectible toy show in the country. The show features hundreds of tables of trains and accessories, operating exhibits, activities for kids, and more. \$10 per adult (Saturday), \$9 per adult (Sunday), Kids ages 11 and under are FREE. Fredericksburg Expo Center. 10 am – 4 pm.

trainshow.com/fred/

African-Americans at Walney Walking Tours

Saturday 2 pm. Learn the names and stories of the many African-American families who lived here, in slavery and freedom. Learn about slave tenancy and stories of resistance and survival in Fairfax County. Ellanor C. Lawrence Park, 5040 Walney Rd, Chantilly, \$6/person www.fairfaxcounty.gov

March 3-4**Alexandria Saint Patrick's Day Parade**

Saturday. Old Town Alexandria celebrates the Irish holiday with a classic car show (9 - 11:45 am), a dog show (10:30 am - noon) and a St. Patrick's Day Parade (12:30 - 2:30 pm). Elected officials; the Irish Ambassador; military commanders; and other local celebrities participate along with local scouts, marines and high school bands.

March 9-25**The Snow Queen**

The Learning Theatre Ensemble tackles Hans Christian Andersen's classic tale which follows the journey of young Gerda as she attempts to rescue her best friend Kai from the clutches of the Snow Queen. General admission \$18, kids, military and seniors \$14-16. Saturday and Sunday 2 pm, Saturday 7:30 pm, Sunday 4 pm. 410 S Maple Avenue, Falls Church. www.creativecauldron.org/2017-18-season.html

Family Friendly Activities happening at Mason

Patriot Center: www.eaglebankarena.com/

February 3-4: PAW Patrol Live!

February 25: Disney Live! Mickey and Minnie's Doorway to Magic

March 17-18: Harlem Globetrotters

Center for the Arts: cfa.gmu.edu/

January 27: Dublin Irish Dance

February 10: TAO

March 4: Keyboard Conversations® with Jeffrey Siegel:

The Immortal Melodies of Schubert

March 12-14: SHEN YUN

March 17: Moscow Festival Ballet: Swan Lake

March 18: Moscow Festival Ballet: Cinderella

Men's and Women's Basketball and Swimming & Diving: gomason.com



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