



January 2019

Vol. 49, Issue 1

Kings Park West Civic Association

Happy New Year! I hope you were able to take some time off, relax, and spend quality time with family and friends during the holidays. It is nice to slow down a bit, refresh, and refocus for 2019.

As we start the year, a great 2019 resolution is to become a volunteer in the community! The Civic Association is an awesome community group that relies 100% on volunteers to assist with our neighborhood initiatives. While we have a great core group of volunteers who continue to work tirelessly, we are always in need of more assistance and help.

December was a festive time for Kings Park West. It is always nice to see the many community decorations. I hope you noticed the entrance evergreen wreaths placed by Linda Reamy and Laura Hall. Also, many of our homes were cheerfully decorated again this year. We were fortunate to have so many impressive holiday displays. While it was no easy task given the quality of decorations on display, the the decorating committee selected the following three homes as the grand winners of the decorating contest:

- 5005 Wheatstone Drive
- 5228 Stonington Drive
- 5066 Coleridge Drive

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

Even though the weather has been mild as we enter into winter, we should all be thinking about preparations with the potential for a snow/sleet/ice event. As we keep an eye on the weather forecast, remember to have enough gas and wiper fluid, proper tires, medication, and an emergency car kit. The Virginia Department of Transportation (not Fairfax County) is responsible for roadway snow removal in our neighborhood. Once it snows at least two inches, residents can check the status of plowing in the neighborhood at www.vdotplows.org/. In addition, we ask that you 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.

I recently read an important reminder to residents of a potential bill paying scam in the December Braddock Beacon. Fairfax Water is reminding customers that if you receive a call offering “discounts”, requesting account information or offering to pay your bill, this is a scam. Fairfax Water does not call asking for account information, nor does it offer discounts. Also, Fairfax Water employees have photo IDs with them at all times, and vehicles and field staff’s clothing bear their logo. During the summer, there may be summer interns who do not wear uniforms, but each one will have a Fairfax Water ID. The complete article can be found online at www.fairfaxcounty.gov/braddock/braddock-beacon

We look forward to another great year! Please consider volunteering to keep the Association programs active and robust. Wishing you a wonderful winter. I can be reached at president@kpwca.org. ~ Jeanmarie Roberson

Community Calendar	
Martin Luther King, Jr. Day.....	Jan 21
Citizen Advisory Council.....	Feb 5
Valentine’s Day.....	Feb 14
President’s Day.....	Feb 18
KPWCA Board Meeting.....	Feb 19
Herald Deadline.....	Feb 27
Citizen Advisory Council.....	Mar 5
Begin Daylight Savings Time.....	Mar 10
Herald Delivery.....	Mar 16
St. Patrick’s Day.....	Mar 17
KPWCA Board Meeting.....	Mar 19
Citizen Advisory Council.....	Apr 2

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	Mike Stonkey	703-509-9725
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@kpwca.org
Zoning, Code, Safety	Jackie Agnew	703-862-8471

Communications

Herald Newsletter:

Display Editor	Leah Larson-Taylor	703-283-0208
Communications Editor	Samantha Juni	703-395-4049
Herald Advertising	Samantha Juni	703-395-4049
Herald Classifieds	Gayle Ostrom	classified@kpwca.org
Signboards	Adrienne Barna	703-323-0518
Web Admin	Kathy Shifflett	website@kpwca.org
Membership	Patti Dickerson	membership@kpwca.org
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.

OFFICERS

President	President@kpwca.org
Treasurer	Treasurer@kpwca.org

COMMITTEES

Membership	Membership@kpwca.org
Welcome Coordinator	Welcome@kpwca.org
Consumer Affairs	Consumer@kpwca.org
Zoning	Zoning@kpwca.org
B.A.G.G.	BAGG@kpwca.org
Parks & Lakes	Parks@kpwca.org
Signs, St.s, Sidewalks	St.s@kpwca.org
Neighborhood Watch	Watch@kpwca.org
Scholarships	Scholarships@kpwca.org
Neighbor Assistance	NeighborAssist@kpwca.org

HERALD STAFF

Editor	Editor@kpwca.org
Classifieds	Classified@kpwca.org
Advertising	See Below
General Information	Info@kpwca.org
Community Association	KPWHOAA@yahoo.com

How Do I Advertise in The Herald?

CLASSIFIEDS: KPWCA Newsletter classified advertisements for the March 16th issue must be received no later than February 27th by Gayle Ostrom, 4912 Gainsborough Drive, Fairfax, VA 22032, or email classified@kpwca.org. Please print clearly, and include payment to KPWCA. Furnish your name, address, and phone number. **UPDATED RATES:** \$5 per issue for 35 words. \$40 per year (8 issues/35-word ad). Found items listed free.

ADVERTISEMENTS: KPWCA Newsletter Advertisements are received by Samantha Juni; please email editor@kpwca.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@kpwca.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.

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.

The Herald

Published eight times yearly by the KPWCA.

NEXT DEADLINE is February 27, 2019

for delivery on March 16, 2019

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:

KINGS PARK WEST CIVIC ASSOCIATION
P.O. Box 7114, Fairfax Station, VA 22039-7114.

Volunteer Opportunities

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.

KPWCA Sign Posting: *30 minutes per month.* KPWCA maintains three signs that serve to keep KPW residents informed of community activities. We have a team for each sign and would like to add a member to each team. Responsibility is to post announcements provided by the KWPCA Board periodically throughout the year.

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 sarahgjlennon@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 Tom McCook at trmccook@gmail.com or call 703-839-5205.

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.

Kings Park West Neighbor Assist Winter Update

Hope your holiday season went well for you! Now, you may want to earn some extra, or not so extra, money to pay the bills that will be coming in, if they have not already arrived.

For our younger and vigorous residents, shoveling snow, if it comes, would provide some serious income. There are seniors in our KPW community who should not be shoveling snow. You can provide them an alternative that helps you and our older residents. Just send your contact information to me at NeighborAssist@kpwca.org, or call (703) 401-0275 to get on the list. With so few younger folks signing up for snow removal, there is likely to be a source of guaranteed work for you.

In the past, I remember hearing that a four-inch snow removal job for an "average" KPW home would cost roughly \$50 for a commercial company to come (if they actually come, that is). This is meant to be used to start the discussion between you and the KPW homeowner about the cost. Generally, I have heard that our older residents are very generous when hiring KPW residents; the opportunity is out there.

For those who decide to clear their own property, please be careful. The weather is often very chilly or just plain cold. Dehydration is an avoidable issue, if you remember to hydrate and to limit your time outside. Heavy snowfall is particularly dangerous in stressing one's heart. For those staying inside watching, you can play a part in making sure that workers are hydrated.

We continue to salute the many local neighborhood volunteers who help other neighbors in need. That is what Kings Park West has been known for, and it is a feature that not only makes living in our community enjoyable, it certainly attracts others to move here.

REAL ESTATE CORNER

by Mary and Cathy



Over the past 12 years, KPW has averaged 58 home sales per year, and 2018 has exactly hit that mark. Homes sold quickly, averaging a mere 28 days on market, and sold, on average, close to list price. The neighborhood maintains its popularity with Northern Virginia home buyers.

Which model was most popular? The Queen, with 14 homes sold at an average sales price of \$594,893. At a close 2nd was the ever-popular Regent with 12 homes sold, and an average sales price of \$624,617. Average days on market for the Regent? Just 17 days!

Looking ahead to 2019, KPW is expected to continue to be a sought-after neighborhood, and well-presented homes should sell quickly for top dollar. The spring market is heating up early, with sellers preparing homes and listing now. If you're planning a 2019 home sale, consider getting a home evaluation soon!

Model	#	DOM	Average
Queen	14	33	\$594,893
Regent	12	17	\$624,617
Baron	8	8	\$661,558
Duchess	6	20	\$576,192
Duke	5	48	\$525,506
Cromwell	4	42	\$560,150
King	4	50	\$541,250
Prince	3	52	\$543,800
Essex	1	19	\$536,400
York	1	5	\$521,500

Kings Park West 2018 Statistics

Number of Homes Sold: **58** • Average Days on Market: **28**
 Average List Price: **\$595,310** • Average Sold Price: **\$590,896**
 Highest Sold Price: **\$735,000** • Lowest Sold Price: **\$482,000**

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Volunteers Work on the Royal Lake Trail

By Friends of Royal Lake (Andy Karp was the lead author)

On November 24th, the Saturday of Thanksgiving weekend, an intrepid team of twelve neighborhood volunteers spent two hours placing crushed stone on a part of the trail that goes around Royal Lake. The work was organized by Paul Gross, President of the Friends of Royal Lake (FORL), with support from Tony Vellucci, and the crushed stone was provided by the Fairfax County Park Authority (FCPA). In addition to them, the hardy band of volunteers included: Sarah Lennon, Andy Karp, Stephen Everett, Keith Talbot, Ethan Talbot, Tom McCook, Airlie Shoemaker, and Kathy Gross; we were also fortunate to gain assistance from a few neighbors who happened by, but they disappeared before we could get their names!

The area worked on is located just beyond the pedestrian bridge that goes over Rabbit Branch in Kings Park West Park, not far from Lakeside Park's parking lot. Prior to this work, that part of the trail had been subject

to regular flooding whenever it rained, preventing trail use by anyone unprepared to wade through water and mud. While some volunteers formed a wheelbarrow brigade to move the crushed stone to the maintenance site, others spread the material across the trail and ensured the grade of the trail would facilitate drainage. After fortifying the trail, some of the more energetic volunteers, led by Tom McCook and Andy Karp, dug a drainage canal to



divert storm water away from the trail towards a natural drainage area. The immediate positive result of this work was the elimination of the tendency to form huge puddles after rainstorms. However, without a compactor, the crushed stone absorbed a good deal of water and became “squishy” when walked on after the first rain, which happened the same day that the work was done. With time, the trail has become progressively firmer as it is compacted by all the people walking on it. FORL will ask FCPA to apply a compacting device to it to complete the repair work.

Three weeks after this work was done, on December 14-16, there was a heavy rain totaling four inches, causing the Rabbit Branch to overflow above both the pedestrian bridge and this section of trail. The result was a new layer of muddy sediment on top of the crushed stone. Since the trail is now higher and there is now a drainage canal to take water away from this area, the large puddles that used to form here are gone. As a result, the trail dried out in fewer days than it used to before the work described in this article.

The work of this small group of dedicated volunteers to repair this section of the trail will benefit the hundreds of people who use the loop trail, many on a daily basis. The Friends of Royal Lake extend a heartfelt THANK YOU to all the volunteers who helped make this project a success!

FORL is planning a series of trail maintenance days in 2019 to address other parts of the trail requiring maintenance; we hope to see even more volunteers at these future trail maintenance activities! Please read the article about the Friends of Royal Lake kicking off 2019 in this issue of *The Herald* for information about our upcoming meetings and activities.

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Get Off the Couch

A roundup of family friendly weekend events around the region...

January 26-27

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. \$15 per family of 4, Clay Café Chantilly, 13894 Metrotech Drive, Chantilly, (703) 817-1051 claycafe.com/special-offers/

February 2-3

Chocolate Lover's Festival

The City of Fairfax presents the 27th 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 pm-4 pm. Throughout Downtown Fairfax. www.chocolatefestival.net

Chinese New Year Festival - Falls Church

February 2, 10 am-6 pm. Luther Jackson Middle School, 3020 Gallows Road. The event, hosted by the Asian Community Service Center, offers performances from China, Korea, India, Thailand, and Vietnam, including the beautiful Chinese sword dance; Dragon Parade, fashion show, Asian plant art, Asian foods, Chinese cooking demo, teaching of Chinese characters, crafts, kids' activities and more. FREE Admission. www.tripsavvy.com/chinese-new-year-dc-1040052

Smithsonian Chinese New Year Family Festival

Saturday 11:30 am-3:30 pm. The Smithsonian American Art Museum in conjunction with the Chinese Embassy presents a family-friendly event to welcome in the Year of the Pig. Enjoy a variety of activities, demos and dance, music and acrobatic performances throughout the day including: scavenger hunts, paper cutting; panda crafts; red paper lantern making. **Free** 800 G St. NW, DC. confucius.columbian.gwu.edu/smithsonian-american-art-museum-chinese-new-year-family-festival-2019

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 9-10

Chinese New Year Parade and Festival in D.C.

February 10, 2-5 pm. Chinatown on H Street, NW,

between 6th and 7th Streets, with best viewing on 7th Street. The parade features the traditional Chinese Dragon Dance, kung fu demos and live musical entertainment. The firecracker will be lit at 3:45 pm. Metro to Gallery Place/Chinatown. www.tripsavvy.com/chinese-new-year-dc-1040052

February 23-24

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, huge 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/

March 2-3

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 Saint 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. www.ballyshaners.org/parade/

March 9-10

49th Annual St. Patrick's Parade of Washington, D.C.

Sunday, 12:00-2:00 pm. Come out to celebrate the Irish culture in America at the St. Patrick's Day Parade. Route is on Constitution Avenue from 7th - 17th with grandstands at 15 - 16th Streets. dcstpatparade.com/

Family Friendly Activities Happening at Mason

Patriot Center: www.eaglebankarena.com/

February 1-3: PAW Patrol Live!

Center for the Arts: cfa.gmu.edu/

March 3: Erth's Prehistoric Aquarium Adventure

March 12-14: Shen Yun

Men's and Women's Basketball and Swimming & Diving:

gomason.com

Homecoming, February 23: block party/tailgating with children's activities/crafts homecoming.gmu.edu/



The Herald's List

by Mary Hovland and Cathy DeLoach

Our Newest Contest! Home Improvement Before and After!



We want to see the best home improvement projects of 2018. Submit before and after photos of your most successful makeover for a chance to win a \$50 Amazon gift card. Submit pictures and description of work by **February 1:**

www.facebook.com/groups/HeraldsList



The Kings Park West Herald's List Facebook Page is an interactive community resource for KPW residents. Requests and recommendations come in daily, and offers searchability and immediate access to recommendations. Post your own requests or recommendations.



www.facebook.com/groups/HeraldsList



ESL CLASSES

Everyone is welcome!

Register: Thursday, January 15, 2019 at 7:00 pm
 Registration Fee: \$15 Text Book: \$25
 3 Levels: Beginning, Intermediate, Advanced

Class Schedule

Tuesdays and Thursdays from 7:00 to 9:00 pm
 Beginning January 22, 2019
 Ending April 11, 2019

Locations

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Q/As About Native and Non-Native Species: Part 1

By Greg Sykes (greg@grsykes.com)

Many of these Eco-Articles refer to either native or non-native species. Some folks have questions about exactly what the term “native” means, what it encompasses, and how it applies to neighborhood landscaping and managing natural areas such as parks. Today’s feature provides some answers.

Q: What is a native species?

A: A native organism is one that evolved and naturally migrated to its current range and is biologically recognized by other species within this region. For example, the ancestor of the iconic American bison actually originated in Asia. Through natural circumstances, the ancestral bison first started crossing the land bridge into North America around 200,000 years ago and continued traversing between Asia and North America. These early bison spread across much of the continent (some maps include Northern Virginia in the former range), evolved into new species, coexisted with some organisms while other species adapted to the new animals, and integrated into diverse ecosystems. In this dynamic process, new species arise as others may move out or face extinction at the same rate. The December 2018 article about mistletoe illustrates how even a native hemiparasite fits into a balanced ecosystem. Incidentally, the horse’s ancestors originated in North America and migrated to Eurasia.

A species’ natural range depends on factors such as a given area’s geology, climate, altitude, and the other organisms present. Political borders rarely fit a species’ range but are applied to easily convey locations. For example, the Colorado blue spruce (*Picea pungens*) is “native” to the U.S., but its natural range is only areas within the Rocky Mountains. When planted in the D.C. area, this tree deteriorates in the hot, humid summers and clay soil, surviving for several years to a few decades, whereas wild specimens can thrive for centuries in their natural habitat. Describing a species’ native range at the county level is a more meaningful measurement. Two websites with county-level plant ranges are vaplantatlas.org and plants.sc.egov.usda.gov.

Q: I went to the nursery for native plants and they said that liriopse and periwinkle *naturalize*. Don’t “naturalize” and “native” mean the same thing?

A: No. Those words have two separate meanings. Naturalize is the term used when an exotic organism is brought into an area and takes over. “Naturalize” is a nice way of saying “non-native invasive,” just like “colonize” is a gentle term for “conquer.” Periwinkle (*Vinca minor* and *V. major*) and liriopse (especially *Liriope muscari*) are non-native weeds that invade woodlands and other natural areas. Few, if any, native species benefit from these exotic plants.

Q: The bison came over from another part of the world and spread, but that was okay. What’s wrong with the plants and animals designated as “non-native invasive?”

A: The key is that the new bison species spread over thousands of years, which happens through natural evolutionary and dispersion processes. Imagine a jet liner cruising at 600 mph (around MACH 0.8). To smoothly and safely land, that jet needs twenty-five minutes; the less amount of time, the harder the landing. If that speed and altitude change happens in a split second, it means that the plane crashes. In biological communities, a rapid change also spells disaster, resulting in more species dying off than others evolving to fill the vacant niches.

Ecological changes should happen slowly over thousands to millions of years. However, folks can witness one change occur within his or her lifetime – mere decades – anywhere from local parks to backyards! This problem is the influx of non-native invasive species. These organisms include weedy plants [e.g., Callery pears (also called Bradford or Cleveland pears, *Pyrus calleryana*), oriental bittersweet (*Celastrus orbiculatus*), winged burning bush (*Euonymus alatus*)], uncontrolled animals like the emerald ash borer (*Agrilus planipennis*), and diseases such as the Chestnut Blight Fungus (CBF, *Cryphonectria parasitica*). What makes these species different from other imported varieties is that the former escaped into the environment and have inadequate predators, parasites, or diseases to keep them in check. In fact, some of these organisms prosper better in America than they do in their native homelands! Unlike the bison’s ancestors, these invaders came to the U.S. through human activity – an artificial distribution system. Once here, people helped fan the proverbial flames of these organisms further, especially through mail order catalogs and other trade. Infected stock spread disease such as CBF. Selling invasive plants translated into multiple points to escape cultivation through seeds, runners, or other reproductive means. The native flora and fauna are unable to control this alien onslaught resulting in the pests’ population exploding unchallenged, thereby altering and degrading the natural environment.

Q: But what you call a “non-native invasive” plant is beautiful. What’s the harm in allowing it to survive, evolve, and add to the biodiversity in the parks?

A: There are many native – often more beautiful – alternatives for each invasive plant. As we discussed earlier, artificially broadcasting exotic species into an established, balanced natural ecosystem is not evolution or a case of survival of the fittest. Instead of increasing biodiversity, it causes severe imbalances. In the invasive plant scenario, animals relying on native species cannot utilize these new invaders. For example, let’s say that a person is given a salad filled with tomatoes, lettuce, peppers, cheese, hardboiled egg, and anything else they like that provides all of the nutrient and calorie requirements for a day. Each day, another of the same salad is served. Now, let’s say that an inedible oak leaf substitutes one of the components – maybe a lettuce leaf. After removing that oak leaf from the salad, the rest is devoured. Each subsequent day, additional oak leaves replace more of the salad until one day the edible food drops so low that the person now starves. This same analogy occurs as non-native invasive plants displace native flora: the wildlife dependent upon those native plants either languish or leave.

Q: Many of the plants that are called “invasive species” are sold in garden centers. They have value. People pay money for them. How can they be all that bad?

A: Just because something is legal to sell and use does not make it right or mean that it is good. An example is tobacco: consuming these products, as directed by the manufacturer, can create severe problems for the user as evidenced by the warnings on the packaging. Too many times, private citizens to professional landscapers gravitate to certain non-native invasive species whenever their project needs a “quick fix.” Such actions lack a comprehensive, long-term plan for these plants. The weeds’ abundance degrades the health of natural areas. If family, friends, or neighbors request a non-native invasive plant, instead of bowing to peer pressure, do the right thing and, “Just say no!”

By refusing a targeted weed and choosing a good native alternative, nurseries see the market trend for fewer exotic plants and more natives. Furthermore, you will help create a healthier environment for your children and generations to come.

Part 2 of this series answers more of your questions.



Figure 1. A big problem with non-native invasive species like this Bradford pear is its seeds, which spread, germinate, and grow uncontrollably outside of cultivation. Any birds capable of eating the small fruits dotting the branches will disperse the seeds in their droppings. Each fruit typically contains two to four viable seeds (inset).

In full disclosure, the author is a biologist whose academic and professional careers include evolution, the environment, and genetics. His current work involves DNA-based species identification and deducing how closely related organisms are based on genetic similarities.

* * * * *

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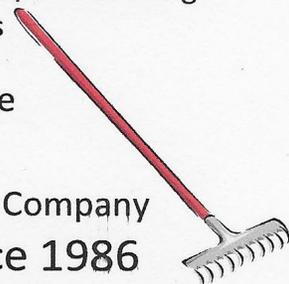
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Pack 1968
By Tanis Gray

Happy New Year, neighbors!

We wanted to start the new year off by thanking our friends and neighbors of Pack 1968. Thank you all for making Scouting a fun and safe environment for our kids to learn, teach, and enjoy all that Scouting has to offer. We are so proud of the young men and women they are becoming, and know that these are skills they will carry with them for the rest of their lives.



Many Scouts participated in National Wreaths Across America Day at Quantico National Cemetery in mid-December. As wreaths were laid on the graves of our fallen heroes and veterans, their names were said aloud in remembrance and thanks. While our Pack didn't get a chance to lay the wreaths, many did attend the ceremony.



With the holiday break and

the ringing in of the new year, the Scouts are designing and prepping their Pinewood Derby cars for the big race! Twenty Scouts showed up at our Pack Leader's house for car rough cuts. This year's race will be at the beginning of February, and we are looking forward to seeing creativity, engineering, and good sportsmanship on display.



As always, if you have someone interested in joining our Pack, please contact our Pack Leader, Bobby Burke, at robert.l.burke.iii@gmail.com.



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KPW Residents Support West Springfield FCPD with Thanksgiving and Christmas Meals

By Tony Vellucci

Each year, the West Springfield Citizens' Advisory Committee (WSCAC) provides a special Thanksgiving Day and Christmas Day meals for FCPD officers working on shift at the West Springfield Police District. It is a way for citizens in the community to let the officers know how much their service is appreciated on those holidays, since the call of duty prevents them from spending time with their families. Meals include main dishes such as turkey and ham, fixings and side dishes, and of course desserts. Volunteers make a dish and bring it to the station the day of the meal. To ensure adequate coverage, officers take their meals in two shifts.

Several KPW residents have routinely supported the holiday meals, either by the preparation of dishes, their time, or both. For a number of years, KPW resident Paul Albertson acted as the overall coordinator, turning over to West Springfield resident Sherry Mull about three years ago. Two volunteers who have continuously supported the effort include longtime KPW residents Bob and Suzy Duvall, who give generously of their time and have remained onsite many times, ensuring all food stations are re-stocked as officers come through. To participate in next year's Thanksgiving and Christmas meals for the officers, send an email to the WSCAC Mailbox at wscacmailbox@gmail.com, and ask to be added to the mailing list.

WSCAC meetings are held the first Tuesday of each month at 7:00 pm in the West Springfield District Station, located at 6140 Rolling Road in Springfield. Meetings are open to the public and provide an exchange forum for the community and the police to discuss various crime and safety topics applicable to the district. Meetings also include presentations by FCPD officers on several department initiatives and programs.

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Pack 1967 News

November and December have been busy times for Pack 1967! At the November and December Pack meetings, a number of our Scouts earned the first rank on their Scouting adventure – the Bobcat rank! Congratulations to the following Scouts:

- Reilly Cooper
- Joseph Crowley
- Abby Duncan
- Austin Gelb
- Brennan Goetz
- Katie Jones
- Christopher Justice
- Kia Katariya
- Michael Kloman
- Minwoo Lee
- Henrik Mann
- Jubilee Niederhauser
- Nehemiah Niederhauser
- Liam Reininger
- Holden Riley
- Henry Spiedell
- Wyatt Strawn
- Jack Szydlik



At the December Pack meeting, the Scouts had their first uniform inspection. The Scouts learned about the proper way to wear their uniform (and learned how not to wear their uniform from some of the adults). The Scouts also learned about the importance of a uniform from a guest, Rear Admiral Luther. While discussion of the uniform was



informative, the Scouts were a little more interested in trying on Rear Admiral Luther's flight helmet.



Pack 1967 finished up the year by helping lay wreaths at Arlington National



Cemetery on December 15 as part of Wreaths Across America. Even the rainy weather couldn't keep Scouts away from performing their duty to their country.

If your child is interested in finding out more about Scouting, please join us at a den meeting! If you have any questions or want to contact a den leader, we can be contacted at CubScout.Pack.1967@gmail.com.



Monticello Park Officially Opens

By Tony Vellucci

On Saturday, November 17, 2018, the Fairfax County Park Authority (FCPA), along with Braddock District Supervisor John Cook's office, held a ribbon-cutting ceremony recognizing the official opening of Monticello Park.

Monticello Park, located at 5315 Guinea Road in Burke, is just across the street from KPW; it offers new recreational amenities to the Burke and Fairfax community, including an obstacle course/playground and the first off-leash dog area (OLDA, or dog park) in the Braddock District. Supporting infrastructure includes park buffers, storm water management improvements, a parking lot, walkways, fencing and related site work such as tree planting. The \$1.5M dollar project was funded by the 2016 voter-approved park bond referendum. Park development was split into two phases: the first phase included the amenities listed above, and the second phase, to be accomplished at a later date, includes a skate spot at the far end by the obstacle course/playground.



The ribbon-cutting with all the speakers and members of the community.

Braddock District Supervisor John Cook, Sara Baldwin (Deputy Director, FCPA), Joanne Walton (Braddock Dogs), Margaret Thaxton (Director of Development, Fairfax County Park Foundation), and Tony Vellucci (Former



Margaret Thaxton (r) presents a Certificate of Appreciation to Joanne Walton (l).

Braddock Representative FCPA Board) spoke at the ceremony. Supervisor Cook spoke on the benefits of the park bringing the community together. Joanne Walton spoke on behalf of Erin Mays, President of Braddock Dogs, who was unable to attend the ceremony. Joanne said she was happy to finally have the dog park, and noted it had been some ten years since she and other KPW residents formed the KPWCA Dog Park Exploration Committee, which eventually became Braddock Dogs and worked closely with the FCPA to make the dog park vision a reality. Margaret Thaxton presented Braddock Dogs with a commendation recognizing the incredible job they did in raising over \$14,000 in contributions. Braddock Dogs contributed \$10,000 to the FCPA, and also received a matching FCPA Mastenbrook grant to total \$20,000, to help underwrite the cost of the dog park. There is about \$4,600 remaining for amenities such as doggie playground equipment, park benches, etc.

Tony Vellucci called for the FCPA to find the funds to finish Monticello Park Phase II sooner than later, and asked them to install lights at Monticello Park for both the obstacle course and the dog park so that the park could be used after dark, noting it makes sense to get as much utility out of the park as possible to maximize the collective taxpayer return on investment.

Since its opening, Monticello Park has been a popular spot with dog owners and kids playing on the obstacle course/playground. Several residents from both KPW and Rolling Woods Estates have asked the FCPA to look into a crosswalk at the Guinea Road/Bronte Road intersection. FCPA Program Manager Paul Shirey forwarded the request to FCDOT, and Supervisor Cook's office is also looking into the request and coordinating with both FCDOT and VDOT. VDOT has a process for crosswalks at non-signalized intersections which includes the preparation, submittal, and evaluation of a study.

With the dog park now a reality, Braddock Dogs has disbanded; members are now working with the FCPA to form a Park Volunteer Team (PVT) to provide community support for the park. If you are interested in becoming a part of the Monticello Park PVT, contact Joanne Walton at joannewalton2003@yahoo.com.



THE GARDEN CORNER

By Charlie Boring

Here in Kings Park West, we have many trees. One aspect of having so many large trees, besides the beauty, is that they provide a lot of shade on our property. When you have a limited amount of space in which to grow a garden, often the space that is available is in shade or partial shade. You've always wanted to grow a vegetable garden, but your yard is too shady... or is it?

Luckily, there are many edible plants that can thrive in partial shade, dappled shade, or in as little as three to six hours of direct sunlight a day. To understand the process, let's look at what shade and full sun mean. Full sun areas receive direct sunshine for six or more hours per day. Partial shade or partial sun both refer to areas that obtain three to six hours of direct sun each day. Partial sun areas receive three to six hours of direct sunlight, but are shaded the rest of the day. Partial shaded spaces are moderately shaded during part of the day, or receive filtered or dappled sunlight all day. Dappled sunlight is where the light is filtered through the leaves of trees. Full shade areas receive no direct sun or reflected light during the day. An area with deep shade is not a good place for growing vegetables; all plants need some light to grow.

In conclusion, despite the whispers to the contrary, you can grow a thriving vegetable garden even in partial shade! All you really have to do is choose the right plants. The first step is to measure the amount of sunlight by direct observation. Remember, as the days lengthen, the sun moves farther north in the sky, and the amount of sun on a particular patch of garden will change. Assure yourself that that the area on which you want to grow your shade garden gets three to six hours of sun.

It is obvious that if you try to grow vegetable garden plants that need abundant sunlight, like tomatoes and peppers, you aren't going to be very successful. But there are still plenty of tasty edibles that will thrive in your partial shade vegetable garden. Most herbs (sage, rosemary, basil, mint, parsley) and leafy greens will perform quite well in less-than-full sun, especially in KPW, where we live in an area that tends toward high heat and humidity during the summer months.

The partial shade garden environment will help to keep those edibles cooler, thus allowing them to produce more readily and consistently than they might in full sun as the sun moves north in the sky. In this part of Virginia, growing vegetables like lettuce in the shade will even help them to produce longer.

Some of the most common and beloved vegetable garden favorites are perfectly suited for partial shade. Arugula is one example that Marisa has grown. When grown in full sun, it bolts much earlier than when grown in partial shade.

Basil is another example in Marisa's garden. Try nipping off the basil tips before the flowers develop. This will produce a bushier plant with more leaves. Harvest the leaves when tender if you want to make the best "pesto."

Leafy vegetables, such as chard, spinach and salad greens, are the most tolerant vegetables that grow in partial shade. Marisa also grows an oriental green called "rau muong" or water spinach that does well in our area. When grown in KPW in full sun, the growing season tends to end in June due to bolting. Partial shade extends the growing season three to four weeks.

Root vegetables, such as beets, carrots, and potatoes, will grow in partially shaded areas that have less direct sunlight, but will appreciate at least a half-day of full sun and some partial shade. I have not tried potatoes in less than full sun, since it is a member of the nightshade family, like tomatoes, and I have always assumed that potatoes are a full sun type plant. My harvest was smaller than in full sun.

Some other interesting candidates are asparagus, beets, bok choy, broccoli, brussels sprouts, cabbage, carrots, and cauliflower.

Don't have shade but want to reap the benefits of growing shade-loving vegetables? Try tucking a few plants beneath the shade of your towering sun-lovers and get the best of both worlds!

Friends of Royal Lake (FORL) Kick Off 2019

By Sarah G J Lennon

Happy New Year!

Friends of Royal Lake (FORL) is excited for 2019. We will be kicking off the year with a meeting on February 20th at Laurel Ridge Elementary School at 7 pm. We encourage and welcome all neighbors who are interested in helping to support and improve Royal Lake, park facilities and its surrounding trails. The Fairfax County Parks Authority (FCPA) has many parks, many lakes, and many interests. A Friends Group works with FCPA to support, enhance and advocate for specific parks and lake projects that are most important to the community. Through FORL, our voice is heard more strongly when we come together as a community and we pool our energy and expertise.

Some good news to share is that we have a volunteer to start up a FORL newsletter! The newsletter will be distributed electronically – on Facebook, Next Door, the KPWCA webpage, and via emails, including to neighboring communities such as Lakepoint and others that border the lake. Submissions are welcome. Email parks@kpwca.org and friendsofroyallake@gmail.com for more information and to join our mailing list.

We are actively seeking someone who can help design and create an FORL webpage where we can announce activities and schedule of events, and share articles of interest and pictures. Interested and talented high school students could earn service hours through FORL.

We are also looking for volunteers to serve as liaisons to the schools and scouting organizations. We would love to have representatives from the neighboring communities to broaden our message and reach beyond KPW.

In 2019, FORL plans to work with the FCPA to identify, categorize, and prioritize the needs that our community identified for Royal Lake and its surrounding parks. Then, we will work to get those requests addressed, possibly seeking bond money in 2020. At the February 20th meeting, we will discuss, among other things, a spreadsheet we developed of priority maintenance and capital improvement projects that we would like FCPA to undertake, with our community support.

As always, you can email Sarah Lennon at parks@kpwca.org or Paul Gross, President of FORL, at friendsofroyallake@gmail.com.

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