

June 2020

Vol. 50, Issue 4

Kings Park West Civic Association

Hello KPW Neighbors,

The past two months have been full of changes in almost every aspect of everyone's life, and June looks to be no different. These changes can be unsettling at times, and we should strive to do our best to maintain during these challenging times. Spring is changing into summer, bringing more changes.

Community Calendar
Father's Day - June 21
Summer Begins - June 21
Independence Day (Observed) – July 3
Independence Day - July 4
KPWCA Board Meeting - July 21
Herald Deadline - August 5
KPWCA Board Meeting - August 18
Herald Delivery - August 22

Fairfax County has been changing its services in many areas due to the ongoing pandemic:

- Fairfax County Public Schools (FCPS) completed its distance learning programs on June 12. More
  FCPS outdoor facilities are now open, as tracks and tennis courts re-opened on May 22 and
  athletic fields re-opened on May 29. Playgrounds are still closed. As spring changes into
  summer, more children will be outside. Please be aware of children riding their bikes when
  driving through the neighborhood. The three pools have opened under limited hours and
  walkers are out at all hours, so be vigilant about cyclists and pedestrians when driving.
- The Fairfax County Public Library system has instituted contactless curbside service for pickups as of Monday, June 1. The service is available from 10 am 4 pm at all branches. In addition, outdoor drop-offs are available to accept returns of borrowed materials. To help accommodate the return of the 500,000 items currently on loan, returns will be accepted on a staggered basis according to the first letter of the borrower's last name. Overdue fines are suspended and due dates for all physical materials will continue to be extended to ensure that no late fees accrue while FCPL branches are closed. Please visit <a href="mailto:fairfaxcounty.gov/library/">fairfaxcounty.gov/library/</a> for the current information.
- Fairfax County Park Authority parking lots and parks are opened for limited use. However, summer camps and programs canceled. The Fairfax County Park Authority has cancelled the June and July performances of their Summer Performance Series (including Braddock Nights) and a decision has not yet been made for the August performances. Please visit <a href="mailto:fairfaxcounty.gov/parks/coronavirus">fairfaxcounty.gov/parks/coronavirus</a> for current information.

(Continued on page 2.)

(President's letter, continued.)

Kings Park West Civic Association (KPWCA), like everyone else, has been changing due to the ongoing pandemic. The KPWCA Board Members have adapted to virtual meetings to conduct business. The annual selection process for the KPWCA Scholarships for seniors was changed to a virtual process, and that adaptation has worked out for all.

The summer is the prelude to changes for the KPWCA Board, with the president and secretary hitting their term limits (three two-year terms for a total of six years of service) and the treasurer is shifting his efforts to helping with the website upgrade.

Other volunteer positions need to be filled, which are detailed on page 4. It is time to for new volunteers to step up so that we will be able to continue the great work for the community. We need the support of the community and for some volunteers to contact me at <a href="mailto:president@kpwca.org">president@kpwca.org</a> or any member of the KPWCA Board to help with this transition.

Sincerely, Jeanmarie Roberson



Kings Park West Civic Association P.O. Box 7114, Fairfax Station, VA 22039-7114 General Information: <a href="mailto:info@kpwca.org">info@kpwca.org</a>   Community Association: <a href="mailto:kpwhoa@yahoo.com">kpwhoa@yahoo.com</a>   Website: <a href="mailto:kpwca.org">kpwca.org</a>   Community Association: <a href="mailto:kpwhoa@yahoo.com">kpwhoa@yahoo.com</a>   Website:		
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#### How do I join the Kings Park West Civic Association?

Send your name, address, and phone number, along with a check for \$25 to KPWCA, P.O. Box 7114, Fairfax Station, VA 22039-7114, or visit kpwca.org and pay via PayPal. Members receive the Community Directory and support from community programs like Scholarship Awards, community school activities, parks and lakes clean-up, and a free subscription to The Herald.

#### How do I advertise in The Herald?

Classifieds: Classified ads for the August issue must be received no later than August 5 to Gayle Ostrom, 4912 Gainsborough Drive, Fairfax, VA 22032 or at classified@kpwca.org. Please print clearly and include payment to KPWCA. Provide your name, address, and phone number. Rates: \$5 per issue for 35 words or \$40 per year (8 issues/35-word ad). Found items listed free.

**Advertisements:** Advertisements are received by Gayle Ostrom; please email <a href="mailto:classified@kpwca.org">classified@kpwca.org</a> for rates.

#### The Herald

Published eight times a year by the KPWCA.

Next deadline: August 5 for delivery on August 22.

Note: Acceptance of articles and advertising does not constitute endorsement by the 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 community news, get a subscription. Send \$25 per year to: Kings Park West Civic Association, P.O. Box 7114, Fairfax Station, VA 22039-7114.

#### How do I get my news in The Herald?

The easiest way to get your news items in The Herald is to email the editor at <a href="mailto:editor@kpwca.org">editor@kpwca.org</a>. 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 the KPWCA.

#### **Volunteer Opportunities**

**NEW!** Membership Co-Chair: Kings Park West Civic Association needs your help! A membership cochair position is open, and we are looking for someone to help us! This is a shared effort in overseeing the annual membership campaign, which is held during the month of October. This volunteer will coordinate with the block captains, answer emails, prepare packets, and coordinate on data entry with a dedicated group of volunteers! Please consider getting involved and helping KPW. Interested? Questions? Please email president@kpwca.org.

**Friends of Royal Lake (FORL) Trail Maintenance Volunteers**: Every three months, the FORL or organizes a morning when neighborhood volunteers work to improve problem areas on the trails around Royal Lake.

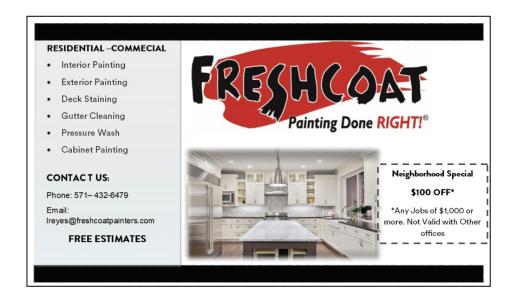
**KPWCA Sign Posting**: 30 minutes per month. KPWCA maintains three signs that serve to keep KPW residents informed of community activities. We have a team for each sign and would like to add a member to each team. Responsibility is to post announcements provided by the KWPCA Board periodically throughout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

**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(at)gmail(dot)com.

**Road Raiders**: *30 minutes month*. Performs common area clean-up around neighborhood once per month early Saturday mornings. Please contact Tom McCook at trmccook(at)gmail(dot)com.

**Invasive Management Area**: 3 hours a few times per year. Details at grsykes.com. Send an email to greg(at)grsykes(dot)com and ask to be on the volunteer distribution list.



#### Giving Back: KPWCA to Host Interactive Virtual Event to Donate Funds by Kaycie Blaylock

The board recognizes that many of our community events had to be cancelled due to Covid-19. Their budgets still exist, however, and since these events rely completely on the financial contributions from memberships, we thought we should let the members decide how we should reallocate these funds.

So, look for more information later this month for information on an interactive virtual event where we will disperse these funds to local nonprofits and have some special guests stop by. (This is our plan, but of course we know what 2020 thinks about any kind of plans!)

In all seriousness, I look forward to doing this. It's been hard feeling like I need to be doing something but also feeling paralyzed by taking appropriate safety measures. Our neighbor recently yelled across his yard and asked us, "Who are all these people?" Living on the main street of Kings Park West, we do see many new faces. There are faces that are now working from home or utilizing the neighborhood for their exercise while their gym is closed. From a safe distance, it has been nice meeting new people and seeing other faces we haven't seen in a bit. It's been a great reminder of how nice of a neighborhood Kings Park West is. For me, there is always something familiar but then something new I am learning.

This leads me to my two requests for the KPWCA members. First, please attend our virtual event when it happens. And the second, think about our neighbors. We may or may not know them, but regardless, many people are dealing with issues we are unaware of. As the season gets hotter and so many things stay unknown or just plain scary, let's remember to practice empathy and patience to the people who share our neighborhood.



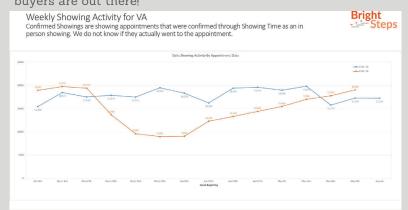
## Kings Park West Real Estate Corner by Cathy DeLoach





#### Kings Park West Home Showings Rebound

I know that everyone might not love graphs, but if you're interested in following real estate trends and perhaps assessing the intrinsic potential value of your home, this graph might make you happy. The two lines compare 2019 weekly showings with 2020 weekly showings in Virginia. Prior to the COVID-19 shutdowns, 2020 was tracking well ahead of 2019. And we know that lots of showings mean lots of potential buyers. The showings plummeted in early March as the realities of the pandemic became clear. But now, after a prolonged period of lower (compared to 2019) activity, showings again are surging past 2019 figures. If you're thinking of making a change in 2020, now is the time to prepare your home for market. The buyers are out there!



#### What's Next for KPW?

We predict an on-going high demand for move-in ready homes. As the virus continues to affect our everyday lives, purchasers are increasingly reluctant to buy homes which need work requiring contractor visits.

Additionally, as we are working, home schooling, full-time parenting, and endlessly cooking more at home, the thought of adding a construction project to the mix is enough to send most buyers running. Buyers are happily paying more to avoid the inconvenience, expense, and frustration of home renovations.

If you like keeping your finger on the real estate pulse in KPW, check out my weekly real estate blog.

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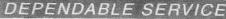
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## Free, Easy, Plentiful Live Bait for Fishing by Greg Sykes (greg(at)grsykes(dot)com)

Attention fishermen! There is a super easy way to quickly get all of the worms you will need to fish for free! Even better, zero time is squandered digging for worms before angling, which cuts into fishing time and illegally damages natural areas when done on parkland. What's the secret? Start a compost bin that benefits earthworms!

There are many different approaches to create a compost pile that earthworms will love. The reference section features additional strategies. Here are some simple guidelines for starters:

Find a cool, shaded spot on your property to setup that is free from chemicals such as lawn treatments or pesticide applications; organic yards are all the better. Traditional composting gets hot from microbial activity. Sunshine further boosts the temperatures. This baking kills weed seeds and encourages fast decomposition but also is bad news for worms.



Figure 1. These earthworms thrive in a 45-gallon (7-cubic-foot) tumbling compost bin. An advantage to tumbling bins over traditional compost mounds is easy access to the worms—simply turn it to get more worms. As the bin rotates, it mixes and aerates the compost. It cannot be too large and heavy or turning will be difficult.

- Get some sort of a container, such as a 20-30-gallon plastic trash bin or make a bale out of wire fencing. Wider openings make access easier. Whatever is used, be sure that it is free of chemical residues. When using plastic containers, drill 3/16-inch holes around the walls and lid for air circulation and water drainage; some designs collect this liquid to fertilize plants. Larger holes can be drilled on the bottom (some folks even cut the floor clear off) for better drainage and to encourage worm access.
- Make sure the container or wire bale sits level and secure to the ground.
- Add compostable material consisting of green vegetation and brown carbon sources.
  - Good items include fresh grass clippings, apple cores, fruit skins, old lettuce, banana peels, coffee grounds, mushroom stems, mulched leaves, and shredded newspaper.
  - Citrus and onions are compostable but worms avoid eating them.
  - <u>Exclude</u> any meat, bones, pet waste, oil, dairy products, fireplace or barbeque ash or briquettes, wood chunks, plastic junk (including fruit labels), or cooked foods from the bin.
  - Egg shells are fine to add to the compost but they do nothing for worms. Think of eggshells as calcium rocks that take a long time to dissolve.
- Mix in some topsoil from the yard. Any worms found can be included, but the worms nearby will be attracted to and eat any vegetation as it starts rotting; their eating eliminates putrid odors. This method is the best way to populate the compost pile with earthworms as some species cannot survive in a compost setting and others, such as the Alabama jumper (*Amynthas* species, which is actually Asian), is extremely invasive—even to the point of damaging garden plants

(Continued on page 9.)

#### (Continued from page 8.)

- Keep the compost bin moist without soaking it. Tilling the bin helps oxygenate the compost, but can release mold spores, so consider wearing a dust mask.
- After a few weeks, churn the compost and check the worm content. Waiting longer means more worms. Do not slice the worms in half unless they are immediately destined for the hook—instead of doubling the population (a myth), cutting can end up killing them.

Keep adding compostable material to the earthworm bin. Sprinkle excess, fully decomposed product around the yard. Some folks prefer having two bins going at one time so one bin receives fresh material while the other finishes and will be emptied in the yard soon. Mammals, such as raccoons and rats, tend to ignore compost piles provided there are no meats, fats, or cooked foods present. Tiny fruit flies and beetles might like the compost, but are harmless and the latter's grubs could also become bait.

There it is—simple and easy! As part of cleaning up the site after fishing, return any unused worms to the compost bin for next time. Cultivating earthworms can be refined even further, such as adding fruit fly countermeasures, setting up a self-contained system, and creating vermiculture for indoor operations.

## For more earthworm information: Invasive worms:



- <a href="https://extension.psu.edu/look-out-for-jumping-earthworms">https://extension.psu.edu/look-out-for-jumping-earthworms</a>
- https://www.audubon.org/news/invasive-jumping-worms-are-now-tearing-through-midwestern-forests
- <a href="https://www.theatlantic.com/science/archive/2020/01/jumping-worms-are-taking-over-north-american-forests/605257/?fbclid=lwAR3NjQcWJepjBeUGlb">https://www.theatlantic.com/science/archive/2020/01/jumping-worms-are-taking-over-north-american-forests/605257/?fbclid=lwAR3NjQcWJepjBeUGlb</a> GyQSPM8ekCZQuwo4NQWQdR2ggWKYBulY5IVzSh7A

#### Worm farm designs:

- <a href="https://dengarden.com/gardening/Starting-a-Worm-Farm">https://dengarden.com/gardening/Starting-a-Worm-Farm</a>
- <a href="http://www.earthwiseharmony.com/GARDENS/EH-Home-Made-Worm-Farms-How-to-Build-Your-Own-Worm-Farm.html">http://www.earthwiseharmony.com/GARDENS/EH-Home-Made-Worm-Farms-How-to-Build-Your-Own-Worm-Farm.html</a>
- https://growwherever.com/how-to-make-a-worm-farm/
- https://www.worm-composting-help.com/Indoor-worm-farm.html
- https://www.wormfarmingrevealed.com/diywormbin.html
- <a href="https://modernfarmer.com/2013/05/how-to-build-a-worm-farm/">https://modernfarmer.com/2013/05/how-to-build-a-worm-farm/</a>



Figure 2. Digging, tearing into the environment, and disrupting topsoil ecology is an amateur practice that wastes time from fishing, makes a mess, and is illegal in parks.

#### **Worm Grunting**

Worm grunting is another efficient way to harvest earthworms. It involves generating vibrations in the soil that mimic worm predators; the worms feel the trembles and escape to the surface. The key to success is driving the stake several inches into the ground and getting good vibrations with the rasping stick so that the immediate ground quivers, too. Further worm grunting info and demos are at: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=3ILOGcSxCAY

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=3iLoGcSXCAY https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Z9f\_v2Difcs https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=D0YjFT8F7RU



Commonwealth Swim Club would like to thank the Kings Park West Civic Association and all of our wonderful KPW neighbors for donations toward the neighborhood pools as part of the KPWCA membership campaign. We appreciate your support and recognition that each of the pools are a valued part of the neighborhood!

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plsoo ornab tnoatheews ebar

#### Answers:

Commonwealth | Robinson | Herald | foxes | neighborhood | Fairfax | Royal | Gainsborough | Mason | Scouts | Pools | Baron | Wheatstone | bear

#### Pack 1967 News

Pack 1967 hopes everyone is healthy and happy. Being at home makes life a little different these days, but the Scouts of Pack 1967 and their families are making due and hope you and your family are as well.

On May 2, along with Scouts BSA Troops and Girl Scout Troops in the neighborhood, Pack 1967 participated in the National Camp-In, a day in which Scouts and their families camped in their backyards, cooked their meals outside, and (of course) had s'mores over the camp fire. It may have been a little different from our usual camp outs, but our Scouts made it work. The Pack 1967 virtual camp out included a campfire program streamed over Facebook Live; definitely a new way of doing it for this Pack.







And even though in-person Scouting has stopped since March, the Scouts of Pack 1967 have continued to work on their adventures with their families. Six Pack 1967 Scouts completed a nearly year-long effort and earned the prestigious Supernova award that recognizes superior achievement by a Scout in the fields of science, technology, engineering, and mathematics (STEM).

To earn the award, the Scouts must conduct an experiment, participate in a STEM activity, learn about a STEM-related career, research scientists, and a complete a number of other STEM-related activities. Across the entire National Capital Region, only 28 Cub Scouts earned the award between March and May 2020, and six of them were from Pack 1967.

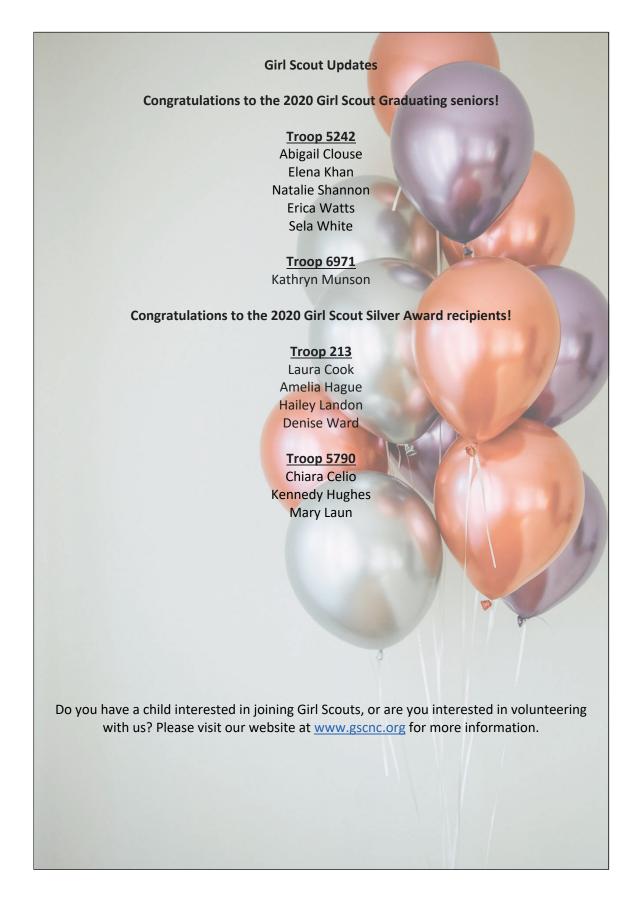
Congratulations to Joseph Crowley, Henrik Mann, Henry Speidell, Brennan Goetz, and Holden Riley for earning the Dr. Luis W. Alvarez Cub Scout Supernova Award and to Cormac Mann for earning the Dr. Charles H. Townes Webelos Supernova award!

(Continued on page 12.)

### (Continued from page 11.)



Even though we've stopped in-person meetings to be cautious, we're still working together remotely to learn about our environment and our community. If your child is interested in finding out more about Scouting, join us at a Den meeting (once they restart!). If you have any questions or want to contact a Den Leader, we can be contacted at <a href="mailto:cubScout.Pack.1967@gmail.com">cubScout.Pack.1967@gmail.com</a>.





www.facebook.com/groups/HeraldsList













## by cathy deloach

Warmer weather inspires us to improve our homes, but during these unusual times, many homeowners are hesitant to have contractors work inside the house. However, outdoor projects are being pursued enthusiastically right now. Here are some contractor recommendations for in-demand projects.



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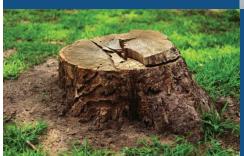


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