

Block #: _____

Date: _____

Kings Park West Civic Association

— 2026 Membership Form —

STEP 1: MEMBER INFORMATION

Name(s): _____

Address: _____

Home Phone: _____

Cell Phone: _____

Email: _____

Would you like to receive email updates from KPWCA? Circle: YES or NO

STEP 2: ADDITIONAL DONATIONS

Kings Park West Civic Association Activities

- | | |
|------|-------------------------------|
| \$25 | 1. Membership Dues (Required) |
| | 2. Herald Newsletter |
| | 3. Common Grounds Maintenance |
| | 4. Parks & Lake |
| | 5. Scholarships |
| | 6. Scout Packs & Troop |
| | 7. Halloween Fall Festival |
| | 8. Spring Egg Hunt |
| | 9. Unrestricted Community Use |

Other Community Support

- | | |
|--|-----------------------------------|
| | 10. Volunteer Fire Department |
| | 11. Robinson All Night Grad Party |
| | 12. Pools in Our Community |
| | 13. Braddock Nights |
| | TOTAL DOLLAR AMOUNT |

I'm Interested in Volunteering:

- | | |
|---|---|
| ☐ Block Captain/Membership | ☐ Welcome Committee |
| ☐ Herald Newsletter | ☐ Streets & Signboards |
| ☐ Parks & Lake | ☐ Dumpster Day |
| ☐ Spring Egg Hunt | ☐ Fall Festival |

Paying Online?

You can complete this form and pay via PayPal using the QR code or at kpwca.org

Paying by Check?

Please make checks payable to KPWCA and return to your Block Captain or mail to:

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



STEP 3: PAYMENT TYPE

☐ Cash ☐ Check (#_____) ☐ Online (PayPal Payer's Name: _____)

Contributions to KPWCA are not deductible for federal income tax purposes as charitable contributions.



Kings Park Civic Association General Membership Meeting September 2026

PROXY FORM

Each active Civic Association member as listed in the membership database may vote on Association business. Any current member wishing to vote by proxy must complete this form. This form may be given to a KPWCA member who will attend any time prior to a regular or special meeting of the Association. Proxy forms received after the meeting will not be accepted.

Name:

Address:

I assign _____ the authority to vote on my behalf regarding Association matters.

Signature: _____

Date: _____

Note: Membership Status of all parties will be verified upon presentation of a proxy. No individual may serve as proxy for more than two (2) members. Please contact president@kpwca.org to obtain another proxy form or to drop off a form.



September 2026

Vol. 56, Issue 3

Kings Park West Civic Association

Hey neighbors!

Even though you'll be reading this on a (hopefully) cool September day, I'm writing this in the middle of an increasingly hot and humid August. Personally, I am looking forward to the cooler days of September. Between the drought and the storms this summer, I'm ready for some crisper air and fall colors.

THE JUNE MICROBURST

Unfortunately, we were one of the houses affected by the microburst this past June. I keep trying to describe the terror that three minutes of my life could hold, but I come up short every time. On June 22 at 5:03 pm, our power went out. At 5:04 pm, I started to hear a dull whine, like the wind was blowing but far away. At 5:05 pm, I heard a noise like a jet engine, saw a wall of white outside coming at me, and heard what sounded like rocks hitting my front windows. At 5:06 pm, it was over (and I was taking cover in a little interior room in our Duchess).

Our court was covered in tree limbs. A branch 10 feet long and 10 inches in diameter had come within 2 feet of slamming into our house. A smaller branch fell on our car but thankfully did not damage anything. Trees in the park behind our house were twisted around.

But you know what? The next twenty minutes were spent checking on neighbors, getting out chainsaws, and making sure everything and everyone was alright. I'm thankful to have experienced that kind of camaraderie during such a terrifying time. I'll be quite happy to not experience something like that again, but I am comforted to know that if I do, I've got some great neighbors to weather the storm with.

ANNUAL MEMBERSHIP MEETING

The KPWCA Annual Membership Meeting will be taking place on September 15 at 7 pm in the Recital Hall at Robinson Secondary School. Members of the civic association are invited to join to discuss and vote on the budget, discuss planned activities for the coming year, and vote on board members. The positions of President, Vice President, and Board Member-At-Large will be up for re-election. A slate will be presented by email prior to the meeting. Please reach out to board@kpwca.org if you would like to submit a nomination for these roles.

2026-2027 MEMBERSHIP STARTS NOW!

Our membership drive kicks off with this edition of The Herald! The Kings Park West Civic Association is a voluntary membership organization for the folks who live or rent in Kings Park West. Membership is \$25 per household for the membership year, running from October to September. Joining the association gives you access to exclusive member events, funds scholarship opportunities, and helps us organize the Halloween Parade prior to the Halloween Festival. Visit <https://kpwca.org/membership-form/> to renew or join today.

Helen Santoro
President, KPWCA

Community Calendar

The Herald Delivery – September 12, 2026
 KPWCA Monthly Meeting – September 15, 2026
 KPWCA Fall Membership meeting – September 22
 Traffic Calming Meeting – October 1, 2026
 Columbus Day – October 12, 2026
 KPWCA Fall Festival – October 17, 2026
 KPWCA Monthly Meeting – October 20, 2026
 Halloween – October 31, 2026
 Veterans Day – November 11, 2026
 The Herald Content Deadline – November 14, 2026
 KPWCA Fall Dumpster Day – November 14, 2026
 KPWCA Monthly Meeting – November 17, 2026
 Thanksgiving – November 26, 2026
 The Herald Delivery – December 12, 2026

Kings Park West Civic Association 5616i Ox Road #7114 Fairfax Station, VA 22039 General Information: board@kpwca.org Website: kpwca.org		
Officers		Email
President	Helen Santoro	president@kpwca.org
Vice President	Vacant - this could be you!	vp@kpwca.org
Secretary	Pamela Thibodeau	secretary@kpwca.org
Treasurer	Alan Morris	treasurer@kpwca.org
Members-at-Large	VACANT Rosemary Cox-Galhotra Jonathan Reiser	boardmember1@kpwca.org boardmember2@kpwca.org boardmember3@kpwca.org
Committees		
Common Grounds Maintenance	Linda Reamy	
Membership	Vacant - this could be you!	
Parks and Lake	Shannon Leary	parks@kpwca.org
Communications		
Herald Copy Editors	Tom Appich Shanley Pinchotti	editor@kpwca.org
Herald Layout Editor	Rose Luczak	editor@kpwca.org
Herald Advertising and Classifieds	Julia Bettge	classified@kpwca.org
Signboards	Jonathan Reiser	boardmember3@kpwca.org
Web Admin	Tim Hartle	website@kpwca.org
Community Services		
Invasive Species	Greg Sykes	greg@grsykes.com
Special Activities		
Fall Festival	Keith Jodoin	kjodoin@gmail.com
Scholarships	Pamela Thibodeau	board@kpwca.org

How do I join the Kings Park West Civic Association? Visit our website (kpwca.org) to complete the online membership form and to pay online. You can also print the membership form from the website to fill it out and mail your form and check to PO Box #7114 Fairfax Station, VA 22039	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 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 an endorsement by the KPWCA.															
The Herald Published in print four times a year and hand-delivered to all 1,900 homes in KPW. Next deadline: November 14, 2026, for the December 2026 print edition. Note: Acceptance of articles and advertising does not constitute an endorsement by the KPWCA nor liability for products or services advertised in its publications.	How do I advertise in The Herald? Please contact classified@kpwca.org for more information on publishing an ad or a classified in The Herald. The deadline for submissions for the December edition is November 14, 2026. The 2026 ad pricing structure is: <table><tr><td></td><td>1-2 issues</td><td>3-4 issues</td></tr><tr><td>▪ 1/8 page</td><td>\$30/issue</td><td>\$27/issue</td></tr><tr><td>▪ 1/4 page</td><td>\$55/issue</td><td>\$50/issue</td></tr><tr><td>▪ 1/2 page</td><td>\$110/issue</td><td>\$100/issue</td></tr><tr><td>▪ Full page</td><td>\$360/issue</td><td>\$350/issue</td></tr></table> Classified ads are \$5 per issue for 35 words.		1-2 issues	3-4 issues	▪ 1/8 page	\$30/issue	\$27/issue	▪ 1/4 page	\$55/issue	\$50/issue	▪ 1/2 page	\$110/issue	\$100/issue	▪ Full page	\$360/issue	\$350/issue
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▪ 1/4 page	\$55/issue	\$50/issue														
▪ 1/2 page	\$110/issue	\$100/issue														
▪ Full page	\$360/issue	\$350/issue														



IN KINGS PARK WEST

By Linda H. Bassert

September is here, and winter holidays are approaching. This is a good time to discuss another reason besides comfort and convenience for transforming your home. For some families, how the house functions for Entertaining is a major concern. The entertaining could be for business and professional reasons, or your home might be the center of extended family gatherings. This need focuses on public spaces rather than the bedrooms. Evaluating the kind of entertaining that is done in each space is an important part of assessing how to have the space work better for you.

Some of these decisions factor into the original choice of the house you will live in – is the dining room large enough for the number of persons we customarily entertain? Is the floor plan conducive to a large gathering in the kitchen? Is that kitchen space open to the larger gathering zone? Do we need a space for children or teens to let loose in and a separate space for adult entertaining? Do we need more than one TV viewing area, for some to gather for a sports event while others watch movies? Or do we need a music listening area or a place in which to practice music? These same questions are applicable if considering a renovation, or change to the floor plan.

Then once the house is selected to meet those entertaining needs with the right kinds of spaces, the furnishings become the next part of the consideration. In these spaces used for entertaining, do the furniture choices contribute to the comfort of guests? Does every chair have a table nearby where you can put down a cup of coffee, a glass of wine, or a small plate? Does the Dining Room have a sideboard so you can easily carve the Thanksgiving roast beast and serve from there, rather than running back and forth to the kitchen? William Morris said, "Have nothing in your house that you do not know to be useful or believe to be beautiful." This is a good lens through which to look at spaces that will be used for entertaining, to see how they might be more useful or more beautiful.

If entertaining is also for business purposes, would clients ever come into your home office? Do you need a home office to look "on brand" for zoom calls? Does a home office space need doors for private conversations? I often recommend shades be placed on the inside side of doors with window glass, so that work left in place on the desktop is not seen if unexpected guests drop by.



A Home Office ready for Professional use.

One of my clients called me back when they decided to create a family-friendly gathering space in their basement. They had designed a storage space adjacent to an L shaped area, so they could alternate either a ping pong table or a family casual dining

table in one part of the space and have a place to store the choice [not clear: should it be "items", "possessions"?] not being used. In the other part of the L, they had added a fireplace with built-ins, so they could showcase the husband's collection of toy Western town play sets. But beyond that, they were at a loss as to how to furnish the space. We needed choices in flooring, wall colors, and furniture that would provide the right feeling for wonderful family gatherings.



A Basement Family Room inspired by a toy collection

The toy collection meant we needed color, which in turn affected choices of rugs, pillows, a cocktail ottoman, and art. The Western theme meant we added a large Western painting of cowboys relaxing and two small Western prints of cowboys raising a ruckus in town after payday. The gaming space with a vintage pinball machine as well as the occasional ping pong table led to framed album covers on the wall, and a collection of small carved cows to use when the dining table was out. The result was a relaxing space that was fun and safe for grandchildren, while the toy collection was enjoyed, but safely out of reach.

If entertaining will occur outdoors, do we need an outdoor kitchen and large deck for entertaining in good weather? Would an outdoor firepit contribute to the kind of gatherings we prefer? Do we need awnings for shade? Is the outdoor furniture well-suited to the gatherings we like to have? Do we need a playset outside for younger children?



Backyard Patio as Game Board

At our house, because chess battles are a part of family gatherings, we turned our back yard patio into a huge chess board, using large porcelain tiles, and oversize plastic chess pieces. The same thing could be done to create an outdoor game board if, in your family, checkers or backgammon is preferred. Cornhole competitions and horseshoe pits are other outdoor games to add for gathering spaces, depending on whether you want to have more permanent locations in the yard or portable games to bring out when company comes over.

Decorating contributes to entertainment. Whether it is a beautiful table setting contributing to the ambiance of a dinner, or just a Wow as friends gather in spaces reflecting your personal style, choices in art, lighting, furniture, accessories, and color not only affirm your sense of what your home represents, but help tell your

story, inviting guests to ask questions and to get to know you better.

Now's the time to start planning, if you do want to consider making some changes before the holiday entertaining season is upon us. Happy dreaming!

Sincerely, Linda

Linda Bassert is the Design Principal of Masterworks Window Fashions & Design, LLC, an award-winning interior design and decorating firm, based from her Kings Park West home. Linda was named Designer of the Year 2024 at the 2024 International Window Coverings Expo Grace Awards, and her business has been awarded Best of Houzz 2025 in Design and Service. Masterworks can be found on Houzz, Facebook and Instagram, as well as at www.masterworksdesign.com

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by cathy deloach

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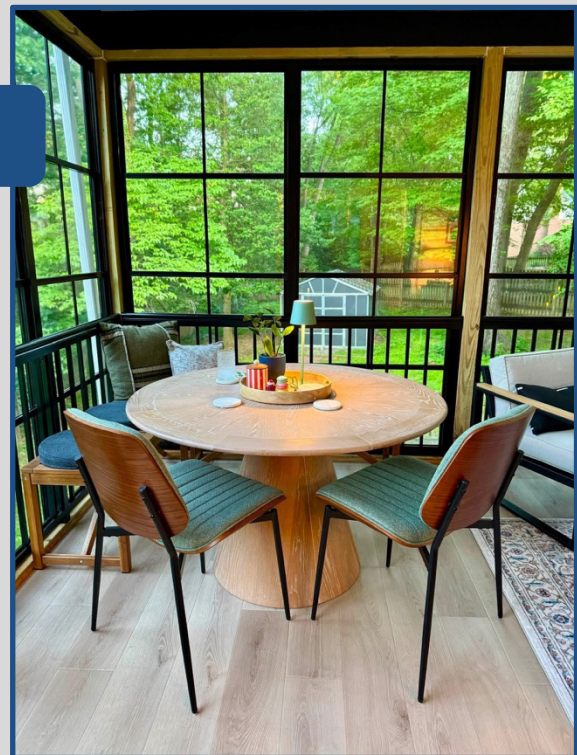
KPW neighbor, **Ashlee Young**, recently updated her home to transform the screened porch into a beautiful, light-filled retreat the whole family enjoys – rain or shine!

*"We live in a King and feel like we doubled our entertaining space! A huge shoutout to **Manny's Home Improvement** (our contractor) and **Tom Futch at New Look Services** (vinyl screened windows) for this incredible transformation. I can't recommend them highly enough. Our sunroom was literally rotting and had become structurally unsafe to use. Now we have a safe, up-to-code space that we can truly enjoy; and it's pollen-free."*

BEFORE



AFTER



Manny's Home Improvement



www.MyHandyManny.net
(571) 379-0422

New Look Services

Tom Futch

(703) 915-3017

To seek recommendations from your neighbors, or to recommend a contractor or service that has done an amazing job, head on over to the KPW Recommends Facebook group at <https://www.facebook.com/groups/kpwrecommends>.

FORL: Microburst Damages Royal Lake Parks and Surrounding Communities

By Paul Gross

The National Weather Service reported that on June 22, 2026, at 5:09 PM, a microburst of up to 90 mph winds engulfed an area one mile long and 500 yards wide. It uprooted trees, snapped off tree limbs, and damaged homes, fences and vehicles in the Kings Park West, Lakepointe, and Chatham Towne neighborhood as well as Royal Lake Park. There was significant devastation but no injuries or fatalities. It was a strange weather event in that our Kings Park West neighbors near Guinea Road had significant to extensive damage while a few blocks away neighborhoods had little or no damage. In hard hit areas, over nine homes in the microburst area were declared uninhabitable.

Royal Lake Parks' trees suffered incredible damage, so the Fairfax County Park Authority (FCPA) Area 4 maintenance crews led by Mike Sines, with the support of Areas 2 and 3 crews, worked incredibly fast to clear the trail in a few days. As a follow-up on July 18, the Department of Public Works and Environmental Sciences (DPWES) Stormwater Management and the Forestry Division removed trees that were in the lake.

A wooden bridge on the Royal Lake trail that had been rehabbed recently by Eagle Scout candidate QB Le and his Scout Troop 1966 was extensively damaged by the microburst. By July 9, FCPA Maintenance built a new wooden bridge as a replacement.



Supervisor Sizemore Heizer held a community-wide virtual meeting to explain the county 's response to the homeowners and other members of the community. FCPA leadership attended the meeting and reported that additional follow-up on park cleanup would be forthcoming. At this point in time, specific actions are being reviewed to clean up Royal Lake Parks to make them safe and presentable for park patrons. This may require a multi-agency effort.

The Friends of Royal Lake are indebted to all the agencies that have been working to restore Royal Lake Parks for our enjoyment and the preservation of the environment. THANK YOU!



Who is a Good Neighbor?

by Shari Zamarra

At my house, it is Tim Hartle. When we realized that the door on our Little Free Library was broken and we weren't sure how to fix it, I emailed Tim. I knew he was a skilled carpenter because of the Puzzle Library he built on Gainsborough Drive.

Tim showed up the next day, tools in hand, and quickly devised a solution. The situation was complicated by the presence of a wasp's nest inside that we couldn't see. He took care of the wasps without being stung. We were soon back in business for our neighbors to enjoy the books. Tim made it look easy. Hats off to someone who cares about our community – truly a good neighbor!



The KPWCA Membership Drive starts next month! and why YOUR MEMBERSHIP is critical!

By Sarah Lennon

Hey neighbors! It's been a while since I've written anything for the Civic Association but, I'm baaaack! (well, sort of...) I have agreed to step in temporarily to help out with the Membership Drive this fall but

WE STILL NEED A NEW MEMBERSHIP COMMITTEE CHAIR!!

Membership numbers have fallen dramatically in the past years, all while the **Eggstravaganza** and the **Halloween Festival** have seen record numbers of attendees and participants. When I headed up Membership ~10 years ago, there were more than 1,000 households that were KPWCA members, out of 1,800 homes. Last year there were 459. Yup, roughly only 24% of all the homes/families in the community chose to pay the \$25 membership fee! That makes me sad, to be honest. The Civic Association is still providing the same services (minus the Directory, which became too expensive and many people said they never used it) but so few people support it; honestly, I don't understand why. For those who may be new to the neighborhood, here's a brief summary of some of the Civic Associations' contributions to the community:

- *The Herald, your KPWCA newsletter, is published four times a year on paper and available on the website.*
- *Scholarships for up to 3 high school seniors (children of KPWCA members)*
- *Sponsorship of Scouting groups*
- *Community social events including the Halloween Festival & Spring Eggstravaganza*
- *Support to Volunteer Fire Departments through collection of contributions*
- *Grounds maintenance and improvements around entrances and the signboards*
- *Parks and Lake Committee that works to clean up and preserve the parks around Royal Lake and works with the Fairfax County Park Authority and Friends of Royal Lake*
- *Sponsorship of the Robinson Secondary School All Night Grad Party*
- *Twice a year Dumpster Day for disposal of furniture, appliances, etc. not picked up by weekly garbage services and is available only for KPWCA members*

The dedicated team that processes all the memberships has improved the process significantly, so it is easier than ever to pay the membership dues of only \$25. Think about it, that's roughly TWO DOLLARS A MONTH and less than buying a cup of coffee once a month! The form and payment are online at www.kpwca.org. There is no need to submit a hard copy form anymore after paying online (using a credit card or PayPal). I recall that when I first set up the PayPal option maybe a handful of people (definitely fewer than 20) used that option and now it's nearly 95%!

So, please consider joining the Civic Association this year and helping us support the community. With less revenue and fewer volunteers, the team of KPWCA volunteers can only do so much. New ideas and suggestions are always welcome!



Artificial Wetlands from a Tadpole's Perspective

By Greg Sykes (greg@grsykes.com)



Following the Shanes Creek stream restoration, many people have appreciated how the project improves the water quality along this Royal Lake tributary. The different habitats, such as wetlands and meadows, increase localized biodiversity. Still, critics of the project, especially of the overflow wetland areas, say, "It's ugly," "It's a bunch of rocks, dead wood, and mud," "It's a breeding ground for mosquitos," and "I want big trees [from before the restoration], not this stagnant swamp!" OK, let's go there!

Pictured above (Figure 1) is one of the overflow wetlands. Normally, Shanes Creek bypasses these features. During strong storms, these receptacles accept the floodwaters and dissipate the water's energy across a wide expanse. After storms subside, the soil and marsh plants slowly absorb the captured water. When these pools exist, they are home to scores of aquatic critters with the green frog (*Lithobates clamitans*) being a more conspicuous species. This frog's thumping-like mating calls echo throughout the wetlands. We've heard the humans' perspective of these zones, so let's combine empathy and science to imagine how a green frog's tadpole might perceive its home compared to a human's abode if it could make its case and talk:

Ah, yes! Here I am in this nice pool filled with rocky and woody hiding places. At least there are no fish to devour me since any brought by floods don't live long here. I can't believe human babies are raised in dry, artificial contraptions called houses. Being cold-blooded, my activity conveniently changes with the seasons, staying more energetic in the summer when I can make the most out of a productive environment. How do humans survive with warm blood? In their houses, they need to regulate temperatures that suit their narrow comfort range. What's more, humans need to bundle in clothing layers throughout winter when we amphibians chill out and sleep au naturel in pond mud or hibernate on land under leaf litter.

I hatched in the spring and will grow into a frog this year. My half-siblings from late-season spawns will shelter amongst the rotting vegetation and muck where they overwinter. Next spring, they will resume developing. They may eat some of the eggs laid by wood frogs, spring peepers, and toads, who also breed here early in the year.

Speaking of food, my mom and dad left me as an egg in this pool filled with yummy nourishment. As a young tadpole, I eat decaying organic matter and algae. When I get older, tiny animals, including mosquito larvae, will supplement my diet and help ready my tummy for a carnivorous adult menu. In contrast, human parents tend to their offspring for many years. They feed their babies either a secretion called milk (as all mammals do) or a synthetic milk-like formula. Some humans drink milk throughout their lives, even when it is manufactured by other animals. They might mix milk with microbes, wait a while, call the result cheese or yogurt, and eat it. I wonder if their moldy milk tastes as good as my rotting organic debris.



A close look at Figure 1's artificial wetland finds a *Lithobates* tadpole with developing legs (top left). Two young adult green frogs sit by the water's edge (bottom right)

All these different native plants grow around my pool, which help filter the water and keep me healthy. Humans surround their houses with limited plants and fields of grassy monocultures called lawns. Humans often choose exotic plants that are as ecologically worthless as plastic, then say, "The garden looks nice." The chemicals that are applied to their yard kill my adult insect-based food, wipe out the diverse plants that my insect food sources and I need, and supercharge nutrients that run off into my home! With my delicate skin, too much of those toxins can kill me! The dog poop that is not picked up has more waste and harmful bacteria washing into my home than getting soaked into the soil. It turns my home into an unflushed toilet until the next flood, whenever that will be! I'm not adapted to handle such contamination, especially when dealing with daily bombardments.

As a bug-eater, I help maintain a balanced environment that helps humans. Whereas I am grateful to the people who built this wetland and those who now remove invasive plants, many more folks damage my home. Some humans think the great outdoors should be tamed like ecologically-simplistic manicured golf courses. Don't ask how many fish and bird kills occurred on golf courses due to lawn chemical misapplications! And those critters are counted because large, dead birds (especially geese) are obvious; the schools of floating and decomposing fish stink. Few people consider counting frog populations despite the fact that we are indicator species like canaries in a coal mine. Some of

my kin got stuck in manmade rubbish and were rescued by good people. Other froggy relatives could not escape their trash entanglements and slowly died. I don't leave messes in people's houses, so why do humans mistreat my home?

Other aquatic creatures, such as salamanders, snarf more mosquito larvae than I do. Adult mosquitoes will be difficult for me to catch when I become a frog. I share a home with dragonflies and damselflies, who eat mosquitoes throughout their lives: as nymphs, they catch mosquito larvae; when they grow up and don wings, they catch mature mosquitoes on the fly. Robber flies and spiders are some of the additional invertebrates that include adult mosquitoes in their dinners. No wonder there aren't too many mosquitoes around my wetland. Meanwhile, humans claim to hate mosquitoes, yet they create perfect mosquito breeding grounds, such as clogged gutters, water-collecting litter, and neglected bird baths. Get this: some humans spray their yards against mosquitoes with chemicals, such as permethrin, even though those insecticides can kill natural mosquito predators and other beneficial organisms!

Humans can have their strange world without encroaching into my habitat. I love my wetland home enough to stay in the area and, when I become a frog, spawn here, too.

To access this article with bonus photos and links, visit https://www.grsykes.com/pdf/eco-articles/140_2026-09.pdf

The Rest of the Story

The June 2026's article, "IMA Concepts Adapted by Other Institutions," mentioned three volunteer groups who are removing invasive species from their land, but only the St. Stephen's story made it to press. To read about the hard work that GMU and Robinson HS volunteers did on their properties, the unedited manuscript is available at https://www.grsykes.com/pdf/eco-articles/139_2026-06.pdf.

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**Virtual Community Meeting for the Traffic Calming Proposal
(Speed Humps/Table)
on Commonwealth Boulevard
Thursday, October 1, 2026
6:30 PM**

The Commonwealth Boulevard Traffic Calming Task Force will host a meeting to discuss the placement of three Speed Humps and one Speed Table. Task Force members from our community have worked with Fairfax County to develop these solutions to reduce speed on Commonwealth Boulevard. The purpose of this meeting is to explain the proposal, receive feedback, and answer any questions or concerns that citizens may have. Representatives of the Braddock District Supervisor's Office and the Fairfax County Department of Transportation will attend and answer any questions during the Q&A Session.

You do not need to attend the meeting in order to vote on the proposal. Ballots will be distributed to residences included in ballot area identified by Fairfax County, at a later time to vote on the final proposal.

If you are not able to attend the meeting, but have questions, please call/ email:

- Rosemary Cox-Galhotra
Task Force Lead & At-Large Board Member of Kings Park West Civic Association (KPWCA)
Boardmember2@kpwca.org

- Fairfax County Department of Transportation
Phone: 703-877-5600
Email: DOTinfo@FairfaxCounty.gov (Subject: Commonwealth Boulevard Traffic Calming)

Attend a Virtual Community Meeting

To participate in the community meeting, click the link below or scan the QR code using your phone, you will be asked to sign in and/or register for the meeting. If you don't have online access and plan to call into the meeting by phone, use the phone number and password listed below.

To join online, click or go to the link below:

<https://tinyurl.com/Commonwealth-Blvd>

Meeting ID: 283 225 147 759 348 **Passcode:** Bb7pQ9Q3 **QR Code:**



To join by phone, call the number below then when prompted, enter Phone Conference ID:
[+1 571-429-5982](tel:+15714295982) United States, Arlington

Phone Conference ID: 348 107 193#

First time Microsoft Teams user? Click here for instructions: <https://tinyurl.com/Join-Our-Meeting>

Community members who would benefit from translation services or ADA accommodations should contact FCDOT at 703-877-5600 no later than seven business days prior to the meeting to arrange accommodations.

Commonwealth Boulevard Speed Calming: Residents Need the Full Picture Before Permanent Road Changes Are Made

By Joseph T. Walker, Ph.D.

Speeding on Commonwealth Boulevard is real: the traffic study found 85th-percentile speeds of 43 MPH eastbound and 38 MPH westbound on a road posted at 25 MPH. That deserves attention. But a speed measurement is not the same thing as documented harm, and that distinction has been skipped entirely. Before Kings Park West accepts a permanent, costly change to a core access road, residents should see the actual crash history for this exact segment of Commonwealth Boulevard, not a hypothetical risk. How many crashes, injuries, or fatalities have Fairfax County Police and VDOT actually recorded here in recent years? If that number is small or zero, the county is asking hundreds of residents to accept a permanent physical obstruction based on speed alone, with no evidence that the speeding has actually hurt anyone.

The proposed solution is also being presented as an unqualified safety win, while its costs to the broader community are minimized, and the decision is being steered toward a small group of residents rather than the hundreds who actually use this road. Commonwealth Boulevard is not a side street serving a handful of homes. It is Kings Park West's core access route to Guinea Road, Roberts Road, and Braddock Road, and the path residents use to reach schools, pools, parks, bus stops, and neighborhood exits. Yet the balloting process now moving forward is limited to homes near the proposed devices. If the whole community bears the consequences, the whole community deserves a vote, not just the residents who live beside where the humps would go. Excluding commuters, Metrobus riders, school-bus families, and daily drivers from that decision is not a technicality; it is a small number of residents imposing a permanent change on hundreds of neighbors who never had a voice.

The devices themselves carry costs the proposal glosses over. Calling them "gentle slopes" doesn't change what they do: force every vehicle to brake, cross a raised surface, and accelerate again. That affects Metrobus and school buses, whose passengers include elderly riders and people with mobility or back-pain concerns; some residents have already seen Metrobus service disrupted on Commonwealth's slopes during snow and ice, a problem raised

devices could worsen. It affects emergency vehicles, fire engines, ambulances, and police cars, where seconds matter and jarring movement can interfere with CPR or IV care mid-transport. It affects snowplows, which may need blade adjustments and can leave behind ice patches. And it affects every resident who crosses these devices daily, through added noise, wear, and discomfort. None of this appears in the case being made to residents.

Nor has the community been shown why less intrusive alternatives are off the table. If speeding is the problem, enforcement should be the first tool, not the last. Fairfax County already uses speed cameras on Sideburn Road. Speed cameras, radar feedback signs, targeted enforcement, and crosswalk or striping improvements target the drivers who are actually speeding, without forcing every bus, ambulance, plow, and resident to absorb the cost of a permanent physical obstruction.

This is not a choice between safety and no safety; that framing is false. Kings Park West can support pedestrian safety and reject an unfair, one-sided process at the same time. Before this proceeds, residents should demand answers on what is being installed, where, and why raised devices are preferred over cameras; the documented crash, injury, and fatality record for this segment, not projected risk; written input from Fire and Rescue, EMS, police, Metrobus, and FCPS transportation; and a real explanation for why the vote excludes residents who use Commonwealth Boulevard every day.

Write to the KPWCA Board and the Braddock District Supervisor's Office now, before this is decided without you. Ask them to pause the process, publish the full impacts, hold a true community-wide meeting, and prioritize enforcement over permanent roadway obstructions. Email boardmember2@kpwca.org and braddock@fairfaxcounty.gov and make sure your voice is part of this decision.

Counterpoint on Speeding

By Kevin Lacey

I respectfully disagree with my fellow neighbor about whether speeding is a problem on Commonwealth Blvd. Over the last several years I have observed the following traffic accidents along the small stretch of Commonwealth Blvd where I reside.

In 2017, an unknown vehicle hit my car which was parked in my driveway, totaling my car and destroying my mailbox in the process. Unfortunately, this was also a hit and run incident that the police were never able to track down, so my insurance company and I had to bear the cost.

In 2025, a vehicle traveling along Commonwealth Blvd collided with my neighbor's SUV at a high rate of speed while they were trying to back into their driveway. Although the SUV was totaled, thankfully no one was hurt. However, there were young children in that van that could have been seriously hurt.

In 2026, a vehicle traveling along Commonwealth Blvd collided with two parked cars at a high rate of speed. The driver was later arrested for DUI by the police. My neighbor learned from this incident that two teenage drivers were racing down both lanes of Commonwealth

Blvd as part of a race and that apparently, this sort of thing is not uncommon on Commonwealth Blvd on weekend evenings.

These experiences and several others inform me that every 4-5 years, one of my neighbors or I is going to suffer injury or loss from a speeding vehicle along Commonwealth Blvd. I find that prospect to be completely unacceptable.

You may have seen my children engaging in what they call "Book, blanket, CFA!" Or making big bubbles this summer. They are upper elementary aged. Yet my wife and I do not allow them in our front yard without supervision because of speeding on Commonwealth Blvd.

While a speed bump cannot stop a drunk driver, or a risk-taking racer from wreaking havoc on our street, my hope is that these speed bumps will disincentivize these behaviors on our road. If it is harder to go unreasonably fast, then some of these risk-taking drivers may decide to take their risks on other roads, (maybe ones that have a more visible law enforcement presence on them), and if that happens, then surely these speed bumps will be a benefit to us all.
(Kevin Lacey is a Commonwealth Blvd resident since 2016)

Commonwealth Blvd Speed Calming Project: Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ)

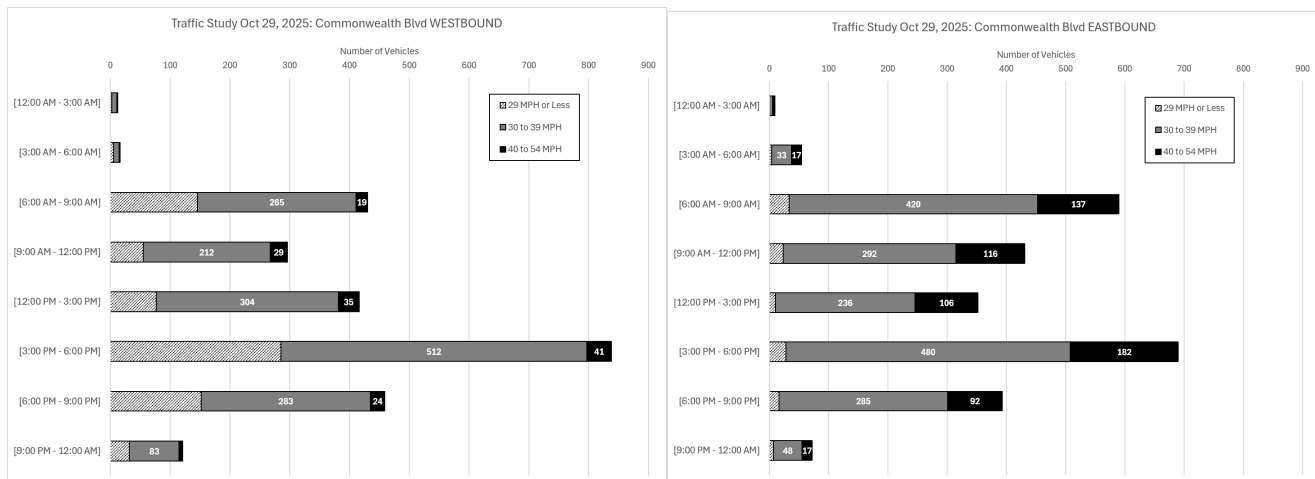
By Rosemary Cox-Galhotra, Ph.D.

Thank you to those of you who reached out following the publication of the article titled “Community-Led Speed Calming on Commonwealth Blvd” in the June 2026 issue of the Herald. Your feedback, questions, concerns, and offers of support are appreciated and welcome!

Quick reminder: a volunteer group of KPW residents are pursuing speed calming measures through an established program called the Residential Traffic Administration Program (RTAP). A speed study conducted by the Fairfax County Department of Transportation (FCDOT) verified a significant speeding problem and qualified us for the RTAP program. FCDOT then developed a speed calming plan that calls for the addition of speed humps and/or speed tables to the section of Commonwealth Blvd immediately east of the 3-way stop with Gainsborough Dr. Below are FAQ about the project.

Can you share more detail on the speed study that was conducted on Oct 29, 2025?

The June 2026 article included the 85th percentile speeds (Eastbound: 43 MPH; Westbound: 38 MPH). Below are plots of the raw data collected on Commonwealth Blvd, just west of the crosswalk at Dequincey Dr. [Note: The location of this speed study was selected by FCDOT as representative for the entire study area.] The study was conducted on a Wednesday, and school (FCPS) was in session. The figures show that a small minority of vehicles in each direction drive at 29 MPH or less (lightest bar) and many are driving 40+ MPH (black bar), especially eastbound



Commonwealth Blvd Speed Study data: Westbound (left) and Eastbound (right). The y-axis is time of day, and the x-axis is total number of cars. The segments of each bar correspond to the number of vehicles driving at a given speed range.

Note that eastbound traffic approached the speed study device after having picked up speed through the straightaway near Crooked Creek. This presents a dangerous situation for those crossing Commonwealth Blvd. at the Dequincey Dr. crosswalk.

What is the current proposed plan?

FCDOT originally developed a speed calming plan that included 7 speed humps and/or tables between the 3-way stop with Gainsborough and Guinea Rd. However, we asked them to pare back to 4 devices: 3 speed humps and 1 speed table, in a smaller section of the study area. The proposed placement puts one device on either side of the crosswalks at the intersections with Dequincey Dr. and Pommeroy Dr. to improve pedestrian safety and slow speeds in that limited section of Commonwealth Blvd.

What are the next steps?

A virtual community meeting will be held on Thursday, October 1, at 6:30p in which FCDOT will review the proposed plan, including exact device locations, and address questions. Please see the announcement in this issue of the Herald for instructions to join the call (Page 12). We invite **ALL KPW residents** to attend! Community feedback will be collected at that meeting. Once we have finalized the plan (likely several weeks later), a vote will be held for residents within a defined ballot area. Details on this to come.

Who determines the ballot area?

FCDOT determines the ballot area based on their criteria. We have no part in this decision.

What other options did you consider? Why not add stop signs, flashing lights at crosswalks, or speed cameras instead?

KPW residents have asked for stop signs on Commonwealth Blvd at key intersections east of the 3-way stop with Gainsborough Dr. However, the Virginia Department of Transportation (VDOT) has denied each request. We are not aware of any programs that allow communities to request Rectangular Rapid Flashing Beacons (RRFBs) at crosswalks or speed cameras, particularly in sections of road that are outside of school zones and already have a 25 MPH speed limit. We have also been told that any measures requiring electricity are extremely expensive and installed only in rare circumstances. However, we agree that these would be helpful!

Why not ask FCPD to ticket speeders?

Several KPW residents have also engaged with FCPD to ask for increased speeding patrols. FCPD has also periodically placed digital signs along Commonwealth Blvd. that show real-time speed to raise awareness with drivers. To be clear, we agree that

speed enforcement is essential; however, the reality is that FCPD cannot patrol for speeders all of the time.

What about the emergency vehicle traffic and snow removal?

We know and agree that this is a concern for our community. **FCDOT has already consulted with Fairfax County Fire & Rescue's operations team about this project.** We all want to ensure that they are comfortable with any speed calming devices. Note that Fire & Rescue has the ability to request emergency vehicle cut-outs and we support their decision on this matter. In terms of snow removal, FCDOT notes that speed humps and speed tables are gradually sloped, allowing snow plow blades to go over them without damaging the blade or the pavement surface.

What are the drawbacks to adding speed humps?

We acknowledge that adding speed humps (12 feet x 3 inches high) or speed tables (22 feet x 3 inches high) to reduce speeds will have tradeoffs. Slowing down when encountering the speed humps may result in braking noise. Sensitive individuals may also experience discomfort when going over them. FCDOT notes

that each device may take emergency vehicles an additional 3 to 10 seconds to travel over them, which in this case would be an additional 12 to 40 seconds total to travel across all 4 devices. (Again, FCDOT has reviewed this project with Fairfax County Fire & Rescue. Emergency vehicle cut-outs can be requested by Fire & Rescue and we are fully supportive of their decision.)

Ultimately, we believe that the benefits slowing down traffic to provide greater safety to pedestrians and cyclists, residents and their property, as well as those who live elsewhere but use Commonwealth Blvd, outweigh the drawbacks.

I have questions, concerns, or want to help. Who should I contact?

- We are constructing a website for the latest status updates and supporting information: kingsparkwest.org
- Join the Virtual Community Meeting on October 1 at 6:30p and ask your questions to FCDOT.
- Reach out to our volunteers with any questions, comments, concerns, support, or help offers: boardmember2@kpwca.org

The View From the Corner of Pommeroy and Commonwealth

By Aldo Rodriguez

I live at the **corner of Pommeroy Drive and Commonwealth Boulevard**. One of the crosswalks in the proposed speed calming area on Commonwealth Blvd. sits right outside my front door, but this is not about my corner alone. It is about every crossing in the plan and everyone who uses this stretch of Commonwealth every day, morning and afternoon. More times than I want to count, I have had to step into the street with my arms out so drivers would slow down for kids in the crosswalk, and what happens at my corner happens at the others too. So when the county's speed study measured an 85th percentile speed of 43 MPH on a road posted at 25, it matched what many of us already see. A car doing 43 on Commonwealth is not a rare outlier. It is part of the normal flow of traffic.

Since this project was first shared in the Herald earlier this summer, some neighbors have asked a fair question. If speeding here has not caused many crashes, is it really a harm? It deserves a straight answer, and I will use the experts' numbers rather than my own. According to the AAA Foundation for Traffic Safety, a pedestrian struck at 42 MPH has a 50 percent chance of dying. The county's study measured 43 MPH here. Fairfax County's own transportation department publishes the same math. A pedestrian hit at 25 MPH has an 89 percent chance of survival, and at 45 MPH that chance falls to 35 percent. Numbers like these are why safety experts treat speeds like ours as a hazard that already exists, and "no one has been killed yet" is not a standard any of us would accept for our own children.

The record is not empty, either. Virginia DMV crash data from 2021 through 2026 shows ten reported crashes on Commonwealth between the 3-way stop at Gainsborough and Guinea Road, including one injury crash inside the area where the devices would go and two more with injuries just beyond it. That count leaves out the busier Gainsborough 4-way and Roberts Road intersections, and it only counts crashes that got a police report. The close calls never make any database.

In October 2024, a speeding car at Roberts Road and Collingham Drive lost control, slammed into a van waiting at a stop sign, and flipped it, sending two of our neighbors to the hospital. Different street, same problem.

A quick word on process. This effort runs through the Residential Traffic Administration Program, a standard Fairfax County program administered by FCDOT, which sets the ballot area and has already consulted Fairfax County Fire and Rescue. The gentler fixes have been tried too. The state has said no to stop signs on this stretch more than once, police patrols end when the officer leaves, and speed cameras like Sideburn Road's are only legal in school zones or highway work zones. FCDOT will walk through all of it at the community meeting.

What is proposed is modest. Three speed humps and one speed table, three inches tall, rising gradually, designed for 25 MPH streets, nothing like the abrupt bumps you brace for in a parking lot. The same devices are already in use all over Fairfax County.

So here is the honest question each of us gets to weigh. On one side, a few seconds of slowing down at four spots along Commonwealth. On the other hand, the chance that a child is in the crosswalk the moment a car comes through at 43. When I put it that way to myself, the answer is not close.

Fixing it looks like drivers are doing 25 instead of 43, and nobody needs to step into the street so a kid can cross. A handful of us started this effort by comparing notes about close calls, and with FCDOT's help it is further along than it has ever been. But it only gets done if the rest of us show up. Come to the FCDOT community meeting, where engineers will present the plan and answer every question about buses, snowplows, and emergency vehicles. Then, when your ballot arrives, use it. I see the problem from my front yard every day. The fix is finally on the table.

KPW Real Estate Corner by Cathy DeLoach



The number of home sales in Kings Park West year-to-date continues to lag slightly behind 2025. As of August 14, 2026, 37 properties had closed compared to 46 last year. Seven properties have closed at over \$1,000,000, six Barons, and one Queen.

Current KPW Statistics*

- # of Homes Sold: 37 (\$685,000 - \$1,400,000)
 - Average Sold Price: \$914,705 • Average Days on Market: 17
- *as of August 14, 2026*

YEAR-TO-DATE SOLD PROPERTIES (as of August 14, 2026)

MODEL	Address	Sold Price	MODEL	Address	Sold Price
Baron	5203 Mornington Ct	\$1,400,000	Queen	5392 Gainsborough Dr	\$880,000
Baron (exp)	10174 Bessmer Ln	\$1,250,000	King	5105 Coleridge Dr	\$876,580
Baron	10215 Commonwealth	\$1,200,000	Prince	9891 Becket Ct	\$875,000
Baron	5262 Pumphrey Dr	\$1,100,000	Prince	10016 Raeburn Ct	\$875,000
Baron	10429 Headly Ct	\$1,050,000	Queen	5370 Gainsborough Dr	\$875,000
Baron	4768 Farndon Ct	\$1,049,000	Essex	10305 Collingham Dr	\$860,000
Queen	4903 Chantry Ct	\$1,020,000	Duke	10027 W Constable Ct	\$853,000
Regent	5306 Stonington Dr	\$985,000	Regent	4911 Wycliff Ln	\$850,000
Regent	10424 Collingham Dr	\$980,000	Queen	5342 Guinea Rd	\$845,000
Baron	4749 Farndon Ct	\$950,000	Regent	5148 Pumphrey Dr	\$830,000
Regent	5267 Pumphrey Dr	\$950,000	Duke	10000 Eastlake Dr	\$800,000
King	5374 Gainsborough Dr	\$930,000	Duke	4954 Swinton Dr	\$800,000
King	5074 Dequincey Dr	\$920,000	York	10167 Bessmer Ln	\$800,000
Queen	10007 Commonwealth	\$920,000	Prince	10125 Commonwealth	\$785,000
Regent	4797 Tapestry Dr	\$911,000	Prince	4914 Wycliff Ln	\$755,000
Baron	10303 Nantucket Ct	\$885,000	York	10409 Ashcroft Way	\$739,500
Cromwell	5206 Pimlico Ct	\$885,000	Queen	4984 Swinton Dr	\$710,000
Duchess	5211 Stonington Dr	\$885,000	Prince	5310 Gainsborough Dr	\$685,000
King	5122 Pommeroy Dr	\$880,000			

What's Cookin' KPW?

by Sarah Lennon

Pumpkin Pecan Pie

My mom made the best pecan pie and I never liked any other that I'd tried over the years. Also I have never been a fan of traditional pumpkin pie (too bland and mushy). BUT when I found this combo pie, it was a home-run!

Ingredients

Pumpkin Filling

- 15 oz can pumpkin purée
- 1/4 cup firmly packed light brown sugar
- 3 tablespoons sugar
- 1 large egg, beaten until frothy
- 1 tablespoon heavy cream
- 1 tablespoon unsalted butter, softened
- 1 tablespoon vanilla extract
- 1/4 teaspoon salt
- 1/2 tsp each cinnamon, allspice, nutmeg, ginger, cloves
- 1-2 Tbsp cornstarch

Pecan Syrup

- 3/4 cup sugar
- 3/4 cup dark corn syrup
- 2 eggs
- 1 1/2 tablespoons unsalted butter, melted
- 2 teaspoons vanilla extract
- 1/2 tsp grated orange zest
- 2 Tbsp bourbon
- 1 pinch salt & 1 tsp ground cinnamon & cardamom
- 1 cup pecan pieces

Directions

Pumpkin Filling: Combine all the ingredients thoroughly in a medium bowl; set aside.

Pecan Syrup: Combine all the ingredients thoroughly in a medium bowl; set aside.

Preheat the oven to 325°F. Grease a deep-dish glass pie pan, put in dough.

Spoon the Pumpkin Filling into the pan, spreading evenly to distribute. Bake 15-20 min till slightly set. Gently pour the Pecan Syrup on top. Bake until a knife inserted in the center comes out clean, about 1 hour and 30 minutes

Calling all cooks and bakers!

Do you have a favorite recipe you would like to share with your neighbors? Please send it to editor@kpwca.org and your recipe may be featured in one of our upcoming issues. Our next issue will be published in December, which will be a perfect time to share a favorite winter/Holiday recipe!



The Herald Book Nook

A book review by Brenda Patience

In his heartwarming fantasy novel *The House in the Cerulean Sea*, T.J. Klune creates a world of unusual characters searching for belonging and acceptance in a harsh and often intolerant environment. The story begins with Linus Baker, a solitary, by-the-book caseworker for DICOMY, the Department in Charge of Magical Youth. The government agency oversees unusual orphanages, particularly those housing children with extraordinary—and sometimes dangerous—abilities. Linus's highly predictable and uneventful life is upended when he is assigned to evaluate the future of six potentially dangerous magical children living on the remote island of Marsyas.

I should warn you: these aren't your typical "magical" kiddos, like Harry Potter or Matilda. They are something altogether more otherworldly. Among them are a forest sprite, a highly skilled shapeshifter, one of the last wyverns in existence, an amorphous blob, and Lucy. I'll leave the details of Lucy's identity to the reader, for fear of spoiling the surprise.

As Linus gets to know these extraordinary children, his rigid worldview is gradually challenged. He begins to see beyond the labels and classifications imposed by DICOMY and discovers the deep bond the children share with their charming and devoted caretaker, Arthur. What begins as an official investigation becomes an adventure of a lifetime as Linus, Arthur, and the children grow closer and begin to find their place in a world that too often fears and rejects what it does not understand.

Klune tells this story with humor, warmth, and tremendous empathy. *The House in the Cerulean Sea* is an enchanting tale and a beautiful exploration of the meaningful connections we can find in the most unlikely places. I absolutely adore this book and highly recommend it to readers who enjoy themes of found family and belonging, coming-of-age stories, or anyone who simply needs a hug in a hard – or soft! – cover. You won't regret picking this one up.



KPW Troop 1966 – Sea Base Sailing Adventure 2026

Nine boys and three adults from Boy Scout Troop 1966 embarked this summer on a six-day, five-night high-adventure sailing trip to the Bahamas.

But this was not your typical Caribbean vacation. Instead, it was a week spent sailing around the Bay of Abaco while living aboard a catamaran.

The twelve adventurers began their journey at 3:00 a.m. in the parking lot of University Mall. After making sure everyone was accounted for, they headed to Dulles International Airport for their 6:00 a.m. flight to Charlotte Douglas International Airport. After a short layover, they continued on to Leonard M. Thompson International Airport, arriving around noon. Once they cleared customs, the crew climbed into prearranged transportation and headed to the marina, where the catamaran Zephyr, its captain, and the captain's wife were waiting.

Once aboard the good ship Zephyr, the captain provided an orientation of the boat and reviewed important safety procedures. Then the adventure began.

Because Sea Base sailing boats are working vessels, the scouts and adult leaders were expected to pitch in. They helped cook and clean, hoisted sails, and even helped repair the boat's engine when it broke down.

Each day brought a new adventure: sailing, snorkeling, swimming, fishing, and exploring island settlements. Because of the heat, humidity, and sparse accommodations below deck, the crew often slept on the deck while the catamaran was safely anchored near a beach.

All of the sailing took place in the Bay of Abaco, giving the crew several opportunities to visit the surrounding Cays (pronounced "Keys") and experience a taste of Bahamian life.

Their adventures included swimming with sea turtles, visiting the Elbow Reef Lighthouse—a defining landmark and one of the most recognizable structures in the Bahamas—fishing for barracuda, kayaking, pretending to be pirates, and, somehow, successfully squeezing all nine scouts into a phone booth.

Six days after leaving Virginia, the nine boys and three adults returned home—exhausted, sun-soaked, and probably ready for a shower, but filled with memories they will never forget.

Your Support helps the troop to be able to afford monthly camping trips. Our latest trip - Spelunking in the Shenandoah mountains! It's not just crawling through caves getting into and out of tight spots and getting muddy. They learned about orienteering, using a map and compass!



Interested in Scouting?
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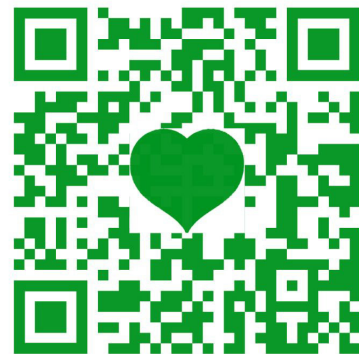
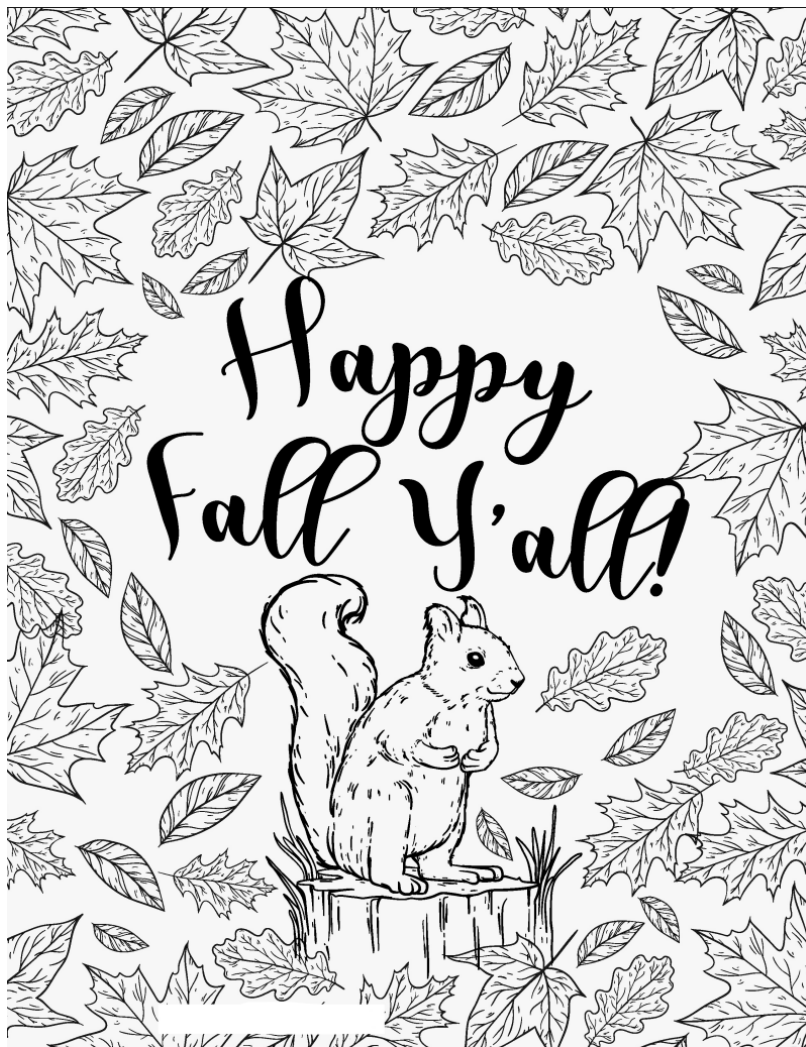
40 Years!!*

*
(and we still love our community!)

Sudoku

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KPW Herald • Social Events
 Easter Eggstravaganza
 Halloween Fest • Scouts
 Dumpster Day • Parks and Lake
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Join Today!

Welcome Fall!

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6



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PLUMBING SERVICES: Hot water heater repairs -replacements- faucet fixture-toilets-disposers- vanity installation-water-gas line repairs -heating - A/C repairs-replacements. Serving KPW since 1993. Follow on Facebook. Please call John Master plumber at 703-472-0150. E mail hrrsbl@gmail.com. Class A contractor. Licensed-insured.

SUITE DOG'S BOARDING: When you're away your dog can play...with us! Suite Dog's Boarding hosts small dogs in our KPW home for individualized, private care. www.Suitedogboarding.com contact: Nona at 202-489-2693.

 **KPW family-owned**

 **Lowest rates**

 **\$500 Monthly Unlimited Daycare Pass***

 **Large cage-free play areas**

 **Dog-loving staff**

 **FREE evaluation for KPW dogs***

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