President’s Message

Last month’s Shop Local Expo was very successful, as evident by feedback from both those who attended and exhibitors. We had approximately 70 people in attendance. It was a great opportunity to highlight local talent living right here in our community. It was an uplifting event that brought several members of the neighborhood together.

Our March 2 meeting will also be an event that will bring residents together; however, it will not be as uplifting as last month’s meeting. We will be voting on whether to advance proposed traffic calming devices to the ballot phase of the approval process. The Ad-Hoc Traffic Calming Committee, chaired by Marlene Schmidt, has done a fantastic job working with the Fairfax County Department of Transportation (FCDOT) to develop and refine the plans that will be proposed. They have focused on being transparent with their work and proving community education about traffic calming. If you have not viewed their blog, www.northspringfieldtrafficcalming.wordpress.com (note the accidental misspelling in the web address), I encourage you to do so to learn about traffic calming and the process involved.

I ask that you come to the March 2 meeting with a strong knowledge of the pros and cons of traffic calming devices, cast your vote (one vote per household) carefully not on emotion but on logic, and finally, appreciate the process and the spirit behind this initiative no matter the outcome. Should the traffic calming initiative move to the ballot phase, only a limited number of residents along Leesville Boulevard (as determined by FCDOT) will have the ability to put this on the Board of Supervisors’ agenda for a pro-forma affirmative vote. If you do not live along Leesville but would like to have your voice heard, I cannot stress enough the importance of attending the March 2 NSCA meeting. This will be your last opportunity to do so for this effort. In closing, I would like to note that this community vote is above and beyond what the County requires for traffic calming approval because NSCA values the importance of community input. See you March 2!

Very Respectfully,

Ken Balbuena
Civic Association President

In This Issue

Traffic Calming .................................................................2
Fairfax County FY17 Budget Update............................3
New Noise Ordinance ..................................................3
Clean Up Day! ...............................................................3
60th Anniversary Resolution .................................4
Volunteer Update ..........................................................4
Scammers .................................................................4
Cultural Night – Second Request .................................4
Boy Scouts of America 990 ........................................5
North Springfield Elementary School Kindergarten Orientation ........................................5
Brand New Bath House for the North Springfield Swim Club ........................................5
Best of Braddock Awards ...........................................6
Free Tax Assistance Provided Locally ............................6
Tax Relief Workshops ....................................................6
Membership Form ........................................................7

Announcements/Upcoming Events:

March 2 General Membership Meeting Topic: Traffic Calming Vote
April 5 North Springfield Elementary School Kindergarten Orientation
April 6 General Membership Meeting Topic: Cultural Festival
May 4 General Membership Meeting Topic: 60th Anniversary Social

for traffic calming approval because NSCA values the importance of community input. See you March 2!
TRAFFIC CALMING

Excerpt from the 3-part post on the blog:

In October 2014, the NSCA Board worked with Braddock District Supervisor John Cook’s office & VDOT to study exactly how many cars are going through the neighborhood’s main thoroughfares and their rates of speed in a 24-hour period. On Leesville Boulevard alone, 4,628 vehicles traveled the road throughout the day. 85% of the vehicles traveled at or below approximately 10mph over the posted 25mph speed limit. Additionally, the unpublished raw data shows that 1.5% of the vehicles traveled at 47mph or greater. While 1.5% may seem like a low percentage, it equates to 67 vehicles. Imagine if 67 cars sped past your house at nearly twice the posted speed limit or even faster.

This traffic study gave empirical data to the subjective reports that have been published in past NSCA newsletters regarding speeding (primarily on Leesville) from as far back as 1972, which was 44 years – almost half a century – ago:

- “We have a request from a couple of our citizens in the Leesville area asking for a radar unit to be set up on the west end of Leesville. The report was that several people were seen to be speeding. We made our request through the proper channels of the Fairfax County Police and radar units were activated in that area.” – May 1972 Newsletter (44 years ago)
- “The most effective way to slow down speeding neighborhood traffic is with more frequent speed checks, and the most effective way to get these is to call the Fairfax Co. police and voice your complaints whenever you notice speeders.” – February 1984 Newsletter (32 years ago)
- “Speeding and reckless driving in our neighborhood endangers the lives and health of all of us, including our children and pets. This problem is particularly prevalent on Leesville Boulevard and Heming, the main thoroughfares in North Springfield. This important safety issue concerns us and we are trying to explore options to make our streets safer, particularly Leesville Boulevard.” – March 1995 Newsletter (21 years ago) (Author’s note: It was at this time that the speed limit on Leesville was officially lowered from 30mph to 25mph)
- “We continue to receive complaints about speeding in the neighborhood; particularly on Heming, Leesville, Ferndale, and Queensbury. Residents are reminded that this is a family community and that there are a number of children playing in the area.” – April 2007 Newsletter (9 years ago)
FAIRFAX COUNTY FY17 BUDGET UPDATE

On February 16, the Fairfax County Executive released his FY17 Advertised Budget. This budget is a recommendation that will be slightly tweaked by the Board of Supervisors before being adopted at the end of April. Unlike last year, the County Executive has not proposed any cuts to services that would be detrimental to residential communities. There is, however, a $0.04 recommend increase in the real estate tax, which equates to a total of $1.13 per $100 of assessed valuation. On average homeowners across the County could expect to pay a little over $303.86 more in property taxes than last year. The Board of Supervisors will set the official FY17 tax rate at their March 1 meeting. Additionally, the County Executive has recommended a 3% increase in the County transfer to Fairfax County Public School, which is slightly less than the 4.8% increase the School Board requested in their $2.67 billion budget proposal. The County Executive’s recommended transfer to FCPS is 52.2% or $1.88 billion of the County’s overall General Fund. Questions? Concerns? Comments? Braddock District Supervisor John Cook and Braddock District School Board Member Megan McLaughlin will have a town hall meeting to obtain constituent feedback on the advertised budget on March 28 at 7:30pm at Robinson Secondary School. Residents are invited to attend.

NEW NOISE ORDINANCE

On November 17, 2015, the Board of Supervisors adopted a new Noise Ordinance, repealed the existing Noise Ordinance, and repealed the Excessive Sound Generation in Residential Areas and Dwellings Ordinance. These amendments became effective on February 17, 2016. Sources of sound covered include loud speakers, construction, vehicle repair and operation, lawn equipment operation and animals among many others. There are prohibited times as well as exceptions. For more information, go to http://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/dpz/zoning/noiseordinance/soundsummarychart11-17-15.pdf. To make a complaint to the Police Department, call the non-emergency number, 703-691-2131, TTY 711.

CLEAN UP DAY!

Fairfax County will provide refuge trucks in the North Springfield Elementary School main parking lot between 8:00 am and 11:30 on June 11; please do not drop off any item before the trucks arrive. The trucks leave promptly at noon so please be there no later than 11:30 am. This is a great opportunity to get rid of old appliances, sheds, tires, lawn mowers, lumber, and other kinds of junk. This service is free of charge to the community and normally incurs a minimum of $50 for a special collection through a private trash collection company.

The County will not accept: explosive materials, business construction materials, paint, or any dangerous items.

The County usually does not accept and reserves the right to reject any yard waste, dirt, glass, or wood used in fire places.

Contractors with unusually large loads must unload their own vehicles and are subject to County approval.

Check www.rbrc.org for the locations of local stores that will recycle your used rechargeable batteries.

You can take old/unwanted cell phones to the nearest police station. The phones are given to potential abuse victims for emergency use. To learn about Hazardous Waste disposal you can listen to a recording at (703) 324-5068 or check the website www.fairfaxcounty.gov.

We need volunteers from 8 am to noon to assist in collecting membership dues and overseeing the trash to treasure area. Help is also needed by people with pickup trucks to assist neighbors to get larger items to the school. Please email Tricia Barnes at tbarnesva@cox.net if you can help; full- or part-time assistance is welcome and appreciated.
60TH ANNIVERSARY RESOLUTION

Delegate Vivian Watts of Virginia’s 39th House District has introduced a resolution to honor NSCA’s 60th anniversary on the floor of the General Assembly. Delegate Watts will be in attendance at our May 4th general membership meeting to present a frame copy of the resolution. In the meanwhile, the text is available online at http://lis.virginia.gov/cgi-bin/legp604.exe?161+ful+HJ318+pdf.

There are still a few celebratory events scheduled for the 60th anniversary, including a community social as the theme of our May meeting, an enhanced community day at the pool, and the planting of a time capsule to be opened at a TBD date. We have almost reached the low end of our budget goal, and we are still accepting donations. Please visit mkt.com/nscivic to make a donation today.

VOLUNTEER UPDATE

NSCA is pleased to announce the addition of Matt Gurrola to the Board of Directors. Matt has agreed to serve as the liaison to the Braddock District Council (BDC), which is a community association advisory body to Supervisor John Cook. Matt has lived in North Springfield since 2010. He is a federal employee and a First Sergeant in the US Army Reserves. Additionally, we have two residents who have expressed interest in leading the clean up efforts of Flag Run Park that was advertised in the last newsletter. NSCA is thrilled that over the last two months, we have had volunteers step up to fill big roles: Newsletter editors, BDC, and Flag Run clean up project leads.

Plans for the creation of a previously-announced Ad-Hoc Yard Sale Committee is being tabled until further notice. We are, however, still in need of a liaison to the Fairfax Federation of Citizens Associations, which is like the BDC but is county-wide in scope and a PTA liaison. Please email kenbalbuena@gmail.com if you are interested in giving back to your community in either of these positions.

SCammers

Have you ever been told your gutters need replaced, but you didn’t think they did or that someone can repave your driveway for 50% less than anyone in the market? Have you ever noticed these solicitors never have business cards or identifiable company vehicles? Chances are, these are scammers. Unfortunately, many of these scammers target senior citizens. In some cases, these con-artists ask for payment up front and do only part of the job. In other cases, the scammers do the full job but charge exorbitant prices. Don’t get swindled for thousands of dollars. Here are some tips to help keep you and your hard-earned money safe:

- Consider posting a No Soliciting sign. It doesn’t have to be fancy; it just has to be posted.
- Ask to see the Fairfax County-mandated Door-to-Door Peddlers/Solicitors License.
- Never pay for work or services in full up front. Generally a 10% down payment is acceptable.
- If the solicitor says some neighbors have had some work done recently, ask which ones and verify with the neighbor.
- Call the Fairfax County Department of Cable and Consumer Services at (703) 222-8435 or visit http://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/consumer/ to check that businesses are licensed. You can also inquire about the company’s complaint history.
- Remember that not all solicitors are scammers – most aren’t, but it’s important to do your due diligence and exercise caution.

CULTURAL NIGHT – SECOND REQUEST

Last month, we put out a request for participants willing to share some aspect of their culture (food, dress, customs, etc.) to highlight our community’s diversity at our April meeting. To date, we have gotten one response. Please contact Ivan Carrasco, NSCA’s Minority Outreach Committee Chair, at cpij4n@yahoo.com if you are interested in participating or if you know of a neighbor who would be great addition to the meeting program. If there is an insufficient number of participants by March 21st, the NSCA Board will change the theme of the meeting.
BOY SCOUTS OF AMERICA TROOP 990

While the goals are the same the Scouting program is not what it used to be; many are surprised to find out how relevant it is to today’s youth. If you have a son age 11-17 who may be interested in scouting contact Scoutmaster Skip Chaples at (703) 644-1311 or email at skipchaples@cox.net; boys can attend Scout functions as a guest to check it out before deciding to join.

If you’d like to support scouting, our annual Friends of Scouting campaign is underway; the pledge form is on the website www.nscivic.org or contact Skip. Supporting Scouting is an investment in young boys’ success. Scouts have higher graduation rates from high school and college. The lessons and experiences received in scouting provide an excellent foundation for succeeding in college and/or a career.

NORTH SPRINGFIELD ELEMENTARY SCHOOL KINDERGARTEN ORIENTATION

April 5, 2016 at 5:30 PM

Students will have the opportunity to visit a kindergarten classroom while parents receive information about the kindergarten program. A packet detailing the orientation program and the specific registration forms and requirements will be mailed to those parents who have submitted their name and address to North Springfield 703-658-5500.

BRAND NEW BATH HOUSE FOR THE NORTH SPRINGFIELD SWIM CLUB

By the time you receive this newsletter, our wonderful new bath house will be well into construction. After nearly 60 years, it is about time the NSSC had its first major face-lift! In case you have not heard the big news yet, the NSSC, built in 1957, is having a new bath house, bath rooms, and offices constructed. Walk over to the site off Leesville Boulevard and Earlehurst Street to check out the progress. We invite our neighbors to an open house on Saturday, May 28 11am-3pm to check out our new ‘digs’ and enjoy swimming in the pool.

Also, for the first time, the swim club is entering the 21st century in another way. Our annual spring newsletter, mailed to pool members every April, will be delivered electronically for the first time this year. This will save the pool money and time. **If you need to receive a hard copy or know of a member who DOES NOT HAVE AN EMAIL ADDRESS, contact our Secretary, Stephen Frey at pelastusvene@yahoo.com

IMPORTANT DATES:

April 1 Members should receive the annual spring member newsletter—via email
April 20 Annual Spring Members Meeting 7pm
May 28 Opening Day Ceremony and Ribbon Cutting 10:30am (tentative time)

Open House, all neighbors invited to visit and swim, 11am – 3pm

For more information, check out our website: ns-sc.org or email danacibulski@cox.net.

North Springfield Elementary School PTA Fundraiser

Do you shop at Giant?

If so, you can help NSES PTA fund school activities by purchasing Giant Grocery Cards.

Use the cards like cash at Giant. The school gets 4% from Giant for every dollar purchased.

Buy $20, $50, or $100 cards. They never expire!

Contact Lisa Pritt at LisaPritt@verizon.net to purchase the cards. We will deliver them to your door.
BEST OF BRADDOCK AWARDS

In addition to hosting presentations with information of interest to all residents, the Braddock District Council hosts the Best of Braddock Awards every July. The Best of Braddock Awards (BoBs) recognize the good things done by residents, public workers and businesses to make the Braddock District a better place to live. In the past, nominations were generally made in May, but BDC would like to encourage residents to submit nominations all year long, especially when something noteworthy has been done and it is fresh on your mind.

Categories recognized are:

- Citizen of the Year,
- Young Person of the Year,
- Most Can-Do Public Employees,
- Club or Organization Making a Difference in the Braddock District,
- Outstanding Business or Business Person, and
- Neighborhood Enhancement or Beautification by a group, individual or business.

Think about all the good things people in your community have done over the last year. Think about some of the outstanding ways people helped one another during the recent snow storm. Think about someone who does something all year long, way under the radar, but that makes a difference in a positive way. It might be the neighbor who has a beautiful rose garden that they know brings joy to the community. It might be the group heading up the clean-up effort along the park stream. It might be the person who has continually given of himself for years without recognition. It might be your mail delivery person. It might be the students who have had done something significant. It might be the person who has overcome long odds in order to get something accomplished.

The nomination forms can be found by visiting http://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/braddock/bobawardsform_2016.pdf. Please give some thought to those you know who deserve a big thank you for the things that they do to make the Braddock District a better place to live!

FREE TAX ASSISTANCE PROVIDED LOCALLY

Until April 18, the AARP Tax-Aide Program is helping low- to moderate-income taxpayers by assisting with tax services and ensuring they receive applicable tax credits and deductions. The service is free and is provided by trained volunteers. The following sites provide income tax filing assistance on a walk-in basis.

The one closest to the NSCA neighborhood is Mason District Government Center, 6507 Columbia Pike, Annandale. Hours of operation are Mon. & Thurs., 1-8 pm, Tues., Wed., Fri., 9:30 am-1 pm, Sat., 9 am-1 pm.

Note: All tax returns are filed electronically. All taxpayers MUST bring government-issued picture IDs and Social Security cards for all persons included on the tax return.

TAX RELIEF WORKSHOPS

The Fairfax County Board of Supervisors is hosting free tax relief workshops in March at several locations throughout the county. Real estate tax relief is available for older adults and people with disabilities who meet certain qualifications; you also may be eligible for car tax relief and tax relief for renters.

County staff from the Department of Tax Administration (DTA) will assist with filling out the application form, as well as answering questions. More information on tax relief can be found at www.fairfaxcounty.gov/dta, or call 703-222-8234 (TTY 703-222-7594).

Supervisor Penelope Gross will host on March 16 and 18, 9 am to noon at the Mason District Governmental Center, 6507 Columbia Pike in Annandale. No appointment is necessary. Call 703-256-7717 with questions. All dates, times and locations can be found at http://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/braddock/newsletter/2016/february/humanservices.htm.
North Springfield Civic Association 2016 Membership Drive
Calendar Year: January – December 2016
NSCA, P.O. Box 1007, Springfield, VA 22151
$15.00 Membership, Contributions Welcome

Name: ________________________________________________________________
Address: ______________________________________________________________
______________________________________________________________________
Phone: (______) _______________________    Date: __________________    Amount Paid: __________________
email (Only if your email is new or not already on our list) : _____________________________________________
New Resident?  ☐ Yes

North Springfield Civic Association 2016 Volunteer Drive
NSCA, P.O. Box 1007, Springfield, VA 22151

Name: _________________________________________________________________________________________
Address: _______________________________________________________________________________________
_______________________________________________________________________________________________
Phone: (_____) ___________________________   Preferred Committee _________________________________
email: ________________________________________________________

You may also pay online at: mkt.com/nscivic

MEMBERSHIP
Thank you to everyone who has already paid their $15 dues. If you have not joined yet, we hope you will soon. We greatly appreciate the extra contributions that have been made to the association and the $6 for 60 campaign.

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