



Friends of Long Branch Stream Valley

Volume 1, Issue 3

March 2015

Letter from the President

First, thank you to everyone for your continued support! It never ceases to amaze me how great the communities and residents are that border Braddock Road. With just a little encouragement this group has had unbelievable early success, and is setting the foundation for future generations. I'm very proud to be a part of this great team that is making a difference in our area.

Our next big event is coming up on April 11th. This will be our second Long Branch Stream Valley Clean Up Day. We are very excited to continue the momentum and enthusiasm from the inaugural event in October. I hope to see



everyone out there that participated in our last event and many more. Please join us for what will be another great clean up, and just as important, a day to come together with neighbors and the communities that make up the LBSV. You can sign up for the event

at <http://www.signupgenius.com/go/10c044ba8ae2ea1f94-clean1>. If you

have any questions or would like to know how you can help, please feel free to email me directly.

I also have to mention another very important event, the Maintenance Day coming up on May 16th. There will be more to follow on that but for the time being, Scott Thaxton, Vice President of Friends of Long Branch Stream Valley (FLBSV) and lifetime Stone Haven resident, is working tirelessly with the Fairfax County Park Authority (FCPA) to coordinate efforts. Again, if you have specific questions regarding those efforts, please feel free to email me directly.

Thanks again and Spring is on its way! I think we're ready.

Chris Bauernshub
President, Friends of Long Branch Stream Valley
chrisbauernshub@gmail.com

Dates to Remember

April 11th – Clean Up Day

May 16th – Trail Maintenance Day

**May 30th – Trail Maintenance Day
(Rain Date)**



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So What's Wrong With Encroachment?



What would you think if your neighbor came onto your property without your permission to put up his new shed in your backyard, or if he started taking down trees on your property so he could get a better view of the lake, or if he decided to dump his grass clippings on your side of the fence rather than put them out for yard waste removal? What if he wanted to plant his garden on your property without your permission? Would you allow him to do that or would you most likely take the initiative to curb his actions by calling the police and in some cases, even seek damages. Would you consider that neighbor to be a good neighbor given his/her lack of courtesy and respect for your property?

Well, each day, across the county, multiple instances of this occur as homeowners adjacent to parkland think nothing at all of doing all of the above – and more. And while many would never think of dumping their grass clipping over the fence in their neighbor's backyard, cutting down one of their neighbor's trees, or putting up a shed on their neighbor's property, they don't give a second thought to doing just that on parkland.

The Fairfax County Park Authority is the single largest landowner in the county and strives to be a responsible property owner and steward of public land. But it needs the help of all its citizens to succeed in that endeavor. Many county residents who adjoin public lands abide by established property boundaries, being good stewards of both their private property and public land. You can report encroachment on parkland by contacting the Park Authority at parkmail@fairfaxcounty.gov. When made aware of encroachment activities, the Park Authority seeks voluntary compliance from violators, encouraging adjoining property owners to respect legal property boundaries.

Tony Vellucci



*Winter Photos after the March 1st & 2nd Ice Storm
by Alan Rulis, Stone Haven Community*



Cub Scout Night Hike on the Trail

The Cub Scout Weblo Den hiked from Wakefield Chapel Park to Guinea Road and back one evening in November 8th to cover their hiking/camping requirement for the Arrow of Light toward graduation. The hike was led by Den Leader Andrew Gay and Den Chief Bryan Young.

Lisa Young

Girl Scout Troop Take-Action Project: Butterfly Garden



Girl Scout Troop 348's leaders have something big planned for this spring! The girls in this Daisy troop have been completing their first Girl Scout journey that centers on gardens and flowers. Now they have to complete a "Take-Action Project." Suggestions for this project were 1) make a worm compost bin and donate the compost to a garden; 2) nurture ladybugs from eggs to adulthood and release into an established garden, as well as other great ideas.

All of these would have been fun (especially for the family taking care of the worm compost bin), but we had a different idea. Since the number of monarch butterflies and bees has drastically decreased in recent years, the troop leaders thought a butterfly or pollinator garden would be a good project. A Monarch Waystation became the goal using native and non-invasive plant species that would help many insect species - milkweed and nectar plants would both be included. The Kings Park Library has one on their property, if you would like to visit one in our area.



We approached Canterbury Woods Pool and Tennis Club to host the garden and their board graciously approved the proposal. The biggest challenge will be the deer population and need for some fencing.



If one community pool can use their property to increase monarch habitat, what if more of us did the same, at our churches, schools, and our own backyards? Maybe we can really make a difference. Does this peak your interest? Take a look at the Monarch Waystation Program at <http://monarchwatch.org/waystations/> or check out MonarchJoint Venture to see some of the key players <http://monarchjointventure.org/>. Here is a good reference for native plants to use from the FCPA: <http://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/parks/greenspring/infosheets/butterfliesandmoths.pdf>. If you would like to help the Daisy Girl Scout Troop in this project financially, with your expertise or plant or seed donations, please contact me at allisonhagner@gmail.com.

Allison Hagner

Friends of Long Branch Stream Valley Positions

If you are interested in a position, please e-mail Chris Bauernshub at chrisbauernshub@gmail.com

Officers:

President	Chris Bauernshub
Vice President	Scott Thaxton
Secretary	Lisa Young

Braddock District Representative to the Park Authority Board of Directors	Tony Vellucci
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Committees:

Invasive Management (interim)	Bryan Campbell
Trail Management	Scott Thaxton
Water Quality Management	Joe Dicerbo
Educational Awareness	Lisa Young & Bryan Campbell
Community Outreach	Allison Hagner

Community Leads:

Olde Forge/Surrey Square - Gary and Mimi Kraus	Canterbury Woods
Rutherford	Red Fox Forest - Lisa Young
Long Branch - David Rabadan	Stone Haven - Chris Bauernshub
Bradfield	Little Run
Hidden Creek	

Braddock District Representative Comments

As many of you already know, the Park Authority is currently conducting a Needs Assessment and that study will drive future bond investments. The last one was completed in 2004. The study is now moving from the Information Gathering Phase (October 2014 – January 2015) to the Survey & Analysis Phase (February - September 2015). Over the next few months the contractor will send out a survey to 15,000 random households in the county. If you receive a survey, please fill it out and send it in. Once results are tabulated, findings and recommendations will be presented to the public in the Open House/Public Forum Phase (September – October 2015), which will also provide the public an opportunity to offer comments on draft findings and recommendations. Public comments will be incorporated into the final Needs Assessment and presented to the Park Authority Board via the Formal Presentation / Park Authority Board Approval Phase (November – December 2015). More information can be found at <http://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/parks/parkscount/>. The presentation that kicked off the effort and which provides additional information can be found at <http://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/parks/parkscount/downloads/parkscount-presentation-100214.pdf>

Tony Vellucci

How Do I Know What The Park Authority Board is Doing?

Most months, the Park Authority Board meets twice to address issues and projects affecting the Authority and does so through eleven (11) standing committees. Committee packages which provide in-depth information regarding projects and activities, the board agenda, and board minutes can be found at:

<http://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/parks/boardagn2.htm>. Further, the Park Authority calendar identifies all official meetings and events of interest of the Park Authority Board and can be found at

<http://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/parks/archives/pabcal.pdf>. Lastly, archives of past meetings are at: <http://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/parks/board/boardarchives.htm>.

Friends of Audrey Moore RECenter On Their Way

On Wednesday February 5th, 2014, about 40 residents from primarily the Braddock, but also the Mason District got together at an organizational kick-off meeting to determine whether they wanted to establish a Friends of Audrey Moore RECenter group (FAMRC). There was overwhelming support to form the Friend's group and eight citizens came forward volunteering as the initial leadership team. While the Park Authority recognizes many Friends groups throughout the county, the FAMRC is a first in that never before has there been a Friend's group for a RECenter.



The Audrey Moore RECenter was the first RECenter in Fairfax County and is now almost 40 years old. FAMRC looks to work with RECenter patrons and the Park Authority to, make appropriate plans for changes and improvements, positioning Audrey Moore as a vibrant recreation center for the future. For more information on the meeting see the Annandale Blog at <http://annandaleva.blogspot.com/> The next FAMRC meeting will be held Thursday March 26th at Braddock Hall at 7:00 PM. Check out their website at www.moorefriends.com!

Tony Vellucci

Long Branch Stream Valley Park in Winter: A Photo Essay

We all enjoy the simple beauties of the park in the spring, summer, and fall, but let's face it; it is a little daunting to get out there when the temperatures dip below freezing! I want to encourage you not to miss what the park has to offer in the winter. Take your time, be watchful, and listen. Then all kinds of things may greet you like what I have captured below!



Snow blossom?



Frozen footprints



Fox tracks



Frozen fried eggs



Fox on the run!

David Kepley
Over 28 year Resident of Long Branch
<http://davidkepleyphotography.smugmug.com/>

The Emerald Ash Borer

Emerald ash borer (EAB) is an invasive, destructive insect that was introduced to Fairfax County 6-8 years ago. This beetle attacks and kills all species of ash trees native to North America but often goes unnoticed until it is too late. This can prove to be costly for residents who have ash trees on their property. Fairfax County Urban Forest Management Division is instituting an outreach program to educate as many interested individuals as possible about how to identify EAB symptoms and what can be done to prepare for EAB impacts, including the financial costs of tree removal, replacement and treatment. Ash trees across the county are beginning to show signs of decline or have died and once damage is done, it cannot be repaired. Acting in a timely manner means that more management options are available, especially if ash tree retention is desired. If your community would like to learn more about EAB management for residents, presentations are available by Fairfax County Urban Foresters. Please contact the Forest Pest Branch by email: PESTmail@fairfaxcounty.gov or by phone: (703) 324-5304 for more information.

Rachel Griesmer-Zakhar

Urban Forester I

Fairfax County Urban Forest Management Division



Photo courtesy: David Cappaert, Michigan State University, www.bugwood.org

Ash Tree Management Seminar: Emerald Ash Borer (EAB) and What You Can Do About It

- How to identify an ash tree
- How to hire an arborist or tree removal company
- How to identify an EAB-infested tree
- EAB control options
- A live demonstration of two EAB treatment methods

Saturday, April 4, 2015 10:30 a.m. - 12 p.m.

Green Spring Gardens: Multipurpose Room 4603 Green Spring Rd., Alexandria, VA

Free Admission! Space is limited so please register early.

Please register online using Eventbrite: www.fairfax-eab-management.eventbrite.com

Invasive Corner: Wavyleaf Basketgrass Alert!

Wavyleaf basketgrass (WLBG, *Oplismenus hirtellus* ssp. *undulatifolius*) is a major Eurasian pest. This perennial was limited to few localities within the D.C. area and now is emerging elsewhere. In autumn 2014, a small patch of WLBG was discovered in Long Branch Stream Valley Park. Its extremely sticky seeds are most likely the way that this weed gains ground. The exact vehicle distributing the seeds could include human foot traffic, birds contacting the seeds, or deer or other large mammals accidentally picking up seeds.



Figure 1. Wavyleaf basketgrass seedlings (A) first look like wide bladed Japanese stiltgrass, but the former soon develops its namesake ripples. B) This mature basket-grass specimen is probably all one plant, connected by stems running along the ground. C) The blossoms are small and close to the stem. Photos by Margaret Chatham.

Within Fairfax County parks, WLBG monitoring falls under the Early Detection and Rapid Response (EDRR) program <http://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/parks/resource-management/ima/ima-edrrvol.htm>. Trained volunteers and biologist send GPS coordinates of patches to the FCPA. In the early growing season, contractors spray glyphosate-based herbicides onto designated targets.

A native resembling basketgrass is deer-tongue (*Dichanthelium clandestinum*). The following table further helps distinguish the two plants.

Table 1. This character list helps with field identification of WLBG and deer-tongue.

Identifying Character	Wavyleaf Basketgrass	Deer-Tongue
Leaf Form	Tiny ripples perpendicular to the central vein	Relatively smooth leaf
Growth	Close to the ground, then raises during seeding	Stems stand tall
Flowering and Fruiting Time	July to frost-kill	May to September

Together, we can stop WLBG’s invasion in its infancy. Here are some general ways you can help curtail non-native invasive weed expansion:

- Stay on the trails to reduce inadvertently contacting and spreading the seeds.
- Always walk your pets on a leash so they do not wander into patches, either.
- Never dump yard debris or anything else into parklands.
- Participate in EDRR or Invasive Management Area (IMA) workdays: <http://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/parks/resource-management/ima/>



Figure 2. Many seeds that cling to passing animals do so through tiny hooks, which inspired Velcro’s invention. Instead of hooks, wavyleaf basketgrass seeds adhere to and are distributed by animals via incredibly sticky goo—reminiscent of the sundew secretions which snare insects. The magnified inset shows droplets backlit by sunlight.

Ways you can specifically fight Wavyleaf Basketgrass:

- Recognize it from similar-looking species.
- Get all of the stems when removing it.
- Keep out of known WLBG infestations during its seeding season (July through November).
- After visiting parks, check for seeds, ticks, and other unwanted hitchhikers. Note (include photographs) any WLBG seeds found prior to throwing them into the trash destined for landfill or incineration.
- Never compost WLBG seeds.
- If you encounter WLBG in Fairfax County, report it to FCPA naturalist Erin Stocksclaeder (703-324-8681, Erin.Stocksclaeder@fairfaxcounty.gov). Include details.
- Document WLBG sightings *anywhere* here: <http://heron.towson.edu/wavyleaf/home/>.

Thank You!

A big thank you to Chris Bauernshub, Rachel Griesmer-Zakhar, Allison Hagner, David Kepley, Alan Rulis Greg Sykes, Tony Vellucci, and Lisa Young for their contributions to the newsletter. Thank you to Greg Sykes for being our expert for this edition of the newsletter.

Please get the word out about WLBG! Learn more about WLBG at: http://www.dnr.state.md.us/wildlife/Plants_Wildlife/WLBG/pdfs/wlbw_poster011108.pdf



Greg Sykes (greg@grsykes.com) and Margaret Chatham

Do You Know? Ask the Expert!

Here are the answers to our quiz from the December newsletter.

1.) The corkscrew trunk is more than likely caused by Japanese honeysuckle. One can tell by looking at the vine's smoothness, coloration, small branch structure barely visible, and the type of damage inflicted. Japanese honeysuckles are non-native invasive species and a target for Invasive Management Area (IMA) site leaders. Many of our parks including, Long Branch Stream Valley, are choking in this weed.



2.) This was probably lion's mane, a fungus that likes to grow on hard woods, especially American Beech.
Greg Sykes



Would you like to be a Friend of the Long Branch Stream Valley?

We are just getting started, so attend our next meeting or one of our events and get on our newsletter mailing list. Just contact us at: friendslsv@gmail.com or visit our Facebook Page: <https://www.facebook.com/FLBSV>







Take a look, stay in touch and like Friends of Long Branch Stream Valley!

Our Newsletter The Friends of Long Branch Stream Valley Newsletter is distributed to members and the civic associations at Olde Forge / Surrey Square, Rutherford, Hidden Creek, Little Run, Long Branch, Bradfield, Red Fox Forest, Canterbury Woods and Stonehaven. It will come out quarterly, in March, June, September and December. We would love your submissions - photos, comments and articles about the stream valley. Send them our way. Submissions received by May 15th 2015 will be included in the June edition. Please send them to Allison Hagner at friendslsv@gmail.com. Look forward to hearing from you!