

BRADDOCK DISTRICT COUNCIL NEWS

June 2009

Internet Address: www.fairfaxcounty.gov/gov/bos/bd/homepage.htm

Tuesday, June 9, 2009 – 7:30 PM
Braddock District Council Meeting
Kings Park Library Meeting Room
9002 Burke Lake Road
Burke, VA 22015
(703) 425-9300

Braddock Picnic & BOB Awards Presentations
Tuesday, July 14, 2009 – 6 PM
Kings Park Library Room & Braddock Hall
9002 Burke Lake Road
Burke, VA 22015
(703) 425-9300

MESSAGE FROM THE CHAIR:

Tuesday June 9th BDC Meeting , 7:30 PM, in Braddock Hall

An important BDC meeting:

- **BDC Officer Elections** (Slate is complete – Floor nominations still open)
- **Announcement of Best of Braddock (BOB) Winners**
- **Status of Braddock Picnic** preparations (Invitations Being Sent & Volunteers Welcomed)

Belinda Buescher of Fairfax County Human Services will provide a briefing on county assistance programs for people and families in need of help. These stressing economic times are causing difficulties for residents and awareness of assistance can often address many of issues early before they become overwhelming.

Braddock Nights 2009 Summer Concerts

This year's series starts at 7:30 PM on Friday, June 5th for Lake Accotink and Royal Lake Parks and on Sunday, June 7th at Ossian Hall Park beginning at 6:00 PM. The schedule is posted on the Braddock District office website and has been sent out in previous emailings. These fiscally difficult times have a potential to impact this series in the future. The request for contributions will assist in maintaining the program as well as showing the priority that you place on this activity. **Become a "Friend of Braddock Nights"**. See you at the concerts! Also, visit the listed Corporate sponsors and thank them for continuing this event.

Braddock Office Open House, Sunday June 14th, 3 to 5 PM

See note in Supervisor's corner about Open House.

Braddock Road Beautification Project/Mary Read Memorial

Rains and mild weather have encouraged plant growth and blooms. However, they have also encouraged grass growth along Braddock Road and other district streets. The Braddock Office has been working with VDOT and Fairfax County Police to continue the effort to cut the grass.

BDC discourages volunteers from working in median strip on Braddock Road. While picking up litter as part of the Adopt A Highway program, we encourage alertness for traffic safety hazards while working on or near district highways. Early morning weekend hours appear to be one of the better times because of the light traffic loads.

2009 Best of Braddock Nominations Are In

Thanks to all who submitted nominations. This is an important task that sometimes gets pushed aside for other activities. The submissions will be turned over to the award selections committee. This is not a standing committee because we attempt to have a new committee every year to make the selections.

Braddock District Picnic, Tuesday, July 14th (Starts at 6 PM)

The Braddock District Picnic will begin at 6 PM on **Tuesday, July 14th, in Kings Park Library Meeting Room.** Thanks to the payments of dues from Braddock District associations, the BDC treasury will be able to provide **another top-notch barbecue** with fixin's. There will also be plenty of **desserts**. This is a great time to enjoy a meal and get to know other members in Braddock District.

Best of Braddock Awards Presentation (Starts at 7 PM) in Braddock Hall

The presentations will begin **in Braddock Hall at 7 PM**. Many of our elected officials will be invited to help make presentations and to share a meal. **Chairman Bulova** has already accepted our invitation to the Braddock picnic, where we will get a formal chance to thank her for her service to Braddock District. This is always a great celebration of the Braddock District volunteerism that has become widely recognized within the county.

Sincerely,
Bruce Wallachy

<p>Braddock District Council Officers Chair: Bruce Wallachy Vice Chair: Tom Reinkober Treasurer: Peg Manella Secretary: Verna Dreyer Communications Chair: vacant Membership Chair: vacant Information Forum Chair: Tena Bluhm</p>
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SUPERVISOR'S CORNER

Summer Planning

Summer is upon us. For civic and homeowners' associations, this is often a "down" time. Many organizations run on a calendar that mirrors the school year. In the Spring, elections are held for officers for the upcoming year. Many organizations do not meet during the summer. Boards therefore use the summer to plan the upcoming year. If your organization is one of those (or even if it isn't), I'd like to propose some ideas for your "summer planning."

Recently, I've been writing about enforcing our zoning, property maintenance, and grass ordinances. I encourage each Braddock neighborhood to make code enforcement a priority in the coming year. Learn the code requirements about multi-family homes (illegal boarding houses), multiple-family dwellings (illegal second kitchens), parking regulations, outdoor storage (a euphemism for junk in the yard), and grass cutting (grass must be kept under 12"). Encourage members of your communities to comply voluntarily with these laws. Find ways for your community members to encourage each other to follow these laws, without becoming overbearing or becoming the neighborhood "busy body." Voluntary code compliance is the key to reducing the rising level of violations, and keeping our neighborhoods safe, vital, and attractive.

I also urge you to plan additional “community building” exercises in your neighborhood. “Community building” is just a fancy way to say that people in a neighborhood need to get to know each other and need to have more opportunities to work and play together. Encourage people to hold block parties in your neighborhood. Plan additional community social events. These steps will bring people together, which is the first step toward addressing neighborhood concerns. In bringing people together, remember to include all people. We are an increasingly-diverse community. Reach out to those who have different ethnic or racial backgrounds from your own. Reach out to those who are older or younger, or who have different professions. Strong communities build relationships between all people, not just between people of the same race, age, economic, or ethnic background. If we want our communities to be strong, we must build those bonds between all of our residents.

I look forward to meeting many of you in the coming year. I would welcome the opportunity to attend your meetings to introduce myself, talk to you about my ideas for strengthening our neighborhoods, listen to your ideas, and answer your questions. Please contact my office if you’d like to schedule a meeting. And, if there is anything I can do to help you meet your neighborhood’s needs, please don’t hesitate to ask. My staff and I are here to serve you.

Below are a few additional items of information that I would like to pass on.

Have a great summer, and keep up that community involvement!

John C. Cook
Braddock District Supervisor

Open House June 14th

On Sunday, June 14th from 3:00 p.m. to 5:00 p.m. I will host my first Open House at the Braddock District office. The Braddock District Office is co-located with the Kings Park Library at 9002 Burke Lake Road in Burke, Virginia.

The Open House is an invitation to Braddock District citizens to meet their new county supervisor and see their office up close and personal. Light refreshments will be served and staff will be available to address needs or take questions about government resources.

Braddock Neighborhood News

The Braddock Neighborhood News is a TV program on the county government’s Channel 16 which I will be using to provide you with information on issues facing our community, programs and services provided by the county, great things being done by our neighbors, and what I am doing to respond to your concerns.

This month's program, with Deputy Zoning Administrator Michael Congleton and County Strike Team Operations Chief Jeff Blackford, provides timely and important information about illegal boarding houses: what they are, what the county is doing about the problem, and how you can help.

The program will air starting on Sunday, June 3rd at 5 p.m. on Channel 16 and will then air every Sunday at 5 p.m., every Wednesday at 7 p.m., and every Friday at 5 p.m. through the month of June. Each month will feature a new topic. I hope you can take the time to tune in. If you have ideas on topics for future shows, please let me know.

Dealing with Uncut Grass

As we have already seen, the grass is getting taller. In our neighborhoods the mowing season is in full swing, but sometimes a home doesn't get its grass mowed in a timely manner and it becomes an eyesore. When this happens, we have some suggestions.

First of all, if the house is occupied, check with your neighbor and see if he or she needs some help with getting the grass mowed. Working directly with a neighbor to address an issue is always the best starting point to resolving community matters.

If the house is empty because it is for sale or rent, contact the realtor or management company whose name is out front. Let them know that the grass has become an eyesore and you are concerned about neighborhood property values. As they say, you only have one chance to make a first impression, and a house with a neat yard makes a much better first impression. Ask them to contact the owner to ask them to mow.

If the house is vacant and there is no realtor sign in front, please contact the county if the grass gets to be more than 12" tall. You may also file an anonymous complaint at http://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/dpwes/environmental/grass_height.htm. Then please let my office know as well. My email is braddock@fairfaxcounty.gov. I will be contacting banks and mortgage companies directly to insist that if they now own properties due to foreclosure they must keep the property in good condition.

Bear in mind that when the county is contacted, staff will post a notice on the property notifying the owner that they have 30 days in which to comply with the request to mow or risk county action to protect community health. Don't let the grass get to be three feet tall before taking action. We know you are proud of your neighborhoods and our goal is to assist you in keeping your neighborhood a place you enjoy.