

SUMMER  
2019  
VOL.1,NO.3

# FRIENDS OF ROYAL LAKE

NEWSLETTER



## IN THIS ISSUE

---

**BRADDOCK NIGHTS AT  
ROYAL LAKE PARK**

---

**PERSPECTIVES ON BALL  
FIELDS & PLAYGROUND**

---

**EXERCISE TRAIL FITNESS**

---

**ROAD RAIDERS ON  
CALENDAR OF EVENTS**

## SUMMER TIME AND THE LIVIN' IS EASY...

The parks around Royal Lake offer a multitude of opportunities to enjoy the outdoors in the summer time.

This issue of Friends of Royal Lake (FORL) newsletter celebrates the myriad ways people utilize the lake and surrounding parks: walking (with or without dogs!); fishing from the banks of the lake; kicking a soccer ball from one end of the field to the other; relaxing (or dancing) to the music of the Braddock Nights concerts. The Royal Lake parks are alive with summer living!



## **....COMING TO ROYAL LAKE PARK by Frank Cumberland**

Get your lawn chairs, grab your picnic blankets and put your dancing shoes on—this year's Braddock Nights summer entertainment series looks like the best ever! We'll be treated to a wide variety of musical styles and performers, with talented artists to help you make the best of your treasured summer evenings. Royal Lake is the backdrop for the 2019 concert season, with shows planned for every Friday night from 7:30 to 8:30, from July 5 through August 23.

Here is the complete schedule:

**July 5: Rhodes Tavern Troubadors (Roots Rock)**

**July 12: Brass 5 (Light Classical, Jazz)**

**July 19: King Teddy (Swing)**

**July 26: Patty Reese Band (Blues, Roots Rock)**

**August 2: The Groove Factor (80s Funk, R&B)**

**August 9: Cool McFinn (Irish Folk)**

**August 16: Wayne Henderson and Helen White (Traditional Appalachian)**

**August 23: The Pietasters (Ska)**

The Summer Entertainment Series is made possible through corporate and private donations, as well as donations from community organizations including the Kings Park West Civic Association.

Some folks drive to the Kennedy Center for musical performances, others to the Birchmere or Strathmore. Some fly to New York and go to Carnegie Hall. As for me, I'll walk to our summer series right here at Royal Lake—see you there!

For more information visit [www.fairfaxcounty.gov/parks/performances](http://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/parks/performances)

# Enjoying the Sounds from the Ball Fields

by Paul Gross

Our community has wonderful parks supported by the Fairfax County Park Authority that serve our needs for outdoor recreation. Lakeside Park and Royal Lake Park provide us with an opportunity to exercise and take nature walks on our network of trails. We also have two playgrounds, basketball courts, tennis courts, a baseball field, and soccer fields for the enjoyment of people of all ages, in particular our youth.



Future World Cup players hone skills

The Lakeside Park baseball and soccer fields abut my backyard, so I have a great view of all the activities on the fields. Thirty-four years ago when we considered buying our home in Kings Park West, I asked the then current owner if there was a problem with traffic and noise, essentially behind the backyard. His response was that only if the sounds of children playing is a problem. I thought what a nice way to describe the value of the park.

With five children and seven grandchildren, I grew to understand that value. (cont'd)



Shooting hoops at the end of the day



It may be a while before the gloves fit!

## Ball fields, cont'd

My entire family uses the playground, courts, and fields on an almost daily basis, and from my vantage point of living next to the fields, I can see we are not alone.

Several years ago I was watching my grandsons play baseball at Lakeside as part of a Fairfax Little League team. As we were coming to the end of the season, one young girl who had not made a hit all season got up to bat and drove a single into the outfield. When she reached first base for the first time she was so excited that she kept jumping up and down on the base with an expression of pure joy.



Tennis anyone?

That got me thinking, isn't that expression why we come to the park? To improve skills, find a feeling of accomplishment and, of course, have a lot of joyful fun with friends.



'People in the parks' include these intrepid volunteers who helped with the May trail maintenance project.

See Calendar of Events for the next chance to help keep our trails in good repair.



## THE BEST OF PLAYGROUND CULTURE REVEALED by Suzanne Doherty

It's been a very hot day. The swings in the Lakeside Park playground hang forlornly with not a child in sight. The sun moves behind the trees which finally cast a cooling shadow over the space.

The first car pulls into the parking lot. Jacob and Joshua, six year old twins, leap from the car and race ahead of their Dad. "No one's here!" Jacob shouts as he makes a bee-line for the swings.

By the time their Dad catches up, the boys have jumped off the swings and scramble up the ladder to the slide. "My boys needed to use up some energy," he says with a grin.

A second car arrives. Elena walks from her car with three year old Luna firmly in hand and six month old JJ balanced on her hip. Luna watches the older boys zoom down the slide.

"You want to try?" her mother asks.

Luna nods but hesitates when she gets to the base of the ladder.

"I think you can do it, Luna," her Mom encourages.

Meanwhile, Lakepointe resident Emily has walked from her neighborhood with Ava (5) and Carter (4). "We like to come after the playground equipment cools down," she confides.

Carter runs to the climbing wall, his "favorite." Ava takes her place behind Luna who has begun a slow climb up the ladder.

Luna carefully plunks her backside down on the small platform at the top of the slide. Then, an agonizing few moments as she screws up her courage to launch herself down the slide. Luna's Mom moves into position to catch her if needs be.

"Come on, Luna, you can do it," she calls up to her.

Ava, valiantly hanging on to her patience waiting her turn, adds her two-cents.

"Go, Luna, you can do it."

Jacob ventures over to the drama on the slide. He giggles and shouts, "You can do it!" Soon, all the kids gather around the slide to take up the chant: "You can do it-you can do it-you can do it!"

And she does.

In just a few minutes, the magic of the playground is revealed—a place to absorb excess energy, develop physical skills, build self confidence, make social connections, and, as more children swarm into the play space, have a rollicking good time.

# STAYING FIT ON THE TRAIL

By Katie Ambrogne

The fresh air—crisp in the fall, fragrant in the spring—and the sounds of birds and crunching leaves draw me to Royal Lake. The path around Royal Lake is my haven whether I need to meditate alone or have quality time with my husband. I seek it when I am sad, and I enjoy it when I am happy. Our little children love discovering the herons, goslings, turtles, and other wildlife. Sometimes, I'll even catch up with a neighbor as we pass on the trail.

I love how the Royal Lake exercise trail suits my energy level. At just under two miles, I can complete the loop and feel satisfied. I walk when I am tired,

run when I feel inspired, and hit the exercise equipment when I want to feel strong. The newly added steps help me power up the hills, and the rock that someone placed at the parallel bar station make it possible for my short stature to actually do the tricep dips. I used to have to climb it like a monkey.



First a good stretch....



Emma copies Mom's style

I also like to hang upside down in an inverted yoga pose. I don't have the height or power for the jump station (great for climbing and hip stretching), so I save jumps for the smaller one tucked away by the beaver dam. When my upper body strength needs work, looking at the glassy surface of the lake beyond my toes on the horizontal pull-up bench makes it pleasantly tolerable.

After traversing the path, I return home feeling rejuvenated and centered, grateful for being able to move in nature.

The exercise trail around Royal Lake was refurbished in September, 2016 after a fundraising effort launched by Friends of Royal Lake. This was the first major project undertaken by FORL. We are grateful to the neighborhoods, businesses, and individuals who made this park amenity possible.

**ROYAL LAKE EXERCISE EQUIPMENT  
GENEROUSLY SUPPORTED BY**

**Burke Crossfit  
The Mary & Cathy Team  
Debbie Dogrul Associates  
Village Park HOA  
Kings Park West Civic Association  
Lakepointe  
Chatham Towne**

**University Mall Theatres, Loretta and Mark O'Meara**

 **Paul Hardy  
Kristen Markovich  
Potomac River Running  
The Togashi Family** 



# CALENDAR OF EVENTS

**TRAIL MAINTENANCE WORK DAY**-August 17, 7:30 to 10:30am. Volunteers meet in the Lakeside Park parking lot. Bring a wheelbarrow and a shovel if you can.

**FALL CLEANUP**- September 21 from 8 to 11am. Lakeside and Royal Lake Park. The clean-up not only maintains an aesthetically pleasing park environment but also removes the trash that threatens the Pohick Creek Watershed.

**FORL COMMUNITY MEETING**-September 26, 7pm; Laurel Ridge Elementary School, CSS Program Multipurpose room. For more information and to get involved, contact Paul Gross at [friendsofroyallake@gmail.com](mailto:friendsofroyallake@gmail.com) or Sarah Lennon at [parks@kpwca@gmail.com](mailto:parks@kpwca@gmail.com)

## A note on park maintenance....

Dog walkers, PLEASE pick up what your hound deposits so it doesn't contaminate our waterways! (It doesn't just harmlessly dissipate into nature.) You may think that if your pup does its business off the trails in the woods, no one will notice. Our volunteers who pull invasive species or pick up trash notice when they get their hands and feet in it! Also, PLEASE dispose of bagged poop in trash containers (tossing it back into the woods does NOT help!!!)



Thank you!



## ANOTHER VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITY by Tom McCook

**KPW Road Raiders (RR)**, founded by Tony Vellucci in 2010, always meets the second Saturday of the month (from September to June) at 7:30am so as not to interfere with other activities planned for the day. We get in and we get out quickly – 30 minutes or less. Road Raiders focuses on a specific location on a specific date to get the biggest bang for the buck in beautifying the community. **The next workday is scheduled for September 14 at Roberts Rd. and Commonwealth Blvd.**

How much of a difference can a few members of the community make in only 30 minutes? The answer is quite a bit. In the past year the RR team has cleaned up trash along sections of Roberts Road; Rabbit Branch Park on Tapestry Drive just off Roberts Road; Commonwealth Boulevard around Crooked Creek Park and Guinea Road opposite the new dog park. We work on VDOT/county property or KPWCA common areas; we do not clean areas that are individually or HOA owned.

Anyone can participate! We appreciate folks who can help just a few times a year and those who consistently help out month after month. Road Raiders supplies coffee & donuts to help get the day started. Volunteers bring tools, leather gloves, trash bags, and rakes. If you are interested, please contact me, Tom McCook, and I'll add your name (email) to our monthly notification/ distribution note. [trmccook@gmail.com](mailto:trmccook@gmail.com)



Editor: Suzanne Doherty  
Comments? Suggestions? Ideas?  
e-mail Suzanne at  
jewelboxgardensbysuzanne  
@gmail.com