

Thalia Civic League Newsletter

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Volume 28 Issue 3

PROMOTING CIVIC BETTERMENT

May 2020

Thalia citizens: Informed and Involved

Website: <https://thalianeighbors.com>

President's Message

May (or May Not?)

Stand up if you want to gather in groups to chat and eat in a much more communal way and spread some Benjamins around. Okay, now sit back down and resume your “quarantine activity” – It May – or It May Not – happen. Be prepared, expect the best (freedom of public engagement) and plan for the worst (more solitude).

As a military member and subsequently a “government contractor” I was subjected to many of life’s “extremes” and honestly think it prepared me more for the daily challenges of life than any other singular force. Above all, I learned the importance of reading books, guides and manuals; of listening to and not hijacking a conversation; of working well with others in extremely diverse situations and groups; in short, the importance of dealing with whatever came up - as it came up.

I have survived cancer and Legionnaire’s; I have been shot at by bad people in strange countries; I have been trained in extreme survival techniques; I have won contract awards of over \$1B for one of my employers; and, I have seen things that are best left unseen. Again, whatever came up...

But what we are seeing these days? Nope, ain’t seen that - ever! So, what to do before reaching Category Four Boredom? Here are a few “Top 10” things you may find amusing/interesting/gratifying:

1. Relearning the art of Scrabble.
2. Cooking through the pantry/freezer/outside fridge. Amazing what I found...
3. Playing those passé and forgotten DVDs – contrary to what one may hear from the young ‘uns, DVDs older than the viewer DO have good qualities. Maybe not good CGI, though.
4. The same goes for music, don’t forget! (Anyone still into cassettes? Need some?)
5. Walking out in the Thalia environs by yourself is refreshing. And faster, more steps.
6. Taking 5 minutes to call/contact a neighbor for a quick ‘Rona Check’ will make all the difference in the world to that neighbor. And to you. Do it early and often.
7. Clean up the wretched excess and share. Give away, sell or donate items you no longer need. When “The Gate” opens, you can replenish it all!
8. Learn something you always wanted to learn, like “How to Cut Your own Hair”. Or a language.
9. Clean your windows. It might brighten your day (it did for me!)
10. Try to keep a sense of humor or at least equilibrium regarding “normal” life events.

Please Stand by – The Thalia Civic League will return to its normal meeting schedule – *Please Stand by*

(We just don’t know for sure WHEN that will be...)

Mike Dougherty tclmikedougherty@gmail.com

WILLIS WAYSIDE REZONING UPDATE

by Rick Boyles

The Venture Realty Development hearing was originally scheduled for the Planning Commission on June 10, 2020. Due to the COVID-19 pandemic shutting down most city governments, the Governor of Virginia, the Virginia House and Senate passed laws allowing local Government official to hold “electronic” meetings. Once our City received this information, they moved the Willis Wayside rezoning back to the May 27, 2020 Planning Commission docket as an electronic meeting. As of right now, there will be NO OPPORTUNITY TO SPEAK IN PERSON in front of the Planning Commission.

We have pointed out to the City Attorney the orange signs were illegally removed from the property for a period of time. We have also pointed out to the City Attorney 30 days advance notice is required to have a Planning Commission meeting. The placement of the signs only gives 29 days advance notice. We are waiting for responses from the City Attorney before deciding the next course of action.

For those citizens who desire to attend this meeting virtually, registration is required. For more information on this process, please review the Planning Commission website www.vbgov.com/pc or enter the following URL into your web browser to register:

<https://vbgov.webex.com/vbgov/onstage/g.php?MTID=e257f154845de42b9a990af61cd1544ca>.

If you desire to speak at the virtual public hearing you must also notify Staff prior to 9:00 am, May 27, 2020 at (757) 385-4621. Staff will attempt to facilitate real-time citizen participation/comments in the public hearing for those citizens who registered

Citizens are encouraged to submit comments to the Planning Commission prior to the public hearing via email to wlandfair@vbgov.com or via United States Postal Service to Bill Landfair, 2875 Sabre Street, Suite 500, Virginia Beach, VA 23452.



Thalia United Methodist Church Food Pantry

Leave bag at your mailbox by 11 a.m. on Friday, May 15th.

Email Dkesterson8@gmail.com with your address for pick up.

2020 Census

The complete and accurate reporting of the 2020 Census plays a vital role in directing federal funds to local communities for schools, roads, and other public services. The results from the 2020 Census will be used to determine the number of seats each state has in Congress and political representation at all levels of government.

According to Linda Young, Recruiting Assistant for the U.S. Census Bureau, the process of the 2020 Census has been slowed by the restrictions imposed by the COVID 19 virus. People can help expedite the population count by completing their census online www.2020Census.gov, or mailing their completed paper questionnaire. Assistance in completing the 2020 questionnaire is available at [844-330-2020](tel:844-330-2020),

People can apply to work for the 2020 Census now in preparation for resuming the work of the 2020 Census by applying at 2020Census.gov/jobs



Thalia Garden Club Notes

By Joan Haskell

THE GOOD NEWS: COVID-19 is not a food borne illness. It is extremely unlikely that someone will catch it through eating. So, let's get those gardens started! Growing your own produce will help you and your family eat more fruits and veggies. Even "picky eaters" are more likely to eat food they helped plant, nurture and harvest themselves.

Your garden doesn't have to be huge. A few herbs in a pot will add tons of flavor to meals. Speaking of pots, container gardens are a great alternative for people who don't have an ideal spot for an in-ground garden. Clay, wood, plastic, and metal are some of the suitable materials. They should be big enough to support plants when they are fully grown and have adequate drainage.

Some produce to grow are any kind of herb, tomatoes (small to medium tomatoes work better than the large ones for containers), beets, cucumbers, onions, peppers, radishes and many other vegetables will make a great container garden to suit anyone's taste!

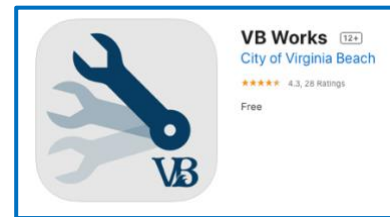
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LOOKING AHEAD: The Garden Club will again be selling the white 'Thalia Daffodil' bulbs in September. We sold out last year, so be sure to reserve an order soon. Contact Joan at 486-4043



The City of Virginia Beach provides numerous mobile apps across platforms to connect citizens to services.

The **VB Works** app is a one-stop-shop for you to report a problem. Whether it's a pothole, streetlight out, graffiti, flooding, or other local problems that are a safety hazard or eyesore, the VB Works app makes reporting a problem easier than ever. The app uses your GPS to identify your location, provides a list of appropriate issues and also allows you to snap a photo to add to your service request. Reports are automatically sent to the city and routed to the appropriate city department for resolution. You'll also be able to follow your issue from the time it is reported until it is resolved.



Republican Party Primary

Thalia Elementary School

Tuesday, June 23, 2020

6 AM – 7 PM

Why Do Trees Like Company?

By Gail Kynette

The company of others – in these days of isolation, we long to be in groups again. It is the same for some of our woody residents in Thalia. Whenever trees sprout up naturally, they seldom grow alone, but in families, e.g. oak or pine seedlings. As they grow, intertwined root systems and canopies provide connection, stability, and resistance to assault, e.g. wind stress.

A fascinating aspect of trees in community is the presence of underground fungal networks. Like fiber optic cables, the filaments that penetrate and weave throughout the ground communicate and transmit signals from one tree to the next, helping trees exchange news about insects, drought, and other dangers. Research reveals that defensive chemicals are pumped in response to signals transmitted by these fungal threads. In short, trees need each other.

Mary Reid Barrow wrote about this phenomenon in her LRNOW Tree Blog:

It's hard to believe and it's hard to understand.

But science is now telling us that trees actually communicate with each other across the landscape.

Trees telegraph their needs and help their neighbors through an underground network dubbed “The Wood Wide Web.”

As we use our Internet communication system, the World Wide Web, the trees use a network of fungus strands to talk to send messages to one another.

The strands are called mycelium and they are like the “roots” of the mushrooms and fungus you see growing above ground. Just dig up a layer of soil in the woods and you will see a network of little white threads going everywhere.

The threads grow in and around the roots of trees and plants and provide nutrients to them. In turn, the trees nourish the fungi with sugar.

If trees could speak English, just think of what they might say: “Time for supper, kids,” the mother tree would say to her seedling babies and she would then send a nice dose of sugar to her young, via the mushroom mycelium.

After a bad storm, we see trees as less than our friends. A diseased, decaying, or dead tree that poses a threat to life and property can be safely removed. Then, plant a family of trees! Thomas Jefferson's plans for his home at Poplar Forest called for a “clump of trees” here and there on the landscape. When we can, let's safely enjoy the company of friends again underneath our lovely Thalia trees!





Woody Stephens

Thalia Neighborhood Wanderer and Photographer

If you are a resident of Thalia, you may have noticed a distinguished gentleman walking the Thalia neighborhood with a camera around his neck. That's Woody Stephens, an avid walker and photographer of Thalia's wonderful wildlife. You have probably seen his photos on the Thalia Neighbors Facebook page or in the Beacon. Woody grew up in Delaware County, Pennsylvania, and joined the Navy in 1964. After several overseas assignments including Vietnam, he was assigned to the Hampton Roads area. In 1969 Woody exited the Navy and went to work in Washington, DC. In 1972 he relocated to Virginia Beach and bought a home in Thalia. Woody has been married to Elaine for fifty-one years. They have one daughter who currently lives in Copenhagen with her husband, who is a Foreign Service Officer, and their two daughters.

After retiring in 1999 Woody started to run marathons, but in his later years he decided to stop running and began walking the neighborhood for exercise. Woody got started in photography with a Brownie Hawkeye when he was 9 years old. According to Woody, he was not an immediate success in photography! Over the years he progressed through various cameras, until he started using Digital Single Lens Reflex cameras. Now Woody combines walking, his love of photography and his great eye for beauty in nature to take wonderful photos of our Thalia neighborhood. Through his photographs Woody shares the wide variety of animal and plant life he has found as he walks around Thalia. Woody does not have a favorite subject to photograph, but he loves to travel to Europe and take photos of historic buildings, especially inside the buildings. If you are walking, riding a bike or driving through the neighborhood and see Woody, say hello. Thank you, Woody, for sharing a piece of your story and your wonderful pictures with your Thalia Neighbors.



Blue Dasher Dragonfly taken in Woody's yard
yard



Bald Eagle taken on Thalia Point

THALIA CIVIC LEAGUE, INC.

2020 MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION

Name: _____

Street Address: _____

Virginia Beach, VA 23452

Home Phone: _____ Work Phone: _____

_____ Please check here if you would like to receive emails related to the civic league and other ongoing events in Thalia. Your email will only be used to send out information related to civic league business and will not be provided to anyone for any other purpose.

E-mail Address: _____

PLEASE CHECK as applicable:

- _____ Sign my household up as a member of the Thalia Neighborhood Watch Program.
- _____ I need more information on the Neighborhood Watch Program.

I hereby apply for membership in the Thalia Civic League, Inc. and enrollment in the Thalia Neighborhood Watch Program.

Annual Thalia Civic League membership dues are currently \$10 per household.

Signature _____

NOTE:

Please submit this completed form along with a check or money order (made payable to the Thalia Civic League, Inc.) to the following address:

**Thalia Civic League, Inc.
c/o Mike Dougherty, President
631 Lynn Shores Drive
Virginia Beach, VA 23452**