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April 2017 Newsletter

Hello Friend of KLB,

As if you can't tell from all the pollen covering everything, Spring is in full swing, and so is Keep Loudoun Beautiful (KLB), so I just wanted to let you know what's been going on and how you can get involved in keeping Loudoun beautiful. Plus, as always, you'll find some information here to reduce your environmental impact while saving or even making money in the process.

Area Leader & Other Upcoming Litter Cleanups

We're only halfway through April, and hundreds of bags of trash and recycling have already been collected all around the county thanks to our dedicated Area Leaders, other caring citizens that organize litter cleanups, and an army of eco-warrior volunteers that take the time to help with the effort. Since KLB supports all of these cleanups, we've been keeping pretty busy. In addition, we've spent thousands of dollars buying much-needed supplies and equipment to outfit our volunteers to

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help them be safe and efficient, which we simply could not do if it weren't for the monetary contributions of our KLB friends. So whether you're a KLB volunteer, a KLB donor, or both, we couldn't do it without you, so thank you for your support!

Events are still being added, so be sure to visit our [Area Leader Events page](#) as well as our [general calendar page](#) for opportunities to get involved. Since not all Area Leaders post events, feel free to connect with them by visiting our [Area Leader page](#).

As I mentioned above, KLB has also been supporting several citizen-led litter cleanups this year so far, where concerned folks reach-out to us and ask for assistance. We're more than happy to help, so if you see a need and are inspired to take action by organizing your own cleanup, just drop us an email to start the dialog for a successful cleanup.

Lastly, registration is now open for our classic **Goose Creek Watershed Cleanup**, coming up on Saturday, May 6, from 9AM to around 3PM. This is a free, professionally-guided canoe float down a Middleburg-area section of the scenic Goose Creek to remove litter from the creek and shoreline. Space is limited, so learn more about the event at www.keeploudounbeautiful.org/KLBcanoe.html and reserve your seats today before they're gone. And speaking of seats, we want to keep our unique & impactful watershed cleanups free-of-charge so that volunteers from all economic levels can participate. That said, our watershed events are very costly to hold and are a strain on our tight budget, so we're going to try something new this time around. Since reserving a canoe costs us around \$100, for just \$100, you can sponsor a canoe, whether you participate in the cleanup or not. In addition to earning the satisfying feeling of making a difference,

we'll recognize your contribution at the event, on our Website, and on the next round of t-shirts. So are you going to be the first to step up to keep these important events free?

Remember that all of these activities should qualify for those seeking community service hours, so we're happy to sign-off on the hours if you provide the filled-out forms.

Green Tips

Solarize Piedmont & SolarizeNOVA: KLB promotes reducing, reusing, and recycling as commonsense and cost-effective ways to be kind to our planet for the sake of future generations and other creatures that call Earth home. Reducing your energy profile is a great way to reduce your environmental impact, and with solar, the investment will pay dividends in the long run. I know this first-hand as a participant of the [SolarizeNOVA](#) initiative back in 2014 (running now for our friends to the east), which appears to be pretty much the same as [Solarize Piedmont](#). Whether you're interested in reducing your electric bill or "zeroing" it out like we did, the Solarize Piedmont program, which ends on April 30, 2017, along with the 30% federal tax credit, is a great motivator. While I intend to soon, I don't have the space here to relay our educational/interesting journey, which also snowballed into involving geothermal HVAC and sprayfoam insulation to greatly reduce our energy consumption. But I will say that, as a baseline first step, you should take what I consider as reasonable measures to become more energy efficient, like switching-out incandescent lights with LEDs, weatherstripping, insulating, adopting Energy Star devices and appliances, and correcting wasteful habits. This is especially important if you're trying to

install a solar PV system designed to net-zero your energy consumption while avoiding generating surplus energy over an annual cycle. Since I've been there-done that, I'm happy to answer your questions if this resonates with you as reducing your energy profile benefits all of us.

Party Time: While parties and celebrations happen all year long, Spring and Summer are filled with picnics, holidays, and countless festivals and celebrations. So with that in mind, the number **300** pops-up. Why? Because typical parties and other celebrations these days mean using disposable entertainment-ware, and according to earth911.com, if you take all the disposable serving items used in a year and line them up, they would wrap around the Earth over **300 times**. 300 times!

Some simple math reveals this as 7.5 million miles of disposable stuff that's mostly headed to the landfill or ends-up as litter. Isn't that nuts? We can do better and we need to do better, and KLB is here to help by leading by example. You know, KLB likes to refresh and reward our volunteers for their effort, but we don't want to beat-up our planet in the process, so if you've volunteered to one of our watershed cleanups or other KLB events, you know that we demonstrate that reusing is the right choice compared to the typical use-and-toss (disposable) mentality. We use 5-gallon coolers with chilled water and lemonade, reusable cups, reusable plates, real silverware, and even cloth napkins for 70+ people. All of which is cleaned afterwards in preparation for the next event, including our work gloves and rags.

Now you may think that going the smart, reusable path would be expensive, but that's simply not true.

All of these items are very affordable and can be purchased at Target, Walmart, and other big-box

retailers, so KLB, which is very frugal with donated funds, can do the right thing without breaking the bank. Choosing to reuse not only saves our planet from unnecessary waste (even if recycled), it saves us money by not having to continuously buy disposable stuff and then deal with the hassle of disposing of it all afterwards. Of course, avoiding disposable stuff also means avoiding potential litter, and litter prevention is what we're all about, as well.

So if we can do it, you can as well at your next gathering, because at the end of the day, the quality of life of future generations depend on our choices, so please choose to reuse if you don't already ..starting today.

The final green tip is to observe Earth Day by being a good steward of our planet, not only on April 22 this year, but every day. Remember: Every Day is Earth Day!

I hope you found this newsletter helpful. As always, your candid feedback is always appreciated.

Thanks again for your support and please share this with your network.

Mark Lenko
President, KLB Board of Directors



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