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October 2017 Newsletter

Dear Friend of KLB,
Happy October from Keep Loudoun Beautiful! Since we are now into our Fall cleanup season, I wanted to share some KLB news, let you know about upcoming opportunities to keep Loudoun beautiful, and of course, this month's green tip.

Upcoming Opportunities to Keep Loudoun Beautiful

October is known for Oktoberfests, but around Loudoun, it's also known for Oktoberbashes, as in Trash Bashes. And this month, we have two back-to-back, side-by-side litter cleanup opportunities in the

In this issue:

- Upcoming Opportunities to Keep Loudoun Beautiful
- Board of Directors Update
- Area Leader News
- Newsletter Archive
- Green Tip – The squirrel & the icebox

Sterling/Cascades area. On Saturday, October 14, the Sugarland Run community is hosting a cleanup and on Sunday, October 15, the KLB Board of Directors will be busy hosting the Cascades Trash Bash & Food Drive right next door to celebrate 45 years of keeping Loudoun beautiful. Please visit our [Area Leader Events page](#) for more details, and we'll hopefully see you at one or maybe both of these community service events.

Board of Directors Update

We have two important changes to share. The first is that after many, many years, we've changed our monthly Board meeting date and time. We are now meeting the third Monday of the month at 7PM.

Thanks to our good friends at the Leesburg Presbyterian Church, we're still meeting at this location in downtown Leesburg. We made this change to better accommodate the schedules of our current Board members as well as hopefully attract new Board members by adopting a time that doesn't conflict with normal daytime business hours. More details can be viewed on our [BOD page](#).

Which brings me to the second significant change...

We have a new Board member! In addition to our mission, our new schedule was a key factor, so it's already making a difference. Christian Bongard, a long-time KLB watershed cleanup volunteer,

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answered the call to step-up to a leadership role within KLB at our September meeting. He brings a wealth of environmental knowledge and currently volunteers with other local environmental groups, so we're grateful that he selected KLB in a leadership capacity. Christian is excited to contribute his energy and perspective and we're likewise excited to work with him. So while we're on a roll in growing our Board, as more Board members directly correlates to more we can accomplish, who's next to step-up? If this resonates with you and our new meeting time is doable, let us know!

Area Leader News

Unfortunately, we don't have the same great news as our Board of Directors update despite our repeated pleas to fill several Area Leader vacancies as well as Area Leaders for brand new areas. So we'll plea one more time... Now don't be shy. If you're tired of seeing litter polluting places that you value, reach-out to us and explore being an Area Leader or assisting an Area Leader. This has been a rewarding experience for our Area Leaders, some who have been contributing for decades, so I'm sure it will be for you.

Newsletter Archive

If you're new to the KLB family or if you missed some previous newsletters, this is just a reminder that you

can view previous newsletters [here](#).

Green Tip – What does a Squirrel and the Icebox have in common?

While out on the mountain bike not too long ago, a squirrel darted across my path. Fortunately, we both reacted quickly and didn't collide, but I did notice a huge acorn is the critter's mouth. What was this squirrel, like about every other squirrel, doing? Planning ahead, plain and simple. Squirrels, like many other wild animals, know that summer's end signals that winter is on its way, so now's the time to prepare for a diminished food supply by collecting and storing what can be scavenged. Otherwise, the squirrel might not make it through to Spring.

Similarly, before the invention of modern refrigeration, we humans were resourceful and harvested ice from frozen ponds, lakes, and waterways during the winter to store in ice houses for refilling of [antique iceboxes](#) throughout the year, especially in warmer climates. Guess what happened if people were lazy, especially in rural areas, and didn't take the time to go out in the cold and risk their lives to cut blocks of ice? Food would spoil and people would go hungry and even perish. They needed to plan ahead as they saw value in it, just like the squirrel.

So what does planning ahead have to do with being green? Quite a bit, actually! Most eco-friendly acts involve planning ahead. One classic example is how some simple planning ahead when shopping can make a huge environmental difference. If we rewind the clock back before the invention of the mass-produced disposable paper bag in 1852 (a sad day), if you didn't bring your own basket to the market, you had to buy another one, you used your hands, or you were out of luck. There clearly was value in planning ahead. With the arrival of disposable shopping bags, people didn't have to plan ahead since the bags were "free" (not really – costing retailers and you over \$4 billion a year) and the pain factor of forgetting your reusable baskets/bags was gone. It was now okay to be lazy and/or forgetful even though the wallet, handbag, and mobile phone are somehow remembered since they are important (i.e. valuable). While there's technically nothing wrong with being lazy, this particular laziness comes with a huge environmental price tag, with over 1.6 billion gallons of oil wasted to produce the 1 million bags consumed each minute that are typically only used for a few minutes. Throw in the wasted energy and the countless polluted waterways with all the life-chocking plastic litter, and you have a real environmental mess just because

planning ahead wasn't important. Fortunately, some smart governments are stepping-up and either banned disposable shopping bags or are making consumers pay a token fee to hopefully reintroduce some pain to inspire a positive change. KLB also tries to inspire positive change by giving out practical reusable shopping bags at all of our events. Sure, they're not free to us, but the benefits certainly outweigh the expense if the reusable bags are put to work over and over again...everybody wins.

Another classic example is bottled water. Just the mere mention of snow will cause a stampede to the nearest grocery or warehouse store to clear the shelves of bottled water. While this can be considered planning ahead, it is both comical and sad. Comical in that most people clearing the shelves have municipal water service, so if there is a localized or even a widespread power outage, the tap water will keep flowing since Loudoun Water, like utilities all across the USA, has pumping station backup generators. Sad in that we have all been trained by the bottled water industry, the media, faith-based organizations, governments, and family, that bottled water is the answer to all our problems. It's not! You know, humanity somehow survived prior to the arrival of modern bottled water in 1973 (another sad day). The eco-friendly storm/disaster

preparedness solution is crazy simple: Purchase very affordable reusable beverage coolers and fill them up with tap water prior to the event. You see, there's no need to run out to the store for bottled water when you plan ahead the eco-friendly and smart way. For those that use well water without the luxury of a whole-house backup generator, just keep one of these coolers filled all the time, refreshing it periodically, and watering the garden with the old water. If storage space is a concern, note that there are collapsible beverage storage containers available.

At our KLB events, we remind volunteers to plan ahead and bring their favorite reusable bottle filled with their favorite beverage for the mission at hand. Of course, every event includes one or more that didn't read our emails, just forgot, or is expecting us to provide hydration. So instead of the usual bottled water, we respond in an eco-friendly way by having reusable cups on hand or by giving these unprepared individuals a practical reusable bottle filled from our beverage coolers. Again, the expense of the reusable bottle is mitigated if the recipient learns from the experience and is inspired to reach for the reusable bottle over and over again... everybody wins.

At home, we take our trusty reusable bottles with us everywhere we go so we are well prepared for whatever we encounter in an eco-friendly and money-saving way. I hope you do the same. If not, there's no better time than right now to start getting into a eco-sustainable habit.

Here are two more quick examples to consider. Planning on stopping by a coffee shop? Plan ahead and take your favorite reusable mug. It will perform better than the disposable to-go cups without all the incredible waste, and yes, litter. Going out for a bite at a local restaurant? Plan ahead and take along one or more reusable containers (in a reusable bag) just in case you can't finish the meal. If the stunned look on the server's face isn't rewarding enough when you relay that you brought your own reusable doggy bag, knowing that your thoughtful planning is saving the planet should seal the deal.

I could go on and on, but I hope you see that if a squirrel with a brain smaller than an acorn can be prepared, so can we, and with our superior intellect, we can be prepared in an eco-friendly way, which will also save you money and some anxiety when the bottled water shelves are empty since you know better.

I hope you found this newsletter helpful. As always, if any of this resonates with you, we would love to hear from you.

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

Mark Lenko
President, KLB Board of Directors



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