



Greater Oakton Community Association Newsletter

Winter 2022

Dear Friends and Neighbors,

We hope your holiday season is off to a warm and friendly start. With your support, GOCA continues to work to enhance our community, as we hope this winter's quarterly update helps demonstrate. If you agree, please consider a year-end donation to help us with our efforts (see details at bottom).

GOCA News

GOCA Annual Meeting and Follow-up. On November 3rd, GOCA held its annual community meeting at the Oakton Library, at which we shared our accomplishments for 2022 and plans for 2023. This year has seen a great deal of momentum, including the organization of several community events and the publication of the first-ever Oakton Community Guide. We have also made significant progress in Oakton Community Park, including the institution of regular mowing of part of the field; promulgation of a meadow with a trail through to the woods; installation of bicycle racks; and, under the leadership of our IMA leads, tremendous progress in removing invasive plants in the woods. GOCA also continues its advocacy for making the schoolhouse available for additional uses, beautification of the roundabout, and extension of sidewalks along Hunter Mill Road.

Since the meeting, we have continued to make further progress on these goals:

- **The Historic Oakton Schoolhouse.** In an exciting development, based on its experience with the historic Grange schoolhouse in Great Falls, the Park Authority has indicated its willingness to negotiate an agreement with GOCA under which GOCA would be able to run programming itself, albeit still seeking the usual approvals as required by the nature of the event. Many details will need to be negotiated, and GOCA and the community will have to consider all aspects of this—and ensure comfort

among nearby HOAs—before we commit to anything. Programming will by necessity need to be consistent with the limitations of the property, including parking and, at least at present, lack of water, restrooms, and kitchen facilities.

- **Hunter Mill Sidewalk.** GOCA has also continued to engage with the Supervisor's office regarding the need for a sidewalk along Hunter Mill Road to ensure the safety of all those who make their way on foot along that busy road to Oakton Community Park, the Oakton Library, and Oakton's commercial district. We had earlier made the Supervisor aware of the interest expressed by the close to 600 residents who signed a petition advocating for the sidewalk. While it remains on the County's unfunded list, the Supervisor's office tells us that this is very high on her list of priorities for a pot of money that recently became available to the County for such purposes. At some point in the coming months, it—and competing projects—may become the subject of a public hearing, at which your voices will be important. We will keep you posted.
- **Roundabout Beautification.** GOCA has reached a preliminary understanding with VDOT that would help resolve the liability concerns that have hindered progress on finding a pleasant design for the roundabout on Hunter Mill. As a result, we are forming a roundabout committee that we expect to convene in early January, with the goal of reconciling different proposals for a design; accommodating the sentiments of immediately surrounding HOAs; solidifying the preferences for native plantings of the invasive plant management community; and VDOT's safety recommendations.

Recent Events. A big thank you to all who helped make several GOCA-arranged events this Fall the successes they were! In November, twenty Oakton residents were treated to **a tour of historical landmarks of Oakton by local historian Jim Lewis**. Participants came away with a new understanding of how Oakton was uniquely challenged during the Civil War when confederate and union supporters lived next door to each other. We hope to arrange further tours of both this and a “Part 2” tour, which will cover landmarks further down Hunter Mill Road, in the coming year. Also in November, IMA site leader Willow Martin led a **Boy Scouts Day** for local scout troops and their leaders to learn about invasive plants and work in the Park. Afterwards, GOCA delivered

pizza to the boys and girls that was graciously donated by **Tony's NY Pizza** in the Oakton Shopping Plaza, for which we are grateful. And earlier this month, small-town spirit abounded as residents gathered at **Arts & Music in the Park** to celebrate local artists selling their wares in the historic schoolhouse and listen to performances from James Madison High School Madrigals, Kena Highland bagpipers, Flint Hill High School's brass ensemble, Flint Hill student Brigit Cook, and Flint Hill's Major Minors.

Community Directory Available. If you haven't already gotten your own copy, complimentary directories are available on the bookshelf directly behind the Oakton Library information desk. The directory includes contact information for a wide range of businesses which operate in Oakton, as well as handy numbers for government officials, public institutions, nonprofits, and emergency resources.

Upcoming Community Events

Invasive Plant Removal and Native Plant Installation in Oakton Community Park. Dates for 2023 are still being set; please watch our website for news. If you would like to receive mailings about these opportunities, please email [Mark Deaton](mailto:Mark.Deaton@oaktonva.gov).

Winter Solstice at Unity of Fairfax. December 21st at 7pm. Join the Unity of Fairfax community as they welcome the Winter solstice with a bonfire, singing, and chanting.

Assorted Upcoming Activities and Events at the Oakton Library. [Click here](#) for a listing.

For updates, please visit [GOCA's website](#) periodically. For a broader listing of community events, and to stay up to date with a wide range of developments in Providence District, in which Oakton is located, consider subscribing to Supervisor Dalia Palchik's "**Palchik Post**" by signing up [here](#).

Support GOCA

Please consider GOCA for your year-end financial donations. We know you can feel the difference that GOCA is making by bringing our residents together. Our events are free to the public, because GOCA pays for all of the activity and promotion. Additionally, we are now incurring costs such as liability and event insurance. Finally, we are looking to a future in which additional funding will be needed to bring improvements to Oakton Community Park, the roundabout, and future capital projects. We need your support! **Please consider making a tax-deductible gift at <https://www.greateroakton.com> or you can mail a check to GOCA, c/o Lauren Crum, 10665 Oakton Ridge Ct, Oakton, VA 22124.**

Donate or lend us your historical artifacts. To enhance the educational value of visits to the schoolhouse, we are seeking donations of historic desks, books, flags, and other items. We are also especially interested in photographs, journals, and other memorabilia that specifically pertain to Oakton and people associated with the schoolhouse. Please let us know if you have any items you would be willing to either donate or lend to GOCA for this purpose.

Help us acquire chairs. Is your office or organization looking to replace folding chairs? If so, please contact us. We would like to acquire 50 chairs to be used for events and presentations in the schoolhouse.

Help us grow our outreach. Please help spread the word about GOCA among your neighbors who may not already be on our mailing list. We would also appreciate, for those of you in homeowners' associations, your letting us know who the current leadership is so we can enlist them in our outreach efforts. Our database is already robust, but we'd like to make it as comprehensive as we can.

Volunteer your time. Finally, we need your volunteer time. Please email us at contact@greateroakton.com and we can match you with the right opportunity.

Warmly,

The GOCA Board

Lauren Crum and Shelley Deutch, Co-Chairs

Jody Bennett, Linda Byrne, Jackie Davey, Mark Deaton, Michelle Fisher, Janet Kerr-Tener (founding Co-Chair), Kris Olsen, Robin Thurman, and Gary Wong