

WINTER 2023

ISSUE 203



A YEAR OF EDUCATING & INSPIRING



FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

RICO FLESHMAN, E.P.

I love Prince William County! More specifically, I love the geography, the places, the attractions, the collection of diverse people and cultures, the history, and of course, our wonderfully vibrant environment. Another year has passed since I stepped into this role which means another 365 days of being introduced to new faces, new places, and the history that makes our County so special. I have found that being a useful tool to the government, businesses, and residents alike is exactly how Keep Prince William Beautiful as an organization thrives, how we strengthen the bonds between the community and environmental stewardship, and how we transform that energy into action.

This past year has seen its fair share of adversity but in that I have witnessed people all across the County stand up to offer their assistance to KPWB in the continuous pursuit of our mission. Picking up litter is a thankless and seemingly endless job at times, yet we have had volunteers old and new line up to assist us and perform community cleanups, adopt spots, label storm drains, do our litter and shopping center surveys, and add their personal expertise and skills to a wide variety of beautification projects. Amidst all of the background noise, to the thousands of volunteers and hundreds of organizations that have lent us your support- KPWB THANKS YOU!

We have also shifted our focus to increased education. We believe a well informed, environmentally-literate population is best poised to take action and have therefore spent hundreds of hours with community groups, civic organizations, and in classrooms working to educate our communities on what it means to take care of our environment. One of my personal favorite moments in this role is to stand in front of a classroom of students and see their eyes light up when we make a connection with them! It fuels me. It gives me hope and I use that hope to continue to do what we do for the County.

I love Prince William County! KPWB loves Prince William County and this team is very much looking forward to what the next year holds for us all!

*"Engage through outreach & education, **excite** by developing a sense of pride in our communities, and **empower** through action to keep our County clean and beautiful."*



OUR MISSION

Keep Prince William Beautiful is a 501(c)3 environmental organization that serves Prince William County through partnering with residents, businesses, community organizations and the government to educate and inspire environmental stewards who, through locally informed action, actively work to reduce litter waste, increase recycling, and broaden environmental education throughout the County.

10,721

LBS. of Litter Collected

37

Community Education & Outreach Events

11

Beautification Projects

3,069

Volunteer Hours

57

Community & Adopt-A-Spot Cleanups

1,858

LBS. of Plastic Bag & Film Collected

2023
COMMUNITY
IMPACT

COMMUNITY ACTION



CHINN PARK CHILDREN'S GARDEN

In June, KPWB partnered with the Garden Club of Lake Ridge to build an educational garden for kids, located between the Chinn Aquatics and Fitness Center and Chinn Park Library. This project was also in collaboration with the Chinn Park Preschool Program.

Volunteers came together to plant a variety of flowers, herbs, and more, creating a highly sensory experience for children that encourages a love for gardening and exploring nature. Stepping stones and educational markers were added throughout for easy accessibility and so one can learn as they go. The garden also features a mailbox full of more kid-friendly educational materials to take home. Thank you to our fellow community organizations and each volunteer who helped make this learning experience come to life!

COMMUNITY ACTION

NVFS' SERVE CAMPUS BEAUTIFICATION

May certainly brought more flowers this year! This past summer, KPWB partnered with AWS InCommunities and the NVFS SERVE Campus to refresh and add to the NVFS SERVE Campus Wellness Garden.

Volunteers built a large new planter for the campus, and gave new life to the garden after it was first established in 2021 by our team. More plants were added and the space was given fresh mulch. This project aimed to provide a calming place for both the staff and guests of the campus to enjoy.



COMMUNITY ACTION



DCC TREE PLANTING & CLEANUP

In September, KPWB teamed up with 60 volunteers from the DCC Coalition to remove litter and restore fencing around Bull Run Plaza and the Bull Run Watershed, as well as extend the riparian buffer by planting dozens of trees. Nearly 30 bags of trash were collected, 50 trees were planted, and new fencing helps to prevent future litter from entering our watershed. Thank you for your hard work, volunteers!

ANDREW LEITCH PARK CLEANUP

This past March, KPWB teamed up with over 40 volunteers from multiple community organizations to clean litter from the NW corner of Andrew Leitch Park. Collecting an estimate of 2332 lbs. of total waste, volunteers removed many dumped mattresses, porch decking, household and lawn furniture, and 32 bags of trash. Thank you to our partners and these hard-working volunteers for their dedication toward protecting our parks!



COMMUNITY ACTION



ANNUAL TOWN OF DUMFRIES CLEANUPS

In 2023, KPWB partnered with the Town of Dumfries to conduct two annual town cleanups that removed litter from various locations around Dumfries. During the Spring Cleanup, 36 volunteers participated in collecting over 700 lbs. of waste from the ground and labeled multiple storm drains. Storm drain labeling is an important educational tool in the community; labels serve as a reminder that any litter in the street can easily flow into our storm drains. Water is not treated or cleaned after entering our storm drains, meaning any present contaminants or trash is sent directly into the nearest body of water. During the Fall Cleanup, 22 volunteers came together to remove over 300 lbs. of litter and illegally-dumped items from the Town of Dumfries. KPWB is honored to have this partnership with the community and looks forward to future action!

COMMUNITY ACTION

ANNUAL BULL RUN WATERSHED CLEANUPS

Protecting water quality in Prince William County is one of the most vital parts of maintaining a healthy environment for wildlife and community members alike. The Bull Run tributary feeds into the Occoquan Reservoir, which provides nearly 17 million gallons of drinking water for over half of Prince William's county population. As a member of the Bull Run Watershed Protectors, a volunteer group of local organizations that seek to improve the health of Bull Run, KPWB helped conduct two cleanup and tree planting events this year. In March, this partnership brought out 50 volunteers to remove almost 30 bags of litter from the area; they planted 10 native tree seedlings near the stream, as well as dozens of native seed balls. Later on in November, 30 volunteers participated in the second cleanup, clearing 26 bags of litter and many large illegally-dumped items.



COMMUNITY ACTION

E-WASTE RECYCLING PROGRAM

KPWB is always looking for ways to expand so as to offer more resources to community members and local businesses. In 2023, KPWB partnered with the PWC Green Business Council and The Junkluggers of Gainesville, VA to offer a free e-waste recycling drop-off location for all community members. E-waste includes any unwanted or broken electronic devices. It has become an additional strain on our landfills, one we hope to help divert.



PLASTIC BAG & FILM COLLECTION PROGRAM

In similar news, KPWB was proud to expand our NexTrex Recycling program. In partnership with local libraries, this program collects plastic bag & film donations from the community, and sends these donations back to NexTrex to have recycled into eco-friendly products. In 2023, KPWB added five collection bins to manage, partnering with five more libraries. All collections go toward earning another bench to be donated to these local libraries, each made from 500 lbs. of recycled plastic bags. KPWB thanks you for your donations!



COMMUNITY ACTION

Learning how to care for one's environment, how to live sustainability, should be prevalent in any young person's education, and we believe in the value of *hands-on* learning. When students are given the chance to explore environmental issues during their youth, a deeper sense of personal interest and responsibility toward our planet is cultivated; they are encouraged to identify challenges, to use critical thinking, and to test their problem-solving skills. Promoting environmental education in our county has been the leading staple of our year, and is the most crucial element to building an environmentally sustainable future.

DALE CITY ELEMENTARY TRAIL REPAIR & OUTDOOR CLASSROOM

This past April, KPWB teamed up with PWTSC and Dale City Elementary School to give students the opportunity to experience outdoor learning throughout their school year. The existing outdoor classroom at Dale City ES needed heavy clearing, as did the trail leading to the space. This project is still in progress; so far, volunteers came together to reroute the existing trail, improve trail sustainability, cleared and rebuilt the existing outdoor classroom, and expanded new space for an additional outdoor classroom. Removing vegetation and repairs have included lots of heavy lifting, and we are excited to keep going!



COMMUNITY ACTION

THE TRASH SUIT: TEACHING CONSUMERISM AND LITTER AWARENESS

October brought a fun, but illuminating, addition for our staff to use when teaching PWC students about the impacts of consumerism and single-use culture. The Trash Suit started as an experiment by Robin Greenfield in which he wore every piece of trash he created over 30 days, instead of tossing anything. KPWB borrowed the suit, including both the jacket and pants, to educate classes from multiple schools on the effects of excessive consumerism in the United States. This was an unforgettable visual to share with students!



EDUCATIONAL ACTIVITIES WITH LOCAL LIBRARIES

Throughout 2023, KPWB has held a series of kid-friendly activities at our local libraries. This included educating students on the benefits of composting, planting, and other environmental topics.

These activities also involved storytime, and our staff is excited to continue doing them in 2024.

COMMUNITY ACTION

BOYS & GIRLS CLUBS' REPAIR AND UPDATE

In November, KPWB, Habitat for Humanity Prince William County, and Neabsco District Supervisor Victor S. Angry teamed up with volunteers from multiple organizations to repair and update 3 local Boys & Girls Clubs. The work completed included repainting common rooms, curbs, and handicapped spots, wood-staining, adding new outdoor games, fence-clearing, pressure-washing, large debris removal, weed clearing, and more.

What a success! Thank you to Habitat for Humanity Prince William County, Neabsco District Supervisor Victor S. Angry, and every volunteer who participated in this series of events for doing such an incredible job for these boys and girls!



COMMUNITY ACTION



TOWN OF DUMFRIES BUS SHELTER BEAUTIFICATION

In June, KPWB showcased 3 more beautified bus shelters, located in the Town of Dumfries. This annual project, supported by OmniRide and KPWB, transforms designated bus shelters into canvases of public art designed by local artists. Combined with a litter removal program, this project aims to use public art to beautify neighborhoods, spread litter awareness, and improve the ridership experience. The theme for 2023 was “Clean Communities, Clean Waterways” and these talented artists knocked it out of the park! Artist’s names, from top to bottom on the left: Darien Taylor, Tamao Nakayama, Amanda Brown

IRONGATE COMMUNITY BEAUTIFICATION

This past year, our team headed to the Irongate community in Manassas, VA to build a new green space for the neighborhood and for our pollinators. New topsoil and mulch was brought in with the installation of varying shrubs, such as Pinkster Flower and Virginia Sweetspire. In addition, a lending library was installed to expand book access and inspire readers in the community. The lending library was built by Joshua, who is pursuing a Venturing Summit Award with Boy Scouts of America. We want to thank Joshua, as well as thank McKay Used Books, who generously donated over fifty books to fill the current lending library and the additional ones that will be installed throughout the neighborhood.



HIGHLIGHTS

VOLUNTEER SHOUTOUT

It's truly our volunteers that keep Prince William beautiful and we have to shout out one of the best! Anushka Misra received the President's Volunteer Service Award silver tier by volunteering 75 hours at various events and organizations throughout 2023. She assisted KPWB with cleanups and NexTrex ; she also volunteers for Lucky Dog, Food Pantry, Loudan Literacy Program, and more. She even finds time to run her own fundraiser and KPWB was honored to receive a donation! Thank you, Anushka!



COMPOST PROGRAM WITH PRINCE WILLIAM COUNTY SCHOOLS

To educate students on the value of food scraps, KPWB teamed up with The Junkluggers of Gainesville VA to start a pilot composting program at Prince William Academy. We are encouraged by the success students have had so far and are eager to establish more programs.

2023 AWARDS

This year, KPWB was honored to have our efforts recognized by the community. For the second year in a row, KPWB was selected for the 2023 Best of Woodbridge Award: Non-Profit Organization Category by the Woodbridge Award Program. KPWB also received the 2023 Agnes L. Colgan Award: Arts and Education from the PW Chamber of Commerce. Lastly, the Town of Dumfries awarded KPWB with an Earth Day Proclamation.



VOLUNTEER TODAY

Prince William County benefits from the hundreds of KPWB volunteers each year, and our volunteers benefit as well! Volunteers lead community cleanups, participate in beautification projects, support our booths at community events, assist in the office and with our TRENZ bag collection, and much more. Whether you're an individual, organization, business or partner, we can help match you to the perfect volunteer opportunity!

KPWB has both one-time and ongoing opportunities available year-round. See the full list of programs or register to volunteer with us at kpwb.org.

ADOPT-A-SPOT

LITTER SURVEYING

**STORM DRAIN
LABELING**

BEAUTIFICATION

ADOPT-A-SHELTER

TRENZ RECYCLING

**COMMUNITY
CLEANUPS**

**EDUCATIONAL
OUTREACH**

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