

## Minutes of the May 16, 2017 Meeting of the Greater Wilton Woods Citizens Association

GWCA President Larry Dempsey brought the meeting to order at 7:10 p.m.

The Treasurer's Report was presented. The complete report is available upon request. An additional expense for new signs is not yet reflected in the account.

The guest speaker this evening was Joshua Smith, Environmental Health Supervisor from the Fairfax County Health Department, who spoke about vector borne disease prevention.

The mosquitoes are starting to come out now and will peak in July and August. The type of mosquito we see most frequently here is the Asian tiger mosquito. The most helpful way to control the spread of mosquitoes is to interrupt their life cycle by preventing eggs from hatching and killing the adult insects.

The aquatic phase of the life cycle takes about a week to 10 days. Finding the aquatic habitats around the home and eliminating them is one key to successful prevention. Get rid of standing water in containers to kill the eggs and pupae. Once the mosquitoes are adults, they are harder to exterminate. Mr. Smith advised everyone to check their yards weekly to eliminate larval habitats by flipping over or discarding containers, and emptying water from downspout extensions. When the water can't be eliminated (such as in long downspout extensions), use a larvicide such as mosquito "dunks," which contain a microbial insecticide. You may also choose to use a barrier treatment on vegetation as Asian tiger mosquitoes tend to rest in plants and shrubs. It was noted that these barrier treatments can also kill bees, so you must use caution when applying. Other methods that can be used to prevent mosquito bites is to keep the house closed and to make sure screens are repaired when torn.

Diseases borne by mosquitoes include West Nile virus, which is passed mainly between birds and mosquitoes, but can be spread to other animals and humans. In humans, the symptoms are usually mild, but some cases can be more severe and can even cause encephalitis or meningitis.

The Zika virus is also transmitted by mosquito bite, but can also be passed from mother to fetus, by blood transfusions and by unprotected sex. Symptoms include fever, rash, joint pain and conjunctivitis. Like some individuals infected with West Nile virus, many will not have symptoms. The onset is within two weeks of exposure. There is no vaccination available. Zika causes birth defects (microcephaly) and there are reports of it causing Guillain-Barré syndrome.

Ticks are also a source of disease. To keep the tick population down in your garden, cut your grass short and discourage deer. If your garden is next to woods, you can install a 3 foot wide gravel barrier, which will deter ticks from crossing from the woods to your garden. Pesticides may be used, but they can kill beneficial insects, too.

The blacklegged or deer tick can transmit Lyme disease. At this time of year, the ticks are in their nymphal stage. Adult ticks will be found in the fall. Symptoms for Lyme disease can appear within a month of being bitten and include a bulls-eye skin rash and possibly fever, chills, fatigue, and headaches.

Another virus spread by the blacklegged tick is the lesser-known Powassan virus, related to West Nile virus. There are about 7 cases a year in the United States (mostly in the New England and Great Lakes region). There has been one case in Virginia. The symptoms, like Lyme disease, are fever, chills, and headache, but often there are not any symptoms. Long-term neurologic problems may occur. There is no treatment or vaccine.

When you are planning a trip into a Zika area, pack to prevent – mosquito net, mosquito repellent, and mosquito repellent clothes are all helpful. Stay indoors to avoid bites and avoid getting bitten by mosquitoes for three weeks after you get home to prevent the local mosquito population from becoming infected. The Center for Disease Control's website (<https://wwwnc.cdc.gov/travel>) offers information about vaccines.

To prevent tick and mosquito bites, wear long-sleeved shirts, long pants, socks and shoes when outdoors. Clothes should be loose-fitting to prevent mosquitos from biting through the clothing. Apply repellent to your clothes, shoes, and gear. You may also wear clothing treated with repellent. When you come in from being outside, do a "tick check" of your entire

body. Taking a bath or shower will wash off some ticks. If you suspect that there may be some in your clothing, put dry clothes into the dryer on high for 10 minutes. Wet clothes will take longer. This will kill any ticks.

To remove a tick, grab it as close to the skin as possible with tweezers and pull it off. It is important to try to get the mouth parts out. Then disinfect the site and wash your hands. Save the tick for identification.

In closing, Mr. Smith passed along some facts about Zika:

- It is spread mostly by infected mosquitoes.
- The best way to prevent it is to avoid mosquito bites.
- It is linked to birth defects.
- Pregnant women should not travel to Zika-infested areas.
- Returning travelers can spread Zika.

Mr. Dempsey noted that GWWCA meetings now start at 7 p.m. instead of 7:30.

Directories have been distributed and any suggestions for future directories would be appreciated.

We have 15 new signs. Seven are currently placed at strategic spot around the GWWCA area to remind members of our meetings. The other 8 signs will be placed when we get permission from property owners.

Suggestions were solicited for future speakers or topics.

Fairfax County will be celebrating its 275<sup>th</sup> anniversary. Browse the website <http://www.fxva.com/275/> for the many events the county has planned to commemorate the occasion.

Three members volunteered to have a Free Little Library on their property. According to the County Zoning Board, there are some restrictions as to location and size of the libraries. The cost would be about \$300 per location.

Mr. Dempsey attended a meeting of the Richmond Highway Embark initiative. This program is a project to improve Route 1 transportation with features such as bus rapid transit (maybe by 2028, but no budget) and an extension of the Yellow Line to Hybla Valley in the 2040-50 timeframe. Route 1 will be widened by VDOT from Alexandria to Woodbridge. There is no intention to widen North Kings Highway. There will be a Penn Daw area meeting in July or August and when the date has been determined, Mr. Dempsey will let everyone know. The Penn Daw fire station will be updated and expanded. Final adoption of the Embark transportation plan is scheduled for March 2018.

FCDOT is in the process of transitioning the School Street realignment project to conceptual design. Contrary to prior plans, there will be full left and right turns in and out of School Street.

Four crimes were reported in the GWWCA area between March 21 and May 11.

Send an email to [GWWCA.President@gmail.com](mailto:GWWCA.President@gmail.com) for questions about issues and events in the Greater Wilton Woods area.

The next meeting will be on Tuesday, September 19. Delegate Mark Sickles will be the guest speaker.

The meeting was adjourned at 8:15 p.m.