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the BRADDOCK BEACON

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HOLIDAY MESSAGE FROM SUPERVISOR COOK

Whatever your traditions, December is a time of celebration, goodwill and optimism. This year, with our Community Engagement Initiative, people are rediscovering their communities, connecting with their neighbors, and devoting their time, energy and talents to making their neighborhoods better places to live.

In this season of good will, let's remember that our communities are for everyone. We need to reach out to all of our neighbors, regardless of their race, national origin, age, wealth, or status. Each person in our community can contribute to a stronger neighborhood. Let's make an extra effort to reach out to those neighbors with backgrounds different from our own. We will grow as individuals as we broaden our perspectives, and our communities will become stronger as more people feel they belong and are appreciated.

This is also the season of giving a helping hand to those most in need. Consider taking some time to volunteer at a soup kitchen, to help staff a hypothermia program for the homeless, to teach a child with special needs, or to help an elderly or disabled neighbor rake leaves or shovel snow.

In that vein, I am working to redirect our limited county resources to those most in need. Last month, the Board agreed to study my proposal to transfer \$2 million, currently used for housing programs that subsidize middle class rent in government-owned housing, to the Community Services

Board (CSB). The CSB would use these funds to house those most in need – those with physical and intellectual disabilities, mental illness or substance abuse. Stable housing is the first step toward recovery and resilience. Currently, the CSB has to use scarce treatment funds to house our most vulnerable neighbors. By redirecting housing funds to those most in need, treatment funds will become available to help our most vulnerable populations lead more fulfilling lives.

We are in difficult times, but in this joyous season let us focus on the many gifts we do have. We can work together to build stronger connections with our neighbors, strengthen our communities and help those most in need. Peace on Earth, good will to all. Happy holidays.



Supervisor John C. Cook

IMPORTANT TRAFFIC ADVISORY ON PAGE 6

Lake Braddock Women's Cross Country Team Wins State Championship Braddock District High Schools Dominate Post-Sea- son Football

I recognized both groups formally at the December 7th Board Meeting but I wanted to congratulate both these groups again.

The girl's cross-country team from Lake Braddock Secondary School took the Virginia AAA State Championship on November 14th, led by freshman Sophie Chase and senior Liana Epstein.

Of the four high schools in the Northern Region Semi-Final game, three, Robinson, Lake Braddock and Woodson, were from the Braddock District. The Championship game was played between Lake Braddock and Woodson, with Lake Braddock winning. Lake Braddock then beat Battlefield and is now heading to States.



Fire Station #23 with their calzones and chili at Taste of Braddock, held on Thursday, December 3. Check page seven for more pictures from Taste of Braddock

SUPERVISOR COOK IN THE COMMUNITY

On November 1st, Supervisor Cook attended the dedication of a new building at the Trinity Christian School.

On November 5th, Supervisor Cook attended a community meeting in Canterbury Woods to discuss zoning and law enforcement issues.

On November 7th, Supervisor Cook was an honored VIP at the re-dedication ceremony for Woodson High School.

Also on November 7th, Supervisor Cook attended an Open House at the Little River Glen Senior Center.

On November 11th, Supervisor Cook attended a solemn Veteran's Day Remembrance Ceremony at the Fairfax War Memorial on the lawn of the old Fairfax Courthouse.

On November 12th, Supervisor Cook hosted his third Constituent Day at North Springfield Elementary School. Many issues, such as commercial parking restrictions and budget shortfalls, were

addressed. He also highlighted his Community Engagement Initiative as well as the upcoming Leadership Institute and Neighborhood College.

On November 17th, Supervisor Cook attended the Employee of the Year award ceremony, hosted by the Fairfax Area Disability Services Board.

On November 18th, Supervisor Cook held an open meeting at the Sprague Center regarding the parking issues many of his constituents face in the Wakefield Chapel area. It was a lively event where many concerns were voiced and will be taken into consideration by the Supervisor and his staff.

On November 21st, Supervisor Cook was an honored guest at the Jewish Community Center's annual gala, held at the Westfield's Marriot in Chantilly.

Supervisor Cook attended two 2011 Budget Dialogue Sessions. One was at Lake Braddock SS, on December 2nd, and the other was at Kings Park Library

on November 14th.

December 3rd was the date for the annual Taste of Braddock holiday event. This year over 25 restaurants participated and donated samples of their finest cuisine. The attendance was great, as usual, and Supervisor Cook enjoyed meeting and greeting residents of the wonderful Braddock District.

On December 4th, Supervisor Cook attended, with two of his daughters, the Kings Park Civic Association's annual Children's Holiday Party.

Throughout the month, Supervisor Cook was involved in a number of subcommittee meetings with the Board of Supervisors. Visit www.fairfaxcounty.gov and follow the link to the Board of Supervisors for additional information. Also, be aware that beginning in the New Year, Board meetings will be moving from Mondays to Tuesdays. As always, these meetings are open to the public and also are streamed live on channel 16.

SUPERVISOR COOK SPEAKS TO NEWLY ENACTED COMMERCIAL PARKING BAN ON RESIDENTIAL STREETS

On December 7th, the Board of Supervisors passed a countywide commercial parking ordinance.

The former ordinance banned parking on residential streets by exceptionally large vehicles like tractor trailers and dump trucks. The new ordinance extends that prohibition to vehicles with the following characteristics: More than 21 feet long (which could include some extended-cab pick-up trucks) or more than 8 feet high (including accessories such as ladders).

I voted in opposition and would like to explain why. Many of the vehicles to be

forced off the street with this new law are vans and pick-up trucks owned by self-employed plumbers, electricians, handymen and small contractors. Unless they own a private driveway, these already struggling business people could now have to pay as much as \$130 a month to park somewhere else. Furthermore, County staff could not identify sufficient existing commercial parking lots to hold these vehicles. So where will they go?

Many constituents raised concerns that the parking of commercial vehicles can be a safety hazard in some neighborhoods. I

certainly understand this, and I believe we should regulate commercial parking on a street or neighborhood basis in those areas where there are serious concerns. I worry that a county-wide approach will be too broad. I worry that a one-size-fits-all, county-wide approach to what is a problem in only parts of the County may impose an expensive, unnecessary burden on homeowners and business people.

I appreciate everyone who reached out to my office and offered their comments. Thank you, and please stay in touch.

Appointments to Boards, Authorities and Commissions

Recently Appointed: Elizabeth d'Alelio to the Advisory Social Services Board

Theo Vaughn to the Criminal Justice Advisory Board

BECOME AN ACTIVE PARTNER IN YOUR COMMUNITY THROUGH NEIGHBORHOOD COLLEGE AND THE LEADERSHIP INSTITUTE

The Braddock District Community Engagement Initiative seeks to foster stronger connections between people and their communities, strengthen our neighborhoods and help improve the quality of life in the Braddock District.

To the right, you will find information on two programs that will teach you how to step forward and make a difference in your community. If you would like to sign up and join us for one or both of these educational opportunities or are just looking for more information, please contact my office at 703-425-9300 or braddock@fairfaxcounty.gov.

Community Engagement Tip of the Month

Volunteer Solutions has numerous opportunities to help older adults or adults with disabilities who live within minutes of your home. Here's just a sample:

- * Transportation to medical appointments
- * Social visits
- * Grocery shopping
- * Meals on Wheels delivery
- * Household tasks

Mileage reimbursement and flexible volunteer hours are available.

Call 703-324-5406, e-mail DFSAAAvolunteer@fairfaxcounty.gov or visit www.fairfaxcounty.gov/aaa/vol_opps_fcn.htm. Volunteer Solutions is a program of the Department of Family Services' Division of Adult and Aging Services.

Braddock Leadership Institute - Saturday, January 23, 2010

Ideal for those on boards or considering community leadership. Students will learn:

- Their role in creating a "thriving community" and responsibilities of volunteering and board leadership
- Leadership skills, including running successful meetings, volunteer recruitment and cultural competency
- Fiduciary responsibilities of organizational leadership, e.g., how to read financials and how to be financially viable in a down economy

Participants also will have the opportunity to engage with other students to discuss ideas for a community action plan for their home owner's association, civic association or community-based organization.

Braddock Neighborhood college - Two sessions: February-March and April-May

Ideal for those who want to make a difference but aren't sure where to start. Graduates use this program to help their neighbors, become involved in local issues, take on leadership roles in their communities and volunteer. Students:

- Learn about local government; meet elected officials and leaders
- Learn what makes Braddock unique and meet community-based organizations
- See how to build partnerships and consensus
- Learn effective participation and leadership skills, including engaging diverse communities

Students must be able to attend and participate in scheduled classes (held once a week, evenings, for six weeks) and activities.

BRADDOCK NEIGHBORHOOD NEWS: GEORGE BRAUNSTEIN, COMMUNITY SERVICES BOARD EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Last month, Braddock Neighborhood News aired an interview with David Ellis, the Neighborhood Services Coordinator for the County Executive, and Ken Disselkoen, the Director of the Department of Systems Management for Human Services.

The interview supported the launch of Supervisor Cook's Community Engagement Initiative in Braddock District.

Supervisor Cook and his guests discussed both changing the nature of the relationship between citizen and local government away from a government-centric model, shifting instead towards using the government as a

facilitator, and how the upcoming Leadership Conference and Neighborhood College can help community leaders to tackle these challenges in their own neighborhoods.

In this month's edition, Supervisor Cook interviews George Braunstein, Executive Director of the Community Services Board. We learn about our neighbors living with intellectual disabilities, mental illness, and substance abuse as well as the difficulties faced by those who may be living without a home during this holiday season.

Helping these neighbors is a collaborative effort between government, non-profit

agencies, and neighbors willing to offer a helping hand. Supervisor Cook hopes you can take some time to tune in this month to learn more about the significant and complex challenges these neighbors face and what role we – as their neighbors – can play in helping them.

Braddock Neighborhood News airs on Fridays and Sundays at 5 p.m. and Wednesdays at 7 p.m. on Channel 16 and can also be viewed online, 24 hours a day, at <http://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/cable/channel16/vod.htm>

VDOT PREPARED TO HANDLE WINTER WEATHER THIS COMING SEASON

As the 2009-2010 winter season approaches, emergency response, including snow and ice removal operations, continues unchanged as a core service of the Virginia Department of Transportation (VDOT). VDOT will be responsible for clearing snow and ice for 58,000 miles of state-maintained roads. While various state programs are having their budgets cut, the



snow-removal services will be untouched. With a snow-removal budget of \$79.6 million, VDOT's preparations ensure that all state-maintained roads will remain safe during the 2009-2010 winter season. VDOT has also budgeted \$14.1 million for snow and ice removal on interstate and primary roads maintained through its interstate maintenance contracts. From the

state's funding, \$28 million will be allotted for Northern Virginia roads.

VDOT's goal is to have all roads cleared no later than 48 hours after a storm ends. To accomplish this, VDOT has 2,314 pieces of snow removal equipment, 3,146 crew members, 62,000 tons of sand and 239,000 tons of salt available to keep roads clear.

In addition, a variety of chemicals are

put onto the roads before a storm to prevent icing. In case of a storm, roads in front of major public facilities (such as hospitals, fire stations, schools, etc.) are cleared with priority.

VDOT has a variety of

information sources for road condition updates. The 511 traveler-information service gives drivers the most up-to-date data available about weather, construction or accidents that may affect travel. Updates can be received by calling 511 from any landline or wireless phone or by going online to www.511virginia.org.

COUNTY INCREASES TRANSPARENCY WITH NEW WEBSITE

Many citizens are interested in the findings of audit reports or in simply knowing what efforts the county has undertaken to police itself. For members of the Braddock District Citizens Budget Review Committee, it was often a complicated and confusing process.

The County is now moving forward and providing residents with more financial transparency; an effort to make comprehensive, unfiltered information available to everyone, enabling a clear view of the government's operations and how tax dollars are spent.

While the county has provided financial information online for years, consolidating it on a single web page is the first step toward making it easier for citizens to get information on a variety of topics. You will find financial reports, budgets, annual audits, procurement contracts and staff compensation plans.

The county is in the first phases of a multi-year effort to install an Enterprise Resource Planning system that will provide an extensive financial database and make possible access to transaction level data.

The new page is www.fairfaxcounty.gov/finance/transparency.

GET TO KNOW NORTHERN VIRGINIA COMMUNITY COLLEGE

Most residents of Braddock District are aware of our Annandale neighbor on Little River Turnpike, and immediate neighbors experience daily, the continuing growth at Northern Virginia Community College. Working to improve "town/gown" relationships will remain a high priority goal for the Braddock office. However, while meeting on those issues with school officials, we have come to learn quite a bit about NVCC and would like to share that information with you.

With over 72,500 students projected to be enrolled annually in credit courses during the 2009-10 school year, NVCC is the second largest community college in the

United States; one of the 50 largest higher education institutions in the U.S. and the largest in the Commonwealth of Virginia. It is one of the most diverse colleges in the U.S. with students representing over 150 nationalities. Its ten campuses located across Northern Virginia offer 77 two-year degree programs (A.A., A.S., A.A.A., and A.A.S.), 24 certificate programs and 64 career studies certificate programs.

On average, one out of every five graduates from a Northern Virginia region public high school attends NVCC. Students are offered guaranteed admission to 33 public four-year colleges and universities and numerous private institutions when

they meet the requirements of a written agreement between NVCC and that school.

Less well-known is the fact that NVCC provides Front Line Training to 80 percent of our first responders in areas such as Law Enforcement, Fire Administration, Environmental Safety, Cyber Security, Power Grid Security, Emergency Response Management, Food Safety and HazMat training.

Fairfax County, along with eight other jurisdictions makes a contribution every year for the continued construction and maintenance of various capital projects on NVCC campuses.

REAL ESTATE TAX RELIEF FOR SENIORS AND CITIZENS WITH DISABILITIES

Fairfax County provides real estate tax relief and car tax relief to citizens who are either 65 or older, or permanently and totally disabled, and meet the income and asset eligibility requirements. Qualified taxpayers may also be eligible for rent relief.

Returning applicants must file between January 1 and April 1 of the calendar year in which relief is sought, although some exceptions may be available. Forget to apply for 2008? Applications are still being accepted for 2008 relief based on hardship and for first-time filers through December 31, 2009.

For eligibility requirements check the following site: http://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/dta/taxrelief_home.htm.

In general, gross income may not exceed \$72,000 and assets other than a home and car may not exceed \$340,000.

For an application, call 703-222-8234 between 8:00 a.m. and 4:30 p.m. weekdays or request by e-mail to taxrelief@fairfaxcounty.gov or download the tax relief application from the website. Those with hearing impairments may call 703-222-7594.

SEASON'S GREETINGS FROM TESSIE WILSON, BRADDOCK DISTRICT SCHOOL BOARD REPRESENTATIVE

This month's column will be rather short. As we get ready for winter break, I think all of us are ready for some special time with our families and friends. For a few weeks, I hope we can all put aside our concerns over the budget and other issues and recognize the most important things in our lives – and that is our families and relationships with others.

I wish all of you a happy and safe holiday season.

And as I sit here and write this, I am listening to a weather forecast reminding me we may be getting snow soon (it is December!). This is just a reminder for all parents to sign up for Keep in Touch to receive up to the minute information on school closings and delays. With our new provider, there should no longer be a delay in getting messages in a timely manner. And information will also be available on the FCPS web site.



TYSONS SHOPPERS WILL HAVE REAL-TIME TRAFFIC AND TRANSIT INFORMATION

Shoppers at Tysons Corner Center can check out how traffic is moving before leaving the mall thanks to real-time travel information now displayed on screens near mall exits. The Virginia Department of Transportation (VDOT) installed the screens to arm travelers with the latest traffic and transit information while construction is under way on the Beltway HOT (high occupancy toll) Lanes and rail to Dulles.

Five 50-inch plasma television screens are strategically placed throughout the shopping center to provide shoppers with traffic conditions, traffic video, bus routes and schedules and construction-related lane closures.

“Now shoppers can make informed decisions before leaving the mall,” said VDOT operations engineer J.D. Schneeberger. “For example, if there’s a major delay on Route 7 a shopper might decide to stay and get dinner rather than sit in traffic. It’s one more tool to help motorists during the road

and rail construction.”

The screens are part of the Virginia Megaprojects \$21 million transportation management plan to help motorists during construction of the Beltway HOT lanes and Dulles Metrorail. Last month VDOT launched express bus service from Woodbridge to Tysons with half-fares for the first six months; and the Fairfax Connector began free lunchtime bus service on weekdays around Tysons Corner. In fall 2010, the Megaprojects will also sponsor first-time direct bus service from Loudoun County to Tysons Corner. In addition, an employer solution team is working with employers to help set up rideshare and telework programs.

VDOT paid \$400,000 for the software development and installation of the screens. It will cost about \$100,000 a year to maintain them.

POLICE LIGHT UP THE HOLIDAYS

In an effort to increase visibility and deter larcenies from autos and other crimes over the hectic holiday shopping season, police cars in parts of the West Springfield Police district will patrol neighborhoods with their blue emergency lights on.

Officers will be in the flashing light mode from Saturday, December 5 through Saturday, January 2, 2010.

In an attempt to stem further thefts frequently associated with the holiday season, officers remind residents to secure their valuables and not to leave cell phones, GPS units, laptop computers, and other items of value unattended in vehicles.

Police also encourage motorists to stay alert on roadways across the county this holiday season and to report suspected impaired drivers to 703-691-2131. For more information on Fairfax County holiday public safety efforts, go to www.fairfax-county.police/gov.

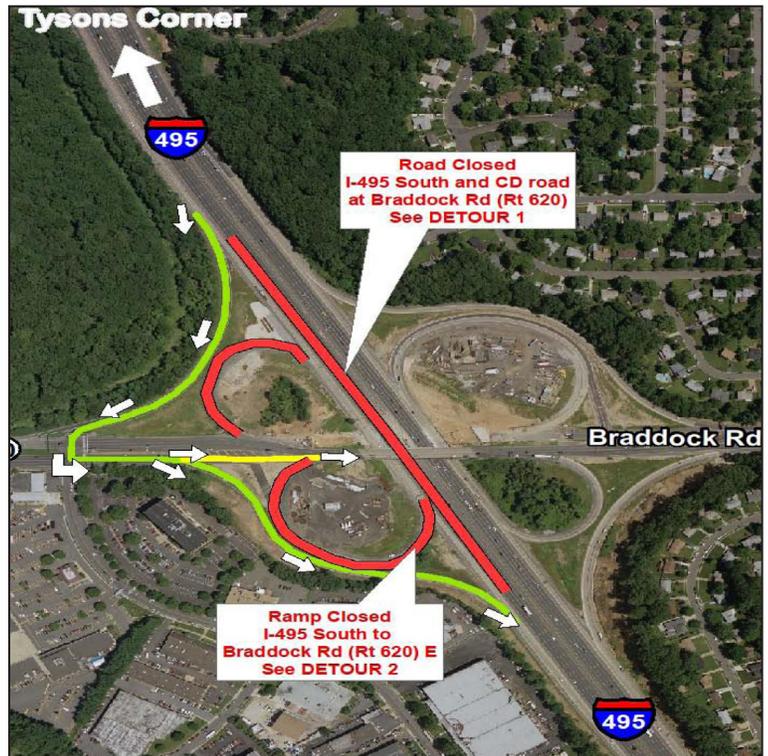
MAJOR TRAFFIC IMPACTS EXPECTED AT BELTWAY AND BRADDOCK ROAD INTERCHANGE DURING MONTH OF DECEMBER

The Virginia Department of Transportation (VDOT) postponed last weekend's scheduled ramp closure at Braddock Road because snow and rain were in the forecast. This closure will be rescheduled for a later date. This work is part of utility and steel installation work at the I-495 and Braddock Road, Exit 54 (Route 620) Interchange as part of the Capital Beltway High Occupancy Toll (HOT) Lanes project.

Weather permitting; the updated schedule is as follows:

I-495 south at Braddock Road and lanes on I-495 north CLOSED NIGHTLY from 11 p.m. to 5 a.m. Monday, Dec. 7, through Friday morning, Dec. 11, all lanes on I-495 south at Braddock Road and several lanes on I-495 north will close to allow crews to install steel beams for a new bridge over the beltway. Braddock Road exit ramps to I-495 south will also be closed. Detour map to the right.

I-495 north exit ramp to Braddock Road west CLOSED ALL WEEKEND. Beginning 9:30 p.m. Friday, Dec. 11 through 5 a.m. Monday, Dec. 14, the exit ramp from I-495 north to Braddock Road west will be closed install a new waterline. You can see a detour map here: http://www.vamegaprojects.com/tasks/sites/default/assets/File/pdf/Detour_Maps/495N_to_620W.pdf



SUPERVISOR COOK ADDRESSES PARKING CONCERNS IN COMMUNITIES SURROUNDING NVCC AND GEORGE MASON

In November, Supervisor Cook spent time with two different communities to address parking issues in their neighborhoods.

Braddock District is unique in that there are two colleges within the district, and with the increase in enrollments over the last few years at both Northern Virginia Community College (NVCC) and George Mason University, there has been a significant increase in parking in the neighborhoods around those schools.

On November 9, he met with residents who live in the area of Braddock Road, Roberts Road and Tapestry Drive. Parking by college students along Roberts and Tapestry has created significant safety and quality of life concerns.

A Residential Permit Parking District (RPPD), applied for by the residents of the single family detached homes along Tapestry, was passed at the Board of Supervisor's December 7th meeting. Those homes were eligible for the district as they are within 2000 feet of a pedestrian

entrance to Mason. We expect students currently parking in the new district will move further down Tapestry. To meet that challenge, Supervisor Cook is working on an amendment to County Code that would permit the expansion of the newly created district.

On November 18, the Supervisor, along with Delegate Vivian Watts and Dana Kauffman of NVCC, met with residents of the communities along Wakefield Chapel Road and adjacent to NVCC. The primary point of concern is the number of students who are choosing to park in the surrounding neighborhoods rather than on campus, where there appears to be ample parking.

Residents of the area of Holborn and Mynor would like to see the pedestrian entrance to the campus at Mynor closed off because students park on their streets and then walk to campus. NVCC has agreed to close the entrance if the community agreed. To gauge community support, Supervisor Cook and his staff worked with several

residents of Holborn to devise a plan to survey the residents within 1500 feet of the pedestrian entrance at Mynor. If 60 percent of those residents approve, the fence will be built. We are currently awaiting the results of that survey.

The Supervisor would like to meet with all parties on a regular basis, so he has created the Braddock NVCC Forum, based on the same model as the Braddock Mason Forum, in which communities adjacent to Mason regularly meet with elected officials and representatives of the university. He sees this as an opportunity to facilitate communication between area residents and NVCC, which can be positive and productive for all involved.

If you are interested in working on a parking issue in your neighborhood, please contact our office at 703-425-9300 or braddock@fairfaxcounty.gov

PICTURES FROM TASTE OF BRADDOCK 2009. HAPPY HOLIDAYS!



KEEP SAFETY IN MIND WITH YOUR HOLIDAY LIGHTS

The Northern Virginia Electric Cooperative recently issued some suggestions that serve as excellent reminders for all of us who put up extra lighting during the holiday season:

- Because hot bulbs can ignite dry tree branches, keep cut Christmas trees well watered.
- Miniature incandescent lights and light-emitting diodes (LED) use much less energy than traditional lights. Consequently, it's unlikely they will become hot enough to catch trees on fire or burn fingers.
- Be sure smoke detectors have new batteries and are working properly.
- Before attaching lights, check for frayed wires, damaged sockets, or cracked insulation. If any defects are found, replace the entire light set.
- To minimize fire and shock danger, make sure a bulb is in each socket. If a bulb burns out, leave it in and unplug the light set. Then replace the bulb.
- Don't connect more than three light strings. Cords can overheat and start a fire.
- Keep indoor extension cords and light strings away from water.
- Always unplug holiday lights before going to bed or leaving the house.

HOLIDAY RECYCLING TIPS

Holiday activities can generate a lot of extra trash. Save time, money and resources by trying some of these ideas:

Gifts and Wrapping

Use less paper and recycle what you do use. Try wrapping gifts in fabric, newspaper or just a bow. Recycle paper gift wrap with mixed paper at the curb or at one of the county's drop-off centers (<http://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/dpwes/recycling/doclst.htm>).

After the Holidays: Recycle your Christmas Tree

During the first two weeks of January, Christmas trees less than eight feet in length will be picked up for recycling. Residents with county collection service should place their trees at the curb by 6 a.m. on the regular collection day. Residents with private service should contact their collector for a Christmas tree set-out schedule.

Please make sure that trees are free of lights, stands, ornaments, tinsel and plastic bags. Place your natural tree next to but separate from regular trash. Artificial trees should not be included for recycling.