



The Arlington Forester

Vol. 64, Number 6

Arlington, Virginia

March 2023

Virtual AFCA Meeting—Native Plants and Trees

AFCA invites you to join our monthly Zoom meeting on Wednesday, March 15, at 7 p.m. Susan Graham will give a presentation on native plants and trees for our local gardens. Years ago, Susan converted her yard on N. Galveston St. in Greenbrier from nonnative lawn grass—a biological desert—into a colorful homegrown park of sorts. Her native flowers, shrubs, and other plants not only please the senses but also furnish a rich variety of habitats for birds as well as bees, butterflies, and other pollinators. An expert on our native flora, Susan will offer ideas for their use in your own yard.

To join the meeting, you can participate through Zoom by entering the following URL into your browser between 6:50 and 7 p.m. on Wednesday, March 15: <https://tinyurl.com/3rbkd5rh>. (If you have never used Zoom, you can view a short tutorial at <https://zoom.us/resources> by clicking on Joining & Configuring Audio/Video.) Alternatively, you can dial in to the meeting at 301-715-8592, where you will be prompted to enter meeting number 861 3118 5052 and passcode 336564. You might also be prompted to hit the # sign one or more times. This call-in number will be active starting at 6:50 p.m.

AFCA February 2023 Meeting

On February 15, AFCA President Esther Bowring presided over a virtual AFCA meeting, with more than 45 residents in attendance. Esther announced that the Arlington Forest Home and Garden Tour, suspended for a couple of years due to COVID, will be held again this year on Saturday, May 6 (see the article on page 9). Tricia Freeman, Gloria Mog, and Katherine Roberts have volunteered to organize the tour. The AFCA Annual Picnic will also be held again this year on Saturday, May 17, at the Lubber Run Pavilion. Rob Janson has volunteered again to organize the event, but he will need help carrying supplies to and from the pavilion. The Arlington Forest Yard Sale will be held on Saturday, May 20; Allison Kennett and Char Mahoney have volunteered to organize the event.

Esther announced that she has contacted the county manager for Arlington parks in response to Northside concerns about trail erosion on the access trail into Lubber Run Park from N. 2nd Rd. and N. Columbus St. She also noted that AFCA would need to request a

county traffic study of the traffic circles on N. 2nd St. if Northside residents are concerned about getting stop signs at all four corners of each intersection. Esther noted that La Coop Coffee has now opened in the Arlington Forest Shopping Center where Sense of Place used to be. She also reported that county workers have been going through Greenbrier this month to grind and smooth uneven sidewalks. On behalf of AFCA, Esther thanked Foresters Stephanie Martin, Jim Graham, Nancy Cleeland, Kevyn McNew, Alex Sanders, and Hutch Brown

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AFCA Virtual Meeting 7 p.m. **March 15**, Zoom

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The Arlington Forester is the official publication of the Arlington Forest Citizens Association, Arlington, VA. A nonpartisan, nonsectarian publication serving the residents of Arlington Forest, the *Forester* welcomes articles, newsbits, letters, and photos focusing on noncommercial events or issues specific to our neighborhood. We publish eight times per year (Sep to Nov and Jan to May). The deadline for submissions is the first of the month. Email your submission of up to 400 words—less, if you include a photo—to newsletter@arlingtonforestva.org.

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AFCA Meeting

...from page 1

for joining a group organized by Arlington Regional Master Naturalists to pull invasive English Ivy in Lubber Run Park (see the article on page 3).

Esther spent most of the meeting summarizing the status of Arlington County's Missing Middle Housing Study (renamed Enhanced Housing Options), which would allow property owners to replace single-family homes in neighborhoods like ours with multifamily housing. Since last year, Esther has been part of a group of 16 civic association presidents who met with county board members six times to discuss the initiative. Thanks in part to them, the board has voted to eliminate the option of allowing multifamily housing with seven to eight units. On January 25, the board voted to approve a request to advertise public hearings in March on proposed amendments to the General Land Use Plan and Arlington County Zoning Ordinance. The most recent revisions to the proposed amendments—contained in a 122-page county document released on January 21—set the final sideboards for what the board can approve. The proposed amendments contain a complex set of 12 interrelated options and suboptions (see the articles on pages 4-5). You can find an online county summary of the proposed amendments at <https://tinyurl.com/bdz6m454>.

On March 6, the county will hold a public hearing on the proposed amendments, followed on March 18 by another hearing and a final county board vote. According to board member Christian Dorsey, the amendments will take immediate effect. The county invited public input on the proposed amendments (including a link to the actual amendment texts) through an online survey at <https://publicinput.com/t5806>. Esther urged residents to take the survey, and she suggested responses for each option. For example, for option 1A (Uses), she recommended no multifamily housing larger than duplexes in residential zones R-5 and R-6 (including Arlington Forest); and for option 6A (Landscaping), she suggested requiring developers of multifamily housing to plant one shade tree per housing unit.

Faces of the Forest:

Tell Us About Someone You Know!

With well over 800 households, Arlington Forest has residents from all walks of life. Tell us about a Forester you know! Do it in an interview or write a story (with your subject's permission, of course)—or tell us about someone from the past. Send your writeup of 400 words or less with a photo (if possible) to Hutch Brown at newsletter@arlingtonforestva.org. Questions? Email me or text/call 703-855-1732.

Keeping Invasives Out of Lubber Run Park

By Hutch Brown

On January 28, about 10 volunteers from across Arlington met in Lubber Run Park to pull English ivy, an invasive plant that has overrun many natural areas. The volunteer group was organized by Stephanie Martin of Greenbrier through the Arlington Regional Master Naturalists (ARMN) program. Stephanie is the ARMN steward for the 31-acre park, a neighborhood gem used and enjoyed by many Foresters. She started by giving us the backstory. In 2001, Foresters led by Greenbrier's Paul Kovenock organized an invasive plant removal project in Lubber Run Park. They began by cutting English ivy vines and pulling them away from the bases of trees. In 2005, AFCA obtained a grant from Arlington's Neighborhood Conservation Program for a 5-year project to work with neighboring homeowners and neighborhood volunteers to control English ivy, lesser celandine, garlic mustard, and other invasive plants in Lubber Run Park. As a result, native wildflowers like bloodroot have reappeared in the park. In 2012, field botanists hired by the county identified 181 different species of native plants in our restored Lubber Run woodland. Through the ARMN program, the county continues to recognize and use the Lubber Run initiative as a model for other parks and neighborhoods.

Jim Graham of Greenbrier was one of the January volunteers. For years, Jim has worked on his own to check Lubber Run Park for invasives, pulling them out and noting where herbicidal spraying by the county was needed, particularly for English ivy and lesser celandine. By 2022, the monitoring task had become too great for a single unsung volunteer, so ARMN—with county support—began bringing in a whole group of volunteers led by Stephanie, with Jim's help. The January group included several Foresters in addition to Jim and Stephanie—Nancy Cleeland, Kevyn McNew, Alex Sanders, and me. The group focused on pulling English ivy, which spreads into the park from adjoining yards. Sprigs of ivy can break off and wash or blow downhill, then root in the park, especially near fallen trees, which shelter the sprigs and supply them with fertile soils from rotting logs. English ivy is a prolific grower, rapidly forming carpets that smother everything else, then growing up trees and killing them as well.



The volunteers spread out across part of the hillside below Greenbrier, with Jim at the top because he knows the boundary line between private and public land. In winter, dead leaves carpet the ground, so we looked for the telltale evergreen leaves of English ivy poking through—and they were far more common than I had expected. We brushed away the dead leaves to expose the vines, then pulled them up by gloved hand. In spots, I used my trowel to dig up a clump. The worst concentrations were in tangles of fallen trees and branches, often mixed in with greenbrier, a native vine with nasty thorns. In the worst places, Jim made a note for the county to come in and spray. We disposed of the vines in plastic bags left for county trash pickup or else by draping them over branches to die. In almost 2 hours, we cleared only a fraction of the park, so Stephanie has planned more events for pulling English ivy, beginning with a morning session on February 25. Volunteers are always welcome! Anyone interested can watch for Stephanie's listserv notification; you can also check the ARMN calendar of volunteer events online at Arlington Regional Master Naturalists.

Missing Middle Update: Key Options

The article is based on a presentation by AFCA President Esther Bowring at the AFCA meeting on February 15.

In 2019, Arlington County launched a Missing Middle Housing Study on replacing single-family homes in neighborhoods like ours with multifamily housing. On January 25, the Arlington County Board voted to advertise the corresponding changes to the General Land Use Plan and Arlington County Zoning Ordinance, with public hearings scheduled for March. At the final hearing, the board will vote on allowing multifamily housing in all of Arlington's single-family neighborhoods, including Arlington Forest. The "expanded housing options" most affecting our neighborhood are outlined here.

Expanded Options

Options 1A and 2A would allow housing with up to six units anywhere in Arlington Forest. Option 2B would restrict five- and six-unit housing, respectively, to lots of 9,000 and 10,000 square feet or greater in size. Options 2A-2E would allow property owners to subdivide their properties for building side-by-side duplexes or three-unit townhouses.

Option 4A would restrict maximum lot coverage (impervious surfaces) for multifamily housing to the same maximum coverage as for single-family homes. Option 4B would shift the lot coverage allowed (an additional 5 percent) for a single-family garage to the coverage allowed for parking spaces, walkways, and the like on a multifamily lot. However, the maximum main building footprint on any lot in our neighborhood would remain 30 percent of a 6,000-square-foot lot (2,520 square feet).

Option 7A would allow up to 58 permits per year across Arlington for multifamily housing construction, with option 7C sunseting the cap in 2028; option 7B would set no cap on the number of permits.

Proximity to Transit

Options 2C-2E would restrict larger multifamily housing to lots near public transit. For example, option 2C would allow housing with up to six units on lots 6,000 square feet in size (the minimum for our neighborhood) within a $\frac{3}{4}$ -mile radius of Metro or a $\frac{1}{4}$ -mile radius of a stop on the Primary Transit Network, which includes Arlington Blvd., N. Henderson Rd., and N. Carlin Springs Rd. Almost all of Arlington Forest would qualify for five- and six-unit housing.

By contrast, option 2E would restrict such housing to an area within a $\frac{3}{4}$ -mile radius of Metro, with no mention of the Primary Transit Network. Only the northernmost blocks of Northside and Greenbrier would qualify.

Option 5 applies to onsite parking spaces on multifamily housing near stops on the Primary Transit Network, including almost all of Arlington Forest.

Option 5A would require only half a parking space per housing unit—except for culdesacs, where one full parking space per unit would be required; option 5C would require no onsite parking spaces anywhere. Up to two onsite parking spaces (four on corner lots) would be allowed between the main multifamily building and the street.

Gross Floor Area

Option 11A would limit the gross floor area for multifamily housing to 4,800, 6,000, and 7,200 square feet, respectively, for a duplex, triplex, and fourplex; housing with five or six units would be limited to 8,000 square feet or more. Option 11B would limit the gross floor area for a side-by-side duplex to 5,000 square feet and for a three-unit townhouse to 7,500 square feet, with no limits for other multifamily housing.

Of course, the maximum building height of 35 feet and the maximum main building footprint of 2,520 square feet in Arlington Forest would effectively limit all housing of any kind to about 7,500 square feet of floor area over three floors (not counting the basement). The largest single-family homes recently advertised for sale in Arlington had 6,000 to 8,000 square feet of floor area.



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Missing Middle: What About the Trees?

By Hutch Brown

Arlington County's proposal to change the Arlington County Zoning Ordinance for "expanded housing options" in neighborhoods like ours would affect tree-planting requirements on lots redeveloped for multifamily housing. The county proposal is for "a minimum of up to four shade trees for sites with 2-4 dwelling units" (including trees left in place) and "a minimum of up to eight shade trees for sites [with] 5-6 dwelling units." However, "a minimum of up to" could mean any number from one to four or eight trees (depending on number of units), and a developer would likely choose the lowest number (one) to save costs.

The Arlington Code (§61.10) already sets minimum tree-planting standards for developers based on the Chesapeake Bay Protection Ordinance. For single-family neighborhoods like ours (with up to 10 housing units per acre), the requirement is 20 percent canopy tree coverage in 20 years (or about two shade trees on a 6,000-square-foot lot). If every home on the block were converted to a duplex (with 11 to 20 housing units per acre), the requirement would fall to 15 percent; for larger multifamily housing (with more than 20 units per acre), the requirement would fall to 10 percent. Over time, as a neighborhood converted to multifamily



housing, the tree-planting requirement for developers could be cut in half.

The county could still reword its confusing "minimum of up to" proposal, for example by requiring one shade tree planted per unit of new middle housing (which would equal or exceed the county-required minimum). However, trees planted by developers can die, and property owners might not replace them or might even remove live trees. Tree-planting requirements for developers are not necessarily a good predictor of tree canopy coverage over time.

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"Only One Regret," Said an Original Owner

By Chris Scheer



The story, based on excerpts from the March 1990 Arlington Forester, is adapted from John Naland's 2015 edition of History of the Arlington Forest Community (pages 24-25) on the AFCA website.

Miriam Herr liked the solid red-brick house being built on N. Wakefield St. near N. 2nd St. in spring 1941, but she had just moved to the "big city" (Washington, DC) from Chambersburg, PA, and she wasn't sure she wanted to live "so far out in the country." Husband John was working for the Navy in Washington while his new wife Miriam explored housing possibilities during the day. He knew a bargain when he saw one, quickly realizing, as the salesman discussed the \$5,990 asking price for a new Arlington Forest home, that he could live more cheaply in his own home than by contending with apartment rents approaching \$75 a month. "Ours was the last house being built in the development just then," John recalled. "The salesman said the first person that put \$200 down would get it." "We needed a little time to think it over," said Miriam. "When we got back to the house, another couple was looking it over," said John. "I found the salesman and gave him my check. We moved in in June."

Son James was a few months old when they moved in. He later went to Barrett Elementary School and Wakefield High School. One of his favorite memories was "hanging out at Cohen's Deli" in the "old" Arlington Forest Shopping Center—buying candy and snacks, reading comic books, and eating "those great subs." Miriam and John recalled the "old" shopping center wistfully

too. "We could walk there easily and find everything we needed for our daily shopping," said Miriam. "There was a great A&P grocery, a drug store, hardware store, gas station, bakery—even a barbershop. I wish we still had them!"

The shopping center was part of the Forest's appeal to the Herrs, along with the solid construction of the houses, the convenient location of Barrett, and the relatively easy commute to work in Washington for John. Miriam, too, appreciated the Forest's access to the "big city." John remembered the big victory gardens that filled his backyard during the 1940s. "It seemed like our whole backyard was filled with tomatoes, beans, asparagus, peas, and chard. Everybody had a big garden then, of course—our trees were young and the ground got plenty of sun." Son Jim remembers growing up in a neighborhood with "over 20" kids his age.

One of the Herrs' few regrets almost 40 years later was not knowing "every neighbor" like they used to. "We don't have young children and other things in common with many of our neighbors," said Miriam. "And life is different now. Mothers work and the kids are in day care, so you don't see a lot of folks out during the day." She and John agreed that it was good to see a new generation of young families moving into the Forest and young children playing on the lawns again. "It's like the Forest goes through cycles," said John, "and that's good because these houses have a lot more life left in them." John said his only real regret about the Forest is that he didn't buy two houses when he moved in back in 1941.

La Coop Coffee—Sipping on Success

By Hannah Kennedy

On February 11, La Coop Coffee opened its doors as the newest addition to the Arlington Forest Shopping Center. The petite strip mall is home to businesses large and small, most notably the national chain Outback Steakhouse and the local startup Crystal Thai. Of course, all shops depend on the patronage of neighborhood families. Before officially opening, La Coop served dozens of walk-ins free of charge, giving residents a taste of the coffee from owner Juan Cano's family farm in Guatemala. Most who visited recognized La Coop from the Arlington Forest Farmers Market, the first to welcome the vendor to the area back in 2018. "Seeing all the support ... it's indescribable," Cano said.

Although his shop's menu lacks the usual frappuccinos, cold foams, and synthetic syrups, Cano believes that customers should taste the coffee instead of masking the flavor with pungent ingredients. His conviction stems from a unique understanding of reciprocities within the industry and his own experiences farming coffee beans. "Growing up with a farmer," Cano said, "in this case my dad, you learn what you need the most." Cano often reminisces about his family's farm in Guatemala, where he grew up. Without access to electricity, Cano had no television or videogames as a child; instead, he climbed trees overlooking the land and prepared lunches with his cousins, siblings, and parents. The nearest middle school was a 4-hour walk away through streams, forests, and hills.

In 10th grade, Cano was one of six students to receive a scholarship to attend a boarding school in the city. This education led him to see the exploitation of his hometown due to the local lack of industry knowledge. "Fairtrade, Rainforest Alliance, other certificates of

being organic—all of those companies are in [the United States]," Cano said. "They don't really see what's going on with the farmers." He noted that Fairtrade is really just a "marketing tool" for many companies. "When you talk to people who actually produce the coffee," he added, "and they sell it to companies [associated with] Fairtrade, they are not getting anything." Cano moved back to his village to form a cooperative—farmers joining together to sell their produce. No longer accepting wages undercut by capitalist giants, they set informed and fair prices for their products. "I grew up in a small town where 95 percent of the people ... grew coffee for a living," Cano said. "We were producing the same amount of coffee that a big farm would, so [the cooperative] allowed us to offer our coffee to several companies at a fair price."

After meeting his wife, who traveled to Guatemala on a Peace Corps assignment, Cano followed her to Arlington. He had no money, spoke no English, and was culturally out of his element. After taking night classes at Arlington Public Schools, he began to tutor adults in Spanish at coffee shops in the area. Cano saved for years and studied models for opening his own shop. "Of course, you show losses [when starting out]," Cano said. "But everything that goes towards learning is not a loss. It's an investment." Cano attributes his now-successful businesses to the Arlington community for helping him to realize his dream. He hopes to parlay his experiences into a relationship with locals and other small businesses, introducing residents to his farm-to-table coffee and signature dirty horchata. "I want everybody to feel like we are welcoming," Cano said. "Working with family taught me that you depend on a good group of people in order to succeed."

Common Impersonation Scams

In February, the Arlington County Police Department released an alert summarized here.

Scams use figures of authority and emergency situations to frighten you on the phone. Police department personnel will never contact you to solicit funds or collect fines, and government agencies and businesses will never demand immediate payment in the form of gift cards, cryptocurrency, or digital cash transfers. Any such call is likely a scam.

Jury Duty Scam: Scammers posing as law enforcement call to accuse you of failing to appear for jury duty and demand payment of a fine, often in the form of gift card numbers over the phone. Note: juror summonses are sent only by mail.

Federal Agent Impersonation Scam: Scammers posing as federal law enforcement agents call to extort money or steal your personal identifiable information. For example, they might claim that your name was used to rent a vehicle found to contain drugs, threatening you

with arrest unless you pay a fine over the phone. Or they might ask you to verify your social security number or tell you that your bank account has been compromised and needs resetting.

Injured Family Member Scam: Scammers posing as a family attorney or even a family member call to extort money, claiming that the family member has been injured in a car crash or arrested and needs money for bail. The scammer often pleads for immediate help, claiming to sound different due to trauma from the crash or arrest.

Fraud Crime Prevention Tips: Always be suspicious of unsolicited phone calls, texts, or emails. Be cautious of mimicked telephone numbers and e-mail addresses. Never use a phone number given by the caller to verify their credibility. Never give money or personal information to someone who contacts you for it.

Lubber Run Farmers Market Opens April 15

By Cheryl Roesel

Mark your calendar! The Lubber Run Farmers Market begins its sixth season on April 15. The market, on the Barrett Elementary School parking lot at 4401 N. Henderson Rd., will be open every Saturday, rain or shine, from 8 a.m. to 12 noon through November 18. Come on out and enjoy live music while shopping for a wide variety of locally grown or prepared products: seasonal fruits and vegetables, fresh-cut flowers beginning in late spring, fish and pork products, goat cheeses, roasted nuts, sweet and savory baked goods, fresh pasta, and a variety of prepared foods and drinks, including kombucha. Potted herbs and other plants for the garden will be available early in the growing season. Parking (limited) is at the south end of the school parking lot and (ample) in the nearby Lubber Run Community Center garage at 300 N. Park Dr. For more information, see <https://lubberrunfarmersmarket.org/> or follow us on Instagram (LubberRunFM) and Facebook (LubberRunFarmersMarket).

Volunteer greeters are always welcome! If you enjoy the market, consider signing up as a volunteer market greeter. Greeters work in shifts of about an hour and a half. Volunteers help answer questions, describe vendors and solicit donations to the Arlington Food Assistance



Center, and offer the ever-popular Lubber Run Farmers Market canvas bags. It's a great way to see neighbors, make friends, find out about market goods, and ensure that we can keep this neighborhood gem. For more information or to sign up, stop by the market tent. See you at the market on April 15!

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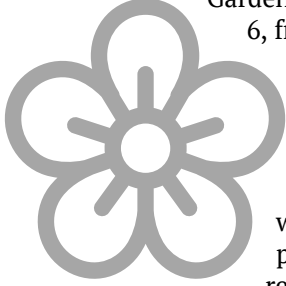
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Home and Garden Tour Update

By Tricia Freeman



The Arlington Forest 2023 Home and Garden Tour is set for Saturday, May 6, from 12 to 4 p.m. A committee of volunteers organized the event, and we found projects in all three sections of the neighborhood to share with our community. Some homeowners worked within the original footprint of their homes to create reimagined interior space. Others

chose to build new additions on the side, on the back, or both. Many borrowed to finance their dreams, whereas others structured their projects in stages to avoid loan negotiations. From one semiteardown, a handsome home arose to incorporate part of the original structure into the owners' vision for a contemporary family home.

This popular event gives each of all of us a firsthand chance to see a wide variety of construction choices that neighbors have made to personalize our vintage brick homes. Thanks to the generous neighbors willing to participate, at least 14 properties will be on the tour. Because many homeowners sought to make the most of outdoor spaces during the pandemic, several properties on the

tour will feature porch, patio, and garden renovations.

Tickets will go on sale for \$10 in late April at locations in each of the three sections of Arlington Forest. The tour is open only to Arlington Forest residents and their guests, so proof of address will be required when purchasing tickets. Although same-day tickets will be available, many people will prefer to buy prior to the May 6 date so they can study the tour brochure and plan which homes they want to visit to gain inspiration for their own future projects.

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Dental: Something Wicked in the Land of

Ahhhs

Financial: Good Habits to Have (Financial Help Book)

County News

Missing Middle Housing Study

On March 6, the Arlington County Planning Commission held a hearing to consider “adoption of amendments to the General Land Use Plan and Arlington County Zoning Ordinance to support expanded housing options resulting from the Missing Middle Housing Study.” The hearing was open to the public, which was invited to sign up to speak. The commission also considered amendments to the zoning ordinance to improve stormwater management facilities in Arlington County. On March 18, the Arlington County Board will hold a hearing to make a final vote on “expanded housing options” for replacing homes with multifamily housing in single-family neighborhoods like Arlington Forest.

Stormwater Retention Vault Planned

Last September, the Arlington County Department of Environmental Services held a meeting about stormwater management in the Lubber Run watershed. The county is planning to install a huge underground stormwater retention vault in Woodlawn Park, near the last open segment of Lubber Run upstream from Ballston Pond. The vault will slow the stormwater that threatens many homes in the original Lubber Run floodplain.

Stormwater Utility Fee

At a work session on January 31, the Arlington County Board accepted a proposal to adopt a stormwater utility fee for homeowners in Arlington. Instead of the current sanitary district tax based on a property’s real estate assessment, the homeowner would pay a stormwater utility fee based on the amount of impervious surfaces (like roofs and driveways) on a property. Based on feedback from a public engagement process, the board accepted the proposal but directed staff to defer the first stormwater utility bill until next year. In the next couple of months, the board will consider a resolution to adopt the stormwater utility fee beginning in May 2024. Find out more online at Arlington Stormwater Utility Implementation.

Annual Water Treatment Process Underway

Arlington is conducting its yearly water treatment process from February 20 to May 15 by swapping the system disinfectant from chloramine, used most of the year, to chlorine. This practice ensures that the water mains remain clean and clear. Find out more online at Arlington Spring Cleaning for Drinking Water.



Paul Cachion, MBA

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CachionHomes@gmail.com

A Wonderful Arlington Forest Tradition: The AF Home & Garden Tour!

Consider this a “Save the Date.” It’s finally back after 6 years – one of Arlington Forest’s favorite (and one of my favorite) community events: the Home & Garden Tour. While typically held every three years, unfortunately the pandemic canceled the last one.

But we are on for this year—the date is **May 6th, from 12-4 PM**. Our house was on the last tour, and if you’ve participated before – either as one of the houses or as one of the neighbors on tour, you know why it is a favorite. The H&G Tour is not to be missed! Look for further details here in the Forester as the date approaches.





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Community Calendar

Next AFCA meeting:

Wednesday, March 15, 7 p.m.

Neighborhood Spring Cleanup:

Saturday, April 22, 2023

Home and Garden Tour:

Saturday, May 6, 2023

Annual AFCA Picnic:

Wednesday, May 17, 2023

Annual Yard Sale:

Saturday, May 20, 2023

AFCA Meetings

(topics are tentative)

March 15, 2023: Native Plants and Trees

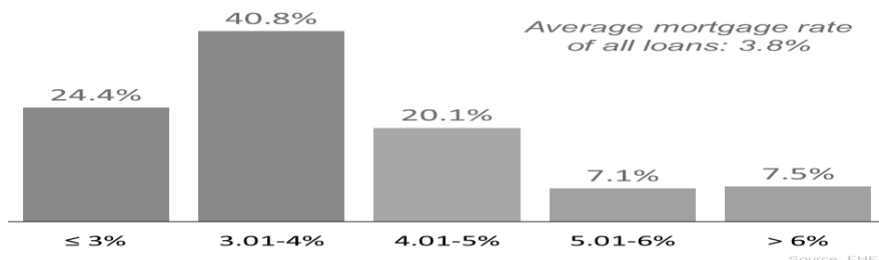
April 19, 2023: Neighborhood conservation projects

May 17, 2023: Neighborhood picnic

The biggest challenge the housing market's facing is how few homes there are for sale. According to the *Federal Housing Finance Agency* (FHFA), the average interest rate for current homeowners with mortgages is less than 4% (see *graph below*). Today, the current mortgage rate for buyers is over 6%. Many homeowners are opting to stay put instead of moving to another home with a higher borrowing cost. This is a situation known as being rate locked. When so many homeowners are rate locked and reluctant to sell, it's a challenge for a housing market that needs more supply. However, experts project mortgage rates will gradually fall this year, and more people may be willing to move as that happens. For any potential home seller, today's market is a sweet spot that can work to your advantage.

Average Mortgage Rate Is Less Than 4%

Current FHFA Loans with Mortgage Rate at Time of Origination



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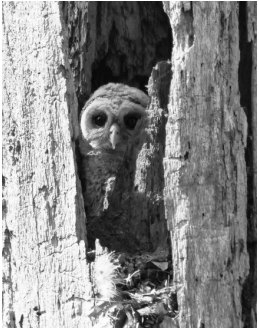
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Around the Forest



Owls in the Forest

Neighbors have reported hearing and photographing barred owls, which nest in small numbers in Arlington. The photo by David Howell shows an owlet in a snag used as a nest site by barred owls in 2021 and 2022. The snag, just south of Glencarlyn Park, no longer stands. According to Alonso Abugattas, natural resources manager for Arlington County, some Arlington parks also have screech owls and great horned owls.

Tick Alert

This winter, naturalists in our area have reported finding ticks after outdoor excursions, even at temperatures as low as 40 °F. After you're out hiking, especially through winter-dormant brush and grasses, it might be wise to check yourself for ticks.

Early Spring

You probably noticed daffodils and forsythias in bloom in February, with a month of winter left. In our local parks, early bloomers like maples and alder (a streamside shrub) came out earlier than usual. Even before President's Day, spring peepers and wood frogs were already vocalizing at Manassas National Battlefield Park, though none were yet evident at Sparrow Pond or the two ponds near the Long Branch Nature Center.

Coffee Shop Now Open

La Coop Coffee opened at the Arlington Forest Shopping Center on February 11 in the same spot as Sense of Place Café. La Coop opened its first location in Washington, DC, in July 2020 and has since been serving coffee at regional farmers' markets, including the Lubber Run Farmers Market. La Coop is noted for its "ethically sourced" coffee from Guatemala, paying producers up to 40 percent above the market rate.



Traffic Improvements Coming

Safety signage and street markings are coming this spring to the intersection of N. Park Dr. and N. George Mason Dr. in Northside. Updated signage and street markings reading "Slow School XING" will come within the next few months. The county is also aiming to get a traffic signal installed there, but it would have to be funded in the next Capital Improvement Plan. Read more in *ArlNow* at <https://tinyurl.com/yuvzzrwt>.



Lubber Run Farmers Market Opening Soon

The Lubber Run Farmers Market will begin its sixth season on April 15. The market, on the Barrett Elementary School parking lot at 4401 N. Henderson Rd., will be open every Saturday, rain or shine, from 8 a.m. to 12 noon through November 18. The market features fresh vegetables along with meats, cheeses, breads, and other foods from our area.

Home and Garden Tour This Spring!

Suspended since 2019 because of COVID, the annual Home and Garden Tour is on again this year. An Arlington Forest tradition, the tour will be on Saturday, May 6. Homeowners who planned to participate in the canceled 2020 tour will have another chance. Foresters might also get a chance to tour homes with renovations in the past few years.

Protecting Streams

Don't let your spring cleaning turn into stream pollution! A few pointers from Arlington County on how to protect streams while doing your spring cleaning:

- Always wash up using indoor drains.
- Clean up outdoor spills with sand, towels, or other absorbent materials.
- Only rain in the storm drain!

Barcroft School News

By Samantha Bell

Thanks to everyone who supported our PTA online auction in February—our most successful auction yet! Our Fiesta de Amistad-Friendship Party on February 10 was a big hit, with lots of balloons, food, and dancing. In February, we honored our crossing guards and bus drivers on their appreciation days with gift cards. We also celebrated Virginia Kindness Week in February by spreading kindness through service in the neighborhood. The PTA was recently able to fund five minigrants for teachers to help with activities and supplies for their classrooms.

Are you interested in serving as a PTA officer? Several PTA board positions will be open at the end of this school year, including president. Email president@barcroftpta.org if you are interested. Upcoming events include a Garden Workday on March 25, an Outdoor Movie Night in late April, and Teacher/Staff Appreciation Week on May 1-5. Spring Break is April 3-7. Follow us on Twitter at @BarcroftEagles.



Fiesta de Amistad-Friendship Party at Barcroft Elementary School.

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	Name	Email	Phone									Other
Southside	Sam Hansotte		703-909-4568	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓	Lawn mowing
	Dylan Heinrich		831-620-9742	✓	✓			✓	✓		✓	Odd jobs
	Ethan Heinrich		831-238-8475		✓		✓*	✓	✓	✓	✓	
	Emilie Kluge	emiliekluge@yahoo.com	571-457-1983	✓	✓		✓		✓	✓	✓	Tutoring
	Amy Mashkuri		571-643-5883	✓	✓							
	Sabrina Saunders	sabrina_saunders@icloud.com	202-531-2247	✓	✓		✓*			✓	✓	Tutoring
	Luna Candon-Campos	lundacandoncampos@gmail.com		✓	✓		✓*		✓	✓	✓	Weekends only
	Evan Dempsey	Evan.cw.dempsey@gmail.com	703-559-9690	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	
	Anna D'Itri		703-346-3467	✓	✓		✓*		✓	✓	✓	
	Gabriel D'Itri		703-346-3467			✓		✓				Lawn mowing
Greenbrier	Julia Green	joangreen32@gmail.com	703-785-4293	✓	✓				✓		✓	
	Gavin Kraft	kenneth.d.kraft@gmail.com	314-775-7008	✓	✓						✓	
	Madeline Lund	madelinelund11@gmail.com	571-447-6968	✓	✓		✓			✓		
	Avery McGrann	snooz_ette@yahoo.com	571-225-2484	✓	✓					✓	✓	Weekends only
	Anna McLaughlin	annamc1012@yahoo.com	571-550-1680	✓	✓		✓*		✓		✓	
	Ciara McLaughlin	ciarahmclaughlin@gmail.com	703-712-9215				✓*			✓	✓	
	Reid Messman		703-469-1988	✓	✓							
	Shea Messman		703-469-1988				✓*					
	Jacob Nadherny	jacob@nadherny.com		✓	✓						✓	
	Matthew Petruccelli	tony.petrucelli@gmail.com	703-629-0425					✓				
Northside	Nicky Petruccelli	tony.petrucelli@gmail.com	703-629-0425		✓			✓				Cats only
	Caulder Pickard	katiepickard@gmail.com	571-244-6870	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓	
	Elle Pickard	katiepickard@gmail.com	571-244-6870	✓	✓		✓*		✓	✓	✓	
	Emma Weaver		703-875-8185				✓*					
	Anelia Werner	aneliaw09@gmail.com	703-975-4573	✓			✓*		✓	✓	✓	Odd jobs
	Natalie Bryant	sarakatherine75@hotmail.com		✓	✓	✓				✓	✓	
	Niittisha Choudhary	Niittisha@gmail.com	703-981-1229	✓			✓		✓			Tutoring
	Tyler Dinan	chrisbettdinan@aol.com	703-525-5763	✓		✓	✓	✓				College breaks only
	Annie Madden	Lacrosse.donuts@gmail.com	703-220-3357		✓		✓*					
	Cory Pearl	cory.pearl99@gmail.com	571-447-0852	✓	✓	✓	✓*	✓	✓		✓	
	Evie Price		703-402-5138	✓	✓		✓*		✓	✓	✓	
	Sophie Stewart	sophiestewart4@gmail.com	703-713-5902	✓	✓		✓*		✓	✓		
	Name	Email	Phone									Other



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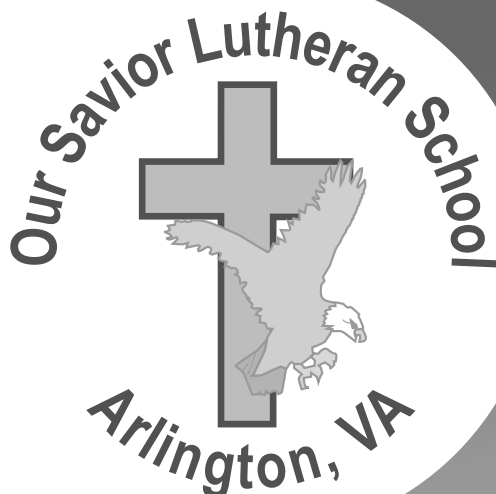
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