

The Arlington Forester

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March 2021

Virtual AFCA Meeting: Recycling, Lubber Run Community Center, and More

AFCA invites you to join our monthly Zoom meeting on Wednesday, March 17, at 7 p.m. Hayley Gambone of the Arlington County Department of Environmental Services will speak about recycling markets and what is recyclable in Arlington. In addition, Peter Lusk of the Arlington County Department of Parks and Recreation will speak about opening the new Lubber Run Community Center, including a preschool in the fall. He will also speak about plans to replace a bridge in Lubber Run Park.

To join the meeting, enter the following URL into your browser between 6:50 and 7 p.m. on Wednesday, March 17: tinyurl.com/rx8e68ee. If you have never used Zoom, you can view a short tutorial at 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 899 0469 4390 and passcode 976658. 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 2021 Meeting

On February 17, 2021, President Esther Bowring hosted a remote AFCA meeting starting at 7 p.m. via Zoom.

Guest Speakers

The first guest speaker was Officer J.P. Montoya of the Arlington Police Department's Community Outreach division. Asked about the investigation into the Arlington Forest Shopping Center break-ins on January 6 and crime rate statistics for Arlington Forest compared to prior years, Officer Montoya promised to find out and report back. Meeting attendees asked about the crime rate in Arlington; when to call the police; pedestrian and traffic safety; and recruitment efforts by the Arlington County Police Department. Officer Montoya invited Arlington Forest residents with questions or comments to contact him at jmontoya@arlingtonva.us.

The next guest speaker was Charles Head from Arlington Municipal Broadband/ArlFiber (Arlington Fiber), an advocacy group seeking to establish an Arlington County Broadband Authority (similar to a public utility commission) to offer and regulate a municipal broadband service in competition with commercial

internet service providers. The group has no connection to any company. Mr. Head explained what the group is proposing, asking for help in advocating the ArlFiber proposal before the county board. He noted that the Commonwealth of Virginia has a number of broadband authorities already; deployment and service offerings would be neighborhood by neighborhood, with more affluent neighborhoods paying more. The ArlFiber petition is available at arlfiber.org; you can reach the group at ArlFiber@tutanota.com, and Charlie's email is CharlesRHead65@gmail.com.

...continued on page 2

Contents

Faces: Judy Titus.....	3	Foundation plantings ..	8
Restore Lubber Run? ..	4	Parks/county news	9
NCP: Parks.....	5	Around the Forest	10
NCP: Beautification	5	Barcroft news	12
Housing trends	6	Barrett news	13
This old house	7	Kids for hire	14

AFCA Virtual Meeting 7 p.m. **March 17** Through 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

Neighborhood Reports

For Northside, Joel Yudken discussed the crossing at North Henderson Road and Arlington Boulevard. Jeff Horwitz noted he had a correction to make about the intersection in the draft Arlington Forest Neighborhood Conservation Plan. For Greenbrier, Tom Smialowicz reported that the Edison Park playground is finished and being used regularly.

At the latest meeting of the Arlington County Civic Federation, a report was made on the distribution of vaccines against the coronavirus. County open spaces/parkland and densification were also discussed.

Neighborhood Conservation Plan:

Hutch Brown, editor for the plan, announced that only one section of the plan remains to be finished, with the rest complete. The plan should be ready for an April vote by AFCA. Meeting attendees asked whether the plan discusses Arlington Boulevard, a state road. AFCA will coordinate with the county to see whether a request to work with the state should go into the neighborhood conservation plan. Meeting attendees differed as to whether narrowing the road would be advisable. Hutch Brown, Liz Kauffman, and Liz Grossman were recognized by AFCA for their work on the plan.

Missing Middle Housing Study

A neighborhood committee led by Joel Yudken is reviewing documents related to the study and is drafting a letter with a series of questions for the county board and staff on information that is missing. The letter raises concerns such as Arlington's role in housing across the entire metropolitan region as well as tradeoffs such as quality of life, green spaces, and historic preservation.

Lubber Run Community Center

Esther Bowring spoke with Arlington County Department of Parks and Recreation staff about the budget and scheduled opening of the new Lubber Run Community Center. When the proposed operating budget comes out in the next couple of months, AFCA will send a letter either expressing thanks for a plan to open the center or urging the county to open it as soon as possible. Parks and Recreation staff has surveyed sites in Lubber Run Park for a replacement pedestrian bridge. Although the money has been allocated, the county has announced no timeframe for the bridge replacement.



Faces of the Forest: Judy Titus

By Liz Kauffman

Judy is an artist, concerned citizen, voracious reader, miniatures enthusiast, great-grandmother, Hawaiian dance teacher, and thinker... we recently had the opportunity to chat.

You're a native of Arlington. Tell us about your family and growing up.

My father was a switchboard operator in the Signal Corps, stationed at Walter Reed. My mother was a Bell telephone operator. They'd get to talking when they weren't busy, and they got married in January 1941. By the time Pearl Harbor was bombed, she was pregnant with me. They shipped him off to England, and I was born in February 1942. My mother was living with her parents on South 22nd Street in Arlington, still working as a telephone operator. My grandparents really raised me until I was 3-1/2 years old. I didn't see my father until after the war ended in 1945.

I went to Wakefield High School and then to Longwood College in Farmville, VA, where I studied art. My husband Charlie was also from Arlington but went to Washington and Lee High School, so I'd never met him until my college roommate arranged a blind date for us.

How did you come to own the historic Mary Carlin House?

When Charlie and I got married, we moved to Buckingham. Once we had our two children, we rented a place in Broyhill Park, up behind Loehmann's Plaza. Around that time, in the mid-1960s, builder Vince Mangano was developing the "Arlington Forest addition," now 1st Place North. He divided the land into eight parcels; he wanted to tear down the old Mary Carlin House, but the county wouldn't let him because it's historic. *(It was constructed in about 1800 by William Carlin, George Washington's tailor.)*

Charlie, who was in construction, gave Vince a price on doing drywall. Vince wanted him to buy the old house and fix it up so the county would stop bothering him. Charlie was reluctant, but when he finally mentioned it to me, I wanted to see the house. There was no electricity, water, heat, or anything—just knee-deep trash. Every window was broken, and someone had taken out all the copper pipes and the radiators. The walls were covered with crude drawings of women. No one had lived here for 3-1/2 years except for bums, rodents, and birds.

I said, "I really like this place. Let's see if we can fix it up." I was young then—ambitious! So we bought it in early 1967 for \$13,000, and we worked on it through the spring; in June, we finally moved in. But we still didn't have electricity, so I'd cook on a Coleman stove and take the kids up to bed with candles.

What was the neighborhood like then?

The train was still running on what's now the W&OD Trail. Kids would run down and the engineer would blow the whistle for them. Carlin Springs Road only had two lanes. All kinds of vehicles used it—cars, buses, trucks.



The first Route 50 overpass was only about 13 feet high. About once a month, a truck driver would wedge his truck under the bridge and stop traffic. I'd tell them to let some air out of their tires, and then the traffic could move again. Once, a truck hit the bridge and its back doors flew open—and out spilled fish aquariums, big glass tanks, one on top of the other. Neighbors gathered up what they could, but it took weeks until all the glass was gone.

What inspired you to teach Hawaiian dance?

I took a class at the Lubber Run Community Center. In hula, the music, words, choreography, stories, history, flora, and fauna all intertwine, often in subtle and mysterious ways. I've studied each summer in Hawaii with Kumu hula masters, and 31 years ago I began teaching for Arlington County. Some of my students have been with me from the beginning. We've performed three times all across China.

You take civic duty seriously.

Yes. I vote. Everyone who can should. With a pandemic raging, I'm a big believer in masks. I've made 1,600 so far. The Lost Dog Café sells them to benefit the Lost Dog and Cat Rescue Foundation. They've raised over \$12,000 so far.

If you were speaking to today's high school students, what would you want them to know?

Get outside and away from your screens. There's so much to learn outside our walls.

One last question: You have a ghost in your house?

Yes, Elva the ghost. Once, a group of us were making hula costumes and the tape measure disappeared. It had been right on the table. We looked all over and couldn't find it. I told Elva to give it back. Five minutes later, it reappeared on the table, in plain view. You have to be firm with ghosts. Don't let them walk all over you.

Should Arlington Restore Lubber Run?

Like most urban streams, Lubber Run is badly degraded. What was once a healthy stream rich in biodiversity is now little more than a conduit for stormwater runoff. Devastating floods have incised the stream down to the bedrock, and erosion routinely topples large trees. Lubber Run can get better—but only if people do a better job of controlling stormwater runoff.

Under the Clean Water Act, Arlington County is required to reduce pollutants from stormwater runoff into Chesapeake Bay. The greatest reductions in pollutant runoff come from stream restoration, including an award-winning project on the lower (estuarine) portion of Four Mile Run. The county also has stream restoration projects in North Arlington, including Donaldson Run (in progress), Gulf Branch (in planning), and Windy Run (completed).

On Donaldson Run, you can see the results in the Zachary Taylor Nature Area just off Military Road. The project reconnected the stream to its floodplain and reinstalled meanders. Workers placed boulders to mimic natural features such as splash pools and streambank linings for channeling streamflow energy inward (to reduce erosion). They also planted trees and other vegetation on the restored and reconnected floodplain.

Stream restoration is no panacea. It does nothing to reduce the impervious surfaces that cause stormwater flooding, like roofing and asphalt. A restoration project uses heavy equipment, and it removes trees, disturbs soils, and disrupts park facilities. Some residents think that stream restoration only makes matters worse at high cost. However, the restored streams in North Arlington weather storms much better than Lubber Run; doing nothing invites more flooding, toppled trees, washed-out bridges, and pollutant runoff into Chesapeake Bay.

Nevertheless, it might be too soon for stream restoration in Lubber Run. The restored streams in North Arlington are near their headwaters, whereas Lubber Run Park is at the lower end of a much larger watershed with impervious surfaces across almost half (46 percent) of its area. The result is a stormwater blowout in Lubber Run Park with every major storm. Until upstream watershed retrofit projects are in place, restoration of Lubber Run might have to wait.

The good news is that Arlington has plans for such projects. A watershed retrofit stores and slowly releases precipitation; you can create one yourself with a swale, cistern, rain barrel, dry well, or rain garden in your yard. In its 2013 Watershed Retrofit Study, the county listed 1,176 potential public projects, including 145 for the Lubber Run watershed. Some are already in place, including a bioswale and reforested



Lubber Run erosion



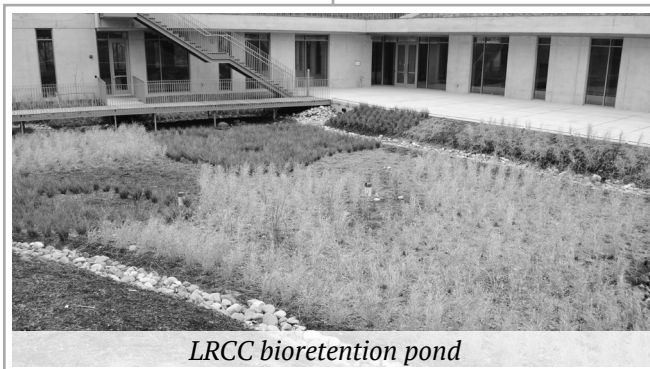
Donaldson Run restoration

area adjoining the new Edison Park playground. The new Lubber Run Community Center has bioswales and an underground cistern that captures stormwater runoff for watering the grounds, with the overflow going into a bioretention pond that feeds wetland plants and filters the water as it seeps into the soil.

Ballston Pond renovation is another example of bio-retention. Ballston Pond captures stormwater runoff and gradually releases it, mimicking natural wetland processes. The restored pond—4 acres in size—will collect runoff from a 300-acre drainage area, roughly 30 percent of the entire Lubber Run watershed. By reducing the volume of stormwater flows into Lubber Run, the project will alleviate flooding in Lubber Run Park.

So should Arlington restore Lubber Run? Yes—but not yet. For now, the county might be better off focusing on green engineering in the upper Lubber Run watershed, including watershed retrofit projects like Ballston Pond. Homeowners in Arlington Forest can help through watershed retrofits on their own properties, including planting trees and other native vegetation. When the time is right,

Arlington can revisit the question of stream restoration in our neighborhood creeks, beginning with Lubber Run.



LRCC bioretention pond

Recommendations: Neighborhood Conservation Plan

The following recommendations to Arlington County are from our draft neighborhood conservation plan. The full plan, posted on the AFCA website, gives the rationale for each recommendation. Send comments to plan coordinator Liz Kauffman at lizkauffman@yahoo.com or editor Hutch Brown at hutchbrown41@gmail.com.

Parks and Recreation

Severe storms in recent decades have damaged our local **park infrastructure**.

- The county should join AFCA and other neighborhoods in strategizing on how to respond to vulnerabilities of park infrastructure to severe weather events and what we can do together to mitigate the threat, such as repositioning trails and “hardening” the infrastructure.
- The county should repair or replace the washed-out trail in Lubber Run Park below Greenbrier, the bridges in Lubber Run Park and Glencarlyn Park, and the unreliable ford in Lubber Run Park in a way that is effective and sustainable in an era of changing climates and worsening storms.
- The county should join the neighborhood in requesting that the power poles between Columbia Pike and North Carlin Springs Road (where they are located in a wooded valley against a backdrop of trees higher than the poles themselves) be repainted in a more natural color that blends in with the surrounding trees.

The community strongly supports the ongoing use of the **Lubber Run Amphitheater** for summer entertainment programs.

- The county should complete upgrades to the Lubber Run Amphitheater by replacing retaining walls and anything else needed to keep the amphitheater in good condition.
- The county should work with AFCA to explore the feasibility of stormwater retrofit projects for the Lubber Run Amphitheater, including those proposed in the county’s 2013 Stormwater Retrofit Study.

The **powerlines** behind homes on steep parkland hill-sides are prone to storms and power outages.

- The county should move powerlines in parks to adjacent streets and replace them with underground wiring.
- Where powerlines are along streets in Arlington Forest, the county should place them underground.

Beautification and History

The county should conduct a joint study with AFCA and the Virginia Department of Transportation on ways

to improve the appearance as well as the ecological and watershed functions of the Arlington Boulevard buffer strips. Issues of beautification, noise abatement, storm-water management, and residential parking should be considered; residents most affected should be included in the process.

The county should work with NOVA Parks to repair or replace its damaged historical signs along the W&OD Trail. The county should also install permanent historical markers at the sites listed below:

- The confluence of Long Branch and Four Mile Run, where George Washington used a large oak tree in 1785 to survey the boundary line of land he owned to the south. Archeologists have also found evidence of an American Indian village near the site.
- A unique old-growth forest stand located in Glencarlyn Park. Part of a county-designated natural resource conservation area, the stand is one of only two recognized old-growth tracts remaining in Arlington.
- Arlington Forest Park, designated by the county as a natural resource conservation area for its rare oak savanna ecosystem, the largest remaining tract of its kind in Arlington. (The county already plans to install an interpretive sign for the site.)
- Huffman’s Falls on Four Mile Run, a point of both geological and historical interest. The area’s bedrock is well exposed at the waterfall, as is the pre-Civil War stonework for the W&OD Railroad.
- The one-story Ann Carlin Cottage at 117 North Galveston Street in Greenbrier. The home was built around 1850 as a tenant house or servants’ quarters for the Carlin family farm.
- The two-story frame farmhouse at 205 North Galveston Street in Greenbrier, built in the 1820s–40s and once owned by Charles E. Mix, who served as Chief Clerk of the Bureau of Indian Affairs from 1838 to 1868 (and briefly as Commissioner in 1858).
- The Lubber Run Amphitheater, Arlington’s only open-air performing arts venue and a beloved landmark for the community. Constructed in 1969, the amphitheater celebrated its 50th-year anniversary in 2019.
- The site of the historic Henderson House at the Lubber Run Community Center. Constructed in 1894, the fashionable country home became Arlington County’s first community recreation center in 1951.
- The Arlington Forest Historic District, placed on the National Register of Historic Places in 2005 for its unique history and architecture. A marker might be installed at the centrally located Arlington Forest Shopping Center, which contributed to the designation.
- The first Arlington Forest homes, constructed in 1939 in Southside. A marker describing the Colonial Revival architectural style might be placed at the entrance to Southside on South Park Drive, where some of the first homes are located.

Housing Trends



The article is based on the revised Arlington Forest Neighborhood Conservation Plan. The full draft plan is posted on the AFCA website. Send edits or comments to plan coordinator Liz Kauffman at lizkauffman@yahoo.com or editor Hutch Brown at hutchbrown41@gmail.com.

As prices in Arlington Forest have risen, homes have become increasingly unaffordable for low- and middle-income households (including minorities), a concern for many residents. Pricey new high rises in Ballston and new multifamily units in the area reflect similar trends. The county has proposed rezoning neighborhoods like ours to replace single-family homes with more affordable duplexes and rowhouses.

In our neighborhood survey, most respondents (87 percent) favored keeping Arlington Forest as a neighborhood of single-family homes. Many survey respondents listed upzoning and overdevelopment—especially the conversion of single-family homes into multifamily units—as a major threat to the neighborhood, and experience in neighboring Buckingham suggests that redevelopment does not make housing more affordable or homeowners more diverse. Although the advantages of densification for Arlington Forest are not clear, the disadvantages would be severe. In addition to sacrificing the neighborhood’s historical single-family character,

the tradeoffs would include (1) ongoing construction, noise, and disruption to quality of life; (2) the loss of neighborhood trees, depriving the community of their biophilic, social, economic, and ecological benefits; (3) more conversion of open space to impervious surfaces, for more stormwater runoff; (4) higher demand for public services, including increased pressure on already overcrowded schools; (5) more potential use of housing in Arlington Forest for commercial purposes such as rentals and AirBNB, further altering the residential character of the community; and (6) more neighborhood traffic and demand for parking, including the possibility that the residents of Arlington Forest would have to start paying for street parking.

Arlington Forest does not take such tradeoffs lightly, and we want the county to take the tradeoffs into account in any redevelopment plans for our area. That includes any prospect of rezoning our neighborhood, which we strongly oppose.

Recommendations

- Arlington Forest urges the county to respect and protect the listing of Arlington Forest on the National Register of Historic Places, including its character as a community of single-family detached homes. We stand ready through AFCA to work with the county to align the results of the Missing Middle Housing Study with the 2020 General Land Use Plan’s commitment to “preserve and enhance existing single-family and apartment neighborhoods.”
- Through AFCA, Arlington Forest will work with the county to preserve and protect open space in our community. We urge residents who are planning a home expansion to work with neighbors to take a full range of values and impacts into account, including the health of large trees; avoid seeking waivers for county-mandated offsets in order to conserve open space; and offset any expansion of impervious surfaces with stormwater mitigation measures such as installing swales and rain gardens and planting more trees.

Glass Recycling Reaches 5 Million Pounds



Although Arlingtonians no longer recycle glass in their blue curbside carts, their use of the dropoff sites continues to shatter expectations, surpassing 5 million pounds (2,500 tons) collected since 2019. The County now receives \$15 per ton for glass collected, a welcome new revenue stream. The recycling company uses the glass to make new bottles, insulation, filter materials, sand material, and other products.

The five dropoff sites are Quincy Park, Aurora Hills Community Center, Lee Community Center, Madison Community Center, and the Trades Center near Shirlington. If you don’t drop off your glass, it goes into the black trash cart and ends up in a landfill. It’s easy to save it until you are passing by one of the dropoff points to avoid wasting energy.

This Old House

By John Naland

Have you ever wanted to know more about your Arlington Forest house? Like when it was built, how its original design differed from neighboring houses, who owned it before you, and how its value has changed over the decades? Answers to those questions are readily available on the internet.



To find out more, start with Arlington Forest's successful 2005 application for listing on the National Registry of Historic Places, written by Arlington County's Historic Preservation Program Coordinator, Cynthia A. Liccese-Torres. That highly detailed 207-page document is posted on the AFCA website (www.arlingtonforestva.org) on the Neighborhood page.

The initial pages describe Arlington Forest's development and architecture. They explain the 10 different house styles and how materials shortages during World War II affected the design of houses built during that period. A map depicting when different sections of our neighborhood were completed is on page 202 of the file (the map is also posted on the AFCA website on the Neighborhood page under AFCA History Book Files).

Starting on page 33 is a house-by-house listing summarizing each house's specific design and when it

was built. Scroll through the long list until you find your house. The listing describes only the original house, but you can find later history by searching the property records on the Arlington County website. Go to propertysearch.arlingtonva.us and enter your address. On the summary page for your house, click on View. Then click

on Archives — Property Card to see a list of past owners and the evolving property values. For example, the entry for my house lists all past owners starting in 1941, contains property assessments from 1951 to 1983, and lists a 1952 sales price of \$17,500. (If you live in one of the three pre-Civil War houses in Greenbrier, don't get your hopes up: the online county data starts only at the middle of the past century.)

Click on Assessments to see changing property values over the most recent decade. Click on Sales to see transactions for the past 30 years or so. Click on Permits to see the estimated value of any major additions built in the past few decades.

So, if you are looking for an interesting rainy-day activity, you might try searching for such snippets of information about the history of your old house.

Demand for single-family homes and townhomes is intensifying. Interest from buyers has reached a fever pitch, causing them to make aggressive offers to compete for those homes. The hurried level of sales seen at the end of 2020 continued into January, with sales volume increasing by more than 30% across the NOVA region versus January of 2020. Median sales prices increased 6%, with the median time on market for listings dropping 31% to 13 days. In February, buyers were still experiencing double-digit competing offers, price escalation and waived contingencies. In 2020, many sellers decided to pause their moving plans for a few different reasons. Now that vaccines are being distributed and there's a light at the end of the COVID-19 tunnel, it should bring some peace of mind to many potential sellers who may want to cash out on the market.

As a buyer in today's real estate market, your offer to purchase will likely be up against offers from other motivated buyers. Based my experience and perspective as a buyer's agent and seller's agent in multiple offer scenarios, I've written a guide called **"13 Ways to Write a Winning Offer", to make your offer stand out** from the competition and be the one that gets accepted. Of course, the strategies you use will depend a lot on the type and condition of the property, your level of motivation, and how much competition you have from other parties. You can **download a FREE copy** of the guide on our website.

Are you looking to maximize your homes' equity in this heated sellers' market? Let's meet to discuss a customized strategic plan for you. ***Who you hire matters*** - put my 36 years of local Arlington market expertise to work for you and your largest financial investment!



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Spruce Up Your Foundation Plantings

It's not too soon to start thinking about spring gardening. This piece is adapted from a Plant NOVA Natives newsletter.

Developers add shrubs against the foundations of new houses to soften the building lines, choosing a few conventional plant species for a uniform look. The new owners get used to the look and never bother to change it. But the foundation planting area offers a big opportunity to beautify the landscaping, eliminate the need for pruning, and help support our local birds and butterflies at the same time.

Native shrubs constitute an essential middle layer of the ecosystem, providing food and shelter for songbirds. Providing this layer in our yards is even more important in areas where the deer have eradicated native shrubs in the woods. Unfortunately, the commonly used plants are species introduced from other continents. They provide no food for wildlife, and many have escaped into nearby natural areas, destroying the ecosystem there. Examples include nandina (with red berries poisonous to cedar waxwings), Japanese barberry (which harbors ticks), privet, burning bush, leatherleaf mahonia, double-file and linden viburnum, and several species of bush honeysuckle.



Luckily, you can choose native alternatives that support the birds and butterflies they evolved with. For the area under a window, it makes sense to choose one whose ultimate height when full grown will not block the view, thus making pruning unnecessary and allowing the plant to assume its own graceful shape. Many have beautiful spring flowers; others have striking red berries that provide interest in winter.

If you don't know what shrubs you have, you can find out by using a plant ID app such as Seek or iNaturalist. You can also get a free visit from an Audubon-at-Home volunteer to help identify invasive plants and discuss alternatives.

Shrubs are not the only plants that are suitable for foundations. Small trees where there is room, native ornamental grasses in the sun, and native ferns in the shade are all natural choices. If you like the conventional look that came with your house, plenty of native shrubs can achieve the same effect. Or you might want to add character by choosing something a little different. And rather than planting annuals in spring, why not plant a few native perennials just once to get that pop of color year after year? For details, see the Plant NOVA Natives website.



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Spring is Coming (and the Spring Market)!

The signs of spring are here in Arlington Forest – I hear more birds chirping, kids are lingering at the playgrounds longer, and I've been able to get out for more days of tennis and pickleball with the warmer weather.

In addition to all the excitement of longer days, warmer temps, and blossoming flowers, the spring real estate market provides reason for optimism. The real estate industry, and Buyers, in particular, have been dealing with low inventory, even before Covid. Amazingly, as of this writing, there are only 20 single-family houses in Arlington, currently listed at under \$1 million. That is a mere fraction of where we'd typically be this time of year. But March always brings more Sellers out, and that will certainly make life a little easier for a lot of Buyers. So here's to looking forward to Spring and the Spring Market!



Member Long & Foster Executive Club.

Parks Update

Bridge Replacement

During the week of February 8, the Arlington County Department of Parks and Recreation conducted a topographical survey in preparation for a new Lubber Run pedestrian bridge. Severe flooding tore out two pedestrian bridges in 2019, and the county has committed to replacing one of them in a suitable location. No time-frame has been set.

Frogs Are Out

Some of the earliest are wood frogs, and in the first week of March you could see—and hear—hundreds of them in the shallows of Sparrow Pond off the W&OD Trail below Southside. Only the males sing. Two to 3 inches long, with distinctive black eye masks, wood frogs spend summer on the forest floor feeding on insects and other invertebrates.

Spring Flowers



Thanks to invasive weed removal by neighborhood volunteers, the English ivy and other nonnative plants that once carpeted Lubber Run Park are largely gone. Neighbors can again enjoy native wildflowers like bloodroot. Beginning in March, you will see lovely white bloodroot blossoms along park trails. (The name derives from the fleshy root, which oozes red sap when cut.)

Virginia Bluebells Are Back!

Many Virginia parklands, especially in riverine lowlands, are blanketed by native bluebells in early spring. Paul Kovenock of Greenbrier has reestablished Virginia bluebells on a hillside just below the Edison Park playground, visible in early spring from the trail down to Lubber Run. You might also find individual bluebell plants elsewhere in the park.

Flowering Trees

Spring brings flowers to many native trees in our area. One of the earliest bloomers is red maple, named partly for its reddish blossoms. Another early bloomer is redbud, with tiny purplish flowers on twigs and branches. Dogwood features white petal-like bracts surrounding tiny yellow blooms. Later in spring, near the Lubber Run Amphitheater, you will see showy white blooms on serviceberry and white fringetree, both uncommon in our local woods. Tuliptree, with its yellow-green “tulips” in late spring, is a common canopy giant.

County News

Vaccine Dashboard

As of February 22, Arlington County had administered 13,922 first doses of the coronavirus vaccine, about 91 percent of the doses received. About 13 percent of the population had received a first dose, roughly the same as the statewide figure. You can find the Virginia vaccine dashboard online at Vaccine Dashboard Virginia.

New Parking Permit System

In February, the Arlington County Board approved an overhaul of the Residential Permit Parking Program following a 3-year review. The new system will take effect in April 2021. Under the program, households in neighborhoods like ours may petition for residential permit parking; a block of neighbors can choose permit parking, with neighbors paying a parking fee. You can find out more at Arlington Residential Permit Parking.

Virtual Parent Support Group

Hosted by Arlington County’s Child and Family Service’s Division, the group meets on Tuesdays from 7 to 8 p.m. to share experiences and discuss topics such as internet safety, time management for kids, COVID-related grief and loss, and the school IEP process. See the schedule and register at family.arlingtonva.us.

Express Library Services

On March 9, Arlington Public Library reopened two branches, Shirlington and Westover, for express services such as browsing for books, picking up holds, and using self-service checkout. All other services are unavailable, including public seating, meeting rooms, and public computers. The Central Library is continuing its holds pickup service and online library resources.

Missing Middle Housing Study

Arlington County has launched a multiyear initiative to gain public support for building “missing middle housing”—duplexes and townhouses—in neighborhoods like ours, currently zoned for single-family detached homes.

- Phase 1 (fall 2020–spring 2021): “Developing a common understanding of Arlington’s housing challenges and community priorities.”
- Phase 2 (summer 2021–fall 2021): “Focused study of housing types that address the County’s housing shortage and limited range of housing options.”
- Phase 3 (winter 2021–spring 2022): “Consideration of how to implement the conclusions of the previous phases, possibly leading to recommendations to amend the Zoning Ordinance, the Comprehensive Plan, and other policies and work programs.”

Around the Forest

Return to School

As Virginia eased its pandemic restrictions, Arlington Public Schools began a phased return to hybrid, in-person learning on Tuesday, March 2, starting with pre-kindergarten through second grade students. After almost a year, neighbors could again watch local kids waiting for school buses or walking to Barrett and Barcroft Elementary Schools.

Neighborhood Conservation Plan

Sponsored by the county, the plan is a once-in-generation opportunity for our neighborhood to take positions on issues ranging from schools, to parks, to neighborhood housing and more. You can review the draft plan on the AFCA website by clicking on Neighborhood, then going to the link. You will find email addresses for members of the writing team, who are happy to take comments and make revisions.

Mail Security Alert

A resident reported using the Arlington Forest Shopping Center mailbox to mail a check for bill payment. A thief stole the check, then altered and tried to cash it, but the check looked suspicious so the bank did not honor it. Mailbox thefts are reportedly uncommon, but you might consider taking mailed checks to the post office instead of using a mailbox.

Graffiti Alert

Decades have passed since graffiti was a serious problem in our local parks, but it has returned. In Lubber Run Park, at least one trailside boulder and a large oak were recently defaced with blue paint. Please keep an eye out for anyone defacing our local parks and report it to the police, who will welcome your call and gladly investigate.

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Annual Spring Cleanup

Our tenth annual Arlington Forest Spring Cleanup is coming up on April 24 from 9 a.m. to about 10:30 a.m., rain or shine. Neighbors will gather in Lubber Run Park (to remove trash from the streambed), on the Arlington Boulevard Southside buffer strip (to remove trash and clean up), and below the North Granada/North Greenbrier trailhead (to remove trash from the streambed). If you have questions, email John Naland at na-landfamily@yahoo.com.

Carlin Springs Road Construction

On February 3, the county announced the status of safety improvements at the intersection of North Carlin Springs Road and North Edison Street. The northeast, southeast, and southwest corners and medians were complete, including restoration. The northwest corner was partially complete, and base asphalt was complete. Remaining items included a proposed retaining wall at the northwest corner and sidewalk along the retaining wall, milling and overlay, and installation of pavement markings and signs.



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AFCA Meetings

March 17: Lubber Run Community Center, recycling issues

April 21: to be determined

May 19: Picnic and annual meeting (tentative—if conditions allow)

Community Calendar



The coronavirus pandemic has forced AFCA to limit the number of community events, with some down as tentative—to be held if conditions allow.

Next AFCA meeting: Wednesday, March 17, 7 p.m.

Neighborhood Spring Cleanup: Saturday, April 24

Home and Garden Tour: Cancelled

Annual AFCA Picnic: Wednesday, May 19 (tentative)

Annual Yard Sale: Saturday, May 22 (tentative)

Young Foresters Corner: Open Forum for Youth

Many if not most Arlington Foresters are under eighteen, and they have unique ideas and stories to tell about our neighborhood. Had an interesting experience? Know of a particular problem or program that you might want to share? Tell your story in 400 words or less and send it with a photo (if you have one) to Hutch Brown at newsletter@arlingtonforestva.org. Questions? Send an email or text/call 703-855-1732.

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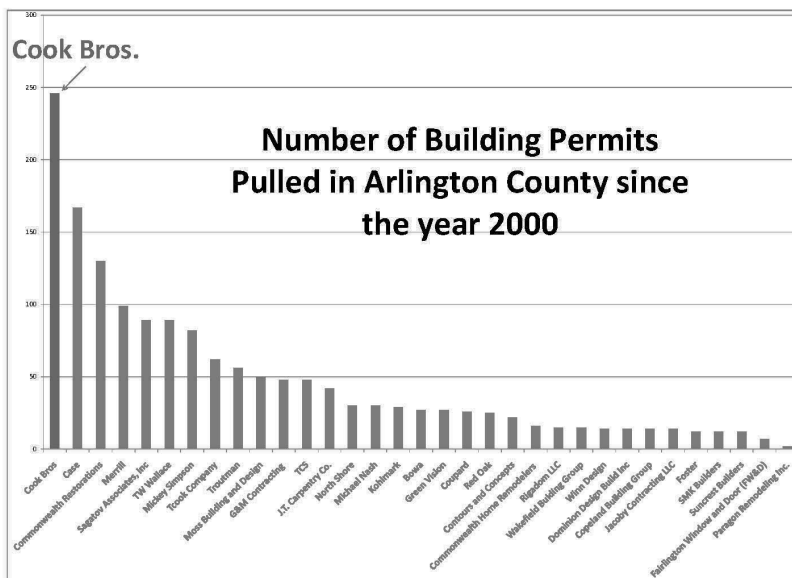
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By Samantha Bell

At the February 22 virtual Principals' Hour, parents reviewed a return-to-school plan giving further details for a typical day under the hybrid learning model. Activities will include health screening prior to boarding the bus or entering school.



Even though they were still in distance learning, students were able to exchange Valentine's Day cards. Students dropped the cards off at school, and staff sorted and redistributed the cards for students ahead of Valentine's Day. In addition, all students received a Valentine's Day treat bag from the PTA during school distribution hours.



Upcoming events for March include a virtual science night and Spring Break from March 29 to April 2.

12

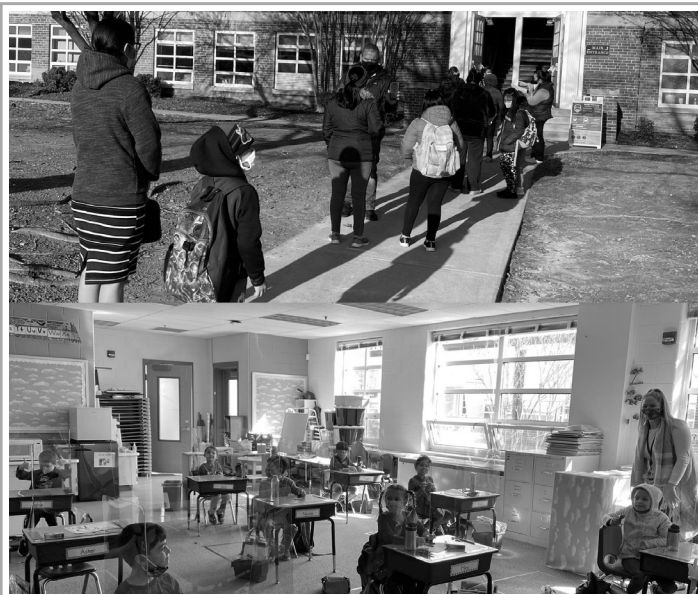
Barrett School News

By Will Le

Almost a year to the day that the pandemic forced the shutdown of Arlington schools, Barrett Elementary School, along with all other county schools, reopened its doors for the return of “level 2” students for in-person hybrid instruction—either on Tuesdays and Wednesdays or on Thursdays and Fridays. Families also had the option of remaining in an all-virtual learning model.

At our March PTA meeting, we were joined by Ms. Nicole McGarry, a licensed professional counselor with McLean Psychotherapy Practices, who spoke about mental health issues in relation to children and families struggling through the pandemic. She discussed signs to look for and when to seek professional help. She also provided advice on developing resiliency for our children and self-care for parents. In addition, Mr. Leonardo Espina met separately with our English learning parents to discuss strategies and resources for families struggling with mental health issues.

PTA members also raised concerns about the proposed Arlington Public Schools budget for fiscal year 2022, which would affect staff in Barrett’s two exemplary projects: Project Discovery, with hands-on learning in science and technology; and Project Interaction, which features family engagement and teaches communication



arts. The proposed budget could adversely affect the positions of Dr. Laurie Sullivan and Mr. Arturo Ramirez, who are integral members of our school community. With the school board scheduled to adopt the proposed budget on April 8 and act on the final budget on May 6, Barrett PTA members will consider ways of opposing the proposed cuts to exemplary projects. Please contact Will Le (president@kwbarrettpta.org) or Andrea Shaw (andreavshaw@gmail.com) for additional information.

Finally, a reminder that our virtual Family Science Night (STEAM Night), hosted by the Children’s Science Center, will be on Tuesday, March 23, at 6:00 p.m. Although there will be no science fair this year, students in 3rd through 5th grades are invited to join the Science Club on Wednesdays at 2:15 p.m. (the link is sent to their teachers weekly).

Virginia Eases Pandemic Restrictions

As COVID-19 hospitalizations and infection rates continued to decline and vaccinations rose in Virginia, Governor Ralph Northam announced steps to ease public health restrictions. As of March 1, the maximum number permitted in a social gathering increased from 10 to 25 people for outdoor settings (the number remains 10 people for indoor settings). Outdoor entertainment and public amusement venues are now able to operate with up to 1,000 individuals or at a 30-percent capacity, whichever is lower.

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			new!										Other
Name	Email	Phone											
Dylan Heinrich	dylanheinrich@icloud.com		✓	✓			✓	✓		✓			Odd jobs
Ethan Heinrich	ethan.heinrich27@gmail.com	703-475-8430		✓		✓*	✓	✓	✓	✓			*RC certified; Tutoring, ages 6-13
Emilie Kluge	emiliekluge@yahoo.com	571-457-1983	✓	✓		✓		✓	✓	✓			Tutoring
Colin Mashkuri	cjmashkuri@gmail.com	571-480-2855	✓					✓					Math tutoring
Andrew Rogers	andrewmcyt@gmail.com	703-892-0226	✓	✓									Yard work
Caroline Rogers	carolinearogers@verizon.net	703-892-0226	✓	✓		✓							
Cecilia Brennan	christybren@yahoo.com	703-475-3809	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓			
Donna Corina		703-248-8885	✓	✓	✓	✓*	✓						*RC certified
Atalie Dempsey	atalie.dempsey@gmail.com	571-317-9216	✓	✓		✓		✓		✓			
Evan Dempsey	Evan.cw.dempsey@gmail.com	703-559-9690	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓			
Anna D'Itri		703-346-3467	✓	✓				✓	✓	✓			
Gabriel D'Itri		703-346-3467			✓		✓						Lawn mowing
Charlotte Lawson	CharlotteLawsonnn@gmail.com	703-933-8880	✓	✓*		✓*							*References
Ciara McLaughlin	ciarahmclaughlin@gmail.com	703-712-9215				✓*			✓	✓			*Safe Sitter certified, references
Reid Messman		703-469-1988	✓*	✓									*References
Shea Messman		703-469-1988				✓*							*Safe Sitter certified, references
Alexandra Orli		703-528-5618		✓		✓*		✓	✓*				*References
Matthew Petruccelli	tony.petruccelli@gmail.com	703-629-0425			✓		✓						
Caulder Pickard	katiepickard@gmail.com	571-244-6870	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓			
Ava Smialowicz	ava.smialowicz@hotmail.com	703-424-0895		✓		✓*							*RC certified
Ben Sparks	benchispas@gmail.com		✓	✓									
Emma Weaver		703-875-8185				✓*							*Safe Sitter certified, references
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Tyler Dinan	chrisbettddinan@aol.com	703-525-5763	✓		✓	✓	✓						Lawn mowing
Evan Eng	dcharveydc@yahoo.com	703-861-1890	✓	✓	✓		✓						
Jeremy Fagen	jeremy.fagen@gmail.com	571-645-3475	✓	✓				✓					
Evie Price		703-402-5138	✓	✓		✓*		✓	✓	✓			*Pediatric training
Sophie Stewart	sophiestewart4@gmail.com	703-713-5902	✓	✓		✓		✓					
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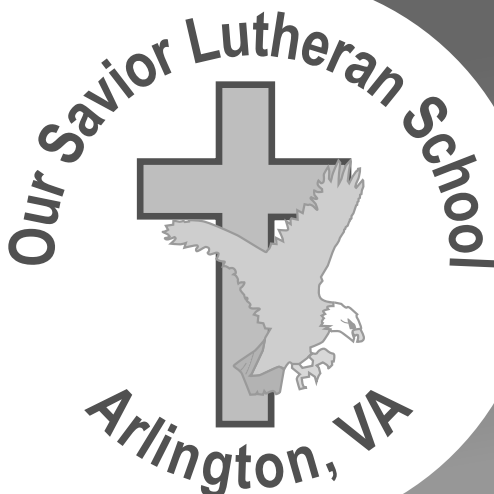
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