

The Arlington Forester



Volume 59, Number 6

Arlington, VA

March 2018

Update on Ballston Quarter

An update on plans for transforming Ballston Mall into Ballston Quarter tops the agenda of our AFCA monthly meeting on Wednesday, March 21st, at 7 pm in the Barrett School library. The meeting will also include a presentation of photos of local wildlife by nature photographer David Howell.

Carmen Strauchon from Forest City (the Ballston Quarter developer) will show project photos and plans, discuss the construction timeline, and share tenant and store information. She will be available to answer questions such as regarding traffic and density. The 25,000-square-foot food court is scheduled to open later this year with 18 restaurants including Ted's Bulletin.

In the second half of the meeting, amateur nature photographer and Greenbrier section resident David Howell will

present a slide show of some of the 300 species that he has photographed in Arlington County over the past few years. Nearly all these species could be found by anyone with a little effort, patience and knowledge, just walking in Arlington's parks and neighborhoods.

His photos have been exhibited in the atrium of the Central Library, at two County fairs, at three Community Centers, and at both Long Branch Nature Center and Gulf Branch Nature Center (currently and ongoing). They have also been included in two professional publications and are used on educational signage in Alexandria' Four Mile Run Park and the restoration project on Arlington's side of the same Four Mile Run segment.

Imagine: Our Own Farmers Market!

by Luke W. Reynolds



It is Saturday morning and between a row of pine trees and Barrett elementary school are dozens of people of all ages milling about, many chatting, some listening to an acoustic singer while drinking locally roasted coffee, while a

mom asks a young daughter how many cucumbers she wants to eat during the week. Crates of apples sit nearby while some passersby munch on a warm snack.

Sound too idealistic to be true? Come this spring, our community may be fortunate enough to host the Lubber Run Farmers Market. The Market would be open on Saturday mornings May through November in part of the Barrett Elementary School parking lot. Roughly a dozen regional

farmers and other food providers would participate.

A small group of volunteers has been planning the market since around the first of the year. Recent developments include the selection of a logo (see insert) after a community feedback process that revealed it was the overwhelming favorite of several options. We have also begun vendor selection. The level of interestcontinued on page 2

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AFCA Meeting 7 p.m. March 21 at Barrett School Library

THE ARLINGTON FORESTER

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Editor's Note

The *Arlington Forester* welcomes articles, news notes, letters, and photos focusing on non-commercial events or issues specific to our neighborhood. We publish eight times per year (Sept to Nov and Jan to May). Deadline for submissions is the first of the month. E-mail submissions of up to 400 words to newsletter@arlingtonforestva.org. Space often fills up before the deadline.

Farmers Market

...continued from page 1

by farmers and other food producers has been surprisingly strong for a new market. In fact, we expect to open with a strong mix of producers, including those selling fruits, vegetables, bread, meats, eggs, and prepared food items.

And, we are humbled by the support so far from the local community. In fact, Arlington Forest Civic Association, Ballston Row-Henderson HOA, Ballston Row-Pershing HOA, and Cathcart Springs HOA have issued letters of support for the proposed market. Arlington Public Schools has endorsed the use of its space and the use permit application is expected to go before the County Board for approval on May 19th.

Want to get involved? Opportunities exist for you to support the market on your own schedule, such as by managing a social media engagement campaign or contacting local merchants for sponsorships, or through commitments to spend a couple hours helping with market operations after opening. Please contact robswennesft@outlook.com. The Lubber Run Farmers Market has great promise to promote healthy eating and provide opportunities to strengthen community relationships. We look forward to continuing to share updates in the months ahead. And, we hope to see you at the Market once it opens!

Why farmers markets?

- Local markets strengthen community connections and collaboration
- Freshly picked, in-season produce is at its peak in flavor and nutrition
- Local markets help new and smaller farmers be successful and save farmland
- It's a great way to get kids interested in healthy eating

Community Yard Sale

Start cleaning out those closets because Arlington Forest's long-running annual Community Yard Sale is around the corner. This year's event will be on Saturday, May 19th. With around 40 Arlington Forest households participating each year, the event attracts bargain hunters from around the Metro area who are drawn to the convenience of cruising through one area to visit many sales. See next month's newsletter for suggestions on how to hold a successful sale.

It's Block Party Season

by John Naland

Spring is the perfect season for block parties. If your block is not among the many in Arlington Forest that hold annual block parties, you might consider setting one up this spring. Block parties are a great way to bring together neighbors who live more than a few doors apart. Kids have a blast playing in the closed-off street while adults enjoy a pot-luck dinner and good conversation. You can put out a sign-up sheet to voluntarily collect e-mail addresses in order to create a block e-mail collective to communicate throughout the year.

To organize a block party, first talk up the idea with a few neighbors and get them to agree on a date and time (typically a Sunday afternoon). Then create a simple printed flyer and deliver it door-to-door inviting everyone else on the block and informing them of the temporary street closure. The organizers might want to volunteer to provide tables to put food on and paper plates, cups, napkins, and eating utensils. Everyone should bring chairs for themselves along with food or dessert to share.

If you live in a cul-de-sac, you might be able to informally close off the end of the street during your block party. But if you live on a through street, you need to get

the County to deliver large orange safety cones for you to put at the ends of the block to detour non-resident traffic. To do so, apply for a block party permit at the main County office building at least 72 hours before the event (they strictly enforce that deadline). There is a \$64 fee for the permit and six safety cones (you can recoup the fee by putting out a donation jar during the block party).

For details, search "block party" on the County website.



Adam (RT) Tnaib

202-725-0055

adamt@kw.com

Your neighbor and realtor in Arlington Forest

If you are thinking about selling this spring, now is the perfect time to start getting your home ready.

Please contact me for a free/no obligation consultation to learn about simple things you can do to improve the value of your home.

I look forward to working with you.



Arlington's Own Radio Station

by Janet Irwin

Have you tuned in yet to Arlington's own local radio station? If not, you should give it a listen. WERA-LP 96.7's mission is to enlighten, enrich, and entertain Arlington's diverse community by promoting and facilitating independent radio.

On December 6, 2015, Arlington entered a new era with the introduction of WERA-LP 96.7 onto the FM dial. WERA's programming is produced by and for the community. The station is an outlet for anyone interested in creating, producing, and delivering broadcast-quality content to the Arlington community and surrounding area. WERA-LP features local-centric programming brought to you by talented and dedicated volunteer producers working in a wide variety of genres and styles to bring the sights and sounds of the Arlington area to our listeners.

Programming includes numerous useful and stimulating shows such as Lyn Borton's Choose to Be Curious every Wednesday morning at 10, and Arlington Voices hosted by Andrew Schneider on Friday mornings at 10 -- an interview program featuring Arlington residents from all walks of life. There is a wide variety of other arts, current issues, and local business-oriented shows, including Forester Sal D'itri's inspirational "Grace in Thirty" every Wednesday at 6pm.

It also includes a huge number of great music shows reflecting individual producers' personal music knowledge and interests, with a strong emphasis on local and area music and performers. Some may remember Mary Cliff's long-running Saturday night folk music show from other area public radio stations; now she has moved to WERA on Saturday nights!

Check out the schedule (go to <https://www.wera.fm/> and click on "Programming") to see the tremendous range of music and interests represented -- blues, DMV-centric bands and shows, rock and pop gems that seldom get commercial airplay, jazz, folk, classical, reggae, hip-hop, world music...you name it and you can probably find it on WERA!

.....
Spring Cleanup: Mark your calendar for the morning of Saturday, April 21st, for AFCA's seventh annual Arlington Forest Spring Cleanup. We will pick up trash, remove invasive plants, and otherwise beautify our public spaces. Cleanup sites will be Lubber Run Park, the Arlington Blvd southside buffer strip, and the Four Mile Run streambed at the foot of N. Greenbrier Street. Please join your neighbors at one of those sites. More details will appear in next month's newsletter.

The Spring real estate market has arrived, and the supply of homes is increasing so far in March and so is buyer activity, with an absorption rate of 1.5 months. It's a seller's market for sure and bidding wars do happen, although not at the pace they did a few years ago. Sellers have options on pricing strategies and most will view initial realistic positioning in a value range as the best strategy to attract educated buyers, who have easy access to available market data. Days on market is influential and impacts how buyers approach an offer. They don't have much leverage in the first few weeks and won't present lowball offers on a fresh commodity. Mortgage rates increased in early March, with current fixed rates averaging 4.5%. According to Freddie Mac, the average mortgage rate from the 1970s-2000 was about 7%, the average rate from 2000-2008 was 6% and since 2008 they've been between

3.5 to 4%. Freddie Mac currently predicts that rates will reach about 5% by the end of 2018. About 1/3rd of recent purchases in the area were made with less than 20% down payment. Conventional loans are available at 3%, 5%, 10% and 15% down. Some local lenders have special programs with 3% to 5% down using conventional financing and eliminate the monthly mortgage insurance payment. Other options are to avoid PMI (private mortgage insurance) are 80/20 (zero down), 80/15/5 (5% down) and 80/10/10 (10% down). With low home inventory and strong buyer demand, the reputation of the mortgage lender is a critical component of any transaction. A pre-approval letter from a strong local lender is a key factor for winning a competitive bid. Some lenders can close a loan in 2 to 3 weeks, which is attractive to sellers. Need some advice on mortgage lenders and how to compete? Let's talk!



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E-CARE

Do you have half-empty paint cans gathering dust in your basement? What about unneeded car fluids, household cleaners, or garden chemicals? Or maybe an obsolete computer or television?

Arlington's semi-annual E-CARE event allows residents to safely get rid of hazardous household materials and electronics which cannot be discarded in regular trash. The next E-CARE takes place between 8:30 AM and 3 PM on Saturday, March 31st (held rain or shine) at the Yorktown High School parking lot.

Acceptable electronics include computers, printers, keyboards, scanners, copiers, cellphones, and televisions. Acceptable hazardous materials include automotive fluids, batteries, compact fluorescent light bulbs, fire extinguishers, flammable solvents, fluorescent tubes, household cleaners, lawn chemicals, paint, pesticides, petroleum products, and propane gas cylinders. Acceptable small metal items include pots, pans, tools, pipes, venetian blinds, and small appliances.

Just load up your car with the unwanted items and then drive through the various stations -- dropping off paint cans at one station, TVs at another station, and so on. There is a \$20 recycling fee for CRT televisions, but no charge for LED or LCD monitors or TVs.

The non-profit group Bikes for the World will collect

serviceable bikes to be sent to countries where they are needed for basic transportation. Other local non-profits will accept household goods for low-income families in Honduras, eyeglasses for those needing them in El Salvador, and durable medical equipment.

For a full list of acceptable items, search "E-CARE" on the County website.

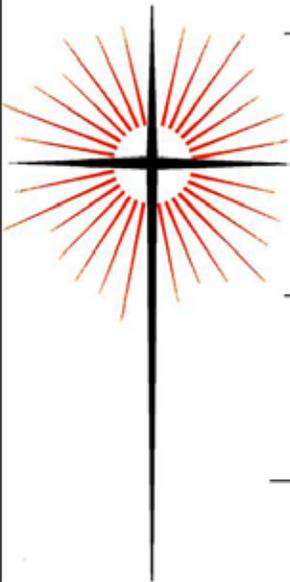
Good Cats, Bad Cats by a Neighbor

It's Spring! Songbirds return from their wintering lands to our Forest, serenading us and starting new families. They pollinate flowers, vegetables and trees and help manage mosquito and garden pest populations. Unless, that is, a roaming cat pounces on a parent. The remaining parent can't protect, feed and coach the brood solo. Five birds, a generation, die.

With 70 million roaming in the U.S., cats pose a greater threat to songbirds than habitat loss. We witness cats killing birds near our feeders and among flowers and shrubs where cats hide and then ambush birds.

Please keep your cat indoors during bird breeding season. Or confine your pet cat with cat-proof fencing. See samples at <https://www.deerbusters.com/cat-fence-kits/>. At the very least, limit your cat's outdoor time to mid-day, when birds have a better chance of spotting a predator. Those of us who love the wildlife our Forest attracts thank you.

Celebrate Holy Week and Easter with Us!



- Sun. Mar. 25** Holy Eucharist and Blessing of the Palms - 10 am
- Thurs. Mar. 29** Loaves & Fishes Meal & Service - 6:30 - 8 pm
- Fri. Mar. 30** Good Friday Services - 12 noon and 7 pm
Good Friday Vigil - 1 - 7 pm
- Sun. Apr. 1** Easter Festive Holy Eucharist with children's message - 10 am
Easter Egg Hunt and reception after the 10 am service

- Sat. Mar. 17** Family Game Night - 7 - 9 pm **Free.** Bring games or use ours.
Refreshments provided. We invite you to bring a non-perishable food item to donate to AFAC. (See website for more information)
- Tues. Apr. 3** Book Club *The Gentleman in Moscow* by Amor Towles 7:30 pm

Sunday Worship Services
8 am and 10 am

Sunday Christian Education
Adults 9 am — Youth 10 am

All are welcome to all services and activities!

St. John's Episcopal Church

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Community Calendar

Next AFCA Meeting: Wednesday, March 21st, 7 PM, Barrett Elementary School. See page 1 for details.

E-CARE: Saturday, March 31st at Yorktown High School parking lot. Semi-annual recycling event.

Neighborhood Spring Cleanup: Saturday, April 21st. Help beautify our neighborhood parks.

Annual Yard Sale: Saturday, May 19th. Turn unwanted stuff into cash.

Taste of Arlington: May 20th. Annual food tasting event along Wilson Blvd near Ballston Mall.

Lubber Run Amphitheater: Live entertainment under the stars resumes in June.

Arlington County Fair: August 15th to 19th. Rides, food, displays, and racing pigs.

Future AFCA Meetings:

April 18: School Board Chair Barbara Kanninen

May 16: Picnic and Annual Membership Meeting

September 19: AFCA begins a new year of advocacy

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I look forward to meeting with you.

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Barcroft School News

Barcroft Elementary students have been enjoying fun activities lately. BiBa Chat (the bilingual parents' group) and the PTA sponsored a fantastic Valentines' party, with a DJ, balloons, and delicious food. Based on ticket sales and the enthusiastic group we welcomed on February 16th, it appears that more than 100 families were represented! It's great to support a community-building activity while also raising money for field trips, teacher training and other important things in support of the school.

On March 6th, a number of 5th-graders from Barcroft and other APS elementary schools were honored at an artists' reception at the Arlington Education Center on N. Quincy. APS will display their art there until April 4th.

Spring break is the week of March 26th, followed by spring intersession. For this optional two weeks in the spring and fall, students may choose from varied offerings that enrich their school experience with fun topics like art exploration, yoga, and cooking.

STEAM Family Learning Night is coming up on March 20th. Join us for exciting games and activities in science, technology, engineering, art and math. In the fall, there was a great family game night, and there's now a game library with suggested age ranges, skills targeted, and guiding questions for parents to ask.

The PTA will sponsor an adults-only fundraiser at the Barcroft Community House the evening of April 28th where guests can enjoy food and drink while listening to live acoustic music. Stay tuned for ticket information, as details are being finalized.



Upcoming AFCA Events:
Spring Cleanup, April 21st
Community Yard Sale, May 19th



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Your Neighbor in Arlington Forest

If you are considering putting your home on the market, I would suggest that you begin getting your home ready as soon as possible. By having your home ready and in great shape for the new owners, the price that you get will be higher than if you don't prepare the home for sale. I have a list of things that owners should do in preparation to market their home. If

you would like to meet with me to see your home and give you some ideas on how to prepare it, please call me for a free, no obligation consultation. With the inventory low, it is an ideal time to sell your home. I look forward to meeting with you.

Jim

Streetlight Management Planning

Project manager Santosh Neupane recently briefed the Neighborhood Conservation Advisory Council (NCAC) on the County's ongoing Streetlights Management Plan (SMP), which focuses on researching new streetlight technology, investigating ways to enhance the appearance of our streetscapes, updating lighting standards and improving outage reporting.

Currently, the County owns and manages about 39 percent of our streetlights, Dominion Power about 59 percent, and VDOT about 2 percent. A graphic showing which streetlights are managed by whom looks like a handful of green and red confetti flung across the County map. This plus the multiple models and ages of streetlights can result in longer waits and higher costs for repairs, as well as occasional digging mistakes when a Dominion team accidentally cuts a County light cable, or vice versa.

While streetlight ownership won't change soon, the County is currently planning to update its own streetlight system, researching best technologies and practices to achieve safety, sustainability (energy savings, health, environmental impacts), and streetscape priorities. "Smart" streetlights may adjust wattage—bright when pedestrians and bikers need them, then dimmer as streets empty. A light may notify repair teams when it needs repair. Adjustable domes may reduce unwanted light going into resi-

dent's bedrooms. To learn more about the plans, search "Streetlights Management Plan" on the County website.

In the meantime, to report a streetlight outage, follow instructions on the County's Report-A-Problem page (<https://topics.arlingtonva.us/reportproblem/>). The County will send a repair team or will relay the message to Dominion Power if they own the malfunctioning light.

Bicycle Transportation Planning

As part of Arlington's Master Transportation Plan, a bicycle working group is updating the County's 2008 Bicycle Plan, analyzing best practices, and developing a strategy for making and keeping bicycling convenient and attractive for transportation, exercise, and play? How can we meet the needs of potential cyclists from a wide range of ages, abilities and backgrounds? How can we balance the interests of motorists, pedestrians and cyclists on often crowded roadways?

Priorities may include closing gaps between unconnected trails and identifying secondary roads for cyclists that parallel busy arteries like Columbia Pike, where a bicycle lane won't fit. Some pedestrians avoid shared use trails because of speeding cyclists. How can we best manage their needs? To find minutes from the working group's meetings and future meeting dates, search "Master Transportation Bicycle Element" on the County website.



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Southside:

- Daniel O'Mara: dog walking, pet sitting, snow shoveling, leaf raking, tomara@teamcfw.com, 703-769-3767
- Ethan O'Mara: dog walking, pet sitting, snow shoveling, leaf raking, tomara@teamcfw.com, 703-769-3767
- Andrew Rogers: yard work, dog walking, pet sitting, andrewmcyt@gmail.com, 703-892-0226
- Caroline Rogers: babysitting, pet sitting, dog walking, carolinearogers@verizon.net, 703-892-0226
- Julia Rogers (college breaks only): babysitting (RC certified), yard work, juliaerogers23@gmail.com, 703-892-0226

Greenbrier Section:

- CeCe Collinson: babysitting (references), pet sitting, dog walking, plant watering, mail collection, 703-528-3595
- Donna Corina: babysitting (RC certified), dog walking, pet sitting, leaf raking, snow shoveling, tutoring, 703-248-8885
- Ethan Hall (college breaks only): snow shoveling, k.hall.b@verizon.net, 302-650-4428
- Jack Holt: babysitting (RC certified), yard work, snow shoveling, leaf raking, watering plants, tutoring, jackloginname@gmail.com, call or text 703-470-8040
- Anthony Lawson: yard work, pet sitting, dog walking, 703-933-8880
- Charlotte Lawson: leaf raking, pet sitting, dog walking, 703-933-8880
- Reid Messman: pet sitting, dog walking (references), 703-469-1988
- Shea Messman: babysitting (Safe Sitter certified, references), 703-469-1988
- Alexandra Orli: babysitting (references), mother's helper, pet sitting, watering plants, call 703-528-5618
- Carsten Schoer: math tutoring, soccer lessons, snow shoveling, leaf raking, yard work, carstenschoer@gmail.com, call/text 703-209-0905
- Leah Shvedova: babysitting (references), tutoring through 8th grade (Social Science, English, Algebra), pet sitting, watering plants, 571-426-6818
- Emma Weaver: babysitting (Safe Sitter certified, references), 703-875-8185

Next AFCA Meeting:
Wednesday, March 21st
Update on Ballston Quarter

Northside:

- Daniel Brancati: yard work, leaf raking, snow shoveling, car washing (in your driveway), daniel@barms.org, 703-243-1916
- Laura Brancati: babysitting (RC certified), dog walking, pet sitting, laura@barms.org, 703-243-1916
- Riittisha Choudhary: tutoring, babysitting (ages 4-12), yard work, riittishachoudhary@gmail.com
- Ely Constantine: pet sitting, leaf raking, snow shoveling, lawn mowing, cpconstantine@comcast.net, 703-841-9229
- Tyler Dinan: babysitting, leaf raking, snow shoveling, dog walking, chrisbettandin@aol.com, 703-525-5763
- Alex Eng: pet sitting, leaf raking, snow shoveling, dcharveydc@yahoo.com, 703-861-1890
- Evan Eng: pet sitting, dog walking, leaf raking, snow shoveling, dcharveydc@yahoo.com, 703-861-1890
- Jeremy Fagen: pet sitting (any animal), dog walking, plant watering, jdoxen11001@gmail.com, 703-200-2396
- Leina Gabra: babysitting (ages 4-12), house sitting, leinagabra@gmail.com, 703-973-8914
- Ethan Nissenson: lawn mowing, leaf raking, snow shoveling, Enissenson@verizon.net, 703-201-0523
- Sophie Stewart: mother's helper, pet sitting, sophiestewart4@gmail.com, 703-402-5494

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3905 - Thomas Jefferson MS 3917 - Washington Lee HS 4566 - Wakefield HS

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