

The Arlington Forester

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Arlington, Virginia

November 2025

Virtual AFCA Meeting—Aging in Place in Arlington

AFCA invites you to join our monthly Zoom meeting at 7 p.m. on November 5. Wendy Zenker from Arlington Neighborhood Village (ANV) will give a presentation on the ANV program. Wendy will have a volunteer join her to discuss the community impact of being a volunteer. ANV members pay an annual fee; in exchange, ANV provides such benefits as running errands (grocery shopping, medication pickup, and bank business); giving rides to the doctor, store, bank, and so on; and household help, along with technology assistance and help connecting online.

To join the meeting through Zoom, enter the following URL into your browser between 6:45 and 7 p.m. on Wednesday, November 5: <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/86776565835>. Alternatively, you can dial in to the meeting at 301-715-8592, where you will be prompted to enter meeting number 867 7656 5835 and passcode 469609. You might also be prompted to hit the # sign one or more times. This call-in number will be active starting at 6:45 p.m.

How Do AFCA Dues Benefit You?

Your annual AFCA dues help get this newsletter delivered to your door as a service to you and the entire neighborhood, with information on trees and parks, trails and bridges, the Lubber Run Amphitheater and Farmers Market, traffic and pedestrian safety, and more. Dues pay for our annual picnic and Santa party and for donations to our neighborhood schools. Dues support the AFCA website (at www.arlingtonforestva.org), which contains a detailed neighborhood map, a history of Arlington Forest, back issues of this newsletter, and more. Please pay your dues promptly this year.

AFCA MEMBERSHIP DUES ANNUAL DUES \$20 PER HOUSEHOLD

Pay online on the AFCA website through PayPal or deliver this form and your check payable to AFCA to your respective AFCA section representative:

Greenbrier: Tom Smialowicz, 26 N. Granada St. 22203

Northside: Liz Grossman, 128 N. Columbus St. 22203

Southside: Julie Kirchhoff, 4828 Arlington Blvd. 22204

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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 and photos focusing on issues specific to our neighborhood. We publish monthly from September to November and January to May. The deadline for submissions is the first of the month. Email your submission of up to 400 words—preferably with a photo—to newsletter@arlingtonforestva.org. Articles on controversial issues are welcome but do not necessarily reflect the views of AFCA and will be marked as opinion.

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AFCA October Meeting By Janet Irwin and Char Mahoney, AFCA Secretaries

The October AFCA meeting was held on October 15 via Zoom with about 24 participants. Forester Tom Shannon, the head of Phoenix Bikes in the Arlington Mill complex on Columbia Pike, spoke about Phoenix Bikes, which emphasizes community engagement and service through youth training and internship programs. Phoenix specializes in repairing, restoring, and recycling donated bikes. Through the free Earn-a-Bike program, youth 11 years and older can learn bike repair and tune-up skills at the shop and then take home their own restored bike. Phoenix also teaches youth interns as young as 15 more advanced skills. In addition, Phoenix teaches racing and mountain biking and fosters ride activities. Meeting participants discussed possibly organizing an Arlington Forest ride this fall or next spring.

The next speaker was Jacqueline Snelling, a Forester who has long worked with the Arlington County Civic Federation. She presented Arlington County's ongoing process for revising the General Land Use Plan (GLUP). The county has been relying on the existing plan, with updates to business expansion in and around metro corridors, limiting incursions into neighborhoods. The new direction would abandon those limitations, although the proposed changes are vague with regard to neighborhood upzoning, density increases, local taxation, community benefits, and more. Jacqueline encouraged Foresters to respond to a county survey on proposed GLUP changes by November 16.

AFCA Treasurer Jeff Horwitz presented the proposed AFCA budget for 2025-26 and it was approved. AFCA has about \$15,000 in its account. The biggest expense for the coming year will be newsletter costs (about \$8,000). Total expenses will be about \$11,400, including software licenses and renting space at the Lubber Run Community Center for meetings and events. The Arlington Forest home tour coming up in May 2026 will have unspecified expenses.

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The Housing Market in Arlington: Local Realtor Report

By Char Mahoney and Janet Irwin, AFCA Secretaries

At our September AFCA meeting, Arlington Foresters Casey O'Neill and Paul Cachion, both experienced local realtors, discussed the real estate market in Arlington Forest and the greater Arlington area. (Omar Sherzai is another experienced local realtor who lives with his family in Arlington Forest; for more information, see the ads for all three realtors in this issue.) We gave the gist of what Casey and Paul reported in the October issue of *The Arlington Forester*. This article gives a fuller overview of their report, including many details.

The real estate market in Arlington has generally been more resilient than in neighboring jurisdictions. During the Great Recession (2008-11), for example, Arlington's housing market did not lose significant value. Maryland and the District of Columbia have been more affected than Arlington by recent federal layoffs and economic uncertainty. The median average price for all housing in Arlington (condominiums, townhouses, and single-family homes (SFHs)) was \$750,000 in August 2025, up by about 10.8% from August 2024. For condos, the median average price was \$528,000, up from \$488,650; for townhouses, it was \$924,900, up from \$730,000; and for SFHs, it was \$1.38 million, up from \$1.25 million. The number of days a house stayed on the market rose from 23 in August 2024 to 41 in August 2025, indicating a slight softening of the market. The list-price-to-sale-price ratio fell from 98.9% in August 2024 to 97.1% in August 2025. Interest rates have climbed in recent years but not beyond their historical average, so the issue for the housing market is not interest rates but low inventory and insufficient new housing starts.

Arlington Forest in particular appeals to young couples and families from other parts of the Washington metropolitan area for its relative affordability, outstanding location, and family orientation. Recent development in Ballston makes houses in Arlington Forest a better value than the small and expensive condos in our area, which are higher priced per square foot than Arlington Forest homes. Arlington Forest homeowners tend to stay longer in their homes than the national average, and many keep their houses and rent them out rather than selling them. Renters tend to be young couples and families rather than groups, consistent with Arlington Forest's general family orientation.

As of September, eight Arlington Forest homes had



sold in 2025, whereas 20 homes were sold in 2024, so sales have slowed a bit. The average Arlington Forest sale price was \$1,060,000 in 2025, compared to \$1,081,000 in 2024. Real estate investment trusts have been buying homes in Clarendon but not in Arlington Forest. Cash sales have gone up because higher interest rates have made financing less attractive. Most buyers in Arlington Forest acquire an unimproved home and then make improvements over time. Teardowns have been few because most builders

cannot justify the cost of buying an older home on a small lot and then building an expensive new one. An exception is a large new home across from the Lubber Run Community Center in Northside; with an asking price of \$2.5 million, it has been on the market for months.



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Forester Chronicles: Lubber Run—Gratitude Runs Deep

By Todd Burns, AFCA Historian

One hundred years ago, the land in and around Lubber Run Park looked very different from the vibrant Arlington Forest neighborhood we know today. In the early 1900s, the area was largely rural—marked by scattered farms, dense woodlands, and unpaved roads. Lubber Run, a narrow stream winding through a wooded ravine, provided a reliable source of water for livestock, irrigation, and perhaps even the occasional secretive use during the Prohibition era. Long before it became a county park, the forested landscape was a vital part of everyday life. Local residents relied on the woods for hunting, gathering firewood, and enjoying moments of quiet reflection in nature. Although Washington, DC, was just a short train ride away, this part of Arlington remained semirural well into the 1930s.

By 1941, the county had officially designated Lubber Run Park, protecting a slice of natural beauty just as development surged. Over the decades, the park has become not only a beloved neighborhood space but also a living link to the area's deeper past. Because November is often termed the gratitude month, I thought it appropriate to list 10 things we can be grateful for as stewards and neighbors of Lubber Run Park:

1. *A preserved piece of Arlington's past.* The park protects one of the county's few remaining natural stream valleys, nearly unchanged for over a century.
2. *Neighborhood green space.* Lubber Run offers everyday access to trails, trees, and wildlife right in our own backyard.

3. *Lubber Run Amphitheater.* Since the 1960s, this beloved venue has brought free music and theater to the community.
4. *Natural flood protection.* The stream valley absorbs runoff and reduces flood risks to our neighborhood during heavy rains.
5. *Wildlife habitat.* From owls to foxes and salamanders, the park supports a wide variety of native species.
6. *Environmental education.* Local schools and families use the park to teach kids about ecosystems and conservation.
7. *A trail connector.* The park links neighborhoods and encourages walking, running, and biking through nature. Recently, some have even thought it a good idea to try driving in the park!
8. *Civic engagement.* Volunteers and neighbors have helped restore trails, remove invasives, and plant native species.
9. *Seasonal beauty.* From spring wildflowers to golden fall leaves, the park offers year-round inspiration.
10. *Peaceful escape.* Just like a hundred years ago, Lubber Run offers moments of quiet for reflection, relaxation, and connection with nature.

Lubber Run is more than just a park—it's a living part of Arlington Forest's history and a daily reminder of what thoughtful preservation can offer a community. Maybe you can think of a few other things to include on your own list?



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Foresters Raise Lubber Run Park Issues With Parks Manager

On September 22, more than a dozen neighbors led by Art Schwartz met with Arlington County Parks Area Manager Lyndell Core at the Lubber Run Amphitheater. Art arranged the meeting with Lyndell to discuss safety, erosion, and other issues in Lubber Run Park. The 31-acre park, Arlington's oldest, is managed as a natural area traversed by a (normally) placid stream. The park is heavily used by Foresters and others from across Arlington. In a 2020 neighborhood survey, 99% of the respondents reported using Lubber Run Park at least occasionally (73% said often).

Safety issues in the park include cars using the asphalt streamside trail, bikes on unpaved trails, and erosion damage to some trails. The county has installed bollards at park entrances to keep out unauthorized vehicles, including one at the foot of the amphitheater parking lot, with plans for more nearby. Vehicles carrying the disabled to picnic shelters need to get permission from Lyndell, who will urge them to instead use shelters with nearby parking, such as in Glencarlyn Park. The county has installed signs at most park access points to keep out unauthorized vehicles and to keep bikes off unpaved trails; Lyndell urged anyone seeing violators to use the county's report-a-problem tool (online at Arlington County VA Report a Problem). Lyndell noted that the yellow line on the asphalt trail in Lubber Run Park tells users that the trail has multiple uses and two-way traffic. He said that the county will replace a damaged bench along the asphalt trail below the amphitheater, and participants asked for the bench to be moved to keep children from hitting it while sledding downhill.

Participants also raised the ongoing parkwide issue of erosion damage due to stormwater runoff, including toppled trees. Lyndell said that capital improvement projects would be needed to repair erosion damage to the unpaved trail below 3rd St. N. in Northside and to the unpaved trail below Greenbrier (dubbed the Goat Trail), including its degraded access point near the fire ring along the stream. For projects in need of capital improvement funding, Lyndell suggested applying to the Arlington Neighborhoods Program. He noted that Arlington Natural Resources Manager Alonso Abugattas and Urban Forest Manager Vincent Verweij have said that rerouting the Goat Trail uphill to avoid further erosion damage would be difficult. One participant claimed that many trees in Lubber Run Park are dying, an issue that has to do with regional oak decline.

The county has emplaced riprap (boulders) along Lubber Run to control erosion and is not considering a stream resilience project like the projects on several North Arlington streams. Participants in the meeting with Lyndell noted the role of Ballston Pond in detaining floodwaters and the installation of an underground stormwater detention vault in Westover. The county has planned a similar vault in Woodlawn Park, where Lubber Run emerges from underground, but the project is on

hold due to neighborhood opposition. A participant suggested meeting with the ARMN (Arlington Regional Master Naturalists) park steward for Woodlawn Park through AFCA to make the case for the project.

The ARMN steward for Lubber Run Park asked Lyndell about plans for controlling a bamboo invasion coming from a backyard in Greenbrier. Lyndell pointed to past success in getting homeowners to remove sources of invasive plants and in controlling bamboo in parks by lopping and then treating with herbicide. However, his parks staff has no immediate plans for treating the Lubber Run Park infestation. Lyndell noted that his staff is now using electric rather than gas-powered leaf blowers to reduce noise, carbon emissions, and wasteful fuel use. He also pointed to vandalism of the playground at the Lubber Run Community Center and to playground sand damage to slides there.

Lyndell welcomed further neighborhood meetings with him to discuss park issues, perhaps together with Alonso Abugattas, Vincent Verweij, and a county stormwater manager for better communication and coordination among county departments. He also suggested inviting an Arlington County Board member to speak about issues affecting our local parks (Bluemont, Glencarlyn, and Lubber Run) at an AFCA meeting. The council members most directly involved in park issues are Susan Cunningham and J.D. Spain.



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Erosion in Lubber Run Park: What Can Be Done?

By Hutch Brown

Arlington Forest residents have long wondered how to stop erosion in Lubber Run Park. Streambank erosion was a major concern in both the 1991 and the 2022 neighborhood conservation plans for Arlington Forest (both are posted on the AFCA website). Yet erosion is a natural process that has been going on for eons—since long before the Potomac River shaped Great Falls and Mather Gorge, spectacular examples of natural erosion.

Arlington Forest is perched on what geologists call a terrace. Terraces in our area comprise sediments up to hundreds of feet thick that were left by ancient rivers. Long before humans evolved, regional uplift caused Lubber Run to start cutting through our local terrace, eroding away the sediments to form a valley adjoining the gorge carved by Four Mile Run. In the process, a lower floodplain terrace emerged where the trails in the park are today. A new equilibrium developed between streambed and floodplain: during storms, floodwaters spilled over streambanks and spread across the floodplain, dissipating the stormwaters' erosive force.

Urban development disrupted the natural equilibrium by breaking the connectivity between streambed and floodplain. In the 1930s-60s, bedroom communities like Arlington Forest sprang up countywide, converting what were once farm- and woodlands into paved streets, suburban homes, and shopping centers with parking lots. Instead of seeping into soils and percolating through the groundwater into local streams, heavy rains now pour from gutters down streets into storm sewers feeding underground pipelines that gush stormwater into truncated creeks, scouring streambeds, collapsing streambanks, and toppling streamside trees.

The upshot is evident in Lubber Run Park. The creek has scoured down to the bedrock from just below N. George Mason Dr. all the way through the narrow rock channel below the Lubber Run Amphitheater and



beyond. The bedrock prevents further downcutting, and much of the creek is now lined with rock walls and protective boulders called riprap. Yet stormwaters still erode exposed streambanks, undermining oaks and other trees, some more than a century old. Moreover, an epic storm in July 2019 blew out parts of what neighbors subsequently dubbed the Goat Trail, now precariously perched on a narrow ledge above the creek. In addition, side streams have eroded gullies across the park.

Erosion isn't all you see. Where the Goat Trail heads uphill towards Greenbrier, erosion gives way to its natural counterpart, downstream deposition. Here, both sides of

Lubber Run are still connected to the streambed, and stormwaters spill onto a floodplain that is relatively wide and flat. The floodplain is covered with sands deposited from upstream, and the rock deposits on gravel bars are wider here than anywhere else in the park. During the heaviest storms, the stream backs up behind the culvert under Arlington Blvd., where the streambed has accumulated a mound of rounded river rocks. Sands and silts that cover the park's asphalt trail following heavy storms stem from the same natural processes of erosion and downstream deposition.

Streams like Lubber Run have always been eroding and redepositing streambed materials, so stopping erosion isn't really the issue. The issue is Lubber Run's loss of connectivity with its floodplain. In future newsletters, I will explore the issue in a series of articles based on historical and county records, beginning with what Lubber Run might have looked like both before and after our area was cleared for farming in the 1700s. I will then examine how urbanization disrupted the balance between streambed and floodplain, what the county has done about it, and what more might be done.

PTA Update—Barrett Elementary School

By Reina Malakoff

So much good stuff is happening at Barrett! We welcomed our new principal, Dr. Rivas; she is knowledgeable and kind, and we are lucky to have her. Barrett students are hard at work and learning. In 5th grade Math, students are working on orders of operations. Ms. Reed even had students play a layering game to demonstrate order, with clothes playing the part of steps. Fifth grade is heading out with the Chesapeake Bay Foundation to

study river ecosystems while boating on the Potomac River. They will also test the quality of the water and discuss ways we can help protect the ecosystem.

Fourth grade is heading to Potomac Overlook Park to study forest ecosystems by looking at animals that live there and their roles in the food web. The kids will hike through the woods to see things that Ms. Lombardi has discussed in Project Discovery. Lower grades will plant

bulbs to await the blossoms in spring, always a fun activity! Thanks to the PTA for cleaning out our garden beds. Second graders are learning about force and motion, and Kindergarten has been introduced to phonics. Barrett Runners are, well, up and running! You will see them lapping you around the neighborhood.

If you've always wanted to volunteer, now's the time with our many reading programs in place. Contact Mr. Ramirez at arturo.ramirez@apsva.us. As a Title 1 school,

Barrett works hard to care for every student. Sometimes that means paying for field trip fees or providing jackets. A little goes a long way, and we are collecting for our December Wish List, which contributes to families in need. You can donate to Barrett at <https://shorturl.at/ACoY7>. Want to sponsor an event? Contact vp-fundraising@kwbarrettppta.org.



PTSA Update—Kenmore Middle School

By Samantha Bell

Kenmore held a Back to School Dance Party after school on September 24 with snacks, drinks, a photo booth, and a dance contest. Thanks to all of the students, families, volunteers, and staff who came out to the Kenmore lawn for the PTSA's Movie Night on October 3. The PTSA also held a restaurant fundraiser at Pupatella (Wilson Blvd.) on October 22. Upcoming events include Thanksgiving Break (November 26-28); the Cougars Care "No Sweat, No Stress" Fundraising Campaign (online on November 4-December 2)—see <https://kenmorepta.givebacks.com/shop> to donate; and an online auction (December 7-14)—see <https://tinyurl.com/4ccp4smn>.

[com/4ccp4smn](https://tinyurl.com/4ccp4smn) to donate and the QR code below for a preview.

You can also support the Kenmore PTSA by linking your Harris Teeter card (www.harristeeter.com/together-in-education); the Harris Teeter Kenmore code is 3954, and you need to relink every year. Follow Kenmore Middle School on Blue Sky (at <https://bsky.app/profile/kenmore.apsva.us>) or on the PTSA page of the Kenmore website at <https://kenmore.apsva.us/pta/>. You can contact kenmoreptapresident@gmail.com if you would like to support the PTSA or have any questions. Volunteers are always needed.

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Community Calendar

Next AFCA meeting: Wednesday, November 5, 7 p.m.

Lubber Run Farmers' Market: Saturday mornings at the Barrett Elementary School parking lot.

Election: November 4 (early voting underway)

Turnaround Day: November 8

Santa Party: Friday, December 4, 7 p.m., at the Lubber Run Community Center

Annual AFCA Picnic: Wednesday, May 6, 2026

Arlington Forest Home and Garden Tour: Saturday, May 9, 2026

Annual Yard Sale: A Saturday in May 2026

Turnaround Day: July 11, 2026

AFCA Meetings

November 5, 2025: Aging in place in Arlington

January 21, 2026: *To be determined*

February 4, 2026: Spring gardening with native plants

March 4, 2026: Pest control issues (rats, wasps, mosquitoes, etc.)

April 15, 2026: Lubber Run Park issues

May 6, 2026: Neighborhood picnic

Newsbits

Brooke Rental Center Closes Shop

The Brooke Rental Center, a longstanding fixture in the Arlington Forest Shopping Center, closed down last summer. According to an Arlington Forest resident, the shopping center managers are marketing the former rental center space for lease. They decided to “white-box” the space—that is, tear out the interior and paint the walls white to allow prospective tenants to better envision how they might use the space.

Neighbors Gather for Stream Cleanup

On the morning of Saturday, October 11, a group of Foresters gathered at the entrance to Glencarlyn Park at the foot of N. Edison St. to spend an hour or two cleaning up trash along Four Mile Run. Coffee and hot chocolate were available for all who joined.

AFCA Organizes a Family-Friendly Bike Ride

AFCA is organizing a family-friendly neighborhood bike ride for next spring. We are looking for volunteers to help plan the ride. If you would like to help out, please contact AFCA President Sal D'Itri at sdитri@yahoo.com.



Paul Cachion, MBA

571-216-6802

CachionHomes@gmail.com

The Numbers Can Be Intimidating...

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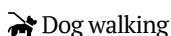
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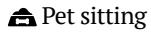
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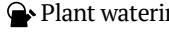
Snow shoveling



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Pet sitting



Plant watering



Mother's helper



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Name	Email	Phone	Dog walking	Leaf raking	Snow shoveling	Babysitting	Pet sitting	Plant watering	Mother's helper	Mail collection	Other
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William Cordon		301-509-7915	✓	✓					✓	✓	Yard help
Ady Lombardi		703-395-2063	✓	✓					✓	✓	
Elsie Lombardi	eflombardi13@gmail.com	703-732-9316		✓	✓*				✓		
Sol Mashkuri		571-643-5883	✓	✓							
Caleb Saunders	caleb_saunders@icloud.com	202-330-1987	✓	✓	✓			✓	✓	✓	Tutoring
Sabrina Saunders	sabrina_saunders@icloud.com	202-531-2247	✓	✓	✓*			✓	✓	✓	Tutoring
Brooks Everitt	Ang.everitt12@Gmail.com	571-244-7691	✓	✓					✓	✓	
Henry Hawks		202-744-5334	✓						✓	✓	
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Sierra McGrann	snooz_ette@yahoo.com	703-489-7170	✓	✓						✓	
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Ben Tahu	Ben.apple.sub@gmail.com	571-289-6272		✓						✓	
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Niittisha Choudhary	Niittisha@gmail.com	703-981-1229	✓			✓			✓		Tutoring
Evie Price		703-402-5138	✓	✓	✓*			✓	✓	✓	
Leilani Wright		207-650-5741	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	Tutoring
Name	Email	Phone	Dog walking	Leaf raking	Snow shoveling	Babysitting	Pet sitting	Plant watering	Mother's helper	Mail collection	Other



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