

The Arlington Forester



Volume 54, Number 7

Arlington, VA

April 2013

Springtime in Arlington Forest

by John Naland

Spring has finally arrived. The Arlington Forest Citizens Association welcomes spring with a neighborhood-wide cleanup on April 27 (see page 3 for details) and the annual community yard sale on May 18 (see page 7).

The next AFCA meeting is this Wednesday, April 17, at 7 PM in the Barrett School library. The guest speaker is Marta Layseca, the founder and principal of EnviroHomeDesign -- an award-winning architectural design and build firm in Arlington Forest specialized in renovations, additions and custom homes that save materials and waste during construction and energy and water during operation. Marta Layseca was the 2011 Regional Winner of the My Marvin Architect's challenge with a house renovation on N. 1st St in

Arlington Forest.

Her talk on the "Greening of 1st St" will describe that renovation and addition project as an example of the application of green goals to one of our Arlington Forest homes. Selected green strategies include the energy efficiency of the envelope that requires a very good interior air quality; the interior air can be controlled by natural and mechanical ventilation strategies. This house renovation with cutting-edge design is saving 50% on water and energy.

Please see the calendar on page 10 for other AFCA-sponsored activities and community events. See the article below for a preview of the coming summer performances at the Lubber Run Amphitheater.

Lubber Run Amphitheater

Summer Season begins June 14

by Chris Scheer

The 2013 Lubber Run Amphitheater's free show season opens Friday, June 14 with the popular Mary Ann Redmond. Her songs and music cover a wide range from down-home country to urban soul. Last year, she premiered the Amphitheater's first full schedule of summer programming since its renovation. She is set for another full house in Lubber Run Park on June 14.

This year's schedule of Friday and Saturday evening shows (with a few Sunday, Monday and Wednesday specials thrown in) runs from June 14 through August 3. Among the 22 performances are many of last year's favorites such as Margot MacDonald, The Grandsons and Hexagon, along with a variety of performers new to Arlington's only full-production outdoor stage.

Arlington Forest's own Colleen Shanley and Grand Junction (Casey and company) will play at Lubber Run July 5. Their show last summer was cut short by rain almost as soon as it started.

Weather was a factor in canceling a number of amphitheater programs last summer. The freak "derecho" toppled a tree that caused minor damage to the amphitheater but that's been repaired and county staff will have the amphitheater in top shape for opening night on June 14.

"The county has kept its promise to bring the Lubber Run Amphitheater up to top safety, access and production standards over the past two years," said Esther Bowring, co-chair of the Lubber Run Amphitheater Foundation. The Foundation was created by citizens a few years agocontinued page 4

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AFCA Meeting 7 p.m. April 17 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 events or issues specific to our neighborhood. The next deadline is May 2 for the issue to be distributed May 11-12. E-mail submissions of up to 400 words to newsletter@arlingtonforestva.org. Space fills up, so check in advance if you wish to submit a long article.

School Capacity Update

By John Naland

At this time last year, there was a flurry of talk about Lubber Run Recreation Center possibly being replaced by a dual-use elementary school and community center. Below is an update on school capacity issues as they have developed over the past year.

Elementary Schools: Voters last year approved a \$42.6 million bond issue to fund the construction of a new neighborhood elementary school on the Williamsburg Middle School site. Voters next year will be asked to approve an \$81 million bond issue to fund the construction of an additional elementary school next door to Kenmore Middle School plus additions at two existing North Arlington schools. Those projects would add 1,875 seats at the elementary level. That is still 948 seats short of the projected enrollment increase between now and 2023. So, at least one additional elementary school will be needed. The site will likely be designated in time for the \$103 million bond referendum in 2016. In terms of school boundaries, the School Board will soon finalize new elementary boundaries for most of North Arlington. A review of all other elementary school boundaries will likely take place in fall 2014.

Middle Schools: This past January, Arlington Public Schools (APS) released projections showing middle school enrollment rising by 2,108 students between now and 2023. That is about 1,500 students over current capacity. Thus, APS projects the need for an additional middle school. No site has been identified, although one option is to demolish the aging APS headquarters building (the Education Center next door to Washington-Lee High School) and then build a new middle school on its site (APS staff would relocate to commercial office space). Middle school boundaries will likely be reviewed in 2015 to rebalance the currently under-capacity schools (especially Kenmore) with the over-capacity schools (especially Swanson).

High Schools: APS projections show high school enrollment rising by 3,233 students between now and 2023. Factoring in existing buildings plus relocatable classrooms (aka trailers), that is about 2,350 students over capacity. High school boundaries will likely be reviewed starting as early as later this year to rebalance the currently under-capacity Wakefield High School with over-capacity Washington-Lee and Yorktown. APS planning documents do not discuss building an additional high school. If another high school is not built, then a large number of additional trailers would need to be placed at existing high schools.



Electronic versions of this newsletter are available:
www.arlingtonforestva.org

Spring Cleanup on April 27

By John Naland

The third annual Arlington Forest Spring Cleanup is Saturday, April 27, from 9 to 11 AM. Depending on the site, we will pick up trash, remove invasive plants, or otherwise beautify public spaces around our neighborhood. Even if you can only help for an hour, please do so. Many hands make for light work, so the more volunteers who participate, the more progress can be made to improve community spaces for our spring and summer enjoyment.

The accompanying map shows the six meeting points and their associated cleanup areas.

- Lubber Run upstream from the Amphitheater: remove trash
- Arlington Blvd southside buffer strip: remove trash and fallen limbs
- N. 2nd Street traffic circles: weed, mulch and replant
- N. Granada/N. Greenbrier trailhead area: remove trash and invasive plants
- Parkland between Mary Carlin House and WO&D trail: remove invasive plants
- Wooded area near N. Edison Street playground: remove invasive plants



Please assemble at a designated meeting point at 9 AM, rain or shine. If you arrive late, look around for those who are already at work. Please wear old clothes and sturdy shoes and bring drinking water. If you have them, wear garden or work gloves.

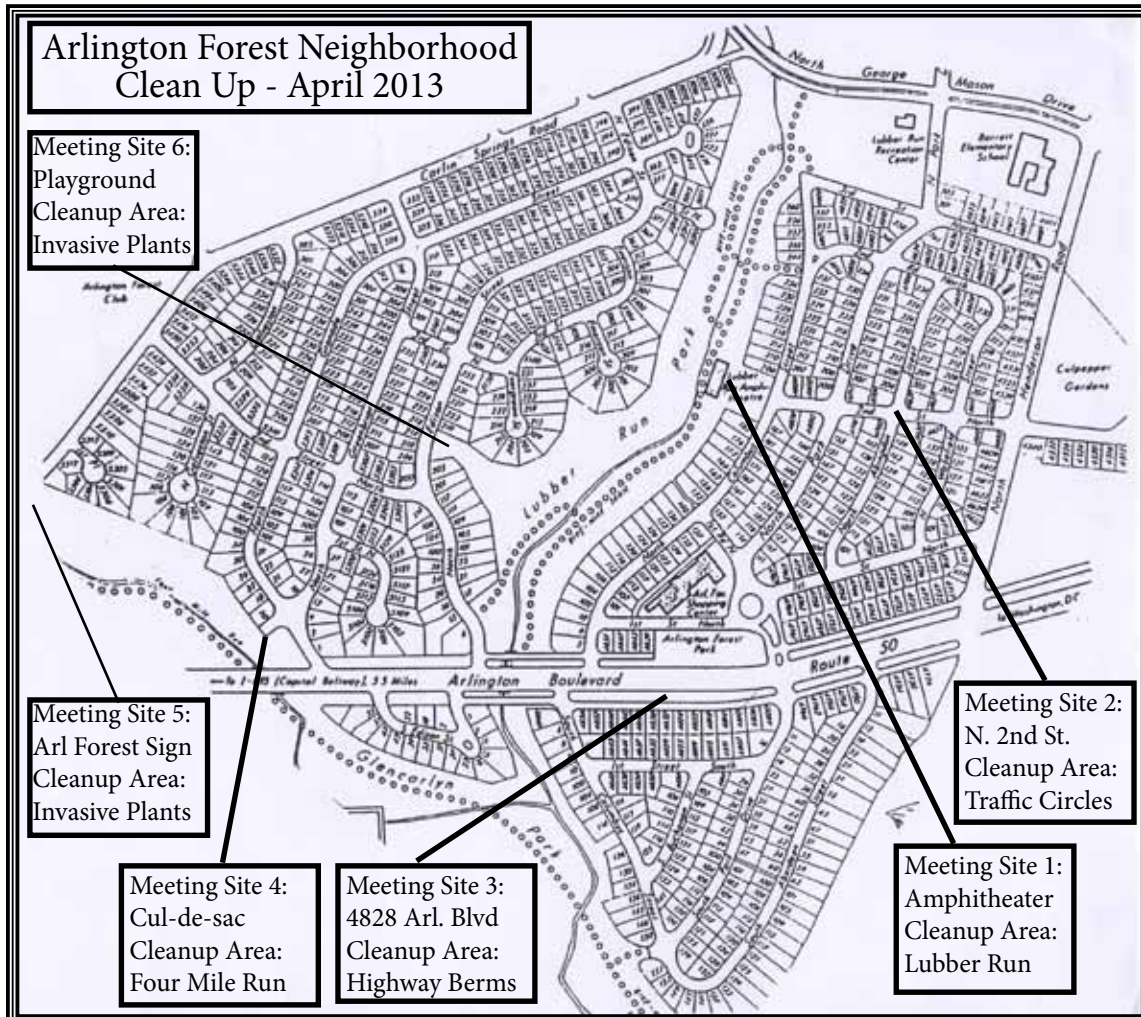
Again this year, we will be joined by Cub Scout Pack 548 and members of Boy Scout Troop 648. In addition, the County's invasive plant control specialist Sarah Archer will help us remove invasive plants.

So, please join in this effort if you enjoy walking, jogging or biking in our neighborhood parks; if you have children who you want to learn to care about the environment; if

you want to get out in the fresh spring air to benefit from some light exercise; and/or if you want to help protect the Chesapeake Bay watershed.

Whether you attend or not on April 27, you can protect our environment today by doing a quick sweeping of the curb in front of your house to pick up plastics and other trash that may have floated down the street or fallen from the trash truck. That will keep the next rain storm from carrying the debris into our streams and rivers.

If you have questions about our cleanup event, e-mail John Naland at nalandfamily@yahoo.com.



Amphitheater ...from page 1

to work with the county on re-opening the amphitheater which had been closed because of maintenance and safety concerns.

"We enjoyed a great season of free family entertainment last summer in spite of unpredictable weather," Bowring said, "and this summer's schedule promises even more."

Foresters can keep track of that schedule and related news by friending the Lubber Run Amphitheater's Facebook page or searching "Lubber Run Amphitheater" on the County website. For more info, contact Foundation member Chris Scheer at scheerjchris@gmail.com.

Here is this summer's Lubber Run Amphitheater schedule:

| | | | |
|------|----------------------------------|------|---------------------|
| 6/14 | Mary Ann Redmond | 7/6 | Mystic Warriors |
| 6/15 | Halau O'Aulani & the Aloha Boys | 7/7 | Bob Gibson Big Band |
| 6/17 | The Metropolitan Chorus | 7/12 | Juniper Lane |
| 6/19 | Potomac Harmony Chorus | 7/13 | Andrew Acosta |
| 6/21 | The Army Blues | 7/14 | Russkie Musikanti |
| 6/22 | King Teddy | 7/19 | Ted Garber |
| 6/23 | The Constituents | 7/20 | The Grandsons |
| 6/28 | Margot MacDonald | 7/26 | Traveling Players |
| 6/29 | Eric Scott | 7/27 | The Tone Rangers |
| 6/30 | Black Muddy River Band | 8/2 | Hexagon |
| 7/5 | Colleen Shanely & Grand Junction | 8/3 | Rico Amero |

All shows start at 8 pm, except Sunday shows start at 6 pm

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Retirement May Be Far Off, But the April 15 Deadline for IRA Contributions Isn't.

You have only so many years to prepare for retirement. That's why contributing to your Individual Retirement Account (IRA) is so important. Fortunately, you still have time to maximize your 2013 IRA contribution before the April 15 deadline.

By contributing now, your retirement savings can have more opportunity to grow. Even if you already have an IRA elsewhere, it's easy to transfer it to an Edward Jones IRA and begin receiving the face-to-face guidance you deserve.


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E-CARE: Environmental Collection and Recycling Event

By John Naland

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

The next E-CARE takes place at Thomas Jefferson Middle School in the West Parking Lot (one block east of Glebe Rd. and one block south of Arlington Blvd.) between 8:30 AM and 3 PM on Saturday, April 20 (rain or shine). Just load up your car with the unwanted items, bring your driver's license to prove Arlington residency, and then drive through the various stations -- dropping off paint cans at one station, TVs at another station, and so on.

Acceptable hazardous items include automotive fluids, CFLs, corrosives (acids/caustics), fire extinguishers, flammable solvents, fluorescent tubes, fuels/petroleum products, household cleaners, lawn/garden chemicals, mercury, paint products, photographic chemicals, pesticides, and propane gas cylinders. Not accepted are asbestos, explosives/ammunition, Freon, medical waste, prescriptions, or smoke detectors.

Computers, printers, keyboards, scanners, copiers, cell phones and TVs will be collected. A \$20 fee for TVs and \$15

for computer monitors applies, but LED or LCD monitors and TVs are free. Cash or checks are accepted.

The event also accepts donations of recyclable electronics, bikes, small metal items, shoes, eyeglasses, and durable medical equipment.

Bikes for the World will accept serviceable and repairable bikes to be sent to countries where they are needed for basic transportation. A \$10 donation per bike is requested to offset shipping charges. Portable sewing machines, baseball and soccer equipment, and bike parts and accessories are also collected and shipped overseas with the reconditioned bikes. For more info, call 703-525-0931. Receipts are given for tax purposes.

Art for Humanity will be collecting "gently used" but functional clothing, linens, shoes, microwaves, air conditioners, rugs, mattresses, bed frames, and pots, pans and other kitchen items. Winter clothing is most needed. Linens are needed including sheets, blankets, bed spreads and towels. Receipts are given for tax purposes.

Old eyeglasses and hearing aids will be cleaned, sorted and dispensed at clinics overseas run by volunteers. Donated wheelchairs, crutches, walkers, canes, braces and strollers are shipped to clinics in remote villages.

For more info, search "E-CARE" on the County website.



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Do you know someone thinking of buying, selling or renting? The spring market is heating up! Give Lauren, your neighbor and Arlington Forest expert, a call today!



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Community Yard Sale on May 18

Arlington Forest's long-running annual Community Yard Sale takes place Saturday morning, May 18 (rain date May 19). With over 50 Arlington Forest households participating each year, the event attracts many bargain hunters drawn to the convenience of cruising through one concentrated area to visit many sales in a short time.

AFCFA publicizes the event by placing classified ads in local newspapers. Sellers who live near Arlington Blvd, Carlin Springs Rd., George Mason Dr. and Henderson Dr. are encouraged to post signs along those thoroughfares pointing into the neighborhood and to their sales (please remove the signs at day's end).

Next month's newsletter will publish a map showing the sale sites. **To get on the map, e-mail your address to nalandfamily@yahoo.com by May 2.** Arlington Forest residents can use the map to locate nearby sales. Sellers are encouraged to make photocopies (or download copies from the online *Arlington Forester* at www.arlington-forestva.org) so shoppers can pick up a map leading them to other sites.

There are no rules governing this event, but past experience suggests strategies for success:

--Prepare in advance. Sort clothes by size and toys by user age. Group similar items together. Find shopper-friendly ways to display your merchandise (tables, clothes rack). Have grocery sacks on hand. Accumulate dollar bills and coins to make change. If selling electronics, set up an extension cord to show the item works.

--Price items reasonably. Savvy shoppers will buy elsewhere if prices are too high. Be prepared to negotiate down from the displayed price.

--If you want to snag professional buyers who make yard sales their business, start setting up at 7 AM. At the other end of the day, people looking for close-out prices and even freebies come out in the late morning.

If you are left with furniture or other large items that you simply want to get rid of, leave them at the curb with a "free" sign and they will probably be gone by Sunday.

--Keep your cash in a pocket, purse or fanny pack. If you do use a cash box, have someone assist you so it is not left unattended while you are with a shopper. Decline personal checks. If you go indoors, have someone watch your merchandise.

For many people, yard sale success is not measured by profit, but by how

much unwanted stuff is moved out instead of left cluttering rooms, basement or attic. The sale is also a great community event. Families can say hello to neighbors down the block and strike their own bargains. Kids can set up a lemonade stand.

So, whether you are a seller, a buyer or both, please join us on May 18.

*Get on the map!
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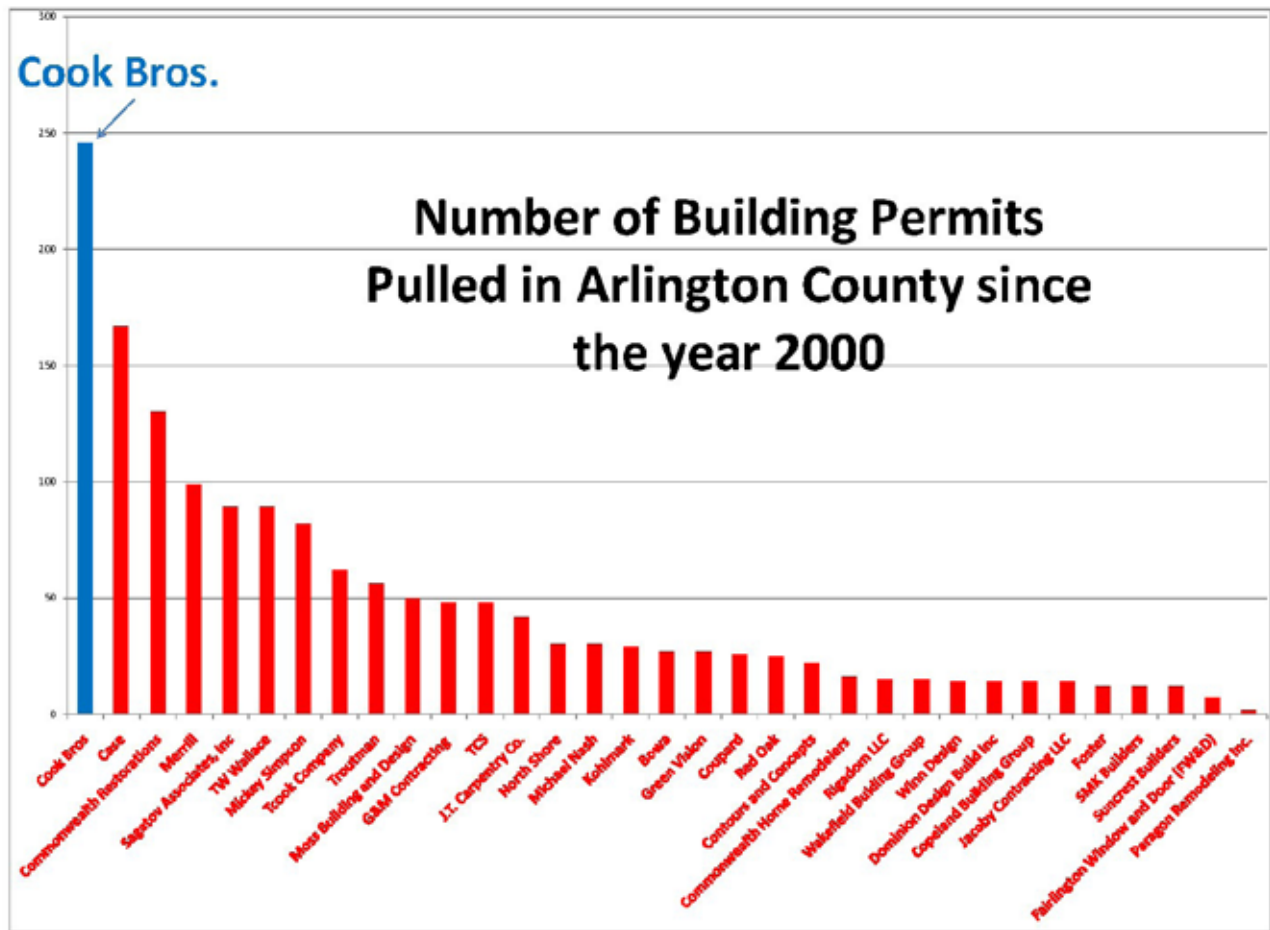
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Around the Forest

Paul Kovenock Honored: Forester Paul Kovenock was recognized at the "Arlington Conservationist of the Year" by the Northern Virginia Conservation Trust during a March 12 award ceremony. The award recognized Kovenock's work over nearly two decades to improve County parks with a focus on removing invasive plants. Kovenock was lauded for his efforts to improve parks, while leading efforts along the way to remove invasive species. He was a founding member of the Alexandria-Arlington Tree Stewards and has been active in Arlingtonians for a Clean Environment.



Tree Grant Program: AFCA's tree grant program offers matching grants to Arlington Forest residents interested in planting a shade tree on their property. Grants of up to \$125 will cover one-half of the cost of buying and planting a tree.

So far this year, three grants have been approved and two more are in process. Funding is available for eight more grants this year, so act soon if you are interested in applying. There is a limit of two grants per property and the tree species must be on AFCA's list of approved shade trees. In addition, the application must be approved in advance before the purchase of the tree. For details and the application form, see Tree Grant Program Application on the AFCA website (www.arlingtonforestva.org) under the "AFCA" tab.

Walk for the Animals: The Animal Welfare League of Arlington's 18th annual Walk for the Animals fundraiser will take place Saturday, May 11 in Bluemont Park. Leash-up Fido and join hundreds of animal enthusiasts for a three-mile or one-mile stroll followed by a festival of entertainment. Check-in and on-site registration starts at 8:30 AM. The walk starts at 9:30 AM. Pre-registration through May 10: \$25. Onsite registration: \$40. For info and to register, go to www.awla.org.

AFCA Yard Sale: Arlington Forest's annual Community Yard Sale takes place Saturday, May 18. Next month's newsletter will publish a map showing the sale sites. To get on the map, e-mail your address to nalandfamily@yahoo.com by May 2. For suggestions on preparing for the sale, see the article on page 7.

Safeway Redevelopment: At an April 3 community meeting at Arlington Traditional School, Safeway and its developer presented plans for redeveloping its site on Wilson Boulevard near George Mason Drive. The preliminary plans include a new Safeway, two levels of underground parking and three to four levels of apartment buildings (160 units)

above the Safeway. The height of the proposed building is 65 feet, significantly above the 35 foot limit under its current zoning status. Thus, Safeway will seek a change in zoning and perhaps a change to the County's General Land Use Plan. Local residents and the Bluemont Civic Association are following developments closely. For more info, go to <http://www.bluemontcivic.org/> or <http://safewaytaskforce.wordpress.com/>

Pothole Season: Spring is pothole repair season in Arlington County. If winter's freezing and thawing helped to create a pothole on your street or on a nearby route that you drive every day, now is the time to report it. Search "Report a Pothole" on the County website to access an online reporting form.

Letter to the Editor

Letter to the Editor,

We love AF for many reasons, including great neighbors. However, one aspect of being a great neighbor is pet-iquette. We have and love pets (cats and dogs), but we don't love it when our neighbors leave their dogs outside barking for extended periods, including at night and early in the morning. We certainly don't allow our dog to do this.



Perhaps these neighbors don't realize the noise level and are unaware their dogs are disrupting the peace. According to a NY Times survey, barking dogs top the list of complaints in suburban neighborhoods.

Neighbors strongly influence the quality of life at home, as Emily Duskow, a lawyer and co-author of "Neighbor Law: Fences, Trees, Boundaries & Noise," wrote. According to Duskow, a bad neighbor situation can be incredibly wearing and turn a domestic sanctuary into a battleground.

Arlington has laws about noise pollution and barking dogs -- aptly referred to as nuisance laws. In Arlington it is unlawful for any animal to create a frequent or continued noise disturbance across a real property boundary. This law does not fall under the animal ordinances, but under the nuisance laws of Arlington County and is legally a matter for the police. The Arlington County code can be found at <http://awla.org/barkingDogs.pdf>

Laws aside, we hope that AF residents want to be courteous neighbors. We sure do!

Sincerely,
A dog-loving neighbor

Community Calendar

Next AFCA Meeting: Wednesday, April 17, 7 PM, at Barrett School library. See page 1 for the agenda.

Future AFCA Meetings: May 15 (annual membership picnic in Lubber Run Park). No meetings are held in the summer.

E-CARE: April 20 at Thomas Jefferson Middle School. Drop off hazardous household materials and other items. See page 5 for details.

Neighborhood Spring Cleanup: April 27. Our third annual volunteer clean-up of public spaces around Arlington Forest. See page 3 for details.

Annual Community Yard Sale: May 18. Turn unwanted stuff into cash. See page 7 for details.

Taste of Arlington: May 19 in front of Ballston Mall.

Lubber Run Amphitheater 2013 Season: Live entertainment under the stars resumes in June. See page 4 for performance schedule.

Arlington County Fair: August 7-11. Carnival rides and good eats. See <http://arlingtoncountyfair.us/>

*75th Anniversary
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Forest Exchange

Golf Tournament: The 7th Annual Washington-Lee High School Golf Tournament is June 24 at Penderbrook Golf Course in Fairfax (I-66 Exit 49C). All proceeds benefit W-L Athletic Program. In addition to 18 holes on a par 71 Championship Course, there will be a continental breakfast, putting contest, lunch, and silent auction. Not a golfer or can't attend? Be a sponsor! For more info and to register, contact Forester Carol Patecell at cmpatecell@hotmail.com or go to the website www.golfdigestplanner.com/23053-2013_WashingtonLeeHighSchool/index.html.

Free: 3 original Arlington Forest window screens for metal casement windows; 2 measure 17 inches by 25 inches; 1 measures 25 by 35 - one of the small screens has two patches but overall they are in good condition. Call Scott, 703-622-9948

Free Movie Night: Sat. April 13, 5:30-8:30 PM. Bethel United Church of Christ presents a free movie night featuring "The World According to Sesame Street". This documentary examines the production of the popular children's TV program in three developing countries: Bangladesh, Kosovo and South Africa. Children's movie and childcare will be available. Discussion after the movie. Snacks and drinks will be provided. Bring money for pizza. All invited. 4347 Arlington Blvd (park at adjacent Red Cross Building). More info at Bethelucc-va.org or 703-528-0937.



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Nature News

Spring Plant Sale: Long Branch Nature Center Native Plant Sale, Saturday, April 20, 1-3 PM. Come to the annual native plant sale! The vast majority of the plants are propagated on site. There will be a variety of spring and summer bloomers along with ferns, vines and shrubs. Payment by cash or check. Rain date: Sunday, April 21, 1-3 PM. For info call 703-228-6535.

Green Living Expo and Earth Week Community Fair: Sunday, April 21, Noon to 4:30 PM. George Mason University's Arlington Founders Hall, 3351 Fairfax Drive, Arlington. FREE! Learn how to green your home, apartment, community and lifestyle. Sponsored by Arlingtonians for a Clean Environment and George Mason University. This family-friendly event will include vendors, seminars, a raffle, children's activities, and food sales. Info: www.arlingtonenvironment.org/expo.

Walkabout Bluemont/Bon Air: WalkArlington will debut the newest community Walkabout on Sunday, April 28, from 3:00-5:00 PM featuring the adjoining neighborhoods of Bluemont and Bon Air. The guided walking tour will be led by residents who helped develop the route, with additional commentary from County Board Chairman Walter Tejada. The 2.5-mile, nine-stop route takes walkers from blue-ribbon schools to award-winning gardens, verdant

parkland to retail crossroads, 1800s farmhouse to 1900s railroad caboose. The Walkabout begins and ends at Fields Park, 775 N. George Mason Dr., behind Fire Station #2. Open to the public, all ages welcomed (dogs on leashes, too). Free of charge. Registration not required. Info: walkarlington.com.

Turtle Trot 5K Run: Saturday, May 18. Check-in at 9 AM. Race at 10 AM. South Bluemont Picnic Shelter, 4th Street N. and Manchester Street. Support the Long Branch Nature Center and local wildlife by taking part in this 5K course through Bluemont Park. Proceeds will support local turtles by paying for the veterinary services. For more info and to register, search "Turtle Trot" on www.active.com. Questions? Contact Cliff Fairweather at 703-228-6535 or cfairweather@arlingtonva.us.

Long Branch Nature Center: Nature abounds at our nearby nature center which is open Tuesday to Saturday, 10 AM to 5 PM and Saturday, 1-5 PM. See the newsletter The Snag on the County website for a list of the many programs for children and adults.



Earth Day is April 22: Celebrate Earth Day by doing a quick sweep of the curb in front of your house. That will keep the next storm from carrying any debris into our streams.



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As a resident of Arlington Forest, I work hard to provide my neighbors with the very best service. Right now, demand for homes like ours is extremely high, with interest rates at an all-time low and very little inventory available. If you are considering selling or buying a home, let me show you how working with a knowledgeable professional can make the experience great! I look forward to meeting with you.

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Barcroft School News

Spring Break is history, and the 4th quarter is proving busy at Barcroft Elementary. Students received 3rd Quarter report cards, and 5th Graders took the VA SOL Writing test in early April. On April 2, U.S. Congressman Jim Moran toured the school, visited classrooms, and read a story to first graders about differences as part of Barcroft's observance of **Autism Acceptance Month**.

On April 3, parents met with the Superintendent to discuss the selection process for a **new principal**. Community members are encouraged to provide feedback in the principal search process. Please consider filling out an Initial Feedback form by April 26. Find a copy at the school's website: www.apsva.us/site/default.aspx?domainid=388.

The 18-member School Chorus, comprised of 4th and 5th grade students, will walk and sing in the **National Cherry Blossom Festival Parade Youth Choir** on April 13. Watch the parade live between 10 a.m.-Noon on ABC 7 or News Channel 8. Wish our chorus members good luck!

The next **PTA meeting**, on **April 16**, will consider several important agenda items. In addition to voting on revised PTA by-laws, the PTA will review initial feedback from the principal search process, as well as the process to choose

four parents to be part of the principal candidate screening interviews. The next **Family Fitness Night** will feature martial arts instruction from Creative Martial Arts, and will be held on April 18 at 7 p.m. All are welcome. **Spring Picture Day** will be April 26 with both individual and class portraits.

Both the school and the PTA will observe **Professional Administrative Assistant's Week** from April 22-26. **Staff Appreciation Week** will be held during May 6-10. Many thanks to our wonderful teachers and staff. We look forward to showing you our heartfelt appreciation for all that you do for our children every day. SOL Testing will begin for all students in Grades 3 to 5 in May.

Please participate in our **Spring PTA fundraiser**. Our upcoming Stella and Dot jewelry and handbag fund-raiser will be held during early May in time for Mother's Day. Orders will be accepted on-line shortly, and a merchandise show will be held at the school between 3-6 p.m. on May 7.

To learn more about What's Happening at Barcroft, go to: <http://www.apsva.us/Page/13363>
Like us: <https://www.facebook.com/BarcroftElementary>

Neighborhood Notes

Hidden Danger

By John Naland

Some neighbors hire companies to mow their lawns, but I still enjoy getting out in the fresh air once a week to mow ours. Having done so innumerable times since we moved to Arlington Forest in 1999, I thought that I knew every square inch of our yard pretty well. That is especially true of our backyard which is fairly nondescript: average size, mostly level, and unobstructed.

So, it sure came as a surprise to me while mowing last summer when I took a step near the center of our backyard and a patch of sod collapsed under the weight of my foot. Still holding onto the mower handle bar, I found myself standing with one foot still on the lawn and my other leg buried nearly up to the knee in a hole.

Completely unharmed, I pulled my leg out of the hole and turned off the mower. Grabbing a flashlight from inside the house, I inspected the hole. It was actually a mini-cavern about two feet deep by two feet in diameter. It was empty, with no Indiana Jones-like poison stakes, snakes, or buried treasure inside it. At its top, a three inch layer of grass roots and soil comprised the roof. I had unknowingly stepped on the center of that thin roof, causing it to give way.

Checking closely, I found no clue as to how the void had formed. I saw no tunnel from a mole, fox or other animal

leading into it. I saw no evidence of erosion from rainwater. No pipes ran through the area that could have burst in the past. And the sod roof had been undisturbed since at least 1999.

Several days later, a neighbor posited a logical explanation: When Arlington Forest was being built nearly 75 years ago, the developer cut down most of the trees leaving low stumps. Grading the land buried some of those stumps under several inches of dirt. Grass grew in the dirt, thus further hiding the stumps. As the decades passed, natural processes caused the stumps to decay leaving a void.

If that theory is correct, then there could be dozens or hundreds of other hidden voids across Arlington Forest just waiting for a well-placed footfall to strike. Keep that in mind the next time you are enjoying the presumed safety of your own back yard.



Barrett School News

Our extraordinary principal, remarkable leader, and wonderful neighbor, Terry Bratt, is retiring after 43 years as an educator. For 36 years, Ms. Bratt taught Arlington's children, including 18 years at Barrett. She helped establish an incredible community of students, families, faculty, and staff, and she created an amazing environment.

The community is invited to help celebrate Ms. Bratt's career at an **assembly on June 12**, and a **reception on June 15**. Thank you, Ms. Bratt, for your exceptional influence on several generations of Arlington Foresters.

As we search for a new principal, we invite feedback from parents, faculty, staff, and others in the community regarding the strengths of Barrett, the most important challenges, and the attributes desired in a principal. Please visit the Barrett home page (<http://www.apsva.us/Page/4038>) to comment (through April 26).

Thank you to the Arlington Forest Community for supporting the Barrett **Direct Mail Campaign**. This campaign raises funds for technology, field trips, guest artists, author visits, STEM Science Enrichment, and more. The campaign will also fund a new sustainable vegetable garden that children will help plant and cultivate.

Donations are still being accepted for the Barrett **Used Book Sale Collection**. Please use the box in the lobby to donate used books, videos, DVDs, CDs, board games, and

puzzles. The sale is on **Thursday, April 18**, from **5:30-8 p.m.** in the school gym.

Earth Week Activities: Tuesday, April 23, is **Library night**, and the plant sale and **Garden Work Day** is on **Friday, April 26**. There will be many additional events associated with Earth Week, such as recycling at lunch and lunch on the lawn.

Teacher Appreciation Week is May 6-10. Thank you to the outstanding teachers at Barrett for all that you do for our children. We appreciate you!

Upcoming Events:

- Monday Morning Movers (every Monday): 7:45-8:10 am
- Used Book Sale/Arts & Writer's Fair: April 18, 5:30-8 pm
- Barrett 5K and Fun Run: Saturday, April 20
- Earth Week: April 22-26
- Library Night: Tuesday, April 23
- Honor Roll Assembly: Wednesday, April 24, 10 am
- Outdoor Lab Open House: Sunday, May 5, 2-6 pm
- Arlington Cinema and Draft House, screening of "Stacker":
Sunday, May 5, 4:30 pm (doors open at 4:00 pm)
- Teacher Appreciation Week: May 6-10
- PTA Meeting: Tuesday, May 7, 7:00 pm
- National Bike & Walk to School Day: Wednesday, May 8

2012 was a pivotal year for the real estate market, both nationally and locally. Consumer confidence increased and interest rates eased down from about 4% at the first of the year to 3.5% at years' end.

The real estate market in the DC Metro area continued to strengthen in 2012. Northern Virginia's median prices increased from \$344,750 to \$385,000 while detached homes increased from \$450,000 to \$500,000.

For all residential property types Arlington County saw the median prices drop from \$513,500 to \$475,000 while the median detached home prices increased from \$644,100 to \$703,500.

Arlington Forest saw the average sales price increase from a median of \$605,000 with 26 homes closed in 2011 to \$609,900 with 35 homes closed in 2012. Arlington Forest hasn't seen a high turnover rate of homes with large additions although the highest price in 2011 was \$712,500 and in 2012 the high was \$975,000.

Looking to maximize value for your home? I can help you with advice on smart improvements! Below are a few stats from the 2013 Cost vs. Value report. Nationwide, stabilized home values and decreased construction costs played a role in the improved remodeling market and costs decreased about 1.9% overall. The central Atlantic region did better than the national average.

For mid-range projects one of the most popular is the kitchen remodel in the top 10 category. In the Washington DC area the average minor kitchen remodel had a job cost of \$18,608 with a resale value of \$16,799 at about a 90% cost recouped. (The cost recouped could be greater when other consistent improvements are factored in). The highest cost recouped in Washington DC was a wood deck addition at a job cost of \$9,455 and a resale value of \$10,282 = 108.7%. It is interesting that a composite deck addition yielded only an 87.5% return at an average cost of \$14,697 and a resale value of \$13,103. If you want a copy of this report let me know and I can mail fax or email it to you!



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Kids for Hire

These Arlington Forest youths are available for babysitting, pet sitting, and other services. To be added or deleted, e-mail newsletter@arlingtonforestva.org.

Southside:

- Daniel O'Mara, dog walking, pet sitting, yard work, 703-769-3767
- Caroline Rogers, pet sitting, dog walking, yard work, carolinearogers@verizon.net, 703-892-0226
- Julia Rogers, babysitting (RC certified), yard work, juliaerogers23@gmail.com, 703-892-0226
- Jon Tiernan, babysitting (RC certified), dog walking, pet sitting, yard work, Wonton81@gmail.com, 703-979-5046
- Liz Tiernan, babysitting (RC certified-my brother and I will babysit together. Two for the price of one!), dog walking, pet sitting, lizzytiernan@gmail.com, 703-979-5046

Greenbrier Section:

- Zephren Collinson, babysitting (references), pet sitting, dog walking, yard work, tutoring, 703-528-3595
- Kate Felsenheld, pet sitting, dog walking, k.cliffhero@gmail.com, 703-276-9874

- Alex Hendel, babysitting (RC certified), experienced Tot Camp counselor (High School student), alexhendel@gmail.com, 703-622-2884
- Sarah Keyser, babysitting (RC certified), pet sitting, dog walking, Stealers12@gmail.com, 703-243-8777
- Alice Naland, babysitting (RC certified), pet sitting, nalandfamily@yahoo.com, 703-888-0125
- Lucy Naland, babysitting (RC certified), LucyMNaland@gmail.com, 703-888-0125
- Katherine Taylor, babysitting (RC certified), 703-525-0148

Northside:

- Northside yard work trio: Leo Horwitz, Zhibek Phillips and Kara Shapiro, leaves@leohorwitz.com, 703-243-2395
- Sophia Constantine, pet sitting, dog walking, cpconstantine@comcast.net, 703-841-9229
- Sophie Frank, babysitting (RC certified), tutoring, sophie.e.frank@gmail.com, 703-859-0722
- Fiona Hickey, babysitting (RC certified), 703-351-7013
- Sophie Hickey, babysitting, 703-351-7013
- Alyssa Luz-Ricca, babysitting (RC certified), dog walking, alyssa.luz.ricca@gmail.com, 703-740-6972.
- Isaac Mortimer-Lotke, babysitting (RC certified), 703-276-9046
- Marika Mortimer-Lotke, babysitting (RC certified), 703-276-9046
- Bo Sampson, babysitting (RC certified), dog walking, tutoring, bo.i.samps@gmail.com, 703-447-7678
- Allison Vernon, pet sitting, babysitting (references), catharinevernon@aol.com, 703-522-9147
- Gabby Young, babysitting, mother's helper, pet sitting, dog walking, merrywesing@yahoo.com, 703-622-4229

All Neighborhoods:

- Julia Franchi, babysitting (RC certified), mother's helper, pet sitting, dog walking, yard work, 703-220-4894

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