

# The Arlington Forester



Volume 54, Number 5

Arlington, VA

February 2013

## Dominion Virginia Power to Brief AFCA

by John Naland

Do you have questions about what Dominion Virginia Power is doing to ensure reliable power distribution in our neighborhood? If so, please come hear Mr. Rob McIntyre from Dominion talk and answer questions at AFCA's next meeting this Wednesday, February 20 at 7 PM in the Barrett School library.

Dominion has a 2013 improvement project coinciding with the County's Columbia Pike revitalization project. The project will reroute the power feed to some of the customers in Arlington Forest. This current feed goes along the WO&D bike trail with heavy tree coverage. Dominion's project will reroute the feed and remove around three thousand feet of troublesome overhead exposure. On page 10 of this newsletter you can see a photo of some of the tree work recently

completed in Arlington Forest (S. Park Drive). See also page 7 of this newsletter for a report of last month's AFCA meeting presentations about tree health.

The Dominion website at [www.dom.com](http://www.dom.com) has a lot of information on Dominion's tree trimming program, causes of power outages, how Dominion prioritizes repair efforts following a major storm, and the pros and cons of burying power lines. Please check out that info if you wish to learn more prior to the AFCA meeting.

All Arlington Forest residents are welcome at AFCA meetings which rarely last longer than one hour. Please see the community calendar on page 10 for the schedule of upcoming meetings as well as other AFCA-sponsored activities in the coming months.

## AFCA Tree Grant Program

by Colleen Green



Have you lost a tree in your yard over the last year? The weather has taken its toll on the aging trees of Arlington Forest. Plant a new tree this spring, and AFCA will subsidize a portion of the purchase price of certain types of trees. To be eligible for a grant,

you must obtain approval before purchasing a tree.

Under the Arlington Forest Tree Grant Program, a matching grant is available to residents of Arlington Forest interested in planting a SHADE TREE on their property. The Grant amount of up to \$125 covers up to one-half of the cost of buying and planting a tree (including delivery). There is a limit of two tree grants (of up to \$125 per grant) per property. For example, a Forester who planted one tree cost-

ing \$300 and a second that cost \$200 would receive a grant of \$125 for the first tree and a grant of \$100 for the second.

The types of trees eligible for the program are White Oak, Northern Red Oak, Willow Oak, Chestnut Oak, Southern Red Oak, Scarlet Oak, Pin Oak, Red Maple, Sycamore, Tulip Tree/ Yellow Poplar, Black Gum, ....continued page 3

### TABLE OF CONTENTS

Wild Arlington Forest.....2	Around the Forest.....9
Good-bye, Neighbor.....3	Community Calendar...10
Spring Cleanup.....4	Nature News.....11
Neighborhood Village.....5	School News.....12-13
Is My Tree Safe?.....7	Kids for Hire.....14

***AFCA Meeting 7 p.m. Feb 20 at Barrett School Library***

## THE ARLINGTON FORESTER

Official publication of the Arlington Forest Citizens Association, Arlington, Virginia founded in 1939. A nonpartisan, nonsectarian publication serving the common interests of the residents of Arlington Forest.

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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 March 7 for the issue to be distributed March 16-17. E-mail submissions of up to 400 words to [newsletter@arlingtonforestva.org](mailto:newsletter@arlingtonforestva.org). Space fills up, so check in advance if you wish to submit a long article.

## Wild Arlington Forest

By John Naland

Soon after dawn one day last month, I looked out the window and saw two deer in our neighbor's backyard (see accompanying photo). They soon ambled back toward Four Mile Run and 20 minutes later a fox strolled by the same area.

So far this winter, I have seen white-tailed deer and red foxes on multiple occasions while walking my *Canis lupus familiaris* just after sunrise along the WO&D trail. One morning, we turned the corner near where the junction of the WO&D and Bluemont trails and came face-to-face with two foxes who, after seeing that my dog was safely leashed, continued on their way playfully chasing each other.

Raccoons are another of our common "charismatic megafauna." They are drawn to hollows high up in neighborhood trees, in addition to the occasional garbage can. I have not seen any possums lately, but they are sometimes seen in hedges and bushes. Squirrels, of course, are ubiquitous in Arlington Forest and rabbits are not uncommon between dusk and dawn even blocks from public wooded areas.

Overhead, I have recently seen a hawk and a Great Blue Heron and have heard owls and woodpeckers in the trees. If one looks, it is easy to find ducks floating here and there in Four Mile Run.

A neighbor who knows far more about birds than I do reports that regular visitors during the winter are the white-breasted nuthatch, chickadees, and red-bellied and downy woodpeckers, in addition to cardinals and blue-jays. Mockingbirds and robins also overwinter in our area. Shy towhees can sometimes be seen in shrubs and brushes. Once the annual spring migration starts, warblers and other spring visitors will pause in Lubber Run Park and along Four Mile Run as they make their way north.



**OH DEER!:** Look around and you may be surprised by some of the wildlife found here in Arlington Forest.

# Good-bye, Dear Neighbor and Friend

By Liz Pennisi and Matt Butcher

I can't really remember the exact words of the notice I put in the Arlington Forester 15 years ago. Something like, "New to the neighborhood, seeking bridge players or want-to-be bridge players." Back in Takoma Park, Maryland, we had a bunch of bridge-playing neighbors who were always up for a game and socializing come Friday evening and we were missing the challenge and camaraderie in our new Arlington Forest home. Our hope was to find some local, like-minded players. We got way more than that.

I remember Helen's call in response to the ad. She sounded like a gentle older lady. She invited us to their house to play. I was thrilled. Before I hung up, I asked how often she and her husband played. Nowadays, only about two or three times a week, was her reply. I hung up the phone and said to Matt, my husband, to be prepared for this to be a humiliating, one-night stand. They were much better players than we were.

That one-night stand turned into a 15-year friendship. At the time, Jim and Helen were homing in on their 50th wedding anniversary. They were better than us—Jim especially was a wizard at cards. But neither that nor the age differences were ever an issue, and we spent many evenings enjoying their company playing cards and marveling at the richness of their lives. Jim had one bad leg from having polio as a child, but he never let that disability slow him down. He was the son of a Bethesda pharmacist and used to wave at Franklin Roosevelt when he drove by the store. He became a pharmacist himself, and Helen was a mother and a government worker. Jim told great stories about setting sail for Florida in his twenties. The first time he and his buddy sank where National Airport now stands. The second time they made it to Norfolk. He and Helen were quick to get married, honeymooning at Luray Caverns and putting \$50 down for their house in Arlington Forest.

When we ourselves got married in 2001 in Lubber Run Park, we asked them to stand up and give us a few words of wisdom. They advised us that humor is the most important trait for keeping a relationship young.

We introduced them to our other bridge-playing friends, all of whom would be invited to significant Jim and Helen events -- birthday parties, wedding anniversaries. Every so often everyone's schedules would align so we could have two tables of bridge going at the same time. Matt started playing cards with Jim in a long standing Social Club. The game reputedly dates back to V-J Day or D Day, and Matt was by decades the youngest player and for a long time, a sure loser. But going to that weekly game brought Jim and Matt very close together, such that as Jim and Helen got older, they felt secure that if they ever needed help, they could call on us.

And they did. Helen's health started declining and she became house-bound. Up until almost the end, she still enjoyed us coming over to play bridge. Sometimes I would come play Rummycube with Helen while the boys were out. When she passed away two years ago, we were at Jim's side and were able to be his support system when his children went back home, easing their minds that he was in good hands.

On New Year's Eve, we played bridge together one last time for the foreseeable future. Two days later Jim moved into an assisted living facility in Northern Neck, about 15 minutes' drive from his son. It was time, he kept saying, as his legs were acting up -- he's using a walker all the time now -- and neuropathy in his hands makes doing daily chores difficult. All I wanted to say was "please, don't go."

I wanted to share this story with other Arlington Foresters because I think sometimes, we all get so wrapped up in our lives that we don't seek out new friends -- even the ones just a few doors away. We reached out and were rewarded with a rich relationship that made us not only better bridge players, but also better people. Hopefully if we put another ad in the Forester, we will be rewarded again.

## Tree Grant Program ...from page 1

Lacebark Elm, American Elm, Dutch Elm resistant cultivars (e.g. Princeton, Liberty cultivars), American Beech, Kentucky Coffee Tree, Hickory, and Linden/Basswood.

Grant funding is available for the first 10 applicants during the 2012-2013 season. Applicants must be dues-paying AFCA members. To apply, please follow these instructions:

1. Complete the Tree Grant Application available on the AFCA website (at [www.arlingtonforestva.org/](http://www.arlingtonforestva.org/) by clicking on the AFCA tab and then scrolling to the bottom of that page) or email [greencolleen@gmail.com](mailto:greencolleen@gmail.com) to request an application.
2. Return the application to Colleen Green, AFCA Tree Grant Coordinator. NOTE: To be eligible, the Tree Grant Application must be submitted and approved BEFORE you purchase the tree(s).
3. Once you have been notified that your application has been approved, you must purchase the tree within 90 days.
4. Submit your receipt to Colleen Green, including your name, address, phone number, and where the tree was planted (e.g. front yard, back yard) within 30 days of purchasing the tree. (Electronic submissions are preferred and your refund will be expedited!)
5. Colleen will inspect your property to ensure the tree is planted and then submit your receipt to the AFCA Treasurer for reimbursement.

# Neighborhood Spring Cleanup

By John Naland

**Saturday  
April 27th  
9 - 11 am**

Mark your calendar for Saturday morning, April 27, for our third annual Arlington Forest Spring Cleanup. We will pick up trash, remove invasive plants, and otherwise beautify public spaces around our neighborhood.

To make this event a success, we are looking now for one or two volunteers per site to serve as coordinators on cleanup day. We already have coordinators for the Arlington Blvd southside buffer strip, the N. 2nd Street traffic circles, the N. Granada trailhead area, and the wooded area near the N. Edison Street playground.

Other areas that could be cleaned on April 27 if volunteer coordinators step forward in advance are: the Lubber Run streambed, the Arlington Blvd northside buffer strip, and Four Mile Run at the foot of S. Park. Coordinator duties only consist of keeping the other volunteers generally pointed in the right direction on cleanup day.

For more info or to volunteer to be a site coordinator, please contact John Naland at [nalandfamily@yahoo.com](mailto:nalandfamily@yahoo.com) by March 1. Sites for which no coordinator steps forward will not be included in this year's cleanup.

Please see next month's newsletter for details about cleanup day activities.

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# Arlington Foresters Joining Neighborhood Village

By Peter Olivere

Surveys show that nearly 90 percent of people want to stay in their homes as long as possible as they age. Will you be able to live comfortably and safely in your home as you age? Villages offer a way to do this. A village is a neighborhood-based organization whose members share the goals of staying in their own homes as they age and working together to make this happen.

We hope you will be able to join us at one of our neighborhood gatherings over the next few months, even if you are still years from retirement. These get-togethers will provide you an opportunity to find out more about the plans for a neighborhood village in Arlington Forest and to share your ideas with friends and neighbors, while enjoying some light refreshments.

Villages provide many of the benefits of a retirement community while maintaining one's independence, home and neighborhood ties. The services provided by villages typically include: volunteer help or referrals for home and computer maintenance and repair; rides to medical or other appointments; daily check-in contact; links to a wide variety of services including those provided by County agencies and others organizations and businesses; and local social activities and events.

We are working with the Arlington Villages Project Team

to create one of a network of villages in Arlington. The combined neighborhoods of Arlington Forest, Boulevard and Glencarlyn will be one of the initial local pilot villages. This area includes over 5800 residents of whom more than 1800 are 55 and older and 1100 are 65 and older (including those in senior residence buildings).

The next meeting of the Arlington Forest, Boulevard Manor, Glencarlyn Local Arlington Village will be on Thursday, February 21 at 7 PM in the basement of St. John's Church at 415 S. Lexington St. in the section of the Glencarlyn neighborhood across from Kenmore Middle School. If you are interested in finding out more about the Arlington Villages project or helping set-up small social get-togethers this spring, the contact in Arlington Forest is Esther Bowring at [erbowring@gmail.com](mailto:erbowring@gmail.com). Additional information about the overall Arlington Villages Project and volunteer opportunities is on the website [www.arlingtonvillages.org](http://www.arlingtonvillages.org). We also have a listserv at [arlingtonforest@googlegroups](mailto:arlingtonforest@googlegroups).

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*Jim*

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# Is My Tree Safe?

By John Naland

A standing-room-only crowd at the January AFCA meeting heard informative presentations by two tree experts.

Professional arborist Ed Milhous explained that it is difficult to rate risks in trees. While there are some obvious hazards -- for example, dead or broken wood two or more inches in diameter that is 15 feet or higher in a tree (as explained on Mr. Milhous' website [www.TreesPlease.com](http://www.TreesPlease.com)) -- some internal structural defects can be hidden. Furthermore, when a tree falls over completely in a wind storm, it is often the water-saturated soil that has failed, not the tree itself.

That said, Mr. Milhous recommended that residents who are concerned about their trees should have them inspected by a professional arborist who can identify any risks and recommend steps to mitigate them. A database of arborists certified by the International Society of Arboriculture can be found on the website [www.treesaregood.org](http://www.treesaregood.org).

Mr. Milhous urged caution when doing construction (for example, digging, paving, grading, or building an addition or deck) within a tree's protected root zone. For an older tree, that zone extends out 18 inches for every inch of tree trunk diameter. Encroaching on that zone can damage or kill the tree.

The second presenter was Arlington Forest's own Jim Graham who last year completed the Arlington and Alexandria TreeStewards training program. He gave tips for how to care for trees -- for example, remove English Ivy from the base of trees, frequently water young trees, and spread out roots from the ball when planting a new tree. He said that trimming trees every three or so years helps them withstand wind gusts that accompany major storms. For more info on tree care, see the websites [www.treestewards.org](http://www.treestewards.org) and [www.treesaregood.org](http://www.treesaregood.org).

Mr. Graham also discussed the importance of maintaining our neighborhood's tree canopy by replacing trees that are lost to storms or disease. AFCA's Tree Grant Program (described on page 1 of this newsletter) is one resource. In addition, Arlington County gives away a variety of native tree species each fall (search "trees" on the County website).



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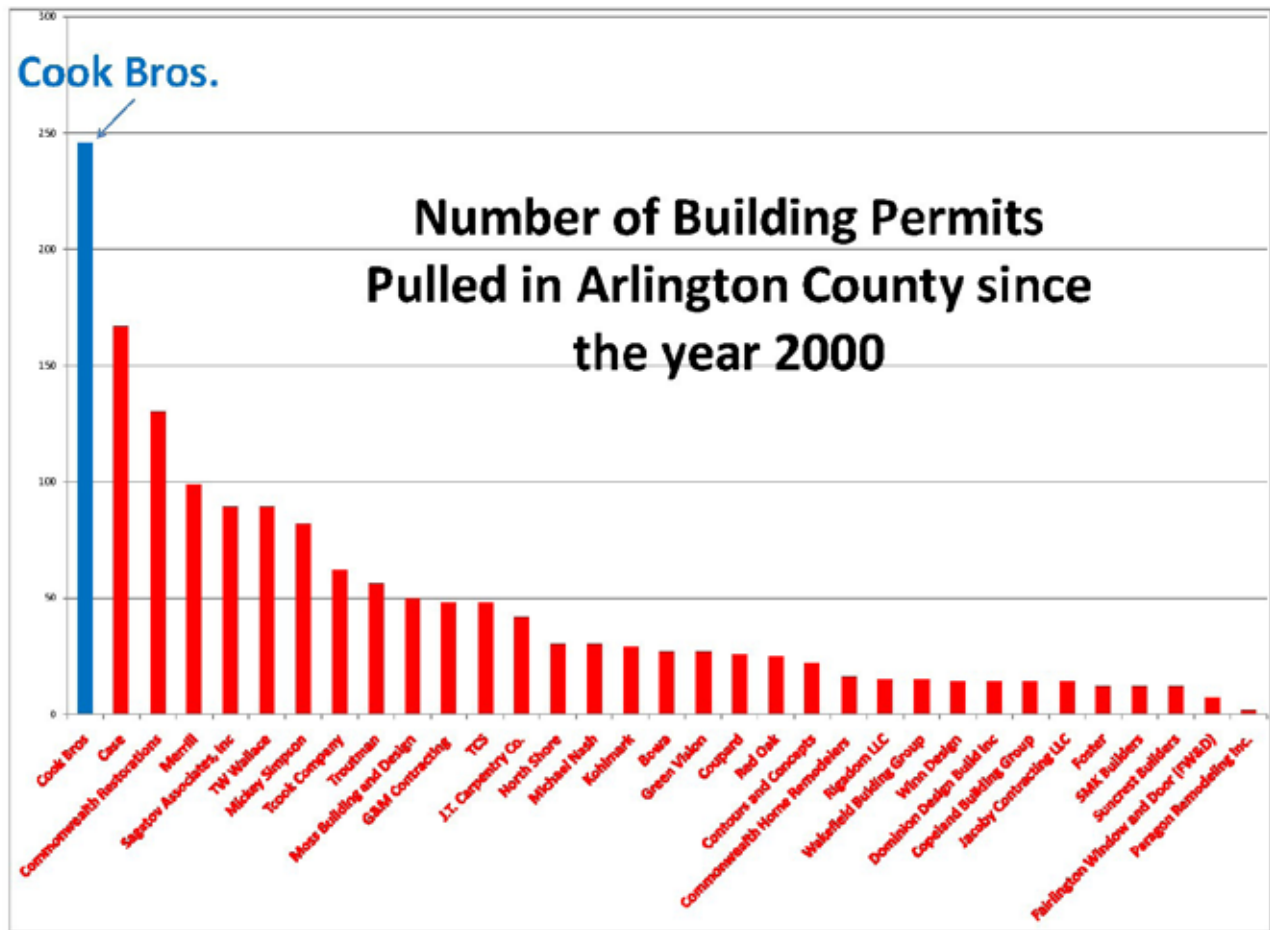
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# Around the Forest

**Southside Playground:** Construction is set to begin this summer on the \$485,000 expansion of the playground in Glencarlyn Park near the end of S. Park Drive. Arlington Forest residents -- including several elementary students who provided input as "subject-matter experts" -- approved the final design at the January AFCA meeting. Construction is expected to take four months.

**Volunteer Tutors Needed:** Kenmore Middle School is recruiting volunteers for a new after-school tutoring program that will offer support in math and English. Formal training is not required -- only a love for math and English 8 literacy and for helping students with work completion. There is no better way to impact student achievement than by rolling up your sleeves and diving in. Please let us know if you are able to help on either Monday or Tuesdays between 2:30-4:15 pm. The tutoring program runs until March. No contribution of your time is too small! Come see what Kenmore students are doing after school and lend a much-needed helping hand. For more details and a volunteer application, please email [donnabudway@aol.com](mailto:donnabudway@aol.com).

**Local Talent:** Arlington Forest's Marsha Lederman was named the top graphic artist in Arlington County last month in the Sun Gazette newspaper's "2012 Best of Arlington" competition based on readers' votes. Best known for her illustrations, design work, and portraiture, examples of her work can be seen at [www.marshalederman.com](http://www.marshalederman.com) and [www.zazzle.com/marlederman](http://www.zazzle.com/marlederman). In addition, she is co-president of the Lubber Run Amphitheater Foundation among other community involvements.



**Share our Streets:** Arlington County has launched a campaign to reduce collisions between bikes, pedestrians, and cars. Called "Be a PAL" the campaign urges bicyclists, walkers, and drivers to be Predictable (travel in a predictable way; don't make sudden, unexpected moves), Alert (pay

attention to your surroundings and to others around you), and Lawful (obey the traffic laws, whether in a car, on a bike, or on foot). The campaign stresses that "we have an inherent responsibility to share the streets with everyone else using them in a courteous and safe manner." Specific suggestions and other helpful info can be found at <http://www.commuterpage.com/pages/pal/>.

**Park Enhancement Grant (PEG):** Last month, the County Board approved a \$5,500 PEG grant sponsored by the

Lubber Run Recreation Center's after-school teen program working with the Virginia Cooperative Extension Service. The project will introduce teens to outdoor activity and education by giving them hands-on gardening experience on land adjacent to the Rec Center. Additional details will be reported in this newsletter as the project develops.

**AF on Facebook:** Did you know that Facebook has a group named "I Grew Up In Arlington Forest" with nearly 90 members? On it you can find reminiscences of life in the Forest in past decades along with vintage photos.

**Workshop on Spring Lawn Care:** Join Master Gardeners of Northern Virginia and Virginia Tech's Dr. Mike Goatley to learn about best management practices for establishing, renovating, and maintaining beautiful lawns in Northern Virginia. The workshop will be on Wednesday, March 14, from 7:00 to 8:30 pm at the Fairlington Community Center, 3308 S. Stafford Street (off Quaker Lane). The workshop is free but advance registration is requested. Call the Horticultural Help Desk at 703-228-6414 weekday mornings or visit [mgnv.org](http://mgnv.org).

**Arlington Snow Ordinance:** Arlington County requires property owners to clear snow and ice from public sidewalks adjacent to their property and prohibits putting snow on the street. The deadline is 24 hours after snow stops falling for snows up to six inches, and 36 hours for heavier snows. You must clear the entire sidewalk up to three feet wide. There are fines of \$50 to \$250 for non-compliance.

**Be Prepared:** If you would like to join the ranks of Arlington residents who are better prepared for and able to respond to and recover from disasters, Community Emergency Response Team (CERT) training may be for you. Since it began ten years ago, over 575 county residents have completed this eight-session, 23-hour training program. The hands-on training takes place over eight weeks on six weeknights (Tuesdays or Thursdays) and two Saturday mornings. It covers topics including disaster preparedness, disaster medical operations, light search and rescue, fire suppression and terrorism. Classes meet at the Arlington County Fire Department (ACFD) Training Academy in Shirlington and are taught by ACFD and Office of Emergency Management staff, as well as active-duty CERT members. Training is free, but participants must acquire certain supplies themselves, many of which should already be on-hand at home. Training is open to Arlington residents who are at least 18 years of age (16 if accompanied by parent) and able to participate in all aspects of the training, including lifting and carrying. Two classes begin in March and seats will be filled on a first-come, first-served basis. For additional info or to sign up, contact Cynthia Kellams at [ArlingtonCERT@gmail.com](mailto:ArlingtonCERT@gmail.com).

# Community Calendar

**Next AFCA Meeting:** Wednesday, Feb 20, 7 PM, at Barrett School library. See page 1 for the agenda.

**Future AFCA Meetings:** Mar 20, Apr 17 and May 15 (annual membership picnic in Lubber Run Park). No meetings are held in summer months.



**Neighborhood Spring Cleanup:** April 27. Our third annual volunteer clean-up of public spaces around Arlington Forest. See page 4 for details.

**Annual Community Yard Sale:** May 18 (date to be confirmed). Turn unwanted stuff into cash.

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

**Lubber Run Amphitheater 2013 Season:** Live entertainment under the stars resumes in June.

**Arlington County Fair:** August 7-11.

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• *For electronic versions of newsletter:*   
• [www.arlingtonforestva.org](http://www.arlingtonforestva.org)  
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**BRANCHING OUT:** Using a crane, Dominion tree trimming crews are able to safely remove tree branches around elevated neighborhood power lines.

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# Nature News

By Cliff Fairweather  
Park Naturalist,  
Long Branch  
Nature Center

## Freezable Frogs and Salamander Congresses

Late February and early March is the breeding season for several species of tough local amphibians. One passes the winter, along

with most of the year, underground while the other endures freezing weather as a virtual ice cube. Both make an annual migration to temporary wetlands, called vernal pools, to mate and lay eggs.

The spectacular spotted salamander sports blue-black skin spangled with yellow spots and can reach up ten inches in length. The adults live underground most of the year in wooded areas near a vernal pool. They feed on insects, worms and other invertebrates and are rarely seen on the surface. Adult spotted salamanders are long-lived amphibians, reaching two decades or more.

Wood frogs are medium-sized frogs that spend their adult lives in the woods hunting for insects and other invertebrates. As winter approaches, they take cover under fallen leaves, digging just a little below the surface. Up to 40 percent of their body can freeze without ill effects because they produce their own anti-freeze that prevents

formation of deadly ice crystals within their cells. While frozen, the frogs have no respiration, heart beat or brain activity, yet within a day of thawing out they are ready to breed.

Both of these amphibians migrate to vernal pools for a few days of mass mating and egg laying, usually in late February or early March in our area. Spotted salamanders move into the pools with the first warmish late-winter rains to form nighttime mating aggregations called congresses. Wood frogs migrate around the same time, with males arriving at the pools first to give their quack-like call while floating on the surface. Responding females arrive soon and a frenzy of mating ensues over the next few days and nights.

Wood frog and spotted salamander young have little time to hatch from their gelatinous eggs and develop into land-living forms. Local vernal pools typically dry out by the end of May and often earlier. This makes them an uncertain nursery but also one that is free of fish that would eat amphibian eggs and young.

The Long Branch Nature Center has vernal pools with wood frog and spotted salamander populations. Check the spring issue of the Snag newsletter for programs related to these habitats and the amphibians that use them.

## Thanks for your business!

*As a resident of Arlington Forest, I am proud to offer my exceptional service to my neighbors. If you, or someone you know, could use my help, please give me a call.*

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# Barcroft School News

Happy Winter from Barcroft Elementary! Students will enjoy a five-day long weekend during February 14-18 while the school hosts **Parent Teacher Conferences**. In celebration of **African-American History Month**, on February 23, the school is sponsoring a Family Saturday Field Trip to Washington, D.C. Families will visit the National Museum of American History and the Martin Luther King, Jr. Memorial.

From February 25-March 1, all students are encouraged to participate in the annual **Jump Rope for Heart** fundraiser. During P.E. classes this week, participating students will jump rope and raise money to benefit the American Heart Association. Neighbors are most welcome to sponsor a student for this worthy cause. On March 2, wish our three **Odyssey of the Mind** student teams good luck as they compete in the annual competition at West Potomac High School.

The PTA's annual **Coffeehouse and Book Exchange** will be held on the evening of March 5 between 6:30-8:30 p.m. All are welcome to join us for hot chocolate and coffee and to collect books for the home library. Drop off any books you don't read anymore, and pick up books that are new to you! That same evening, the PTA will commemorate Arlington Public School's "Arts in the School" Month by hosting a special presentation by Art Teacher Marel Sitron during the PTA meeting and by displaying student art submissions in the 2012-2013 PTA Reflections Art program.

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## Crime Prevention True or False

By Captain Karen Herchenroder  
First District Commander  
Arlington County Police Department

With another year upon us, we have all grown a little older and hopefully a little wiser. I thought I would give you this little quiz. Please share it with your family and help us reduce the number of preventable incidents.

### Test - True or False

1. If I park my car in my driveway, I do not need to lock my doors?
2. If I don't leave anything of value in sight in my car, my car won't be broken into?
3. It is a good idea to leave a spare key to my car in my car?
4. If I am a victim of a crime, I should wait till I get home to report it?
5. If I see something suspicious, I should just email the civic association president or police?

On March 7, Barcroft will celebrate the close of the 3rd Quarter with a daytime and evening "Days and Nights of Leonardo" **Open House** and an evening African-American Heritage Celebration. Join us on the 7th to explore the latest in student learning and to conclude our month-long celebration of African-American culture.

Between March 8 to April 1, students will have a break from classes. Consistent with Barcroft's year-round "Modified School Year" schedule, Spring Intersession classes will be held from March 11-22. Students may take two weeks of morning and afternoon classes featuring extended learning opportunities in math, language arts, science and technology, writing, music, and art, or enjoy a break from school. All students will then enjoy **Spring Break** from March 25-April 1. Classes will resume on April 2.

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

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### Answers

1. False - We have had several cars entered that were parked in driveways. Always lock your car. Did you know that in December alone over 20 unlocked cars were entered?
2. False - Cars have been entered even if items of value are out of sight. Even leaving change in your car attracts thieves.
3. False - Leaving keys in the car makes your car an easy target to steal.
4. False - Call as soon as you can from the location that the incident occurred if safe to do so.
5. False - Call the non-emergency police phone number (703-558-2222) as soon as possible and provide as much info as possible so an officer can respond then and not several hours later.

I appreciate the cooperation of citizens who call the police after seeing a suspicious person in the neighborhood. We cannot do it without your eyes and ears! If you see something that doesn't look right, please call our non-emergency number so we can have an officer check it out. On a separate note, we have seen a few cases in Arlington where all four tires have been removed from cars. If you see someone that you don't recognize taking tires off cars please call us. If your car has expensive tires, you might consider purchasing locking lug nuts to deter/prevent this crime.

Thank you and I hope you have a safe and happy 2013!

# Barrett School News

Thank you to the families and community members who continue to support Barrett Elementary with their time, energy and donations. We couldn't do it without you!

**National PTA Reflections Contest:** Congratulations to the Barrett Students who were recognized at a ceremony on January 17 at Washington-Lee High School.

The **January Library Night** with author visit from Hena Khan was enlightening. The children heard stories about Islamic culture, made picture frames, and sampled Ms. Khan's favorite foods.

**Family Gym Night** has been rescheduled for Friday, February 22, from 6:30-8:15 p.m. Energize with Zumba, Fitness Boot Camp, movement games, yoga, Heart Bingo and more!

**Discovery STEM Night** (Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics) is on Thursday, February 28 from 6:00-8:00 p.m. Activities include: presentation by Astronaut Leland Melvin, videoconference with NASA, telescopes, forces and motion activities, space mathematics, and viewing science fair projects. Barrett will host the 1st Annual STEM Book Fair, highlighting the latest STEM fiction and non-fiction titles, games, and educational toys on Thurs, 2/28, 4:30 - 8:30 p.m. and Fri, 3/1, 8 a.m. - 4 p.m.

Superheroines, Superheroes, and Supervillains! Ever wonder what it would be like to have super powers? Barrett PTA is partnering with **EverWonder Camps** again for the March 7 & 8 Parent-Teacher Conference Days. Visit the link for details: <http://everwondercamps.com/Camps/Arlington>

**Silver Diner Restaurant Night** is Thursday, March 14, 5:00-8:00 p.m. Join Barrett families while we 'Run the Diner!' A percentage of sales will be donated back to our school!

Please join us for one of Barrett's next **Kindergarten Information Sessions** (Tuesday, March 12, 9:15 a.m.-10:45 a.m. or Thursday, April 11, 12:45 p.m.-2:15 p.m.). Sessions include: school tour, exhibits of students' work, and information on Barrett's focus in math, science and the arts. Parents of prospective Kindergartners are invited to join us at our STEM Discovery Night on February 28 and March 12 Library Night. If you have any questions about the orientations or want to schedule a follow up visit to the school, please call Principal Terry Bratt at 228-6288 for more information.

Thursday, March 16 is Barrett's **Kindergarten Play Date** for rising Kindergartners and their families. Come play at Barrett!!

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, snow shoveling and other services. To be added or deleted, e-mail [newsletter@arlingtonforestva.org](mailto:newsletter@arlingtonforestva.org).

## Southside:

- Caroline Rogers, pet sitting, dog walking, yard work, snow shoveling, [carolinearogers@verizon.net](mailto:carolinearogers@verizon.net), 703-892-0226
- Julia Rogers, babysitting (RC certified), yard work, snow shoveling, [juliaerogers23@gmail.com](mailto:juliaerogers23@gmail.com), 703-892-0226
- Jon Tiernan, babysitting (RC certified), dog walking, pet sitting, yard work, snow shoveling, [Wonton81@gmail.com](mailto: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, snow shoveling, [lizzytiernan@gmail.com](mailto:lizzytiernan@gmail.com), 703-979-5046

## Greenbrier Section:

- Zephren Collinson, babysitting (references), pet sitting, dog walking, yard work, snow shoveling, tutoring, 703-528-3595

- Kate Felsenheld, pet sitting, dog walking, [k.cliffhero@gmail.com](mailto:k.cliffhero@gmail.com), 703-276-9874
- Alex Hendel, babysitting (RC certified), experienced Tot Camp counselor (High school student), snow shoveling, [alexhendel@gmail.com](mailto:alexhendel@gmail.com), 703-622-2884
- Sarah Keyser, babysitting (RC certified), pet sitting, dog walking, [Stealers12@gmail.com](mailto:Stealers12@gmail.com), 703-243-8777
- Alice Naland, babysitting (RC certified), pet sitting, snow shoveling, [nalandfamily@yahoo.com](mailto:nalandfamily@yahoo.com), 703-888-0125
- Lucy Naland, babysitting (RC certified), [LucyMNLand@gmail.com](mailto:LucyMNLand@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, [leahorwitz.com](mailto:leahorwitz.com), 703-243-2395
- Sophia Constantine, pet sitting, dog walking, [cpconstantine@comcast.net](mailto:cpconstantine@comcast.net), 703-841-9229
- Sophie Frank, babysitting (RC certified), tutoring, [sophie.e.frank@gmail.com](mailto: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](mailto:alyssa.luz.ricca@gmail.com), 571-274-1453.
- 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](mailto:bo.i.samps@gmail.com), 703-447-7678
- Allison Vernon, pet sitting, babysitting (references), [catharinevernon@aol.com](mailto:catharinevernon@aol.com), 703-522-9147
- Gabby Young, babysitting, mother's helper, pet sitting, dog walking, [merrywesing@yahoo.com](mailto: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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