# **BULLETIN**

**FEBRUARY 2013** 



Volume 39, Number 2



www.fca-fairlington.org

#### FCA monthly meeting

Wednesday, February 13, 7 pm FCC 3308 S. Stafford St.

FCA strategic communications working session Monday, February 11, 7 – 9 pm FCC

**Fairlington Diners** Tuesday, February 12, 6:30 pm Clyde's at Mark Center Alexandria

**MOMS Club** Wednesday, February 13, 4 pm FCC

**Tree pruning workshop** Sunday, February 17, 1 – 3 pm Arlington home

#### **Fairlington Diners**

Monday, February 25, 6:30 pm Ramparts half-price burger night Alexandria

#### **Book Group**

Tuesday, February 26, 7:30 pm North Fairlington CC

See Neighborhood News on page 23 and related articles for details about calendar events.

## Association bylaws updated for 21st century

At the FCA meeting this month, Fairlington residents can learn more about proposed amendments to the bylaws of the FCA, Fairlington's civic association, and then vote on the amendments proposal. Over the last year, FCA board members offered suggestions for ways to streamline and make more flexible the board's operating procedures, as codified in the bylaws, with the goal of making the association better able



The bylaws committee—Guy Land, Mark Jones, and Carol Dabbs—shares a light moment. Photo, Gretchen Fallon.

to respond to community needs.

The bylaws committee, Carol Dabbs, Mark Jones, and Guy Land, recommended which changes to include in amended bylaws, and they undertook the largely technical task of developing workable language for the amendments. At the February 13 meeting, Jones and Dabbs will describe the bylaws changes and explain how they are designed to adjust or clarify how the FCA governs itself.

For example, one such practical change takes into account that the FCA's nine board members sometimes need to take action (e.g., make decisions, take votes) between regularly scheduled in-person meetings. But instead of trying to arrange a special meeting—requiring meshing the schedules of nine busy volunteers-the amended bylaws would permit the board to poll its members electronically, while also requiring that the vote be recorded in the minutes of the next regularly scheduled meeting. In addition, the amendment would give the board flexibility in communicating with Fairlington residents, by making expanded use of social and electronic media, to include the Web site and the neighborhood's Facebook page, rather than limiting notifications to the monthly newsletter.

## Coming up ...

The FCA Board invites all Fairlington residents to attend its meetings, which occur on the second Wednesday of the month at the Fairlington Community Center (3308 S. Stafford St.) unless otherwise noted. If you would like to discuss a neighborhood issue at the meeting, please e-mail president@fca-fairlington.org or leave a voice-mail message at 703-243-1735 by the Sunday before the meeting.

#### Agenda:

**February 13:** Discussion of the proposal to amend the FCA bylaws, followed by a vote on the proposal. A finalized agenda for the monthly meeting will be posted on the FCA Web site the Sunday before the Wednesday meeting. In February 2013, posting will be Monday, February 11.

#### **Regular business meeting:**

- Approval of agenda
- Approval of January minutes
- Officer and committee reports
- Unfinished business
- New business

#### **Online resources:**

Find more information on the FCA Web site, www.fca-fairlington.org. Sign up for updates delivered to your inbox.

Find us on Facebook at Fairlington Appreciation Society.

Find the latest *AFB* online at the FCA Web site the week before hard copies hit doorsteps.

Web design by Global Thinking, Alexandria, VA, www. globalthinking.com.

#### **USEFUL CONTACTS**

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Fairlington Community Center	703-228-6588		
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www.arlingtonva.us/departments/Environmental			
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#### All Fairlington Bulletin

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6 PM, **10th of month** preceding publication month for commercial advertising, mini-ads, and editorial copy. Send material on disk with paper proof to: FCA • PO Box 6182 • Arlington, VA 22206-0182 E-mail editorial announcements to: editor@fca-fairlington.org E-mail commercial and mini ads to: admanager@fca-fairlington.org Drop off location: Drop box in the Fairlington Community Center, 3308 S. Stafford Street

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Pick one up at an FCA-sponsored event or meeting. Or send e-mail to president@fca-fairlington.org. Or contact any FCA board member. Or call the FCA at 703-243-1735 to leave your name and number. T-shirts, in white or hunter green, are \$15, 100% cotton, in sizes S, M, L, and X-L.



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*Some images in this publication may be digitally enhanced.* 



## PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Effective communication is a key attribute of vibrant communities. This is particularly true of places, like Fairlington, that enjoy a large and diverse population. In February FCA will be focusing on how we

can foster stronger communication within the Fairlington community, and we need your ideas and suggestions.

Major questions for us include-

How can we learn from you what your needs and priorities are for us? What are the best ways to share with you what FCA is doing as an organization?

How do we keep you informed about Arlington and Alexandria policies that could have a unique impact on Fairlington, as well as get out the word about real estate development plans that could affect Fairlington? Which strategies best facilitate conversations among Fairlington's condo and homeowner associations?

How can we foster more communication among our residents?

We have a variety of tools for meeting these challenges. The most common is this newsletter—and those signboards that you see on the street corner. But we also have a Web site, participate in a Facebook group, and use Twitter in special circumstances. And we will be looking at ways of making better use of social media and technology.

Part of our mission is telling you what we know, in a timely and understandable way, regardless of the technology. But that's one-way communication. We need ongoing conversations across the Fairlington community—whether it's letters to the editor of this newsletter, online surveys that gauge the community's sentiment on various topics, or Facebook postings among Fairlingtonians seeking solutions to a common problem.

It's also about how we use these tools to strengthen a sense of community. This could range from deepening our understanding of Fairlington's history to an online Fairlington photo contest where we spotlight both cool facets of the community and the awesome camera skills of our residents.

Many of our residents (particularly the younger ones—yes, this is almost a generational matter!) rely almost exclusively on social media and electronic communication, while other residents lean more heavily on hard copy. The challenge is to strike the right balance, to match up with the different ways our residents prefer to stay connected to their world.

We need your thoughts as we launch this discussion. A conversation about communication benefits from multiple parties. Please join it. Shoot me an e-mail with your thoughts and we'll add them to the mix in our informal communication strategic planning work session on February 11.

Guy Land, FCA President president@fca-fairlington.org

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## FCA board maps community activities for 2013



Would you be interested in seeing a farmers market in Fairlington (and would you patronize it if we had one)? How should we celebrate Fairlington's 70th anniversary? Would you like to show off your athletic skills through a Fairlington 5K fun run/walk? Could you help us if the FCA tried to do these things?

These are some of the activities the FCA Board is exploring as it develops a working plan for 2013. Other potential topics include a community electronics recycling event, a "Fairlington Tree Walk" led by an arborist or tree steward, a community swim competition in the summer, and an architecture tour. Your suggestions for other community events are welcome.

"We are looking for activities that link north and south Fairlington, appeal to a wide spectrum of our residents, and just generally make Fairlington a fun place to live," says FCA President Guy Land.

There are limits to how many things FCA can sponsor, so not everything that is on the working list will make the final cut. In deciding which ones to pursue, the board is considering the degree of perceived community interest, the potential cost, and the ability to recruit volunteers to help with the event. In some cases, planning may begin this year with an eye toward hosting the event next year.

If you have ideas, and particularly if you're willing to help out with an event, please send an e-mail to president@fca-fairlington.com. And if you would like to encourage community discussion of your idea, write a letter to the editor of the *All Fairlington Bulletin*. Those are always welcome.

Every other year FCA sponsors Fairlington Day in May, a community-wide gathering featuring food, games for children, and a variety of vendors. Last year's was a big success, attracting hundreds of residents from across Fairlington. In odd-numbered years, FCA supports the May Fairlington Home and Garden Tour, sponsored by the Fairlington Historical Society.

## County budget new\$

**The process:** Arlington County's budget process for fiscal year 2014 is now underway. FY 2013 concludes on June 30, 2013. FY 2014 begins July 1. Again this year, according to the County Manager's office, there is a "significant gap between expected revenues and expenditures." The shortfall is projected at nearly \$25 million for the county government and about the same amount for the public schools.

**Real estate tax:** The assessment notice, for property you own in Arlington, went out after January 1, and the letter contains instructions and deadlines for appealing your assessment to the Department of Real Estate Assessments and the Board of Equalization. The deadline for seeking an appeal is March 1, 2013. Applications must be postmarked by March 1. The current real estate tax rate is \$0.971 assessed per \$100 worth of value.

**Info:** For more information, go online to the county Web site, www.arlingtonva.us, select the County Manager's page, and click the icon for FY 2014 Budget Updates. You also can find various pieces of budget-related information under Treasurer, Real Estate Assessments, and Department of Management and Finance.

## Strategic communications: Special work session, Monday, February 11

The FCA board members will hold a special work session on Monday evening, February 11, 7 to 9 pm, at the Fairlington Community Center, for an informal and wide-ranging discussion of ways to expand the FCA's communication with the community. In particular, the discussion will center on ways to make better use of social media to gather information from residents and to pass information to them. What kinds of things would you like to see on the FCA Web site or on the Facebook page? You can join the group to share your knowledge and suggestions for wavs to keep the information flowing.

#### FCA 2013 board: Correction

The FCA board members for 2013 are:

President, Guy Land Vice president, Kent Duffy Secretary, Carol Dabbs Treasurer, Ed Hilz Directors: Jacob Gelbaum, Joe Hartman, Mark Jones, Carrie Street, and Michelle Woolley.

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### Dominion's repair to underground cables continues



Photos, Gretchen Fallon.

Dominion Virginia Power's installation of new bulk feeder cable along S. Utah Street was completed last month. The replacement work was occasioned by two failures last summer on the oldest spans of underground electrical lines in the area. At some work locations, the ends of non-energized cable can be seen above ground near the pad-mounted switches (big green boxes) that the new cable is being connected to. In addition, Dominion is working to remove two older switches and replace them with newer, more reliable switches. (Switch replacement may require planned outages; affected residents will be notified in advance.)

The final stage of the work, energizing the new cable, should be completed by early to mid-February (barring

#### Winter tree and shrub pruning workshop, February 17

Virginia Cooperative Extension Master Gardeners will conduct a free workshop on the basics of pruning trees and shrubs in winter. The workshop will cover when to prune, how to use pruning tools to make the right cuts, and how to reduce a plant's size and shape and correct defects. Hands-on experience will be provided. Bring your own pruning tools (hand pruners, lopping shears, pruning saws), if you have them, and dress warmly for outside work.

The workshop will be held on Sunday, February 17, 1 to 3 pm, 4470 First Place South, Arlington 22204 (private residence, at the corner of S. Pershing and S. First Place). The workshop is free, but registration is requested. To register, call the horticulture Help Desk at 703-228-6414.

weather delays or other unforeseen circumstances). All construction sites will be restored (grading and grass) to the way they looked before the work began. Similar cable replacement projects are in the design phase for locations in north Fairlington.

Dominion describes the replacement of faulted underground cable as routine maintenance. At the same time, they are performing "some proactive reliability work." That includes replacing large spans of "vintage" cable which were found in the areas adjacent to the faulted cable, as well as replacing old switches. The expectation is that, ultimately, reliability and service to customers will be improved.

### Home and Garden Tour plans

The 2013 Fairlington Home and Garden Tour, sponsored by the Fairlington Historical Society, is just three months away, on Saturday, May 11. The tour committee is still looking for homes to add to the tour, especially ones that have had major renovations. A goal of the tour is to include at least one home from each of the Fairlington neighborhoods, with examples of each type of floor plan (Braddock, Clarendon, Edgewood, etc.).

The tour committee invites neighbors to participate as volunteers. We'll need help before the tour with planning, advertising, ticket sales, and fundraising with local businesses, and on the day of the tour as guides and helpers. If you are interested in volunteering to help with the tour, or would like to nominate your home or garden, please send e-mail to FHG2013@gmail.com.

## For the parking-challenged residents of Fairlington, Arlington's parking manager and traffic engineer explain the rules of the road

Everybody wants to

park in front!

*—Sarah Stott* 



Arlington Parking Manager Sarah Stott, from the county's Transportation Division, Department of Environmental Services, describes receiving calls from residents as sometimes like "catching javelins." No one calls to say, "Hey, thanks for the new signs." Rather, people typically get in touch when they have

a parking-related question, complaint, or problem. And that's to be expected, said Stott, who is charged with

managing all the available publicstreet curb space in the county. The task involves balancing the needs of a host of interested parties—residential area neighbors, visitors, commuters, bikers and pedestrians, store owners, commercial and emergency vehicles, transit vehicles, and work vans and delivery trucks.

In a county where population is expected only to grow, perhaps by 25% over the next 20 years, parking space along the public streets is a valuable resource—and a finite one. "We aren't adding any more curb space," said



Stott. So the county seeks to manage the curb space that exists by combining its regulation with other factors that affect all stakeholders: examining more transit options; pursuing sensible parking restrictions that are designed for increased safety; and making the public aware of garages that go underutilized.

At the FCA meeting in January, a spirited audience of parking-pressed Fairlingtonians presented their concerns to Stott and to Andrea Wilkinson, DES transportation engineer, who helped explain the recent perceived loss of legal parking spaces on Fairlington streets. Most affected were residents along S. Stafford Street, where extensive road work last year meant that several spans of curb, previously used for parking, were newly signed or striped to preclude parking. (See the story, January *Bulletin*, page 1.)

> In many cases, as Wilkinson pointed out, the "lost" parking space was never a legal space to begin with based on Virginia Code that requires 15 feet of clear space to a fire hydrant (on either side) and 20 feet of clear space to an intersection. Because cars encroached on the clear-curb areas,

those areas now have signs or pavement markings to reinforce the requirements. In addition, a few crosswalks and bus stops were signed/marked to create greater clearcurb space in order to meet county, state, and federal standards for accessibility and safety.

Stott explained that such changes can occur any time Arlington improves the roadway, and that's usually during the county's seasonal street repair work, between about March and October. Major street repairs entail an assessment of the curb space, which will sometimes trigger the need to bring the curb space into compliance with established standards and regulations.

Stott provided comments cards for Fairlingtonians to fill out if they had a specific question about parking. In addition, Stott and Wilkinson answered many questions from the audience, which produced the following pieces of interesting and useful information:

• Arlington's on-street parking restrictions are neither capricious nor haphazard. The county follows legal codes and applies standards that are accepted



nationwide. In addition, said Stott, county planners are mindful of "over-signage."

- Transportation engineers are not heavy-handed with signage and markings when enforcing the curb-clearance rules. They closely survey every foot of available curb space. And if it's a judgment call involving a few inches or even a few feet to an intersection, for example, and if safety concerns are met, they tend to make the call in favor of permitting one more legal parking space.
- Pavement markings are not a suggestion—your car should be parked fully inside the box. Parking enforcement might be willing to overlook the overhang of a bumper, but not the rear half of a car.
- The county's zoned permit-parking program is a tool designed to address the pressure on residential parking from outside the neighborhood (commuters parking near bus stops, for example). It is not designed to manage a neighborhood's internal parking issues. For more information, go online to www. arlingtonva.us and search Residential Permit Parking Program.

- The curb space along Quaker Lane (southbound, adjacent to Fairlington) can be re-examined to permit some form of parking, if residents so desire. The signed restrictions to discourage overnight parking (No Parking 1 3 am) were put in place to address residents' complaints that the Quaker Lane curb had become a virtual parking lot, overnight and for several days at a time, for large commercial trucks, vans, and boats. The county is willing to work with Fairlingtonians to develop a way to make better use of the space for residents.
- There are about 100 on-street parking spaces in Shirlington, but there are hundreds more in the parking garages, and those spaces increase to more than 3,000 on evenings and weekends. Particularly underutilized is the "hidden" garage, so-called because people don't seem to know it exists—the Randolph garage can be accessed from a side street off S. Randolph Street.

For more information, go online to the county Web site, www.arlingtonva.us > Department of Environmental Services > Parking icon. For requests/questions directed to the Transportation Engineering and Operations Bureau, call 703-228-3344. For on-street parking enforcement, call the Police non-emergency hotline, 703-558-2222, or send e-mail to the police by using the online form.

Opposite page, top: County traffic engineer Andrea Wilkinson and Parking Manager Sarah Stott at the FCA meeting in January. Opposite, bottom: FCA president Guy Land examines Wilkinson's map of zoned parking-permit areas inside Fairlington. This page, top: Parked cars fully occupy Fairlington curb space. At left: Last year's extensive roadway repair occasioned a reassessment of the curb space. Below: Newly signed clear-curb space. Photos, Gretchen Fallon.





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### All the same, but different



Constructed with solid and sometimes luxurious materials, Fairlington was built to last. Photos, Gretchen Fallon.

The historic landmark status that Fairlington now enjoys in its 70th year derives in part from its cohesive look and feel. A *Washington Post* reporter once described Fairlington's heritage look as having a "hypnotic sameness." Visitors to Fairlington say they easily get lost—street to street, courtyard to courtyard, they say, "It all looks the same." But once you've lived here a while, you begin to notice repeated variations on the basic theme.

The differences are not haphazard. They were planned to provide visual variety within an overall pervasive format—Fairlington's characteristic Colonial-revival red-brick style. Within that framework, you can see that exterior architectural details vary throughout the neighborhood.

Most buildings are red brick, but some buildings combine brick and quarry stone. Some buildings' high walls include a decorative window, which may be round or rectangular. Above some windows, there are flat stone lintels, with or without a keystone, while others have arched decorative brickwork, and still other tops of windows and doors are plain. Sometimes, windows will be flanked by paneled wooden shutters, sometimes not. Covered front porches, with varying designs of cornices, might have round or fluted wooden columns or square brick ones, and individual entries come with a variety of bracketed canopy designs.

Rooflines are mostly steeply pitched gables, but there are several buildings with gambrel or mansard roofs, a few buildings have flat roofs, and some roofline planes are broken by dormers. A 1940s bill for the predominantly slate roofing describes squares of Vermont slate in variegated purple, unfading mottled green, and weathering sea green. At intervals on rooftops, you will see chimneys, described in the construction documents as false chimneys—"they do not carry products of combustion. They are merely ornamental features."

As you walk, run, or bike through Fairlington, it's easy to be reminded of the community's hallmark Colonialrevival architectural theme—it's visible everywhere. And then you begin to identify, here and there, the pattern of variations designed 70 years ago, just to attract and delight the eye.

#### Fairlington history on the Web

PBS television station WETA 26 hosts a local history blog, "Boundary Stones," that currently includes a post on Fairlington's history (December 3, 2012). In case you missed it, Guy Land provides the following link:

http://blogs.weta.org/boundarystones/2012/12/03/ fairlington-built-last.

Also, did you know that Fairlington has a Wikipedia page?



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## NC plan describes the neighborhood's goals, needs

The Fairlington-Shirlington Neighborhood Conservation Area Plan is a document sponsored by the FCA through which the neighbors express their desires for improvements in the local area and secure funding from the county to build or install the improvements. For example, in 2009, the Neighborhood Conservation program approved Fairlington's request for an ADA-compliant picnic shelter in Utah Park, which was built in 2010.

In fact, since the original FSNC plan in 1987, the neighborhood has received more than \$600,000 for improvements, says FCA treasurer Ed Hilz, who also serves as



Jacob Gelbaum and Ed Hilz, above, prepare the slide show for the FSNC plan update presentation. Right, Ed Hilz amid the playground improvements at the FCC. Photos, Guy Land, Gretchen Fallon.

chairman of the Fairlington-Shirlington Neighborhood Conservation Committee. Those improvements include: decorative brick walls and entry signs framing two major access points into Fairlington; 72 street lights; curb, gutter, and sidewalks on S. Taylor and S. Wakefield Streets and along Quaker Lane; a staircase along Abingdon Street across from the fire station; amenities at the FCC such as playground equipment, a picnic shelter, an exercise trail and stations, and landscaping; and landscaping and underground irrigation systems at four traffic circles and islands.

The NC program is an Arlington initiative that helps county government select infrastructure improvement projects for construction on public property in residential neighborhoods. Funding for the projects comes from bond referenda approved by county voters. Disbursing the funds is overseen by the program's advisory committee (NCAC), which is composed of representatives from Arlington's participating neighborhoods. The committee reviews requests for projects and makes recommendations twice a year for approval to the county board. The approved funds might be designated, for example, to install a series of drains and culverts on a section of bike trail that becomes submerged after heavy rains; to re-grade and reinforce a hillside that is subject to erosion; or to construct and install a playground or water feature in a local park.

The desired improvements are identified by the residents of a neighborhood, who describe their neighborhood, its residents, the area's assets and deficits, and the residents' goals in the NC plan. There is, for example, the Clarendon-Courthouse NC plan, the Alcova Heights NC plan, and the Fairlington-Shirlington NC plan—at last count, there were 58 participating Arlington neighborhoods. The county describes this input from neighborhoods as "direct engagement between citizens and government."

A neighborhood's NC plan is a substantial, multi-part document (more like a booklet, 30 to 50 pages long), the work for which is typically undertaken by the neighborhood's civic association. The usual process is for the civic association to sponsor a survey to gather input from residents about things they value and things they'd like to see changed. The survey also takes stock of the area's infrastructure, including an assessment of the state of repair for such things as sidewalks, curbs and gutters, park and recreation facilities, street lights, street signage, and intersection and traffic controls. In response to the survey, residents might say, for example that they've noticed an uptick in cut-through traffic due to nearby redevelopment that has increased density, and they'd like the county to install speed humps or other traffic-calming devices on residential streets. (Traffic concerns are routinely a major point of discussion in Arlington NC plans.)

After the NC plan document has been compiled, the civic association presents the plan to the advisory committee for review, and then to the county board for consideration. The update to the 1987 Fairlington-Shirlington NC plan, which has been shepherded for several years by Ed Hilz, will be presented this month to the NCAC by Hilz, FCA board member Jacob Gelbaum, and FCA president Guy Land. For more information about the NC program, go online to www.arlingtonva.us/ departments/CPHD/ons/CPHDOnsConservation.aspx.



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- Denice McCullough, Fairlington Resident

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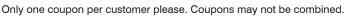
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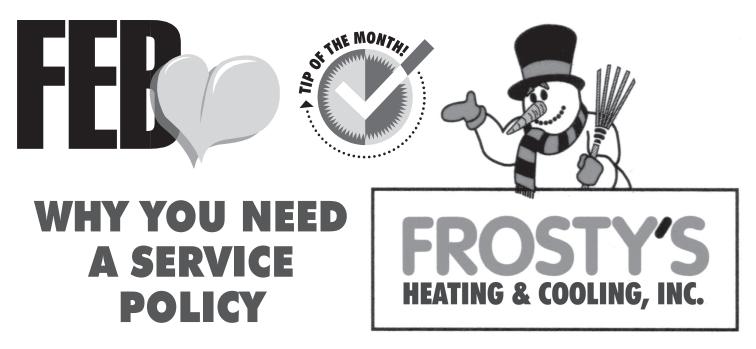




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If you would like more information on our annual service policies or one of the many other services Frosty's Heating & Cooling provides, please contact our office.

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### Storm-wise car-trip tips from the American Red Cross

The best tip is to not travel by car in a storm. If you must drive, follow these tips:

- Make sure you have an emergency preparedness kit in the car with you.
- Keep your car's gas tank full to keep the fuel line from freezing.
- Let someone know your destination and route. If you car gets stuck along the way, help can be sent based on your prearranged route.
- If you do get stuck, stay with your car. Do not try to walk to safety.
- Start the car and use the heater for about 10 minutes every hour.
- Keep the exhaust pipe clear so fumes won't back up into the car.
- As you sit, move your arms and legs to keep blood circulating and stay warm.
- Keep one window slightly open to let in air.

## Arlington County summer camp sign-up begins, February 20 online

- Choose from over 100 different camps at a variety of times and locations.
- County resident online, fax, and mail-in registration begins Wednesday, February 20. Camps begin June 24, 2013.
- For more information, go online to www. arlingtonva.us/dpr and search summer camp.

#### FCC hours and contact Info

Monday through Friday, 8 am – 9 pm Saturday, 8 am – 5 pm Sunday, closed

Hours are subject to change. For updates and more information, call the FCC at 703-228-6588. The center manager is Patrick Mallon, 703-228-6590, pmallon@arlingtonva.us.

Get a complete description of classes online or go to the FCC to pick up a copy of *Enjoy Arlington* or the summer camps guide. For more information or registration, go online to www.arlingtonva.us or call 703-228-4747. For updates and questions, call the FCC at 703-228-6588.

#### Watch flying squirrels at Long Branch this winter



Arlington County naturalist Cliff Fairweather reminds us that there's plenty to do and learn in local winter woods, meadows, and streams. Long Branch and

*Encyclopediabritannica.com.* 

Gulf Branch Nature Centers have a full line-up of programs where you can learn to identify leafless trees by using bark, twigs, seeds, and other clues. Discover birds that spend their winters in Arlington and head north in the spring—winter wrens, hermit thrushes, and ruby-crowned kinglets, to name a few.

Flying squirrels are featured in February programs. Smaller than gray squirrels, flying squirrels don't actually fly like birds or bats, but glide from tree to tree by stretching out loose folds of skin (the patagium) between their front and hind legs. It forms a wing that allows them to glide up to 300 feet. Generally nocturnal, flying squirrels are easier to spot in the winter because they are more likely to come to feeders during the daytime. The hour-long programs are held on select Saturdays and Sundays around sunset; the cost is \$5. For more information, call 703-228-6535.

## Meal-packing event at Abingdon, March 9

Hundreds of volunteers are needed at Abingdon Elementary School on Sunday, March 9, to help fight childhood hunger by packing nutritious meals. The event is sponsored by Feeding Children Everywhere, whose mission is to pack and ship millions of meals in the U.S. and around the world. FCE will donate most meals packed on March 9 to AFAC, the Arlington food pantry.

The FCE meal packet contains lentils, rice, six dehydrated vegetables, Himalayan salt, and vitamins and minerals—just add boiling water for a digestible source of protein.

Volunteers are needed to sign up now for one-hour shifts, 10 am to 3 pm. All ages welcome—it's a great event for families, scout troops, and more. Go online to feedingchildreneverywhere.com > Upcoming Events, scroll to Arlington Hunger Project/March 9, and click Volunteer. Or contact the local organizer, Fairlington resident Patti Covington, 703-850-0781.

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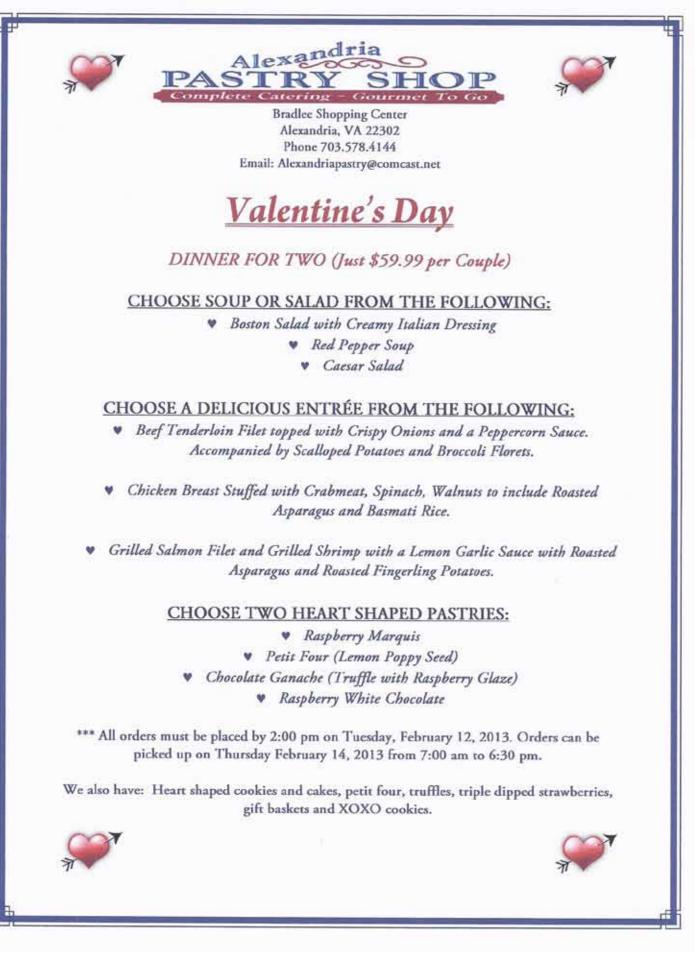
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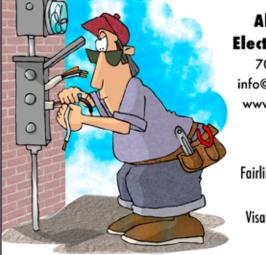


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## DOWN TO EARTH patio gardening



## Get ready for spring—work in soil amendments now

While perennials and bulbs sleep in winter and deciduous specimens stand listless without flowers, fruit, or leaves, it's time to examine what we put in the garden besides plants. Before adding plants in early spring, now's the time to prepare the soil.

It really depends on what basic soil composition you have to work with. If you inherited a patio that was tended to by an avid gardener, your soil should be fertile and malleable. If not, and the soil hasn't been turned over in a while, you have some work to do. If you start digging and your shovel "pings," it's likely impacting a rock or piece of cinder block. Using a spade fork to turn the soil is easier on the wrists, since the tool prongs easily penetrate the ground and will better "dodge" hard objects. I recommend just trashing rocks and hard clumps of clay. But if you have softer pieces of clay or dirt, these can be re-used when mixed with an amendment.

The entire soil area need not be amended, because you're not growing crops, here. But in places where plants will go, improve the soil with the addition of soil conditioner, peat moss, topsoil, composted manure, or even potting soil (for bulbs and tender perennials).

**Soil conditioner** is my recommendation. It is odorless, soft, and easy to spread. The bags are three cubic feet and somewhat heavy, but well suited if you are doing a lot of



*Garden stores offer a bewildering array of soil amendment products. Photo, Gretchen Fallon.* 

planting in the ground. Once the plant sits in the hole you have dug, spread some of it around the root ball as you mix in the soil you have removed. A 50-50 mix is good.

**Topsoil** is ideal if you are filling swales, from, say, when a tree has been removed. Topsoil is heavier and comes out of the bag in moist clumps. Once the hole is nearly filled with topsoil, rake over some existing dirt or spread a thin layer of soil conditioner. Topsoil is messy since it's muddy and sometimes has a foul odor. **Peat moss** is the partially decomposed remains of plants, most commonly sphagnum moss, and is dry and soft in texture. The wind will blow it into your eyes and up your nose if you aren't watchful. Organicgardening.com reports that, over time, peat morphs into coal, which is a fossil fuel full of carbon—not what we want vaporizing into the atmosphere. Used in moderation, it will retard soil compaction and provide tunnels for beneficial earthworm movement.

**Potting soil** actually contains little soil. It is a mix of peat, composted bark, and perlite. Commercially sold potting soil has a neutral pH. The little white specks you see are perlite, formed from hydrated, naturally occurring volcanic glass. The perlite also deters soil compaction, thus keeping the mix soft and malleable for fibrous plant roots in containers.

**Composted manure** is "treated" animal waste high in nutrients. Anything sold commercially has to be composted, that is, mixed with hay, peat moss, soil, and minerals (especially nitrogen), and low in weed seeds and ammonia, so that it doesn't burn plant roots. Gardeners in rural areas compost their own livestock manure. Depending on which animal it comes from, it can be malodorous. Nonetheless, it is moist and clumped, similar to the texture of potting soil.

— Bill Sullivan, www.sullivanslandscaping.net



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## ABING School news





*Teacher of the year, Laurie Shaw (at right) and Principal Uyeda.* 

#### *Ms. Shaw is the Abingdon Teacher of the Year*

Laurie Shaw was selected, by her colleagues, as the 2012-13 Abingdon Teacher of the Year. Ms. Shaw is currently teaching 3rd grade. During her 19 years at Abingdon, she has taught both 3rd and 4th grades. Ms. Shaw lists compassion, persistence, and professionalism as the core components of successful and rewarding teaching.

This explains why the parents and teachers interviewed describe her as an extremely caring person who will search for any method to help a student learn. "The methods that I have incorporated through the years did not derive solely from me. I have always absorbed knowledge from my peers, while maintaining an open mindset to embrace new ideas and approaches for student achievement."

When asked about Abingdon, Ms. Shaw responded, "This is a special

place for teaching and learning. Principal Uyeda has cultivated a highly collaborative staff and provides various professional development opportunities." Among many great development opportunities, her favorite was attending a oneweek Space Camp in Huntsville, AL. "We learned about life as an astronaut. It was equally enriching to incorporate that experience into classroom lessons."

Ms. Shaw received her undergraduate degree at Agnes Scott College and her Masters in Education from the University of Maryland. She is a strong advocate of the Multiple Intelligences learning model. "By integrating the arts, our students are exposed to a wide variety of learning opportunities, while seeing the world beyond their classroom and neighborhood." Recently, Ms. Shaw received the Certificate of Achievement from the Kennedy Center.

Thank you, Laurie Shaw, for being a great teacher and phenomenal person for all of us to know.

#### Nine Abingdon musicians selected for county-wide Junior Honors Orchestra

A record number of talented Abingdon students were recently selected for the Arlington Public Schools county-wide Junior Honors Orchestra. Five of the nine selected students are Fairlington residents (as noted by \* below). Here are the students and the instruments they play: Charlotte Joyner, violin; Olivia Efird, violin; Ella Downey, violin; \*Reese Creadon, viola; \*Emily Andrews, viola; \*Natasha Volk, cello; Nicole Romero, cello; \*Leanna O'Driscoll, cello; and \*Isaiah Mefford, bass.

Auditions were open to all APS 4th, 5th, and 6th grade orchestra students. The orchestra practices each week until its final concert at 7 pm on Tuesday, March 12, at Kenmore Middle School. Abingdon's own strings instructor, Kristin Gomez, was selected to be this year's conductor. "I have been a helper for eight years at this concert and I can tell you it is awe inspiring," said Gomez. "A parent once told me that the county's Honors Orchestras are 'the most effective enrichment activity available in Arlington County." Arlington County also has a Junior Honors Band and a Junior Honors Chorus, with their final concerts being held the same night as the orchestra's. Congratulations to Abingdon 5th grader Juliana Logan for being selected for the Junior Honors Chorus.

#### Kindergarteners wanted! Visit Abingdon during orientation

It's that time of year again—time for parents of children entering Kindergarten in September to start the school enrollment process. Entering Kindergarteners for the 2013-14 school year must be five years old by September 30, 2013. Registration begins February 1 at all Arlington Public Schools.

Parents interested in learning more about Abingdon and its unique Project GIFT Exemplary Program can

*Continued, next page* 

#### School, Continued from page 21

attend any one of these orientations in the school Media Center: Tuesday, February 19 at 9:15 am; Tuesday, March 12 at 12:45 pm; and Thursday, April 11 at 9:15 am. All orientations will include a presentation by the principal, comments from the Kindergarten teachers, and a tour of the school focusing on Kindergarten classrooms. More information on the APS Kindergarten Registration process can be found online at www.apsva.us/page/2992.

## Muppet movie comes to Abingdon this month

Abingdon PTA's next free movie night is Friday, February 8, featuring the *Muppet Movie* (2011 version with Amy Adams and Jason Segal). Doors open at 6 pm and the movie starts at 6:15. Bring sleeping bags, pillows, and PJs and find a spot on the school's multipurpose room floor. The PTA will sell pizza, snacks, and drinks. And we'll raffle off two DVD copies of the movie as well as other related prizes.

—Dan Branch, PTA co-president





## neighborhood news

#### **Book Group**

In attempting to determine who he is, a virulently prejudiced amnesiac conducts a whirlwind tour of nineteenthcentury hatreds, political intrigues, and conspiracy theories. Umberto Eco's novel *The Prague Cemetery* raises the possibility that one especially evil man is at the center of it all. Come discuss the book with us on Tuesday, February 26, at 7:30 pm in the North Fairlington Community Center, 3005 S. Abingdon St. For more information, please contact Terry Gough at tjgough@verizon.net.

#### Fairlington Diners

Fairlington Diners is a group of Fairlington and non-Fairlington friends who gather for relaxed dinners nearby. We focus on having a good meal and an opportunity to chat with neighbors. In January, we had a very lively dinner at McCormick and Schmick's in Crystal City, with excellent food as well!

This year, we will generally hold our ethnic dinners on the second Thursday of the month (but not in February!), and burger night at Ramparts on the fourth Monday of the month. Here are the events we have planned for February:

Tuesday, February 12, 6:30 pm, Clyde's at Mark Center, 1700 N. Beauregard Street, Alexandria, VA 22311, 703-820-8300, www.clydes.com. With a wide range of moderately-priced dishes that change frequently, this traditional American restaurant aims to please. Please call Carol at 703-379-6840 by 6 pm on Monday the 11th if you're planning to attend, so we can make a reservation.

Monday, February 25, 6:30 pm, Ramparts Restaurant, 1700 Fern St, Alexandria, VA 22302, 703-998-6616. This is a local favorite that we usually visit monthly. On Mondays, they offer half-price burgers with the purchase of a beverage, and the rest of the menu is also available.

For either event, please call Carol at 703-379-6840 to let us know you plan to attend, and leave a voice-mail if you don't reach her directly—include your name and how to contact you the day of the event, in case we need to let you know of a change in plans.

If you'd like to be included in our e-mail list, please send your e-mail address to carol\_dabbs @yahoo.com.

#### MOMS Club of Arlington-Fairlington

With their children, members of the MOMS Club of Arlington-Fairlington VA© chapter of the International MOMS Club participate in fun activities, service projects, Parent's Night Out, meetings with interesting speakers, and groups such as our walking, dinner, and book clubs. Our weekly age-specific playgroups start as young as birth and go up to 3+ years old. Playgroups are wonderful for kids, but they also offer parents a chance to find support and friendship.

Parents and parents-to-be are welcome to join us for our next general meeting on Wednesday, February 13, at 4 pm at the Fairlington Community Center. Children are always welcome. For more information about the club, the meeting, or membership, contact our Membership VP at fairlingtonmomsclub@gmail.com or visit www. fairlingtonmomsclub.com. Annual dues of \$25 support our club activities and charitable projects.

#### Card players welcome

Join your Fairlington neighbors for a friendly game of Canasta. No previous experience is necessary to enjoy this card game. We are happy to teach you. The group meets Tuesday mornings at a local church hall near Fairlington. Call Carol Ann at 703-931-8533.

#### Fairlington Babysitting Co-op

If you are looking for a night out without the kids, or an afternoon to yourself, look no further than the Fairlington Babysitting Co-op. For more than 30 years, the Babysitting Co-op has been a community of parents helping parents right here in our neighborhood.

The Co-op is a network of Fairlington families who exchange free babysitting services. It's perfect for parents who would like to know dependable adults to watch their children and meet other families in the community.

If you are a Fairlington resident (North or South), e-mail the Winter Quarter Co-Coordinators Jillian Hanright and Susan Renehan at fairlington.babysitting@gmail. com to request an application or for more information.

#### Bylaws, continued from page 1

Meeting attendees are welcome to ask questions and offer comments as the discussion proceeds. An entirely new amendment offered from the floor would not be in order for a vote at that time; rather it would be submitted to the bylaws committee for review and recommendation to the FCA board. At the conclusion of discussion, Fairlington residents in attendance will vote on the proposal to amend the bylaws. (All Fairlington residents, as well as non-resident owners, are automatically members of FCA.)

The amendments were described in last month's *Bulletin* (page 5). The full text of the proposed bylaws amendments can be found on the FCA Web site, www. fca-fairlington.org. In addition, you can pick up a hard copy of the amendments at two locations: the Fairlington Community Center (3308 S. Stafford Street) and the Fairlington Villages management office (3001 S. Abingdon Street, adjacent to the North Fairlington Community Center).

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**SENIOR CRAFTSMEN, INC.** Biff Henley, bonded and insured. 703-403-5354. Seniorcraftsmen@verizon.net.

**CLIMATROL HEATING &** COOLING CORP. 703-981-6664. www.climatrolhvac.com. Only \$79.95. Serving all Fairlington citizens. Family owned, operated, licensed and insured business. Our staff is reliable, trustworthy, punctual and detail oriented. Our prices are extremely competitive, and our service is thorough. Have us professionally perform a residential heating or cooling system inspection. Or if you currently have a problem, we will be happy to diagnose it. We can also inspect the accessory equipment including the electronic air cleaner, programmable thermostat, condensate pump and hot water heater at no extra charge! Read real reviews from satisfied Climatrol customers at Angie's List. Get 10% discount on repairs with this ad. We also perform FREE second opinion on heat exchangers and compressors.

**VOLTA ELECTRIC.** Contact Volta Electric for all of your Fairlington home electrical needs. From fan installations, recessed lighting, and full home remodels, to troubleshooting a pesky outlet - we are your one stop shop! We are a veteran owned company, family run and Fairlington residents! Master Electrician with over 10 years of experience, fully licensed and insured. Free estimates always! Call Mason, 703-310-9773 or email voltasystems@gmail.com

**PAINTING & WALLPAPERING.** 25 years experience. Excellent references in Fairlington and all areas. Interior and exterior. Faux finish. Call Ricardo for free estimate 703-495-0781. rrhomeimprove.com.

**R.R. HOME IMPROVEMENT, INC**. Celebrating our 20 year anniversary with very LOW RATES. Painting, drywall, carpentry, plumbing, electrical, floors, and general household repairs. Office 703-495-0781. Call 703-801-9151. rrhomeimprove.com.

### **House Cleaning**

MICHELE'S MAIDS. Reliable, honest, affordable. BACKGROUND CHECK ON EVERY EMPLOYEE. Window cleaning now available. LICENSED, BONDED INSURED. 13 years in Fairlington. Fairlington references available. No Machines to talk to. 703-820-1808 Visit our website at www.michelesmaids.net

**HOUSE CLEANING.** Reliable, experienced, good references, flexible scheduling, reasonable rates. We bring our own equipment. Weekly bi-weekly - monthly - occasionally. One-time, move-in/out, offices. For free in home estimate call Maryen/ Raul at 703-321-5335.

#### FAIRLINGTON MAID SERVICE.

703-820-8635. Serving Fairlington since 1978. Family owned and operated. Our prices are extremely competitive, our service is thorough, plus we are great with family pets. We have satisfied customers throughout the neighborhood as references. Call for a free estimate and to inquire about our New Year's specials.

**B&A CLEANING SERVICES.** 22 years experience. Excellent references in Fairlington and all areas. Reasonable prices. We provide our own equipment and supplies. Call for free estimate 703-495-0781.

### **Pet Services**

**PET & PLANTCARE BY GERRI, LLC.** Reliable, loving care for your dogs, cats, rabbits, birds, or fish. Petsitting, playgroups, walks, feedings, medications. Indoor/outdoor plantcare. Established 1999 by 19-year Parkfairfax resident; bonded and insured. Competitive rates; flexible arrangements. Call 703-379-7719.

**DOG WALKER & CAT SITTER -REASONABLE RATES.** Special rates for regular walks. Mature, responsible, reliable and dependable woman with excellent Fairlington references. Suzanne Mitchell: Pal4Paws.Suzanne@ gmail.com or call 703-868-8894.

**HOME ALONE FELINES.** Loving, professional, in-home care of your special feline. 703-671-5504; homealonefelines@gmail.com

**ALL WAYS CARING PET CARE.** Dog walking, cat sitting. Flexible, reliable, reasonable. 703-765-0990;703-405-2775.



#### NOTICE TO ALL ADVERTISERS

Due Date for All Ads:	6 pm on 10th of the preceding month (Feb 10th for Mar issue)
Payment:	BOTH payment and ad copy must be received by the 10th.
	Make checks payable to "Fairlington Citizens Association."
NEW E-Mail Address for All Ads:	admanager@fca-fairlington.org
Mailing Address for All Ads and Checks:	FCA-AFB, PO Box 6182, Arlington, VA 22206-0182
Drop-Off Location for Ads and Checks:	Drop-Off Box in Fairlington Community Center, 3308 S. Stafford Street

#### MINI-AD FORM

Mini-ad copy can be e-mailed to admanager@fca-fairlington.org and then submit your payment by mail to FCA AFB, PO Box 6182, Arlington, VA 22206-0182 or drop off ads and checks to the drop-off box in the Fairlington Community Center, 3308 S. Stafford Street. E-mailed ad text will not be processed until payment is received. Write key words from your ad on the check for reference. (Example: "Yard Sale" or "Lost Camera") Cost is 50 cents per word (e.g., "998-0000" and "stove" are each one word; "interior/exterior" are two words).

Please include the following information with all ads:

Name:	Phone (h):
Address:	Phone (w):
City, State, Zip:	E-mail:
Category (see newsletter for options):	
Mini-Ad Text (please print clearly):	

## LONG AND FOSTER

OFFICE

#### ArlingtonAlexandriaSales.Lnfre.com

4800 S. 31st Street | Arlington, VA 22206 | 703-998-3111

## December **TOP PRODUCERS**



Rob Allen **Top Producer** 



Dayna Wagner **Top Selling Agent** 



Marian Stifle **Top Listing Agent** 



Arl/Fairlington— Picture perfect 2BR loft unit w/ HDWDs, updated kit. & bath. Spiral stairs to loft & huge attic \$335,000 Call Lynn Robinson-Gant



Alta Vista/Arl.—Penthouse Condo. 2BR/3.5BA w/stunning views. \$699,900 Call Kristin Usaitis



McLean/Chesterbrook Woods-Spacious 2 lev. Rambler. 4BR/3BA. \$830,000 Call Marian Stifle



DC/Rio (SW) -Spacious 1BR w/lovely HDWDs, lots of closets. Minutes to Metro & Nationals ballpark, shopping, & Arena Stage. \$124,900 Call Kristin Usaitis



Sudley/Manassas—Totally renovated 4BR/2BA Colonial. Great location. \$343,000 Call for details



Alex/Rosecrest—Charming 3BR/1.5BA Bungalow, 2 car gar., huge kit. \$650,000 Call Doug Luzik

## SERVING FAIRLINGTON