

all FAIRLINGTON BULLETIN



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www.fca-fairlington.org

Home Improvement Showcase returns February 15

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The Fairlington Home Improvement Showcase is set to return for its fifth consecutive year on Saturday, February 15, at the Fairlington Community Center, 3308 S. Stafford St. This annual event is sponsored by the Fairlington Citizens Association (FCA).

The event will be held from 9 am to 2 pm. Participating contractors will have tables set up in Room 118 for the duration of the event and will also take turns exclusively presenting or consulting in Room 100.

The event will once again feature contractors who know the intricacies and quirks of our historic buildings. The format will be similar to last year and provide an opportunity for in-depth discussion of home renovation and repair issues and options. Topics will include kitchen remodeling, bathroom makeovers, plumbing challenges, window and door replacement, electrical and lighting options, flooring upgrades, and effective landscaping.

Space will be limited based on room occupancy codes. Those interested in attending will be admitted on a first-come, first-served basis.

There will be many opportunities to ask questions and learn about unique design options and other improvements that can enhance the quality of living and value in Fairlington.

Contractors that have committed to the event are Custom Design Tile, GH Contractors & Handyman Services, AKG Design Studio & GMJ Construction, Silva Construction Group, Frosty's Heating & Cooling, Delong Home Improvement, and Nova Installations.

There may be space available for additional contractors to participate. If you have any recommendations for contractors who have done exceptional work



A contractor speaks to residents at the 2019 Showcase. Photo by Guy Land.

Continued on page 9

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. Before the beginning of each monthly Executive Board meeting, FCA members may address the board on matters affecting the community, limited to three minutes per member.

FCA monthly meeting February 12

There will be no presentation at the February 12 meeting. The Board will hold a work session.

Regular board business:

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

Meeting minutes: Minutes of prior meetings can be found on the FCA website.

Online resources:

Find more information on the FCA website, 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 website the week before hard copies hit doorsteps.

Web design by Avatar Systems Ltd., Alexandria, VA, www.avatar-systems.com.

USEFUL CONTACTS

If you see something immediately alarming or suspicious, call 911.

Police, Alexandria (non-emergency)	703-746-4444
Police, Arlington (non-emergency)	703-558-2222
Animal Warden	703-931-9241
Dominion (power outages)	888-667-3000
Fairlington Community Center	703-228-6588
Metrobus Complaints	703-228-7929
Miss Utility	811
Pothole Patrol Hotline	703-228-6485
Shirlington Library	703-228-6545
Street Light Hotline	703-228-6511
www.arlingtonva.us/departments/EnvironmentalServices/dot/traffic/streetlights/index.htm	
Helicopter Noise Complaints	Mike Lucier (VA 8th Dist.) 202-225-4376

Fairlington Citizens Association

PO Box 6182 • Arlington, VA 22206-0182
571-403-1943 • president@fca-fairlington.org

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All Fairlington Bulletin

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— DEADLINE —

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

Email editorial announcements to:

editor@fca-fairlington.org

Email commercial and mini ads to:

admanager@fca-fairlington.org

Drop off location: Drop box in the Fairlington Community Center, 3308 S. Stafford Street

COMMERCIAL ADVERTISING RATES

Artwork and check made payable to **FCA** are due the 10th of the month preceding desired publication date. Direct inquiries regarding advertising file requirements to the Advertising Manager at 571-403-1942.

Ad Size	Height	Width	Rate
1/8 page	2 3/16 in.	3 5/8 in.	\$47
1/4 page	4 5/8 in.	3 5/8 in.	\$94
1/2 page	4 5/8 in.	7.5 in.	\$195
Full-Page	9.5 in.	7.5 in.	\$395
Back Cover (Full Page)	9.5 in.	7.5 in.	\$505
Full-Page Insert (1 Side)	11 in.	8.5 in.	\$525
Full-Page Insert (2 Sides)	11 in.	8.5 in.	\$570

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Fairlington is a National Register and Virginia Landmark Historic District

For more information, visit www.fca-fairlington.org

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Designed and printed by More Vang.

Calendar

Fairlington Knits

Monday, February 10, 6:30 pm
FCC, 3308 S. Stafford St.

FCA monthly meeting

Wednesday, February 12, 7 pm
FCC, 3308 S. Stafford St.

Fairlington Diners

Thursday, February 13, 6:30 pm
Rabieng Thai Restaurant
5892 Leesburg Pike, Falls Church

Presidents' Day

Monday, February 17
FCC Closed

Fairlington Diners

Monday, February 24, 6:30 pm
Beckett's
2800 S. Randolph St.

Fairlington Knits

Monday, February 24, 6:30 pm
FCC, 3308 S. Stafford St.

Book Group

Tuesday, February 25, 7:30 pm
FCC, 3308 S. Stafford St.

January thaw



An unseasonably warm day in mid-January meant bare arms, sunglasses, and a crowded playground at Fairlington Park. Photo by Guy Land.

Contributors this month: Jennifer Davies, Donna Felipe, Guy Land, Rachel Mallory, Andrew Raab, Susan Renehan, Thora Stanwood, Bill Sullivan, and Chris Weathers.

Some images in this publication may be digitally enhanced.



PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Thinking about making some improvements to your condo? Want to learn what design options other people have been choosing? Interested in getting to know some contractors who routinely work in Fairlington? Then FCA's Home Improvement Showcase on February 15 is for you.

Now in its fifth year, the expo has proven to be one of our most popular activities, with several hundred people showing up each year. They can't resist the chance to quiz contractors on designs, costs, timelines, and problems.

This is the only opportunity to visit in one place with a variety of contractors who do significant work in our neighborhood. Sure, there are other home improvement expos with a longer list of participating contractors, but the magic of ours is the fact that it features contractors who have a track record of working in Fairlington. And as many of you know, Fairlington units have all sorts of quirks that a less experienced contractor might not be familiar with.

If you are looking at making major improvements, you may also want to take a look at how to use historic preservation tax credits. Because Fairlington is listed on the National Register of Historic Places and the Virginia Landmarks Register, you may be eligible for a state historic rehabilitation tax credit.

There's also a federal historic preservation tax credit, but that is available only for income-producing properties. Your unit would have to be rental property to take advantage of that.

Eligible expenses can include architectural and engineering fees; new heating, plumbing and electrical systems; and updating kitchens and bathrooms. Both state and federal tax credits specify things that need to be done before starting the work, and there's a substantial threshold amount you must spend to qualify. Consult your tax adviser or Arlington's Historic Preservation Office for additional information.

Special thanks to FCA Board member Chris Weathers for coordinating the showcase. Chris pioneered this for us when we weren't even sure what it would be, and he has masterminded it ever since, capitalizing on his strong relationship with a number of contractors in the area. We also appreciate the contractors who participate.

If you are thinking about upgrading your unit this year, or even if you're just starting to think through what you want to do—and how much to save—come check out the showcase. See you there.

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

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Registration for Fairlington 5K now open

April 25 marks the seventh and possibly final Fairlington 5K to benefit Abingdon Elementary and one of its former students, Ellie McGinn. Since 2014, this beloved neighborhood event has brought together hundreds of Fairlington residents in the name of physical fitness and community involvement.

Proceeds support physical education programs at the school as well as research into Ellie McGinn's disease. Ellie was born with a rare brain and spinal cord condition called LBSL, which slowly robs children of their ability to walk, stand, and eventually coordinate all fine and gross motor movements.

Since its inception, the Fairlington 5K has raised over \$100,000 for LBSL research at the Kennedy Krieger Institute and Johns Hopkins University in Baltimore.



Ellie McGinn is a Fairlington resident, a 6th grade student, and an alum of Abingdon Elementary. She is also the inspiration for the Fairlington 5K, now in its seventh year. Photos by Guy Land.

"Because of the money raised from this race, we were able to convince doctors to start a research effort," explained Ellie's mom Beth McGinn. "The love and generosity of this community has made hope for a cure a reality for Ellie and others like her around the world."

McGinn cited rising costs associated with street closures and emergency personnel as a reason for potentially ending the 5K, although she said they are looking at alternative ways to reduce overhead and keep the race viable.

Last year, over 700 people registered for the race. Organizers hope 2020 will be the biggest and best Fairlington 5K yet.

As always, this family-friendly event starts at 8:00 am near the school, crosses the I-395 overpass, winds past the South Fairlington Community Center, and then ends back at the school.

There is also an optional "1K Walk & Fun Run" for families with small children. Dogs and strollers are welcome.

Master Gardeners offer training on soil health

The Master Gardeners of Northern Virginia is offering a free training on soil entitled, "Build Healthy Soil and Manage Water in Your Yard." The healthier the soil in your yard, the more water it can potentially absorb into the ground during a deluge and the less water your plants may need when the dry times come.

Learn how to build soil health by feeding your soil's biome, how to prevent or mitigate soil erosion and compaction by choosing appropriate plants, and whether certain landscaping techniques—such as terracing or a bioswale among others—might be worth your time and effort.

This class is offered by Extension Master Gardeners.

The training will be held on Thursday, January 23, from 7–8:30 pm at the Fairlington Community Center, 3308 S. Stafford St. The class is free but advance registration is requested at mgnv.org.

Questions? Telephone 703-228-6414 or email mgarlalex@gmail.com.



When the Fairlington 5K kicks off on April 25, it will include families, Ellie's friends and classmates, Fairlington residents, serious runners, and even four-legged friends. Pictured here, the starting line from the 2019 Fairlington 5K.

Temporary road closures will be announced prior to the race so that residents can plan accordingly.

The cost of registration for adults is \$35 and includes a t-shirt. Children ages six to 16 can participate for just \$20, and children ages five and under are free.

Register at www.Fairlington5K.com before February 28 for an "early bird discount."

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Get to know the two new FCA Directors

Two new members have been elected to the Board of the FCA, Julie Butler and Donald Staren-Doby.



Julie Butler is a Mews resident and a native of Northern Virginia. Photo courtesy Julie Butler.

A Northern Virginia native, Julie Butler has been a Mews resident since 2016. She completed her graduate studies at the Savannah College of Art and Design and is now an architectural historian currently working for a historic restoration contractor.

Her passion for historic buildings and their continued preservation thrives in our beautiful historic district. Recently, she volunteered her time and energy as the co-chair of the 2019 FHS Home and Garden Tour. She enjoys spending time with her two young daughters (ages one and two) and husband as they explore our community and (ambitiously) the rest of the



Donald Staren-Doby has lived in Fairlington for the past 12 years. Photo by Debbie Staren-Doby.

world. Julie is an avid home chef and enthusiastic DIY-er.

Donald Staren-Doby and his wife Debbie moved to Fairlington Court in 2008 after his last tour in the United States Navy, onboard the USS Ronald Reagan. Donald and Debbie are native Washingtonians with deep roots in the Fairlington community (Debbie grew up in South Fairlington).

Donald is an Information Technology professional and the former Chief of Information Technology Operations and Chief Technology Officer of the Smithsonian's National Museum of African American History and Culture. In his free time, Donald enjoys spending time with his three children, two dogs, and a pretty cool cat.

—Susan Renehan

Fairlington Presidents' quarterly update

Two topics and a scam alert dominated the October 2019 Fairlington Presidents' meeting.

Trash and recycling procedures

We invited President David Dunn and CFO Lisa Worrell of Capitol Services of VA to update us on trash and recycling procedures. The major change is that glass is no longer recyclable in Fairlington. However, glass can be taken to the Trades Center Recycling Drop-Off Center at 2700 S. Taylor St., Monday–Friday, 5 am to 9 pm and Saturdays from 6:30 am to 6 pm.

According to Dunn and Worrell, recycling is taken to WM Recycle America which sorts the recyclables. Then WM sells the recyclables to different markets. Any items deemed to be trash are taken to Covanta. Fairlington's trash also gets delivered to Covanta, a waste management company, to be burned and recycled into energy.

Verizon and Comcast service issues

Louise Anderson, Verizon Fios Franchise Service Manager, and Marie Schuler, Comcast's Director of Government Affairs, were invited to the meeting to explain the procedure and timeframe for burying cable and for keeping cable boxes secured.

Generally, wires coming from upright green metal boxes

belong to Comcast and those coming from the flat green boxes belong to Verizon.

If you see exposed wires or open boxes, contact Comcast and Verizon as follows:

Comcast—Call Customer Service at 1-800-XFINITY (934-6489). You can also report a situation online at [xfinity.com/support/contact-us](https://www.xfinity.com/support/contact-us) where you can select online chat or request a call back.

Verizon—Contact Louise Anderson, Fios Franchise Service Manager at her office at 703-558-9817 or at louise.anderson@verizon.com. Louise is a long-time resident of Fairlington Green.

E-mail scam alert

Please be alert—there have been scam emails sent out, supposedly from Fairlington presidents.

Some of the Fairlington presidents have been the victims of scam emails being sent out over their names. The scam sender requests that you buy gift cards or send money on behalf of the Fairlington president. Always contact the president to verify the validity of the email before doing anything else.

—Thora Stanwood

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FCA Board endorses WETA expansion application

At its January meeting, the FCA Board unanimously voted to endorse the application of the Greater Washington Educational Telecommunications Association, commonly known as WETA, to expand their facility in Shirlington.



The WETA building at its current location on Campbell Ave. in Shirlington. Photo by Guy Land.

WETA, a leading public broadcasting station, is asking Arlington County to permit an additional 17,150 square feet of office space at its existing site. This will enable them to move their production studio from the current site on S. 27th St. near Jennie Dean Park to their location on Campbell Ave. That will enable the station to consolidate all of its activities at one location.

WETA will then sell the property that now houses their production facilities to Arlington County. The county wants to demolish the building and use that property to expand Jennie Dean Park. A park master plan was developed as part of the Four Mile Run Valley (4MRV) initiative, which was adopted by the county board in September 2018.

WETA and Arlington County signed a letter of intent in January 2018 that envisioned the relocation of the production studios to the Campbell Ave. headquarters site. Prior to entering that agreement, WETA had been looking throughout the region for suitable space that would combine the station's studio with its office operations. WETA has indicated that the studio is outdated and inadequate for its current needs.

Under the proposed expansion, WETA is considering building a four-story addition on the north side of the

current six-story office building, on the land between the building and the parking garage.

Keeping WETA in Arlington has been a priority for county leaders. Under the letter of intent, the county would provide up to \$2.25 million in economic development incentive grants over the next 15 years. The county would also make up to \$500,000 in urban design improvements near the WETA headquarters. WETA would invest at least \$15 million in the expansion and retain its roughly 300 employees in Arlington.

WETA produces such popular national programs as *PBS NewsHour* and *Washington Week*.

The Arlington County Board approved the contract for the first phase of the Jennie Dean Park improvement project in November.

—Guy Land

Voter registration deadline approaches

February brings a voter registration deadline for those wishing to vote in the upcoming Presidential primaries.

You do not need to register in Virginia again if you are already registered at your current address. If your name or address has changed, you should update your registration to avoid delays when you vote.

Registration is closed 21 days before general or primary elections and 13 days before special elections. The deadline to register or update for the March 3, 2020 "Super Tuesday" primary election is Monday, Feb. 10, 2020.

Home improvement, from page 1

in your home, please contact FCA Director Chris Weathers at cweathers@ttrsir.com or 703-402-4648.

A final seminar schedule will be published on the FCA website and Fairlington Appreciation Society Facebook page, and posted outside FCC Room 118 (the large multipurpose room) on the day of the event.

The event is free and open to all residents and visitors.

—Chris Weathers

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Not the same old gym.

Fairlington basketball coach finds success on and off the court

To many in Fairlington, Joe Reed is best known for being Abingdon's dedicated Physical Education teacher over the past 15 years. For others, they know him for his extraordinary dedication as founder and director of the Fairlington 5K that benefits A Cure for Ellie and Abingdon Elementary.

Residents of the Arbor may know him from his time served on the condo association board. And some kids might have participated in his elite basketball clinics and camps through his Orange Line Sports program he operates with his wife, Katarina. Whether it is "Mr. Reed," or "Joe," he is always greeted with a smile or high five, whether at the Farmers Market, the pool, or the playground (where you can often find him chasing his young daughter).

But over the holidays, it was "Coach" Joe Reed that gained headlines in NovaHoops.com, ABC7, and the *Washington Post* as Head Coach of Yorktown High School's (YHS) varsity boys basketball team. The Yorktown Patriots finished a perfect 10-0 in 2019 (and are 11-1 at time of writing), ranked 10th overall in Virginia and 20th overall by the *Post*. It is the best season that YHS has ever had and the team is deservedly being praised.

Reed admits to being much more laid-back this season, giving players more freedom, which has translated to increased engagement and passion. As quoted in the *Washington Post* article, YHS junior Steven Lincoln said, "Never in my life has basketball been this fun."



Joe Reed, his wife Katarina, and their daughter Annalisa. Photo courtesy NovaHoops.com.



Joe Reed hands the McGinn family a check during the early days of the Fairlington 5K. From left, Mike McGinn, Joe Reed (crouching), Beth McGinn, Ellie McGinn, former FCA Director Joe Hartman and current FCA President Guy Land. Photo by Nicole Van Hoey.

When asked how he approaches his role with players, Reed

reflects, "My coaching philosophy is to find a way to connect basketball to life. My job is to help mold these boys into young men so they can go off to college in a few years and find success in their endeavors."

Reed has dedicated much of his career to basketball. Prior to YHS, he was the Assistant Boys Basketball Coach at Bishop Ireton High School; he also had seven years of college coaching experience as an Assistant Men's Basketball Coach at Marymount University in Arlington, Catholic University in Washington, DC, and Springfield College in Massachusetts. During his college coaching career, Reed has coached six All-Conference players, two Rookie of the Year award winners, and two All-Americans.

Reed and his family have called Fairlington home for the past eight years and appreciate the neighborhood's proximity to all major amenities, cultural treasures, high-quality educational opportunities (including our local STEM pre-school and Abingdon), all while being a ten-minute drive to all that DC has to offer.

He also notes how many more children live in the neighborhood. "What I have noticed is that families are staying longer because of the bonds they have built within the community. People might be able to get a bigger house, but it is unlikely they will be able to form the bonds they have made with neighbors, school teachers, and the overall community. It gives people the feel of a big city, but the warmth of a small town."

Beth McGinn, mother of Ellie McGinn, has nothing but admiration for Reed's support for their family and A Cure for Ellie. "I didn't know Joe at all when he first approached me in 2013 about starting a 5K for my daughter Ellie. He found me in the kindergarten hallway at Abingdon and basically said 'I want to start a race to promote physical fitness and community engagement and I think your daughter's situation

Continued on page 13



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– Janene, Arlington, VA



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– Patty, Fairfax, VA



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– Erik, Arlington, VA



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Defense authorization mandates helicopter study

The 2020 National Defense Authorization Act as signed into law includes a provision which will require the Secretary of Defense to conduct a study on helicopter noise in the National Capital Region.



Rep. Don Beyer has previously spoken to the FCA on the issue of helicopter noise. Photo by Guy Land.

The provision was put in place as a result of an amendment offered by Rep. Don Beyer (D-VA) and Congresswoman Eleanor Holmes Norton (D-DC). Rep. Don Beyer represents Virginia's 8th District, which includes Fairlington.

Rep. Beyer spoke to the FCA on a number of occasions, including a briefing which was specifically to address the issue of helicopter noise. "Despite widespread complaints from residents across the National Capital Region and our engagement with the Pentagon on this issue, every

indication suggests that helicopter noise keeps getting worse," said Beyer.

"[This amendment] would give policymakers and concerned citizens' groups the hard data to define the problem in clear terms, and to help inform solutions," he said.

The legislation requires the Secretary of Defense "to

conduct a study on the causes and effects of military helicopter noise on the National Capital Region."

A previous study on the issue of helicopter noise was issued by the Department of Defense in 2018, but Rep. Beyer felt that a new study was needed, according to his Chief of Staff, Noah Simon.

—Susan Renehan

Basketball coach, continued from page 11



Joe Reed has coached the YHS boys basketball team to their best season on record. Photo courtesy DMV Pix.

would be a great cause for us to rally around.' Seven years later he has helped raise over \$100,000 for the LBSL cure research at Kennedy Krieger / Johns Hopkins Institute. There simply aren't words to say how grateful we are."

Whether on the basketball court, on the bullhorn for Abingdon's Field Day, at the microphone for the Fairlington 5K silent auction, or chatting with friends and neighbors on the street, Joe's presence is felt and appreciated. Thanks Joe and good luck on the rest of the season.

—Jennifer Davies

Celebrate your milestone with the AFB

Do you want to honor someone celebrating a milestone who lives here in the neighborhood?

Would you like to recognize a special teacher, caregiver, or coach?

Do you want to congratulate your child's teammates on a successful season?

The *All Fairlington Bulletin* has ad space available to interested residents in multiple sizes and a range of prices. Contact the Advertising Manager at admanager@fca-fairlington.org.



Fairlington MOMS Club announces date for spring sale

The Fairlington MOMS Club has announced the date for their spring consignment sale, which will be held on March 21.

The semi-annual sale is held twice yearly, once in the spring and once in the fall. Once again, the sale will feature a large variety of baby, toddler, and children's clothing, toys, and gear.

For more information about the sale, including details on how to become a consigner, visit the sale's Facebook page, www.facebook.com/FairlingtonMomsClubConsignmentSale/.



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West Alex development nears completion

Fairlington residents have probably noticed that the construction of West Alex, located at the corner of King and Beauregard Sts., is now nearly completed. The 500,000 square foot, multi-building development is now open for residential use, according to Andrew Rose of Next Realty.

The Array is their apartment complex with a variety of floor plans and pricing options. To schedule a tour or for additional information, visit their website: www.arraywestalex.com.



The Array is the residential apartment complex at the new West Alex development at the corner of King and Beauregard Sts. Photo by Guy Land.



The interior courtyard at the new West Alex development. Photo by Guy Land.

The retail area is scheduled to be available for opening by April this year with over 100,000 square feet of retail space to be anchored by a Harris Teeter grocery store. The opening of the grocery store is still to be determined.

Other retail outlets will include a Sport Clips Haircuts and a Silver Diner. A two-level subterranean parking garage with 225 spaces is located directly below the retail area level.

—Andrew Raab

Street improvements planned at King and Beauregard

In addition to the construction work at West Alex, the City of Alexandria is moving forward with a two-phase project to improve the King-Beauregard-Walter Reed intersection.

The project will create a multi-modal environment and promote safety for pedestrians and motorists by adding an additional left turn lane in each direction on King St., medians on King St., and a 10-foot shared-use path on portions of King St. from Beauregard/Walter Reed to S. 28th St.

The full project would reach along King from Chesterfield Rd. to Northampton Dr.

The first part of Phase I, which includes grading, curb and gutter, and retaining walls, has been completed. This work needed to be done prior to relocating the utility lines.



The next phase of the project is the relocation of overhead and underground utilities, which must be completed prior to the beginning of the major road work. Most of the utility relocation work has now been completed and Alexandria staff anticipate that will be finalized in May.

Once the utility relocation work is completed, the final phase (Phase II) of road work which includes grading, curb and gutter, asphalt concrete pavement, sidewalk, drainage structures, medians, and traffic signals will be advertised for bid.

The construction of Phase II is scheduled to begin in September 2020.

—Guy Land

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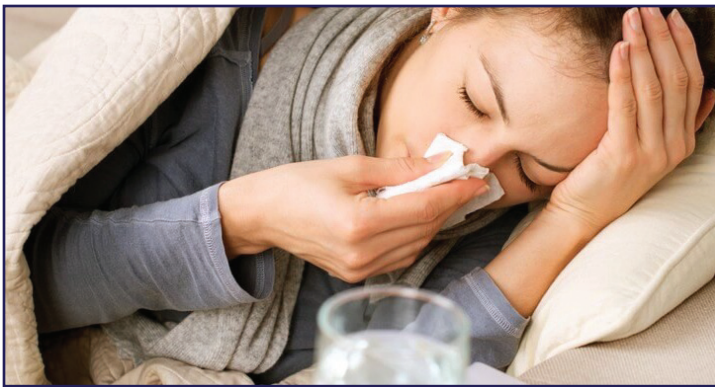


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Paint, Build, Create

On Saturday, January 18, children and their parents enjoyed a wide variety of S.T.E.A.M. (Science, Technology, Engineering, Art, and Math) activities as part of "Paint, Build, Create." Some of the activities featured this year included making silk-screen designs, building catapults, making lava lamps, and coloring activ-

ity pages that could be brought to life using computer animation.

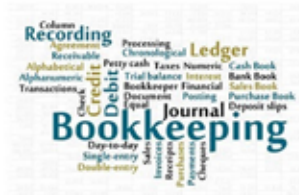
This free event, sponsored by Arlington County Department of Parks and Recreation, was held at the Fairlington Community Center and was open to children of all ages and ability levels. *Photos by Guy Land.*





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Students work on projects for Gunston Science Fair and Expo

The Gunston Science Fair and Expo was held on January 22. All 8th graders as well as selected 7th graders participated.

The annual science event provides students the option of presenting their projects as part of a formal competition, judged by scientists in the community, or providing information to teachers and parents in a more expository format. Winners of the Gunston Science Fair competition will go on to represent the school at the Regional Science Fair held later this year.

Several Fairlington 8th graders weighed in on their Gunston experience. Jackson Gravelle commented, "I enjoy science because there are a lot of moving parts and I'm always learning something new."

Luke Fisher and Malachy Merriweather's project focused on measuring seismographic readings on different objects.

Addison Young, who plans to continue taking science in high school, studied the effect of encouragement on motivation and productivity. "We chose this because we are very interested in how positivity affects the brain and, in turn, your mood and efficiency," she explained.



Riley Segana and Justin Diller used pickle jars to measure the effects of different soil media on decomposition. Photo by Justin Diller.

Riley Segana and Justin Diller decided to test the effects of different soil media on decomposition, using tomatoes, potting soil, sand, compost, and backyard soil. They set up a dining room lab with eight pickle jars with a tomato each and two of each soil type.

They watched them for a month, noting changes in the soil levels and how the tomatoes looked, and weighing the tomatoes at the start and end of the experiment. With a marine biologist and environmental engineer for par-

ents, science has always been one of Justin's favorite subjects, especially biology and anything to do with animals.



Luke Fisher and Malachy Merriweather's project involved building a seismographic reader. Photo by Luke Fisher.

Addison Young concluded, "I like the hands-on labs that we do in science class. They help me see science and curriculum in action." Bravo to all our budding scientists!

—Jennifer Davies

U.S. Census Bureau seeks census takers

The Constitutionally-mandated 2020 Census is underway and the U.S. Department of Commerce's Bureau of the Census is hiring hundreds of people temporarily in Arlington and the rest of northern Virginia over the next few months to help carry it out. The principal position available is that of Enumerator. The pay is good (\$25–\$27.50/hour in Arlington) and the hours are flexible.



Additionally, there are many good reasons for our community to ensure that Census participation is as complete as possible, since the results impact Congressional representation and federal funding for education, healthcare, infrastructure, and other areas. Further, Personally Identifiable Information (PII) collected by the Census is confidential under Title 13 of the U.S. Code. PII is never shared with other government agencies or any other entity or person.

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Congratulations to Abingdon's Teacher of the Year!

Congratulations to Abingdon's Teacher of the Year, Living Histories teacher Kathi Aagaard. Ms. Aagaard was selected by her colleagues for the honor of teacher of the year and will next be considered for Arlington County teacher of the year. She was also kind enough to give an interview:



Abingdon teacher of the year, Kathi Aagaard. Photo courtesy Abingdon Twitter feed @AbingdonGIFT.

How long have you been teaching? How long have you taught at Abingdon?

I have been teaching for a total of 21 years, 18 of which have been at Abingdon. I originally thought I would only stay at Abingdon for four to five years, and then I would move back to the West Coast. However, I absolutely fell in love with the students and staff at Abingdon, and it's been home ever since.

What is your favorite part about your job?

I love working with students from many different grade levels and seeing their excitement to learn. My position also allows me to see

students grow over the course of six years, which is amazing.

How do you think the Changing Education Through the Arts (CETA) program helps students at Abingdon?

I started at Abingdon before we began our CETA partnership with the Kennedy Center, and it has been exciting to see the transformation in our staff and students over the years. I have found that integrating the arts has resulted in students being more engaged, retaining information for a longer time, and demonstrating their understanding in a variety of ways. The courses we take at the Kennedy Center are of a very high quality, and I feel this has helped us better meet the needs of all students.

What was your favorite subject when you were in elementary school?

Growing up, I loved math, and it was my favorite subject from elementary through high school. I started my career teaching middle

school mathematics. I loved it, but I was also drawn towards working with younger students in a variety of subject areas.

Do you have any goals for the Living Histories class that you would like to share?

One of my goals in the Living Histories course is to spark interest and curiosity in students so that they want to become lifelong learners about history. Another goal is that I want them to learn about topics in a deep and comprehensive way from a variety of perspectives.

What do you think is special about Abingdon?

I love Abingdon's diverse population of students and their unique experiences. Our students come from all over the world and speak over 20 different languages. I believe this is a great asset and makes for a wonderful community.

Abingdon's Read-A-Thon starts soon!

In the coming weeks, Abingdon students in all grades will participate in the fourth annual Read-A-Thon, organized by the Abingdon PTA. The goal of the program is to build excitement around reading and to help encourage students to spend more time enjoying books.

During the Read-A-Thon, students will log the time that they spend reading at school and at home using their own online tracker. Their time will be combined with their class-

mates', and the class at each grade level that logs the most time reading will win prizes, including gift cards that teachers can use toward classroom resources.

The Abingdon community and families can make donations directly to Abingdon students they know or through the general donation link at <https://www.read-a-thon.com/school/individual>. Donations of any amount will be greatly appreciated!

—Rachel Mallory

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Wakefield happenings

In December, Wakefield's Director of Student Activities, Noel Deskins, retired. She saw the athletic department grow from "the other school" to a competitive district school.

Several teams and individuals represented Wakefield and won at district, regional, and state level competitions under her leadership. The Director of Student Activities oversees the athlete teams, coordinates with Wakefield Boosters and other schools, and works with all the clubs and the multitude of other student events (Homecoming,

awards nights, senior picnic, photo days, poetry club, ethnic clubs, and academic teams).

We welcome Nate Hailey as Interim DSA. He is a current Wakefield teacher who served as a summer school administrator for several years. Mr. Hailey has over 20 years of coaching experience at various levels.



Noel Deskins retired in December as Wakefield's Director of Student Activities. Photo courtesy Wakefield's Twitter feed @wakefieldchief.

The DSA maintains an active Twitter account (@WakeAthletics) and website (warriorshsathletics.com). Weekly schedules and activity updates are regularly posted.

Speaking of activities, spring sports tryouts are in mid-February. Any interested students, including 8th graders (for baseball and softball), need to have their physicals completed before tryouts.

—Donna Felipe



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neighborhood news

Fairlington Diners

The Fairlington Diners gather a couple of times a month for relaxed dinners nearby. We focus on having a good meal and an opportunity to chat with neighbors. In January, we tried out the new Shirlington location of Cheesetique with much-expanded seating space, which was formerly occupied by Luna.

Here's what's planned for February:

Thursday, February 13, 6:30 pm, Rabieng Thai Restaurant, 5892 Leesburg Pike, Falls Church, 703-671-4222, www.rabieng.com. It's just beyond Bailey's Crossroads—very close to Fairlington—and has plenty of parking out front. This is a favorite of several of our regulars; it's always great food, in an informal atmosphere.

Monday, February 24, 6:30 pm, Beckett's, 2800 S. Randolph St., Arlington, 703-379-0122. This is an alternate location for Monday burgers for us. This casual restaurant/bar in Shirlington has delicious soups and a spectacular chicken curry.

Please call Carol at 703-379-6840 if you plan to attend, and leave a voicemail if you don't reach her—include your name and how to contact you the day of the event, in case plans change. If you want to receive a copy of these notices early in the previous month, send your email address to carol_dabbs@yahoo.com.

Book Group

Join the Fairlington Book Group in February to discuss *Big Little Lies*, a novel by Liane Moriarty.

"Big Little Lies is a brilliant take on ex-husbands and second wives, mothers and daughters, schoolyard scandal, and the little lies that can turn lethal." —Amazon.com.

The Book Group welcomes first-time visitors and drop-ins. No commitment required! Join us for our discussion, even if you haven't read the book. We are meeting on Tuesday, February 25, at 7:30 pm in the Fairlington Community Center, 3308 S. Stafford St. We hope you'll join us.

Canasta Group Doubles the Fun

Our local Canasta group has multiplied the cards, the luck and the fun. We are now playing "Hand and Foot," a Canasta-type card game played coast to coast. If playing your hand was fun, there may be wild cards waiting in your foot! Join this local group, which plays Tuesday mornings at a church hall near Fairlington. Having card-sense is helpful, but we're happy to teach you the rules of this game. Call Carol Ann 703-931-8533.

Join us for Fairlington Knits (and Crochets)

Join Fairlington Knits! on Monday, February 10, and Monday, February 24, at the Fairlington Community Center from 6:30-8 pm for a knit/crochet meet-up. Bring what you're working on, share what you know, and learn new skills from our crafters. In February, we're going to learn how to knit little hearts for Valentine's Day. Come meet new friends, some who might be neighbors, and enjoy an evening of making things with like-minded people. All levels of knitters and crocheters are welcome. The events are posted on the Fairlington Appreciation Society's Facebook page. For more information, contact: Turner at Turnerwork@aol.com.

Fairlington MOMS Club

The MOMS Club of Arlington-Fairlington VA® is a group for moms of young kids to find friends, get support, and have play opportunities for the kids. The Club participates in a number of annual service projects to help our community, four big annual parties, routine playdates and crafts, and moms' nights out. We have a great listserv for sharing advice and connecting to other Fairlington families. We welcome all moms! Please email fairlingtonmomsclub@gmail.com for information on joining and visit us online at www.fairlingtonmomsclub.com. \$30 in annual dues goes to support the club's work and service projects. The MOMS Club of Arlington-Fairlington VA is the local chapter of International MOMS Club®.

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Although mostly organic, it never grows. Thus, there's no height, width, or bulk to its habit. The best thing about it? It never needs watering, fertilizing, pruning, deadheading, or transplanting.

Without it, a garden looks naked and the soil erodes.

Mulch is apparent in every garden. I listened to my mother but not when it came to mulch. She didn't care for it and preferred the natural look of dirt. "But mom," I'd say, "the plant leaves are caked with mud from the splashing rain. And you have mud puddles." She'd smile, take a drag on her cigarette and say, "But I like it that way."

So why do gardeners and landscapers feel compelled to use it, year after year?

The benefits are decoration (it offers a texture bare soil does not), prevention of erosion, weed control to a degree, pleasant odor for about a week, and its ability to keep plant roots warm in winter and cool in summer.

The main drawback is overuse. In Fairlington, it is piled high in the front beds, side beds, and around trees. In most cases, it is applied over weeds and dead leaves, which only adds to the clutter. Mulch need not

be stacked. A couple inches high is plenty.

I've written this before but I once saw silver dollar (large chunk) mulch piled about four inches high in a Fairlington garden. And beneath it, I found a snake nest with the mother and four babies. Reptiles and rodents need nesting places. Thick mulch can be their homes.

Never should any type of mulch be stacked in a bed or up against a tree/shrub trunk since it retains moisture causing root rot and pest infestation. Instead, leave a circular moat around the trunk so water runs down into the root zone.

Go to a garden center and you'll find many types of mulch. Below are descriptions.

Shredded hardwood: This is used in the common areas of Fairlington. When piled too high, it hardens. In winter, you can extend your fingers down into it. What comes out in your palms is one piece of coagulated mulch, sometimes as big as a turkey platter.

Virginia fines: My favorite because of its color (cinnamon), odor (pleasant), size (that of a quarter), and texture (small bits). It is easy to remove from the bag and easy to spread.

Silver dollar: My least favorite (see why, above). Each piece, sometimes four inches in width, becomes unsightly with age as the edges curl and turn gray. When stacked, it distracts the eye from what makes a



When used correctly, mulch can beautify a patio garden and help with weed control. Photo courtesy pixabay.

garden beautiful—the plants.

Red or black cedar: The cedar odor is pleasant but dye is used to color the naturally brown wood. One typically sees the red type at gas stations. Some prefer the black type since it looks natural, resembling the soil.

Rappahannock: This is okay and a smaller version of silver dollar. It looks natural (like bits of tree bark broken up) and does provide a textured look.

Pine needles: Its acidic nature is perfect for the root systems of evergreen plants (yew, laurel, azalea, rhododendron, pieris, and spruce). But with age, the needles turn brown and add to the eyesore of dead broad leaves.

Rubber: Should be used only in playgrounds. This safeguards children who may slip and fall off the equipment. It is a great idea but not good for birds who may ingest it.

—Bill Sullivan
www.sullivanlandscaping.net

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Dates to remember
Feb. 10: Voter registration deadline (see p. 9)
Feb. 28: Deadline for Fairlington 5K "early bird" discount (see p. 5)

MINI-ADS INSTRUCTIONS

Due date for ads and payment: 6 pm on the 10th of the preceding month (February 10 for March issue).

- Checks payable to "Fairlington Citizens Association."
- Send mini-ad copy via email, regular mail, or drop off at FCA drop box.
- Send checks via regular mail or drop off at FCA drop box.

Email: admanager@fca-fairlington.org

Mailing Address: FCA-AFB, PO Box 6182, Arlington, VA 22206-0182.

Drop Box Location: Fairlington Community Center, 3308 S. Stafford St. (Hours: 8 am–9 pm, M-F, 8 am–5 pm, Saturday; closed Sunday.)

Cost: 50 cents per word.

Include with ad copy: Name, address, phone #, email address, and ad category (see Mini-ads for options).

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