

FAIRLINGTON FCA

www.fca-fairlington.org



FCA monthly meeting

Wednesday, January 8, 7 pm FCC 3308 S. Stafford St.

New Year's Day

Wednesday, January 1 FCC closed

Fairlington Diners

Monday, January 6, 6:30 pm Ramparts, 1700 Fern St. Alexandria

MOMS Club

Wednesday, January 8, 11:30 am FCC

Park Shirlington Redevelopment Briefing

Tuesday, January 14, 7 pm FCC

Martin Luther King Day

Monday, January 20, 10 am – 12 pm Barcroft Park, 4200 S. Four Mile Run Dr. Four Mile Run cleanup

Book Group

Tuesday, January 28, 7:30 pm North Fairlington CC

See Neighborhood News on page 17 and related articles for details about calendar events.

JANUARY 2014

Volume 40, Number 1

Developer to brief community on Park Shirlington project January 14



Photo by Guy Land.

Representatives of Home Properties, Inc., the owner of the Park Shirlington apartments on 31st St., will brief the Fairlington community on plans for the redevelopment of the property on January 14. Home Properties filed a site plan and rezoning application with Arlington County on November 15.

Similar to what Home Properties told the community in preliminary briefings in 2013, the plan calls for replacing the current 294 apartments with 750 new apartments in

five buildings that will be three to five stories high. The buildings will be on both sides of 31st St. The application seeks a rezoning of the property to permit higher density than is currently permitted under the property's existing zoning.

According to materials filed with the County, the buildings will be designed "to provide an appropriate transition in height, density and architectural design between high density of the Shirlington House and the Village at Shirlington and lower-density Fairlington Village."

Most of the units would be market rate and would be competitive with other apartments in Shirlington, though there would be a certain number of units set aside as affordable housing. The number and types of affordable housing units would be determined during the County's consideration of the application. The market-rate apartments would be a mix of studio, 1-, 2-, and 3-bedroom apartments.

The application includes off-street parking facilities, enhanced landscaping, undergrounding of utilities on the property, and redesigned traffic flows within the property. Construction of the buildings would be designed to achieve Bronze status under the National Green Building Standard.

The application proposes 903 on-site parking spaces, with 827 of them in garages. This is a slight increase in parking spaces over last year's projections.

As part of the application, the developer submitted a preliminary transportation management plan that focuses on promoting the use of public transit by residents and staff of the new apartments, including providing employees with a commuter benefit program and distributing free SmarTrip cards to the initial group of tenants.

Continued on page 15

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 571-403-1943 by the Sunday before the meeting.

January 8 preliminary agenda:

Board regular business meeting to transact routine business and establish policies and budget priorities for 2014.

- Approval of December minutes
- Officer reports
- Old business
- New business
 - 2014 standing policies and procedures
 - 2014 budget
 - Aging in place initiative

January 14 special briefing:

Representatives of Home Properties will brief the community on their site plan and rezoning application for the redevelopment of Park Shirlington apartments.

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.

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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.arlingtonya.us/departments/Environmental		

www.arlingtonva.us/departments/Environmental

Services/dot/traffic/streetlights/index.htm

Helicopter Noise Complaints Bob Laser (FAA) bob.laser@faa.gov

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 -

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2014's major initiative: The FCA Board will launch a community-wide conversation about aging in place and linking Fairlington's generations. Activities will include setting up a working group, special presentations on approaches used in other communities, and an assessment of what options match up with Fairlington's needs and interests. Join in this important community exploration.

Contents

Features

Some images in this publication may be digitally enhanced.



PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Building on last year's rich menu of community activities, your FCA Board is crafting an ambitious lineup of Fairlington projects for 2014.

We'll continue our normal routine of offering you a variety of speakers on matters that you have expressed an interest in. And we'll augment that with a rich menu of special events and activities. See the story on page 9 for more information.

Three larger topics will shape much of our other work.

Park Shirlington redevelopment. The developer (Home Properties) has filed a site plan and application for rezoning in order to raze the existing Park Shirlington apartments and replace them with new buildings, increasing the number of units from 294 to 750. To facilitate our consideration of the proposal, the developer has agreed to do a presentation for the community on January 14. In addition, we have set up an advisory committee, representing a variety of perspectives, to review Home Properties' application and advise FCA on the implications for Fairlington.

Abingdon Elementary. One of my particular interests will be to strengthen our ties to Abingdon Elementary. With the increase in the number of kids in Fairlington, Abingdon has become more central to the life of our community. When I went to the school's fall festival in October, I was surrounded by familiar faces of Fairlington parents and their children. We need to more closely integrate FCA's activities with the work of Abingdon.

Aging in place. This spring we will launch a community-wide conversation about "aging in place" and blending the generations in Fairlington. Fairlington's population is skewing to both ends of the age spectrum. We have more seniors and more families with small children than we've had at any other time since the conversion to condominiums in the late 1970s.

The challenge is how best to respond to these changing demographics. It's not just about meeting the fairly different needs and priorities of different age groups. It's also about how we link them together. That larger conversation will be our major project this year.

All of these activities are designed to accomplish several key goals: keep you informed on things happening in and around Fairlington; be your voice in helping shape those things; and strengthen the things that make Fairlington such a great place to live. We hope you will join us in these efforts. We need you.

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



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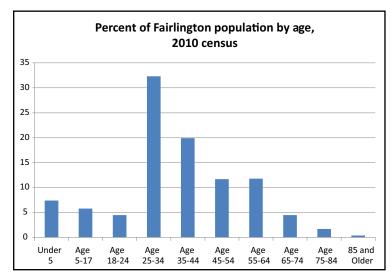
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FCA Board to launch "aging in place" discussion

How can the Fairlington community better meet the needs of its growing number of senior residents? What strategies can best link the generations and engage the large number of families with small children in the community?

These are a couple of the key questions the FCA Board will tackle this spring as it begins a community-wide conversation about aging in place and blending Fairlington's generations. This will be one of the Board's major priorities for the year.



Source: Arlington County Department of Community Planning, Housing and Development. Census blocks may not perfectly align with the civic association boundary and likely include households that are adjacent to Fairlington.

One approach that is growing in popularity across the nation is the "neighborhood village" concept. Villages are community-based, grassroots organizations that provide the support services needed to help older adults stay in their homes and remain active in their communities as long as possible. Participating seniors pay an annual fee, but this does not normally cover the full cost of the program and many of the services are provided by a cadre of volunteers who also live in the community.

The menu of services is shaped by each village and can range from rides to medical appointments or grocery shopping to emergency pet care to small home repairs to social activities to help with paperwork or bill paying to clearing snow and ice from entrances and vehicles.

A group of Arlington residents have been exploring this approach for Arlington and have created Arlington Neighborhood Villages, a free-standing organization that can help interested Arlington communities establish their own neighborhood village. Their model of operation consists of a network of neighborhood villages united by a county-wide hub. A number of neighborhood villages already exist in Alexandria, Fairfax

Want to help shape Fairlington's "aging in place" conversation? The Board is looking for volunteers to serve on a special committee to guide this initiative. If you want to help out, please contact president@fca-fairlington.org.

County, and D.C. Arlington Neighborhood Villages expects to formally launch its operations in March.

FCA hopes to feature a representative of Arlington Neighborhood Villages at a special forum in the spring to explain the model and how it might work in Fairlington.

Establishing a Fairlington Neighborhood Village is just one of several options the FCA Board will be considering during the course of the year to determine the types of resources that are available for helping

communities meet the needs of an aging population and how those can be adapted to Fairlington.

FCA Board members Carol Dabbs and Carrie Street will lead this exploration. To help guide the discussion, the Board will be establishing a special committee of residents. Contact president@fca-fairlington.org if you are interested in helping out.

For more information on Arlington Neighborhood Villages, go to http://arlnvil.org/.

—Guy Land

What's up next?



Outgoing FCA Board member Michelle Woolley and Vice President Kent Duffy monitor the action at this year's annual meeting. Photo by Guy Land.



Fairlington Village

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County tree canopy program benefits Fairlington condos

Fairlington's tree canopy will grow again this year, thanks to tree grants provided by Arlington County's Tree Canopy Fund. According to Nora Palmatier, president of the Arlington TreeStewards, which helps support the tree distribution, Fairlington received 26 trees this year, with the bulk of those going to Fairlington Villages.

The Tree Canopy Fund, which is funded in part by contributions from developers as part of their site plan application commitments, gives grants to community groups to plant

and maintain trees on private property.

"The program is a very generous one," explained Mark Johnson, Operations Manager for Fairlington Villages. "It enables communities like ours to restore their tree canopy to a level that might not otherwise be possible with limited condominium resources."

Johnson estimates that the free trees North Fairlington received in October would have cost the condo association over \$10,000. As a condition of the grant, the association commits to professionally maintain the trees. "It really helps us be good stewards of our 93 acre tree canopy, which is a tremendous natural resource in an urban environment like Arlington," Johnson noted.

Utilizing staff and Grounds Committee volunteers, Fairlington Villages is restoring the common natural areas along the fenceline between North Fairlington and The Arlington Condominium. These natural areas had been overrun with invasive species like English Ivy, Japanese Honeysuckle, and White Mulberry and are being restored using native wildflowers, shrubs, and native trees from the Tree Canopy Fund.

There are two sizes of Tree Canopy Fund trees. Those that North Fairlington received were generally two inches in diameter. The fund also supports the distribution of smaller, "whip" trees in two-gallon containers.

Other condos in Fairlington have also benefitted from the tree canopy program. For example, three years ago the Arbor received 30 trees to replace many that had been lost to two bad snowstorms and summer storms. According to Pam Emily, a member of the Grounds Committee in the



Patrick Wegeng, Arlington's Environmental Landscape Director, explains proper tree maintenance to members of last year's TreeStewards class. Photo by Guy Land.

Arbor, these were augmented by 28 additional trees purchased by the Arbor. For the past two years, the Arbor has also received smaller evergreen "whip" trees from the Fund and used them to fill in between the cedars that form a buffer along King Street.

The Tree Canopy Fund is administered by Arlingtonians for a Clean Environment(ACE) and the Arlington County Urban Forestry Commission (UFC), with the all-volunteer TreeStewards assisting applicants in determining appro-

priate types of trees and locations. The purpose of the Fund is to arrest the decrease in tree cover in Arlington County in recent decades and then to assist in increasing canopy over time.

Apply now for the 2014 class of TreeStewards

The TreeStewards of Arlington and Alexandria are volunteers dedicated to improving the health of our urban trees through educational programs, tree planting, and tree maintenance throughout the community.

New volunteer training will be held Tuesday evenings, starting February 11 through April 29, plus three Saturday morning workdays to be determined. Improve your ability to identify trees, enhance your pruning skills, and learn how to select the right tree for the right spot. Through an engaging blend of classroom instruction and hands-on training, participants learn the basics of tree biology and physiology, as well as appropriate planting and maintenance techniques.

The program is designed to prepare participants for volunteer service to the community, and each trainee commits to improving and protecting their community forest through 30 hours of volunteer service during the next year. For more information or to register, visit www.treestewards.org or call 703-527-2349. TreeStewards programs are supported in part in Arlington and Alexandria by Virginia Cooperative Extension and are open to all. Scholarships are available.

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FCA board sets agenda for 2014



The 2014 FCA Board: From left, Secretary Carol Dabbs, Bill Russell, Carrie Street, Lisa Schwanger, Treasurer Ed Hilz, President Guy Land, Vice President Kent Duffy, Joe Hartman, and Mark Jones. Photo by Amy Schardt.

A mix of speakers, new activities, and returning favorite events will mark FCA's work in 2014 under a general work plan developed by the FCA Board during December.

- **Speakers and programs**. A robust offering of outside guests will inform residents about activities and policies that potentially affect the Fairlington community. Traffic and development staff for the City of Alexandria are already committed for the February 12 meeting. Other programs are expected to include members of the Arlington County delegation in Richmond, members or staff of the County Board, and local school leaders.
- Events. April will see the return, after almost a decade, of a Fairlington 5K Run/Walk, this time in a first-ever partnership with Abingdon Elementary. May will bring Fairlington Day, a popular gathering of residents for hot dogs, kids games, and visiting with neighbors. This year the Board is looking to add activities that appeal to adults, to balance the moon bounce and other kids offerings. The Fourth of July parade, sponsored jointly with the Fairlington Villages condo association, always draws several hundred Fairlingtonians. Grounds and tree tours will feed residents' appetites to learn more about flora and fauna.
- Paper shred. Based on the success of November's Fairlington Paper Shred, the Board anticipates host-

Get email updates.

Sign up to get email updates on FCA activities and events. Go to www.fca-fairlington.org.

- ing two shredding events in 2014, one in the spring and the other in the fall. It is likely that at least one of those will also include electronics recycling.
- **Farmers market**. The launch of the Fairlington Farmers Market is expected to occur in April and continue weekly on Sundays through November. An application for the market is currently being reviewed by Arlington County staff. The County Board will have to give its approval before the market can become operational.
- **Real estate development**. The proposed redevelopment of Park Shirlington apartments will be the Board's major real estate focus during the year, but the Board will also track the progress of changes in Bradlee Shopping Center (e.g., the new Fresh Market grocery store and the rebuilt Safeway), Fairlington Battery, and development in Alexandria's West End.
- Aging in place. This will be the Board's major new initiative for 2014, and will lean on a committee of volunteers to help determine how FCA can meet the needs of the community's growing senior population and link Fairlington's generations.

Carrying out this agenda will require the work of a large group of volunteers. If you have a few hours to give to enhancing life in Fairlington by helping with these activities, please contact president@fca-fairlington.org.

Annual meeting elects new board

Two new directors join a returning slate of seven officers and directors to lead FCA next year as a result of voting at the December 11 annual meeting of the association. Re-elected were President Guy Land, Vice President Kent Duffy, Secretary Carol Dabbs, Treasurer Ed Hilz, and directors Mark Jones, Carrie Street, and Joe Hartman. The new directors are Bill Russell and Lisa Schwanger. They replace Michelle Woolley and Jacob Gelbaum, who did not seek re-election.

Russell and Schwanger were nominated from the floor at the meeting. Jim Hurysz was also nominated from the floor. Russell and Schwanger won in the paper ballot voting.

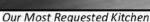
Russell and Schwanger both live in South Fairlington and have been active in FCA's work. Russell has been focusing on parking issues, while Schwanger is a member of the farmers market working group.

Directors and officers receive no compensation for their services and serve one-vear terms.

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LOTS of photos at our website: www.DelongHomeImprovement.com

Fairlington news clips

Farmers market proposal advances

After the FCA Board unanimously approved supporting the Fairlington Farmers Market proposal at its November meeting, the farmers market committee, under the auspices of Field to Table, submitted the special use permit application to Arlington County staff for review. Upon completion of their review, the staff will refer it to the County Board for final consideration and vote.

The farmers market committee anticipates a recommendation by the staff early in the year, followed shortly thereafter by formal consideration by the County Board.

In the meantime, the committee is starting to identify potential vendors so that the market can be ready to begin operations in April once it receives County Board approval. If you would like to be included in the email distribution list, please email fairlingtonfarmersmarket@gmail.com. Check the FCA website for updates on the application and for the date when the County Board will consider the permit.

Fairlington 5K set for April 5

Start getting in shape now to join your Fairlington neighbors and Abingdon friends on Saturday, April 5, when FCA and Abingdon Elementary School host the 2014 Fairlington 5K Run/Walk. Proceeds will benefit the Abingdon Elementary School P.E. program, the Abingdon School library, and A Cure for Ellie, a nonprofit organization dedicated to finding a cure for mitochondrial disease.

Entry details will be coming soon. In the meantime, if you have questions or wish to volunteer, please contact president@fca-fairlington.org.

Vintage hardware sought

Are you thinking about renovations? Are you planning to update your 1970's, conversion era, door hardware (knobs, plates, hinges)? Please let us know!

The Fairlington Historical Society receives occasional inquiries from people wanting to restore, rather than renovate. The door hardware originally installed in our homes is now no longer available, and we advise people to call the contractors who advertise in the AFB to see if they have or plan to replace it.

If you have, or plan to have, conversion era original door hardware available, contact the webmaster at www. fairlingtonhistoricalsociety.org.

Snow day!



A young Fairlingtonian uses leaves to make a "freckled snowman" after early December's light snow. Photo by Pat Teske.

Community center to host "grasses for the masses" course

Winter-weary gardeners can grow something from seed during the winter and contribute to the health of the Chesapeake Bay through the Chesapeake Bay Foundation's (CBF) "Grasses for the Masses" program. Participants grow native underwater celery grass in their homes during the winter/early spring months. CBF provides a simple kit with seeds in which to grow the grasses. At the end of the grow period (late April to early May), participants gather to plant their grasses in the Potomac River at Mason Neck Park.

Fairlingtonians can choose from two workshop opportunities at the Fairlington Community Center: Saturday, January 18, 9:30-11:00 am, and Tuesday, February 4, 7-8:30 pm. The fee is \$40, which covers part of the cost of the kit. The details of the program, including information about the workshop, are on the CBF's grasses webpage, http://www.cbf.org/grasses.

The program is supported by Virginia Cooperative Extension and Arlington Regional Master Naturalists. The course is taught by former North Fairlington resident Kasha Helget. Contact kasha.helget@cox.net.

Police updates highlight FCA annual meeting



FCA President Guy Land (second from right) welcomes, from left, John Crawford, Public Information Officer for Arlington's Office of Emergency Management; Sgt. Rick Rodriquez; Capt. Brett Butler, Third District Commander; and Officer Krizza Balderrama. Photo by Amy Schardt.

Several dozen residents turned out for the annual Fairlington Citizens Association (FCA) meeting on December 11, to hear the board's accomplishments from 2013 and learn about upcoming plans for 2014. The annual elections were also held, bringing in two new members to serve as directors on the FCA board (see page 9 for more details).

Following the meeting's formal business, guest speakers from Arlington's Office of Emergency Management, the Emergency Communication Center, and our local police force discussed crime and safety issues, including recent property destruction across the neighborhood, as well as emergency preparedness planning.



Capt. Brett Butler visits with Fairlington residents after his presentation at the annual meeting. Photo by Guy Land.

Third District Captain Brett Butler of the Arlington County Police Department and his team addressed residents' concerns over the recent rash of vandalism and property destruction in Fairlington.

"We are pleased to report that we have a strong suspect who was stopped on Tuesday night, and we are working with officials to get some DNA lab tests back before we can take further action or make any arrests to this individual," Butler said.

Throughout the fall, Fairlington experienced multiple incidents of cars being vandalized and rocks and bricks being thrown through condo unit windows, particularly in the area of the Meadows.



Sgt. Rick Rodriguez compares notes on Fairlington crime issues with Fairlington Glen President Jay Yianilos after the presentation at the annual meeting. Photo by Guy Land.

Butler noted that the police have been putting lots of time and manpower into finding the individuals responsible for the property destruction and will remain vigilant until the crimes have been stopped. "We want residents to know that we are very aware and sympathetic to this issue and will continue to provide as much information as we can on the suspect as we get it," he said.

Butler and his team also emphasized the importance of residents keeping an eye out for suspicious activity in the neighborhood and not hesitating to call the police if they see anything that does not seem right.

"No one knows this neighborhood better than you," he

said. "Have the police department's number plugged into your phone so all you have to do is press a button to get us on the line. Don't be afraid to get involved or draw attention to a situation that does not seem right."

Other ways to help deter burglars and vandals include keeping your front and back porch lights on, keeping bushes trimmed down, and ensuring that neighbors you trust know when you are going out of town. "Make sure your house looks lived in while you are away," Butler said.

Emergency preparedness

John Crawford, Public Information Officer for Arlington's Office of Emergency Management, emphasized the importance of being informed, making a plan, and preparing a disaster supply kit to be prepared for emergency situations that could arise in our homes or work place.

Crawford used the recent water main break in Shirlington as an example of why residents should make sure they have a plan in all emergency situations. He recommended that residents sign up for Arlington Alert at https://www.arlingtonalert.com.

"Arlington Alert is a free alert system that allows the County to contact you during an emergency by sending text messages to your email account or cell phone. When an emergency occurs, the County will instantly notify you with updates, instructions on where to go, what to do, or what not to do, who to contact and other important information," Crawford explained.

He also highlighted radio station 1700 AM as an excellent source for emergency information across the County. "I recommend each household has a battery operated radio so they can be informed on emergency situations in the case of lost power."

Vanessa Coles, Bureau Chief Operations Supervisor for the

Easy steps to follow to be prepared for any disaster

- 1. Know how to get information in an emergency (Arlington Alert and 1700AM)
- 2. Make a plan
- 3. Prepare a disaster supply kit

For more information check out http://sites.arlingtonva.us/oem/

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Emergency Communication Center, provided an overview of the process for receiving and processing 911 emergency and non-emergency calls throughout the county.



Returning FCA Board members Carrie Street and Mark Jones welcome new member Lisa Schwanger (center) after December's annual meeting. Photo by Guy Land.

Board reports

Board President Guy Land reviewed the major activities of the year, focusing on an extensive menu of speakers and events, as well as a major initiative to examine the feasibility of creating a farmers market in Fairlington. He announced that 2014 would bring a wide-ranging discussion of "aging in place" in Fairlington.

Treasurer Ed Hilz reported on the association's finances, stating that FCA was one of the few civic associations that does not require a membership fee. Advertising revenues from the *All Fairlington Bulletin* support the organization's activities.

Hilz noted that generally expenses were in line with the budget adopted earlier in the year, with the major unplanned expenses being costs associated with upgrading FCA's website in response to numerous hacking incidents and the Board's decision to obtain liability and crime insurance. The crime insurance fulfills the bylaw requirement that the Treasurer be bonded.

-Amy Schardt

Pat Shannon & Kristin (Isaitis

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Edward Getterman,
 Fairlington Resident

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Rick Micker, Former Fairlington Condo VP

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— Denice McCullough, Fairlington Resident

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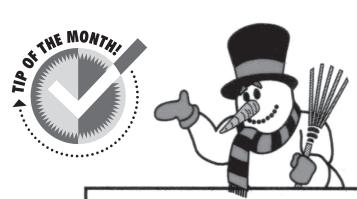
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If you would like more information on our annual service policies or one of the many other services Frosty's Heating & Cooling provides, please contact our office.

Call NOW! 703-671-9193

Santa rides through Fairlington

A few raindrops couldn't deter Santa and his sleigh, er, fire truck, from making the rounds in Fairlington December 14. Special thanks to Fire Station 7 for Santa and his helpers and the truck, and to Fairlington Villages for the Santa suit. Photos by Guy Land.















Recipes needed for Fairlington's 70th Anniversary Cookbook

Don't put away those holiday recipes just yet!

The Fairlington Historical Society is still looking for contributions to the 70th Anniversary Cookbook to be published this spring.

We'd love to have your favorite recipes, along with any family heritage recipes, as well as pictures and stories about food, friends, families, and festivities in the community.

We're looking for recipes in the following categories: Appetizers, Beverages, Soups, Salads, Main Courses, Vegetables & Side Dishes, Breads, and Desserts & Sweets.

Developer, continued from page 1

The Home Properties proposal is now under review by County staff. It must go before the Site Plan Review Committee and the Arlington County Planning Commission, and then be considered by the Arlington County Board.

To help the Fairlington Citizens Association (FCA) assess the implications for Fairlington of the Home Properties application, FCA is establishing a special Park Shirlington Redevelopment Advisory Committee. The Committee is expected to begin its work this month.

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CHECKBOOK



Read what some of your neighbors have to say:

GMG Services remodeled two bathrooms and a bar area in our home in Arlington, VA. GMG was one of three contractors we got quotes from, and we liked their punctuality, prices, and their ideas about how to best use the space available for the two bathrooms we wanted to re-do. Once we signed the contract, the work went exactly as planned. We were sent to wonderful providers for countertops, sinks, toilets, showers and tiles—everyone we worked with was fabulous, and it was clear they all had a great relationship with GMG. We were referred to GMG by a good friend, and we are very pleased with the way the work turned out.

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"I've been using GMG exclusively for the last 15 years for 4 different projects. Other than my bathroom, they have totally renovated my entire condo including a recent complete renovation of my downstairs bathroom. I have absolutely no reservations using them again and am chomping at the bit to have them renovate my bathroom next year. They do outstanding work, always finishing on budget and just as Importantly, on time... I can honestly say, when comparing experiences with my friends on contractors, I've never been able to offer any of the horror stories they always have..."

"We are writing to express our sincere appreciation and gratitude to you and your crew for the excellent work in remodeling our two bathrooms. It was indeed a pleasure dealing with a company that places a high priority on customer satisfaction. We are very satisfied customers. The bathroom was done with a high degree of craftsmanship and completed within the time frame that you had originally proposed. It's apparent that GMG is a remarkably well-run and well-organized operation. In the 33 years that we have lived in the Washington DC area, we have never been more satisfied with contractors than we are with GMG Services"

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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 December, we enjoyed another trip to L'Auberge Chez Francois, which has become an almost annual event to kick off the holiday season.

In January, we'll also have just one event, picking up on burger night at Ramparts, since we didn't go in December:

Monday, January 6, 6:30 pm, Ramparts Restaurant, 1700 Fern Street, Alexandria, (703) 998-6616, www. rampartstavern.com/. This is a local favorite that we visit almost every month. On Mondays, they offer half-price burgers with the purchase of a beverage, and the rest of the menu is also available. Come on out for a burger to celebrate the return of your "regular" activities.

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.

Book Group

After an adventurous youth on the Continent, polymath Thomas Cromwell rose to be chief minister to King Henry VIII of England. In her prize-winning novel, *Wolf Hall*, Hilary Mantel humanizes the seemingly ruthless Cromwell in a sweeping portrayal of the religious, political, and societal turmoil of the times. Join us to discuss the book at 7:30 pm on Tuesday, January 28, in the Fairlington Villages Community Center, 3005 S. Abingdon St. For more information, please contact Terry Gough at tjgough@verizon.net.

New Year's Resolution— Learn to Play Canasta

Here's a great opportunity to learn an old card game. 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.

To request an application or for more information, Fairlington residents can send e-mail to the coordinators, Tiffany Bittenbender and Monica Ekman, at fairlington.babysitting@gmail.com.

MOMS Club of Arlington-Fairlington

Members and their children 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.

Parents and parents-to-be are welcome to join us for our next general meeting on Wednesday, January 8, at 11:30 am, in the Fairlington Community Center. The session will feature a special presentation from Language Stars, who will be teaching a sample class. 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.

MLK Day of Service

Help make Martin Luther King Day a day of service. Volunteer to help clean up trash out of Arlington County's largest stream watershed, Four Mile Run. Groups, families, and individuals are all welcome. Monday, January 20, 10 am to 12 pm. Meet at Barcroft Park, 4200 S. Four Mile Run Dr. Register online at arlingtonenvironment.org.



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DOWN TO EARTH patio gardening



Good plant choices can add color to winter's gray days

As you re-heat the ham-and-cabbage and look at your barren patio, remember, you can still have an interesting garden in winter. If you have time, take a mug of coffee out to Merrifield Garden Center in Fairfax and walk through the heated bubbles (winter plant homes) to check out some of these plants you might add to your own landscape next spring:

"Burford" Holly—It's a dense evergreen with bursts of red fruit. Of all the hollies, few have a more dynamic fruit display. The shrub has shiny, pointed leaf margins and will fill the corner of your garden.

Beautyberry—This leggy, pendulous shrub offers fruit in a fluorescent purple in late autumn. The drupes are smaller than holly fruit but are metallic and eye-catching. It needs room and is deciduous.

Cotoneaster—Another leggy evergreen that has cranberry pomes clinging to its tangled, pendulous arms. The leaves are tiny and ovalshaped, so the fruit stands out in its habit. Cotoneaster is a large ground cover, reaching only 20 inches tall with a greater spread.

Osmanthus—This evergreen offers white flowers with a fragrance that can be picked up by humans as well as hounds from a distance. The leaf resembles a holly but has many more spiny margins.

Mahonia—Strands of fragrant, yellow flowers reach from this



Fairlington nandina. Photo by Guy Land.

specimen's top from December into February. The spiny leaves sometimes mutate from a "lima beangreen" to maroon and orange in late fall. Typically, the leaves will display prominent yellow veinage.

Camellia—Look beyond the flowers (if you don't stop at the beautiful blooms and swollen buds) and notice the "golf-ball-sized" woody capsules. The Camellia flower shows in red, pink and white (from August into early April) and each bloom bears a yellow eye with protruding stamens and pistils.

Magnolia—The fragrant white flowers are gone but the leathery green leaves with brown undersides remain. In addition, football-shaped aggregates will split open to expose red seeds.

'Bradford' Pear—This specimen has everything—white flowers in spring, early red leaf color in autumn, and furrowed bark and clusters of brown, round pomes in autumn that look wooden.

Yew—Look closely among the needled, evergreen branches and you'll notice pinkish-red arils that look like raspberries. Try not to prune this specimen, as its "reaching" branches add grace to its habit.

Nandina—Planted in Fairlington's common areas, clusters of deep red fruit droop from branches all winter. If your shrub has an abundance of fruit, snip off a stem and insert the fruit clump in a holiday wreath.

Skimmia—This ground cover (shade or sun) offers a red drupe that persists until March. It used to only appear on "female" plants but now there are self-pollinating cultivars.

Ligustrum—Throughout winter on this vigorous evergreen, you'll notice flat, oval, grayish-black drupes (like miniature boomerangs). It prefers full sun and is common in Fairlington. At maturity, it reaches 5-feet tall with a similar width.

"On the Lighter Side": a customer recently said to me, "You know, I hate gardening but love your column."

—Bill Sullivan www.sullivanslandscaping.net

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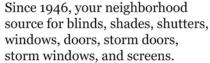
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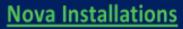
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ABING School news



Abingdon musicians earn county recognition



Ella Downey, Hannah Lewis and Aisha Barry recently received county honors for their music. Photo by Abingdon PTA

Three Abingdon 5th graders—Aisha Barry, Hannah Lewis and Ella Downey—have been accepted into the All County Junior Honors Orchestra. These three students prepared a challenging audition and went to Kenmore to play for judges from the U.S. Army Band and Orchestra. The Juniors Honors Orchestra is a collection of the most

able instrumental students in the Arlington Public School system. They will now practice every Tuesday evening until the final concert at Kenmore Middle School on March 18th. Abingdon strings music teacher Kristin Gomez is very proud that her students continue to receive this distinctive honor each year.

Alicia Donoghue is teacher of the year!

Alicia Donoghue was selected by her colleagues as the 2013-14 Abingdon Teacher of the Year. In her 11 years of teaching, she has established herself as a master teacher. When asked about this recent honor, Ms. Donoghue replied, "Having the title Teacher of the Year is a wonderful thing; however, working and learning from my peers is the greatest honor. As far as teaching goes... there's nothing like it! Each and every day the children bring a smile to my face. There is no greater joy than seeing children eagerly come to school, their second home, and participate in their academic and social growth." She went on too



Teacher of the year Alicia Donoghue with Principal Joanne Uyeda. Photo by Abingdon PTA.

mention that she feels lucky to be surrounded by such a passionate, supportive and talented group of teachers. Ms. Donoghue is extremely thankful to Principal Uyeda for hiring her at Abingdon. She adds, "Ms. Uyeda is the kind of principal every teacher wants as an administrator. I'd go over the moon for that lady."

After interviewing many of her peers, it is evident that they consider Alicia Donoghue to be a highly supportive colleague, quintessential team player, and dedicated professional. Every teacher we spoke with mentioned that Ms. Donoghue treats her students as if they were her own by nurturing, inspiring, and motivating them to grow as learners. In speaking to Abingdon parents, present and past, it is clear that Ms. Donoghue has left an indelible memory in their minds. Many commented about her warm, inviting Livingston, Texas, accent and how always she is present with anyone she communicates with. Past students recall wanting to come to school every day because Ms. Donoghue cultivated a comfortable classroom that inspired them to learn. Their parents are clearly grati-



Continued on page 22

fied that their first grade child had the luxury of being in Ms. Donoghue's classroom. Current parents resoundingly refer to Ms. Donoghue's ability to make each student feel special, while holding all of them to a high standard of learning and behavior. When you walk the halls of Abingdon and see the "Donoghue crew" passing by it is apparent they are well behaved, happy and in the safest hands a parent could ever imagine. This is why Alicia Donoghue is, and always will be, beloved by the entire Abingdon family!



Teacher Sam Moser's Abingdon Basketball Club enjoying Georgetown game in a private suite. They were invited to come onto the court before tip-off. Photo by Abingdon PTA.

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Client Testimonial:

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

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November TOP PRODUCERS



Kristin Usaitis Top Producer



Juan Zaffaroni Top Listing Agent



Arl/Windaate of Arlington Rental-Great 2BR/2.5BA end brick TH w/2 master bedrooms and country kitchen/family room. \$2,200 Call Joanne Ritchick



Ashburn — Beautiful 6BR/7.5BA 4 Ivi SF w/home theatre & 3 car gar. \$1,130,000 Call Juan Zaffaroni



Arl/Fairlington - Completely updated. 1BR/2BA TH in great location \$419,000 Call Rob Allen



Arl/Fairlington Rental - Updated 2BR/2BA brick TH. Beautiful HDWDs on main level & walk-out fenced rear patio. \$2,150 Call Britt Grouby



Arl/Heatherlea Rental-Updated 1BR w/new appliances, HDWDs, fireplace, balcony, cathedral ceiling. \$1,550 Call Rebecca Ward



Arl/The Arlington-28R condo w/ fireplace & balcony, Mins, to shops, restaurants, & theatres. \$272,000 Call Doug Luzik

SERVING FAIRLINGTON

