

# all FAIRLINGTON BULLETIN



www.fca-fairlington.org

MARCH 2020

Volume 46, Number 3

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## County demographer to address FCA



*FCA is a census partner in the Arlington Census 2020 efforts.*

Elizabeth Hardy, Principal Planner and Demographer for Arlington county, will address the Fairlington Citizens Association (FCA) at their monthly meeting on March 11. Hardy will discuss the upcoming 2020 census and give background information on how the census will be conducted and why it is so important for everyone to be counted.

As part of her presentation, Hardy plans to discuss demographic changes in Arlington county and how those changes have the potential to impact various countywide policies. Changes in population can affect how the county decides infrastructure projects, transportation initiatives, and public school catchment areas.

The U.S. Census counts every resident in the United States. Article I, Section 2 of the U.S. Constitution mandates that this occur every 10 years.

The results of the census inform various policies at the county, state, and federal levels of government. The information the census collects helps determine how more than \$675 billion of federal funding is distributed to states and communities each year.

The census is conducted through various means and temporary workers have already been hired to assist in the effort. Invitations to participate will be mailed out to every residential address starting in mid-March.

The census officially begins on April 1 and people can start responding to the census online, by phone, or paper starting as early as March 12, 2020. For those who do not respond in a timely manner, they will receive a visit from a census worker who will be tasked with interviewing households to ensure that everyone is counted accurately and completely.

Elizabeth Hardy has served as the County Demographer since 2017; she has been with the Arlington County Department of Planning, Housing, and Development since 2008. She has a Masters in Urban and Regional Planning from Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University.

Topics that Hardy plans to cover include 2010 Census Demographics, 2018 ACS Socioeconomic Demographics, 2020 Population Estimates, Population Projections, and the 2020 Census.

For more information on the census, and in particular Arlington county's role in ensuring an accurate count, visit <https://topics.arlingtonva.us/census-2020/>.

—Susan Renehan

## 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 March 11

**Special presentation:** Representatives of Arlington County's Department of Community Planning, Housing, and Development will talk about the 2020 census and demographic changes in Arlington.

#### Regular board business:

- Approval of February 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](http://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](http://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
<a href="http://www.arlingtonva.us/departments/EnvironmentalServices/dot/traffic/streetlights/index.htm">www.arlingtonva.us/departments/EnvironmentalServices/dot/traffic/streetlights/index.htm</a>	
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](mailto: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](mailto:editor@fca-fairlington.org)

Email commercial and mini ads to:  
[admanager@fca-fairlington.org](mailto: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
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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](http://www.fca-fairlington.org)**

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## Calendar

### **Fairlington Knits**

Monday, March 9, 6:30 pm  
FCC, 3308 S. Stafford St.

### **FCA monthly meeting**

Wednesday, March 11, 7 pm  
FCC, 3308 S. Stafford St.

### **Fairlington Diners**

Saturday, March 14, 11 am  
Hank's Oyster Bar  
1026 King St., Alexandria

### **MOMS Club Consignment Sale**

Saturday, March 21, 9 am  
FCC, 3308 S. Stafford St.

### **Fairlington Knits**

Monday, March 23, 6:30 pm  
FCC, 3308 S. Stafford St.

### **Book Group**

Tuesday, March 24, 7:30 pm  
FCC, 3308 S. Stafford St.

### **Fairlington Diners**

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

## Take the long way home



*Director Kent Duffy discusses possible changes to Metrobus during last month's FCA meeting as Directors Julie Butler and Donald Staren-Doby listen. Photo by Guy Land.*

**Contributors this month:** Lucy Beadnell, Jennifer Davies, Kent Duffy, Donna Felipe, Guy Land, Rachel Mallory, Beth McGinn, Susan Renahan, Bill Sullivan, Chris Weathers, and Sam Wolbert.

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



## PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

At February's FCA meeting, leaders of the Shirlington Civic Association briefed us on the proposal to provide additional density there.

The Village at Shirlington is roughly 30 years old. Property owner Federal Realty Investment Trust (FRIT) wants to reinvest in Shirlington, while preserving the small-town character of Campbell Ave. To make that work financially, FRIT needs to build on land it owns. And for the businesses there to thrive, they need additional customers, which more density would yield.

Without the ability to address these twin challenges, deteriorating facades and vacant storefronts could make Shirlington far less attractive in future years, something that's not in Fairlington's interest.

FCA understands the importance of maintaining Shirlington as a vibrant commercial area. It's part of the extended Fairlington neighborhood. Our residents shop there, frequent the restaurants, go to Signature Theatre. We want the businesses to thrive. At the same time, we know the concern our residents have about additional density.

Our discussion identified three broad considerations:

First, improvements should include making Shirlington more accessible to Fairlington residents. There are already plans to enhance pedestrian access down 31st St., but additional steps are needed to facilitate vehicle, pedestrian, and bike access down Quaker Ln.

Second, a discussion of increased density should include a hard look at traffic impacts, not just in Shirlington itself but in the surrounding neighborhoods. As Shirlington becomes a more popular destination, our streets will likely become more congested.

Finally, in considering changes in Shirlington, the county needs to look more broadly at a larger geographic area that includes both North and South Fairlington, as well as Parkfairfax and adjacent parts of Alexandria. Developments in Shirlington will not happen in a vacuum.

It isn't just the impact of additional density in Shirlington. Rather, it's the cumulative impact of Shirlington density, combined with the proposal to double the density in Park Shirlington, along with the new development at West Alex, the conversion of the two Park Center office buildings to apartments, and the revitalization of Green Valley. All of those will likely feed off of each other, with implications for Fairlington.

FCA representatives attend the county's work sessions on Shirlington, and we will encourage participants to expand their analysis beyond the narrow confines of Shirlington's boundaries.

Guy Land, FCA President, [president@fca-fairlington.org](mailto:president@fca-fairlington.org)





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– Patty, Fairfax, VA



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– Erik, Arlington, VA



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# Fairlington real estate assessments outpace county-wide increase

Property values for most Fairlington models in Arlington outpaced the county-wide increase in residential real estate assessments for 2020, with some units experiencing increases more than twice the rate across the county.

Overall the total assessed value of all residential and commercial property in Arlington increased by 4.6 percent, compared to 3.5 percent last year. Commercial properties saw the largest gain at 4.9 percent overall, while residential properties increased 4.3 percent.

A spot check of almost 20 different Fairlington models revealed that all of them showed assessment increases above the county average.

The one-bedroom Braddock, with 761 square feet, led the way, showing an increase of 10.1 percent. Other models showing significant increases included the Edgewood and the Georgetown, with increases near or above eight percent.

The large—and rare—Arlington unit, with 2145 square feet, continued to have the highest valuation, shattering the \$600,000 barrier for the first time. The assessment was \$631,800, an increase of almost seven percent, or \$41,100.

A large Dominion I (1800 square feet) in North Fairlington also broke through the \$600,000 mark, with an assessment of \$605,400. Other Dominion models comfortably exceeded the \$500,000 level. No other models in the sample had assessments higher than \$500,000.

Assessments for selected Clarendon I models (1500 square feet), which predominate in South Fairlington, and the smaller Clarendon II's (1383 square feet), which are common in North Fairlington, showed increases ranging from 5.6 percent to 6.9 percent. The assessment for selected Clarendon I's was \$495,800, while the assessment for selected Clarendon II's was \$455,900.

The assessments for individual units of the same model can vary, depending on location and whether they have undergone major renovation work.

According to the county, the average home value in Arlington, including condominiums, townhouses, and detached houses is \$686,300.

Last fall the county board directed the county manager to prepare a budget for the coming year that contains no increase in the real estate tax rate. Of course, the increase in valuations means that homeowners' taxes will rise, even if the rate remains unchanged.

According to a county press release, the increase in commercial property values was driven by a decline in the office vacancy rate, continued new construction, demand for rental properties, and Amazon-related leasing activity. Apartment property values, for example, increased 8.9 percent while office values grew by 2.5 percent.

Real estate assessments are based on previous sales figures, so they may lag behind current resale prices. Residential assessments are based primarily on neighborhood sales occurring from September 1, 2018, through August 31, 2019. Assessments for specific units may not reflect the current fair market value for that unit as determined by the marketplace. This may be particularly true for Fairlington units that have had major internal improvements.

—Guy Land

**2020 real estate assessments, selected Fairlington units\***

Unit type	Sq. feet	2019	2020	Percent change
Arlington	2145	590,700	631,800	6.96
Ashlawn	1470	418,500	448,000	7.05
Barcroft	1490	378,100	407,400	7.75
Braddock	711	271,900	299,400	10.11
Bradford	1009	316,900	337,900	6.63
Clarendon I South	1500	454,200	485,800	6.96
Clarendon I North	1500	469,300	495,800	5.65
Clarendon II North	1383	426,400	455,900	6.92
Dominion I North	1800	565,800	605,400	7.00
Dominion I South	1830	533,700	566,400	6.13
Dominion II	1689	493,500	528,000	6.99
Edgewood	1400	382,100	415,100	8.64
Edgewood	1400	401,000	434,800	8.43
Georgetown	922	355,200	383,300	7.91
Monticello	1712	429,700	459,600	6.96
Mt Vernon	1860	444,000	478,800	7.84
Richmond	1031	323,400	346,300	7.08
Sherwood	1257	369,300	395,800	7.18
Staunton	1121	317,700	340,300	7.11

Source: Arlington County real estate assessments

\*Units of the same type may have different assessments.

<https://propertysearch.arlingtonva.us/>

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## Bus riders: take the bus survey by March 2

As part of the Metro budget process, there is a proposal to restructure and/or cancel several Metrobus lines that serve Fairlington. Public comments are due by 5 pm on March 2.

If you are a bus rider that would be affected by the proposed changes, please complete the WMATA survey available here: <https://www.wmata.com/initiatives/budget/>. It is the best method for public input.

FCA will be submitting written comments citing concerns with the proposals as well. FCA is collaborating with Arlington county and our neighbors in Shirlington and Parkfairfax on the proposals.

Below is a summary of the proposed changes; any service changes proposed by WMATA would go into effect by about July 1:

- Metrobus Route 7Y, which serves North Fairlington, is proposed to terminate at the Pentagon instead of going into DC to Farragut Square. Riders would need to transfer to Metrorail instead.
- During peak hours, Metrobus Route 22C would be replaced by additional 22F trips which would keep the current 10-minute headway between buses in South Fairlington. This is a minor change for most



*Proposed changes to Metrobus service include lines that serve Fairlington. Photo courtesy Metrobus Info Twitter feed, @Metrobusinfo.*

and could offer improved schedule reliability. However, there are some riders who prefer the current 22C route to avoid crowding on the 7 route. Also, there would not be direct bus service from Fairlington to Ballston.

- Metrobus 22A and 22C service would be cancelled for off-peak hours and weekends. Ridership is low in South Fairlington during the off-peaks, but the community has long enjoyed access to/from Metrorail provided by this service. During off peak hours, bus service would be available with a walk to the 7 route in North Fairlington, as well as the Alexandria DASH bus service at Bradlee Center or Parkfairfax.

—Kent Duffy

## Arlington and Alexandria sponsor seminar for condo leaders

Representatives of several Fairlington condo associations participated in a February seminar for condo and homeowner associations jointly sponsored by Arlington county and the City of Alexandria.

Fairlington Arbor President Bill Jenkins, Fairlington Meadows President Joe Spytek, Fairlington Villages General Manager Greg Roby, along with FCA President Guy Land and individual Fairlington homeowners, were among the 40 people attending the session at the Fairlington Community Center.

The seminar focused on educating homeowners about the structure and governance of condominium communities; strengthening the knowledge of commu-



*From L to R Guy Land, Pia Trigiani, Greg Roby, and David Mercer at last month's condo seminar. Photo by Akeria Brown.*

nity board members about management and budgeting issues; and helping communities understand state law related to open meetings and governance.

Pia Trigiani and David Mercer, two of the D.C. area's leading experts on condominium law, led the seminar.

Akeria Brown, Arlington County's Homeownership Program Administrator, told the group that condominium

ownership was a good way for homeowners to build wealth and community.

A second session, focusing on basic questions about living in a community association, will be held on March 28.

—Guy Land



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# Fairlington 5K's silent auction goes digital

During the first annual Fairlington 5K in 2014, so many local vendors donated gifts and services to the event that race organizers decided they needed to start an auction the week before. Now, six years later, the Fairlington 5K's silent auction has become a huge draw, generating nearly 100 donations and attracting hundreds of bidders throughout the Fairlington community and beyond.

Just like the race itself, proceeds from the auction support Abingdon Elementary physical education programs and Ellie McGinn, an 11-year old Fairlington resident with a rare neurological condition called LBSL. Ellie's family is supporting research into a cure for LBSL at the Kennedy Krieger Institute / Johns Hopkins University in Baltimore. The genetic disorder slowly robs children of the ability to walk, then stand, then coordinate all motor movements.

This year's silent auction will take place Friday, April 17, one week prior to the 5K. As always, it will be held



*The silent auction is a chance for neighbors to come together, bid on unique and valuable items, and support A Cure for Ellie. Pictured here, the 2019 silent auction. Photo by Mike Leonard.*

at the Fairlington Villages Community Center, 3005 S. Abingdon St., from 6 to 8 pm. There is no charge to enter and free adult refreshments and food will be served. Free babysitting is also once again being provided by the Abingdon PTA.

This year, however, organizers have added a special twist. Bidding will be done online via phone or computer and will open about a week prior to the actual event. Guests will still be able to come and see the items up for auction in person and bid right up until the last second. Those who attend will be able to walk away with their prize.

Items up for bid include everything from vacation rentals to summer camp registrations to high-end jewelry, rare wines, and sports memorabilia.

To browse the Fairlington 5K Silent Auction Catalogue go to <https://handbid.app.link/CureEllie>.

—Beth McGinn

## Master Gardeners offer trainings in March

The Master Gardeners of Northern Virginia is offering free trainings in March:

### **Thursday, March 12, 7– 8:30 pm, “Turf Talk: How to have a healthy lawn”**

Dr. Mike Goatley, an entertaining and award-winning Virginia Tech professor, will discuss his research on turf grass and lawn management from across Virginia, focusing on what everyone from “turf managers” to home gardeners should be doing to maintain optimal lawn growth while minimizing pesticide and fertilizer usage. This program will touch on lawn grass selection, management and care, and pests and diseases.

### **Tuesday, March 31, 7– 8:30 pm, “Tomato Love”**

Americans love tomatoes – whether that first bite of

a BLT, a bowl of cool gazpacho, or cherry tomatoes picked off the plant and popped into your mouth – and tomatoes are the second most consumed vegetable in the world! Learn everything you need to know to grow exceptional tomatoes: understand the many varieties, select those that suit your needs, prepare your garden, plant and nurture your plants, and harvest tasty tomatoes of your own this summer.

These classes are offered by Extension Master Gardeners.

The trainings will be held at the Fairlington Community Center, 3308 S. Stafford St. The classes are free but advance registration is requested at [mgnv.org](http://mgnv.org).

Questions? Telephone 703-228-6414 or email [mgarla-lex@gmail.com](mailto:mgarla-lex@gmail.com).



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## Fairlington says goodbye to friend and leader

Andrew Vitols passed away on February 3 after a courageous two-and-a-half-year battle with cancer. He is survived by his wife, Elizabeth Lyons, his children Eleanor (12) and Ned (10) and his parents. Andrew was a celebrity among the youngest of Fairlingtonians, evidenced by an almost cult-like following on the playground, along the streets, or in the halls of Abingdon.

Hailing from Michigan, and a die-hard Wolverines fan, Andrew and his wife called Fairlington home for fifteen years. As a stay-at-home parent, Andrew was the first “dad” member of the Fairlington MOMS Club. He was an active volunteer at the Fairlington Creative Preschool (FPC) where his children attended.

In 2012, Andrew became an integral voice within the Abingdon community, first as a volunteer and then assuming the leadership position as PTA co-president in 2014. He served on the school renovation project's



*Andrew Vitols was well-known around the neighborhood for his generous spirit, his easy laugh, and his vibrant hair.  
Photo by Elizabeth Lyons.*

Building Level Planning Committee and played an important role in the early planning stages of the Fairlington 5K.

Andrew was most recognizable as Abingdon's Cardinal mascot and, in subsequent years, “Mr. Banana Man.” Despite his illness, Andrew would do his best to attend neighborhood events. He could be seen giving runners high fives along the 2019 Fairlington 5K route. When people remarked at his presence, he simply replied; “Of course. Banana Man can't be stopped.”

Whether it was his shocking pink, green, or orange hair (depending on the season), his infectious spirit to bring joy, or his commitment to serve, he will be dearly missed by all who knew him.

A Celebration of Life reception will be held on March 21 at the Fairlington Villages Community Center, 3005 S. Abingdon St., from 1–4 pm.

—Jennifer Davies

## MOMS Club consignment sale to take place March 21

The MOMS Club of Arlington-Fairlington VA® is holding its semiannual consignment sale on Saturday, March 21, from 9 am to 1 pm at the Fairlington Community Center, 3308 S. Stafford St. The sale will feature new and gently used children's clothing, shoes, books, games, toys, and maternity items. Items are generally priced at \$3–4 each on average.

The MOMS Club will donate a portion of the proceeds from the sale to a local charity, and many unsold items will go to charities that directly give their goods to families in need. Savvy shoppers normally get there before 9 am to stand in line. At 12:30, most items will be reduced to 50 percent off until the close of the sale. Credit cards will be accepted.

For more information, including how to obtain early shopping passes, go to [www.facebook.com/FairlingtonMomsClubConsignmentSale](http://www.facebook.com/FairlingtonMomsClubConsignmentSale).

—Lucy Beadnell

## Volunteers needed for 4MR stream cleanup

Arlington County Park Rangers are calling on volunteers to help clean up Four Mile Run on Saturday, March 14, from 10 am to 1 pm at five locations along the stream, including Shirlington. Get outdoors and help Arlington restore its natural spaces. This is a great project for individuals, families, service clubs, and school groups.

Where to meet:

- Jennie Dean foot bridge next to Shirlington dog park
- Barcroft rear pavilion
- Arlington Mill stairs leading down into the park
- Glencarlyn 3rd St. pavilion
- Madison Manor pavilion

Volunteers should wear waterproof boots and appropriate clothing and bring gloves. Bags will be provided. An adult must accompany volunteers under 18 years old.

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# Home Improvement Showcase draws crowds, interest

Approximately 300 attendees turned out on February 15 for FCA's fifth annual Home Improvement Showcase at the FCC. Silva Construction, GH Contractors & Handyman Service, AKG Design Studio, Frosty's Heating & Cooling, Custom Design Tile, DeLong Home Improvement, Nova Installations, and Daniels Design & Remodeling greeted visitors at tables throughout the day, while also holding 30-minute intensive and interactive sessions with participants.



*The Home Improvement Showcase gave residents a chance to meet with contractors face to face. Photos by Guy Land.*

Topics and discussions included finishing out an attic space, what to expect when renovating or remodeling your home, the importance of keeping your home properly insulated from the elements and sound with updated windows, HVAC options to keep a home efficiently heated and cooled in a mid-Atlantic climate, and how to create efficient spaces in a smaller home.

Participants found that the event gave them a nice diversity of general contractors and specialists with inside knowledge of the community, while showing there is a variety of ways to approach home remodeling projects. It was an opportunity to size up the contractors and learn key aspects of remodeling a home or taking on smaller, more specific projects.

While most attendees appreciated the options of see-



*The tabling area was busy throughout the five-hour event.*

ing contractors at tables in the large multipurpose room or witnessing presentations in the classroom, some felt stretched between the two options, not wanting to miss out on opportunities to hear from the experts. Presenting contractors differed in their approaches to a captive audience. Some simply allowed the audience to dictate the topic by allowing for Q&A, while others prepared slide shows and shared stories of what lies behind the walls of Fairlington units.

The tabling area in Room 118 stayed very busy for the duration of the five-hour event. Attendees were able to visit with the eight different contractors on site. In addition, Arlington Neighborhood Village, a non-profit organization dedicated to helping older residents continue living in their own homes, held court with several interested residents in the same space.

Contractors involved with the event had a chance to acquire new contacts and potential business in the com-

*Continued on page 21*

## Remodeling thanks

FCA extends a very special thank you to FCA Director Chris Weathers for organizing this popular event. Thanks also to the following vendors and services for participating and offering their expertise to the community.





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## Gunston theater program stresses inclusion

Under the direction of drama teacher and after-school theater program director, Caitlin Wittig, Gunston students have been rehearsing in preparation for the spring production of "The Casablanca Project: an adaption of the classic film." Ms. Wittig, who has been with APS for over 15 years, explained that she selected the project because "art matters and the messages we amplify are important, particularly exploring issues around doing the right thing and fighting on the right side of history."



*Gunston students rehearse for their spring production. Photo by Caitlin Wittig.*

In addition to a robust after-school theater program, Gunston offers drama to students in every grade, no prior experience necessary. A distinguishing feature of the Gunston theater program is an emphasis on inclusivity and access for all students. Wittig comments, "I believe that the arts provide students with an oppor-

tunity to learn how to express themselves, feel safe, and learn to listen and work with students that they may not see at other times during the day."

Gunston 8th grader and young Fairlingtonian, Fiona Brown, has been involved in theater since 6th grade. Fiona has many fond memories of being part of the cast and crew. When asked to share what makes Gunston's Drama Club special, Fiona

commented, "Ms. Wittig is very eccentric and tries to involve everyone in every production."

Come check out "The Casablanca Project: an adaption of the classic film" on Thursday, March 12, and Friday, March 13, at 7 pm. Tickets are free but donations accepted and wildly appreciated!

—Jennifer Davies

## City of Alexandria responds to FCA on King St. project

For the past year, the FCA has been closely following the progress of a series of potential improvements that were proposed along the King St. corridor between Quaker Ln. and I-395. The proposed improvements included landscaping and beautification projects but also drainage solutions, stormwater management, and remediation of potentially hazardous intersections.

Following a series of discussions, the FCA sent a letter to the City of Alexandria outlining several concerns, and asking for an update on the status and timeline of the project.

"The area currently suffers from poor drainage, frequent trash, and damaged trees," wrote FCA President Guy Land. "It is both unsightly and a potential health hazard. It's not a very welcoming introduction to the City of Alexandria and our community."

Land went on to write, "We understand the logic of deferring landscaping enhancements until stormwater work is accomplished, but delays in addressing the stormwater management issues also result in deferred

decisions on landscaping."

On January 24, 2020, the City of Alexandria responded with a letter from Yon Lambert, Director of Transportation & Environmental Services (T&ES). Mr. Lambert said he would instruct T&ES staff to inventory street signs and replace any signs that were faded or otherwise in need of repair. He also responded that he would direct the City Arborist to ensure that trees were properly trimmed to ensure adequate lines of sight.

Mr. Lambert went on to say, "I do not, unfortunately, have a clear answer for you on your request to designate this corridor for major capital investment...the City's 10-year Capital Improvement Program (CIP) does not include any designated projects for this part of King St. and staff is not recommending any changes at this time."

To read both the FCA's letter and the City of Alexandria's response, go to the FCA's webpage, [fca-fairlington.org](http://fca-fairlington.org).

—Susan Renehan

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# PAW PRINTS

## *Proactive pet parents*

Arlington is ranked as one of the top cities for animal lovers, and Fairlington is no exception. If you've happened to be outside on a beautiful day (or any day, for that matter) you may have noticed there is an abundance of four-legged creatures in our backyard. With so many animals that share in our community, it's important to remember your role in keeping Fairlington a neighborhood in which people and animals can coexist harmoniously.



*Sam Wolbert is the CEO of the Animal Welfare League of Arlington, an FCA Director, and a dedicated pet parent. Photo courtesy Sam Wolbert.*

The Animal Welfare League of Arlington (AWLA) is here to help with any and all animal related matters, including everything from stray dogs to injured wildlife. AWLA provides Animal Control services to Arlington County and is reachable at (703) 931-9241 24 hours a day/365 day a year.

Here are some other local resources and information you may need as a pet owner in Arlington county:

- Looking for a place to tire out your pup? There are eight off-leash dog parks available in Arlington County. These are the only areas in which your dog is permitted to be off-leash. Utah Dog Park and Shirlington Dog Park are the closest parks to many

of us, but a full list of all dog parks and regulations can be found at <https://parks.arlingtonva.us/parksfacilities/dog-parks/>.

- When out and about with your dog, please help us protect the environment by always cleaning up after your pet. Bag dog waste and place it in one of the many trash bins around Fairlington. Pet waste makes our streams unsafe for human contact and increases the cost to treat our drinking water.

- For the safety of your pet, yourself, and the people around you, please use a leash. It is against the law to allow dogs to run loose on public property or the private property of others. Dogs must be restrained by a physical leash and under the control of a responsible person when on public property. The owners of dogs found running at large can be cited, fined, or held liable for any damage caused by their pet.

For more information, including details about AWLA's extensive community programs or links to upcoming events, please visit [awla.org](http://awla.org).

—Sam Wolbert

## *Fairlington ranked as a top real estate market*

A report released by Redfin in December ranks Fairlington in the top 20 of the most competitive neighborhoods in the nation for real estate sales in 2019. This study used a combination of data that included factors like sales to list price ratio and days on market for January to November in 2019. According to the report, Fairlington had a 101.8% sales to list price and median of 7 days actively on the market to rank as the 18th most competitive neighborhood across the country. Redfin

also used their own internal data to further create their evaluative criteria.

Fairlington was one of two neighborhoods from the DC Metro real estate market represented in the ranking. AU Park/Friendship Heights in northwest DC was ranked 7th. The Bay Area in California had the highest number of neighborhoods in the study, followed by the Boston area.

—Chris Weathers



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—Ben Herring,  
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## Marymount men's basketball visits Abingdon

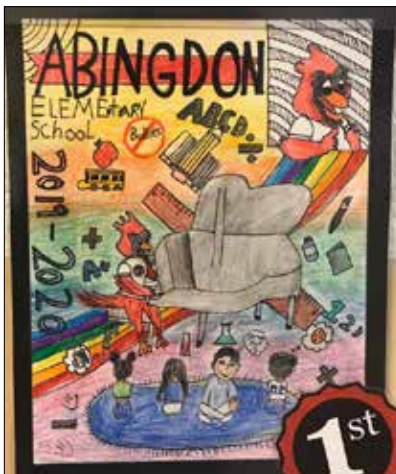
On January 10, the Marymount University men's basketball team and coaches spent the morning at Abingdon Elementary School. For the last five years, PE Teacher Joe Reed has coordinated this school visit. The players visit classrooms where they read to the students and talk about the importance of education and sports. The Abingdon students look forward to their visit every year. The students also love to ask the players questions and to see how tall they are!



*A Marymount University basketball player reads to Abingdon students. Photo courtesy Arlington Public Schools News Release newsletter.*

—courtesy Arlington Public Schools News Release newsletter

## Yearbook cover chosen



*The winning yearbook cover. Photo courtesy Lauren Muscarella's twitter feed, @MsMuscarellaArt.*

Each year, 5th grade students at Abingdon submit artwork to be used as the cover of the yearbook and then vote on their favorite. A winner has been chosen, which will be seen on the cover of every yearbook! The nine runners up will have a small version of their artwork on the back cover of the yearbook.

## Abingdon's winter concert



*Students in Abingdon's choir led by Ms. Kingsley. Photos by Rebecca Kim.*

Mr. Horak, Abingdon's principal, welcoming everyone to the concert and highlighting how important the school's music program is to the Abingdon community. Ms. Gomez's orchestra then played and the 5th graders surprised the audience with a rendition of the *Star Wars* theme song. Ms. Kingsley's choir was next, accompanied by a parent on piano and students from different classes playing the xylophone. The evening was capped off with Ms. Johnson and the Abingdon band, which played several songs. The event was fun for everyone in attendance!



*Ms. Gomez leads the orchestra at the winter concert.*



*Students in Abingdon's band at the concert led by Ms. Johnson.*

On February 6, Abingdon 4th and 5th graders participated in a strings, band, and choir concert, showcasing their musical abilities to a packed room full of parents, families, and Abingdon community members.

The night kicked off with

Mr. Horak, Abingdon's principal, welcoming everyone to the concert and highlighting how important the

school's music

program is to

the Abingdon

community. Ms.

Gomez's orchestra

then played and

the 5th graders

surprised the

audience with a

rendition of the

*Star Wars* theme

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ley's choir was

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and students from different classes playing the xylo-

phone. The eve-

ning was capped

off with Ms.

Johnson and the

Abingdon band,

which played

several songs.

The event was

fun for everyone

in attendance!

—Rachel Mallory



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# Wakefield happenings

## Wakefield arts

March is Arts in the Schools Month. You can see Wakefield arts students' artwork on display around Arlington. Wakefield recently won 267 individual awards in the Arlington County Scholastic Art Competition.

Carmina Lopez won the American Visions Award. Her piece, Metal with Floral Sheet, was considered one of the five best in show. Artwork will be displayed at the Arlington Central Library throughout March. In addition, Wakefield students designed and painted the graffiti mural wall at Pupatella Pizza on Walter Reed Dr.

## Wakefield sports

In sports, Wakefield winter athletes won at district competitions. The gymnastic team won the district meet for the second year in a row. Sophie Gamboa had an amazing performance and finished as the All-Around Individual District Champ. Gabby Watts finished as District Champ as an individual as well as in floor routine. Fairlington resident Elizabeth Haley finished 3rd on vault.

Indoor track sent several athletes to regional competition in the Girls' 55m dash, 1600m run, 3200m run, 4x800 relay, and shot put. The Boys' team represented

Wakefield at regionals in the 300m dash, 1000m run, 4x200 relay, high jump, long jump, triple jump, and shot put. Fairlington resident, Reese Creadon, is among these elite athletes. In addition, former Abingdon student and Fairlington resident Isaiah Mefford won Best Male Field Athlete for the second year in a row.

## Wakefield PTSA plant sale

The Wakefield PTSA annual plant sale is just around the corner. Order online and pick up your plants the morning of the sale. Online pre-orders are available now with the sale set for April 25 from 9:30 am – 2 pm at Wakefield. Most individual flowering plants, vegetables, and herbs cost between \$3–5 a pot. Hanging baskets are \$25 apiece. Visit the Wakefield PTSA website for order form and more information <https://wakefield.apsva.us/ptsa/>.

—Donna Felipe

---

## Home Improvement from page 13

munity, while offering specialized knowledge to those faced with the need to improve their home.

After another successful turnout, the FCA has determined that the event will most likely be held again in 2021 with some minor tweaks based on observations and feedback received. As long as contractors find a value in the event and attendees continue to show up in great numbers, this event will continue to be a tradition for the community. For information about this year's contractors, feedback on the event, or ideas for next year, please feel free to contact Chris Weathers at [Chris.Weathers@SothebysRealty.com](mailto:Chris.Weathers@SothebysRealty.com).

—Chris Weathers

## Primary Day is March 3

Tuesday, March 3, is Virginia's primary election to determine the Democratic nominee for U.S. President.

In-person absentee voting closed on February 29.

Fairlington residents in Arlington vote at either Abingdon Elementary School, 3035 S. Abingdon St. (for those in North Fairlington); or the Fairlington Community Center, 3308 S. Stafford St. (for those in South Fairlington). Fairlington residents who live in Alexandria vote at the NOVA Arts Center, 4915 E. Campus Dr.

All polls are open 6 am to 7 pm on Election Days.

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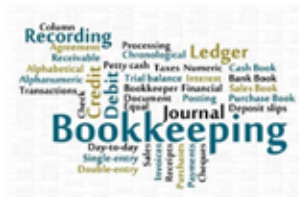
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# neighborhood news

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## **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 February, we visited a couple of our favorites, Rabieng for excellent Thai food, and Beckett's for their great Irish specialties.

Here's what's planned for March:

Saturday, March 14, 11 am, Hank's Oyster Bar, 1026 King St., Alexandria, 703-739-4265, [www.hanksoysterbar.com](http://www.hanksoysterbar.com). For a change, we'll try brunch on a Saturday. This branch of Hank's Oyster Bar opened in 2007, and the brunch menu includes raw bar, small plates, sandwiches, large plates (traditional brunch food), and an assortment of sides. Because we do need a reservation, please call Carol at 703-379-6840 if you plan to attend, no later than 6 pm on Thursday, March 12. 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.

Monday, March 30, 6:30 pm, Ramparts, 1700 Fern St., Alexandria, 703-998-6616, [www.rampartstavern.com](http://www.rampartstavern.com). We'll return to this perennial local favorite on a Monday, when they offer a special price on hamburgers (and turkey burgers, and the occasional fish burger) with the purchase of any beverage. The rest of the menu is also available.

If you want to receive a copy of these notices early in the previous month, send your email address to [carol\\_dabbs@yahoo.com](mailto:carol_dabbs@yahoo.com).

## **Book Group**

Join the Fairlington Book Group in March to discuss *Destiny of the Republic: A Tale of Madness, Medicine and the Murder of a President*, by Candice Millard. The book is an account of James Garfield's rise from poverty to the American presidency, and the dramatic history of his assassination and legacy.

"A spirited tale that intertwines murder, politics and medical mystery...Candice Millard leaves us feeling that Garfield's assassination deprived the nation not only of a remarkably humble and intellectually gifted man but one who perhaps bore the seeds of greatness."—*The Wall Street Journal*

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, March 24, 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.

## **Fairlington Knits**

Join us at Fairlington Knits! a knit/crochet meet-up on Monday, March 9, and Monday, March 23. We meet from 6:30-8 pm, at the Fairlington Community Center on S. Stafford St. Bring what you're working on, share what you know, and learn new skills. 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: [Turnerwork@aol.com](mailto: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 [fairlington-momsclub@gmail.com](mailto:fairlington-momsclub@gmail.com) for information on joining and visit us online at [www.fairlingtonmomsclub.com](http://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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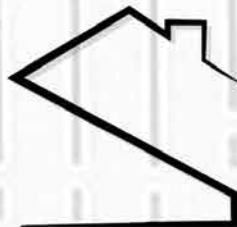


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# DOWN TO EARTH patio gardening



## *Spring cleaning your patio garden*

Depending on March's unpredictable weather, we are a few weeks away from spring plantings. Sometimes, we can plant mid-month. But with snowfall and frost still a possibility, it's smart to wait until April 1 to don the garden gloves and jab the shovel into the soil for new plant holes.

Nurseries delay showcasing plant inventories this month for fear of their plants freezing. Not all garden centers have heated bubbles or houses where plants are stored in winter. While shrubs and trees will be for sale April 1, annuals such as impatiens and begonias won't appear until mid-April.

So, what might you, the gardener, do in March?

Cleaning up the soil space and ridding your garden of eyesores is project Number One. This spring cleaning prepares your layout for rejuvenating plants (perennials) and new plantings. With clean, open spaces, you'll have a clear idea of what plant goes where. Below are some de-cluttering ideas:

**Pots:** Over winter, containers become filled with dead leaves, weeds and compacted soil. Remove everything, add pebbles at the base for drainage, and fill the pot with fresh soil conditioner, which is more loam-like than topsoil, which can form in clods. If you have plastic containers with plastic hangers, re-use them in the same fashion (as long as they aren't cracked from winter freezes).

**Wild shrub branching:** I say



*March is a good time to gather your tools and tackle some garden clean-up projects. Photo courtesy Pixabay.*

“wild” meaning growing or reaching where they need not be, such as a rosebush's thorny branch stretching across the wooden gate or kitchen storm door. Since many shrubs' branches tangle, locate the branch crotch and prune one of two twisted branches. This leaves a cleaner, open appearance.

A specimen's lowest branches that droop to the ground may “re-root” in the soil and re-grow. Uproot these colonizers and then go to the crotch (maybe at the trunk) to make your cut. Why? There's no need for branches of a small tree or shrub to drag the ground. Cluttered branching prevents air flow and invites moisture build-up in the form of fungus, mold, and mildew. In addition, dead leaves and debris collect here. And critters find this mini “fort” a nesting place.

**Renewal pruning:** Perennials can be “tidied up” now, so prune old flower stalks. On black-eyed Susan, purple coneflower, columbine, hosta,

and sedum, these spent, brown leaders still stand tall while the basal (lower) foliage remains evergreen. On vines, prune spent growth but leave the base of the plant undisturbed. In time, the plant's new, green growth emerges and twines upward.

**Mulched areas:** With a trowel, trench out the outer bed edge and distribute this soil to the back of the bed (at the fence). Creating this conduit prevents mulch or soil erosion onto your concrete, brick or flagstone patio. Once cleaned out, spread a light coating of new mulch here. Next, dig out all the weeds or crabgrass that has invaded your garden. With a clean soil area, your perennials and new plantings will have an undisturbed area in which to grow.

**Hardscapes:** Where either sand or stone dust (malleable substances) lie between bricks or flagstones, tree seedlings or weeds may appear due to wind or bird droppings. Take a screwdriver and groove out these areas to remove the weeds which never root deeply. Then replace this area with fresh sand or stone dust. If the area in the seams is mortar (and it's cracked), scrape it out and add new mortar mix (bag or tube). If you have flagstone (which is gray), buy mortar mix that's been dyed gray. If that's not available, buy a small can of gray paint to mix in with the mortar which will match the flagstone's gray color. White lines between gray flagstones are unsightly.

—Bill Sullivan  
[www.sullivanlandscape.net](http://www.sullivanlandscape.net)

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**Email:** [admanager@fca-fairlington.org](mailto: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.

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