

all FAIRLINGTON BULLETIN



MARCH 2023

Volume 49, Number 3

www.fca-fairlington.org

Inside this month

Features

County demographers	1
5K deadline	5
Narcan training	5
Alexandria West	7
Real estate assessments	9
Fairlington author	11



Scout donut sale	11
DEI committee	13
Street safety audits	13
Wakefield athletes	17
Abingdon St. sidewalk	27
Gardener class	31

Departments

Letters to the editor	15
Climate corner	16
For the love of nature	19
Pet profiles	21
School news	23
Neighborhood news	25
Patio gardening	29

County demographers to present census data at FCA meeting

If you think you see a lot more kids on the sidewalks in Fairlington than you used to, census data from Arlington County confirm your view. According to the preliminary data from the 2020 census, almost 21 percent of the population of South Fairlington is under the age of 18.

By comparison, in 2010 the population under age 18 was only 14.4 percent of South Fairlington's total population. And it's not just that the percentage of the population has grown; the total number of kids has also jumped, from 445 in 2010 to 706 in 2020, a whopping increase of 58 percent.

That's a lot more young Fairlingtonians out and about in the neighborhood. And that's only in South Fairlington.

Arlington County demographers Elizabeth Hardy and Emily Garrett will discuss these and other Arlington census data at FCA's virtual meeting on March 8 at 7 p.m. The meeting will be streamed over FCA's Facebook page, www.facebook.com/FCACivic.

Residents are encouraged to join in this discussion of population change in Arlington County broadly and particularly in Fairlington.

The county has recently developed a new online tool that enables residents to access basic demographic data by either census tract or civic association boundaries. Hardy and Garrett will demonstrate this Census Tract Demographic Dashboard, which displays info on total population, age, race, income, percent of college graduates, and type of households.

Fairlington is the first civic association to get a special briefing on using the new tool.

South Fairlington is exclusively one census tract, while North Fairlington is part of two different tracts. The new tool should make it easier to get the

	Tract 103000 (South Fairlington)		
	2000	2010	2020
Total Population	3,090	3,093	3,390
18+ Years	2,670	2,648	2,684
Under 18 Years	420	445	706
Percent under 18 years	13.6%	14.4%	20.8%

Source: Arlington County, based on data from the Bureau of the Census.

Continued on page 16

Coming up

The FCA Board invites all Fairlington residents to attend its meetings that 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 have three minutes to address the board on matters affecting the community.

FCA monthly meeting March 8

Special presentation: Arlington County demographers will discuss recent census data about Arlington County and Fairlington. The meeting will be held virtually and can be accessed through FCA's Facebook page, www.Facebook.com/FCACivic.

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. Sign up for updates delivered to your inbox.



Find us on Facebook at Fairlington Citizens Association.

Find the latest AFB online at the FCA website the week before hard copies hit doorsteps.

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Fairlington Community Center	703-228-6588
Metrobus Complaints	703-228-7929
Miss Utility	811
Pothole Patrol Hotline	703-228-6485
Shirlington Library	703-228-6545
Street Light Hotline	703-228-6511
www.arlingtonva.us/departments/Environmental	
Services/dot/traffic/streetlights/index.htm	
Helicopter Noise Complaints	Mike Lucier (VA 8th Dist.)
	202-225-4376

Fairlington Citizens Association

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All Fairlington Bulletin

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— DEADLINE —

6 p.m., **10th of month** preceding publication month for commercial advertising, mini-ads, and editorial copy. Editorial announcements, story suggestions, and letters to the Editor should be sent to: afbeditors@yahoo.com.

Ad payment can be sent to: FCA • PO Box 6182 • Arlington, VA 22206-0182, locally dropped-off at the drop box in the Fairlington Community Center, 3308 S. Stafford Street, Arlington VA 22206 or pay via PayPal to fca.fairlington.ads@gmail.com. Ad file(s) should be included with payment and emailed to the Ad Manager at fca.fairlington.ads@gmail.com.

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Full-Page Insert (2 Sides)	11 in.	8.5 in.	\$570

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Calendar

FCA monthly meeting

Wednesday, March 8, 7 p.m.
Virtually
[www.Facebook.com/FCACivic](https://www.facebook.com/FCACivic)

Narcan training

Thursday, March 9, 6–8 p.m.
FCC, 3308 S. Stafford St.

Fairlington diners

Saturday, March 11, 12:30 p.m.
Duangrat's Thai Restaurant
5878 Leesburg Pike
Falls Church, VA 22041

DEI discussion group

A better way to defuse racial
discrimination
Wednesday, March 15, 7 p.m.
FCC, 3308 S. Stafford St.

Fairlington 5K early bird registration deadline

Friday, March 24
www.Fairlington5K.com

Book group

Tuesday, March 28, 7:30 p.m.
Virtually on Zoom

Spring cleaning



A contractor for Arlington county trims back the street trees along 31st St. in February. Photo by Guy Land.

Contributors this month: Barbara Berti, Regina Bethencourt, Sharon Burd, Tina Byrd, Leslie Cameron, Jenn Davies, Connor Hawkins, Guy Land, Beth McGinn, Stacey McGinnis, Carrie Street, Bill Sullivan, and Betty Young.

Some images in this publication may be digitally enhanced.



PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Drive or walk through Fairlington between 7 and 8 a.m. on weekdays and you will likely see accidents just waiting to happen.

As the number of kids in the neighborhood has grown, so too has the traffic of parents, students, and buses getting to schools in the area. Add to that a host of morning joggers, a reduction in the number of school crossing guards, and an increase in commuters as employers ask workers to return to their offices, and you have the prospect of traffic and pedestrian chaos.

Unfortunately, impatience and carelessness seem often to be the order of the day.

Several bus routes, traveling to different schools, serve North and South Fairlington. While you will see kids on a number of corners in the neighborhood, the hot spots are in front of the Fairlington Community Center on S. Stafford St. in South Fairlington and along the 3000 block of Abingdon St. in North Fairlington.

A North Fairlington resident recently reported that the highlights from one “typical” morning included a vehicle making a U-turn in front of a school bus; another vehicle tailgating the bus; and vehicles cutting through a condo parking lot and then running a stop sign.

We have also heard complaints from residents on 30th Rd. that their street is a de facto drop-off point for Abingdon students, impeding residents’ ability to safely head to work.

FCA isn’t legally responsible for student and traffic safety, but we see part of our role as working with county and school staff in exploring options for reducing the possibility of accidents and serious injury.

Several years ago we urged the county to look at the crosswalk on Stafford in front of the community center. While the county declined our request to install warning lights, it did install the sign in the middle of the crosswalk.

We are talking with the county about strategies for improving safety along Abingdon St., where the problem has been exacerbated by the loss of a crossing guard that used to work the mid-block crosswalk. We are also talking with the PTA and the leadership of Abingdon Elementary to get their suggestions for improved safety.

We would welcome your ideas as well. Ultimately this is about all of us exercising judgment, caution, and patience as our kids get to school.

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

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Because your safety, health, and peace of mind is our top priority, you can rest assured we are taking every precaution to ensure your safety and well-being. We have asked all members of our team to wash their hands repeatedly throughout the day and requested they do not come in to work if they feel sick or if they have a fever. They have also been instructed to be extra vigilant to wipe down all surfaces before, during, and after their shifts, to wear protective gloves and masks, and to support the social distancing guidelines with homeowners and co-workers.

Until this crisis is over, we will continue to monitor the developments set by the CDC and our local governments and will make any necessary adjustments to our practices to keep you safe.

We support our community and feel that it is everybody's job to limit risk of exposure and spread of COVID-19 and in that light, we encourage you to take advantage of telephone, Facetime, and video consultations for all your home improvement needs.

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5K early-bird deadline ends March 24

The 8th Annual Fairlington 5K takes place Saturday, April 29. The event raises money for Fairlington resident Ellie McGinn, a 14-year-old with a rare brain and spinal cord condition called LBSL. Researchers are close to finding a gene therapy to stop progression of the disease. A portion of the proceeds also support physical education activities at Abingdon Elementary School, where the race starts and ends.



Runners get set at the starting line at last year's 5K. Photo by Guy Land.

In order to get the early bird discount and get your official race day shirt, you must register before March 24. Dogs and strollers are welcome. There is a special 1K option for younger runners and those who want a less challenging course. Back by popular demand is the

K-9 category. Dogs can register on the day of the event, but must be accompanied by a registered human.

Road closures will start at 8 a.m. and will open on a rolling basis with all roads open by 10 a.m. Please plan accordingly. Next month's *Bulletin* will provide a map of the race course.

Go to www.Fairlington5K.com

to sign up for the race and contact Beth McGinn at bfrigola@gmail.com to volunteer or donate to the Silent Auction portion of the event. Donors get their name and logo on the race day t-shirt and website.

—Beth McGinn

FCA offers community naloxone (Narcan) Training March 9

FCA invites all members of the community (from teenagers on up) to attend a training session on the use of naloxone (Narcan) presented by Arlington County's Arlington Addiction Recovery Initiative (AARI) at the Fairlington Community Center on Thursday, March 9 at 6 p.m. in room 118. No RSVPs are necessary.

From 6–7:15 p.m., trainers will offer a one hour and 15-minute training on the dangers of opioids in our community, how to recognize the signs and symptoms of an opioid overdose, and how to administer naloxone (also known as Narcan). From 7:15–8 p.m. residents can drop in for a shorter session focused on how to administer a dose.

At the end of the training, participants will be provided Narcan and other harm reduction supplies. AARI's ability to provide these supplies at the end of the training might be constrained by supply bottlenecks but we will get everyone their supplies as soon as possible.

The only way to reverse an opioid overdose and save someone's life is by rapidly (within minutes) administering Narcan. Anyone can legally carry and administer

Narcan. Overdoses involving opioids are overwhelmingly from illicit fentanyl that was pressed into counterfeit pills that look exactly like a legitimate Percocet, Adderall, Oxycontin, Tylenol #3, and Xanax. These counterfeit tablets containing illicit fentanyl are the primary driver of opioid overdoses in minors in Northern Virginia.



For assistance connecting to substance use resources (harm reduction tools, treatment, and support groups) or peer support services, contact the Drugs/ Substance Use Resource Line in Arlington; call or text 571.302.0327. To learn more about AARI, please visit <http://onearlington.org/>.

—Jennifer Davies



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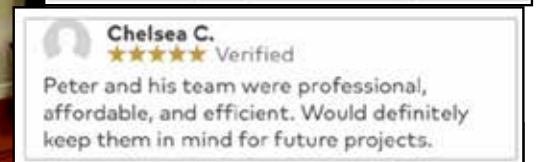
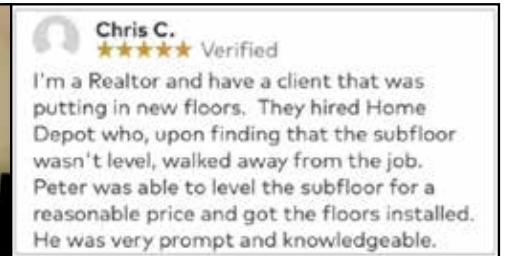
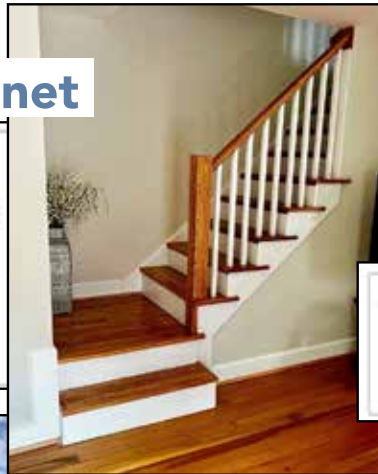
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City planners brief Fairlington on Alexandria West

At its February monthly meeting, FCA welcomed City of Alexandria planners to provide an overview of the 18-month process to determine the future of Alexandria West, also known as West Alex. The area covered by the study includes the portion of North Fairlington that is in Alexandria along King St. and all of Alexandria that lies west of I-395, as well as a small portion near Seminary Rd. and Van Dorn St.

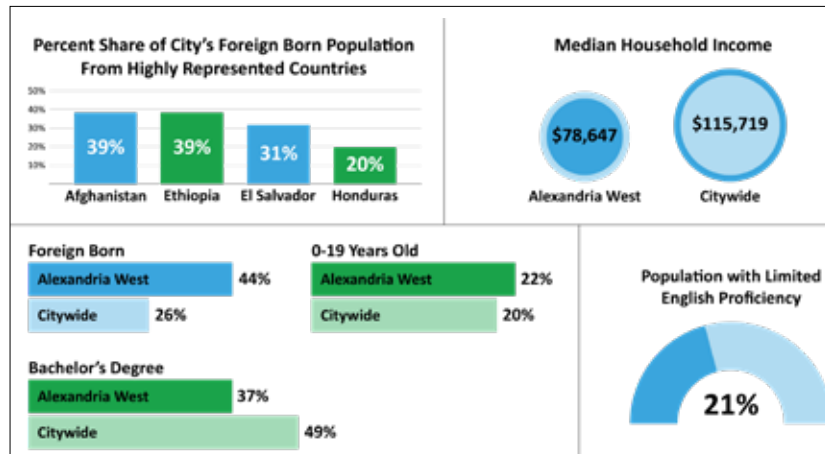
Richard Lawrence, the city's project manager for the study, remarked that the process "allows us to plan for changes that are happening now and also plan for the future."

Alexandria West has not been studied for over 30 years. Covering 1260 acres and representing 20 percent of the city's population, the area is considerably more diverse than other portions of the city: 44 percent are foreign born vs. Alexandria's average of 26 percent. Only 8 percent of the area is occupied by single family homes, with the majority, 67 percent, living in apartments.

"The priority is to engage with groups that are often marginalized," Lawrence commented. He further noted that many of Alexandria's workers live in that area and stated, "We recognize the value these workers and residents bring to the city."

The study is only in Phase I at this point, referred to as "Launch, Listen, and Learn." No decisions have been made, including land use concept or upzoning. Community engagement has ranged from presentations to civic associations to pop-up events in the lobbies of apartments and farmers markets.

Engagement has been conducted in four languages; English, Arabic, Spanish, and Amharic. Of the 970 responses to a survey conducted online and in-person over the past several months, residents' top priorities include more gathering space and more play spaces for children. Concerns include housing affordability, traffic and parking, lack of retail options, and crime.



Alexandria West demographic data from the City of Alexandria staff presentation.

At the conclusion of the presentation, Lawrence fielded questions from the board and residents. There was particular interest from residents in Fairlington Villages' Ward 6, the portion of North Fairlington that lies within Alexandria.

Melanie Alvord, the condo board president and Ward 6 representative, commented that residents often felt left out of Alexandria's considerations. This sentiment was echoed by several Alexandria Fairlington residents. Lawrence responded, "We don't want folks to feel forgotten in the process. We will be available to meet with you again or other groups."

FCA president Guy Land asked about conversions of office space to residential buildings, similar to what has happened across King St. Lawrence responded that the city will have to see what the market dictates. But any conversions to residential units would need a plan from the property owner to offset any added density.

Another question came from an Alexandria resident who wanted an update on the intersection of Beauregard/Walter Reed and King St., described as treacherous. President Land added that the major street improvements planned for that area have never taken place.

Themes from poll responses:

- Housing affordability and fear of displacement
- Traffic, safety, and mobility
- Community services and retail
- Public open space and connections
- Neighborhood safety and crime

Lawrence acknowledged they had not happened and he would follow-up, but believed that there were issues with having adequate funding.

In a similar line of concerns, residents commented that along King St. from 30th St. to 28th St., the sidewalk is

Continued on page 13

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Fairlington real estate assessments lag county average increase

The real estate assessment for most Fairlington models in Arlington lagged behind the county-wide increase in residential real estate assessments for 2023, with some units experiencing no increase in assessed value.

This continues last year's pattern in which assessments for most Fairlington models did not keep pace with the general increase in assessments across the county.

A spot check of almost 20 different Fairlington models revealed that all of them showed increases in assessments of less than 2.0 percent. Most models in the sample showed an increase of between 1.6 percent and 1.74 percent in assessed value. Two models recorded no increase.

Overall, the total assessed value of all residential and



The large Arlington model has the highest assessed value in Fairlington.

commercial property in Arlington increased 3.6 percent, compared to 3.5 percent growth last year. Residential property values increased 4.5 percent, while commercial property values increased 2.6 percent. New construction contributed to 0.8 percent of the 3.6 percent tax base growth across the county.

The county released the 2023 assessments in mid-January.

The Barcroft model, with 1490 square feet, led the way in the growth of assessments, but it increased only 1.74 percent, well below the county's average residential increase. Clarendons in North and South Fairlington followed closely behind, with assessments rising 1.73 percent.

The large—and rare—Arlington model, with 2145 square feet, continued to have the highest valuation. Last year it shattered the \$700,000 barrier for the first time, after having broken through the \$600,000 ceiling in 2020. This year the assessment for an improved unit was \$714,700, an increase of 1.69 percent, or \$11,900.

Large Dominion units had the next highest assessments, with assessments running in the mid-\$600,000s. No other models had assessments greater than \$600,000.

The popular Clarendon I (1500 square feet) generally had an assessment of \$569,300 and the smaller Clarendon II (1383 square feet), which is common in North Fairlington, was assessed at \$516,900. Assessments of individual units can vary. A Clarendon with a finished attic, for example, had an assessment of \$595,700.

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, 2021, through August 31, 2022. 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.

The difference between assessed value and market resale value can be seen in a large Dominion unit in South

Continued on page 27

Unit type	Sq. feet	2022	2023	Percent change
Arlington	2145	702,800	714,700	1.69
Ashlawn	1470	495,200	503,100	1.60
Barcroft	1490	454,400	462,300	1.74
Braddock	711	312,000	317,300	1.70
Bradford	1009	370,300	376,200	1.59
Clarendon I South	1500	559,600	569,300	1.73
Clarendon II North	1383	508,100	516,900	1.73
Dominion I North	1800	675,400	675,400	0.00
Dominion I South	1830	651,400	662,700	1.73
Dominion II	1689	588,300	598,400	1.72
Edgewood	1400	462,100	470,000	1.71
Edgewood	1400	479,500	487,700	1.71
Georgetown	922	426,900	426,900	0.00
Monticello	1712	511,700	520,400	1.70
Mt Vernon	1860	533,100	542,200	1.71
Richmond	1031	385,200	391,700	1.69
Sherwood	1257	438,600	445,800	1.64
Staunton	1121	377,900	384,200	1.67

Source: Arlington County real estate assessments
**Units of the same type may have different assessments.*
<https://propertysearch.arlingtonva.us/>



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Fairlington author wins major book awards

A collective refrain of congratulatory wishes was heard across Fairlington during the last week of January as Mews resident Amina Luqman-Dawson was awarded both the prestigious John Newbery Medal and the Coretta Scott King Book Award for her debut novel, *Freewater*.

The Newbery Medal honors the most outstanding contribution to children's literature and the Coretta Scott King Book Award recognizes an outstanding African American author. Amina is the first woman to win both awards.

Freewater is a historical fiction novel for young readers chronicling the journey of two children who find a maroon community after escaping slavery.

In an interview with Siân Gaetano from Shelf Awareness, Amina expressed her reaction to receiving the news of her award. "There were tears of joy. I felt so very honored and humbled. I thought, 'The whole world is going to know about *Freewater*.'"

A book signing appearance at the Fairlington Farmers Market last spring drew many young readers from the community. When asked why she tailored the book to a young audience, Amina said, "The best reading in my life took place during my middle school years. It's when I first learned to lose myself in a book. I also learned



Amina Luqman-Dawson signed autographs of her novel at the Fairlington Farmers Market last spring. Photos by Guy Land.

that I had the power to read whatever I wanted, and that's what I did. The idea of writing for other kids at that same stage in their lives feels like a privilege."

Since the announcement of the awards, acclaim for Amina has been abundant, including from the director of Arlington libraries, Diane Kresh, who said in a statement, "We are beyond happy for Amina Luqman-Dawson and her extraordinary achievement. *Freewater* is an important story and deserves to be read by every middle school student."

Her dedication to the project has earned her an appearance on NPR's program, *Here & Now*, selection by *Entertainment Weekly* as a Black History Month pick, and a fan club of Fairlington supporters.

—Carrie Street

Scout Troop 350 to sponsor March donut sale

Scout Troop 350, which meets at the Fairlington United Methodist Church and counts a number of Fairlingtonians among its members, is sponsoring a Krispy Kreme donut sale to raise money for a summer trip to the Philmont Scout Ranch in New Mexico.

The Troop is planning a 12-day backpacking trip through the mountains of New Mexico, carrying all their food and supplies on their backs. The trip is estimated to cost \$3500 per Scout to participate.

Members of the Troop will be delivering dozens of glazed donuts to homes across Fairlington on the morning of Sunday, March 12. Or you can donate a dozen donuts to AFAC. Troop 350 earns 50 percent of the proceeds from each \$14 box of donuts ordered.

To order, visit: <https://bit.ly/donuts350> or use the QR code.



—Connor Hawkins



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The real estate market is heating up for spring but with less competition than in the past as we inch closer to a well-balanced market.

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Diversity, equity, and inclusion group grows, expands resources

Fairlington's discussion group on Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI) is growing. The group was established in response to the Black Lives Matter protests following the death of George Floyd during the summer of 2021.

Founder and Fairlington resident Lydia Redway proposed the group as a way to encourage healthy neighborhood conversations surrounding race and bias.

The group began by using the toolkits provided by Arlington county, on Privilege, Bias, and then Equity. Each toolkit includes slides and discussion points for groups.

"We have gone through the series twice," said Redway. "And our group has doubled in size. We're at an inflection point where we are transitioning into an article club about DEI topics."

Group participants are picking articles together and people can suggest or lead a discussion on a topic they find interesting.

"The biggest thing is just to keep dialogues going among Fairlington residents about race and equity," said Red-

way. "We want people to be able to talk about race and equity topics so that people feel more comfortable on how to address things when they come up with neighbors."

In February, the group discussed Black History Month and in March and April there is discussion about doing a session on the history of segregation in Arlington county schools.

The next discussion is scheduled for Wednesday, March 15 at 7 p.m. at the Fairlington Community Center. Participants will be discussing the article "A Better Way to Defuse Racial Discrimination" from Stanford Business. All are invited to attend.

—Regina Bethencourt



FCA board member Lydia Redway leads the discussion at a recent meeting of the DEI group. Photo by Guy Land.

Alexandria gets funding for safety audits along King St.

The U.S. Department of Transportation has selected the City of Alexandria as a grant recipient in the Safe Streets & Roads for All Program. This grant will fund safety audits for seven high-crash intersections in Alexandria's West End, including three intersections near Fairlington—King St. and Dawes Ave., King St. and 28th St., and King St. and Park Center Drive.

The other intersections include S. Van Dorn St. and S. Pickett St., S. Van Dorn St. and Edsall Rd., Seminary Rd. and Mark Center Ave., and Seminary Rd. and Kenmore Ave./Library Lane.

The project will begin in Fiscal Year 2024 and will include safety audits, analysis, community engagement, and conceptual design for each of the seven intersections.

According to a city press release, this project supports the city's adopted goal of zero traffic deaths and severe injuries in Alexandria by targeting safety improvements at locations with a history of fatal or severe crashes. The Safe Streets & Roads for All Program is a new funding program created by the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law.

—Guy Land

City planners from page 7

narrow, the right of way is unkempt, and the pedestrian crossing at 28th is dangerous. "We'd like to see improved walkability in this area." Another resident asked whether that area of King Street would be tree-lined or car-centric, to which Lawrence responded, "we are not there yet," in terms of decisions.

Finally, one resident observed that the overall impression of Alexandria West is a region lacking character and cohesion. "I've lived in the Alexandria section of Fairlington for 19 years, and except for voting at NVCC, I have little reason to spend time in Alexandria West. What ideas are being considered that could promote more community/economic/cultural cohesion?"

Lawrence agreed that this is lacking and is the reason the city is conducting the engagement process--to learn what residents and stakeholders want to see in the area.

Moving forward, residents and stakeholders are encouraged to follow the process online and sign-up for notifications. For more information, see <https://www.alexandriava.gov/AlexandriaWest>.

—Jennifer Davies



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Letters to the Editor

Enslaved labor and gardening innovations

We are writing to express our disappointment with the For the Love of Nature column in the February *Bulletin*. The column praised George Washington, James Madison, Thomas Jefferson, and John Adams for their gardening innovations without any recognition of the forced labor and trauma of enslaved Africans who did the work on the plantations of the founding fathers. It was particularly troubling that this column ran during Black History Month.

Enslaved laborers brought new seeds from their African homes with them, including cowpeas/black-eyed peas, leafy greens, okra, yams, millet, and sorghum, thus adding new foods to American agriculture. Furthermore, the Africans' knowledge of centuries-old agricultural practices such as composting (replenishing poor soil with kitchen waste and other biomass and ash), shifting cultivation or bush fallow (letting cultivated fields rest after cultivation to regain nutrients), and planting cover crops to protect soil, among others, was exploited by plantation owners for profit.

No discussion of plantation owners' gardening innovations is complete without recognition and acknowledgment of this stolen labor and knowledge.

—Elizabeth Fabrizio and Tammie Dzubák

For the Love of Nature response: Our February article talked about “founding gardeners” and their interest in native plants, but we did not include that enslaved people did the work and also contributed knowledge and skill to creating and maintaining the gardens and farms at these plantations, none of which has been acknowledged by history. We agree that this discussion is not complete without acknowledgement that these gardens and farms were the product of the labor, knowledge, and skill of enslaved people.

The problems with liriopse

The February issue of the *Bulletin* contained an article about liriopse that was not entirely accurate and that has the potential of negative repercussions for years to come.

We bought a place in Fairlington several years ago. The front portion of our home was covered in liriopse. It must have been planted as a garden border, but after a few years it spread into a very thick, dense mat, and covered the entire area. At first I liked the greenery and the delicate little flowers. But then I started trying to dig it

out. The article was absolutely correct—you have to use a pick axe to get through the stuff.

I have spoken with a few Master Gardeners on how to remove it. They all shared the same sentiment: “just don’t plant it in the first place!”

Every root must be removed, as the plant can propagate through small bulbs off the tips of the roots. It sends out “runners”—smaller plants under the dirt that can even spread under sidewalks and can cement themselves into stone or concrete nearby. It also spreads by seed. Just when you think you have gotten rid of it, up pops a new little plant leftover from the year (or 2 or 3) before. We are working on several years (plural—years!) of removal of this awful plant.

From my research online, there is only one way to kill it chemically, and this would be hazardous to pets and children, and has to be special-ordered from a hardware store.

Several strains of liriopse are on Arlington’s list of invasive plants.

I would love to read about native solutions for gardening offered in the *All Fairlington Bulletin*. This would be better for the environment, and for our local ecosystem! Native plants require less watering, are better for water mitigation (when it rains), and just do better overall. Plus they support all the beneficial critters that make our ecosystem healthy.

There are many native alternatives to the harmful liriopse. This website has some great suggestions. <https://www.nutsfor natives.com/post/ornamental-plant-substitutes-planting-this-instead-of-liriopse>.

Blue wood sedge is an almost evergreen sedge that grows well in average soils from shade to partial sun. Plantain leaf sedge, also called seersucker sedge, is another easy to grow semi-evergreen sedge. If you are looking for purple blooms in August shade, you might try lobelia or one of the many native asters. While not purple, pink turtlehead provides a wash of pink color in shade in late August. If

Continued on page 16

The All Fairlington Bulletin welcomes letters to the editor and will print them as space permits. However, the opinions expressed are those of the writers and do not represent endorsement by this publication or the FCA. In addition, the AFB reserves the right to edit letters for length or clarity, and the AFB may refuse to print letters that are not appropriate for a community newsletter.



Teaching our children about climate change

Climate change can be a frightening topic for children. AND educating our children is a very important step toward a brighter future for them. With this conundrum in mind, I've been researching educational approaches and came across a solid online program for kids, Planet Protector Academy (planetprotectoracademy.com).

In the last several weeks I have been doing their "Keep Cool" program, which is focused on the climate, with my 1st grade granddaughter. The online content (videos, games, scoring, facts) has a superhero theme (that captured my granddaughter's attention immediately) and is a good balance of engaging silliness and simple facts that are not scary for children. I'd made a simple 3D model of sun, earth, ozone layer which helped me fill in details and prepared my own factsheet, so I was ready to answer questions.

I have been amazed how effective the effort has been—after the first half-hour my granddaughter had good questions, could articulate how she and her

family can help, and started taking action to change some of her own behaviors and remind Mommy and Daddy too. When she asked, "Gran, what happens if the earth gets too warm?" I replied, "we are going to do this, so we don't have to find out."

Planet Protector Academy programs are free, come with Planet Protector Apprentice ID cards, mission and activity books for the children, and teacher materials/resources. While geared to a classroom of children for a 6-week period, the program is flexible to adapt to just one child. The staff at Planet Protector Academy has been supportive, assuring me that I didn't have to be a formal educator to access their programs, and they have been very quick to respond to all my questions.

I encourage all us adults to help our little ones help our climate. We CAN do it! Contact us for more information—fairlington-can@googlegroups.com

—Fairlington CAN

County from page 1

numbers just for the territory covered by FCA (all of Fairlington plus Park Shirlington and Shirlington House).

The information can provide residents with a better sense of the composition of the neighborhood and how it is changing over time.

The final data from the 2020 census are not yet available. The latest target for the release of the information is late spring. In the meantime, Arlington is using demographic data based on the 5-year average American Community Survey.

The 2020 census reported Arlington's total population to be 238,643 people, an increase of 31,016 persons since the 2010 census. Arlington's population increase of 14.9 percent was over double that of the nation's growth (7.1 percent).

But Hardy notes that "Based on Census Population Estimates, Arlington has declined in population since the 2020 Census, especially at the younger ages." The

estimates suggest that the county's overall population had declined by 2.4 percent between the 2020 census and July 2021.

The census data are used to help determine state legislative and congressional districts, and the Bureau of the Census released those numbers first, to facilitate the drawing of new district lines.

At the county level, the demographic data drive the discussion of school boundaries.

—Guy Land

Letters from page 15

you are looking for a semi-evergreen ground cover, consider green and gold or native pachysandra. A third, wild ginger, adds an interesting ground cover for shade.

To learn more, see <https://www.arlingtonva.us/Government/Programs/Sustainability-and-Environment/Ecology/Native-Plants>.

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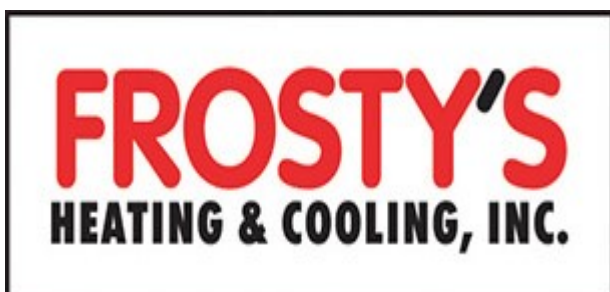
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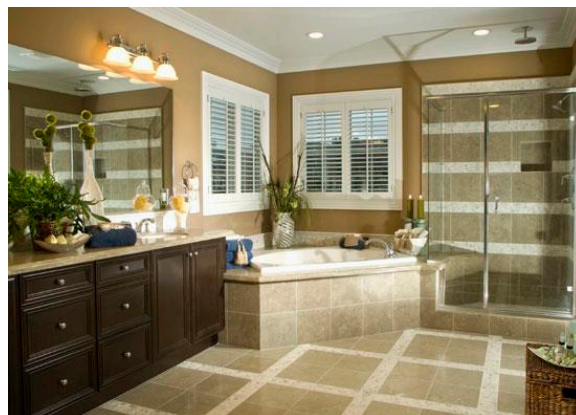
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Fairlington's Wakefield athletes excel in district events



Dorothy Edson (second from left) and the 4x200 relay team. Photos by Stacey McGinnis and Betty Young.



Addison Young (second from left) and the 4x800 relay team.



Owen McGinnis, left, in the district wrestling championship tournament.

Congratulations to Fairlington's Wakefield athletes who turned in outstanding performances in district competitions, earning them the right to compete in regional events.

Fairlington residents Dorothy Edson, Grace Armitage, and Addison Young competed in the Varsity Indoor Track and Field District meet February 2-3. Their performances earned them each a spot at Regionals and secured a second-place overall finish for the Girls Varsity team in the Liberty District.



Wakefield wrestlers.

Grace will be representing Wakefield High School at Regionals in Triple Jump, Dorothy as member of the Liberty District winning 4x200 relay, and Addison in the 500m, 1000m, and as a member of the 4x800 relay, which smashed the previous school record by 24 seconds with a time of 9:44.

Both the 4x200 and 4x800 girls relay teams qualified for the New Balance Nationals (Rising Stars) in Boston.

Fairlington resident and student athlete Justin Diller scored points for the Boys Varsity Team in the 4x400 relay, which took 4th place to help clinch a third-place overall finish for the Wakefield Boys in the Liberty District Championship.

The Wakefield High School Varsity Wrestling Team wrapped up its season February 3 at the Liberty District Championship Tournament as well. Under the leadership of first year coach John Leinberger, who won coach of year for the Liberty District, two Wakefield wrestlers placed 4th and advanced to the Regional Tournament. Senior Tanner Nelson (138 lbs) finished the season with a record of 23-14, and Sophomore Owen McGinnis (144 lbs), a Fairlington resident, finished with a season record of 22-14.

—Betty Young and Stacey McGinnis

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Why do insects matter?

When a group of us decided to write this column for the *Bulletin*, it was to provide information to residents about how to help insects and improve the biodiversity in Fairlington. The column has extolled the benefits of native plants and practices to protect and increase insect populations. But why does it matter—why do insects matter?

E. O. Wilson, an American biologist, naturalist, and writer, said it best:

“The truth is that we need invertebrates, but they don’t need us. If human beings were to disappear tomorrow, the world would go on with little change.... But if invertebrates were to disappear, I doubt that the human species would last more than a few months. Most of the fishes, amphibians, birds, and mammals would crash to extinction about the same time. Next would go the bulk of the flowering plants and with them the physical structure of the majority of forests and other terrestrial habitats for the world.”

In 2007, Doug Tallamy, an American entomologist, ecologist, and conservationist wrote *Bringing Nature Home: How Native Plants Sustain Wildlife in Our Gardens*. This book turned all we knew about gardening upside down.

Tallamy advocates for planting native plants that sequester carbon, manage the watershed, support a food web, and support pollinators. Lawns do not do any of these four things we need from a landscape—they are ecological dead zones.

The trees, shrubs, and plants that fill landscapes today are mostly non-natives. For the most part, insects can’t eat non-native plants and can’t use them to produce offspring. Non-native plants regularly escape into our parks and wild areas and become invasive, meaning they



Monarch caterpillar chomping down on Butterflyweed (Asclepias tuberosa) in Fairlington. Photo by Tina Byrd.

overwhelm and replace the native plants insects CAN eat. Without insects and their caterpillars, birds cannot raise nestlings.

Research indicates that a yard needs a minimum of 70 percent native plants to sustain chickadee nestlings. An estimated 40 percent of insect species are in decline worldwide, and we have an estimated 3 billion fewer birds in North America than we had 50 years ago. Of course, it’s not just birds—as E. O. Wilson says, we can’t afford for insects to disappear; they support the entire ecosystem, which supports us.

All of Fairlington covers about 322 acres. We can make a difference! Make the next tree, shrub, or plant purchased a native plant. Gar-

den centers sell invasive plants, but look for the native plants. If you don’t see any, ask.

Remove invasive plants in patios and alert landscape committees to invasives in common areas. Stop using synthetic insecticides, herbicides, or fungicides outdoors. Most importantly, don’t use aerosol insecticide sprays, which harm many pollinators and other insects. Avoid or minimize the use of synthetic fertilizers—these run off our lawn into storm drains and ultimately into the Chesapeake Bay.

We can make a difference—we can change practices across Fairlington to protect insects, other wildlife, our ecosystem, and ultimately ourselves.

Please send any questions or comments to fortheloveofnature@googlegroups.com, and follow Fairlington Gardening Community on Facebook—search #fairlingtonwildlife to see some of our insects and other wildlife.

—Tina Byrd and Leslie Cameron



WHERE YOU LIVE!

Fairlington to Fort Hunt Edition

There is so much to **LOVE** about Fairlington — there's the charm, the green space, the sense of community, and the amazing location — but sometimes you just need more. My *Life After Fairlington* journey led me to Fort Hunt, and I'm always thrilled to share my neighborhood with my clients!

WETA

"If You Lived Here," you would **LOVE** it! Join me on my first television adventure as I guide John and Christine through Fort Hunt and Mount Vernon on their popular PBS show. View it online with WETA Passport!



Find out what I **LOVE** about Fort Hunt! Follow me @IHeartFortHunt on Facebook and Instagram as I introduce local businesses, highlight family-friendly activities, and showcase upcoming events and open houses!

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~ The Ungers



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pet profiles

Parlez-vous bulldog?

Luke (a French bulldog) is living a life full of 'savoir faire.' He rides an electric bike, has embraced a vegan diet, knows everyone on his block, and has figured out how to get whatever he needs/wants from his parents. Luke, now 8, has been living in Fairlington for 3 years. His parents recently adopted a new family member Tofu, also a French bulldog, so Luke has been busy helping Tofu adjust to a new home life. Pet Profiles was able to meet Luke for a brief visit between his dog coaching, dinner, and sleeping.



Luke (center) with his parents Kristi (l) and Dan (r). Photo courtesy of Dan Doxzon.

You've been seen riding around the neighborhood with your parents on an electric bike. What is that like? Are you scared?

I'd like to think I am pretty cool but riding around in a backpack with the wind in my face makes me feel unstoppable. The first time I rode on the bike was in a basket on the back which made my dad a little nervous because I could move. It's much better in the backpack. Plus it helps our Earth, which my parents say is very important. I think every dog should try it!

You are a vegan. What has that been like adjusting to a new diet? What do you eat and how is that working for you?

My parents call me Capt'n Crunch because I love to eat. One day my parents told me that pigs are like me, so I said I didn't want to eat any more of my friends! My parents spend every Saturday making my food for the week. I am pretty lucky! I get lots of fruit (like blueberries and pineapple), green stuff they call "kale", chickpeas, lentils, and my favorite: sweet potato.

My day starts with first breakfast when I get my bowl of goodies, then after they do workouts I get a second breakfast of a peanut butter spoon and some smoothie (dad sneaks it to me when mom isn't looking). At lunch I beg and drool for fruit and veggies. After what feels like years I get dinner. Sometimes, if I am really cute, mom and dad give me ice cream and I pass out from

the sugar rush after.

Your neighbors say you are incredibly friendly. What do you do that other dogs don't?

I love my neighbors! I greet them all with lots of barks when they come and go...so they always know I am thinking of them! When they have treats for me, I make sure to eat them. My court hosts Happy Hours, which I think is just so everyone can spend time with me, so I make sure to give everyone attention.

Your parents say you're spoiled. How did that happen? Any tips to share?

I wouldn't say spoiled; I would say treated like the king I am. My parents say I am the best boy in the world, so isn't that how it works? Also, my mom says my dad is a "sucker" so that might be why. Tips for conditioning your parents into suckers:

1. Lots of drooling when they eat
2. Big stretches while they eat
3. Basically be as cute as possible when they eat

You recently added a new member to the family. What advice can you give other dogs about joining a new home?

When my parents brought home Tofu, I wasn't so sure about him. I thought he was going to get all the food and attention, so I was pretty defensive. My parents made sure to give me lots of one-on-one time with them and breaks. To dogs joining a new home, remember the older dog is dealing with a big change too. Give them lots of space, listen when they tell you to back off, and let them have all the toys. They will come around soon.

—Barbara Berti

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A Lunar New Year at Abingdon

Abingdon held a joyous Lunar New Year celebration on the back playground on Saturday, January 28. Our community gathered together to ring in the Year of the Rabbit (and the Year of the Cat). Students enjoyed craft activities, including making dragons, lanterns, and “good fortune” signage, as well as sampling traditional treats such as White Rabbit Creamy Candies, haw flakes, and preserved plums.



Abingdon alumna Olivia (Abingdon class of 2016) reads a Mo Willems book in Mandarin Chinese and English. Photos by Sharon Burd.

Abingdon alumna Olivia (Abingdon class of 2016) offered bilingual storytime in English and Mandarin Chinese to a crowd of students who shared giggles while she read books. Students were also excited to learn that Olivia began learning Mandarin Chinese when she attended Abingdon.

“Participating in Abingdon’s after-school Chinese class as a 5th grader led me to 7 years of learning Mandarin and a study-abroad journey to Taiwan. I’m so grateful for the opportunity to give back to Abingdon students by passing on my love

of language learning and Asian culture to them,” said Olivia.

It was heartwarming to see the community come together to learn and celebrate these traditions important to our Asian American community.

In other news, over the course of two weeks, all of Abingdon’s five fourth grade classes went to Wakefield High School as a part of their physical education curriculum. Students enjoyed learning swimming skills and water safety.

On their last visit to the Wakefield pool, they played water polo. It was a fantastic opportunity for Abingdon students to enjoy some time in the pool and to learn important skills. We are thankful to our fourth grade educators and our PE instructors for this terrific opportunity.

Lastly, our community remains thankful to the many community members, organizations, and local businesses who generously take the time to support our neighborhood school. Foremost, a heartfelt thank you to Lancaster Landscapes for generously donating and delivering a truck load of wood chips for our school garden from a local Fairlington tree that was recently removed.

A huge thank you to Fairlington neighbor Lindsay who gifted a hydroponic garden for Abingdon Elementary; it’s wonderful for students to see the garden grow inside the school cafeteria. Additionally, we are thankful to Peet’s Coffee of Shirlington and Wawa for supporting our recent MLK service event in the school garden. These meaning-



Thank you kindly to our Lancaster Landscapes friends Adrienne, Carlos, Martil, and Santos for donating and delivering wood chips to the Abingdon Community Garden.

ful partnerships help support strong family-school connections.

There are many opportunities to support our neighborhood school. I hope you will consider staying engaged and connected with us as we continue advocating for our Cardinals: Facebook, Twitter, and www.abingdonpta.org.

—Sharon Burd

APS School Year Calendar:

Thursday, March 2: Elementary Early Release for Parent-Teacher Conferences

Friday, March 3: No School for Elementary & Middle School Students - Parent-Teacher Conferences

Wednesday, March 15: Early Release for Elementary/Middle/High School (School-Based Professional Learning for Staff)

Friday, March 31: End of 3rd Quarter



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neighborhood news

Fairlington Diners

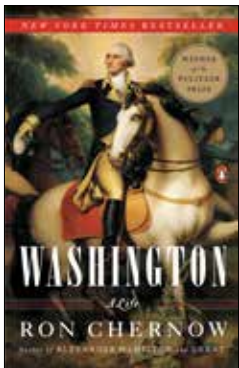
The Fairlington Diners generally gather monthly for relaxed dinners nearby. We focus on having a good meal and an opportunity to chat with neighbors. In February, we enjoyed a visit to the Carlyle in Shirlington.

Here's what's planned for March:

Saturday, March 11, at 12:30 p.m., Duangrat's Thai Restaurant, 5878 Leesburg Pike, Falls Church, VA 22041, (703) 820-5775, <http://www.duangrats.com>. Excellent Thai cuisine; parking is on the side away from Bailey's Crossroads when approaching on Rt 7 from Fairlington.

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

Book group



Join the Fairlington Book Group in March to discuss the second half of *Washington: A Life*, the Pulitzer Prize-winning biography of George Washington by Ron Chernow.

"A strapping six feet, Washington was a celebrated horseman, elegant dancer, and tireless hunter, with a fiercely guarded emotional life. Chernow brings to vivid life a dashing, passionate man of fiery opinions and many

moods." —Amazon.com

The Book Group welcomes first-time visitors and drop-ins. No commitment required! Join us for our discussion, even if you haven't read the book. We are meeting Tuesday, March 28, at 7:30 p.m. on Zoom. If you would like to receive the email with the Zoom coordinates, please contact carol_dabbs@yahoo.com. We hope you'll join us.

Fairlington Moms' Club

The Fairlington Moms' Club is a group where moms can meet friends, form a support network, and create opportunities for children. The Club organizes several community service projects, routine playdates, craft days, family parties, and moms' nights out. We have a great listserv for sharing advice and connecting with other Fairlington families, as well as our own classifieds listserv. We welcome all Fairlington moms! Please email fairlington-momsclub@gmail.com for further information.

Friends of the Abingdon Community Garden

Abingdon Elementary would love your support to create a successful, sustainable community garden. It is our goal to enrich students' and families' knowledge of environmental sustainability and to be good stewards of our Earth, while providing first hand experience in learning about our food supply and our pollinators. To sign up, please scan the QR code or check out: <https://tinyurl.com/2p82y7rv>.



Diversity, equity, and inclusion committee

The FCA Committee on Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion hosts a monthly article discussion group. The group meets on the third Wednesday of the month to discuss an article on a DEI topic.

This month we will be discussing A Better Way to Defuse Racial Discrimination from Stanford Business on Wednesday, March 15 at 7 p.m. at the Fairlington Community Center. All are welcome to join, even if you don't read the article! For a link to the article, please scan the QR code.

If you have any questions, please contact Lydia Redway at lydia.redway@gmail.com.



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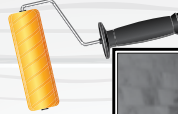


Greetings! My name is Angel Villanueva, and I spent 18 years working full time for the late **Victor Sison** of **FAIRLINGTON MAINTENANCE SERVICE**, learning construction and repair from the ground up. If you knew Victor, then you know me, and it will be my pleasure to serve you! I have worked in hundreds of Fairlington homes. Specializing in bathroom and kitchen remodeling!

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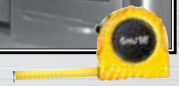


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—Mary Thomasson,
Former Fairlington owner



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New sidewalk enhances walkability in Fairlington

Have you seen the new sidewalk on Abingdon St. between 31st St. and 31st Rd.? This recently completed project was funded by a program through which Arlington County empowers residents to identify and plan public projects that they believe will improve their neighborhoods—and then provides modest funding to implement these plans.

The sidewalk addresses a gap in walkability and accessibility in North Fairlington along a major route for children and families going to Abingdon Elementary from South Fairlington. The lack of a street-level sidewalk also created potential safety issues, as many people simply chose to walk in the street, a problem exacerbated by a bus stop on that side of the street.

Called the Arlington Neighborhoods Program (previously the Neighborhood Conservation Program), county funding also supports improvements such as streetlights, signs, neighborhood art, and beautification.

Because the dollars are limited, neighborhoods across Arlington compete for the funding and many communities, like Fairlington, can wait years until their proposed project makes its way to the top of the list. The county uses a points system to prepare a list of qualified



New Abingdon St. sidewalk. Photo by Guy Land.

projects that go to the county board for funding.

Eligible projects must address a need or priority identified in an overall neighborhood plan, and those needs are identified by surveys that seek the views of all the residents in the neighborhood. Fairlington's initial plan was submitted to the county in 1987 and an update, coordinated by FCA, was presented in 2013. The need for a sidewalk along that stretch of Abingdon St. was identified in both of those.

Another major project funded through this program is the sidewalk along the east side of 31st St. from Park Shirlington down to the Shirlington Transit Station that was installed in 2020. It, too, was identified in Fairlington's neighborhood plan.

Funding for the Arlington Neighborhoods Program comes through the 10-year Capital Improvements Program (CIP) and is financed through bond issues that are approved by the voters. The County Board authorized \$5 million for the program in last year's CIP, which is for a two-year period. When the CIP is being developed, FCA routinely urges the county board to include funding for this program.

—Guy Land

Assessments from page 9

Fairlington that sold in 2021 for \$729,500 but has a 2023 assessment of \$672,400.

"The increase in property values continues to show that Arlington remains a place people want to live and work," said County Manager Mark Schwartz. "And it's the revenue generated from these real estate taxes that help to fund the county's high-quality services and public services for residents, visitors, businesses, and workers."

Real estate taxes provide almost 60 percent of total county revenues. The county's real estate tax base is split roughly equally between residential (55 percent) and commercial (45 percent) property assessments.

Existing office property values showed a very modest

decrease, as high vacancy rates continue to plague values, but that was offset by new construction.

According to a county press release, Arlington is facing challenges in the FY 2024 budget, with a preliminary funding gap of more than \$30 million due to the growth in expenses outpacing the growth in revenue. Commercial vacancies continue to impact revenue; expense pressures include increasing costs for goods and services, higher interest rates, and wage growth.

The county board will hold a public hearing on real estate tax rates March 30, 2023, at 7 p.m. The board will adopt the tax rate on April 22.

Appeals of residential assessments must be filed online by March 1.

—Guy Land



Dr. Jeff Borenstein Dr. Steven Trauben

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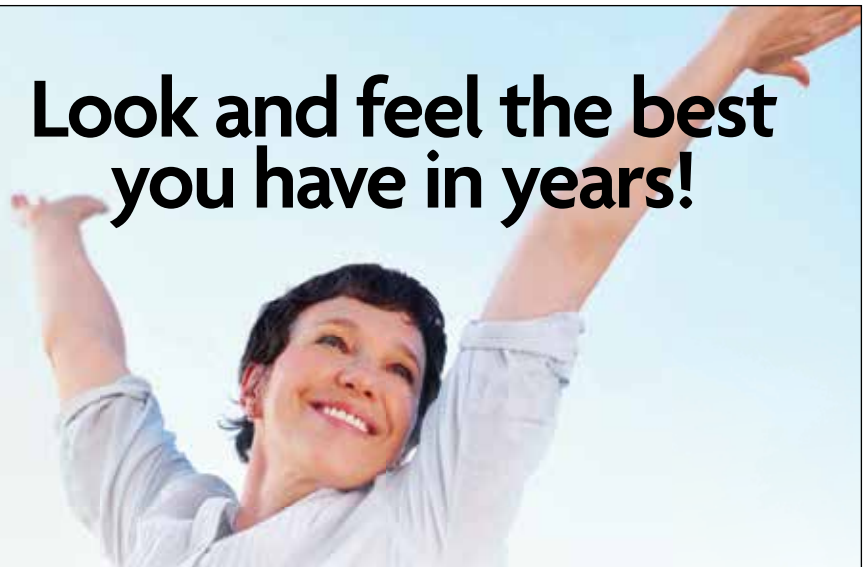
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DOWN TO EARTH *patio gardening*



Answers to common spring garden prep questions

New plants aren't fully inventoried at nurseries until early April, so it's not quite planting time. So, I will share common questions I receive from Fairlington homeowners. The month of March (if we're snow and ice free) is the time to prepare your gardens in terms of weeding, leaf removal, and renewal pruning of perennial plants.

I want a new hardscape (brick or stone). Should I have the existing patio removed? No. The existing pad is four inches thick and was set in 1970–72 during Fairlington's condominium conversion. Any hardscape needs a sturdy foundation and the existing patio serves as that. Jackhammering the patio and hauling away the debris is a costly and unnecessary expense.

I like mulch but it winds up on the patio. How can I prevent this? During heavy rains or when squirrels paw the soil to hide or unearth acorns, the soil and mulch can be misplaced. To prevent it, try two things.

1. If the perimeter beds are higher than the patio, remove some soil so it's level with the patio.
2. Dig a trench (3-4 inches deep) around the patio perimeter. When erosion does occur, soil and mulch will wash down into this trench and not onto the patio.

What causes plants to die? There are many reasons:

1. Lack of water that deprives plant roots of oxygen.



Arborvitae in Fairlington Court. Photo by Guy Land.

2. Excess watering which floods the root zone and drowns the roots.
3. Disease (fungus, pathogen, or insect) which is hard to predict. Some years, one plant genus is targeted by a fungus. What's peculiar is the *Arborvitae* emerald green which I frequently see totally brown (and dead). Commonly, they're planted as a screen to blanket an eyesore. Some can be healthy while others die. Still, I like this plant since it's an evergreen, houses birds' nests, and is fairly priced.
4. Plants situated too near a large tree where the tree's roots gorge on water and soil nutrients that deprive the new plant of these benefits.
5. Compacted soil consisting of rocks or clay. If new plant roots can't meander and grow (and if earthworms can't till the soil), the plant suffers.
6. Root ball improperly prepared. The ball has to be scored with a spade fork to loosen the compacted roots. This allows water, oxygen, and nutri-

ents from the ground to filter into the ball. I sometimes cut off the bottom two inches of a root ball since it can harden when packed into its plastic container. Removing this hardened piece from the root ball makes the base malleable so it can breathe.

7. Plants situated too deep or shallow in the soil. Plant it too deeply and it may suffocate due to the compressed soil around the ball; plant it too shallow and its roots won't be grounded where they can establish in the soil.

Should I bother buying annuals? Yes. Annuals are undervalued. I prefer to plant them in pots or containers and place them on the patio or stoop. Because of their modest presence, they don't look as pretty when planted in the perimeter soil beds. The benefits of annuals are many—affordability, variations of color, cost, and ease in planting. This is a do-it-yourself planting. Remember, annuals arrive at nurseries in mid-April and live until the first or second frost (usually in mid-December).

I want a trellis for my vines. Wood or iron? I like iron since it is sturdier, more handsome and won't become misshapen in the elements. Wood trellises can become curved or splintered with age. An iron trellis houses a delicate vine (clematis) or heavy-duty vine with thicker stems (climbing hydrangea). There are many sizes and styles of trellises. Look around for one that suits your taste.

—Bill Sullivan
www.sullivanlandscaping.net

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Due date for ads and payment: 6 pm on the 8th of the preceding month (March 8 for June issue).

- Checks payable to "Fairlington Citizens Association."
- Pay via PayPal at fca.fairlington.ads@gmail.com.
- Send mini-ad copy via email, regular mail, or drop off at FCA drop box.

Email: fca.fairlington.ads@gmail.com

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

Cost: 50 cents per word.

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

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Find out how you can work with and encourage natural predators to keep your landscape plants healthy and free of these pests.

This free virtual class on controlling scale on crape myrtle, holly, and other plants is offered Friday, March 3, from 10 to 11:30 a.m. RSVP at <https://mgmv.org/rsvp-for-public-education-classes/> to receive a link to participate.

Sign up now for the Fairlington 5K.

Early bird registration closes March 24.



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