



All Fairlington Newsletter

President's Message

Welcome to the first issue of the digital All Fairlington Newsletter. We are excited to explore the possibilities of this new platform and would love to hear feedback and suggestions as we move forward.

I want to acknowledge that this is a difficult time for our community. I hear from APS teachers who are preparing for potential immigration raids and encourage families to have a plan in case they are separated. I hear from my friends who have been placed on administrative leave or their spouse is about to lose their job. I know of a family whose daughter will likely lose access to critical medical research because of federal funding freezes. We know friends or family members whose human rights are threatened. We think about Arlington's safety-net nonprofits that are bracing for increased demands. I see this at Park Shirlington's monthly food distribution supported by Capital Area Food Bank. Collectively we worry about housing prices and regional economic stability.

Fairlingtonians pride themselves on our strong sense of community. We demonstrated this five years ago during the pandemic. We should all make a pledge to listen with compassion and offer help and support where we can. There are many ways to hold up this neighborhood – we are only as strong as our most vulnerable.

March brings with it the signs of spring. After a long, cold winter, I am ready for some warmth on my face. Now that I am taking my dog for longer walks, I try to appreciate the flowers emerging; or delight in the balloons announcing the birth of a baby boy or girl; and I even enjoy the “pop” of a pickleball on the courts. I look to find small joys amid the uncertainty.

I will leave you with a quote from one of the best neighbors I knew growing up, Mr. Fred Rogers: “All of us, at some time or other, need help. Whether we're giving or receiving help, each one of us has something valuable to bring to this world. That's one of the things that connects us as neighbors—in our own way, each one of us is a giver and a receiver.”

– Jennifer Davies



FCA receives update on Shirlington House

FCA was briefed by Snell Construction Corporation at the February 12 monthly meeting. The presentation provided an overview of the proposal.

There are currently 436 apartments in a 10-story apartment building constructed in the early 1960s, with a total of 565 parking spaces in both surface and structured parking. Snell proposes to construct 73 new, additional apartments on the property, for a total of 509 dwelling units. The existing building and parking structure will remain. The proposed new development will comprise:

- One new 7-story apartment building with 59 units

The infill development of new units will be constructed on the 31st Street frontage, lining the existing parking garage. The existing 565 parking spaces will remain, for a proposed ratio of 1.1 spaces per unit.

Of note was the construction of 3-bedroom units, which are currently in short supply. Committed Affordable housing is also part of the project. The proposal also calls for the widening of the sidewalk along 31st Street with improved streetscaping.

The online engagement ran from February 10-21, but there will be more opportunities for the community and FCA to directly provide feedback on the project as it goes through the Site Plan Review and Public Hearing later this spring. Full information can be found [here](#).



Abingdon Elementary: MLK Day turnout, APS visit, help needed for food distribution

Spring is around the corner, and things are as busy as ever over at Abingdon Elementary. We kicked off the 2025 with a raucous BINGO night in the cafeteria - bringing together hundreds of students, families and neighbors for some fun. Principal Acevedo moonlighted as our emcee and DJ!

In early February, the community came out to support our annual Book Fair. Despite some snowy disruptions, students and their families were able to shop for new titles and support our school at the same time. Thank you to all who participated.

Huge turnout for MLK Day: THANK YOU!

Thank you to the hundreds of neighbors, families and friends who joined in the FCA/PTA day of service on MLK Day. The day was a bright spot during a cold and wintry week. Volunteers collectively assembled 200 Winter Hygiene/Safety

housewares and 100 Snack Kits for Doorways to distribute to Arlingtonians recovering from domestic violence.

School Board President visits Abingdon

APS School Board President Mary Kadera joined the Abingdon PTA General Membership meeting in January, discussing the board's top priorities and answering a range of parents' questions. Much of the conversation focused on steps the school board is taking to protect students and staff in this time of great uncertainty.

Help needed: Food distribution for students in need

We are looking for one-time or repeat volunteers to help with Thursday food distribution to students in need. The job takes about an hour and involves organizing 40+ food packages and bringing them to classrooms throughout the school. [Visit our sign-up for more details!](#)

We will share upcoming restaurant Spirit Nights and other opportunities on the Fairlington social media pages. Make sure you follow us ([Abingdon PTA](#)) for the latest announcements.

March events calendar

Interested in having your event included? Email afbeditors@yahoo.com

Tuesday, March 4

Financial transitions: Exiting the federal government: 6:30-7:45 p.m.

Arlington Central Library (1015 North Quincy Street)

Saturday, March 8

Fairlington Diners 12 p.m., Duangrat's Thai Restaurant, 5878 Leesburg Pike, Falls Church ([703 820-5775](tel:7038205775), <http://www.duangrats.com>). Excellent Thai cuisine, including luncheon specials, even on Saturdays; parking is on the side away from Bailey's Crossroads when approaching on Rt 7 from Fairlington.

To reserve a seat at our table, please contact Carol not less than 24 hours in advance, either by calling her at 703-379-6840 (leave a voicemail if you don't reach her, including your name and how to contact you the day of the event, in case plans change), or by emailing her at carol_dabbs at yahoo dot com. If you want to receive a copy of these invitations early in the previous month, send your email address to the address above to be added to our list.

Resource Fair for Federal Workers & Contractors: 12-5 p.m.

Pop-up resource fair at Wakefield High School (1325 S. Dinwiddie Street, Arlington, VA 22206) to access vital services including: unemployment assistance, mental health support, housing information, food aid, and information on federal worker's rights

Second Saturday Crafternoon Workshops: 1:30-3 p.m.

Drop-in, free craft at Fairlington Community Center, Room 130

Wednesday, March 12

Fairlington Citizens Association monthly meeting 7 p.m.

Tuesday, March 25

Book Group: 7:30 p.m. Fairlington Community Center. Group will be discussing Hester by Laurie Lico Albanese

**For the Love of Nature: Restore the ecosystem ... pull invasives & plant native plants!**

Plants are not “good” or “bad.” It’s all about where they are planted. Non-native trees and plants were brought here from some other part of the world, some intentionally, some by accident. Fairlington landscapes are full of these non-native plants. We have recently begun to understand that moving plants around the world has consequences. Most non-native plants, because they evolved in a different ecosystem in a different part of the world, do not contribute to our ecosystem here. For the most part, our insects can’t eat them, so insects like butterflies and moths don’t lay eggs on them, which means there are way fewer caterpillars. Since most baby birds eat spiders and insects, mostly caterpillars (not seed), fewer babies can survive.

There is a cascade of harm that affects our native wildlife. This is why there is growing interest in native plants because native plants do support our wildlife.

Some of the non-native plants in our landscapes are also invasive. This doesn’t just mean “spreads a lot.” Invasive is a specific term for species that (1) were introduced by human activity (to an ecosystem they didn’t evolve in) and (2) cause harm – to our economy, human health, or the ecosystem. Invasive plants escape our landscapes and gardens into parks and natural areas even if we don’t see them spreading. They take over and smother the native plants our wildlife needs to survive. If it seems like we are seeing fewer butterflies and birds over time, it’s because we are.

Non-native #FairlingtonInvaders, to name a very few, include English ivy, wintercreeper, burning bush, Japanese euonymus, Rose of Sharon, the non-clumping liriop (Liriop spicata), Chinese privet, Nandina, and sweet autumn clematis. Check out Arlington’s invasive plants and do our wildlife a favor, don’t

Gardeners of Northern Virginia have lots of ideas. For more, follow Fairlington Gardening Community on Facebook.

– *Leslie Cameron*



Fairlington Historical Society: When kids ruled Fairlington

Fairlington is known for its kids. From dawn to dusk, you'll often find them on the playgrounds, pools and paths. But the number of kids you see here now, though more numerous than recent decades, is still a fraction of those who were here in Fairlington's early years. Of course, demographic trends have changed dramatically since 1950, when the country was in the midst of a baby boom.

There were well over twice as many children in South Fairlington in 1950 than there were in 2020. This is still true for those aged 5 and older, who were born before the baby boom started. All in all, 35% of South Fairlington was 17 or under in 1950, compared to 21% in 2020. Incredibly, a fifth of the population was 6 or under in 1950. Kids really did rule Fairlington!

There were also far more people living in Fairlington overall, even though the housing stock was essentially the same as it is today. That's due to households being larger in 1950. In South Fairlington, the average household size was 3.0 in 1950 compared to 2.1 in 2020. Much of the change is due to a steep increase of individuals living alone: 47 individuals in South Fairlington lived alone in 1950, compared to 658 in 2020 (from 3% to 40% of households). The share of two person households is virtually unchanged from 1950 at about one third of households.

For those of you who have noticed that there are more kids here than there used to be, you're also correct. Fairlington has seen a modest baby boom in recent years. While Fairlington has a high proportion and increasing number of

If you'd like to learn more about when kids ruled Fairlington, go to our website at <https://www.fairlingtonhistoricalsociety.org> and read some oral histories from that era, including kids who explored Fairlington's sewers.

– Dan Burd

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