

all FAIRLINGTON BULLETIN



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www.fca-fairlington.org

Inside this month

Features

Kanninen presentation	1
Park Shirlington	5
Election day	7
Fairlington Farmers Market	10
FCA board candidates	13
Brass quintet	13
Dialogues on race and equity	15
Cello concert	15



Community spotlight	17
Native plants	21
Fairlington Cares	23
Halloween decorations	27
Fairlington playground	33

Departments

Neighborhood news	29
Patio gardening	31
Mini ads	34

Kanninen outlines Arlington school challenges

Arlington Public Schools (APS) still face substantial challenges as the system moves toward hybrid learning this fall. Vice Chair of the APS Board and liaison to Fairlington Barbara Kanninen spoke at the Fairlington Citizens Association (FCA) virtual board meeting on October 14 offering a school update.

"We are facing very big challenges and are operating in a situation that is really devastating in so many ways," she said. "But staff is working all out to provide the best school experience possible given the current circumstances."



Barbara Kanninen

A hybrid system of virtual and in-classroom learning will begin sometime this fall starting with the 250 highest-need special education students who require one-on-one support in order to continue with learning. Kanninen hopes this will occur by late October but said final dates entirely depend on virus rates throughout the county.

By mid-November APS plans to welcome preschool through second grade back to in-person learning and third grade through fifth grade shortly after. Middle and high schools won't see a return to campus until January 2021 at the earliest.

According to the APS website, in the new hybrid model, students will receive synchronous instruction four days per week, Tuesday-Friday, attending school in-person on two consecutive days and attending virtually the other two days. Mondays will be reserved for planning, small group intervention, asynchronous learning (all students), and office hours for teachers. Students and teachers will also have the option of declining in-person instruction and continuing with virtual only.

"It's hard," said Kanninen, when asked as to whether the transition to the hybrid model would cause more disruptions in new instruction. "The only thing I can say is that I think we all fundamentally believe that most students need that in-person learning, so even though we're backing up for a head start with that transition work, it's still beneficial."

She said at some point we are going to have to talk about lost learning. She mentioned that building a stronger summer session or inter-session are suggested ideas, but that school administrators still don't know the answers.

Continued on page 25

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 November 11

There will be no presentation at the November 11 meeting. The Board will hold a virtual meeting, which can be viewed live on FCA's Facebook page and later on FCA's YouTube channel.

Regular board business:

- Approval of October minutes
- Unfinished business
- Officer and committee reports
- 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.

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

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www.arlingtonva.us/departments/Environmental Services/dot/traffic/streetlights/index.htm	
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Fairlington Citizens Association

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All Fairlington Bulletin

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6 PM, **10th of month** preceding publication month for commercial advertising, mini-ads, and editorial copy.

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Calendar

Fairlington Knits

Monday, November 2, 6:30 pm

See page 29 for details

Election Day

Tuesday, November 3, 6 am – 7 pm

FCC Monthly Meeting

Wednesday, November 11, 7 pm

Virtually on FCA Facebook page

Fairlington Diners

Saturday, November 14, 12:30 pm

See page 29 for details

Thanksgiving

Thursday, November 26

FCC Closed

Book Group

Tuesday, December 8, 7:30 pm

See page 29 for details

Harvest time



Fairlington residents welcomed the arrival of fall with colorful outdoor decorations. Photo by Guy Land.

Contributors this month: Regina Bethencourt, Lynne Blasi, Jennifer Davies, Sue Davis, Guy Land, Bill Sullivan, and Chris Weathers.

Some images in this publication may be digitally enhanced.



PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

I don't envy members of the Arlington School Board as they confront a variety of unpleasant options affecting Arlington Public Schools (APS).

The first is the shift to virtual or hybrid learning. As School Board Vice Chair Barbara Kanninen told FCA in October, they have had to implement an entirely new school model. I've heard parents, teachers, and students in Fairlington express their frustration with the situation, though they also acknowledge that, at least for the time being, there really aren't any good choices.

A second challenge is the budget impact of declining county revenues, also a product of COVID. APS has had to table plans for new school construction. That means that overcrowding will continue at a number of schools, including Abingdon Elementary and Gunston Middle School.

Even though Abingdon was expanded only three years ago, it is already on track to be the most overcrowded school in Arlington next year. Portable classrooms ("relocatables") were returned to the site earlier this fall.

Kanninen's message was bleak, but honest. Given the suspension of new construction and the lead time required to bring a building on line, it could be up to a decade before additional school capacity is available in South Arlington.

Redrawing school boundaries, which was slated for this year, has been postponed. While that could have been a good news-bad news exercise for Fairlington—the good news is enrollment might be more manageable; the bad news is some current Abingdon students might be assigned to other schools—the entire process has been put off two years in South Arlington.

Two decades ago there were few families with school-age children living in Fairlington. How different the community is today! Consequently, school issues have assumed greater importance in FCA's work.

Initially our focus was overwhelmingly on Abingdon, because it is right next to us and most of the Fairlington children went to school there. Abingdon continues to command our attention, but our interests now include Gunston, whose PTA co-president is a Fairlington resident, and Wakefield High School. The number of Fairlington kids in those schools grows each year.

FCA works to maintain strong relationships with school board members and APS leaders, so that they will be familiar with our needs and interests as they balance these unpleasant trade-offs. We welcome your thoughts on how they should navigate these difficult choices.

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



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– Erik, Arlington, VA



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Owners file preliminary application for Park Shirlington redevelopment

The owners of the Park Shirlington apartments on S. 31st St. have filed a preliminary site plan application with Arlington County to redevelop the property. At this stage, the site plan is primarily an internal working document to serve as the basis for discussions between the owners—Standard Communities and Foundation Housing—and county staff.



Park Shirlington entrance. Photo by Guy Land.

The plan calls for the preservation of affordable housing on the site, but it would substantially increase the total number of units on the property. The remaining units are expected to be market rate.

While the plan generally follows the conceptual outline the owners presented to the community in an FCA-sponsored briefing last fall, it differs in a major respect by shifting the location of a proposed seven-story apartment building from being directly adjacent to Fairlington Villages condos to being further down the hill toward Shirlington. It would also reduce the height of the structure.

The location and size of the building sparked opposition from Fairlington neighbors when it was revealed last fall. County staff had also expressed concerns about this aspect of the overall plan.

The change in location responded to a change in zoning rules adopted late last year by the Arlington County Board. That ordinance restricts the height of buildings that are adjacent to residential structures, like Fairlington condo units.

County staff report that the revised proposal is “generally compliant” with the zoning code, but staff note that there would likely be other issues to be resolved in discussions with the owners.

Discussions between the owners and county staff are ongoing, but any final decision by the county is not likely before next spring at the earliest.

One option that is also viable is for the county to purchase part of the property in order to maintain it as affordable housing and minimize displacement of current residents.

The county board and the owners previously agreed to an option for the county to purchase the part of the property that lies between 31st St. and I-395. That option

extends into next year.

Although the county faces major budget challenges because of a COVID-related decline in revenue, that would not likely affect the financial ability to purchase the property if the county chose that option. Funding for that acquisition would come from the county’s affordable housing fund, which is financed largely by contributions from developers when they propose new developments that could put additional strain on the availability of affordable housing.

Park Shirlington is a 294-unit garden apartment complex built in 1956. Standard Communities and Foundation Housing jointly purchased the market affordable complex in December 2017 with the assistance of a \$6 million loan from the county’s Affordable Housing Investment Fund.

Last fall’s plan showed all 294 affordable units clustered on the eastern side of 31st St. (the side closest to I-395).

Park Shirlington is part of Arlington’s Housing Conservation District, 12 apartment neighborhoods where the county hopes to preserve affordable housing. In October the county launched the community planning component of a Missing Middle Housing Study, looking at the issues of housing supply and housing choice. The study, as well as additional developments affecting the Housing Conservation District, could have implications for the future redevelopment of Park Shirlington.

—Guy Land

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Election day arrives, finally, on November 3

After weeks of early in-person voting and voting by mail, Nov. 3 brings the official in-person voting day at all precincts across Northern Virginia. Polls are open from 6 am to 7 pm.

North Fairlington residents who live in Arlington vote at Abingdon Elementary, 3035 S. Abingdon St. South Fairlington residents vote at the Fairlington Community Center, 3308 S. Stafford St.

North Fairlington residents who live in Alexandria vote at the NOVA Arts Center, 4915 E. Campus Dr.

You will need to show an ID to vote.

Acceptable forms of valid ID include: voter registration confirmation documents; a valid Virginia driver's license; a valid U.S. passport; or any valid student identification card. You may also use an employee identification card; Virginia Voter Photo ID card; or a copy of a current utility bill, bank statement, government check, paycheck, or other government document that shows the name and address of the voter.

If you are unable to provide ID, you are required to sign a statement that you are the registered voter you claim to be in order to cast a ballot.



Arlington County Clerk of Court Paul Ferguson welcomed South Fairlington voters on a rainy election day 2018. Photos by Guy Land.

Mail ballots must be postmarked by Nov. 3 and must be received by noon on Friday, Nov. 6. No witness is required for mail voting.

Federal elections feature races for President, U.S. Senate, and U.S. House of Representatives. Most of the attention has focused on the battle between Donald Trump and Joe



Biden—Libertarian Jo Jorgensen is also on the ballot—but incumbent Democratic Senator Mark Warner faces a challenge from Republican Daniel Gade and Independents Denise Kim and Mary Knapp.

In the House race, incumbent Democrat Don Beyer is challenged by Republican Jeff Jordan.

For Arlington residents, local offices will see a race for county board between incumbent Democrat Libby Garvey and Independent Audrey Clement. Three candidates are vying for two slots on the school board: David Priddy, Cristina Diaz-Torres, and Symone Walker. School

board races are nonpartisan, but Priddy and Diaz-Torres won the endorsement by Arlington County Democrats this summer.

Voters will also consider two constitutional amendments. One would establish an independent redistricting commission to determine congressional and state legislative districts. The other would exempt from taxation automobiles and pickup trucks owned by veterans with a hundred percent service-related disability.

Arlington residents will also consider five separate bond issues: \$29.94 million for Metro and transportation projects; \$3.63 million for parks and recreation facilities; \$7.485 million for community infrastructure; \$52.65 million for schools; and \$50.84 million for stormwater capital projects.

For more information, including sample ballots, <https://vote.arlingtonva.us/elections/> or <https://www.alexandriava.gov/Elections>.

In 2016, more than 121,000 Arlingtonians voted in the presidential election.

—Guy Land



A Democratic party volunteer on election day 2018 encouraged South Fairlington voters to vote a straight Democratic ticket.

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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.

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Holiday shopping wraps up a successful year at the farmers market

There are a few more weeks to visit the Fairlington Farmers Market before the season ends November 22. Let the market make your holiday food shopping easier and pick up essentials like produce, breads, and desserts. You can also stock up on prepared foods and freeze them for later use.

The market is also a great place to buy honey and jams from Kuhn Orchards and Spring Valley Farm and Orchard, and coffee from Café Los Suenos, and make your own gift baskets.

When the farmers market committee started planning the season in February, conversation focused on vendors and products we'd like to add, new pop up vendors, and having more special events and activities. We couldn't know then how quickly we'd need to change plans to operate the market safely. We didn't know if we could even have the market at the community center, since it was closed for many months.



When the county approved our request to open, we quickly bought new signs, extra tape to mark off safe distances between vendors, hand sanitizer and paper towels (both in very short supply in April), gloves, and masks. We opened just one week later than planned, and thanks to everyone doing their part to follow our health and safety guidelines we've had a successful season.

The committee greatly appreciates the many positive comments from Fairlingtonians about how much it meant to them to be able to continue to shop at the market as they had for many years, when other things in their lives had changed so drastically. New residents were equally pleased to have the market as a shopping option.

"This year's coronavirus pandemic has been challenging for the Fairlington Farmers Market as it has been for all of Field to Table's markets in Arlington," said Rob Swennes, Executive Director of Field to Table, the



organization that manages our market. “While we’ve mourned the loss of music, community tabling, sampling food, and engaging conversations with market customers, these losses have been outweighed by an uptick in market customers.”

Swennes noted that many shoppers who had never been to the market have turned to our outdoor market as an alternative to regular enclosed stores. “Special thanks go out to the many farmers and other food

producers who spun on a dime to update their business practices in the face of the pandemic—they are an inspiration to us all.”

—Lynne Blasi



Market sponsor Kay Houghton & Associates provided free ice cream in October. Photos by Guy Land.

With gratitude

We are so thankful for our wonderful volunteers and sponsors. The market wouldn't exist without their continued help and support.

Volunteers: Barbara Haney, Carrie Tipton, Chelsea Reinberg, Dominic Rojas, Erin Treacy, Flavia Amariei, Gail Crider, Janice Mooneyham, Jennifer Wolfersberger, Laura and

Eliot Kriviski, Lisa Dixon, Lisa Grandle, Mary Tang.

Sponsors: Fairlington Citizens Association, Kay Houghton & Associates, and Fairlington Presbyterian Church.

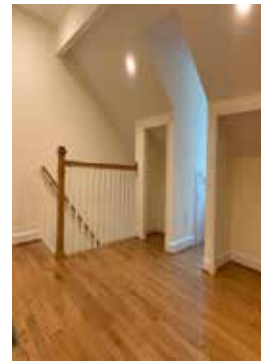
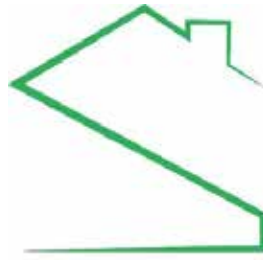
Market committee: Melissa Beene (co-chair), Lane Erwin (co-chair), Lynne Blasi, Cheryl

Goodman, Jeff Kost, and Tracey McGovern.

Market manager: Aisha Salazar.

Market assistant manager: Jessica Peyton.

Field to Table substitute assistants: Deniese Degges, Michelle Minstrell, and Nick Rozek.



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FCA looking for candidates for upcoming board election

Have some ideas about how to improve life in Fairlington? Want to help implement activities that will strengthen our community as a warm and welcoming neighborhood? See some things you would like to change in the community? Then consider serving on the Fairlington Citizens Association (FCA) board in 2021.

Representing all Fairlington residents and owners, FCA is a great place to support our community. It's an excellent way of helping shape your little corner of the universe.

The board sponsors neighborhood activities, such as family movie night, the Fourth of July parade, and, depending on COVID conditions, the Home Renovation Expo. It arranges presentations to the community by local elected officials and county staff. It publishes this newsletter.

One of the most important responsibilities of the board is representing the views of Fairlington to Arlington County and the City of Alexandria on nearby real estate development. This year, for example, the board has weighed in

on additional density in Shirlington, the plan to renovate the Lindsay Automotive property along Quaker Lane, and a new "continuum of care" building at West Alex.

All nine board positions are up for election each year at the December annual meeting, which this year is December 9. One board member has already indicated that he will not be seeking re-election.

Board members are volunteers; they receive no compensation.

FCA holds monthly meetings from 7 to 9 pm on the second Wednesday of each month. Due to COVID, meetings are being held virtually. Outside of the monthly meetings, the time commitment can be as great or as small as you prefer.

If you, your spouse, or a neighbor is looking to get more involved in the community, email FCA Vice President Jennifer Davies (vp@fca-fairlington.org) for details.

Brass quintet draws enthusiastic crowd to Utah Park

With blankets spread out for picnics under a warm fall sun, more than a hundred people, appropriately socially distanced, enjoyed a Sunday concert in Utah Park by a brass quintet from the Alexandria Symphony in late October. The concert was jointly sponsored by FCA and the Fairlington Historical Society.

The selections ranged widely across musical genres, from ragtime to classical to recent compositions. The concert included two transcriptions of works by

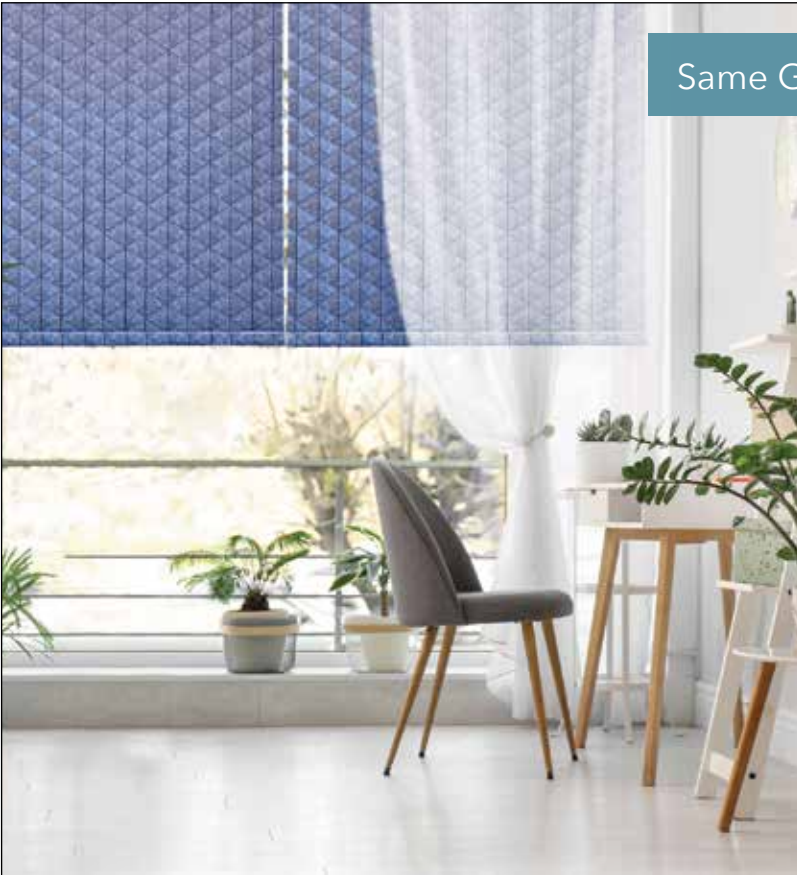
Florence Pierce, the first Black American woman to have her music performed by a major orchestra (the Chicago Symphony).

With their regular indoor concert season cancelled, the Alexandria Symphony has been seeking outdoor venues for performances that would both bring live music to residents and provide modest income for members of the orchestra. "They love doing this," Music Director Jim

Ross said, noting that the group had not been able to perform together since March.



Photos by Guy Land.



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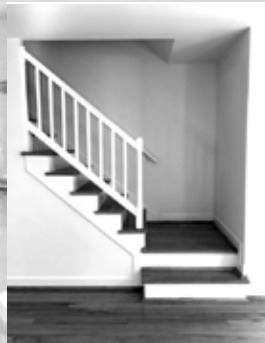
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Arlington County Launches Dialogues on Race and Equity Initiative

In mid-October, Arlington County launched a new program to promote conversations between communities and neighbors to help increase understanding about the prevalence of systemic racism and to provide tools to learn about and directly address racial equity issues in Arlington. The initiative is part of the response to the County Board's 2019 equity resolution.

There are many ways to participate in the Dialogues on Race and Equity Initiative (DRE). The County is asking that all residents take an anonymous community assessment to gather information regarding personal experiences and perspective on race and equity. Residents can access the survey at; <https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/G9YWWP9>.

"Arlington deeply values open community opinion and perspective," said Samia Byrd, newly appointed Chief Race and Equity Officer for the county. "By launching DRE, we hope to encourage community participation across the County on addressing and advancing issues of racial injustice and inequity.

"The assessment will help us understand where Arlingtonians are on the journey and the dialogues will help us begin to normalize conversations on race and equity to know where and how we want to grow and evolve as a community," Byrd explained.

In addition, Arlington has teamed up with the local non-profit, Challenging Racism, to facilitate dialogues. One specific opportunity for FCA is the DRE Together option that would invite members of FCA's board to participate in a facilitator training session to then lead further conversations among board members and the general Fairlington community.

The FCA Board will also consider reaching out to interested community members who could participate in the "train the trainer" program and then work with the board directly. If you are interested in participating, or have any questions, please contact Jennifer Davies at vp@fca-fairlington.org.

—Jennifer Davies

Outdoor concert features young cellists

The soothing sound of cellos wafted over Fairlington on a clear and crisp Saturday morning in early October as 14 young cellists performed an outdoor concert under the direction of North Fairlington resident Kathryn Hufnagle.

Ranging from Saint-Saens' "The Swan," performed by the most advanced students, to "Twinkle Twinkle Little Star," played by all the students, the music delighted an audience of over 30 people who were seated on the grass or in lawn chairs behind Hufnagle's unit on Columbus St. Other selections included "Scherzo" by Weber and "Minuet 2" by Bach.

This was the first time the musicians had been together in person since COVID shut things down in the spring. "Since March we have held these group classes on Zoom so today was a special day for us," Hufnagle said.

The musicians ranged in age from six to 15 and included



More than a dozen young cellists performed in an open space between condos in North Fairlington in early October. Photo by Guy Land.

a couple of Fairlington residents as well as students from across Northern Virginia.

Hufnagle uses the Suzuki method of teaching. She offers weekly private lessons, but her students also participate in group lessons twice a month.

She was pleased that the students could perform in front of an audience. "Making music is ultimately about sharing our work with an audience and each other," Hufnagle commented.

"We should make this an annual tradition," one member of the audience enthusiastically suggested.

The concert offered another example of the variety of activities occurring in Fairlington this fall, notwithstanding the challenges of COVID.

—Guy Land



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Community Spotlight: Portia Moore and the STEM Preschool

A quarterly series showcasing neighborhood businesses and resident activities.

Portia Moore opened STEM Preschool in Fairlington, located next to old Fire Station 7 on Abingdon St., in January, 2015. After enrolling up to the initial capacity of 33 students that year, the preschool quickly increased to 66 students the following year. With continued demand, STEM Preschool expanded to 106 in 2019.

The presence and expansion within the commercial space on Abingdon Street has been a most welcome opportunity for many parents in Fairlington. Ms. Moore estimates that approximately 80 percent of the enrolled students are from within the Fairlington Citizens Association boundaries.

Because of her commitment to serving Fairlington families, FCA supported her permit applications when they were considered by Arlington County.

With her success in Fairlington, Ms. Moore expanded her business and opened a second STEM Preschool location on Capitol Hill in DC.

Ms. Moore grew up in Arlington, attending Long Branch Elementary, Thomas Jefferson Middle School, and Washington-Lee (now Washington Liberty) High School. She earned a Pre-Med degree from Virginia Tech and a Masters of Education from Marymount University in Arlington.

During her time at Marymount, Ms. Moore discovered a passion for science, technology, engineering, and math education for young children. After graduating from Marymount, she served as a teacher in Arlington Public Schools and started her own business, P & E Babysitting.

Ms. Moore's entrepreneurial spirit and desire to boost science and math education ultimately lead her to open STEM Preschool in Fairlington. "Children are your most prized possession," she says. "When you send your child somewhere for 8 to 10 hours a day, you really, really have to trust who is caring for your child. They are so vulnerable and they're like sponges, they soak everything up."

The preschool, in its sixth year, has already increased



Portia Moore celebrates the grand opening of the STEM Preschool in January 2015. Photo by Guy Land.

its capacity twice. As of 2019, the capacity at STEM Preschool peaked at 106.

Due to our current pandemic, the number of students in the school is lower right now, but the school continues to provide education to kids, with several precautionary measures in place to protect teachers, students, and families.

Like many businesses, the COVID-19 pandemic has taken a toll on STEM Preschool operations. In the early shut down period, Ms. Moore was quick to keep her teachers and staff paid by obtaining a Paycheck Protection Program loan. Currently, the program is just above half capacity. "I am thankful to be open at this time," states Moore, who has had to constantly adapt to changes in safety protocols. Smaller classrooms that

do not intermingle, masking for teachers and students, and shorter hours (8 am to 5 pm) are just a few current standards.

Ms. Moore lives in nearby Parkfairfax with her husband and newborn baby. She's a frequent customer at the Fairlington Farmers Market. She recalls that it was almost too good to be true that Fairlington would be the location for her dream of opening an early childhood STEM school.

Ms. Moore has relished the relationship she and her school have with the community. "I love the civic association," Moore says. "Guy Land was integral in helping me navigate opening my business here." She also appreciates the accessibility to community members and how progressive and respectful it can be.

With a high percentage of students from the Fairlington neighborhoods, Ms. Moore appreciates how parents continue to enroll their children from word-of-mouth referrals. Relationships have budded and flourished over the past few years.



Continued on page 21



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For the love of nature

A column by Fairlington grounds committee members and gardeners

Most of the time people forget that there are eight distinct communities in Fairlington. Each of the villages is different and unique, but we have commonalities as well. Teresa Cordova from the Commons recently reached out to all the Landscape Committees across Fairlington to share information and best practices.

Each community has mutual concerns from dying trees to healthy grass to landscaping companies. The hope is that we can share our problems and expertise to educate the community about what a landscape is. The hot topic today is a return to native plants.

So, why native plants? Bradford Pear, once everyone's sweetheart, is on the 'do not plant' list. Day lilies, a garden staple, are getting snubbed. English Ivy, ground cover to end all ground covers—forget about it. After years of planting non-natives, it's clear that native plants are already adapted to this climate making them heat and drought tolerant, they attract insects and birds, and are just as attractive as their non-native counterparts.

The group has a listserv through which to share information. It has met once over Zoom, and several times in smaller groups in person. There has been no lack of con-



Sue Davis explains the design and function of the conservation garden in the Mews to members of the Meadows, Commons, and Arbor grounds committees. The conservation garden has only native plants and controls storm water runoff. Photo by Tina Byrd.

versation. Whose grass looks the best? Do organic fertilizers work? What rules and protocols do residents follow in your neighborhood? What special projects does everyone have? How can we share all of this? Which landscaping company do you use?

For the Mews, it was good to meet with other dedicated individuals who value the importance of native plants, individuals who are moving native plant theory into practice. One example is the shade garden at 2934 Columbus St. in Fairlington Villages. Another example are the beds along Utah St. between 32nd and 34th Sts.

in Fairlington Commons.

Group members also write this monthly post in the *All Fairlington Bulletin*, featuring articles on, for example, turf management, shade gardens, and attracting pollinators.

This fall the Mews team is working on creating a list of suitable native plants to use in the Mews. The hope is to get our landscape to a 50/50 level—half native, half non-natives. We are already working in that direction. The King Street Rejuvenation Project and the Conservation Garden near the swimming pool contain only native plants.

—Sue Davis, Fairlington Mews

Community spotlight from page 17

One of the parents from the first day in the history of STEM Preschool, Caroline Knox, became a very close friend as her child matriculated through the program. "We are still friends to this day. I was invited to her wedding, she was invited to my baby shower," notes Moore.

Michelle Woolley, a Fairlington resident and parent, says, "Our son is in second grade now, but we still talk about things he learned or did at STEM. The teachers

and staff did a great job of not just educating our son, but helping him grow as a person."

In 2021, Ms. Moore plans to launch a non-profit that will raise money to pay early childhood education tuition for families that may otherwise not be able to afford it. This mission will open opportunities for more children to gain valuable experience and understanding before entering their traditional elementary education.

—Chris Weathers



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Fairlington Cares launches strategic planning effort

The response of Fairlington's residents to the challenging conditions created by the COVID pandemic displayed the community's desire to help immediate neighbors and demonstrated a level of compassion and generosity that spoke volumes.

This sparked a robust conversation among FCA's board members about how best to respond to the desire of residents to support their neighbors who are facing challenges. Armed with a neighborhood survey in early June showing over 80 percent support for the idea, FCA leadership voted to form a separate non-profit entity, Fairlington Cares, a 501(c)(3) charitable organization.

The goal of Fairlington Cares is to fill gaps that are not currently being served by existing non-profits, not to duplicate existing efforts. It gives Fairlington residents a way to ensure that their contributions are targeted to the needs of residents of Fairlington or nearby communities.

FCA president Guy Land, FCA vice president Jennifer Davies, and Fairlington community leader Michael McGinn serve as the initial officers of the board. All the federal and state paperwork required to give the organization full legal standing was completed in early October.

The first order of business for Fairlington Cares is developing a strategic plan to guide its fundraising and community assistance activities for the next couple of years.

Over the next month, a small steering committee will be formed, composed of Fairlingtonians who have made strong contributions to the community, as well as residents who have experience in nonprofit work. FCA Director Sam Wolbert will facilitate the planning process. He brings substantial professional experience to the task.

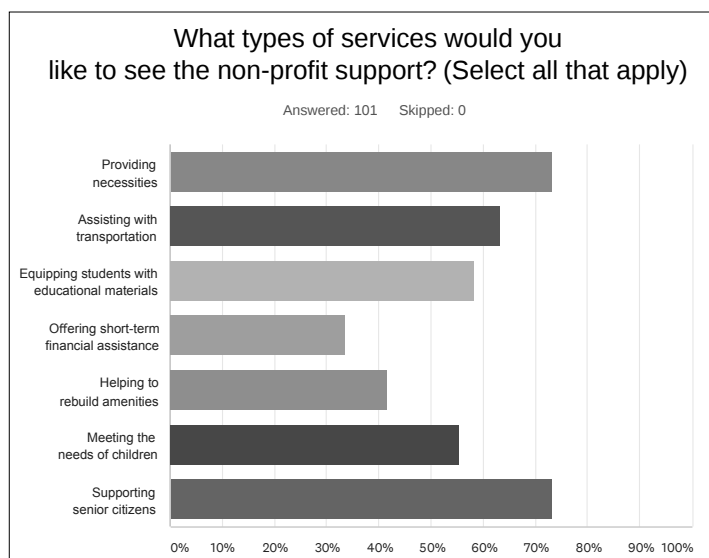
"As the President & CEO of the Animal Welfare League of Arlington, I am responsible for the strategic direction of the entire organization," Sam said. "I know first-hand the importance of thinking strategically and planning for the future, and I am both excited and honored to use my experience to help create the strategic plan for Fairlington Cares."

The strategic planning process will identify the scope and programmatic priorities for Fairlington Cares. The non-profit will have a local focus that includes Fairlington's civic association boundaries, including Park Shirlington and Shirlington House, as well as the Abingdon Elementary School community.

Sam noted, "Fairlington is a wonderful community filled with people eager to lend a helping hand. Through Fairlington Cares, there's now a mechanism for that support to stay in Fairlington in order to provide more targeted help to our neighbors in need."

The results of the early June survey will help guide the discussion. Ideas that were strongly endorsed in the survey included supporting seniors and providing basic supplies to vulnerable residents. Proposals also included modest scholarships for deserving students and emergency assistance. In addition, Fairlington Cares will look to partner with local organizations, such as PTAs, that also have direct relationships with local residents.

A second community survey will be circulated to get additional feedback once the strategic planning process is farther advanced.



An online survey of Fairlington residents this summer showed strong support for a new non-profit to provide necessities such as groceries and basic living supplies, as well as support senior citizens in helping them sustain independent living. Fairlington Cares will use this survey data in its strategic planning process.

Fairlington Cares looks forward to a formal launch prior to the holidays. More information about Fairlington Cares is available at <http://www.fca-fairlington.org/wp-content/uploads/Non-profit-QA-website-version.pdf>

We welcome your thoughts on what the organization's priorities should be. You may send them to Fairlington-cares@gmail.com.

—Jennifer Davies

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Of significant concern is the status of the 2020–2021 school budget, which is facing a deficit of \$20–30 million, largely due to losses in county tax revenue. Enrollment, while significantly under average numbers, has not contributed in a major way to budget loss due to the Virginia General Assembly's decision to hold public school systems harmless for temporary enrollment loss. (State funding is traditionally based on actual enrollment figures.)

However, according to Kanninen, state and federal funding only make up a small portion of total APS revenue with more than 80 percent of the annual budget coming from county tax revenues.

Stimulus spending, including the HEROES Act currently under negotiation in Congress, could make a difference, but without major intervention the only solution will be to furlough staff.

"We are obviously going to do whatever we can to have that not happen," said Kanninen. "But I want people to understand that that is going on."



Barbara Kanninen visited with FCA at the Board's virtual meeting in October. Photos by Guy Land.

APS staff already did not receive a compensation increase in 2020 due to budget constraints and most building and minor maintenance spending has been delayed. Some projects already nearing completion, like the opening of a new elementary school in the Westover neighborhood area, will continue as planned. But other plans to relieve overcrowding through new construction have been shelved for now.

The inability to make future predictions about budget and enrollment numbers have paused plans to reorga-



Relocatable classrooms were installed at Abingdon Elementary earlier this fall to address overcrowding.

nize the APS elementary school boundary lines. A new look at elementary attendance zones had originally been planned for this year.

South Arlington schools, including Abingdon Elementary School, will not see relief from overcrowding until the next boundary process. Abingdon is projected to be the most overcrowded school in the county next year.

"We may have gotten a little permanent reduction in enrollment from private schools," said Kanninen, hoping that may help relieve congestion. "The proposal is to do the North Arlington boundary change and then to do South Arlington two years from now in the fall of 2023."

Kanninen projected that the building of a new elementary school in South Arlington would not occur for a minimum of 10 years.

Several APS bond initiatives will appear on the ballot this November including infrastructure spending and major maintenance projects, like roofs and new kitchens for school buildings. But more than half of the proposed spending is earmarked for planning for new construction.

While this APS update offers somber news, Kanninen said she hopes things will begin to look up as students, parents, and teachers adapt to the changes in the system. She said APS has achieved several positive steps in recent months including the June hiring of new superintendent Dr. Francisco Durán and the monumental task of retraining teachers and successfully opening an entirely new school model this fall with very little time for preparation.

She also credited the FCA and Fairlington residents for their support and encouragement in a very difficult year.

"You are a true friend to our schools," she said. "You've been a partner, a champion, actively kept on top of the issues. And really worked with us in a nice collaborative way."

—Regina Bethencourt

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-Shirley Z.



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- Steven K.

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Ghosts, goblins, witches, and skeletons invade Fairlington

The coronavirus couldn't stop residents from making Fairlington a frightful neighborhood as Halloween approached. Based on the number of decorations, Hal-

loween is definitely Fairlingtonians' favorite holiday. *Photos by Guy Land.*



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neighborhood news

Fairlington Diners

The Fairlington Diners usually gathered a couple of times a month for relaxed dinners nearby. We focus on having a good meal and an opportunity to chat with neighbors. There's no commitment to attend regularly; many people attend as their schedules permit, or based on the choice of restaurants.

Since social distancing set in, however, we've adapted. In September and October, we picnicked together on the FCC grounds, once in the evening, and once for Saturday lunch, both of which proved popular. But alas, it will be too cold to do so starting in November. So the following Zoom event is planned.

On Saturday, Nov. 14, at 12:30 pm, a Zoom picnic! Saturday lunch proved popular last month, so let's try it again, on Zoom. Please RSVP by email to carol_dabbs at yahoo.com, and the Zoom coordinates will be sent to you a few days in advance.

If you have questions or suggestions about this group, call Carol at 703-379-6840 (leave a voicemail for a return call), or you can email her to be added to the email list.

Book Group

Save the date! Because of the Thanksgiving holiday, the Book Group will not meet in November but instead will have a Zoom meeting on Tuesday, Dec. 8 at 7:30 pm. At that time we will discuss *The River of Doubt: Theodore Roosevelt's Darkest Journey*, by Candice Millard.

"At once an incredible adventure narrative and a penetrating biographical portrait, *The River of Doubt* is the true story of Theodore Roosevelt's harrowing exploration of one of the most dangerous rivers on earth." —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. Please call Carol at 703-379-6840 to be added to our email list in order to receive a Zoom invitation.

Join Fairlington Knits! and Crochets and relax



Feeling tied up in knots due to the pandemic? Nervous about the election? Knitting has been proven to lower blood pressure and create a sense of calm. Join us for a virtual evening of knitting, crochet, and fellowship on Monday, Nov. 2 from 6:30–7:30 via Zoom.

We're meeting on Zoom so we can see what everyone is working on, ask for help/advice, or get inspiration for a project. All levels of crafters are welcome—beginner to expert. Log in from your home to talk with like-minded people about projects that might interest you.

Email Turner for the Zoom information to join the call: Turnerwork@aol.com.

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 a number of 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 fairlingtonmomsclub@gmail.com for further information.

Free redbud seedlings available

Thanks to Dominion Energy's Project Plant It!, EcoAction Arlington is offering free redbud seedlings at the Fairlington Farmers Market on Sunday, Nov. 1 from 9 am to 1 pm.

Online reservations are required. Each seedling will be about 12 inches long and will be bare root and wrapped in plastic. Distribution is first come, first served. Limit one per household. More information: ecoactionarlington.org or volunteer@ecoactionarlington.org.

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DOWN TO EARTH patio gardening



A fall walk reveals Fairlington's variety of planting areas

In a few weeks, we'll give thanks—even if via Zoom—with family and friends. Pandemic or not, Fairlington residents still can walk through our neighborhood to admire the natural beauty of trees, plants, and flowers. I've lived in this area for over 50 years and appreciate it every day. So, let me point out planting areas you will enjoy.

Nandina: On the circle which intersects S. Stafford St. and S. 36th St., these evergreen beauties stand tall (about six feet high). In April and May, they show tiny white flowers (like "Baby's Breath"). In colder weather, clumps of red fruit hang on thin, herbaceous stems. Nandina's leaves are one inch long and pointed at the margin. Some foliage turns reddish or maroon, depending on the cultivar. The evergreen leaves are so diminutive, they whistle in a strong breeze. Nandina colonizes at the root, forming many new trunks (one inch thick) along its base.

Willow oak trees: Seemingly planted in the early 1940s when Fairlington was built along with nearby ParkFairfax, Auburn Village, and the Pentagon, these giants form a canopy over S. Stafford St. Yes, some sidewalks buckled because of the shallow-growing root arms but it gives one of Fairlington's busiest streets a "hometown" feel. The narrow, three-inch-long leaves detach from branches and twirl to the ground, forming a yellow carpet in late autumn. Ideally, I'd like to see these buckled sidewalks removed and rebuilt in a curve for safety and aesthetics.



Magnolia seed pod in Fairlington Villages. Photo by Guy Land.

Southern magnolia: Where S. Stafford St. meets S. 32nd Rd., you will see one of these beauties. It's shaped like a giant egg, has football-shaped, thick leaves (brown on the underside and a glossy green on top), and large white flowers like unfolded handkerchiefs on its branches in summer and into October. Walk up to it and inhale one of these fragrant gems. Once the flowers fade, aggregates (fruit) forms in the shape of a baked potato that is salmon-colored before turning fire-engine red. Birds peck at the seeds in this hard-as-a-rock treat.

Blue spruce tree: There is one at the Fairlington Villages main office. Sometimes, it is decorated with strings of tiny white lights during Christmas. Branches bear stiff bluish needles in a circular pattern around

the stem. Grab one with your fist and it'll feel like plastic. Squeeze one and it returns to its bristly original form. Considering few specimens have a "blue" appearance, this one catches your eye. It is so loved, botanists long ago created cultivars. "Fat Albert" is a dwarf tree and the blue spruce shrub is shaped like a horizontal wreath, growing just 20 inches tall but two feet wide.

Japanese dogwood: It shows ivory flowers in late spring/summer but observe one in the fall and you'll see red fruit hanging from the stems. It is pinkish, round, and the size of a nickel. It even has pebbles on its surface. There is one next to a concrete bench at the corner of S. Stafford St. and S. 33rd St. The tree is an ornamental (flowering) and stands just 14 feet tall with a 12-foot spread.

Yellowwood tree: Cross the bridge into South Fairlington. At the right edge of the second court on the left (4645-4687 S. 34th St.), there is one on the median. It's about 40 feet tall and has smooth, grayish bark. In fall, the leaves turn (how'd you guess?) yellow. It's the only one I've seen in Fairlington. In May-June, panicles of white, fragrant, pea-like flowers hang from the branch tips. In fall, fruit forms in the shape of a peapod—originally green but later turning brown. Leaves are ovate (fat) with prominent veinage. The yellowwood is native to Kentucky, North Carolina, and Tennessee.

—Bill Sullivan
www.sullivanlandscaping.net



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Getting lots of exercise



The Fairlington playground was a bustle of activity on a late October Sunday morning. The county renovated the playground last year, installing all new equipment, and it has been a big hit with kids and parents alike. The combination of the playground and the Fairlington Farmers Market makes the Fairlington Community Center the place to be on Sundays. *Photo by Guy Land.*



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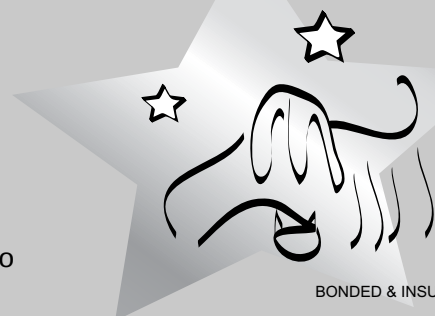
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- Pay via PayPal at fca.fairlington.ads@gmail.com.
- Send mini-ad copy via email, regular mail, or drop off at FCA drop box.

Email: admanager@fca-fairlington.org

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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.)

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