

# all FAIRLINGTON BULLETIN



www.fca-fairlington.org

SEPTEMBER 2015

Volume 41, Number 9

**Please note change of date:** The September FCA meeting will be held on Tuesday, September 15, (rescheduled from the usual 2nd Wednesday of the month), at 7 pm in Room 118 of the Fairlington Community Center, 3308 S. Stafford St.

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## Developer to outline Alexandria Gateway plans on September 15

Fairlington residents can learn about the plans for developing the Alexandria Gateway property at King St. and Beauregard St. in Alexandria when Danny Abramson, co-owner of Abramson Properties (the developer), outlines his revised plans at the FCA meeting on Tuesday, September 15.

Abramson described his general vision to the community in April, but he has been working with City of Alexandria staff on major revisions to key components of the proposal. The revised proposal is now slated to go before the Alexandria City Council in October.



*Artist's rendering of the Gateway project.  
Photo courtesy of Abramson Properties.*

Key elements for the property—the vacant parcel at 4600 King St. and the small strip mall at the King and Beauregard intersection—include a 7-floor apartment building on top of a 62,000 square-foot Harris Teeter grocery store; a 4-floor apartment building across from it; retail space where the strip mall is now, with 2 floors of offices on top of it; a 5-story office building on Beauregard, with retail on the first floor; and a 2-level below-ground parking garage for 800 vehicles, along with a limited number of surface parking spaces.

Earlier plans had called for a 144-room hotel, but that has been deleted. Initially the property did not include the small retail strip (site of the check-cashing business), as that property was under different ownership. But it has now been included in the overall development.

An initial design for the property last year had contained a 14-story apartment building, but that has been scaled back to 7 stories. Roughly 70 of the apartments on the site will be designed as affordable housing, while the remainder will be rented at market rates.

*Continued on page 21*

# 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.

## September 15 preliminary agenda:

**Note change of date!** Rescheduled from the usual second Wednesday of the month, the FCA meeting will be held on Tuesday, September 15, at 7pm, in the Fairlington Community Center, Room 118.

**Special presentation:** Danny Abramson, owner/developer of the properties at King and Beauregard, across from Fairlington and farther west on King, will update the community on plans for the Alexandria Gateway project.

### Regular board business:

- Approval of August minutes
- Officer reports
- Committee reports
- Unfinished business
- New business

## Online resources:

Find more information on the FCA website, [www.fca-fairlington.org](http://www.fca-fairlington.org). Sign up for updates delivered to your inbox.



Find us on Facebook at Fairlington Appreciation Society.

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

Web design by Global Thinking, Alexandria, VA,  
[www.globalthinking.com](http://www.globalthinking.com).

### USEFUL CONTACTS

Police, Alexandria (non-emergency)	703-838-4444
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Animal Warden	703-931-9241
Dominion (power outages)	888-667-3000
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Metrobus Complaints	703-228-7929
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Pothole Patrol Hotline	703-228-6485
Shirlington Library	703-228-6545
Street Light Hotline	703-228-6511
<a href="http://www.arlingtonva.us/departments/Environmental">www.arlingtonva.us/departments/Environmental</a>	
<a href="http://Services/dot/traffic/streetlights/index.htm">Services/dot/traffic/streetlights/index.htm</a>	
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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**Assistant Editor:** Christine Chirichella

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**Distribution Manager:** Noemi Riveira

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### — DEADLINE —

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

Send material on disk with paper proof to:

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E-mail editorial announcements to:

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E-mail commercial and mini ads to:

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

Drop off location: Drop box in the Fairlington Community Center, 3308 S. Stafford Street

### COMMERCIAL ADVERTISING RATES

Artwork and check made payable to **FCA** are due the 10th of the month preceding desired publication date. Direct inquiries regarding advertising file requirements to Beth Andrews at 571-403-1942.

Ad Size	Height	Width	Rate
1/8 page	2 3/16 in.	3 5/8 in.	\$47
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Back Cover (Full Page)	9.5 in.	7.5 in.	\$505
Full-Page Insert (1 Side)	11 in.	8.5 in.	\$525
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### Fairlington is a National Register and Virginia Landmark Historic District

For more information, visit [www.fca-fairlington.org](http://www.fca-fairlington.org)

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## Calendar

### First day of school

Tuesday, September 8  
Arlington Public Schools

### Fairlington Diners

Monday, September 14, 6:30 pm  
Ramparts Restaurant  
1700 Fern St., Alexandria

### County street sweeping

Tuesday, September 15,  
7:30 am – 3 pm  
Arlington Zone 2—Fairlington

### FCA monthly meeting

Tuesday, September 15, 7 pm  
FCC, 3308 S. Stafford St.

### Book Group

Tuesday, September 22, 7:30 pm  
FCC, 3308 S. Stafford St.

### Fairlington Diners

Thursday, September 24, 6:30 pm  
House of Dynasty  
7550 Telegraph Rd., Alexandria

### Native plant sale

Saturday, September 26, 9 am – 2 pm  
1701 N. Quaker Lane  
Alexandria

## School days in Fairlington

Watch for children. Drive slowly.



### Contributing writers this month:

Jennifer Davies, Lisa Schwanger, Bill Sullivan,  
Michelle Woolley.

Some images in this publication may be digitally  
enhanced.



## PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

A key step in the expansion and improvement of Abingdon Elementary School will occur in mid-September when the Arlington County Board considers the application by Arlington Public Schools (APS) for a use permit for the project. Approval of the permit, and its associated conditions, will allow APS to move forward with construction and renovation.

Over the past year FCA has worked closely with APS and county staff, serving on two advisory committees and hosting six listening sessions for Fairlington residents. With the approval of the use permit, the project will move from planning to execution. (*See the story, page 5.*)

The construction activity, which will begin next spring and last roughly 18 months, may have a significant impact on Fairlington residents.

**Playing field.** The playing field will become the construction staging area, which will make the field unavailable for public use throughout the construction phase.

**Construction traffic.** The intersection of S. Abingdon and S. 29th Streets will become more congested as construction vehicles enter the work site. To help with traffic, the contractor will be required to have a flagman at key intersections when construction vehicles are entering or leaving the site. To reduce congestion at the entrance to the school itself, APS will create an access road from S. 29th to the field so that construction vehicles will not have to use the actual school entrance. In addition, construction vehicles will not be permitted to enter or leave the site during school drop-off and pick-up hours. APS will explore a secondary access route, but the options are limited.

**Construction worker parking.** Construction workers will be prohibited from parking on neighborhood streets. The county's zoning inspectors will enforce this provision. Construction management will be allowed to park on the playing field, but all other workers will have to park off-site outside of Fairlington. APS is searching for nearby property on which to lease 35–50 parking spaces for the workers to park. The contractor may be required to provide a shuttle to take the workers to the site.

**Impact on adjacent buildings.** To assess any construction impact on the Fairlington buildings that are right next to the school, APS will contract with an engineering firm to do a pre-construction baseline assessment and monitor the buildings periodically during the construction period.

FCA will seek quick resolution to any neighborhood problems that emerge once the construction work begins.

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



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## ***Back to school, Tuesday, September 8***

On Tuesday, September 8, we'll see the return of students walking and biking to school and school buses picking up and letting off children. Stay alert for kids crossing the street. Slow down.

And to discourage dangerous driving around stopped school buses, Arlington Public Schools (APS)

unveils bus cameras on the first day of school. Newly installed this year, cameras on the stop-arms of a selected number of APS's fleet of 165 buses will capture scofflaws in the act of passing a stopped-with-red-lights-flashing school bus.

The first buses with new cameras were tested on summer school bus routes over the last couple of months, and 50 drivers received written warnings for violations. Starting September 8, civil fines of \$250 will be assessed and citations that are not paid timely will be turned over to the county Treasurer's office for collection.

The violation-detection and license-plate cameras operate automatically, providing both video and high-resolution still images of vehicles that pass stopped buses. Virginia law requires drivers to stop when they approach, from any direction, a school bus with red lights flashing and stop-arm extended. The primary exception: Drivers traveling the opposite direction on a road with a median or center-road barrier. For more information, go online to [apsva.us/stoparmcameras](http://apsva.us/stoparmcameras).

—Gretchen Fallon

## ***County Board to consider Abingdon expansion***

The Arlington County Board is slated to vote on the plans for expanding Abingdon Elementary School in mid-September. The board is expected to consider a use permit package that includes the guidelines for construction activities, parking requirements, transportation strategies, and tree protection plans.

Abingdon's application is scheduled to be considered by



*Photo by Beth Andrews.*

the board the week of September 21.

FCA has raised with county staff a number of concerns expressed by residents who live near the school, including the impact on the neighborhood of construction traffic and parking by construction workers and potential damage to the 70-year-old condo buildings that are right next to the school.

Still unresolved is the status of off-site parking for the school. Arlington Public Schools (APS) and Fairlington Villages have been negotiating a multi-year lease arrangement that would permit Abingdon to use 15 parking spaces in the Fairlington Villages lot that is adjacent to its community center on S. Abingdon St. This would enable

*Continued on page 21*

## ***South Arlington Working Group seeks innovative solutions to elementary overcrowding***



*In August, a bus tour of possible South Arlington school sites included county board (CB) and school board (SB) members: (from left) Barbara Kanninen (SB), Libby Garvey (CB), Michelle Woolley, Fairlington representative to SAWG, Mary Hynes (CB), Nancy Van Doren (SB), and FCA President Guy Land. Photo by Katie Cristol.*

As the *Bulletin* recently reported, Arlington Public Schools (APS) is facing an increasingly concerning overcrowding problem. APS's 2014 Capital Improvement Plan allotted money for a new elementary school in South Arlington to address a projected 1,000-seat deficit in south-county elementary schools by 2019. After plans to site a new elementary school on the campus of Thomas Jefferson Middle School were scrapped, the school board directed the APS Superintendent to create a community working group to analyze site options for

*Continued on page 7*

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# I-395 HOV ramp scheduled to open in September



*Photo by Gretchen Fallon.*

The long-awaited I-395 ramp that is designed to improve access from the highway to the Mark Center at Seminary Road and Beauregard Street is scheduled to open to traffic in late September, according to VDOT (Virginia Department of Transportation). The dedicated ramp connects the highway's HOV/bus lanes directly to the Mark Center, and it features reverse flow—moving traffic into the center in the morning and away from it in the evening.

The \$1 billion Army Headquarters Building complex at the Mark Center (also called BRAC 133), which completed construction in stages and moved employees to the site in phases between 2011 and 2013, now houses about 6,500 DoD and other federal agency employees. The Alexandria site was selected in 2008 as a result of the 2005 round of Base Realignment and Closure decisions, and it was intended to meet stringent DoD requirements for anti-terrorism building security.

The office complex has been controversial since it was planned, because the site is accessible only by car or bus; many of the employees who were relocated to the Mark Center moved from leased spaces in Crystal City and the District that were Metro accessible. The dedicated highway ramp was included in 2010–2011 planning to mitigate traffic impacts and to ease local and regional concerns about the complex's location.

For more information about this or other VDOT projects, go online to [www.virginiadot.org](http://www.virginiadot.org).

—Gretchen Fallon

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*South Arlington Working Group, continued from page 5*

a new 725-seat elementary school in South Arlington and to provide insight into other potential options to address overcrowding and improve instructional opportunities in South Arlington's elementary schools.

The South Arlington Working Group (SAWG) started meeting in June, and it includes representatives from PTAs and civic associations in South Arlington, school board staff, school board-appointed SAWG Chair Greg Greeley, School Board member and liaison Barbara Kaninen, and County Board member and liaison John Vihstadt. The FCA is represented by Michelle Woolley, while Jen Davies and Jeni Hornback, both Fairlington residents, are Abingdon PTA's representatives to the group. Meetings are open to the public and occur approximately twice a month until November. A schedule for meetings, locations, meeting minutes, and additional information are available on the APS website.

Thus far, SAWG has reviewed current county-owned properties for potential school locations. The Fairlington Community Center was considered, but it did not make the cut for further study at this time. As of mid-August, the working group continued its review of potential private property suggestions, which would require the county to purchase land, consider land swaps, or grant developers zoning waivers in exchange for land.

There are many challenges involved with finding a new school site. Arlington is a small county, with little undeveloped land, public or private, to consider. Purchasing private parcels that provide even the minimum required acreage could prove prohibitively expensive—especially considering the limitations on Arlington's bonding capacity required to maintain its AAA rating. Also, geographic concerns restrict site options: whether a site is in a flood plain, is close to busy or noisy thoroughfares, or has access to outdoor play space.

However, the working group has also come up with many creative ideas to consider to help address the overcrowding problem within budgetary constraints. For example, there were several suggestions to move programs, such as the Career Center, to other sites, thereby opening up county-owned land for elementary overflow and, perhaps, allowing for a more cost-efficient solution. So far, the group maintains an optimistic demeanor, and it gives hope that if the community is willing to consider innovative solutions and work together the overcrowding problem can be addressed. The group expects to achieve a narrowed list of sites before a status report is due to the school board in September.

—Michelle Woolley



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## ***Fairlington Bikeshare station performs poorly, will be removed***



*CaBi maintenance in August. Photo by Gretchen Fallon.*

The Capital Bikeshare (CaBi) station on the bridge, at Abingdon and S. 36th Streets, has underperformed the program's expectations, and it was scheduled for removal in August.

CaBi manager Paul DeMaio said the program has been tracking the bridge station's usage, and it was "not doing well. In fact, it consistently performs at the bottom of our 81-station network." The station logged 21 trips in June, less than one trip per day—and that's during peak riding season. By comparison, the median monthly trips for Bikeshare stations in June is 481. Therefore the program decided to reallocate the equipment and docks of this under-utilized station to a site "where they are more needed."

The other two CaBi stations in Fairlington will remain, at the Fairlington Community Center and at S. 31st and S. Woodrow Streets. It is expected that the few trips initiated at the bridge station will, going forward, be split between the two remaining stations. DeMaio said Capitol BikeShare considered relocating the bridge station to another Fairlington site, but the community's need for on-street parking precluded that option. It is an option that can be revisited in the future, DeMaio said, as the entire regional network expands and ridership increases.

—Gretchen Fallon

## ***New to Fairlington? Avoid a ticket—register your car***

You must register your vehicle within 60 days of moving to the county, whether moving into Arlington from another state or from another Virginia jurisdiction. This sets up your vehicle's county tax account.

Note: Although you have 60 days to register your vehicle, the law requires the display of a county decal within 30 days, so it's wise to register your vehicle and obtain a decal within the first 30 days after moving into the county or obtaining a new vehicle in order to avoid the risk of being ticketed by the police. (This registration differs from your Virginia Department of Motor Vehicles registration.)

For more information, email the Commissioner of Revenue's office, [vehicle@arlingtonva.us](mailto:vehicle@arlingtonva.us), or call 703-228-3135. Also check out the county's "New Resident Checklist" on the county website, [www.arlingtonva.us](http://www.arlingtonva.us).

## ***Safeway historical marker***

Take note of the Alexandria Heritage Trail marker in the plaza area between the new Safeway entrance and the retail building beside the store. The marker stands near the spot where 19th century wagon routes converged as trade moved east/west and north/south between the port of Alexandria and the town's hinterlands. Commercial activity near the crossroads increased during and after World War II, including the construction of Fairlington, Parkfairfax, and Shirley Highway (I-395). The original Bradlee-area Safeway was built at the crossroads in 1955.



*Photo by Gretchen Fallon.*

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## Beach house bath

Cindy Kunz's whole house remodeling took its unifying theme from the owner's affection for "a rainy day at the beach"—signaling guilt-free indolence—and threads of grey, beige, and aqua can be found throughout the house. As with her new kitchen (featured on the Fairlington Historical Society's Home and Garden tour in May and in the July *Bulletin*), the upstairs master bath was completely remodeled with that calming palette in mind.

After demolition, the bathroom walls were insulated and covered with the distinctive bead-board wainscoting that can be found in the kitchen backsplash and island surround. The light-sand-colored tile of the new walk-in shower is complemented by the plank ceiling and the warm quartz stone countertop—its mandolin shape provides extra surface space by extending across the entire wall. The tile floor is a surprise—it looks exactly like weathered grey driftwood. A light grey wave tile accent detail in the shower surround repeats in the tiled wall above the sink, and the sink itself is a clear glass vessel.

Amid colors and textures that recall crushed seashells and sandy pebbles, the bath adds such practical touches as a high-efficiency fan and a new pocket door. Kunz



*The wave detail of the wall above the sink can be seen in the shower's accent tile. Contractor, Harol Silva. Photos by Kendra Best.*

offers this thoughtful lesson learned: She wishes she had had an electrical outlet installed inside the cabinets, so that the toothbrush could stay plugged in but hidden.

—Gretchen Fallon

## Take a walk back in Fairlington's history—coming this fall



Want to learn a little more about Fairlington's history while exploring the neighborhood? FCA and the Fairlington Historical Society are working on a Fairlington history walk for later this fall. Stops may include a boundary stone from the late 1700s that was surveyed at the time of President George Washington, the site of a Civil War fort that was part of the defenses of Washington, and the location of a colonial plantation.

If you would like to help with the walk or have a suggestion for a site or topic to include on the walk, please contact [fairlingtonhistoricalsociety.org](http://fairlingtonhistoricalsociety.org).

See the October *Bulletin* for more details.



*The floor looks like aged driftwood—it's tile.*



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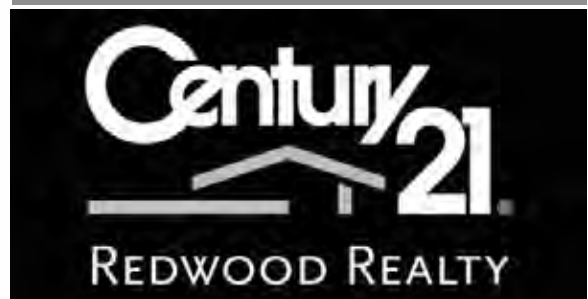
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# Tree distribution program's website launches September 1



At the county's nursery facility. Photo by Gretchen Fallon.

The county's popular free tree giveaway program is organized by the Parks and Natural Resources Division of Arlington's Department of Parks and Recreation (DPR), and the program's website opens for business September 1. Now is the time for neighborhood groups, condo boards, and individuals to start planning a request for a free tree from the county to plant on private property next month. The trees support renewal of Arlington's urban canopy.

## New location for native plant sale



Virginia spiderwort.  
Photo courtesy  
WesternWildlifeCorridor.org.

The Northern Alexandria Native Plant Sale will be held on Saturday, September 26, from 9 am to 2 pm at the Church of St. Clement, 1701 N. Quaker Lane. (Formerly known as the Parkfairfax Native Plant Sale, the sale has moved from its old location on Valley Drive.)

Organized and operated entirely by volunteers, the sale is the largest native plant sale in the D.C. metro area. A dozen or more vendors from Virginia, Maryland, Pennsylvania, and West Virginia offer native perennials, shrubs, and trees for sun or shade.

Vendors are listed on the sale website, [www.NorthernAlexandriaNativePlantSale.org](http://www.NorthernAlexandriaNativePlantSale.org). For more information or questions, contact Scott Knudsen at 571-232-0375 or [sknudsen@earthlink.net](mailto:sknudsen@earthlink.net).

—Gretchen Fallon

The tree distribution event is scheduled for Saturday, October 24, from 8 am to 3 pm, at the county nursery facility located behind the baseball complex on Four Mile Run Drive. Park in the lot near the ball field and walk into the nursery to pick up a tree. A golf cart and driver will be available for anyone needing assistance.

The program permits one tree per residential property. Multi-family properties should contact TreeStewards, [info@treestewards.org](mailto:info@treestewards.org), to seek assistance in obtaining trees and coordinating planting sites.

The trees come in a variety of native species, and the specimens, called "whips" in the nursery trade, come in two-gallon containers. Starting this month, the tree distribution website will be updated with photos and details about what types of trees will be available, as well as registration instructions for individuals and groups. Go online to [www.arlingtonva.us](http://www.arlingtonva.us), click on the DPR tab, and follow the link to tree distribution. For questions about the trees or the process, contact Environmental Landscape Supervisor Patrick Wegeng, [pwengeng@arlingtonva.us](mailto:pwengeng@arlingtonva.us) or 703-228-6521.

—Gretchen Fallon

## See the trees, online

To view a virtual tree map of Arlington, go online to <http://gis.arlingtonva.us/gallery>. Using the county's GIS (Geographic Information System), county arborists have created this virtual tour of Champion, Significant, and Notable trees in Arlington. Zoom in to see Fairlington's eight Notable trees as well as the Champion Blackjack oak on the grounds of the Fairlington Community Center.



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## Delivered to you!



*A variety of local vendors will delivery groceries right to your door in Fairlington. Photo by Gretchen Fallon.*

If you're pressed for time or just unable to get to the store, here's how to order a grocery delivery. Two local stores offer on line ordering for direct delivery to your home.

Giant's Peapod service ([www.peapod.com](http://www.peapod.com)) offers next-day delivery or up to two weeks delay, if you want your order delivered after a vacation, for example. Safeway's home delivery ([www.shop.safeway.com/ecom/home](http://www.shop.safeway.com/ecom/home)) offers same-day delivery if you order before 8:30 am.

Harris Teeter isn't offering

direct delivery yet for our area, but you may choose to order on line and pick up your order curbside at the Potomac Yard store (see [www.harristeeter.com/shopping/express\\_lane](http://www.harristeeter.com/shopping/express_lane)).

Easier still, check out Instacart ([www.instacart.com](http://www.instacart.com)), which promises delivery in one hour for orders you place on their website for any goods at Magruder's, Costco, Harris Teeter, Yes! Organics, Safeway, and Whole Foods. You do not need a Costco membership to order

there from Instacart. They even allow you to mix goods from those stores in a single order. Websites mentioned here all contain information about various pricing arrangements and apps that make ordering easier.

You might want more inspiration, maybe ideas for meal planning, or more specialized products, such as organic, local, or gluten-free food. Perhaps you might like the ingredients prepared for you, delivered with a recipe and ready to cook. Then try the following online delivery services:

- Washington's Green Grocer ([www.washingtonsgreengrocer.com](http://www.washingtonsgreengrocer.com)). Choose a standard or customized box of organic groceries, including meat and fish. Choose how often you want deliveries. If you can't be home, just tell them where you want them to leave the box.
- Relay Foods ([www.relayfoods.com](http://www.relayfoods.com)) advertises local providers and offers meal-planning suggestions. They deliver, but also have one local pickup site at Key School. The meal plans offer various categories, including "budget-friendly."
- And, finally, Blue Apron ([www.blueapron.com](http://www.blueapron.com)) advertises premeasured ingredients for seasonal meals of 500–700 calories per serving that will take about 35 minutes to prepare—"Farm-fresh ingredients from family-run businesses." Pick a plan, two-person or family, three meals per week, and receive a refrigerated box of ingredients and recipes for those meals.

—*The Locavivists*

**Locaviva:** This new monthly series, about local services and opportunities that can make your life easier and more fun, will help meet a community need for information identified by the FCA Steering Committee on Intergenerational Strategies. Monthly features will describe how to use, join, or participate in activities that offer assistance with everyday interests, such as arranging for grocery delivery, finding a class to take, getting a ride somewhere, or connecting with local groups to meet friends or volunteer your services. We encourage readers to become Locavivists by learning more about local options, telling us about their experience, and adding their own favorite sources each month. Just send a message to our dedicated email account ([locavivists@gmail.com](mailto:locavivists@gmail.com)). We'll post results on the Fairlington Appreciation Society Facebook page.

### County taxes due next month, October 5

The second installment of Arlington real estate property tax and the car tax (vehicle personal property tax) are due to the county treasurer early next month, on Monday, October 5.

Homeowners who do not pay property tax through a mortgage escrow account will receive a bill in the mail. Penalties apply for late payment, whether or not you received a bill in the mail.

For complete information, go online to the county website, [www.arlingtonva.us](http://www.arlingtonva.us), and search taxes.

October 8th Special Event. *Details below.*

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— Denice McCullough, Fairlington Resident

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# FFM welcomes Compost Crew!



Becky, at Compost Crew (above), explains how composting works. Photo by Guy Land. Photos at right and below by Gretchen Fallon.

Due to the increasing popularity of composting in the last few years, Fairlington residents are thinking about ways to dispose of kitchen and garden waste in a productive and responsible way. The FCA formed a committee to look at composting possibilities for the community, and the Fairlington Farmers Market noted comments from many shoppers who voiced an interest in having a compost vendor at FFM. Thus, among other options now being considered in Fairlington, Compost Crew joined FFM in August.



So, what is composting? It's a process that turns your garbage into nutrient-rich soil—in short, garbage recycling. It starts with soil—that black stuff underfoot—but we seldom consider that soil is made up of a mixture of “organic remains, clay, and rock particles.” Those “remains” are leftover bits of things that once grew, have died, and are now lying around on the

ground. If that material can decompose (i.e., is organic), it will eventually become soil. So, composting is just nature's way of acting on organic material—decomposing it and turning it into rich soil.

Finished compost is soil that's dark brown and crumbly,

and it smells like a forest floor. Working compost into your garden supplements and aerates the soil that's already there (usually Virginia clay), and it enhances the garden's ability to grow healthy plants. Why not just fertilize, you might ask? Fertilizer feeds the *plants*; compost feeds the *soil*.

But suppose you don't garden. Why then would you compost? There are many benefits:

- Composting reduces your carbon footprint by reducing the amount of waste you send to the landfill, which we now know contributes to greenhouse gases. (The EPA estimates that Americans could keep out of the landfill more than 140 pounds of waste, per person, per year, by composting.)



- Composting turns your waste into a useful product; so if you don't want to use it, others can.
- Using compost in a garden reduces the need for water and fertilizers and helps reduce/eliminate the need for pesticides.
- If you get kids involved, it's a great way to teach environmental respect and stewardship.

Ryan and Becky of Compost Crew have designed the process to be very easy. They collect food scraps and other organic matter—including, believe it or not, dryer lint, pine needles, human and animal hair, and silk thread (there is an extensive list of compostable items). They provide sealed and critter-proof bins and bin liners for your collected organic waste and a weekly collection service—you don't have to be home for pick-up. When they return the bin, it's all cleaned out. You can then choose to receive the composted soil or donate it.

Compost Crew launched in Maryland in 2011 and to date has collected over one million pounds of food waste. They are currently accepting subscriptions in Virginia, and service will begin on September 14. Stop by and learn all there is to know about composting, as well as Compost Crew's services and fees.

—Lisa Schwanger

**Fairlington United Methodist Church**  
**Saturday, September 12<sup>th</sup>**



**Fairlington Fun Fest**

**11 a.m. – 2 p.m.**

**All are welcome! FREE event!**

Join us on the Fairlington UMC Playground located at 3900 King Street. Enjoy a moon bounce, fire truck, crafts, games, music, and playground. Bring your own picnic or purchase and enjoy your Chicken from the Fairlington United Methodist Men's Chicken BBQ. Ice cream and popcorn will be available for sale. Questions? Call the church office at 703-671-8557 or look on our website at [www.fairlingtonumc.org](http://www.fairlingtonumc.org).



Our Motto:  
 "If the Colonel had our recipe, he'd be a General!"



**Chicken BBQ and Yard Sale**

BBQ chicken will be available from 10:30 a.m. until they sell out. Yard sale (8 am-4 pm) space is available for \$10. (Pay the cashier - Bring your own table). All proceeds support Fairlington United Methodist Men Missions. For more information or to reserve your yard sale space, contact Dave Moore at [cruguru@gmail.com](mailto:cruguru@gmail.com).



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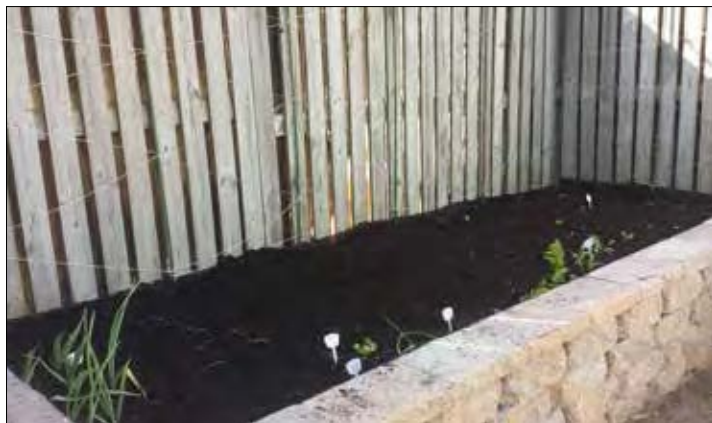


## *The Fairlington Farmer reflects on the season's bounty*



The spring's hard work, of soil amendment and supports placement, pays off in the vegetable garden of Glen resident Rebecca Carpenter during the summer's peak yield period in July and August, and extending into September for cool season crops like broccoli and spinach. Visitors salivate over a summer harvest basket (pictured, above) filled with squash, cucumbers, okra, cherry tomatoes, green beans, "chocolate" peppers, and green peppers. Carpenter's vegetable garden, cultivated on a Fairlington patio, provides a laboratory for marveling over how her garden grows. For more information, see [www.SproutKitchenGardens.com](http://www.SproutKitchenGardens.com).

—Gretchen Fallon



*The raised bed this season produced garlic, carrots, broccoli, cauliflower, okra, squash, zucchini, tomatoes (three varieties), and peppers (two varieties). In front of the bed are containers with more than 15 varieties of herbs. The bed, in April before planting (above top) and full grown with summer crops in July (above bottom). Photos by Rebecca Carpenter.*



*Early green bean plants, newly sprouted in May and protected from squirrels by wire netting (left); beans winding up the tee-pee trellis in June (center); and (right) full grown blooming bean plants in July.*

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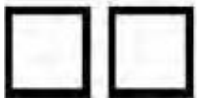
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In addition to the Gateway development, other changes planned for that area include major improvements at the King and Beauregard intersection itself: creating an additional left-turn lane in each direction on King; installing medians down the center of King; widening sidewalks; and installing a 10-foot shared-use path on portions of King and Beauregard.

The September 15 meeting will be the third time Abramson has shared his plans with Fairlington residents.

—Guy Land



**Plastic and paper do not mix!** Mews resident Ann Noonan lifts a plastic bag full of crumpled paper out of the “commingled” items recycling bin. Packaged in this way, the bag is essentially trash. To remind: Paper does not go in the bins. Paper goes outside the bins, bundled in paper bags (not plastic bags) or tied with string. Paper in the bins contaminates the entire bin-load. Plastic mixed with paper contaminates the collected-paper load. For a review of recycling guidelines, see [www.capitol-services.org](http://www.capitol-services.org). Photo by Gretchen Fallon.

APS to meet the county's parking requirements while protecting much of the playing field on school property. In FCA-sponsored listening sessions, residents expressed a desire to maintain as much of the green space as possible.

The Villages condo board considered the draft lease in August, but tabled a final decision until September 2 in order to have further negotiations with APS over a few provisions. After additional discussion, both the board and APS believe they will be able to reach a mutually agreeable proposal to secure off-site parking spaces as requested by APS. If, however, they are unable to, APS will submit a plan to put the additional parking on the site of the current playing field.

—Guy Land

## Street sweeping in Fairlington, September 15 and October 6



Fairlington's car-filled streets pose a challenge for street-sweepers. Photo by Gretchen Fallon.

The county requests that you make every effort to remove your car from the curb on Tuesday, September 15 and October 6, when Fairlington's streets are scheduled for street sweeping between 7:30 am and 3 pm.

Street sweeping removes accumulated debris and pollutants, like sand, salt, metals, petroleum, and bacteria, before they are washed into streams and the regional watershed. Arlington's 59 civic associations are grouped into 11 street sweeping zones—Fairlington is in Zone 2. To see the schedule and a zone map, go online to the county website, [www.arlingtonva.us](http://www.arlingtonva.us) > Department of Environmental Services > street sweeping.



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# neighborhood news

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## **Fairlington Diners**

The Fairlington Diners gather a couple of times a month for relaxed dinners nearby. We focus on having a good meal and an opportunity to chat with neighbors. In August, we tried Whitlow's for burgers and Bangkok 54 for Thai food. In September, we'll return to a neighborhood favorite for burgers and try a different Chinese restaurant for variety.

Monday, September 14, 6:30 pm, Ramparts Restaurant, 1700 Fern St., Alexandria, VA 22302, 703-998-6616. Back by popular demand, this is a local favorite that we visit frequently. On Mondays, they offer 1/2 price burgers with the purchase of any beverage. The rest of the menu is also available.

Thursday, September 24, 6:30 pm, House of Dynasty, Hayfield Plaza Shopping Center, 7550 Telegraph Road, Alexandria, VA 22315, 703-922-5210, [www.houseofdynasty.com](http://www.houseofdynasty.com). A favorite of one of our long-time members, who reports that there's great food, easy parking, and separate checks are no problem.

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](mailto:carol_dabbs@yahoo.com).

## **Book Group**

Join the Fairlington Book Group in September to discuss *American Nations: A History of the Eleven Rival Regional Cultures of North America* by Colin Woodard.

According to the *Daily Beast*, the author “debunks the simplistic notion of Left Coast, red state, blue state, and other broad-brush efforts to peg America's differences” and offers “a way to better understand the forces at play in the rumpus room of current American politics.”

The Book Group welcomes first-time visitors and drop-ins. No commitment required! If you're into American politics, history and culture, join us in September, no strings attached.

We are meeting on Tuesday, September 22, at 7:30 pm in the Fairlington Community Center, 3308 S. Stafford Street. We hope you'll join us.

## **Card players welcome**

Join your Fairlington neighbors for a friendly game of Canasta. No previous experience is necessary to enjoy this card game. We are happy to teach you. The group meets Tuesday mornings at a local church hall near Fairlington. Call Carol Ann at 703-931-8533.

## **Fairlington Babysitting Co-op**

If you are looking for a night out without the kids, or an afternoon to yourself, join the Fairlington Babysitting Co-op. For more than 30 years Fairlington families have been exchanging free babysitting services using a card system. It's perfect for parents who would like to know dependable adults to watch their children and meet other families in the community.

Email the coordinators, Danielle Bloom and Tiffany Bittenbender, at [fairlington.babysitting@gmail.com](mailto:fairlington.babysitting@gmail.com) to request more information and an application.

## **School crossing guards needed**

Arlington County Police are looking for crossing guards to ensure safety at Arlington Public Schools.

- Earn extra cash working a few hours each weekday.
- Starting salary \$13.84 an hour plus county benefits including sick leave, annual leave, holiday leave, and retirement. They also provide uniforms and training.
- For more information go online to <http://agency.governmentjobs.com/arlington>.
- Don't use computers? Staff will be happy to put in an application for you. Telephone 703-228-3500.

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# DOWN TO EARTH patio gardening



*As the growing season wanes, go flower shopping*

September signals a shift in seasons, although temperatures in the Washington area still can reach 90 degrees some afternoons. While the month is about back-to-school, football, and pulling sweaters out of storage, what does it mean for our patio gardens in Fairlington?

For one thing, you can plant now. The heat in September isn't as brutal as it was in June, July, and August. And with cooler overnight temperatures, a plant's root zone stays moist, which keeps it healthy and vigorous.

More important, though, is flower shopping. Plant nurseries have stopped ordering annual flowers, but now is a good time to buy what's left. They're leggy but price-discounted. They were already marked down at Merrifield Garden Center, in Fairfax, in early August.

Annuals are an underrated specimen of a patio garden. They present any color (yes, blue as well) from late April to early December, are affordable, and are easy to plant. It only takes a trowel and elbow grease to fit the fibrous-rooted plants in the soil or in a pot on your brick patio or porch. The only thing to consider—Is your patio shaded or in full sun?

About the only annual that requires a shovel to plant would be mandevilla. The native of Brazil flowers in pink, red, and white from spring until early December. The flower's throat is a pale yellow, they're fragrant, and they open to a 4-inch-diameter. They are showy even while meandering



*Mandevilla flanks a patio gate. Photo by Gretchen Fallon*

through lush, green leaves that resemble miniature footballs (3 inches wide and 5 inches long).

Other vines to look for this month are the fall-blooming clematis and star jasmine. Each has a white fragrant flower in autumn. You may have noticed a "blanket of white" draped over a fence in autumns past. This would be a clematis, which has 4-lobed blooms filling its branches. Star jasmine's flowers are 5-lobed, less dense on the vine, and resemble a pinwheel. Usually, they are seen twining around a lamp post.

And if you notice the oakleaf hydrangea at a nursery, buy one. Its ivory, cone-shaped flowers turn salmon-pink in autumn. The leaf resembles, well, an oak leaf, but it is gigantic—some size up at 12 inches long by 8 inches wide. It prefers shade and is bulky, so it needs space.

While at the perennials table, look for sedum. This perennial has many species, but look for "Autumn Joy," which has a pinkish flower in—you guessed it—autumn. The leaves on this sedum are bluish-green, paddle-shaped, and succulent—they feel like rubber if you pinch one. This sun-loving ground cover grows 8 inches tall with a similar spread, and it is dome-shaped.

If you haven't the garden space for new plants, there's always maintenance to do. Weeds and leaves manifest throughout the year, and removing them preserves ground water for plant roots while eliminating areas where fungus, bacteria, and powdery mildew may occur.

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



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# ABINGDON *school news*



*Photos by Jen Davies.*

## ***Abingdon welcomes families and staff back for 2015–16 school year***

School supplies are being delivered, teachers are preparing their classrooms and the administrative staff is busy organizing the hundreds of students and staff expected to walk through the school's doors on September 8. It is *that* time of year.

While students might enjoy an "extra" week of summer vacation, the late school-year start means more will be packed into an already busy September.

"We really want all Abingdon families and staff to feel welcomed and part of a larger community right from the start," says PTA co-president Jennifer Davies. "Whether you are a returning student, a parent whose child is just starting kindergarten, a recently relocated-to-the-area family or a new teacher, we hope that everyone can feel at

home here and excited by the start of the school year."

Abingdon's five-member PTA executive board are all Fairlington residents; so, too, are the dozen or so staff members who call Fairlington home. The school and the neighborhood enjoy and benefit from a positive symbiotic relationship that Davies hopes will continue.

Abingdon has experienced tremendous growth over the past five years (consistent with schools across the county), and this will mean more students walking, taking the bus, and being dropped off at school.

"We hope that parents and residents are mindful of all the little feet that will be making their way to school," said Davies. "And please be careful whether you are walking, biking, or driving through the neighborhood."

## ***We welcome new staff to Abingdon***

While we said goodbye to many beloved staff members last year, we are very pleased to say hello to our newest members to the school: Karen Bastow, 5th Grade Special Education; Alexa Broccoli, Spanish; Lauren Bruzon, Spanish; Lori Criado, ESOL HILT; Nicole Hurren, Physical Education; Lauren Idol, 5th Grade; Sarah Jackson, Guidance Counselor; Nicole Jondahl, 1st Grade; Mary Ohmer, 5th Grade; and Toni Svonavae, 1st Grade.

## ***Important dates for September***

Thursday, September 3, 1 to 2 pm, Open House, Pre-K through 5th grade. All families are welcome

to come to school to meet their child's/children's teacher(s), see their classroom, and get important information for the start of the school year.

Monday, September 7, 4 to 6 pm, PTA Back to School Picnic and Potluck. All Abingdon families, staff, and alumni are invited back for our annual picnic on the school playground. This is a great opportunity for students see old friends and welcome new ones. As always, PTA provides fried chicken and drinks.

Tuesday, September 8, First day of school (K–5)

Wednesday, September 9, First day of school (Pre-K)

Thursday, September 17, 7 pm, Back to School Night

Tuesday, September 29, 6:30 pm, PTA meeting

—Jen Davies



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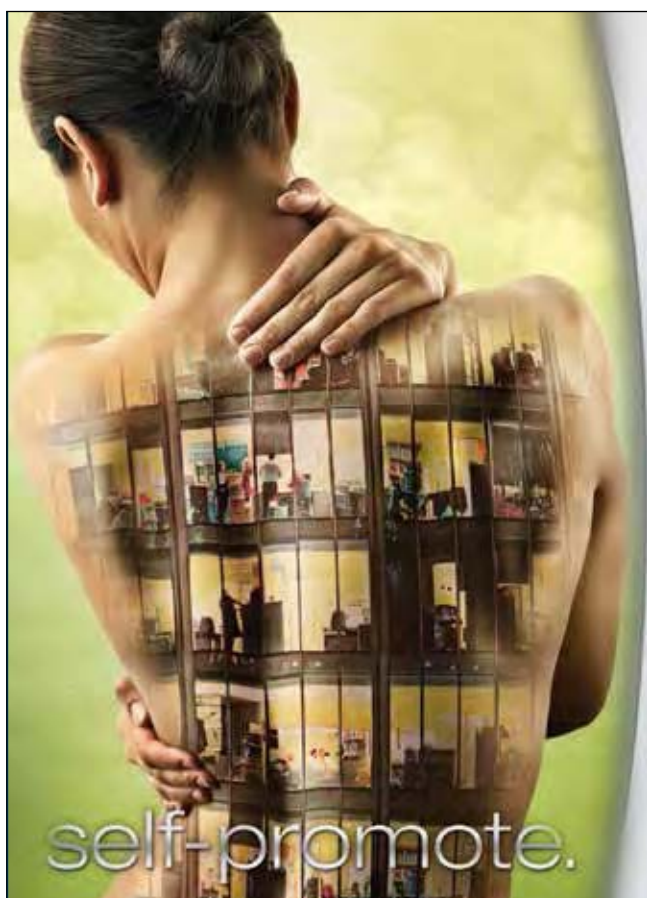
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**DAYTIME YOGA AT FAIRLINGTON COMMUNITY CENTER.** Starting September 23rd, Yoga will be at South Fairlington Community Center, Wednesday mornings from 9 to 10:15. No experience necessary; all levels welcome and accommodated. Join us for traditional Hatha Yoga to improve breathing, flexibility, strength and stability. We will work on poses, balance and mental focus and a simple warm up with optional use of very light weight (one or two lbs). Class ends with relaxation. Age 14 to adult and able to follow oral or visual instructions. Please call Rita at 703-728-3053 for information.

### MEDITATION WORKSHOP AT FAIRLINGTON COMMUNITY CENTER.

On Saturday, October 3rd, 9AM to 4PM, I will offer a meditation class at South Fairlington Community Center. In class you will learn to calm mind and body, watch and change thinking, reduce response to stress, focus and heighten awareness, and breathe efficiently. Class combines instruction, exercises, discussion. Wear comfortable clothing; bring lunch to eat during class. Beginner and practicing meditators welcome. Instructor is certified to teach Integrative Meditation; class is not affiliated with any religion or spiritual practice. Call Rita at 703-728-3053 for information.

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Alexandria — Super Location! All brick townhouse w/3 BR & 3.5 BA. Minutes to Beltway and Pentagon. Eat in KIT w/SS appliances, new deck. Finished lower level with fireplace and walk out private yard \$449k. Call Pat Shannon



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