

Are you a homeowner or a renter? If you live in the Aurora Highlands area you are invited and encouraged to come to our monthly meetings where we meet neighbors, discuss topics of interest and share information. All are welcome to attend. Come and meet your neighbors at the Aurora Hills Community Center at 735 18th Street South.

**OUR UPCOMING MONTHLY MEETING:
WEDNESDAY APRIL 8, 2009, 7:00 p.m.
AURORA HILLS COMMUNITY CENTER**

Guest Speakers:

Low Larson & Jeremy Huish – Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints:

Lew would like to speak to our community about the LDS plans for a commercial building the church is acquiring on 23rd Street. From information he has provided, sounds like a nice fit with restaurant row, and our day care and church “main street.” Many of you may not be aware, but within ARCA and AHCA, the LDS numbers over 300 members, and this location will create a walkable location for their evening and Sunday church services. Also, this subset of our community really came through on the petition drive to help save Aurora Hills Library.

Eric Dahlseid - Tortoise & Hare Bar & Grille

We have invited Eric to come and speak about the T&H permit request seeking to have live entertainment at their restaurant. See details under items that require voting.

As always—childcare and light refreshments will be provided.

BIG REMINDER: CONTRIBUTIONS –

DONATIONS- MEMBERSHIP DUES – these FUNDS are what allow AHCA to rapidly respond on issues like the threat to the Aurora Hills Library, or hold the Boo Ha Ha and Fire House event and hopefully a 4th of July event, or donate to Wakefield, Gunston and Oakridge school causes... and to be able to offer up funds for items we want the county to pursue like the enhancement of the east side of the soccer field in Virginia Highlands Park or perhaps another drinking fountain in one of our other parks. Our ability to leverage contributions, even small AHCA contributions, goes a long way in the county budget process, especially during these hard financial times.

Following are Items that require Voting and/ or immediate Action:

Expenditures on flyers for “Save Aurora Hills Library” effort. AHCA spent a total of \$660 dollars for three rounds of printing with SOC, in addition to information that was contained in the March 2009 AHCA newsletter with insert. ARCA is covering \$200 with another \$130 contributed from several individuals in ARCA for a total of \$330. Given AHCA bylaws, as President, I am allowed to approve up to \$100. That leaves \$230 to be approved by AHCA membership, after the fact. In each round of printing, we did not have time to wait for the monthly meeting to take a community wide vote on the expenditures. Given I made the decision, if the membership does not approve the \$230 at the April meeting, I will cover this cost.

Oakridge Elementary has requested a \$250 contribution for the Spring Fling Carnival and Fund-raiser. I recommend we approve this request. The funds will be used for technology needs and AHCA will be acknowledged with a sign in front of the "Toddler Animal Playground" moonbounce.

Tortoise & Hare Bar & Grille is seeking a permit from the County for live entertainment. As a community, we need to vote on whether to support this request. In general, I'd like us to support our restaurant row, but would like to hear from those that live near restaurants what they think about proposed entertainment hours. *The request is for live entertainment on Monday through Sunday 6:00pm to 1:30am. Additionally, the request says live entertainment will be primarily on Thursday-Saturday. The county will not permit outdoor live entertainment and further requires all doors and windows to be shut during times of live entertainment.*

McGinty's Public House, an Irish pub, opening in the Eclipse Building in Potomac Yards is also seeking a permit for live entertainment. This one does not appear to have direct impact on our neighborhood, given its' location.

Tree Giveaway: Letters of Intent are due by April 17, 2009 and Application's by July 17, 2009. Web site: www.arlingtonenvironment.org. Awards will be based on an assessment of needs and the strength of the application. Each project should cost less than \$5,000. And while individuals can submit applications, it appears applications that come from or are endorsed by Civic Associations will carry more weight. I suspect if both AHCA and ARCA sign applications and/or the Aurora Hills Women's Club, this will carry even more weight. It is an opportunity to be part of study by UNC Highway Safety Research Center (HRSC) for walkable and safety issues within in 10 test communities. Applications due by May 29, 2009 with a conference call scheduled for May 1, 2009. For details, see: http://www.walkinginfo.org/res_guide/index.cfm. Awardees will receive \$2,000 for participating throughout a one year period.

Traffic calming: We need to take vote on how we best see traffic calming dollars (\$170,000 for 23rd and Ridge and \$97,000 for Joyce) being used along Joyce, 23rd and Ridge Roads and this then has to be coordinated with ARCA. These are the dedicated funds which have been referenced before. As an aside, since 2001, the county spend

\$8.0 million for 80 traffic calming projects (none in AHCA and that number may count small dollars spent in ARCA on Ridge Rd effort). *These dedicated funds may have broader latitude of use than stated and AHCA and ARCA leadership are looking into that point.

AHCA fund raising effort for east side of soccer field in Virginia Highlands Park. Patrick Wegeng, Lanscape Supervisor for Arlington Parks believes that with about \$12,000 and county staff time and some top soil from DES, he can build a small retaining wall on east side of field, with steps included, and fill in top soil behind. Then, he could place nice young shade trees on that side of field with a small fence to help catch soccer balls that go that direction toward parking area. We have the first \$50 contribution to this effort from Nina Sebastian (who lives south of 23rd street) who accepted my challenge for \$100,000 fund for VHP. I have been speaking to various community leaders about assisting with this fund raising effort and I am recommending AHCA contribute \$3,000 to this goal. Why? Because this is an attainable capital project that shows people that come through this major walking gateway into our community, that those of us who live in ARCA and AHCA take great pride in our broad neighborhood. And it let's high density commercial property owners know that as well.

DR. AGNES FUENTES
DENTIST IN OUR NEIGHBORHOOD



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“Save Aurora Hills Library” A look behind the scenes at how our broad neighborhood east of 395 sprang into action and came together on this important issue.

I am sharing what I have seen as President of AHCA, but I am only one person and can only share the part of the story I know. Clearly, many people have played various roles on this issue – after all, we know that over 3,000 signed the petition.

There was **Karin** from South Hampton condos who sent me the first heads up about the County announcement on Feb 21st. Thanks to Karin, the word got spread around on Feb 22nd via Alice Anders and the 4-D list serve as well as my email list (not to say others didn’t notice announcement and start spreading word, just what I know from my perspective). And the **Calvary Methodist Church** newsletter carried an early heads up on the library issue.

Then, there were early discussions with AHCA and ARCA leadership about getting the facts and putting on agenda for AHCA monthly meeting March 11th. What you may not have known or seen, with Mr. Carlees’ assistance, there was an immediate outreach to Diane Kresh, Director of Libraries (and to Laura Lazour –Director for PRCR on Community Centers who we had already been engaging on the community center issue) to have direct meeting on the proposal to reduce operating hours at Aurora Hills Library. This was even before Ms. Kresh announced her proposed round of talks at each library location.

And then, several neighbors stepped to the front to help out: **Nic and Cory Giacobbe**, and their daughter **Maya** who created the Face Book site. And **William (Bill) Gillen** who is a Member of Friends of Arlington Libraries (a group that donates funds to our library system). And **Stacy Kreppel** who set up the petition web site. And **James Oliver** who started an effort to collect names and signatures as well. And I should point out the fantastic job Bill did crunching numbers and showing how they presented a favorable case for our library.

As you know, there was a tremendous turn out at the AHCA monthly meeting held on March 11th, at which Ms. Kresh got to hear from our broad community. Many helped to facilitate this meeting as well as all the flyers that went out. **Julie Ann Beveridge** and **Rosamunda Neuharth-Ozgo**

stepped forward to handle meeting hospitality (what a meeting to be doing hospitality for the first time). And you may not have realized Ms. Kresh, after agreeing to come and all our announcements had gone out, was going to change date to the following week. And while I missed the meeting, sounds like **Mike Dowell, Cheryl Mendonsa and Bill Gillen** did a great job leading the meeting. And of course, all you who attended and asked great questions. A special thank you to the **children from Oakridge** who made signs to show their support at the AHCA meeting.

Then, of course, **ALL OF YOU** who sent letters and emails and made phone calls to the County Board.

Prior to the March 11th meeting, Bill Gillen, Cheryl Mendonsa and myself met with Diane Kresh and Laura Lazour. That’s where we heard their long term vision of moving library to Crystal City Metro area or Pentagon City Metro area and moving community center function to Long Bridge Park. These were vision comments by senior staff, not adopted county policy. But given who said it, we shouldn’t forget these thoughts are out there.

Then, in between the March 11th AHCA meeting and the County Budget hearing on March 24th, thanks to Bill working the phone lines, several of us (Bill, myself, **Chick Walters of ARCA and Diane Perry of the Aurora Hills Women’s Club**) met with All the Board Members: first with Jay and Mary, then with Chris and Walter, and finally with Barbara.

And clearly the **Read-In** on March 18th which got Fox News Coverage, was a huge PR success. There was **Jeannie**, a neighbor, who used to work for Fox and NBC, that helped facilitate that connection. And all those kids and parents who showed up, and **Jake Filon**, great sound bite.

Then, there was **Suzanne Filon** and her kids and two other families that delivered cookies to the County Board on behalf of Save Aurora Hills Library, from what we hear, that made a lasting impression. Guess we need to remember the cookie factor for the future.

And all those at **Gunston and Oakridge and Wakefield and Claremont** who helped spread the word. And of course ARCA was busy with their email, phone and in-person networks spreading the word. We are lucky to have two strong Associations representing our broad neighborhood.

ARCA kicked in \$200 towards the flyers and individuals in ARCA contributed another \$130 toward the effort.

And ALL of you who helped with the petition at key locations or walking the neighborhood and gaining access to the large apartment buildings and condo buildings. And our friends and neighbors in our local Mormon community who played a special role in the petition drive , thank you.

And again, ALL of you who kept pouring in letters and emails to the Board, way to go!

And then, of course, the push for the Budget Hearing on March 24th. What an amazing showing by our broad neighborhood. There must have been 12 -15 speakers, all excellent. [**Rory Cameron, Bill Gillen, Eva Hernandez, Landis Bradfield, Carole Cones, Joyce Richardson, Cory Giacobbe, Nicholas Giacobbe, Betty Hill, Shelley Wade, Al Burt, Elizabeth Mailander, Miriam Gennari**] plus many in the audience holding our yellow signs and still more in the lobby who couldn't get in because of crowd control by the Fire Marshall. And over 3,000 signatures on our petition, which was highlighted in a news piece in the local Sun Gazette the next morning. That's more signatures than Gulf Branch had.

And all of our kids, showed such strong citizenship by being active in this campaign.

And last but not least, the **friendly flyer phantoms** that hit every telephone pole in our area, way to go! Not that our campaign is done, but please, if you are out and about for a walk, feel free to pull those down flyers so we comply county ordinance on flyer posting.

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NEW ITEMS:

1. See Separate Insert on 'Save Aurora Hills Library'

2. Schools:

a. *Wakefield* – On February 11, 2009, Secretary Duncan used Wakefield as the backdrop for his stimulus package press conference. Also, APS has included ALL needed funds for Wakefield renovation and full rebuilding in the Arlington County request to the Virginia Governor's call for stimulus projects (and it has included Jefferson Middle School and the Career Center). And in recent news announcements by Secretary Duncan, it appears Wakefield, Hoffman-Boston, Gunston and Drew are excellent candidates for some of the special \$5 billion in program funds he will award in addition to the capital funds that can be tapped. Those with kids that feed into the Wakefield school pyramid need to do ALL we can to be educated on these new and exciting funding opportunities.

b. *Gunston* – On Thursday, March 5th, AHCA for the second time, made a \$100 contribution and spoke at the quarterly "Good Citizenship Awards" which Gunston awards to outstanding citizens.

c. *Oakridge* –as noted above, we have request for support for Spring Fling.

d. Also, local resident James Lander, who lives in ARCA, is a candidate for the school board for the November 2009 School Board election. He appears to be well positioned for his campaign.

3. Spray Ground Application via NC Funding window for Virginia Highlands Park -with staff cut backs, PRCR (which does design and implementation of NC park projects), does not have staff to do design work for at least one to one and half years. AHCA leadership is working with NC leadership to decide best course of action for Spring Funding Round of NC. It is too late to substitute another AHCA project in its place for this round.

4. Monday, May 11, 2009: Free Screening of "Arlington's Smart Growth Journey" at Central Library.

5. For those that have seen the announcement for a "Walking Town Meeting with the County Board," AHCA is not eligible since we had one a few years ago.

6. AHCA leadership will be attending a meeting April 13th regarding review of the draft Parking

and Curbspace Management Element of the Arlington Master Transportation Plan.

7. ARCA and AHCA continue working together on all the major issues impacting our broad neighborhood represented by two civic associations.

8. Julie Ann Beveridge and Rosamunda Newharth-Ozgo have offered to handle hospitality for AHCA and to suggest spring and summer community events.

10. The Recycled Art Mural at Aurora Hills Library, made by 8-12 year olds, should be complete and on display.

JOHN PAGE
LANDSCAPE ARCHITECT
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Our sincere thanks to SOC for their support of AHCA by printing our newsletter.

Aurora Highlands Civic Association

P.O. Box 25201 - Arlington, VA 22202

"The Association is a non-partisan organization of community residents formed to work in the overall community interest in promoting civic pride, enhancing the quality of life in the community, preserving the character of the community and planning for the orderly, safe, and humane development of the community" (AHCA Bylaws, Article II). The AHCA meets on the 2nd Wednesday of each month (unless specifically noted) in the Aurora Hills Recreation Center (735 S. 18th St.) at 7:00 p.m.

2009 Issues

1. **Community Center & Virginia Highlands Park**
2. **NC Projects: 19th Street (600&700 blocks) sidewalk & street lights, spray park in VHP, Ives Street (20th-22nd) sidewalks & street lights.**
3. **Nina Park improvements**
4. **Nellie & Eads Park**
5. **Potential Dog Park?**
6. **Sidewalks & Street Lights**
7. **Crystal City Long Term Plan as well as CCBID and CCBID, Inc impact on Aurora Highlands area**
8. **Wakefield High School Capital Rebuilding and quality of academic programs.**
9. **Waste Water Treatment Plant**
10. **Social Events**
Spring event TBD?
Community event with Restaurant Row ?
4th of July picnic in Virginia Highlands Park

AHCA acct balance as of 3/31/09: \$6,909.25

Association Officers & Committee Chairs

- ◇ President – Bruce Cameron 703 892-5071
- ◇ Vice President – Michael Dowell 703-521-7739
- ◇ 2nd Vice President – Van Newstrom 703 683-5911
- ◇ Treasurer / Membership - Gail Fleming
- ◇ Business Secretary & Web Master– John Kriese 703 519-0961
- ◇ Corresponding Secretary – Paul Mcaree
- ◇ AHCA NCAC Rep: Chris Mann
- ◇ Aircraft Noise Liaison - Denis O'Sullivan 703-521-6425
- ◇ Meeting Hospitality - Julie Ann Beveridge and Rosamunda Neuharth-Ozgo
- ◇ Newsletter Distribution - Bruce Cameron
- ◇ Newsletter Editor—Maria Cameron 703-892-5071
- ◇ Police and Waste Water Treatment Plant Liaison -Brad & Louise Garris - 703-548-1944
- ◇ Urban Planning Ted Saks 703-683-1312

Items for the Newsletter: Send items in e-mail messages (not attachments) to the newsletter editor, Bruce Cameron at brucecameronahca@gmail.com.