

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. Childcare will be provided.

**OUR UPCOMING MONTHLY MEETING:
WEDNESDAY, February 10, 2010 (7:00 pm)
AURORA HILLS COMMUNITY CENTER**

Agenda:

- ◆ Presentation by Arlington County staff on the Pentagon City Multi-Modal Improvement Preliminary Design for South Hayes Street
- ◆ 100 Year Anniversary Activities discussion
- ◆ Eads Street Post Office relocation update

Inside This Issue:

- ◆ How to Support our Aurora Hills Library
- ◆ History of Our Neighborhood
- ◆ English Ivy: Tree Killer

Support Aurora Hills Library

Although the fiscal year 2011 Arlington County budget won't be released until February 20, it has already been announced that the Library Department will have to absorb a 10% cut in funding.

Please take a moment to sign and send in the enclosed letter (yellow insert) to the County Board to voice your support for our library. Come to the Civic Association meeting this Wednesday to obtain more flyers. See page 2 for more information.

Join the "Save Aurora Hills Library" Facebook group to receive updates on the library.

President's Corner

by Michael Dowell

This year we'll celebrate the 100 years that have passed since the founding of our neighborhood. At last month's AHCA meeting, we came up with a few ideas on how to celebrate the anniversary. For starters, we'll dig up some history and stories about the neighborhood. Some of our history is well documented, yet some of the best stories are found with our long-time residents, who have anchored the neighborhood for decades. We'll see about coming up with a service project to give the community a strong start for the next 100 years. And of course, we'll need to have a party, and invite our friends. Got some ideas? Come to the next AHCA meeting on Wednesday, Feb. 10, 7 pm!

Our sincere thanks to SOC for its support of AHCA by printing our newsletter.

SOC Enterprises

750 South 23rd St. Arlington, VA 22202
703-920-9400 Fax: 703-299-3255

"Business and Rehabilitation"

We combine both to provide meaningful training and work for our community's disabled
SOC for Printing, Mailing, and Fulfillment Services



What's Up With Aurora Hills Library?

Last Spring, our neighbors came together in an unprecedented outpouring of support to save Aurora Hills Library from losing three days of service a week to budget cutbacks. The Arlington County Board heard our voices, rejecting the proposed cuts and maintaining our library hours. In mid-February 2010, the Arlington County Board will be reviewing a fiscal year 2011 budget proposal that will no doubt reflect the need to cut services to make up for an overall budget shortfall, and it is likely that this will include reductions to our library's hours. We do not know what will be in the proposed budget yet, but the AHCA position on this issue at this preliminary stage is this: *We understand the County's need to reduce costs and are willing to make our fair share of sacrifices. However, we expect cuts to services, which include the library, to be made equitably across the County system, and not affect our neighborhood disproportionately.* The AHCA has sent an official letter to the Board stating this belief. Once we see what is in the actual budget, we may need to take further action.

What can you do now while we wait for the actual budget to come out? Write a letter to the Board saying that the Aurora Hills Library is important to you, thank them for taking action to save the library from disproportionate service cuts last year, and remind them that while we understand cuts may be necessary in 2011, we believe the burden will be lighter if shared across all Arlington libraries. Or you may sign and send the enclosed letter.

What else can you do? Use the library. Visit for wi-fi, book club or children's story-time programs, borrow movies or music CDs, check out magazines, or use the library's computers to place a hold on that book you just heard about at ACORNWEB.ORG, where you should have your book sent to Aurora Hills for pickup. It's easy and free. And don't forget to thank our librarians at Aurora Hills.

Cheryl Mendonsa is chairing the Civic Association's new Aurora Hills Library Committee to galvanize community support for our neighborhood library as we approach the budget season. Find out more or join this group online at the AHCA Web site, where you can also download letter templates and instructions on how to send notes to the County Board. Visit aurorahighlands.org.

Local Theaters Going Dark This Summer

by Cory Giacobbe

Two local theaters will be moving out this summer to their permanent homes. This will be the Washington Shakespeare Theater's last season at Clark Street Playhouse before moving to Rosslyn in the Summer of 2010 to the ARTISPHERE, the facility formerly occupied by the Newseum and Rosslyn Spectrum Theatre. Don't miss out on catching Washington Shakespeare Theater's last two theater productions in our neighborhood: *The Miser* by Moliere (Jan 28 to Feb 28, 2010) and *Every Young Woman's Desire* by Marco Antonio de la Parra (May 20 to Jun 20, 2010). <http://www.washingtonshakespeare.org/press.html>

The Arena Stage in Crystal City will be performing its last three productions in Crystal City before moving back to its renovated permanent home this summer. Arena will be reopening in its waterfront facility in SW Washington probably in October 2010. The three remaining productions are *Stick Fly* by Lydia R. Diamond, directed by Kenny Leon, until February 7; *The Light in the Piazza* by Craig Lucas, music and lyrics by Adam Guettel, March 5 to April 25, 2010; and *R. Buckminster Fuller: The History (and mystery) of the Universe* written and directed by D.W. Jacobs, May 28 to July 4, 2010. <http://www.arenastage.org/>

How to Join the Neighborhood Listserve:

For bulletins of neighborhood interest, ask to join the Yahoo group 4D-A. The group is administered by Alice Andors of AHCA. Copy the address below into your browser. Once at the page, click on the blue rectangle marked "Join This Group!" <http://groups.yahoo.com/group/4D-A/>

How to Join Arlington Alert:

Arlington Alert is an alert system that allows the County to contact you during an emergency by sending text messages to your e-mail or cell phone. Copy the address below into your browser. Once at the page, click on the blue rectangle marked "Click here to register!" <http://www.arlingtonalert.com/index.php?CCheck=1>

Aurora Highlands Civic Association
February 2010

Quiet Oasis With Rowdy Edges Turns 100

by Jenny Lawhorn Sammis

The community we know today as Aurora Highlands celebrates its centennial in 2010. Our community's first successful subdivision, Virginia Highlands, took root in 1910 around a railroad stop by the same name. Developers had tried before to start a community here, and efforts such as Addison Heights and Hume Heights had attracted a few summer homes to the area in the 1880s. But between 1910 and 1945 the community really mushroomed.

John Morris began building Aurora Hills in 1913. These homes went for \$6,500 to \$8,000 with ads claiming, "Ripe for a raise in value because of permanent sidewalks, paved streets with gutters, sewerage facilities, pure artesian water...Maximum price 15 Cents per Sq. Ft." Garfield Manor Corporation continued adding to the community, developing land once owned by President Garfield into more homes in 1924. This era brought us our first library at Eads and 23rd and a firehouse across the street. Then, in the 1940s, the Federal Government built temporary housing for wartime workers in Virginia Highlands. Boasting southern exposures and superb views, home styles in our greater community include Sears & Roebuck models and unique concrete dwellings circa 1910 designed by New York City architect Milton Dana Morrill, marketed as "The Easy-To-Keep House."

Brickyards, an amusement park and racetrack flanked the neighborhood, offering potential for rowdy excitement, but the area was mostly known as an oasis of quiet in a rapidly changing landscape. Throughout 2010 we'll continue delving into the past to find out more about how our neighborhood has evolved. Happy Birthday, Aurora Highlands!

Calling all writers!

Would you love to see your name in print? Do you have knowledge or expertise in a field that would interest or help your neighbors? Write an article for the AHCA Newsletter! Share your knowledge about health, finance, pets, home repair, gardening, car maintenance or any other neighborhood tips that would interest or benefit your neighbors. Pitch your idea to the newsletter editor at ahca.news@yahoo.com. We have your byline waiting to print!

Aurora Highlands Civic Association
February 2010

3

Coming Up at Our Next Meeting: Hayes Multi-Modal Design Presentation

Arlington County staff will come to our February 10 Civic Association meeting to present the Pentagon City Multi-Modal Improvement Preliminary Design for South Hayes Street. The plan reconfigures the block in front of the Pentagon City Fashion Centre mall to provide better parking for the buses, better access to Metro and put the street car stations in place. The plan may also include improvements to the sidewalks and landscaping.

This issue has been on the table at least since 2003 when it was discussed with county staff in February, March and May. However that 2003 plan was scrapped as too expensive. The subject was brought up again in 2005 when the county was working on a revised plan with phased implementation. The July 2009 concept plan has been posted on the AHCA web site:

http://aurorahighlands.org/Media/Penta-gon_City_MultiModal_Conceptual_Plan2009.pdf



"BELLA CASA"
RENOVATIONS AND HANDYMAN SERVICES

- * GENERAL CARPENTRY
- * INTERIOR / EXTERIOR PAINTING
- * BATHROOM REMODELING
- * GENERAL TILE WORK
- * TRIM AND CROWN MOLDING

RAUL ARMAZA CONTRACTOR
703-282-8790 or 703-391-5656

MT Vernon Baptist Church

You are invited to visit us at:
MT VERNON BAPTIST CHURCH
935 South 23rd Street,
Phone: 703.979.1558
WWW.MVBCCC.ORG
EMAIL MVBCCC@MVBCCC.ORG
Weekly services:
11am Sunday, 7pm Wednesday.

The Story Behind Grace Murray Hopper Park

by Michael Dowell

The next time you're surfing the web, whether at home or on your iPhone, take a moment to consider the contribution of one of our former neighbors to information technology. Grace Murray Hopper, who lived in River House for twenty years until her death in 1992, did much to build the foundations of modern computing. Hopper worked on some of the first computers during World War II, in a time when computers took up entire rooms but were less powerful than an iPod. In fact, her computer broke down one day because a moth crawled into it, which she documented as the first computer bug! Hopper made several outstanding technical contributions, developing the first compiler, and leading the development of the first modern computing language, COBOL. Simply put, everything that a modern computer or network does requires that someone write the software in a computer language and then compile it. Hopper pioneered both. Accomplishing this much in life requires persistence, which Grace Hopper complemented with hard-headedness too - she coined the phrase "It's better to ask for forgiveness than it is to get permission".

Hopper got many accolades in life and in memoriam. In 1996, the US Navy launched the DDG-70 *USS Hopper*. And in 2000, Grace Murray Hopper Park was dedicated in front of her former home, River House, in our community. Give a thunk to the rock in her park the next time you walk by!



In the lower left is the dedication boulder at Grace Murray Hopper Park, located in front of River House, South Joyce St. To the right is "Fifi", a sculpture of Plexiglas and stainless steel by Lincoln Schatz, 1998 (Photo by Cara Tenuta).

A Walk in the Park

by Cara Tenuta

Although it is cold, there is still a reason to go for a walk and visit Grace Murray Hopper Park. Learn about Grace Murray Hopper from the dedication plaque. Enjoy a sweet little area secluded from the buildings by trees with lots of tables and chairs and a small pond (drained for the winter). The stone walls give it a grotto feel and it is a nice place to eat lunch on a warm day or savor a little seclusion any day.

The area also features "Fifi", a 1998 sculpture of Plexiglas and stainless steel by Lincoln Schatz. Everyone has their own thoughts, but many think Fifi is a playful little dog on a grand scale. The sculpture was a gift from the Federal Realty Investment Trust, Post Properties, Inc., and the River House.

GMH Park is very dog friendly and the grass is open to all, unless marked otherwise. Dogs do need to be leashed and there are several dog clean-up bag stations where a bag for waste is available if you forgot one. There are lots of paths and plenty of things for dogs to sniff and explore. There is even a cool echo spot in the park. On the closest path to South Joyce St., when you are just across the street from the 1401 Joyce on Pentagon Row building, let your dog bark. There is a fabulous echo that sounds like your dog is barking double-time. Even in the snow, Grace Murray Hopper Park is a fun outing for you and your dog and a great place to meet other dog owners. There are a few snowmen still left and the paths are all paved and clean.

G-40 Art Summit

Keep an eye out for art in Crystal City in March. An office building will get a makeover into contemporary exhibition space. An artistic interpretation of the G-20 political summit, the G-40 will showcase four state-themed floors with ten featured artists and 40 additional artists per floor. The juried show will include sculpture, photography, paintings, collage and mixed-media.

March 3 - 27, 2010

223 23rd St South

<http://www.crystalcity.org/do/g-40-art-summit>

Aurora Highlands Civic Association
February 2010

Advertise in the AHCA Newsletter

Give your business a boost!

Contact Marty King for rates:
martinch@erols.com

Plumbing: Master Service, LLC

Lyman Stutzman:

811 North Irving Street

Arlington, VA 22201

Phone: 703.525.3399

Lymansplumbing@comcast.net

- Specializing in residential service, repair and remodeling
- See our good references in Angie's List and Washington Checkbook.



McGinty's
Public House

FREE COVERED
PARKING

*Bringing a little bit of Authentic Irish Hospitality
to your Doorstep*

McGinty's has something for everyone!!

- Top CLASS restaurant menu
 - Pub Trivia
 - Traditional Music
 - Outdoor Seating
- Kids Eat Free in dining room - Saturday pm

**Bring along this Ad and receive 20% off your
food order**

(excluding alcohol, happy hour menu, events menu and all other
promotions. - Offer expires 28 February)

3650 South Glebe Rd, Suite 170

Arlington, VA

Phone: 703.414.3555

ADJACENT TO HARRIS TEETER

www.mcgintyspublichouse.com/arlington

Would you like your street to look nicer?



by Cara Tenuta

You may not be able to fill a pot hole, fix a sidewalk crack or repair a street light, but if you are looking for a way to make your part of the world better, look no farther than your own street. Arlington County's **Adopt-a-Street** program is designed for the "adoption" of a specific section of road. It requires that you pledge to keep the street, curb, and storm drains free of trash and debris, for a year. You, your family, your club/group or your business can adopt. There are hundreds of streets available. You don't have to adopt an entire street. You can adopt a block or two. You can even adopt just one side of a street.

Adopters:

- Sweep the curb, gutters and wheelchair accessibility ramps of the adopted street quarterly;
- Remove litter along the adopted street, quarterly or as needed; and
- Schedule a pick-up of swept debris by Department of Environmental Services (DES) staff.

On many streets, rain or melting snow can result in trash, sticks, leaves and gravel collecting near the edges of the street or curbs. Eventually this debris gets washed down to the storm drains, where it can block the drains and prevent the run off of water. Clogged storm drains can result in street and yard flooding. The Arlington County Solid Waste Bureau provides free street cleaning equipment (gloves, eye protection, buckets), and safety tips. You will need to use your own broom and a dust pan.

Participants are also asked to look out for and to report the following:

<u>Condition</u>	<u>Number to Call</u>
• Street Light Outages	703-228-6511
• Damaged/Missing Street Signs	703-228-6570 (DES Customer Service Center)
• Pot Holes or Damaged Streets/Sidewalks	703-228-6570 (DES Customer Service Center)
• Downed Power Lines	1-888-667-3000 (Dominion VA Power Customer Service)

Anyone can report these conditions—not just participants in the Adopt-a-Street program. These are automated lines that allow you to leave a message with the pertinent information. If you are calling the DES Customer Service Center, you can speak to a person during normal business hours.

You can enroll in the Adopt-a-Street program online at: <http://egov.arlingtonva.us/DES-Adopt-a-Street/Default.aspx>. You can also stop by the DES at 4300 29th St. S, Arlington, VA 22206 (off King St. between Walter Reed and 395) and enroll in person. During enrollment you can choose to have your name or the name of your group displayed on the Adopt-a-Street home page. If you would like give some credit to your civic association for making you aware of the program, select the option that allows you to display a group name and make AHCA a prefix to your name, e.g., AHCA—Jane Doe or AHCA—the XYZ Restaurant.

The more our neighborhood residents do to support the County's efforts to keep the streets clean and the storm drains clear, the greater visibility our little slice of Arlington has when issues arise for which we need the county's support. Just about everyone can use a broom. Talk to your neighbors and friends and get a group together so you have company while you are working. Volunteer work can be fun and social, in addition to contributing to community.

Arlington County sponsors many volunteer programs. The Adopt-a-Street is part of the DES and other DES programs include Storm Drain Marking, Stream Cleanups, Adopt-a-Stream, Invasive Plants Removal, Stream Monitoring, and Water Steward Teams. You can find many other Arlington County Volunteer programs online at: <http://www.arlingtonva.us/Departments/HumanServices/volunteer/HumanServicesVolunteerVolunteerOffice.aspx>

Aurora Highlands Civic Association

February 2010



Membership Renewal

Please join or renew your membership in the Aurora Highlands Civic Association. We can work together more effectively to improve our South Arlington home if we have more people sharing opinions and becoming involved in issues that matter to us as a community. Our neighborhood social events create opportunities to get to know each other as neighbors and friends.

Join Today!

If you are interested in the quality of life in our neighborhood and want to participate in keeping our community safe and vibrant, please join Aurora Highlands Civic Association. Membership is open to all residents aged 18 or older. Dues are \$3 per year (individual) and \$6 per year (family). Donations are always welcome. Please complete the following information and mail with your check payable to **"Aurora Highlands Civic Association"** to AHCA, P.O. Box 25201, Arlington, VA 22202 or bring to the next monthly meeting.

Name _____

Address _____

Email _____

Phone _____

I am interested in.....

Library Schools Parks & Rec Streets and Lights Kids Pets

Serving on an AHCA committee

Other (please specify) _____

Beautiful and Bountiful Tree Killer:



English Ivy

by Cory Giacobbe

Source: NPS Plant Conservation Alliance,
Alien Plant Working Group

Winter is a great time to remove English ivy from your trees. It's easy to see in the winter because it's one of the few green things in your garden at this time of year. English ivy (*Hedera helix* L.) is a non-native invasive plant that does great damage to trees and other native plants. It continues to be planted because it is pretty, hardy and evergreen. However, it is invasive as a spreading groundcover and climbing vine that chokes out native groundcovers, shrubs and trees. The ivy climbs trees in search of light, engulfing and killing branches by blocking light from reaching the host tree's leaves. Once the tree is weakened, the added weight of the ivy increases the risk of the tree being blown down in storms.

The easiest and safest way to remove ivy from a tree is to cut the vines with pruners down near the ground. Cut again at a comfortable height, eye-level or so. Gently remove the cut ivy, trying not to do damage to the tree bark. A flat-head screwdriver can be used to gently pry embedded vines if necessary. The part of the ivy that is rooted in the ground will need to be pulled out as well. Use gloves to protect yourself from poison ivy or spiny plants that may be living among the English ivy.

If you'd like more information on ivy management and other removal methods, please consult the National Park Service alien plant fact sheet: <http://www.nps.gov/plants/ALIEN/fact/hehe1.htm>

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 Community Center (735 S. 18th St.) at 7:00 p.m.

AHCA account balance as of 1/31/10 was \$7,883.74

Association Officers & Committee Chairs

- ◇ President – Michael Dowell 703-521-7739
- ◇ Vice President – Nick Giacobbe 703-842-5441
- ◇ 2nd Vice President – Cara Tenuta 703-864-6826
- ◇ Treasurer / Membership - Gail Fleming
- ◇ Business Secretary – Cory Giacobbe 703-842-5441
- ◇ Web Master– John Kriese 703-519-0961
- ◇ Corresponding Secretary – Jenny Lawhorn
- ◇ AHCA Rep. to Neighborhood Conservation Advisory Committee: Chris Mann
- ◇ AHCA Rep. to Crystal City Business Improvement District (CCBID): Cheryl Mendonsa
- ◇ Long Range Planning Commission's Crystal City Long-Term Plan: Bruce Cameron & Mike Dowell
- ◇ Aircraft Noise Liaison - Denis O'Sullivan 703-521-6425
- ◇ Meeting Hospitality - Rosamunda Neuharth-Ozgo
- ◇ Newsletter Distribution - Cara Tenuta 703-864-6826
- ◇ Newsletter Advertising - Marty King
- ◇ Newsletter Editor—Cory Giacobbe 703-842-5441
- ◇ 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, Cory Giacobbe: AHCA.news@yahoo.com



Girl Scout Cookies

- ◇ Girl Scout Troop 3450, which meets at Gunston Middle School, will be selling Girl Scout cookies at the **Crystal City Metro** station on **Friday, February 19th** during the afternoon rush hour. Stop by and support our Scouts!



Aurora Highlands Civic Association
February 2010

February 2010

Arlington County Board
2100 Clarendon Boulevard, Suite 300
Arlington, VA 22201

Dear Members of the Arlington County Board,

I am sending this letter to you to show my support for the Aurora Hills Library. The Aurora Hills Library, as was described last year, is at the heart of our community. It serves many, many people in a variety of ways and is very important to the quality of life of our neighborhood.

As a community, we sincerely appreciate your support of the Aurora Hills Library for fiscal year 2010. We look forward to your continued support for fiscal year 2011.

Respectfully,

Signature _____

Name _____

Address _____

I
SUPPORT
THE
AURORA
HILLS
LIBRARY