

Aurora Highlands

CIVIC ASSOCIATION

NEWSLETTER

JULY-AUGUST 2010

AURORA HIGHLANDS CENTENNIAL
1910—2010

AuroraHighlands.org

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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, July 14, 2010 at 7:00 p.m.
AURORA HILLS COMMUNITY CENTER

5:00 p.m. to 7:00 p.m. Passport to Summer 6:30 p.m. Social 7:00 pm Meeting

Agenda

Aaron Wohler of Arlington County Department of Parks, Recreation and Cultural Resources, will give a presentation on the Water Pollution Control Plant landscape improvements.

Mark Blacknell of the Arlington County Bicycle Advisory Committee will discuss the new Bike Share program as well as the near and long term plans for bike trails in our corner of the county.

Aurora Hills Library Passport to Summer Gets Off to a Great Start!

by Mike Dowell and Cheryl Mendonsa

We had a great turnout at the Passport to Summer kickoff on June 16! Our inaugural June event exceeded all expectations when over 250 guests arrived to meet their neighbors, read stories and gobble up 25 pizzas from our own Café Pizzaiolo on 23rd Street. Almost 90 new library cards were issued that night to new readers.

library and getting together with friends, while the kids listened to stories, made crafts, and played games. We're hosting Passport to Summer every Wednesday this summer from 5:00 to 7:00 p.m. through August 25. See the flyer in this newsletter for the schedule.

reciting poetry. Nanette Franks, a former teacher, leads these themed reading nights that are geared from toddlers to teens. Posters and flyer dot the neighborhood and each week's theme or guest speaker is announced by neighborhood list serve.

We hope you enjoyed visiting the

Passport to Summer is being sponsored by the AHCA as a way to more fully use the facilities open to us by gathering as a community for a couple hours of reading, word games, working on puzzles and

We're looking for volunteer readers. If you have an interesting job, or travel to faraway places, (or you just like to read), come share a personal story and then a read a book to the kids. They'll probably ask you some questions and you will become a local hero! You'll have fun. Contact Cheryl Mendonsa (cmendonsa@verizon.net) and she'll get you scheduled.

Come see what the buzz is about.

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

President's Corner

by Michael Dowell

As the hot days of summer settle in, we're going to propose taking a breather in August with no meeting and no newsletter. But there are several activities ongoing. A small group of folks forming a joint AHCA-ARCA committee to engage with the county about using the community center for other neighborhood activities, in addition to the Wednesday Passport to Summer program. With the neighborhood survey in-hand, and some really great ideas from neighbors, we're going to have a few cool events later this summer and in the fall. Contact Miriam Gennari or myself if you have interest.

Also, planning for the third annual Boo Ha Ha is underway. We had great fun last year, if you'd like to help out and want to keep it simple, this might be just the event for you. Contact me at your leisure.

At the July AHCA meeting, we'll have two speakers: Aaron Wohler from the Wastewater Treatment Plant will present the landscaping plan, and Mark Blacknell from the Bicycle Advisory Committee will discuss the new Bike Share program and progress on bike trails in our area. We'll also have a discussion about pending actions in Congress to add additional long range flights to National Airport and see if we can develop a community position.

The Neighborhood's on Facebook!

Stay informed and involved in what's going on in the neighborhood. Join the **Aurora Highlands Civic Association** group on Facebook. Get current updates on news and events. Share information and ideas. Post and view photos.

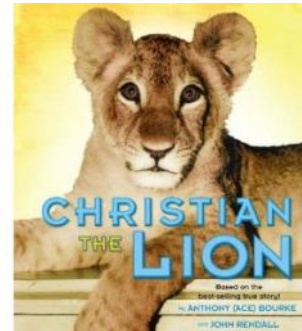
For information mostly pertaining to the Aurora Hills Library, join the Facebook group called **Save Aurora Hills Library**. Learn what you can do to help keep our local library branch open and available as the vibrant center of our community.

Great Books on the Suggestion Shelf

by Cory Giacobbe

Whenever I walk into the Aurora Hills Library, I browse the Suggested Reading shelf which is located just inside the door to the right as you enter. It is arranged by Katie Thomas every month and follows a theme. This month the theme is animals, and the book that caught my eye was Christian the Lion by Anthony (Ace) Bourke and John Rendall.

It was the absolutely captivating photo of the lion on the front cover that drew me in. I then read that the book was based on a true story. Having recently watched *Born Free*, a true story about Elsa the Lioness, and read *Wildflower: An Extraordinary Life and Untimely Death in Africa* by Mark Seal



about the murder of naturalist and wildlife filmmaker Joan Root, I was primed with interest in this topic of wild animals that happen to live with humans because of various circumstances.

This book is the children's version of A Lion Called Christian: The True Story of the Remarkable Bond Between Two Friends and a Lion, also by Bourke and

Rendall, originally published in 1971 and recently updated and re-released in 2009 after a YouTube sensational video went viral showing the reunion of Ace, John and Christian.

The story began when Australians Ace and John were visiting London and came across a lion cub for sale in the pet department of Harrod's department store. Unable to leave him languishing there, they decided to rescue the cub by purchasing him and bringing him home.

Told in the form of a photo scrapbook with humorous captions and titles, this book leaves out the details but shows the care and devotion the young men had for the ever-growing wild animal.

Completely by chance, the actors who played George and Joy Adamson in *Born Free* stopped by the furniture shop where Christian lived with Ace and John. They helped them contact George Adamson who eventually taught Christian to live in the wild. Check it out at Aurora Hills Library!

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Weekly services:

11am Sunday, 7pm Wednesday.

New Water Mains

by Cara Tenuta

Parts of Inge, Joyce, June, 23rd, and 26th Streets are in the process of getting new water mains. Some of the water mains on these streets are over 80 years old. The Arlington County Department of Environmental Services began a construction project a couple of weeks ago that will place new water mains in the following areas:

- Inge St--23rd to 26th Sts
- Joyce St--23rd to 26th Sts
- June St--23rd to 26th Sts
- 23rd St--Inge to June Sts
- 26th St-- Inge to June Sts

The entire project is scheduled to take 12 weeks. During the construction, residents should expect parking on each of these streets to be restricted at times. Usually the restrictions are in effect from 7:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. DES will place flyers on each of the streets' parking signs prior to parking restric-

tions taking effect. Each street should only be impacted for a few weeks. Some street closures may also occur and construction equipment and supplies (water mains, new fire hydrants, gravel) may be stored on the streets.

On day one of work as a trench was dug for the new water mains on the west side of Inge St., soil with an odor was encountered by construction workers in the trench. Workers excavated the delivery lines running to each home from the existing main by hand. As a precaution to protect the construction workers from soil that might be contaminated, soil testing was called for and the trench was filled in without the new main being installed. The soil dug from the trench on Inge St. was found to be contaminated with something petroleum based. This will delay work on Inge St. while the county negotiates with its contractor to remove and properly dispose of the bad soil. New signs limiting parking



Joyce Street - Photo by Cara Tenuta

will be posted on a street before construction moves to that street. The construction manager for Arlington County on this project is B.L. Sims IV and he can be reached at 703-228-3592.



26th and Joyce
Photo by Cara Tenuta



Inge Street: Suspicious soil
Photo by Cara Tenuta

Door-to-Door Peddlers, Vendors and Canvassers Must Carry a Permit— Ask to See It

by Jim Callow

During the summer months, persons soliciting donations, selling goods or services, or otherwise raising funds for some familiar and not-so-familiar organizations often visit our neighborhood. Arlington County requires such persons to obtain a permit before engaging in the "business of peddler, vendor or canvasser." Neighborhood residents should request to see the county-issued permit before conducting business with peddlers, vendors or canvassers. If the requested permit is not produced, residents are asked to call non-emergency phone number

of the Arlington County Police Department: 703 558-2222.

The green permit, approximately 3 x 5 inches in size, displays a picture of the individual peddler, vendor or canvasser. It is important to note that the permit is issued directly to the individual, rather than an organization, and therefore cannot be used by other persons representing the same organization.

Peddlers and vendors of religious, political or written materials, as well as persons selling newspapers and fresh farm products, are specifically exempt

from the requirement to obtain a permit. Such persons are issued an "exemption letter," which should be produced in lieu of a permit upon request.

For a nominal fee (\$20), peddlers, vendors and canvassers may apply for a permit at the Arlington County Police Department, which investigates the applicant's "business responsibility and character." For more information, contact Detective Matt Owens at (703) 228-4255.

Unbundled Brush Pickup and Mulch Delivery: Arlington County Delivers the Goods

by Nick Giacobbe

One of the greatest treats of gardening in our neighborhood is the fabulous organic recycling service offered by Arlington County's Department of Environmental Services. If you have tree pruning to do or large brush to get rid of, you can simply pile it at your curb and it will be whisked away by a magical truck with a giant claw (at no extra charge). The county staff will take it away, grind it up, and, for a nominal fee, deliver it back to you as inexpensive wood mulch for your flower beds (\$40 for half a load or 2.5 cubic yards, \$50 for a whole truck or 5 cubic yards).

It may be the heat of the summer now, but ever wonder what happens to all the fall leaves? Arlington County also picks those up for no additional fee but this time it's not the claw, but rather the vacuum truck that makes the rounds of the neighborhood. Again, through the magic of grinding and mulching, the County will deliver leaf mulch to your yard for the same fees listed above. Free mulch is also available for pickup at the Trades Center in Shirlington, 4300 29th Street South. For more on mulch, visit <http://www.arlingtonva.us/departments/EnvironmentalServices/swd/EnvironmentalServicesSwdMulchOrders.aspx>

So how do you order an unbundled brush pickup or a mulch delivery? There are a couple of ways to do it:

- Call DES Customer Service at (703) 228-6570, Monday - Friday, 8 a.m. - 5 p.m. After hours, select option 2, then follow the recorded messages and make menu selections using your touch tone phone
- By internet, go to <http://egov.arlingtonva.us/SolidWasteRequests>

There are a few rules you need to keep in mind about the pickups:

- Brush collection can only be done curbside and limbs and brush must be less than 18" in diameter and less than 10' long.
- Place brush curbside or in the street, not in the yard. Large amounts should be stacked parallel to the curb.
- Look up; there must be an overhead clearance of approximately 25 feet.
- Look around; do not place brush by parked cars - the truck needs at least 10 feet clearance from cars to avoid possible damage.
- More details available at <http://www.arlingtonva.us/Departments/EnvironmentalServices/swd/EnvironmentalServicesSwdSpecial.aspx>.

Finally, make it easier on the county staff by bunching pickups together in your block with your neighbors. The driver of the claw truck says his job is much easier if several families put all of their brush in one single pile. It's not only better for the environment, but gives you an opportunity to brag about what you're doing in your yard over a cold glass of iced tea.

How to Report Aircraft Noise

by Brent Spence

Report aircraft noise. It only takes a minute and it does matter. We worked hard for many years to achieve this opportunity to have input. The FAA has requirements that aircraft must fulfill and penalties when they are not met. In addition to noise irritation, safety is a concern, and several near misses were reported recently by the *Washington Post*. You can report noise complaints by phone at 703-417-8020. If there is no answer, please leave a message - these complaints are tallied.

You can also make noise complaints online. Go to the National Airport site at <http://www.metwashairports.com/reagan/1271.htm> and click on the "Airsceen" link at the bottom of the page. You will have to register to make a complaint. Under the Complaint tab there is a form. The form begins with start and end times down to the second. Next is a dropdown box with categories such as Aircraft too low, Aircraft off course and Noise at wrong time. At the bottom is a place for comments. Please identify the aircraft, if possible, and include any other information such as altitude and direction. Your comments are recorded and tracked.

Keep this information handy and take the time - this is an easy way we can make a difference.

Our sponsors support the activities of the Aurora Highlands Civic Association



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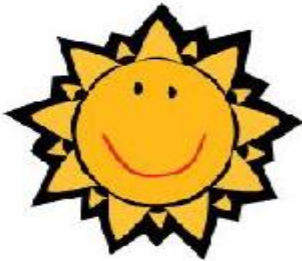


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Summer Fun Pullout

Passport to Summer - 2010



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Aurora Highlands Community Center (and Library)

June 16th – August 25th
Wednesday Evenings
5:00 – 7:00 PM

Schedule

Week 1:	June 16, 2010 *
Week 2:	June 23, 2010
Week 3:	June 30, 2010
Week 4:	July 7, 2010
Week 5:	July 14, 2010
Week 6:	July 21, 2010 *
Week 7:	July 28, 2010
Week 8:	August 4, 2010
Week 9:	August 11, 2010
Week 10:	August 18, 2010
Week 11:	August 25, 2010 *

* Food and ice cream will be provided.



Sponsored by the **Aurora Highlands Civic Association**
For more information visit: www.aurorahighlands.org



Summer Fun: Activities and Events

Crystal Farms Farmers Market

Tuesdays, 3:00 - 7:00 p.m.

Crystal Drive from 18th to 20th Sts.

Along with fresh, local seasonal fruits and vegetables, you'll also find addictive fresh salsa, local artisan cheeses, home-made jams, bison steak jerky, cheese snacks, cut flowers, croissants and bread, and flower and herb plants for your garden, not to mention compost. Vendors are giving away cool recycled, re-usable grocery bags with every purchase of \$10 or greater.

Arlington County Swimming Pools

There are three indoor public pools in Arlington, located at the three high schools. They have pretty good summer hours (click here for hours: <http://www.arlington.k12.va.us/15401081151920707/blank/browse.asp?A=383&BMDRN=2000&BCOB=0&C=55394>),

And they're not very expensive (click here for fees: <http://www.arlington.k12.va.us/15401081151920707/blank/browse.asp?A=383&BMDRN=2000&BCOB=0&C=65248>)

There is also an **outdoor water park** in Arlington called **Upton Hill** located at 6060 Wilson Blvd. It's managed by Northern Virginia Regional Park Authority. It looks really fun from the pho-

tos on the website. It's also not very expensive. Click here for all the info: http://www.nvrpa.org/park/upton_hill/content/pool

Arlington County Spray Parks

There are three spray parks in Arlington. Due to budget cuts, starting this month the spray parks don't open until noon and each one is closed one day a week. Here are the locations and closed days:

Drew Park
3514 22nd Street
South
Closed Tuesday

Hayes Park
1516 N. Lincoln Street
Closed Wednesday

Lyon Village Park
1800 N. Highland Street
Closed Thursday

For more information on the spray parks, visit <http://www.arlingtonva.us/departments/parksrecreation/scripts/parks/Drew.aspx>

Fun to Attend or Volunteer -

Jazz and Wine Summer Series in Shirlington begins Thursday, July 1st.

[Shirlington's annual wine and jazz festival](#) is back on Thursdays in July and August for eight weeks of evening enjoyment. Come and enjoy the music and support the **Arlington Food Assistance Center (AFAC)**. Our volunteers will be pouring wine. Proceeds from wine sales benefit AFAC. Please contact volunteer4afac@afac.org if you can help out.

Are you free Tuesday evenings?

Can you help **pick up produce donations for AFAC** Tuesday evenings at the Crystal City farmer market? 6:15-7:45 pm. Contact Puwen at puwen.lee@afac.org to find out more. **For other volunteer AFAC opportunities go to <http://www.afac.org/Volunteering-Sept11.html>

SUNSET PARADE AT THE IWO JIMA MEMORIAL

7:00 p.m., Tuesdays, June 9-August 11, U.S. Marine Corps War Memorial (Iwo Jima), Arlington, VA

A one hour performance, the Sunset Parade features the music of "The Commandant's Own", The United States Marine Drum and Bugle Corps and precision drill by the Marine Corps Silent Drill Platoon. There are no public parking spaces available at the Memorial grounds on Parade evenings. Guests may park at the Arlington National Cemetery Visitors' Center. Ride a free shuttle bus service from the visitor center to the war memorial grounds from 5:30 p.m. to 6:30 p.m. before the parade and from 7:30 p.m. to 8:30 p.m. following the parade OR you can take the Metro to Arlington Cemetery (blue line). For additional information call 202-433-6060. Inclement weather call will be made at 6:45 p.m. please call 202-433-6060.

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Summer Fun: Activities and Events

Pentagon Row Summer Concerts Thursdays, 7:00 - 9:00 p.m. until August 26

This is the 8th annual Rock at the Row Summer Concert Series. In the event of rain, concerts will not be rescheduled. Here's the schedule for the rest of the summer:

JULY 15

The Justin Trawick Group
Singer/Songwriter

JULY 22

Ted Garber
Blues Americana Rock

JULY 29

Fools & Horses
Rock and Roll Combined with new British Pop

AUGUST 5

Alex Pilotti
Rock

AUGUST 12

Back To Zero
Party Music

AUGUST 19

Joker's Wild
Swing

AUGUST 26

Brother Shamus
Bluesy Rock

Crystal Screen: Star Trek Mondays at sundown until August 16

On Monday nights Crystal City will take a trip out of this galaxy with Captain Kirk and the Enterprise. Each night will also have special giveaways, sponsors, and other activities. Screenings are at 18th and South Bell Streets, across from Crystal City Metro Station. Here's the remaining schedule:

7/12/2010 - Star Trek VI: The Undiscovered Country

7/19/2010 - Star Trek Generations

7/26/2010 - Star Trek: First Contact

8/2/2010 - Star Trek: Insurrection

8/9/2010 - Star Trek Nemesis

8/16/2010 - Star Trek

In addition the films there will be special activities on some nights:

7/12/2010 - Washington Shakespeare Company presents Marc Okrand, creator of the Klingon language

7/26/2010 - Star Trek Costume Contest; Participants should arrive by 7:15 p.m.; Contest starts at 7:30 p.m.

8/9/2010 - Star Trek Trivia Night; Participants should arrive by 7 p.m.; Trivia starts at 7:15 p.m.

8/16/2010 - Announcement of voting results and films for Crystal Screen 2011

For more info visit <http://www.crystalcity.org/do/crystal-screen-star-trek>

Passport to Summer at Aurora Hills Library

Wednesdays, 5:00 - 7:00 p.m. until August 25

Bring your family, friends and neighbors to the library on Wednesdays for stories, crafts, poetry, games, snacks and drinks. Show your support for the library by registering for a library card and checking out some books. Check it out! See you there!

Happy Hour in the Garden at Advent Lutheran Church

Thursday, July 22, 6:00 p.m.

Stop by Advent Lutheran Church (2222 S Arlington Ridge Road) after work, starting at 6:00pm, on Thursday, July 22nd, for a mid-summer snack. After refreshment, we will spread out in the garden and work to make everything beautiful. This is a perfect opportunity for apartment/condo dwellers who have limited access to gardening! Contact Ingrid Berdahl at iberdahl@mac.com if you have any questions.

Four Mile Run Farmers and Artisans Market

Sundays, 8:00 a.m. - 1:00 p.m. through October

The Four Mile Run Farmers and Artisans Market is open from 8:00 a.m. - 1:00 p.m. on Sundays at 4109 Mount Vernon Avenue, Alexandria, VA

22305. Shop for fruit, vegetables, meats, cheeses, tamales, saltenas and crafts.

See: <http://www.arlandria.org/p/4mr-market.html>

Outdoor Zumba in the Courtyard at 2345 Crystal Drive

Wednesdays, 12:00 - 1:00 p.m.

Join the Crystal City BID, Sport and Health fitness club, and Vornado/Charles E. Smith for free Zumba in the courtyard of 2345 Crystal Drive. Zumba fuses hypnotic Latin rhythms and easy-to-follow moves to create a one-of-a-kind fitness program that will blow you away. Come out and join the party! Classes are canceled in the case of inclement weather.

Morning Meditation in the Water Park, 1750 Crystal Dr.

Mondays at 7:00 a.m.

Every Monday morning at 7:00 a.m. in June and July, Sport & Health will lead a 1-hour workout involving easy stretching and meditation. Classes will take place in the Crystal City Waterpark located near 1750 Crystal Drive. The class is canceled in the event of inclement weather.

Arlington County Fair August 18 - 22, 2010

Thomas Jefferson Community Center, 3501 South Second Street

Rides, entertainment, competitive exhibits, vendors, and more. For hours and details, visit <http://arlingtoncountyfair.us/index.html>

Host a Block Party!

Choose a date, send flyers to your neighbors and start planning the menu and activities for all ages. You'll need to go to the County at least 3 days in advance for a permit and those orange cones to block the street. The cost will vary depending on how many cones you need, but it will be around \$60. There are a few rules but it's worth it. Start by visiting <http://www.co.arlington.va.us/departments/EnvironmentalServices/dot/traffic/parking/EnvironmentalServicesHb2.aspx>



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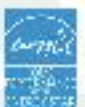
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Libraries need longer hours, more activities, patrons say

By Abby Brownback
Graduate Student, Philip Merrill
College of Journalism, University of
Maryland

Budget cuts have whittled the hours at Arlington's central library and its seven branches, and patrons expressed their disappointment at a library forum on Saturday [June 5, 2010].

Linley Mancilla said she used to take her 4-year-old daughter to the library every Sunday evening, and now it's closed at that time.

"I have to really work it in to go on weekends," she said. "They should stagger it so there's a library open in the evenings."

Diane Kresh, the director of the county's department of libraries, wasn't surprised by the feedback. She said she knows county residents are unhappy that some facilities will be closed one or more days per week, starting July 1. However, "it's a resource issue; it's a money issue," Kresh said, and decreased revenue translates into decreased services and hours.

Each of four focus groups, comprising about 30 people total, cited the need for more evening and weekend hours to cater to residents who work full-time. They described the hours as "erratic" and "hard to remember" and said the libraries' operating hours hindered their use of the facilities and services.

A committee of five county employees — part of an internal leadership development program — convened the forum to study how the county can shape the future of the library. By June 23, the committee members will submit a report to Kresh based on the focus groups' suggestions, and Kresh said she will post the feedback on the library's website and keep it in mind when she prepares a budget proposal this fall.

"This is an opportunity to create a vision of library services in the county... what they're going to be in the future," Kresh said. "When you want to make changes, you need to check the pulse of the community."

But participants voiced concern that they are not involved in decisions that affect the library system.

"Survey what patrons want instead of assuming what they want," said Samantha Bodwell, a substitute teacher who lives in south Arlington. "You live in the community. You want to be part of the decision-making process."

Bodwell said she was disheartened when the Aurora Hills branch began selling its older hardback adult fiction books this spring. Despite the shelf space opened up by the sales, Bodwell hasn't seen new books replacing those that were sold.

However, Arlington residents offered positive feedback as well, raving particularly about the library's website and online services. Mancilla said she visits the site every other day to re-

Mancilla said the posts make patrons "feel like you have a connection" with the library director and staff.

Going forward, the library must "keep up with the technology, but not at the detriment of the old," Bodwell said.

"We'll become even more dependent on technology and on having the alternative sources of media," Kresh predicted. "We're already beyond books."

So participants suggested ways the library could embrace a future that is more than books. Sixteen-year-old Maya Giacobbe wants the library to organize gatherings like movie nights, book clubs or theme parties for young adults.

"Teens need a place to go that's structured and enriching," said her mother, Cory Giacobbe. "Teens need to stay engaged with books and knowledge and role models."

Mark Nadel said he thought there would be interest in book clubs and activities for single adults. Other residents proposed that the library curate local news blogs, purchase more e-books, operate a bookmobile, and offer volunteer-led workshops on crafts, cooking and parenting.

"(But) with all the budget constraints, how does a library continue to function and serve the public?" asked Mary Stump, a middle school librarian who attended the forum.

And that is precisely the question Kresh will attempt to answer as she compiles next year's budget while considering patrons' ideas from this forum and others, as well as comments left on the library's blog and in suggestion boxes.

"Arlington has a strong tradition of community involvement," Kresh said. "Everyone has different ideas, and I don't want to be imposing from above. It's a way for me to say, 'I care about what you think'... and get a sense of where they are for the budget process in September."



Remodeling by Raul

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new loans — and thus avoid fees if she is out of town — access online magazine subscriptions, ask questions of a librarian through a live chat feature, and read Kresh's director's blog. Though she would like to see the blog updated more frequently,

Neighbors Create Modern Mosaics with Ancient Techniques

by Cory Giacobbe and Gail Fleming

Matteo Randi has been creating mosaics since he was a boy in Ravenna, Italy. It was only natural that he would pass his time breaking stones since Ravenna has been the center of mosaic art for centuries. Ravenna has been a principal city of mosaic since the 5th century AD when it became the Byzantine capital. The early Christian monuments of Ravenna were designated a UNESCO World Heritage Site in 1996: "... the site is of outstanding universal value.. by virtue of the supreme artistry of the mosaic art that the monuments contain..." (whc.unesco.org/en/list/788)

Matteo has owned a traditional mosaic hammer since he was nine years old. He began his formal training in mosaic art in Ravenna at age 11. He continued his training at the Istituto d'Arte Gino Severini and then at the National School for the Conservation of Mosaics, both in Ravenna.

Simona Cristanetti is an art conservator. Just prior to beginning her graduate studies, she went to Ravenna to study mosaic art, and there met Matteo. A fellowship took her to Cleveland, where Matteo joined her and they married. Simona then took a job at Mount Vernon, and they moved to Virginia. Currently she is with the National Gallery.

Here in Virginia, Matteo does the same work he did in Italy. Working with ancient technology and traditional methods, Matteo creates modern mosaic art using the traditional materials of stone and glass, but adds a contemporary and fresh perspective

by integrating local natural materials such as shells and driftwood, and incorporating stones from riverbeds. He uses glass made in Venice at a factory

which has 3,000 shades of green alone. The pieces of glass are called *pizze*. He uses a hammer called a *martellina* to hit the colored pieces of glass against a *tagliolo*, a chisel set in wood (see photo at bottom left). Then he fits the *tessere*- the pieces - together to form an image.

Most of his work is by commission, creating works for private chapels, office buildings, private residences and apartment buildings. He works with property owners to meet their design needs with a blend of traditional and contemporary styles.

Matteo also does mosaic consultation. In 2007, when the Basilica of the National Shrine of the Immaculate Conception needed to mount a mosaic made up of 2.4 million *tessere* on the dome ceiling, they called on Matteo to lead the installation. The mosaic was created in Italy using the traditional methods to form the image

designed by artist Leandro Miguel Velasco. The Shrine's mosaic was then shipped to Washington in pieces via 346 FedEx boxes. Matteo oversaw the six artisans who adhered the pieces to the dome ceiling using a reverse mosaic method. The backs of the design sections were attached to the cement and when dry, the paper was peeled away from the front.

In an earlier project, Matteo collaborated with Luca Buvoli, a contemporary artist and futurist who works in mixed media, sculpture and media. Luca likes mosaic but doesn't do mosaic, so he asked Matteo to do the mosaic



The Randi family at home in Aurora Highlands. (photo by Cory Giacobbe)

part of his work. The piece was exhibited at the Venice Biennale in 2006 and was shown at the entrance of the Arsenale, the main building of the exhibition.



Traditional mosaic design, Cave Canem, Pompeii. (Photo courtesy of matteorandimosaics.com)

Matteo just returned from a trip to Chicago to show 18 pieces and teach a class at the Chicago Mosaic School. One piece won the Members' Choice Award by the Society of American Mosaic Artists.

He also teaches classes here in his Arlington studio by having students

recreate traditional designs such as the well-known Pompeiian design Cave Canem, shown above. For more information on Matteo Randi, his art and classes, visit www.matteorandimosaics.com



Matteo in his studio, breaking stones by tapping them with his *martellina* against the *tagliolo*. (Photo courtesy of www.matteorandimosaics.com)



Detail of a recent mosaic by Matteo Randi, incorporating stone, shell, glass and driftwood. (Photo by Cory Giacobbe)



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.

Additional contributions in any amount are always appreciated.

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) _____

Tree Talk: Restoring Our Community's Native Tree Canopy

by Cory Giacobbe

Tree Care During the Heat Wave

All of the tree stewards and tree experts I spoke with this month had the same thing to say: water the trees! Weather data show that we are 6 inches short of rain compared to the average yearly rainfall by this date. Young trees need 10 gallons of water per week in the first two years after being planted. In hot, dry weather, it would be best to water 5 gallons twice a week. Older trees and shrubs may need water as well. Monitor them for signs of drought stress: wilting leaves, leaves that are lighter in color or turning brown at the edges, and leaf yellowing and leaf drop. The best time to water is early in the morning. The second best time is late in the evening. Remember to water the roots, not the trunk. The roots spread out, not down, at least as far out as the branches reach.



Pucker up for Chokecherries!

We left for Cuba in 2002. When we came back from Canada in 2008, there was a tree next to my dear old dogwood that wasn't there before, and it was already bigger than the dogwood. Now I like trees and I like weeds, but this weed tree was growing alarmingly fast and at a 60° angle. I was planning to remove the tree when my friend from Toronto came to visit and started raving about the wonderful tree. She told me it was a chokecherry and that the birds would feast on the cherries when they ripened in September. I did some research and found that this tree's common name is a misnomer. *Prunus virginiana* was a main food source for native American groups all across North America. If you wait until the berries are truly ripe in September, they are sweet and delicious with a slight pucker factor. They can be made into jam, juice, jelly, syrup and wine. Native Americans made them into a leather, kind of like a fruit roll-up. That way the food could be preserved into the winter months. The bark, stems and seeds contain hydrocyanic acid which is toxic, but that is neutralized by boiling or drying. "The most important use [of chokecherries] was as part of the recipe for pemmican, or mince-meat. Pemmican was

made by getting a slice of dried meat (bison was preferred over elk, deer or antelope) and pounding it with a stone until it had a fine texture. Bone marrow and animal lard were then heated and mixed with the meat. Crushed chokecherries were then added. Pemmican would be cached as a winter food." (http://plants.usda.gov/plantguide/pdf/cs_prvi.pdf) *Prunus virginiana* may be the most widely distributed tree in North America. It regenerates by sprouting from spreading rhizomes or from seeds dispersed by wildlife. Seeds actually germinate more successfully if they are first eaten by a bear! Because they reproduce so easily, and contain hydrocyanic acid, *Prunus virginiana* are listed on the USDA Invasive and Noxious Weed list.

Gardening for Butterflies and Other Pollinators

I found a website on plants that attract butterflies as host plants and I was encouraged to see I already had some host plants in my yard. It motivated me to choose some more and then I found this other website that you can plug in your zip code and it tells you what butterflies are easiest to attract in your area. You check which butterflies you want and it tells you what nectar and host plants to plant for them. It literally makes up a shopping list for you! Here's the website. Have fun.

<http://www.gardenswithwings.com/what-is-a-butterfly-garden.html>

This Butterfly Garden guide from Green Spring Gardens has a ton of information on how to attract butterflies and moths:

<http://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/parks/gsgp/infosheets/butterfliesandmoths.pdf>

Here is the plant list from Virginia Tech's Native Plant Garden for Pollinators:

<http://filebox.vt.edu/users/adamson/VTApiaryPollinatorGarden.pdf>

Here's a link to the Parkfairfax Native Plant Sale vendor list.

<http://home.earthlink.net/~sknudsen/id3.html>

Visit local nurseries and attend the next Parkfairfax Native Plant Sale on Saturday, September 25, from 9 a.m. to 2 p.m. 3601 Valley Drive, Alexandria, VA.

Aurora Highlands Civic Association

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President – Michael Dowell
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Vice President – Nick Giacobbe
703-842-5441

2nd Vice President – Cara Tenuta
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Items for the Newsletter: Send items in e-mail messages (not attachments) to the newsletter editor, Cory Giacobbe: AHCA.news@yahoo.com

For past issues of the newsletter, bylaws, and neighborhood boundaries and more, visit

AuroraHighlands.org

P.O. Box 25201 - Arlington, VA 22202

AuroraHighlands.org

"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.