

[AuroraHighlands.org](http://AuroraHighlands.org)

**Inside This Issue:**

- ◆ Community Center Improvements
- ◆ President's Corner
- ◆ Pentagon City LRPC
- ◆ Mosquito Management
- ◆ Historic Resources Inventory
- ◆ Aircraft Issues
- ◆ Police Ride-Alongs
- ◆ Activities and Events
- ◆ Energy Efficient Home
- ◆ Wood Recycling

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, April 13, 2011 at 7:00 p.m.**  
**AURORA HILLS COMMUNITY CENTER**  
**Agenda**

- 6:30** Social
- 7:00** Hayes Street Multimodal Update
- 7:15** AHCA Business Meeting
- 7:45** Community Discussion: New AHCA Website

**WiFi, New Seating and More Coming to Aurora Hills  
Community Center and Library**

By Jenny Lawhorn Sammis

The Aurora Hills Library and Community Center is a cherished space in our neighborhood. When the center was threatened with potentially debilitating cuts to hours and service in 2009, we spoke up. Our voices made a huge difference: the library was ultimately spared from cuts that might have spelled the beginning of the end. The show of force showed County leadership that the library is a huge priority for Aurora Highlands.

Thanks to some neighbors who've

stayed on task working hard for the Aurora Hills library and community center, things are is turning around. The DES (Arlington Department of Environmental Services) and PRCR (Arlington Parks, Recreation & Cultural Resources) are working with us on solutions to improve the facility's infrastructure and make under-used areas in the center more welcoming and functional. Over the winter, the County replaced the library's heating and cooling systems and installed a new roof. Community leaders and County staff

sharing program gives AHCA and ARCA members easier access to the center. Key-sharing has opened up the space already used by our seniors to more neighbors than ever, bringing us Passport to Summer for families, Edgar Allen Poe night, Odyssey of the Mind, Family Movie Fridays, a science program for elementary-aged children, and other popular meetings.

More improvements are coming over the next few months. The DES is working with an Aurora Highlands neighborhood committee to expand wireless access in and around the library and community center. Visitors will already notice new wireless internet service in the lobby and in the two rooms of the community center, and new outdoor service will be available before sum-

also worked together on a plan that has vastly increased neighborhood use of the community center. The community center key-

—Continued on Page 3—

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## President's Corner

by Michael Dowell

Welcome to spring and goodbye to a not-so-bad winter, although the thundersnow was a little weird. The Cherry Blossoms are out and our attention turns across the river, where one can see the beautiful blossoms of the Tidal Basin.

Well, not really. For if you duck into the Crystal City Water Park tunnel and take a walk up the Arlington side of the

river, along the bike trail and through Gravelly Point Park, you'll see a rusted hulk of iron, the Long Bridge, soon to be honored by Arlington's newest park of the same name at the north end of Crystal City. The park will have a viewing platform looking north, offering a considerably more expensive, yet no prettier view of the same scene.

Nine bridge spans grace the Potomac

River between the old ports of Georgetown and Alexandria. From upstream to down, these are the Francis Scott Key, Theodore Roosevelt, Arlington Memorial, George Mason Memorial, Rochambeau, Arland Williams Jr (hero of the Air Florida plane crash), Charles Fenwick, Long Bridge, and the Wilson Bridge. Most of these bridges do

—Continued on Page 4—



## Pentagon City Long-Range Planning Committee Update

By Nick Giacobbe

The committee met for a second time on March 29 to continue the process of developing recommendations for Parcel 1D (the lot bounded by Army Navy Drive, South Fern Street, 12<sup>th</sup> Street South, and South Eads Street). At this point, according to the terms of the 1976 Pentagon City Master Development Plan, the County staff calculates the remaining density permitted on the 8.4-acre site is 882 hotel units. This density is predicated on completion of the anticipated swap of 300 hotel units from adjacent Parcel 3 (Metropolitan Park) in exchange for moving 930 residential units from Parcel 1D. After the swap, the build out of Metropolitan Park on Parcel 3 will ultimately result in 3,212 residential units, of which 2,102 remain to be built.

The County staff walked through some of the guiding principles from the 1976 plan (which are still valid and applicable) and attempted to extrapolate the comments of the 1997 Pentagon City Task Force as being applicable to

Parcel 1D. The chair of the 1997 Task Force was at the meeting and reminded everyone that the 1997 comments were focused on bringing together the many perspectives on the task at hand, Pentagon Row, and were not meant to be applicable to all of Pentagon City. Most importantly, the 1997 Task Force Commentary was not adopted by County Board as an amendment to the 1976 Plan.

Some of the 1976 guiding principles that were discussed included compatibility, mixed use development, distribution of densities and heights among the buildings and moving the highest densities to the north and east of Pentagon City, open space, and circulation and pedestrian routes (especially the construction of the 12th Street South connector). One of the missing elements that was also considered was sustainability, which the County staff said would have to be a given for any project undertaken. The streetcar barn, which was a major point of the

first meeting, was not developed any further.

The County staff presented possible massing studies, ranging from the baseline of 882 hotel rooms up through a high density proposal that is quite similar to the proposal submitted for the site. In its "objective" analysis, the massing study the County staff developed for the baseline 882 hotel room option was laughable, a sure way to get that one thrown out as a non-starter. The remaining massing studies completely disregard the principles of the 1976 Pentagon City Master Development Plan.

At the end of the long evening, not much had been accomplished, but another meeting will follow in a month or so. It may also include a walking tour of the site, although the group may forgo the field trip and instead take a virtual tour in the comfort of a county conference room.

## Community Center Improvements

-Continued from Page 1-

mer. The PRCR is also in the final stages of designing a new Spray Park in the park next to the library. The Spray Park should be ready in time for a cool summer 2012.

DES is also working with a representative committee of our neighbors on small but meaningful design improvements meant to make the library and community center's space more functional and welcoming. (Larger improvements will require funding and will need to be submitted as part of the county's CIP process.) Although there are still design decisions to be made, work could begin within a month. First on the list, the partitioned windows that once housed a visitor info center but is currently used for storage will be removed to add space and seating in what is now just a lobby. Carpeting and soft seating will be installed, creating an informal conversation and meeting area separate from the library with internet access.

The lobby will also be updated with space for the display of local artwork, an electronic information board, and better interior signage.

All of this would not be possible without your support and your voice. For more information on library improvements, the key-sharing program, or to make a suggestion, please contact AHCA President Mike Dowell.



**INFORMATION EVENING**  
Wednesday, April 27, 7:30 – 9:00 pm

**MORNING IN THE GRADES**  
May 7, Saturday, 9:30-11:30 am  
For parents only  
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## Mosquito Management in Your Yard is Easy and Effective

by Cory Giacobbe

It's that special time of year in Arlington, when we go directly from winter to summer. Any day now, the mosquito eggs that were laid in grass and ivy last fall will be ready to hatch. With a week's worth of water and warm weather, they'll complete their larval stage and they'll be ready to hunt for blood. My neighbors have told me that the arrival of the Asian Tiger Mosquito, *Aedes albopictus* has changed their outdoor recreation routines. We grill out less, eat outside less, play outside less, and are building screened porches.



These new bugs on the block have a different biting schedule from the dawn and dusk biters we grew up with. They are active all day long and they have a very short breeding cycle. They can complete their entire cycle from blood meal to egg laying to larva to hatched adult in only 4 days during warm weather if they have a constant pool of water, even if the amount of water is tiny. I learned 3 quick and simple yard maintenance tips that will GREATLY reduce mosquito breeding. If we all do these things, remind our neighbors and help neighbors when they are away or unable, we will reduce the mosquito

population in our neighborhood.

**#1 mosquito breeding site:** inside the corrugated black plastic tubes we've all been attaching to our downspouts to move rain away from the house. Those little corrugated bumps hold in enough water (even on a slope!) long enough for thousands of mosquitoes to hatch and reach adulthood. After every rain,

and once every weekend, remove the tube and tip it vertically to pour out all water, mud and debris. Consider removing the tube entirely and using instead a smooth tube or one of those cement or plastic trays.

**#2 mosquito breeding site:** water that collects in flower pots, saucers, furniture and toys in your yard. Empty puddled water after every rain and again once every weekend. Do a search for lost toys in the ivy and shrubs. A lost sand pail or grocery bag can breed thousands of mosquitoes per week.

**#3 mosquito breeding site:** bird

baths. Empty, rinse and refill at least every weekend..

Another very common mosquito breeding site is clogged rain gutters. Anywhere water puddles for a few days can be an attractive egg laying site. Clean your rain gutters regularly or hire somebody to do it.

The bottom line is, to interrupt the mosquito breeding cycle, we need to dump all standing water at least once a week. Establish a routine to patrol your yard every weekend to search for and empty standing water. Empty drainage tubes after every rain. For more information, consult the online pamphlet, "Protecting Yourself From Disease Carrying Insects: A Reference

**"The bottom line is...we need to dump all standing water at least once a week."**

Guide to Mosquitoes, Ticks, West Nile Virus and Lyme Disease." It has a very useful check-

list on page 9 for eliminating mosquito breeding sites in your yard. Here's the link:

<http://www.co.arlington.va.us/departments/HumanServices/PublicHealth/EnvironmentalHealth/file64967.pdf>

(Note: I personally do not advocate use of the pesticides in the brochure.)

## President's Corner

—Continued from Page 2—

indeed grace the river – viewed from the water the detail on the Arlington Memorial Bridge is particularly beautiful.

The Long Bridge is not graceful, but it does have a story. The first Long Bridge was a wooden toll bridge opened in 1809. The bridge was burned down during The War of 1812 (the British burned the Washington end and we burned the Arlington end) and rebuilt after. Long Bridge served the region throughout the 1800s, closing several times to repair damage from ice flows and floods. In 1856, the Ar-

lington and Washington Railroad opened rail service across the bridge, connecting to the Baltimore and Ohio railroad in Washington DC and northward.

Long Bridge gained spans for road and rail traffic after the Civil War, leading to the multiple bridge arrangement still used today. Long Bridge itself was rebuilt in 1903 with a swing bridge span. The bridge was replaced in 1943, but the swing bridge span was retained, now 108 years old.

Today Long Bridge is owned by CSX

Corporation, the result of mergers and consolidations in the bridge ownership dating back to the 1903 bridge construction.

Long Bridge is a historic structure, without question. But it is one that could sorely use some sprucing up. In past years, its rusty and graffiti-strewn appearance seemed an apt metaphor for the sorry, often bankrupt state of the U.S. railroad industry. With the resurgence in the fortunes of the railroad industry over the past decade, this bridge has certainly earned a coat of paint.

# Historic Resources Inventory

by Nick Giacobbe

For the past few years, the Arlington County Historic Preservation staff has undertaken a survey of the most important structures built in the County. The newly completed Historic Resources Inventory looks at three categories of buildings constructed prior to 1955 that set

Arlington apart from other places -- namely garden apartments, shopping centers, and commercial buildings.

The County staff looked at nearly 400 historic properties and ranked them into several different categories: Essential (properties that define Arlington as Arlington), Important, Notable, Minor, and Demolished. The sad news is that about a quarter of the properties fell into the Demolished category before the survey project was complete.

During a rollout on March 30, the County staff explained that listing on the

inventory does not afford any protection to the historic properties, but is instead meant as a planning and information-sharing tool that will help the County and developers preserve these important links to our past. Some of the programs that are in place to

promote the preservation of listed buildings include rehabilitation tax credits, preservation easements, and transfers of development rights. The County could also implement tax incentives for rehabilitation expenses, a revolving fund for rehabilitation work or direct acquisition and resale of historic structures.

The County Board will consider a request to advertise the Historic Resource Inventory at its May meeting and it will then be considered for adoption at the June or July meeting.

Our neighborhood as a whole is a pretty historic place; we were listed by the National Park Service on the National Register of Historic Places on October 22, 2008 as a historic residential suburb. What do we have on the County's new list? Although we don't have any of the 23 properties that are classified Essential (that I could find), we are lucky to have quite a few properties in our neighborhood on the list. Here's a quick rundown:

## Important Commercial Properties

420 23rd Street South  
805 20th Street South (#1)

## Notable Garden Apartments

Aurora Hills Apartments, 2701-2705 South Fern Street (#4)  
Low-Rise Apartment Building, 702-710 22nd Street South (#2)

## Notable Commercial Properties

523-525 23rd St. South (#3)  
555-561 23rd St. South

## Minor Commercial Property

549 23rd Street South (#5)

For more information on the Arlington's Historic Resources Inventory and the complete list of properties, visit the County's web site at: <http://www.arlingtonva.us/departments/CPHD/ons/CPHDOnsHistoricPreservation.aspx>.

**\*\*All photos on this page are by Maya Giacobbe\*\***



## Aborted Landings Common at National Airport

By Brent Spence

According to the March 30 Washington Post ("At National Airport, Aborted Landings Are Not Uncommon") there are an estimated 10 to 20 aborted landings a month at National Airport. Last-second orders to abort a landing are not unique to National, but the heavy traffic load into the compact airport means that air-traffic controllers have to use particular skill, especially during the busy hours of the day and when helicopters are nearby.

National is basically a one-runway operation (6,869 feet long). The Post quotes an FAA official as saying "They run squeeze plays all the time because they have to in order to move traffic. The old saying was "tighten them up until you get a go-around (the term used for aborted landings or wave-offs) and then back off a bit and you will

have perfect spacing on final."

National averaged 726 daily commercial flights last year. Hemmed in by the Potomac River on one side and the George Washington Memorial Parkway on the other, the airport has one primary runway, 6,869 ft long. Dulles, on the other hand, averages 922 daily flights but can use three runways at the same time, and a fourth, at an angle is available for use when conditions allow (two are 11,500 and two are 10,500 feet long). BWI, with about 700 daily commercial flights, normally uses two runways (10,502 and 9,501 feet long), with a third reserved mostly for smaller planes.

There are a number of reasons that a pilot on final approach to land might be ordered to abort. A plane may be ap-

proaching too fast or too high for safety, or the weather may be a factor. Frequently, the cause is traffic on the runway, possibly because a plane that just landed hasn't moved out of the way quickly enough or a plane cleared for takeoff has stayed on the runway longer than expected. A third possibility is that the arriving plane approached more quickly than anticipated, throwing off the tower's timing. When a plane is "waved off" at National, it often comes right up 23rd Street. For questions or complaints about aircraft noise, the number is 703-417-8020.

Currently, the Senate has already approved a bill (S223), which is in conference, to add more flights with heavier planes at National.

## Update on Airport Legislation

By Brent Spence

The House passed its FAA appropriations bill on March 31, apparently without including additional flights for National Airport. Of note, an amendment to allow two Southern California airports to impose 10:00 p.m. to 7:00 a.m. curfews was defeated by the House. Also defeated was an amendment to require a minimum of three air-traffic controllers at all times.

The Senate passed an FAA appropriations bill on February 17. The Senate bill calls for adding 16 more flights beyond 1,250 miles to National, including five

that would go to airlines that currently have little or no presence there. Currently at National, 12 daily flights beyond 1,250 miles are allowed.

The next step is a reconciliation of the two bills before a conference report is submitted for the President's signature. The Office of Management and Budget has released a statement saying that President Obama will veto the bill if language limiting the ability of railroad and airline workers to unionize is included in the final bill.

## Neighbor Helps Solve Problems

Last month Al Burt helped his neighbors and friends by advising in areas such as a better way to replace the lowering cable of a sailboat's center board, ideas on house improvements,

repairing lamps, and financing a car. He is still waiting for your call (703-521-9629) or email ([dcamiadca@yahoo.com](mailto:dcamiadca@yahoo.com)) so he can try to help with your particular question.

## Police Ride-Alongs

Interested in learning more about the Arlington County Police Department and how the police work in the community? The police department offers Police Ride-Alongs to any county residents over 18 years of age. They will take you out, any time day or night (except Fridays and Saturdays) and allow you to observe the police at work. There's always something going on that requires police atten-

tion, so you are bound to learn something new.

More information is available from the Police Department's Ride-Along Coordinator, Marlo Wade, telephone 703-228-4120 or by email at [mwade@arlingtonva.us](mailto:mwade@arlingtonva.us). An application form is available online at: <http://www.arlingtonva.us/Departments/Police/citizens/forms/docs/RideAlongApplication.pdf>.

## MT Vernon Baptist Church

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Weekly services:

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## Activities and Events

### **Courthouse Farmers' Market**

**Saturdays from 8:00 a.m. – noon**

Located adjacent to the Arlington County Courthouse Parking Lot, at the intersection of North Courthouse Road and North 14th Street. Arlington's largest market, it continues year round and averages about 30 vendors, all of whom are required to produce their items within 125 miles of Arlington. Free parking is available in the parking garage under the County Administrative Offices. No dogs are allowed at the market.

### **Four Mile Run Farmers and Artisans Market, Every Sunday from 8:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m., just across the bridge on Mount Vernon Avenue.**

Last year was a great success for this new market and the community successfully supporting the market week in and week out despite 100+ degree days and lots of rain. Starting the first Sunday in April, **4MRMarket** starts again to build on that success and make our local market the best thing going.

### **Del Ray Farmers' Market, Saturdays from 8:00 a.m. – noon, corner of East Oxford & Mount Vernon Avenues.**

The nearby Del Ray market is open year round, offering producer-grown fresh vegetables and fruits in season. All year round, this market offers meats, eggs, fresh pasta and sauces, Amish cheese, yogurt, bakery goods, eggs, jams and jellies, fancy nuts, and bakery goods.

### **5K Fridays Continue every Friday at 6:30 p.m. through April 29.**

Join the Crystal City BID and Pacers Running Stores every Friday for one of the most popular and fun 5k races in the metro area! Racers will run a professionally timed and certified course along a fast and fun route through Crystal City! Register at <http://pacersevents.com/crystalrun5kfridays/index.html>.

**Public Meeting on Crystal City–Potomac Yard Transitway Operations, Wednesday, April 13, from 6:30 p.m. to 8:00 p.m., Cora Kelly Recreation Center, 25 West Reed**

**Avenue, Alexandria.** The project team – including staff of Metro, Arlington County, and the City of Alexandria – has made recommendations for transit-only lanes between Crystal City and Potomac Yard. The purpose of the meeting is to discuss proposed transitway operating strategies and to receive community input. The meeting will include an open house with maps and displays, a slide presentation, and group discussion. Meeting materials will be posted on the project website, <http://www.cpytransit.com>.

**FLASH, March 17 - April 17, Wednesdays and Thursdays: 5:00 p.m. – 10:00 p.m., Fridays: 5:00 p.m. - 11:00 p.m.; Saturdays: Noon – 11:00 p.m.; Sundays: Noon – 7:00 p.m. on the 12th and 13th floors of 2450 Crystal Drive.** The Crystal City BID and Foto DC bring together 250 photos, 55 photographers and a library of 150 photo books in two locally-curated free shows.

**Arlington Home Show & Expo, Saturday, April 9, 10:00 a.m. - 4:00 p.m. at the Walter Reed Community Center, 2909 South 16th Street.** The 5th annual home show will offer one-stop shopping for a wide variety of home improvements. The expo will feature information on remodeling kitchens and baths, finishing or waterproofing basements, replacing windows and doors, as well as how to make your home more energy efficient.



Photo by Maya Giacobbe

**Power Purge and Shred, Wednesday, April 27, 7:00 a.m. to 7:00 p.m., parking lot of 220 20<sup>th</sup> Street South.** Crystal City BID once sponsors recycling of electronics, batteries, and an opportunity to avoid identity theft by

shredding documents. For more info visit [www.crystalcity.org](http://www.crystalcity.org).

**Yoga in the Water Park, every Monday beginning May 2 at 7:00 a.m., across from 1750 Crystal Drive.** Instructors will lead a free 60-minute yoga stretching class every Monday throughout the summer and through the end of September.

**Crystal City Farm Fresh Market, Every Tuesday Starting May 3, 3:00 p.m. to 7:00 p.m., Sidewalk Along Crystal Drive between 18<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> Street.** Over 20 local farmers and producers bring together seasonal fruits and vegetables, fresh-cut flowers, container plants and herbs, farm-raised eggs, all-natural meats, artisan baked goods, specialty foods and much more.

**Zumba in the Park, Every Wednesday Starting May 4 at noon, Courtyard in front of 2121 Crystal Drive.** Join the Crystal City BID, Sport and Health fitness club, and Vornado/Charles E. Smith for free Zumba in the courtyard of 2121 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.

**Floral Frenzy: Tropical Storm, Friday, May 6 starting at 9:30 a.m., Courtyard at 2121 Crystal Drive.**

Budding gardeners and flower-lovers can participate in a healthy and therapeutic activity with the Bulb Blitz. As part of the Floral Frenzy program, the Bulb Blitz invites area residents and workers to dig up the thousands of tulip bulbs along Crystal City Drive for planting in their own gardens in the fall. Typically discarded after a single season of blooming, these high quality bulbs will continue to bloom for years.

**Open House at the New Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, Saturday, May 7, 3:00 p.m. to 6:00 p.m., 745 23rd Street South.**

Neighbors, friends, and community members are invited to explore the new chapel renovated from an existing office building. Free and open to all.

# Improving Your Home's Comfort, Health and Energy Efficiency: Part 5, Heating Combustion Safety Dangers in Your Home

By Scott Donelson

Since November, I have been focusing on several topics to improve the comfort, health, and energy efficiency of your home. You may be feeling the effects of those high gas or electric bills or still having to put on a sweater just to be comfortable due to drafts. You don't have to live with either! All of these articles can be found at <http://aurorahighlands.org>. Here is a synopsis of the articles to date:

**Nov 10** - What causes hot/cold problems in the home resulting in high bills and how to identify the sources through an energy audit that produces a prioritized list of improvements based on "best bang for the buck".

**Jan 11** - Heating and cooling systems- The types out there and considerations to make when replacing one.

**Feb 11** - Twelve easy homeowner tips for reducing energy consumption beyond replacing light bulbs!

**Mar 11** - What you should know about water heaters.

## WHY SHOULD YOU CARE?

Carbon monoxide (CO) is a colorless, odorless, tasteless gas that can kill! Any combustion device in the home, whether it is a water heater, furnace or oven, can emit CO and other dangerous combustion products in the home. Experience indicates about 1 in 5 homes have some level of problems - many serious. Low levels of CO have been shown to contribute to chronic health problems and are known risk factors in several disorders such as Alzheimer's and MS, particularly in young and older people. Protect your family! Specialized equipment and training is required to identify and diagnose combustion safety problems and that is why most HVAC companies and others don't bother. A Building Performance Institute (BPI) certified energy auditor is trained for this. When addressing comfort and energy effi-

ciency problems in the home through air sealing and insulation, combustion safety problems can be exacerbated, and failure to perform a proper energy audit first before embarking on these extremely worthwhile projects could lead to further problems.

## TYPICAL TYPES OF COMBUSTION EQUIPMENT IN THE HOME

**Gas storage water heaters:** These have a large tank and combustion gases which have either natural-drafted or fan-assisted draft. A natural-draft heater has a metal flue that vents to a chimney or vertical flue through the roof. Gases naturally rise up and out, and there is a gap at the top of the heater below the draft hood to allow air to come in the flue to create the draft. A fan-assisted unit will have a fan on top of the heater and vents with plastic pipe out a sidewall of the home. The natural-draft water heater is the device MOST susceptible to problems.

**Gas ranges/ovens:** These devices are the second most susceptible to problems. They emit some CO into the home whenever operating. Thus, burner problems can be really dangerous, particularly in the oven.

**Tankless water heaters:** These are always designed to be sealed combustion, meaning that air for combustion is drawn from the outside and combustion gases are blown out in a sealed combustion chamber. This is the safest and most efficient device. Most high efficiency water heaters and fur-

naces these days involve sealed combustion.

**Furnaces:** These can be natural-draft, fan-assisted draft, or sealed combustion, just like the water heaters. Here again, the natural draft is the most dangerous because gases can easily escape if a problem occurs with the system. Although furnaces are generally the least susceptible devices, they can quickly cause a significant safety problem since they are the largest combustion device (and largest exhaust producer) in the house.

## COMMON CAUSES OF PROBLEMS

During energy audits, I have seen all of these issues once or multiple times in homes in the area:

**Metal flue configuration problems:** flues that don't slope up by 1/4 inch per foot minimum or do have sharp bends near the draft hood.

**Burner problems:** Clogged or dirty burners - particularly on ovens and water heaters - cause incomplete combustion, resulting in excessive CO production.

**Chimney issues:** Poor design or deterioration on the inside doesn't produce the draft pressure required to properly remove the combustion gases.

**Gas leaks:** Leaks in gas piping joints anywhere from the meter to the gas consuming device.

**High-capacity range hoods:** A very nice kitchen remodel with a high-capacity range hood can depressurize the house enough to cause back draft-

ing of a water heater! (We have seen this multiple times!)

**Simultaneous operation of items that draw air out of the home:** For instance, any combination of operating a few things simultaneously, such as a lower volume kitchen range hood, clothes dryer, bathroom exhaust fan, a fire in the fireplace, or the furnace/air conditioner operating may be enough to cause problems.

—Continued on Page 9—

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## Heating Combustion Safety Dangers in Your Home

- Continued from p. 8 -

### Heating and air system air returns:

Having a return too close to the water heater may draw enough air to prevent the water heater from drafting correctly.

### HOW DO YOU KNOW IF YOU HAVE A PROBLEM?

Do you get regular headaches, have flu-like symptoms, or generally feel lousy or lethargic while in the home? These are usually signs that CO poisoning is occurring.

An energy audit can determine the sources of these problems or the potential for this poisoning to occur. Combustion safety testing is included with all energy audits from a reputable auditor/company. All auditors are not created equal, but by using a Building Performance Institute (BPI) certified auditor with a BPI accredited company, you can be assured of getting the combustion safety testing done properly. In addition, you will get a full assessment of your home's air sealing and insulation and be provided the road-map to improve your home's comfort and energy efficiency.

### TIPS FOR PROTECTING YOU AND YOUR FAMILY

Install a LOW LEVEL CO detector on each floor: The little known secret is that the Home Depot/ Lowe's CO detectors provide very limited protection and are meant to be "life or death" alarms, and they are only designed to alarm when the CO levels are extremely high. They do NOT alarm at low levels warning you of an impending bigger problem so it can be addressed before an emergency situation develops. Why are the common CO detector standards so low? Conclusive evidence is a bit elusive, but practically, these detectors are cheaper to make, and thus the theory is the government standards for the alarm activation thresholds were set high to provide a CO detector for the masses that is relatively inexpensive with the hopes that people have something rather than nothing. A low level alarm is more expensive, but this is a very cheap insurance policy!

Use the oven range hood if you have a gas oven/stove top: Most vent outside, and if so, always turn the hood on while the oven/stovetop is in use.

Install a sealed combustion water heater and furnace when replacing this equipment.

### CONCLUSION

Combustion safety in the home should not be taken lightly. Combustion gases, even at low levels, can cause long term health problems and lead to death in the worst catastrophic scenarios. An energy audit can determine if there is a current problem or potential for a problem and can educate you to make the right choices. Finally, install a low level CO detector.

The following web sites contain more information on the topics discussed: <http://www.MyEnergyMedics.com> (links to many sites and answers to frequently asked questions) <http://www.coexperts.com> (makers of a quality low level CO detector, available through Home Energy Medics).

About the author: Scott Donelson is a local resident, a BPI certified energy auditor, home energy consultant, and president of Home Energy Medics, [www.MyEnergyMedics.com](http://www.MyEnergyMedics.com), an elite NoVA home Performance with Energy Star program participating company.

## It's Not Just a Rumor: Gossip on 23<sup>rd</sup> To Expand

By Jenny Lawhorn Sammis



Photo by Maya Giacobbe

Fashion boutique Gossip on 23<sup>rd</sup> will be expanding from its jewel-box sized storefront at 566 S. 23<sup>rd</sup> Street into a larger space that will include the corner store currently occupied by a Payday 2 Go. Gossip on 23rd will begin leasing the new space in April, and following renovations (during which the main store will stay open) will launch the new store in late May or early June. The enlarged boutique will add to the store's suc-

cessful mix of fashion at an affordable price with women's contemporary shoes, more accessories, a collection of plus-size items, some men's graphic tees, and some kids stuff. Katherine Glorioso Dress, the owner, says the store has a great group of supporters in the neighborhood, and draws customers from Maryland, DC and all over Northern Virginia. On the web at: [www.gossipon23rd.com](http://www.gossipon23rd.com).

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# Yes! I want to join the Aurora Highlands Civic Association!

Please complete the following information and enclose the form with your check payable to **Aurora Highlands Civic Association**. Annual dues are **\$20.00** per household. Bring it to the next Civic Association meeting or mail to:

Membership Chair  
Aurora Highlands Civic Association  
P.O. Box 25201  
Arlington, VA 22202

## Member information:

Name(s): \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

E-Mail: \_\_\_\_\_

Check here to receive Civic Association announcements by email.

## I'm ready to get involved!

### I am interested in:

Library     Schools     Parks and Rec.     Streets & Lights

Zoning/Planning     Other \_\_\_\_\_

Serving on an AHCA committee

**Note:** Your address, phone number and e-mail address will not be released outside the civic association. The dues year runs November 1 to October 31.

## Tree Talk: Restoring Our Community's Native Tree Canopy

by Cory Giacobbe

### Wood Recycling

Trees reduce greenhouse gases in the atmosphere by converting carbon dioxide and water into oxygen and sugar. The oxygen is released into the atmosphere as a gas and the sugar is used by the tree for energy to carry out its functions and is then converted into cellulose and stored as wood. This is called the carbon cycle.



The carbon dioxide is stored in the wood for as many years as the wood remains intact. If it is burned, chipped, composted or decomposed, the carbon is released back into the atmosphere.

If you find that you are unable to avoid cutting down a tree on your property, consider offering the wood to a wood recycler. Wood that is made into furniture, cutting boards, tools, bowls or art holds the carbon dioxide out of the atmosphere for as long as that wood item lasts.

Imagine a 200-year-old mighty oak that has been converting carbon dioxide into oxygen and wood through colonial days, the Civil War, the Industrial Revolution, all the way up to the dot com boom. A family prospers and can finally afford to put an addition on their home for a grandparent guest suite and a dining room. The oak tree has to be cut down to make room. If the tree is cut down with care, the wood can be cut and cured and used to build furniture. A fine oak table could extend the carbon sequestration function of the oak tree for another 200 years. Who knows what history the tree will witness in its next form and function.

### The Story of Wood

The process of wood recycling was featured last weekend at an all-day

event at Potomac Overlook Park. The free program, "The Story of Wood," was co-sponsored by Northern Virginia Conservation Trust, Arlington County Nature Centers and the Audubon Society of Northern Virginia. In the hundred acre wooded regional park in North Arlington, when trees fall, they are usually left to provide habitat and compost, but when fallen trees obstruct roads and paths, they are removed. They are then milled and dried and used

for furniture, fencing or other educational purposes. During this year's event, the wood collected from Potomac Overlook amounted to a pile of logs equal to a thousand board feet. Half of it will go to Arlington Public Schools high school wood working programs. A quarter will be taken by the saw operator as payment for work, and a quarter will be used by Potomac Overlook for fences, benches and other park use.

### Wood Recycler Contact List

Tree Stewards are developing a list of arborists in the greater DC area who practice wood recycling. The list will be available soon on the Tree Steward website. Here is a preliminary list:

B&K Timber Mill, Lucketts, VA  
Carl Middleton 703-929-4310

Earlywood Design & Services, Woodbine, MD, Cecil Smith, 410-935-5689

NeighborWood, 6028 23rd St. N, Arlington, VA, Bill Merkel, 703-225-9969

Treincarnation, Silver Spring, MD, Marcus Sims, 443-831-1781

For more information on wood recycling, the Story of Wood and other tree care resources, visit [TreeStewards.org](http://TreeStewards.org).

## Aurora Highlands Civic Association

### Association Officers

#### & Committee Chairs

President – Michael Dowell  
703-521-7739

Vice President – Nick Giacobbe  
703-842-5441

2nd Vice President – Cory Giacobbe  
703-842-5441

Treasurer / Membership – Brent Spence

Secretary – Jenny Lawhorn  
jennylawhorn@comcast.net

Web Master – Jason Roberts  
[AHCAWebmaster@gmail.com](mailto:AHCAWebmaster@gmail.com)

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 – Denis O'Sullivan  
703-521-6425

Meeting Hospitality - Rosamunda  
Neuharth-Ozgo

Newsletter Distribution -

Michael Shumway 703-774-5045

Newsletter Advertising - Marty King

703-979-3410 [martinch@erols.com](mailto:martinch@erols.com)

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](mailto:AHCA.news@yahoo.com)

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

[AuroraHighlands.org](http://AuroraHighlands.org)

P.O. Box 25201 - Arlington, VA 22202

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"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.