

Aurora Highlands

CIVIC ASSOCIATION

AuroraHighlands.org

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NEWSLETTER

FEBRUARY 2012

AURORA HIGHLANDS — EST'D 1910

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 8, 2012 at 7:00 p.m.

AURORA HILLS COMMUNITY CENTER

Agenda

6:30 Social

7:00 AHCA Business Meeting

7:30 Pike Transitway Presentation

8:00 Discussions on Trees, Ice Rink, Linden Sign and more

Pentagon Row Plaza Survey—What is the Sense of the Community?

By Jim Oliver, AHCA President

Help Us Answer the Question:

Do you favor the construction of two new stand-alone retail spaces in the Pentagon Row Plaza, at approximately 800 square feet each, together with the inclusion of a larger ice rink, OR, do you oppose the new retail spaces and the larger ice rink? That is the simple question we need our neighbors to answer.

The Background: The people who own and manage the Pentagon Row Plaza had planned to freshen up the plaza with landscaping changes, turf, sidewalks, benches, an outdoor fire

pit, and other improvements. One element of this was to create space for a much larger ice rink. In winter months, this is a very popular amenity and sometimes it gets pretty crowded. A larger rink could provide space for youth hockey teams to practice. The developers, Federal Realty, met with people from our neighborhood and made changes to the plans based on our suggestions. Federal Realty told us that they wanted to add two new retail spaces to the plaza as part of the project. What we didn't fully understand at that time was that the revenue from both the new retail spaces would

rink. Now, to make sure we get input from a large number of residents and Pentagon Row users, we decided the best way would be to survey people—using our newsletters, the 4D-A list serve moderated by Alice Andors, and an online survey at <http://www.surveymonkey.com/s/BWBLD7X>.

The survey results will be used by AHCA and ARCA to help guide feedback that we give to the developer and County. The results may also be used by the developer so that they can be more responsive to their customers and by the county so that they can be responsive to their constituents. For more in-depth information on the whole issue, you can look online at: http://arlington.granicus.com/MetaViewer.php?view_id=2&event_id=472&meta_id=97697.

We will discuss the survey at the

—Continued on Page 2—

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



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Long Bridge Park: Newsletter and Website

Friends of Long Bridge Park has a brand new newsletter. The newsletter provides significant information about the park, including sections on the history of the park, the environmental work done to make the park safe and ways to get to the park.

Issue number 1 of "The Long Bridge Connection" can be found at this link:

[http://www.longbridgepark.org/
FoLBP_Newsletter1\(Jan2012\).pdf](http://www.longbridgepark.org/FoLBP_Newsletter1(Jan2012).pdf)

Long Bridge Park officially opened on November 5, 2011. The three synthetic turf fields are being used for soccer and lacrosse. In addition to the fields, the 18-acre park includes:

- * Wave Arbor Public Art Piece created by Doug Hollis
 - * Half-mile long Esplanade
 - * Rain Garden and Trellis
 - * Public Green Space
 - * Roaches Run overlook nature walk

The park has a committee meeting for the design of the next stages of the Park. More information about the plans and ideas can be found on the

website at the link marked “Future Plans of the Park”.

<http://www.longbridgepark.org>



Playing field and Wave Arbor.
Photo: longbridgepark.org



Long Bridge Park Esplanade.
Photo: arlingtonva.us

County Board Announces Open Door Mondays

As a part of County Board Chair Mary Hynes' PLACE (Participation, Leadership And Civic Engagement) initiative, Board members will fan out across the Arlington for weekly Open Door Mondays. One of the monthly sessions will be held here in the neighborhood at the Gunston Community Center. Neighbors are welcome to attend the session to speak directly with County Board Members on any topic. No appointments are needed!

The Gunston sessions will be held from 7:00 to 9:00 p.m. on the second Monday of each month (Feb. 13, Mar. 12, Apr. 9, May 14, June 11, July 9, Aug. 13, Sept. 10, and Dec. 10). The group will gather in the conference room at the Gunston Community Center, 2700 South Lang Street.

Details of the other weekly sessions throughout Arlington are available on the County web site or by calling the County Board Office at 703-228-3130.

—Continued from Page 1—

upcoming civic association meeting on February 8.

The plaza at Pentagon Row and the ice rink are important amenities for people in our region and, particularly, our community. Please take a minute to go online and answer the single survey question, drop us a note in the mail, email either Jim Oliver at jamesroliver@me.com or Susan English at engphil@verizon.net or call or text Jim on (703) 867-8976. Please make your vote clear. Suggested subject line: "YES on two retail spaces and the larger ice rink" or "NO on two retail spaces and the larger ice rink." You can add other feedback in the body of your email or the in the comment box on the survey.

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School News

Oakridge Elementary School News

Would you like to subscribe to the Oakridge PTA listserve? It's easy! Simply send a message to OakridgePTA@gmail.com and you will be added to the list.

Calling all Parents of Prospective Kindergarteners (PPKs?!). Please visit Oakridge and come to an information session! These will be held on the following dates:
Tuesday, February 7; 12:45-2:15 p.m.
Thursday, February 23; 12:45-2:15 p.m.
Thursday, April 12; 9:15-10:45 p.m.

See you then!

Annual Gunston Middle School PTA Auction

It's Gunston Middle School PTA Auction time! The silent auction will be held on Saturday, March 3 from 6:00 - 10:00 p.m. at the National Rural Electric Cooperative Association (NRECA) Ballroom, 4301 Wilson Blvd. (near the Ballston Mall). This year's goal is to raise \$15,000 for the school.

In order to have a successful auction,

the PTA will be accepting donations until February 15. Donations submitted by this date, along with their donors, will be prominently acknowledged in the auction catalog. And all sponsors with donations of \$25 or more will be featured in the PTA list serve emails promoting the event and inviting all families to attend.

For more information about the auction or to donate an item for the auction, visit the PTA web site at <http://www.apsva.us/Page/7257>. If you have any questions, please feel free to contact Joanne Burd by phone at (703) 685-3829 or via email at jrburd@verizon.net.

Wakefield High School News

At this week's PTA meeting, Principal Willmore shared the following achievements by members of our school community. I know you will join me in congratulating these teachers and students.

1. Ten Immersion students were recognized by the School Board at its meeting last Thursday for receiving passing scores on the DELE exam. The DELE is a test of Spanish

proficiency established by the Cervantes Institute and the Spanish Ministry of Education.

2. Theater Arts teacher C. Gillespie received the Wolf Trap Foundation's 2011-12 Grant for Performing Arts Teachers. He will receive funding and support from Wolf Trap in this spring's productions of *Beauty and the Beast*.

3. All four finalists in the Arlington Decal Contest were Wakefield students and for the 3rd year in a row the decal contest winner was a Wakefield student.

4. The Project Upstanders was mentioned in the most recent edition of the new *Arlington Magazine* (p. 49).

5. A WHS student was selected for the District 12 All District Band. He placed 22nd out of 112 clarinetists from Northern Virginia.

6. Science teacher M. Johnson and a WHS student were recently appointed to the Friends of the Arlington Planetarium Advisory Council.

Go Warriors!

Three Volunteer Newsletter Bundle Distributors Needed

We are thrilled to announce that our neighbor Maureen Quinn has volunteered to serve as the Volunteer Newsletter Distribution Manager! She will pick up the newsletters from the printer each month, divide them into bundles for the carriers, and then drop them off at the homes of the three regional distributors.



What's needed now are the three regional distributors. Our neighborhood has been ingeniously divided into three regions: North

of 23rd Street, South of 23rd Street and Commercial Enterprises. The bundle distributors receive the bundled and labeled newsletters on Friday

night (typically the first Friday of the month).

Each region has about 20 newsletter carriers. You would deliver the bundles to your 20 carriers early on Saturday morning so they will have

the weekend before the AHCA meeting to walk their routes and deliver the newsletter to each home, business

and apartment building in our neighborhood.

This job is fun and rewarding. It takes under an hour per month and works better with two people, a driver and a runner. If you and your family think you have what it takes, and you are ready to fulfill a valuable role in our neighborhood (and it is also something you can put on job resumes and college applications!), please send an email to the editor.

Cory Giacobbe, Newsletter Editor
AHCA.news@yahoo.com

Why is Your House Cold and/or Drafty and How Can You Fix It?

By Scott Donelson

So are you uncomfortable in selected rooms in your house now that it is colder or did you cringe when that last gas bill came? Is your home dry in the Winter and you have to run a humidifier? Do you feel drafts by the windows and think you need to replace them? (keep reading!) Did you think you just need to add some insulation to solve the problems? These are just a few of the pitfalls that well intentioned homeowners can easily fall into.

Most comfort and energy consumption issues are related to air leakage. Air leaks are caused by small gaps and cracks in the upper and lower levels of the home and are caused by items such as electrical penetrations in the tops of walls, studs shrinking away from the wallboard, recessed lighting, plumbing vents and exterior penetrations, ductwork problems, bath fans, unsealed band joists, and many more. As warm, moist air goes out of the house in the Winter, cold dry air comes in causing humidity levels to drop. (see this pictorially at the website listed at the end of this article.) This also leads to cold air infiltration that some feel around doors and windows. Stopping the air loss keeps it from wanting to come in, thus no more drafts!

Due to air leakage, most homeowners are paying to heat and cool 2-5 times the amount of air they need to every day! EPA studies indicate 46% of typical home energy consumption is due to heating and cooling and that half of this is being wasted due to air leaks in the home. Air sealing is the number one priority by the EPA/DOE when it comes to home weatherization improvements. Insulation is number two, but insulation is far less effective without air sealing. Next comes HVAC improvements and then windows. Most homes in this area have 20-30% of the insulation recommended by today's standard which is accepted as R-49 in this area. Air leakage and insulation problems can generally be solved with much less expense than replacing windows.

A home acts as a system and can involve many complex interactions which

require the proper tools and training to diagnose problems correctly. So where do you start to address your comfort problems and other concerns? The best place to start is with a home energy audit. A home energy audit is typically a four-hour, in-home analysis using sophisticated diagnostic equipment to qualitatively and quantitatively evaluate the home for comfort issues, energy savings, indoor air quality, and combustion safety issues. The audit will find the root cause of problems and develop solutions to address them. It normally provides a prioritized list of recommended improvements in a detailed report. Results can be very enlightening!

Attributes of a quality audit/auditor:

- 1) Auditor is BPI-certified both as a building analyst and envelope professional; ask or check with BPI
- 2) Includes combustion safety testing, Infrared imagery, energy bill analysis, and other mechanical systems assessment per BPI protocols. Get a written list of the services to be provided – you can't just compare by price
- 3) Includes comprehensive report tailored to home with pictures & prioritized list of recommendations. Ask for a report example- report quality varies wildly
- 4) Includes post improvement validation
- 5) Cost: about \$400, 4 hours in home

A Building Performance Institute (BPI) certified energy auditor can help guide you through the various materials and methods to conduct the corrective actions. Some companies will also provide a means to help you do the recommended work. You should select a BPI gold star accredited contractor for this.

The benefits of an audit and doing the prescribed work are clear: greater home comfort, lower utility bills, better health, and many more! The following web sites contain more information on the topics discussed:

<http://www.HomeEnergyMedics.com>
(answers to frequently asked questions)

http://www.energystar.gov/index.cfm?c=products.pr_where_money (the details on the home energy consumption breakdown)

http://www.energystar.gov/index.cfm?c=home_sealing.hm_improvement_sealing (how and where a home leaks air pictorially, duct sealing and air sealing information)

About the author: Scott Donelson is a local resident, a BPI-certified energy auditor, home energy consultant, and president of Home Energy Medics, www.HomeEnergyMedics.com, an elite NoVA home Performance with Energy Star program participating company and a BPI gold star accredited home performance contractor.

VA Home Energy Efficiency Rebate to Expire Soon!

Have you been considering some work on your home for comfort or energy efficiency improvements? The State of VA has been offering a rebate for Home Energy Efficiency upgrades to include air sealing and insulation, oil furnaces, gas/oil boilers, and replacement windows and doors. Rebate amounts are up to \$595 for 20% of the labor and materials cost for these projects. Energy audits are credited at \$250 and are considered part of the \$595 cap.

This rebate must be applied for by Feb 17th. You only have 30 days to act on an audit and/or any improvements. All paperwork must be submitted by March 30th. Given the relatively short timeline, it is recommended that rebates be applied for near the deadline to take full advantage of the 30-day window. Once you apply and get approved (very quick), the 30-day clock starts ticking! In the meantime, it is recommended you seek out the right company to help address your needs if you so choose.

An energy audit is normally the best place to start. It will identify problems in the home in a prioritized manner listing the "best to least bang for the buck." For increasing comfort and decreasing your bills, air sealing is the DOE/EPA first priority and insulation is the second.

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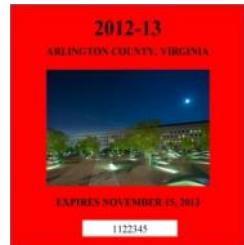


DAN TROUTMAN 703-380-6361

Wakefield High Student Wins Decal Contest

After six weeks of voting by Arlington County residents, Jeppe Callander's night-time photo of the Pentagon Memorial was chosen as the winning design in the annual Decal Design Competition. A junior at Wakefield, Callander is a Norwegian exchange student and his submission, "Silent Memories," will appear on the windshields of more than 155,000 vehicles in Arlington County. A total of 36 entries were submitted and the other finalists were also Wakefield students:

Maya Giacobbe, "Fun at the Fair"
Sarah Peterson, "Reflection"
Amanda Smith, "Guard of Honor"



Congratulations to all!

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.



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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 in the garage under the County Administrative Offices. No dogs are allowed at the market.

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.

Bread of Life Cooking Classes, 3rd Saturday of each month, 1:00 - 3:30 p.m., Mount Vernon Baptist Church. For young chefs; come sharpen your culinary skills; dress up in chef uniform and have fun. Free. Call (703) 979-1558 or e-mail [mvbcc@mmbccc.org](mailto:mvbccc@mvbcc.org).

YogaFit for Seniors, Tuesdays and Thursdays at 11:00 a.m., Mount Vernon Baptist Church. Sit & Be Fit. This class is gentle, fun and the first two classes are free with a small fee afterwards. You must call or e-mail 1st to sign up. Call (703) 979-1558 or e-mail [mvbcc@mmbccc.org](mailto:mvbccc@mvbcc.org).

YogaFit, Tuesday & Thursday, 6:30 p.m. at Mount Vernon Baptist Church. Experience the health benefits of gentle Hatha Yoga. First two classes are free. Small fee afterwards. Call (703) 979-1558 or e-mail [mvbcc@mmbccc.org](mailto:mvbccc@mvbcc.org).

Youth Friday, 2nd Friday of each month, 7:00 - 9:00 p.m., Mount Vernon Baptist Church. Various activities such as readings, story-telling time, movie night. Hot dogs, chips, popcorn, drinks. Free. Call (703) 979-1558 or e-mail [mvbcc@mmbccc.org](mailto:mvbccc@mvbcc.org).

FotoWeek DC, Interior Walkways of Crystal City, through March

31. With over 5,600 submissions from 44 countries, the winning images in the 2011 FotoWeek DC have proven to be the most stimulating and evocative in the festival's four year history. The Crystal City FotoWeek Exhibition will also host the winners of the Youth contest and the FotoDC Favorites that did not make the winner's circle, but stood out for their content and composition. In total there will be 84 Competition Winners/ Honorable Mentions, 31 Youth Contest Winners, and 33 FotoDC Favorites.

Pancake Breakfast, Saturday, February 4, 8:00 to 10:00 a.m., Calvary United Methodist Church, 2315 S. Grant Street. Start your weekend with delicious pancakes prepared by the men of Calvary. You are sure to see all your neighbors and friends and it will be a great time to catch up with what's happening in the neighborhood.

Arlington Learning in Retirement Institute (ALRI) will hold a Spring Course Preview on Saturday, February 4, 2012 from 9:00 a.m. to 12 noon at GMU –Arlington, Founders Hall, Multipurpose Room, 3351 N. Fairfax Drive. Hear the instructors talk about their course offerings, which begin on March 5. Spring registration opens at 10:00 a.m. on February 6. Information on clubs, special events and other opportunities will be available and refreshments will be provided. For information, call (703) 228-2144 or visit www.arlingtonlri.org.

Crystal Couture, February 7 to 12, from 6:00 to 10:00 p.m. in the former food court at 1750 Crystal Drive. The DC area's hottest fashion show and high-end bargain trunk sale returns to Crystal City. For details, visit <http://www.crystalcity.org/do/crystal-couture2>.

Genesis Reboot, February 9 to March 4, Synetic Theater, 1800 S. Bell Street.

In this farcical new play, an angel and a demon retell the story of creation from their perspectives. As the evening wears on, loyalties are tested, boundaries are broken, and the

Garden comes alive in unexpected ways. The Fall of Man comes with applause as Cain and Abel share a prison cell.

Oakridge Summer Activities Fair, Friday, February 10, 6:00 - 8:00 p.m.

Visit with over 100 representatives offering summer opportunities for children ages 3-17. Explore a variety of summer camps and programs, including academic and art programs, sports camps, day and overnight camps, and camps offering accommodations for children with special needs.

County Board Open Door Session, Monday, February 13 at Gunston Community Center, 7:00 - 9:00 p.m.

Meet informally with County Board members and let them know what's on your mind. No appointment necessary.

Annual Gunston Middle School PTA Silent Auction, Saturday, March 3 from 6:00 - 10:00 p.m. at the National Rural Electric Cooperative Association (NRECA) Ballroom, 4301 Wilson Blvd. (near the Ballston Mall).

Help the PTA raise funds for the school and take home some great items in the process!

Light in the Darkness, March 8 to March 25, Synetic Theater, 1800 S. Bell Street.

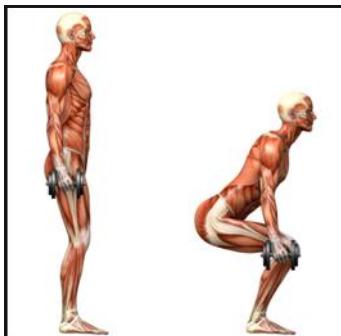
Acclaimed actress Miřenka Čechová, and her company Tantehorse from the Czech Republic mount Light in the Darkness, a two-part piece – On the Dark Road: The Death of Marquis de Sade and Light in the Darkness: Dante – that fuses the disciplines of physical theater, mime and modern dance. The first part, On the Dark Road, is composed of dreams and fantasies and invites the audience to a fictional picture gallery of sins in which various images of death appear and disappear. One fantastic image emerges and develops into another, demanding the viewer's individual imagination and experience. Light in the Darkness combines surreal and decadent poetry with elements of physical theater and modern dance. Hell is not in others: hell exists within us – just as we contain within us the promise of heaven.

NeighborFit

By Maria Joukov

Even if your new year is not shaping up (no pun intended) as you planned, it's never too late to improve your health. Every month, check this column for new exercises, fitness tips, and nutrition pointers to try out. If you're just starting out, these simple moves will give you a good foundation to work key muscle groups and get you on your way toward a healthier lifestyle. If fitness is nothing new to you, try the intermediate-level "Challenge" exercises below, and add them to your regular routine.

Challenge yourself to complete the task below at least twice a week this month, with a rest day between sessions. (As with any exercise program, please get clearance from your physician before starting out.)



Move of the month: The Basic Squat

One of the most essential exercises, The Basic Squat requires no equipment and minimal space. Do a set the

next time you're waiting for your food in the microwave or when the commercials are on TV.

What it targets:
The squat targets muscles of the lower body, primarily hamstrings, quadriceps and glutes. It also works muscles of the core.

How: Stand with your feet shoulder-width apart, toes forward, arms out in front of you or at your sides. Bend your

knees and lower yourself down slowly, engaging the abs and making sure that your knees don't extend forward past your toes. Slowly stand back up. That's one rep.

How many: Start with two sets of 10 reps each.

Challenge yourself with: The One Legged Squat: same movement as above, but performed with one leg only on the floor. Do 10 reps, switch legs and repeat. That's one set. As a caution, make sure you're near something to grab if you lose your balance. By the end of the month, you should feel yourself getting stronger. Good luck with your training!

—Maria Joukov is a neighbor who believes fitness is meant to improve your life, not consume your life.

Crystal Farms Community Supported Agriculture (CSA) Returns for 2012

Registration is now open for returning and new CSA members. Sign up now to guarantee your box for 2012. Enjoy 20 weeks of Thursday deliveries of fresh farm produce straight from the local farm from June 7 to October 18. Additional benefits include free U-pick quantities at the farm and free admission for your family to farm events. Cost for returning CSA Members is \$498.23 and for new CSA Members is \$513.23.

For more information or to sign up, visit <http://www.crystalcity.org/green/csa>.



HOG Pull, February 4 Haley Park

Haley Park, Oakridge Elementary School, Gunston Middle School Invasive Plant Pull

Help free our trees from ivy and wisteria.

When: Saturday, February 4, 9:00 - 11:00 a.m.

Where: Meet at Haley Park, 2400 S. Meade Street

This is a continuing project on the first Saturday of each month to reclaim the natural area between Haley Park, Oakridge Elementary School and Gunston

Middle School from invasive plants.



Tools - weeders, clippers, whackers, small saws

Drinking water
Insect repellant

We will provide extra tools if you don't have any of your own.

This is a RiP and ARMN approved project.

Plan ahead for March. The next HOG Pull will take place on March 3.

Contacts:

Marti Klein, cummingslc@aol.com
Jennifer Frum, frumjb@gmail.com
Mary Ann Lawler, malawler0@gmail.com
Bill McLaughlin, billmcnative@gmail.com

Gloves

County Board Candidates' Written Responses to Resident Questions

Special Election is Tuesday, March 27

AHCA and ARCA held a candidates night on Jan. 11, 2012. All Candidates were provided 10 community-generated questions. We offered to print written responses to two of these questions (ARCA will print remaining 2) to inform citizens who could not attend the candidates night. Mark Kelly had not announced his candidacy at the time. We will print his responses next month if he chooses.

Audrey Clement chose to answer the following question:

Arlington has made progress in residential recycling and has efforts in place to encourage energy efficiency and reduce waste. Describe for our community steps you would take to specifically address the issues of energy efficiency and waste reduction in large scale apartment and condo buildings, commercial offices, retail businesses, and hotels as those seem to be the area of greatest growth and thus the best targets for the implementation of better practices. Specific examples including targets for LEED certification, fee based incentives, etc. would be appreciated.

A little more than a year ago Arlington County Board adopted a new commercial recycling code that requires commercial establishments to recycle most of the items included in the residential recycling program. However the commercial recycling code is not being enforced, because the county employs only one (1) inspector countywide to inspect businesses for compliance with the code. As a result the overall recycling rate for businesses is 31% and the rate for apartment buildings is only 10%.

In response to a 2011 FOIA request, Michael Clem, of the county's Environmental Management Office, stated that "the overall rate is significantly lower than the residential rate [48%], because the multi-family and business sector is much larger." It is estimated that the county's commercial sector generates 70% of the county's solid waste, none of which is covered by the county's residential trash pickup service. The county itself recycles only 13% of the waste from schools and other public buildings, an abysmal rate considering the county's claim of sustainability. County Board didn't dispute these numbers when I quoted them at a County Board meeting last May. They even agreed with me that the recycling rate might improve if they filled the vacant inspector position over at Solid Waste, and they directed the County Manager to do it. But I think it will take at least four inspectors to cover all the commercial establishments and apartment buildings in the county.

Regarding energy efficiency, currently the County has a LEED Silver standard for new office buildings and compliance is voluntary. I think the County needs to impose a LEED Platinum standard for new commercial structures. If we cannot insist on LEED Platinum for the new headquarters of an industry leader like Boeing, how can we expect homeowners to significantly improve the energy efficiency of their homes? A LEED Platinum building costs building owners far less to operate because of greater energy savings per square foot. A LEED Platinum building attains major energy efficiency improvements compared to buildings that don't achieve LEED Platinum certification.

Another innovation that the County should mandate to reduce its carbon footprint is solar charging stations in all new commercial parking garages. Don't talk to me about 2,200 more parking spaces in Crystal City. In fact, don't talk to me about 100 more parking spaces in Crystal City without talking solar charging. Why that can be done in Maryland but not in Arlington is a mystery to me. We always seem to put the fossil fuel industry ahead of air quality in Virginia.

Libby Garvey chose to answer the following question:

This combined Library and Community Center form the public "heart" of our community. Please describe for us your views on what the public needs are in our community or how you would go about discovering those needs. Further, please tell us how you will work with our community to make sure that these facilities (or others) will meet the needs of our community. Please specifically address how the Library as it currently exists or how it may evolve in the near future will meet the needs of our entire community from the burgeoning youth population to our seniors. Further, please describe how you may support County Capital Improvement funds being used to address the needs in this 40-year-old facility.

The importance of public libraries in Arlington was clear from the public outcry that arose over cutting library hours. Every community needs a central focus for activities and your aging facilities clearly need an upgrade. Support for your community center can be seen in the expanded and revitalized programs that are there due in large part to volunteer efforts. It also shows how an investment by the County in community facilities can leverage more investment by citizens. With thriving programs for after-school and weekend activities for children, the County is certainly getting good value from your community center/library. However, an aging facility eventually must be renovated or it will not continue to function effectively in serving the community, and residents will feel discouraged by the lack of support. We cannot let that happen. Unfortunately, yours is not the only aging County facility in need of maintenance/renovation, but is part of an overall pattern. There has been a lack of attention to maintenance and facilities needs. The County Board has finally requested an inventory to determine what those existing needs are, which is a start. There should be an overall systems plan for both maintenance and providing services. Every community needs a good center for activities—to give it a "heart." And those centers should be provided on an equitable basis.

There should be overall standards for community services. For example, in general, how near should a library be to residents, how large, and what services (such as web services and computers) should it offer? What should a community center provide and how big should it be? Other cities have these standards; we should too. The County could put together draft standards (considering all age groups) and then work with Arlington residents to determine what we want the final standards to be.

We then need a county-wide inventory so we can set priorities for what is most in need of improvement and what can wait. Your library/community center will likely be near the top of the list. That priority should be reflected in the Capital Improvement Plan (CIP). We should be hesitant to take on new, exciting large projects when we are unable to maintain what we already have. Finally, we need to adopt and implement the CIP, with regular monitoring to see where we are and if any situations have changed.

This is not an issue that will be solved quickly, but it is crucial to the health of our neighborhoods and the County as a whole that we begin to address basic services in a systematic and strategic way.



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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

Tree of the Month: Hickories (adapted from TreeStewards.org)

Hickories are large trees that can reach 100 feet in full sun can spread as wide as they are tall. They are in the walnut family, *Juglandaceae*. If you are fortunate enough to have one in your yard, you may see some beautiful moths and butterflies. One of the most spectacular in its larva form is the hickory horned devil which can grow to nearly five inches.

The Hickories (genus *Carya*) supports 235 Lepidopteran species as well as providing nuts for squirrels and other wildlife. The four species are local to the DC area: Sweet Pignut (*C. ovalis* also called False Shagbark or Red Hickory since real Shagbark is not local to the DC area,), Pignut Hickory (*C. glabra*), Mockernut Hickory (*C. tomentosa*) and Bitternut Hickory (*C. cordiformis*). Bitternuts prefer moist conditions, the others are much more general and adaptable except they do not like it wet.

Hickory leaves are compound, which means that each leaf has 7 to 9 leaflets on one stem. Hickory leaves turn a brilliant golden yellow in the fall.

The Hickory fruit is an edible, nut-like drupe that looks a bit like a walnut or pecan inside. In fact, a pecan tree is a type of Hickory.

The Mockernut Hickory can live as long as 500 years.



Photo of Hickory: Virginia.org



Photo of Hickory compound leaf: Virginia Tech

AHCA Tree Fund Up For Vote

There are several ways to get free or inexpensive trees for private property in Arlington. Last year the AHCA voted to devote \$1000 of our Civic Association budget each year to a matching grant program to purchase trees for AHCA members. There will be a motion at the February 8 meeting to reauthorize the fund for another year. Please come to the meeting to vote!

Under this neighborhood program, Tree Stewards will help you choose an appropriate local native tree for the right place in your yard. AHCA will pay for half the cost of the tree, or up to \$150. We also are forming a Tree

Canopy Committee to help identify areas of our neighborhood where more trees are needed, and to advise interested neighbors in tree selection and placement. To join the committee or apply for a tree, please attend your Civic Association meeting, held

on the second Wednesday of each month except August. Or send an email to this newsletter or to Jim Oliver at jamesoliver@me.com.

AHCA Ivy League

After a brilliant and creative idea from my neighbor Lou Ott, AHCA will be forming a committee to help neighbors identify and remove English Ivy and other invasive plants from their trees. Our neighborhood tree canopy is too valuable to lose to a preventable problem. We'll also help you decide which native plants can replace the invasive aliens. To join or re-

quest assistance, attend the AHCA meeting or email this newsletter.

Aurora Highlands Civic Association

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Vice President – Nick Giacobbe
703-842-5441

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Long Range Planning Commission's Crystal City Long-Term Plan –
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Aircraft Noise – Denis O'Sullivan
703-521-6425

Meeting Hospitality - Rosamunda Neuharth-Ozgo

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 to the newsletter editor, Cory Giacobbe:
AHCA.news@yahoo.com

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.