

[AuroraHighlands.org](http://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, March 14, 2012 at 7:00 p.m.**

AURORA HILLS COMMUNITY CENTER

### Agenda

- 6:30 Social**
- 7:00 AHCA Business Meeting**
- 7:30 Martha Moore, Presentation on Edge Development**
- 8:15 Discussion of Community Priorities**

## County Board Poised to Restore Library Hours at March 20 Hearing

By Shelley Wade

We won! [Sort of!] The Proposed Fiscal Year 2013 Arlington County Budget includes full restoration of the mid-week day at Aurora Hills and other branch libraries. This will, I hope, be the final decision, but it hasn't been adopted yet. If you wrote to the County Board last year in support of keeping the branches open, thanks! Just one last time should do it.

Chair Mary Hynes has said the Board would like to hear from the public on this matter. This is our chance to express our appreciation for the new proposed hours. The Budget Hearing is

March 20, but you can write any time before then, [even TODAY!] to: [countyboard@arlingtonva.us](mailto:countyboard@arlingtonva.us); or [mhynes@arlingtonva.us](mailto:mhynes@arlingtonva.us); or by regular mail to:

Arlington County Board  
2100 Clarendon Blvd., Suite 300  
Arlington, VA 22201.

In 2009, an earlier County Manager proposed a 50% cut in hours for branch libraries based SOLELY on usage statistics. This year, after citizen input, including letters at last November's close-out and several public forums, Ms. Hynes says the rationale

for restorations is that branch libraries serve many purposes, and County Manager Barbara Donnellan acknowledged popular support for daily service.

If you can actually make it to the Hearing on March 20, better yet! Whether you give a specific example of how your branch helps you or your neighbors' lives, or simply thank the Board and Manager for the new proposed hours, it will be held on Tuesday, March 20, at 7:00 p.m., in the County Board room at 2100 Clarendon Blvd. Advanced sign up begins March 13. All the details on how to sign up to speak at the budget hearing can be found at this website: <http://www.arlingtonva.us/departments/countyboard/meetings/CountyBoardMeetingsBTHProcedures.aspx> or by calling 703-228-3130.

Or, if you're shy, you can just stand when other patrons speak.

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



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## President's Corner—Columbia Pike Transit Initiative

by Jim Oliver

At our last meeting, Arlington County's Steve Del Giudice presented the latest on the Columbia Pike Transit Initiative (The Trolley.)

The trolley will enter our neighborhood at Joyce and Army Navy Drive and go east on Hayes where it turns south. At 12th Street, it again turns east along the "to-be-completed" 12th Street with this current phase stopping at Eads. The trolley will have 3 stops in our neighborhood: one on Army Navy across from the Harris Teeter; one at 12th and Hayes on top of the Pentagon City Metro; and one along 12th near Eads. In addition, an Operations and Maintenance (O&M) facility will be located along Eads Street between 12th Street and Army Navy Drive.

The project has been in planning for years and many studies have been completed. The entire project, all of the publications, reports, and history are available at [www.piketranst.com](http://www.piketranst.com).

Mr. Del Giudice's presentation briefly touched on the cost/benefit studies, environmental impact analysis, and the current status of the project with regard to potential federal funding.

Some questioned why more or higher capacity busses couldn't be used. The response reveals some of the complexity associated with a major public transit initiative. First, the Pike is almost at its effective bus density so adding more busses is not really feasible and may only serve as a band-aid approach. Second, larger capacity articulated busses could meet the near term demand projections with questions complexity and longevity (NoVA does not use these busses and thus has no service facilities and Metro has been reporting disappointing results as far as longevity and maintenance); and third, the local financing of the project is accomplished solely by a special commercial tax and the county's long-term commitment to infrastructure and

traffic drive the developers' willingness to invest in properties and pay the special tax.

There was also some discussion of what type of activities would be performed at the O&M facility and what form the facility might take. Without the trolley (more busses or bigger busses), we should assume that they will drive down Eads to the service facility across from the Water Pollution Control Plant. The activities at the O&M facility were described as "light" particularly when compared with Metro's heavy rail or the CSX rail lines to the east of Crystal City. The presentation included some pretty pictures of O&M facilities elsewhere. If this project comes to reality, we should work with the project to ensure that we get the best facility we can and not another unsightly chain link fenced lot. If you have any other concerns or questions, please let us or the Pike Transit Initiative know.

## Pentagon Row Plaza and Ice Rink Redesign Update

By Jim Oliver

During the late summer of 2011, Federal Realty, the property owners at Pentagon Row approached folks from our neighborhood and Arlington Ridge to get input on a redesign of the plaza. A number of opportunities for improvement were identified. Most of the trees have died and professionals determined that the "boxes" below the concrete for the roots were too small. A number of folks pointed out challenges with moving around the plaza especially across the space in the North-South direction when the ice rink is set up and the fencing for the restaurants is "piled up" to make room for the skate shack and changing area. The plans call for a redesign of the fountain and the addition of a fire pit.

The biggest change was the potential of including a larger ice rink (50% larger) than the existing rink and two stand-alone retail shops to help offset the cost of the improvements. One shop is proposed to be located in the NE corner near the Noodles and Com-

pany and the other in the SW corner near the DSW. Originally, the property owner was asking for 2500 square feet in space, but reduced that through several design iterations to 1600 square feet. Because of some confusion on the part of everyone involved, County staff recommended that only one of the shops be built and the County Board was leaning toward this approach when the property owner said that they could not afford to go ahead with the project, as proposed, with only one 800-square foot shop. The property owner asked the county to defer taking any action on the proposal.

We coordinated with the folks in the Arlington Ridge Civic Association and decided to find out whether the broader community supported allowing the construction of two new retail shops and the larger ice rink or opposed the proposal. We decided that, because of the short time and the limited resources (not enough people to go around knocking on doors) to use an

Internet based survey.

The survey was announced in this newsletter last month, in the ARCA email distribution, on the 4D-A, listserv and through as many other channels as we could think of (PTAs, scouts, churches, clubs, etc.).

We received 267 responses with 193 in favor and 74 opposed, or approximately 72% in favor and 28% opposed. These results are in line with similar results that the property owner got from its own survey.

Based on a vote at the February AHCA meeting, these survey results have been reported to the County to serve as a "data point" representing the sentiment of our community. This is still an open and public process so I encourage anyone interested or concerned to contact me directly or let the county staff or elected officials know how you feel.



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# Neighborhood Cub Scout Pack 164 Burns Up the Track

On Saturday night, February 25th, about 125 of our friends and neighbors gathered at Calvary Church for the annual Cub Scout Pinewood Derby Races. Our neighborhood scout pack has more than doubled in size in the last 2 years with enthusiastic support from parents and siblings. This year, 43 scouts raced along with a special siblings division that included 13 racers. Great family fun, good sportsmanship, lots of pizza, cake, and "bug juice", cheers, laughter, and smiles were in abundance. After the smoke had cleared, each den had a winner who will go on to compete at the district races on March



10th. The fastest cars belonged to: Sykes Parsons (Tiger); Alex Everette (Wolf); Tatton Oliver (Bear – 2nd Overall); Aidan Ristino (Webelos 1 – 3rd Overall); and Joey Mazel (Webelos 2 – 1st Overall).

In the siblings division, 1st Place went to Sean Gilliam followed closely by Annabella Brooks in 2nd, and Bryce Austin in 3rd.

Special awards were also given for the: Most Creative Design to George Whichard (Webelos 1) for his Nuclear Submarine; Fastest Looking Car to Gabe Holmes (Tiger); and Best Design to Kai Behrens (Tiger.) Special thanks go out to all the family and friends for their

support of scouting, Calvary Church for giving them a home, and most especially, our scout leaders for volunteering their caring, time, and leadership.

Please remember our scouts when you see them out selling popcorn for their annual fundraiser in the fall or collecting food for the Arlington Food Assistance Center as part of "Scouting for Food" between Halloween and Thanksgiving. For more information, contact: [CubmasterPack164@gmail.com](mailto:CubmasterPack164@gmail.com).



## Volunteer! Three Newsletter Bundle Distributors Needed

We are still in need of three neighborhood newsletter bundle distributors. This job is fun and rewarding. It takes under an hour per month. It works better with two people, a driver and a runner. 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. As a distributor, you deliver the



bundles to your 20 carriers early on Saturday morning. 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.

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:

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

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## County Board Candidates' Written Responses to Resident Questions Special Election is Tuesday, March 27

AHCA and ARCA held a joint 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 in the February newsletter to inform citizens who could not attend the candidates night. Mark Kelly had not announced his candidacy at the time. His response to his chosen question is below.

**Mark Kelly chose to answer the following question:**

**Arlington is nationally recognized with awards for the Arlington Way as a model for citizen involvement. However, it is felt by many of our associations' members that processes currently in place as an effort to ensure citizen input are failing to have any real impact on county decision making. What changes will you make to give us confidence that we have an impactful voice in county decisions? What efforts will you take to ensure that information goes out to all Arlington citizens?**

Every resident should note how the issue of community concerns over the lack of impact from resident input has led the County Board to attempt to increase opportunities for public engagement instead pledging to listen to the community input they currently have been receiving but not considering.

The best approach to bringing the County Board back in touch with resident concerns is to take that important first step toward insisting on a diversity of opinion among elected county officials. A diversity of opinion would end the practice of letting residents simply have their say in a public

forum before the County Board makes the decision they had already pre-determined.

As I talk to voters throughout Arlington, I hear the same thing from Democrats, Republicans and Independents alike – they want a bigger focus on core functions of their local government and less on “vanity projects” like the Artisphere and the proposed Columbia Pike trolley. As a 12-year homeowner in Arlington, I could not agree more.

We should focus on infrastructure, education, public safety and deferred maintenance needs of our existing assets over things like new theaters.

Refocusing the County Board's agenda on core services that directly affect the quality of life in Arlington is an important first step to reintroducing civic association input into the county decision-making process.

Arlington's future is important and worth fighting for, and we deserve leaders who will listen to community concerns. In these uncertain economic times, we need to craft more responsible budgets, build a comprehensive economic strategy and develop real-time transparency and accountability from our government.

Setting a reasonably high standard for transparency and accountability in local government is central to developing a culture in county government that recognizes and respects resident and civic association input on important issues to neighborhoods and the community as a whole.

To that end, I have called for complete transparency for all county spending – opening up our checkbook by putting every penny online in near real-time. I also support the proposal of the Civic Federation to hire an independent Inspector General to audit our county government and county schools.

Most important of all I pledge to listen to input from the community and make sure that the County Board works on behalf of the community to maintain or improve your quality of life.

In terms of specific measures to ensure that information goes out to all Arlington citizens I pledge to publicly discuss and explain my vote on the Arlington County Board. Currently Board Members discuss their votes at the meetings, but we should make the underlying reasoning for Board decisions much more accessible to civic association members and all interested residents.

## Bus Shelter in Front of Homes an Improvement?

by Ann Marie Stetekluh

What has happened to the Arlington Way? 23<sup>rd</sup> Street Bus Improvement is unwanted by the neighbors. You may have noticed the sign posted in front of 607 S. 23<sup>rd</sup> street - “Street Bus Improvement 703-228-3520”. The county is about to construct a bus stop with shelter in front of 603, 605 and 607 S. 23<sup>rd</sup> street without notification or involvement from the neighbors or neighborhood.

In April, 2010 a resident learned from a county worker performing initial work on the bus stop of the plan for the new bus stop. The residents sent e-mails and our Civic Association inquired to the County Board to confirm the project only to be told they would follow-up and meet to discuss the subject. No meeting was ever arranged by the County in two years and the residents believed this to be a non-starter. Monday, March 5, 2012 Mary Hynes of the County Board and Lynn Rivers, the

WMATA Service Coordinator, met with the neighbors residing at 603, 605, 607, 609, 611 South 23<sup>rd</sup> street, the ARCA vice president, AHCA president and the AHCA newsletter editor to discuss the bus shelter. Mrs. Hynes started the meeting informing the neighbors the project had been paused and apologized for the County Board misplacing ALL of our inquires and objections from 2010. The meeting lasted 50 minutes with candid discussion by the neighbors about the current 17 bus stops along South 23<sup>rd</sup> Street, reviewing the proposed placement of the bus shelter, reviewing alternate locations, elimination of up to 3 parking spaces, increased security concerns, an increase of noise and litter in our front yards, the validity of the ridership statistics collected, current bus stop recommendations and what county policies are being followed.

Recommendations discussed included:

(a) Retain the existing 500 block 23<sup>rd</sup> and Fern street bus stop and move the planned shelter to an alternate location. Preferably closer to the SOC.

(b) Do nothing.

The meeting concluded with Mrs. Hynes promising to follow-up on our issues and concerns but that we should be aware that the contract has already been let for the work.

The location of a shelter on the corner of 23<sup>rd</sup> and Fern, in front of a residence is wrong, and the county needs to fix their mistake. Please come to the civic association meeting and support your neighbors to prevent the removal of up to 3 parking spaces, impact to trees, increase neighborhood security concerns, and a bus shelter within steps of the residence door. Please send an e-mail to the County Board opposing this project:

[countyboard@arlingtonva.us](mailto:countyboard@arlingtonva.us), or call the County Board Office at 703-228-3130.

## Noise Isn't the Only Issue at National Airport

By Brent Spence

Check out the Citizens for the Abatement of Aircraft Noise (CAAN) website ([CAAN.org](http://CAAN.org)) to get news and history about our airports. CAAN recently posted the abstract and a link to a draft paper, "Airports, Pollution, and Contemporaneous Health", written by Wolfram Schlenker and W. Reed Walker. The draft paper was issued in December 2011 by the National Bureau of Economic Research. Government officials who have insisted that pollution from airports is insignificant and/or not measurable, should wake up and smell the jet fuel! The referenced study indicates that significant human health effects can be attributed to the toxicity that surrounds airports. This provides yet another compelling argument against increasing density in

our area.

### "Airports, Pollution, and Contemporaneous Health" by Schlenker and Walker, Abstract:

Airports are some of the largest sources of air pollution in the United States. We demonstrate that daily airport runway congestion contributes significantly to local pollution levels and contemporaneous health of residents living nearby and downwind from airports. Our research design exploits the fact that network delays originating from large airports on the East Coast increase runway congestion in California, which in turn increases daily pollution levels around California airports. Using the component of California air pollution driven by airport congestion, we find that carbon monoxide (CO) leads to significant increas-

es in hospitalization rates for asthma, respiratory, and heart-related emergency room admissions that are an order of magnitude larger than conventional estimates: A one standard deviation increase in daily pollution levels leads to an additional \$1 million in hospitalization costs for respiratory and heart related admissions for the 6 million individuals living within 10 km (6.2 miles) of the 12 largest airports in California. While infants and the elderly are more sensitive to air pollution, we also find significant relationships for the adult population. The health impacts are driven by CO, not NO<sub>2</sub> or O<sub>3</sub>, and occur at levels far below existing EPA mandates. Our results suggest there may be sizable morbidity benefits from lowering the existing CO standard.

## Neighbor Volunteers to Help Solve Problems

Our neighbor Al Burt is still looking for opportunities to help fellow neighbors with creative solutions to everyday minor problems. If you have a problem with broken furniture, minor household improvements, mathematics (Algebra through Calculus), or anything else that could use some creative thought, feel free to call Al at 703-521-9629 or email him at [dcamiadca@yahoo.com](mailto:dcamiadca@yahoo.com) (title your email "Help"). Al will neither ask for nor accept any payment for his help.

**Do you have a neighbor who's doing something cool? Write it up and send it in.**



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# Activities and Events

**Courthouse Farmers' Market, Saturdays from 8:00 a.m. – noon.** Adjacent to the Arlington County Courthouse Parking Lot, at the intersection of North Courthouse Road and North 14th Street. Arlington's largest market continues year round and averages 30 vendors, all 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 Del Ray market is open year round, offering producer-grown fresh vegetables and fruits in season. 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 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 & have fun. Free. This class fills up fast! Call (703) 979-1558 or Inquire & RSVP to [KidsRCooking@gmail.com](mailto:KidsRCooking@gmail.com)

**YogaFit, Monday & Thursday, 6:30 p.m. at Mount Vernon Baptist Church.** Experience the health benefits of gentle Hatha Yoga. Free. Call (703) 979-1558 or e-mail [mvbccc@mvbccc.org](mailto:mvbccc@mvbccc.org).

**FotoWeek DC, Interior Walkways of Crystal City, through March 31.** Over 5,600 submissions from 44 countries, the winning images in the 2011 FotoWeek DC. Winners of the Youth contest and the FotoDC also shown.

**Light in the Darkness, March 8 to March 25, Synetic Theater, 1800 S. Bell Street.** Acclaimed actress Miřenka Āechov, 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 Voice of Anne Frank, Synetic Theater, 1800 S. Bell Street, Wednesday, March 14 at 11:00 a.m., Wednesday, March 14 at 1:00 p.m., Monday, March 19 at 8:00 p.m.** Dance and visual theater piece with a master acting performance of Miřenka Āechov. *The Voice of Anne Frank* touches the woes and delights of a thirteen year old girl. In the voice of the diary it is not only Anne talking but all the

problems of the hiding people - those who survived and those who didn't. The life of Anne doesn't end at the last page but in a concentration camp. Performances are followed by a Q&A session, tickets are \$20.

**Arlington Historical Society presents *Do You Remember? An Interactive Journey Through Arlington's Commercial History*, Thursday, March 15 at 7:30 p.m., Arlington Central Library.** The program will be given by Charlie Clark, longtime contributor to the Arlington Historical Magazine, author of the "Our Man in Arlington" column for the weekly Falls Church News-Press, and senior correspondent for Government Executive magazine.

**Comment Period for the 14th Street Bridge Corridor Draft Environmental Impact Study Concludes on March 15.** For more information, visit the project website at <http://www.14thstreetbridgecorridoreis.com/deis.html>.

**Green Living Expo, Saturday, March 17, 10:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. Washington-Lee High School, 1301 N. Stafford Street, Arlington.** Annual event features green suppliers, products from local and national businesses, exhibits and seminars from government agencies and nonprofits. Learn practical ways to green your lifestyle, with energy conservation, solid waste reduction, eco-friendly transportation, green home remodeling, sustainable landscaping, and healthy homes. Info at <http://arlingtonenvironment.org/expo> or 703-228-6427.

**The Arlingtomes Spring Tonic 2012 - A Refreshing St. Patrick's Day Celebration! Saturday, March 17, 2:00 p.m., Spectrum Theatre.** Celebrate St. Patrick's Day and the wonders of spring as the Arlingtomes Barbershop Chorus and Quartets present an a cappella performance in the refreshing barbershop harmony style. The featured quartet is MAYHEM, 2011 Southern Division gold medalist.

**Arlington County Budget Hearing, Tuesday, March 20 at 7:00 p.m., County Government Building, 2100 Clarendon Boulevard.** Take the time to let the County Board know your priorities for spending in the next fiscal year. Do you support libraries? Do you support schools? Testify or send a written message. (See front page)

**Arlington County Tax Rate Hearing, Thursday, March 22 at 7:00 p.m., County Government Building, 2100 Clarendon**

**Boulevard.** Take the time to let the County Board know your priorities for raising funds in the next fiscal year. Testify or send a written message. (see front page)

**Vegetable Gardening 101, Saturday, March 24, 9:00 a.m. – noon, Fairlington Community Center, 3308 S. Stafford Street.** An in-depth look at starting a garden that includes instruction on seed starting, soil preparation, and tips on where and when to plant. To register, call 703-228-6414.

**Special Election for County Board, Tuesday, March 27, 6:00 a.m. - 7:00 p.m.** On the ballot are: Libby T. Garvey (D), Mark D. Kelly (R), Audrey R. Clement (G). If you are unsure where to vote or need to vote absentee, call 703-228-3456.

**Green Fire: Aldo Leopold and a Life Ethic for Our Time. Thursday, March 29, at 7:00 pm at the Arlington Central Library, 1015 N. Quincy Street.** This documentary is the first full-length, high-definition film ever made about the legendary conservationist Aldo Leopold. To RSVP, go to Northern Virginia Conservation Trust's Meetup page ([meetup.com](http://meetup.com)) or contact Ashley Stanton at [astanton@nvct.org](mailto:astanton@nvct.org) or 703-354-5093.

**Pancake Breakfast, Saturday, April 7, 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.

**ECARE, Saturday, April 7, 8:30 a.m. – 3:00 p.m., Thomas Jefferson Middle School, 125 S. Old Glebe Road.** Dispose of hazardous household materials, computer monitors, and televisions (\$15 fee for computers and \$20 fee for televisions), and recycle small metal items, electronics, shoes, clothes, linens, eyeglasses, and durable medical equipment. Serviceable bikes will be collected by Bikes for the World (BfW) to be sent to countries where they are needed for basic transportation. For more information, visit [www.arlingtonva.us/recycle](http://www.arlingtonva.us/recycle).

**Youth Friday, 4th Friday of each quarter, 7:00 - 9:00 p.m., Mount Vernon Baptist Church, Next class April 27th.** Various activities such as readings, story-telling time, movies. Free. Hot dogs, chips, popcorn, drinks. Call (703) 979-1558 or e-mail [mvbccc@mvbccc.org](mailto:mvbccc@mvbccc.org)

## NeighborFit

By Maria Joukov

In many ways, January 1<sup>st</sup> resolutions set us up for failure. Think about it—by the time we make our pledges, our fridges are still full of leftovers, lingering relatives are interfering with our routines, and the cold weather makes us want to curl up with a bowl of comfort food. March, on the other hand, is a perfect time to start a new workout routine. The weather is getting warmer, the days are getting longer, and more importantly, swimsuit season is not as far away as once thought.

This month, let's focus on cardiovascular workouts. Unlike a strength training program which primarily improves muscular strength and endurance, cardio workouts target the heart and the lungs. To make sessions even more effective, add intervals of low intensity, followed by high intensity. Your body will work harder to adjust your heart

rate and breathing, resulting in a more effective workout and a quicker fat burn.

We're lucky to live in a neighborhood where sidewalks, parks and trails are plentiful. This month, challenge yourself to walking or jogging five miles a week. If you're already a regular walker or runner, add an extra five miles with this easy workout. (As with any exercise program, please get clearance from your physician before starting out.)

### Move of the month: The One Mile Interval, One Block at a Time

In our neighborhood, the numbered streets run about a tenth of a mile per block. This month's workout consists of walking or jogging five blocks on a numbered street, then turning around and returning to your starting place—

that's one mile. Sound easy? Now, make this an interval workout by using each new block as your cue to change up your pace based on your own comfort level. Customize this workout to your own fitness level: whether you're doing sprints or walking, almost everyone can benefit from adding intervals. Block 1: Warm-up pace, slow walk  
Block 2: Medium pace  
Block 3: Fast pace--power walk or jog  
Block 4: Medium pace  
Block 5: Fast pace—power walk or jog  
Reverse direction, continuing to vary your pace by block. Your last block should be a slow walk at a cool down pace. Do this every work day and you will have added five miles to your week. For an added challenge, build on last month's workout, and do two sets of squats at the halfway point and the end.

## Gala Auction to Benefit Oakridge Elementary School

Hold this date: **Thursday April 12th!!**

What a great night out!

Gala Auction to benefit our local Oakridge Elementary School!

6 to 9 pm (adults only)

**Double Tree Hotel Crystal City**

300 Army Navy Drive 22202

\$25 per person and \$45 per couple with all proceeds to benefit Oakridge Elementary. Your admission entitles you to two drink tickets, appetizers, live music, and a chance to bid on great items such as a Golf Outing at PC Avenel on the Potomac, Apple iPad, Tickets to the Nationals, Tennis lessons, and a Guided Gallery Tour and much more. Please send your check to: Oakridge PTA 1414 24th St. S., Arlington 22202. For more info, contact [OakridgePTA@gmail.com](mailto:OakridgePTA@gmail.com)

## Disney's Beauty and the Beast at Wakefield High School

Wakefield High School will perform *Beauty and the Beast*, April 27—May 5. For this performance, the Wakefield Theater Department has received a grant from the Wolftrap Foundation and is working with Broadway performer James T. Lane and with Jane Franklin Dance. Stay tuned for details here next month.

## HOG Pull, April 7 Haley Park

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

Help free our trees from alien, invasive ivy and wisteria.

**When:** Saturday, April 7, 9:00 - 11:00 a.m.

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

**What:** 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.

Bring:

**Appropriate clothing**, including good footwear. Some parts of the

area are steep and contain poison ivy.

**Gloves**

**Tools** - weeders, clippers, whackers, small saws

**Drinking water**

**Insect repellant**

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



**No, this tree isn't enjoying this!**

This is a RiP and ARMN approved project.

Contacts:

Marti Klein, [cum-mingslc@aol.com](mailto:cummingslc@aol.com)  
Jennifer Frum, [frumjb@gmail.com](mailto:frumjb@gmail.com)  
Mary Ann Lawler, [malawler0@gmail.com](mailto:malawler0@gmail.com)  
Bill McLaughlin, [billmcnative@gmail.com](mailto:billmcnative@gmail.com)

# PenPlace

By Jim Oliver

Just over a year ago, we published some information on a development proposal for the vacant lot behind the warehouses across from Costco. The development project is called PenPlace. It is bordered on the North by Army Navy Drive and I-395, the East by Eads Street, the West by Fern Street, and to the South by what will be the continuation of 12th Street. The property is just over 12 acres which does not include the existing Marriott Residence Inn on the Northwest corner. It's at the far Northeast corner of the AHCA neighborhood and borders on the Crystal City neighborhood.

The project proposes to build 5 separate buildings on the site, 2 regular office buildings, 2 office buildings that meet DoD standards, and a hotel. The project is envisioned to be built over the next 8 years.

Because it's hard to visualize new development on a vacant lot, I'll provide some context about what is already planned for surrounding areas as well as this site. The hotel, proposed to be built on the Southwest corner of the site, is 12 stories. The existing Marriott is 17 stories. On the corner of 12th and Fern is the existing 12-story office building (Northwest), a proposed 14-story office building on the Kimco (Costco) property to the Southwest, and an approved 18-story residential building on the Southeast corner (where the last Fern Street warehouse was torn down 6 months ago).

On the Northwest corner of 12th and Eads, an office building is proposed to be as tall as 22 stories. The Southwest corner has a proposed 18-story residential building similar to those already built across Fern Street from Costco. The Southeast corner has an existing 19-story residential building while the Northeast corner is planned to have a residential building at 200 feet tall.

The two office buildings designed to meet DoD standards are planned to be set back into the middle of the property (a large open set back is part of the DoD requirements.) The building to the West is proposed to be 22 stories and the building to the East is proposed to be 12 stories.

Finally, the fifth building is an office building on the Southwest corner of Army Navy Drive and S. Eads Street and it is proposed to be 18 stories tall.

The 22-story buildings would be the tallest in this area with the next tallest being the office building planned for the Southeast

corner of 12th and Hayes on the Kimco property, which will be 20 stories.

All told, the five buildings will cover 31% of the "buildable area" on this property.

The new Arlington County Transitway (trolley) will travel along the completed 12th street right in front of this development. The project is also within ¼ mile of the Pentagon City Metro Station.

The property has already undergone the long-range planning process. In a perfect world, this process is done in a sort of vacuum, absent any actual proposal for development and it looks at the surrounding properties, our goals and needs, historic planning efforts, and existing infrastructure, and produces a set of guiding principles for how the property should be developed.

On February 13, this project entered the site-plan review phase where a proposal is put in front of the Planning Commission, representatives from other commissions (housing, transportation, etc.), and representatives from the surrounding community. Mike Dowell and Jim Oliver are representing the AHCA neighborhood that contains the project. The site-plan review meetings are open to the public and I encourage anyone interested to contact Mike or me to attend in person.

Some concerns have already been raised including traffic and air quality, which are linked. Another concern is the current zoning and planned use of this property. Without going into a lot of excruciating detail, current zoning does not allow this much development and the 1976 planning document would only allow hotels and residential development. The result being that the developer will have to "earn" the additional development rights by providing "community benefit" above and beyond what is currently required (i.e., contributions to affordable housing, infrastructure, transportation, specifically the transitway, and even public art).

I am sure that there are economists and policy wonks out there who are much smarter than I, but

the way we "tax" developers makes some economic sense to me. Data show that nearly 10 times as many people come to work in Arlington as Arlingtonians go to work outside Arlington. Those folks coming to Arlington get to use our streets, water and sewer, police and fire, and many other services without having to contribute much more than the tax on their lunch. Arlington's "tax" on developers is one way to have people who use public services contribute to paying for them.

Please let either Mike or me know about any concerns or questions you might have. Our job is to represent our neighborhood in the planning discussions. Please send us not only concerns, but also ideas, community needs, and desires.

Contact: [AHCAPresident@gmail.com](mailto:AHCAPresident@gmail.com).

## Calling all writers!

Do you have knowledge or expertise in a field that would interest or help your neighbors? Do you have an interesting story about our neighborhood's history? Write an article for the AHCA Newsletter!

Share your knowledge about health, finance, pets, home repair, gardening, car maintenance or any other tips that would interest or benefit your neighbors. Pitch your idea to the newsletter editor at [ahca.news@yahoo.com](mailto:ahca.news@yahoo.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

### Tree of the Month: Why Pick a Paw Paw?

[This article was posted by Kate Donohue in [TreeStewards.org](http://TreeStewards.org) and shamelessly stolen by me to share with you because it's so great]

Looking for a small understory tree that is a bit out of the ordinary? Let us suggest the native *Asimina triloba*, a member of the custard apple family and a terrific pyramidal tree that will mature at around 20 feet. The Paw Paw has much to recommend it to Northern Virginia gardeners, in every season!

In winter, if you look closely at the bare, uplifting branches, you will notice small, fuzzy brown flower buds waiting for the first hint of warmth. The deep maroon, bell-shaped flowers bloom in early spring, dangling beneath the branches. This evolved to attract flies, beetles, and other carrion-loving pollinators. In order to have fruit, you will need two different Paw Paw trees to cross-pollinate. I've read recommendations to hang road kill or manure in your Paws Paws to attract flies to the flowers. While this approach has logic going for it, personally I prefer to welcome spring by taking a feather duster out to the flowering Paw Paw trees, and pollinate the flowers that way. They do alright on their own, but a little extra help ensures a bigger crop come late summer.

In summer, the large, drooping, elliptical leaves provide a wonderful backdrop or specimen tree, with a tropical appearance. Small green fruits appear, often in clusters. Throughout the summer they will continue to grow, ultimately reaching three to four inches in size. Technically berries, they are our largest indigenous fruit. In late summer, the Paw Paws can be harvested. They are ready to eat when somewhat soft to the touch, like a ripe avocado, and when the green skin turns yellowish, speckled with brown. When you notice the fruit beginning to ripen, pick it and take it indoors. Like bananas, the fruit will continue ripening, and you will have outwitted the wildlife. With a creamy texture and tropical



taste reminiscent of bananas, mangos, and pineapple, it is hard to believe that this fruit is native to Virginia, and not from South America!

In fall, the leaves turn a beautiful clear yellow. The trees are spectacular against a dark backdrop, and mix well with the colorful oranges and reds of other natives such as *Fothergilla* (Witch's Alder), *Clethra* (Sweet Pepperbush), and *Itea* (Virginia Sweetspire).

Paw Paws need little attention, and are bothered by few pests. They like moisture, and are often found along the banks of rivers and streams. However, they do fine in drier, upland conditions, and once established thrive with only occasional watering during our hot, humid summers. Paw Paws will sucker, sending up new sprouts that will eventually form a grove if not cut back. If you only want one or two trees, it is easy to keep the occasional sucker under control with a lawn mower or pruners.

One last (but not least!) benefit of growing Paw Paws is that they are larval hosts for the spectacular Zebra swallowtail butterfly, as well as the Paw Paw sphinx moth. The easy-to-grow Paw Paw provides beauty to the garden, fruit for people and wildlife, and hosts gorgeous butterflies—this native is definitely worth considering for the urban garden!

### 'Tis the Season to be Pruning

And while I'm shamelessly stealing other peoples' articles, why not turn to the [Washington Post](http://www.washingtonpost.com)? Last week there was a wonderful article on pruning by Adrian Higgins. I am no expert on pruning and I'm actually known for being quite squeamish and laissez-faire with my plants. Mr. Higgins, however, has explained the pruning of woody plants (shrubs and trees) in one article, and I can now say I get it. It's both an art and a science. Here's the link: [http://www.washingtonpost.com/lifestyle/home-garden/a-pruning-primer/2012/02/08/gIQA7vACiR\\_story.html](http://www.washingtonpost.com/lifestyle/home-garden/a-pruning-primer/2012/02/08/gIQA7vACiR_story.html) "Pruning that's a cut above" by Adrian Higgins, in *Local Living*, The Washington Post, 3/1/2012.

## Aurora Highlands Civic Association

### Association Officers & Committee Chairs

President – Jim Oliver  
703-867-8976 [jamesroliver@me.com](mailto:jamesroliver@me.com)

Vice President – Nick Giacobbe  
703-842-5441

2nd Vice President – William Gillen  
[ahca@gillen.org](mailto:ahca@gillen.org)

Treasurer / Membership – Mark Ruckh  
703-271-4393 [ruckhus@hotmail.com](mailto:ruckhus@hotmail.com)

Business Secretary –  
Jenny Lawhorn Sammis  
703-683-0727 [jennylawhorn@me.com](mailto:jennylawhorn@me.com)

Corresponding Secretary –  
Brent Spence  
703-684-8120 [brentspence@juno.com](mailto:brentspence@juno.com)

Newsletter Editor – Cory Giacobbe  
[AHCA.news@yahoo.com](mailto:AHCA.news@yahoo.com)

Newsletter Distribution - Vacant  
Newsletter Advertising - Marty King  
703-979-3410 [martinch@erols.com](mailto:martinch@erols.com)

AHCA Rep. to Neighborhood  
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703-683-1312

Items for the Newsletter: Send items to  
the newsletter editor, Cory Giacobbe:  
[AHCA.news@yahoo.com](mailto:AHCA.news@yahoo.com)

P.O. Box 25201 - Arlington, VA 22202

[AuroraHighlands.org](http://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.