

# Aurora Highlands

CIVIC ASSOCIATION

# NEWSLETTER

JULY/AUGUST 2012

AURORA HIGHLANDS — EST'D 1910

[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, July 11, 2012 at 7:00 p.m.

AURORA HILLS COMMUNITY CENTER

### Agenda

**6:30 Social**

**7:00 AHCA Business Meeting**

## Disasters Can Strike at Any Time ... Are You Ready?

By Cynthia Kellams, Arlington Community Emergency Response Team (CERT)  
Volunteer Program Coordinator/Citizen Liaison

Were you ready for the derecho last week? Could you survive comfortably for three full days without power or assistance from others? Do you have enough food and water on hand? Do you have flashlights and **batteries**? How will you communicate if you can't use your cell phone? What if grocery stores, gas stations and ATMs are not operational? All of these things could happen again in Arlington without any warning. Are you prepared?

One important step you can take to be

better prepared for and able to respond to and recover from all types of emergencies -- large and small -- is to complete Community Emergency Response Training (CERT). This eight-session, 26-hour course provides important information and skills needed to help yourself and others in emergencies and is offered twice a year. It is sponsored by the Arlington County Citizen Corps, Office of Emergency Management (OEM) and Fire Department (ACFD) and follows a FEMA/DHS all-hazards curriculum used around the globe.

side elsewhere -- who are at least 18 years of age (16 and 17-year olds are welcome if accompanied by a parent or adult guardian) and able to participate in all aspects of the training, some of which requires lifting and carrying. We have members of all ages. The training is free, but participants are expected to acquire certain supplies themselves, many of which you probably already have on-hand. All classes meet at the Arlington County Fire Training Academy in Shirlington and are taught by ACFD, ACPD and OEM staff and CERT members.

To-date, over 550 people have completed CERT training in Arlington County. It is open to Arlington residents -- and those who work in the county but re-

Some complete this training simply to be safer in their own homes and workplaces. Others choose to complete additional requirements necessary to

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## Is Your Home's Upstairs Too Warm? Creating an Energy-Efficient Home

by Scott Donelson

If the last couple of weeks are any indication of what is to come, this summer is going to break some records for heat! Is the air conditioning not doing the job and you are ready to sleep downstairs? I often hear about complaints of warm rooms in homes this time of year, especially in the upper levels. If your power was out this past week and the house heated up quickly, this is the sign of some underlying problems too. Most homes suffer from a combination of factors that create uncomfortable rooms, high bills, and other issues which are easily addressed. Upper level rooms can often be like living under a giant pizza stone transferring heat into your living spaces and sending both utility bills and temperatures soaring! This is all easily fixable!

The most common causes are usually one or more of the following: (1) Air leakage caused by holes in multiple spots such as around plumbing pipes. Due to significant air leakage, most homeowners are paying to heat and cool 2-5 times the amount of air they need to every day! Air sealing is the number one priority by the EPA/DOE when it comes to home weatherization improvements. (2) Under insulation. Most homes in this area have 20-30% of insulation recommended by today's standard which is R-49 (about 13 inches of blown cellulose). Insulation is only about 50% as effective without air sealing first. (3) Duct leakage. With many systems located in basements in two story homes with all metal ductwork, much air leaks out before it can reach the upper levels. This can be

easily fixed too! (4) High humidity levels caused by an underperforming AC system or bath fans not venting properly (or lack thereof) (5) Duct balancing- too much flow going to some rooms and not others or stale air that can't get back to the return.

A house truly acts like a system and not only can addressing the problems make you more comfortable and lower your bills, but it can help HVAC equipment last longer because it does not have to run as long. When replacing your HVAC, the system can often be downsized too because there is less heat load on the home thus costing less up front and long term to operate. If you're seriously considering a new air

—Continued on Page 4—

## Spray, Zap, Slather on DEET or Risk a Bite?

By Cheryl Mendonsa

Mosquitos love me; I do not return the love. So I joined a few of my neighbors and had my yard sprayed. It's lovely to walk to around and not feel like a walking blood bank for insects.

With a bumper year of disease-carrying insects expected this year—ticks, fleas, mosquitos – and the bats that eat them dying with white nose fungus; I thought a flower-based spray guaranteed to be safe for kids and pets was just the ticket.

There seems to be a debate about this across the river in my friend Nancy's neighborhood of Chevy Chase.

Her neighbors checked with the Rachel Carson Council; named after the woman who whose book *Silent Spring*, published 50 years ago alerted the public to the dangers of pesticides. Half a century later, we're still on the quest to kill disease-carrying pests without harming birds, bees, butterflies and fish ponds.

Excerpts with permission from Diana Post, Rachel Carlson Council:

Do the applicators wear hazmat suits when applying these chemicals? Do they post a sign in the yard that pesticides have been applied and to stay off the lawn for a specific period of time? Legally, no pesticides can be

labeled "safe" according to EPA regulations.

One mosquito abatement company states "the active ingredient in our most commonly used barrier spray is a synthetic reproduction of a substance derived from chrysanthemums."

This is a description of a class of synthetic chemical pesticides called pyrethroids. These chemicals are known to be highly toxic to fish and beneficial insects including bees. Pyrethroids are nerve toxins and some of them have been associated with human health problems such as cancer, endocrine disruption and immune dysfunction.

<http://www.rachelcarsoncouncil.org>

Then there are the bug zapper products and DEET. Again, according to the EPA:

After completing a comprehensive re-assessment of DEET, EPA concluded that, as long as consumers follow label directions and take proper precautions, insect repellents containing DEET do not present a health concern. Based on extensive toxicity testing, the Agency believes that the normal use of DEET does not present a health concern to the general population. EPA completed this review and issued its reregistration decision (called a RED) in 1998.)

Bug zappers don't kill mosquitoes and ticks. They only kill insects that are attracted to light. They are actually harmful to the ecosystem because they kill so many beneficial insects.

The safest, cheapest and easiest way to keep mosquitoes out of your yard is to remove standing water every week from flower pots, toys, trash can lids, and any other vessel that hold even the tiniest amount of water. In warm weather, mosquitoes complete their lifecycle from egg to adult in less than a week. Keep in mind that the most common mosquito breeding location in Northern Virginia is inside the black plastic corrugated drainage tubes we all use to move water away from our downspouts. Pick those up after every rain and shake them out vertically. Consider using smooth PVC tubes at a good drainage angle instead. See the Rachel Carson website for 27 ways to prevent mosquito breeding sites around your home. <http://www.rachelcarsoncouncil.org/index.php?page=mosquitoe-breeding-site-prevention>

For our 4-legged family members, a blatant commercial to remind you to keep your pets disease-free with regular applications of flea and tick medication.

<http://www.1800petmeds.com/>

## New Library Hours at Aurora Hills

Thanks to the activism of our neighbors and library users throughout Arlington County, with the start of the new fiscal year on July 1 the cuts to our library hours have been restored. Here's the new schedule for the Aurora Hills branch library:

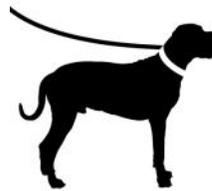
Sunday CLOSED  
Monday 10:00 a.m. – 9:00 p.m.  
Tuesday 1:00 p.m. – 9:00 p.m.  
Wednesday 1:00 p.m. – 9:00 p.m.  
Thursday 10:00 a.m. – 9:00 p.m.  
Friday 10:00 a.m. – 5:00 p.m.  
Saturday 10:00 a.m. – 5:00 p.m.

For more information, call the Main Library at 703-228-5990 or the Aurora Hills Branch Library at 703-228-5715.

Remember, the best way to keep our fantastic neighborhood branch open and active is by using it!

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## Southeast Arlington Chapter of the MOMS Club

The Southeast Arlington Chapter of the MOMS Club (Moms Offering Moms Support) is new to the neighborhood and looking for interested members! MOMS is an international nonprofit organization for stay-at-home mothers, working-at-home mothers, and any other mothers who are primarily interested in weekday support, socialization, and activities for their children and themselves.

If you are interested in finding out more, please email [Arlington.va.southeast@gmail.com](mailto:Arlington.va.southeast@gmail.com).

## Volunteer! Two Newsletter Bundle Distributors Needed

We are still in need of two 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 the multi-family buildings. 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:

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

## Energy-Efficient Home —Continued from Page 2—

conditioning system or adding an upstairs unit to solve your problems, please think twice about addressing these other items first! There are big pay-offs in the long run typically with 20-30%+ savings.

Do you know \$1000 rebates are available for Arlington County residents for implementing improvements like those mentioned above? Go to <http://leap.energy Savvy.com/?src=I21FEM> to get your free home energy assessment and to register for the Home Performance with Energy Star program through LEAP (Local En-

ergy Alliance Program). The program recommends the first place to start is with a home energy audit.

A home energy audit is a four-five hour in-home analysis by a trained professional to qualitatively and quantitatively evaluate the home for comfort issues, energy savings, indoor air quality, and combustion safety issues. The subsequent audit report will identify any problems and give you the prioritized "improvement roadmap" to follow with recommended fixes. Typical cost is \$395. A professional energy auditor will know

how to consider the right materials for the given application to solve the problems and ensure the most benefit.

*About the author:* Scott Donelson is a local resident, home energy consultant, certified energy auditor, and president of Home Energy Medics, [www.HomeEnergyMedics.com](http://www.HomeEnergyMedics.com). Home Energy Medics is a LEAP certified NoVA home Performance with Energy Star program participating company, and a BPI gold star accredited home performance contractor.

## Passport to Summer Wednesdays at Aurora Hills Community Center

Arrgh, Matey!

Wednesday July 11 at the

Passport to Summer starts weekly sessions on

Aurora Hills Community Center from 5:00—7:00 p.m. The program will run every Wednesday through August 22.



Come get some library books, share some pizza, chat with neighbors and learn about pirates! We'll have an activity each week of the summer - science, arts, history, and adventures.

See you on Wednesday!



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## My Take on Sidewalks

by Bruce Cameron

New sidewalks are happening in AHCA and ARCA. Specific to concerns regarding Joyce Street Phase II. One of the guide wires that was obstructing the sidewalk has already been moved. County staff is still working with Dominion Virginia Power to get the other guide wire moved as well as the power box that overhangs the sidewalk. Also, I have been in touch with a government relations contact at Dominion to see if she can help on the issue. Between 20th and 22nd along east side of S. Joyce St. the sidewalk is wider than the old standard of 4 feet and wider than the newer standard of 5 feet, but that was done to accommodate wishes of the residents immediately abutting the county right of way at those lots. The curbs and curb cuts are to current county standards. The county is doing these sidewalks for AHCA and ARCA because we asked for them.

New sidewalk projects coming or just completed:

- Joyce Street Phase III will complete Joyce on east side from 22nd Street to 23rd as well as include improvements to the Joyce/23rd Street intersection.

We hope this will begin in the fall of 2012.

- A Missing Links sidewalk project including curbs was just completed on Kent Street (west side) between 17th and 18th. While this is in ARCA, this area is part of the Addison Heights subsection of our larger neighborhood.

- A Missing Links sidewalk project was just completed at corner of 17th/Lynn. Again, in ARCA but part of Addison Heights subsection of larger neighborhood.

- An NC (Neighborhood Conversation) project has passed the second petition for 21st Street between Joyce and Kent which will put in place sidewalk on the north side of that block. Again, in ARCA and the Addison Heights subsection of the neighborhood.

- Ives Street between 20th and 23rd. An NC project should begin actual construction some time in July 2012. This will include complete sidewalk on both sides as well as Carlyle lights on east side of street.

- Fern Street between 19th and 22nd

Street, sidewalk on west side as well as some improvements at the intersections - has been fully approved and awaits actual construction in 2013 or 2014.

The Addison Heights subsection of the ARCA/AHCA area historically never had much of a complete sidewalk grid. Now many sidewalk projects are queued up at neighbors' requests, and where sidewalks have gone in, even many originally opposed have changed their minds and actually like them. I am realistic about sidewalks, having worked on many of the new sidewalks in our area, they aren't perfect, and some people will always hate having sidewalks, but for the most part, they create safe places for adults and children to walk and they also create a safe place for neighbors to stop and visit without crossing the invisible boundary that says you are on my private property. In almost every block where sidewalks have gone in, over time, there has been more neighbor interactions because now they have a place to stand and talk that is not the middle of the street and is not in the middle of someone's private grass yard or garden.

## Disasters Can Strike at Any Time ... Are You Ready?

—Continued from Page 1—

become active members of neighborhood teams trained to assist in major disasters. All help make Arlington County a safer place to live, work and play!

Fall CERT classes are scheduled to begin September 13 and 18 and available spaces will be filled on a first-come, first-served basis. Advance registration is required. If you'd like additional information or would like to sign up, please contact the program's volunteer coordinator, Cynthia Kellams, at [ArlingtonCERT@gmail.com](mailto:ArlingtonCERT@gmail.com).

In the meantime, with hurricane season upon us, please take a few minutes to do at least one thing to be better prepared for emergencies this

summer. This could include:

- Making sure you have enough food (non-perishable, such as canned goods) and water on-hand to last three days. The suggested amount of water (primarily for drinking) is *one gallon per person per day* for each member of your household. The three-day guideline applies all year-round, not just in the summer. Remember, the neighborhood Harris-Teeter or CVS might not be open in a disaster!

- Keeping a working flashlight in your home and extra batteries for all your devices that may need them. A battery operated AM/FM radio is a good idea, also, as Arlington has its own AM station for emergencies (AM 1700). Give

some thought as to how you'd continue to operate without power for a few days (no light, no ability to charge cell phones, no television, etc.). This is a great topic to bounce off family members around the dinner table!

- Keeping hydrated – especially while working/playing outdoors.

Have a safe and happy summer!

# 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.

**Four Mile Run Farmer' Market, Sundays from 8:00 a.m. - 1:00 p.m., Mount Vernon Avenue, just across Glebe Road from Four Mile Run bridge.** The market runs through October and is on a brand new plaza next to the brand new stage at the re-purposed Four Mile Run Conservatory building (the old paint store). Get your reusable bags ready to fill with farm-fresh goodies and artisan made crafts. This should be a great growing season.

**Yoga in the Water Park, Mondays at 7:00 a.m. through the end of September, Crystal City Water Park, across from 1750 Crystal Drive.** Beginners and seasoned yogis are invited to join professional instructors from Crystal City's newest Yoga studio (opening in the fall), Mind Your Body Oasis, and flex their way into the week with Morning Meditation and Yoga.

**Crystal Screen Presents ROMCOMs, Mondays at sundown through August 27 in the Ball Street Courtyard (diagonally across from the Crystal City Metro Station).** Now in its sixth year, look forward to a romantic evening under the stars with a charming collection of movies chock full of laughs and love:

7/9 Sleepless in Seattle  
7/16 Bridget Jones's Diary  
7/23 The Proposal  
7/30 You've Got Mail  
8/6 How to Lose a Guy in 10 Days  
8/13 Pretty Woman  
8/20 Love Actually  
8/27 When Harry Met Sally...

**Two Wheel Tuesdays, various Arlington locations through July 31, 7:00 to 8:30 p.m.** Tuesday night is bike night in Arlington! Join BikeArlington for informative and interactive sessions on everything you need to know about biking in Arlington. Each session will focus on safety tips, equipment and clothing recommendations, and advice on routes and directions for your commute or ride. Visit Bike Arlington's, <http://www.bikearlington.com> for additional information and the schedule.

**Crystal City Farm Fresh Market, Tuesdays from 3:00 - 7:00 p.m., on the sidewalk along Crystal Drive between 18th and 20th Streets.** The market runs weekly through November 20. 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.

**Outdoor Zumba, Wednesdays, through September 26, from noon - 1:00 p.m. in the courtyard of 2121 Crystal Drive.** Join the Crystal City BID, Sport and Health fitness club, and Vornado/Charles E. Smith every week for free Zumba. Zumba fuses hypnotic Latin rhythms and easy-to-follow

moves to create a one-of-a-kind fitness program that will blow you away.

**10th Annual Rock at the Row Summer Concert Series, Every Thursday evening through August 30 from 7:00 to 9:00 p.m. at the Pentagon Row Plaza.** This summer's lineup looks to be a lot of fun:

## **JULY - Funky Roots Rock**

5 The Crowdaddies, Roots Rock, Zydeco  
12 Old Man Brown, Southern Soul  
19 Higher Hands, Funk  
26 Donegal Xpress, Celtic Rock

## **AUGUST - Pop / Variety**

2 Bobby Lynch Band, Pop Variety  
9 Crowded Streets, Dave Mathews Tribute  
16 Unity, Reggae  
23 Matt Hutchison, Rock  
30 Gonzo's Nose, Pop Rock

**Free Nighttime Summer Concert at Lubber Run Amphitheater, North Columbus and 2<sup>nd</sup> Street North, all programs begin at 8:00 p.m.** Enjoy music, theater and dance concerts under the stars! The series continues Fridays, Saturdays and Sundays through August 4. Pack a picnic and enjoy the arts al fresco. For full information, visit [www.arlingtonarts.org](http://www.arlingtonarts.org) or call 703-228-1850.

**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 and have fun. Free. This class fills up fast! Call 703-979-1558 or Inquire and RSVP to [KidsRCooking@gmail.com](mailto:KidsRCooking@gmail.com)

**Vacation Bible School is coming to Mount Vernon Baptist Church July 16 - 20 from 6:00 - 9:00 p.m.** This year's theme is RBP's Bug Zone so join in, all ages are welcome (ages 4 - 99). It will be a fun week for all participants! A light meal will be served at 6:00 p.m. daily. Phone 703-979-1558 to register or e-mail [mbvccc@mbvccc.org](mailto:mbvccc@mbvccc.org).

# Activities and Events

**County Board Open Door Mondays, July 9, August 13, September 10, December 10, 7:00 — 9:00 p.m. in the Gunston Community Center Conference Room, 2700 South Lang Street.** Neighbors are welcome to attend the session to speak directly with County Board Members on any topic. No appointments are needed! For more information call the County Board Office at 703-228-3130.

**Crystal City Twilighter, Saturday, July 21 at 8:30 p.m.** The region's most exciting twilight summer 5K returns to Crystal City. A runner favorite for its fast course, great perks, and after-party, the Crystal City Twilighter 5K is the area's largest summer evening 5K. The race offers mile splits, Facebook results posting, photos, two water stops, technical tees, post-race food and beverages (bring your ID!), and a great party atmosphere. Click [here](#) to register.

**Concert at Mount Vernon Baptist Church, 935 23rd Street South, Friday, August 31, 7:30 p.m.** An evening of music by Mount Vernon's Music Director, Serge Romanchak. His CD "Serge Romanchak Plays Ravel and Chopin" was released in 2010 and he has performed at the French Embassy, the Fairfax Symphony, the Supreme Court and much more. Free! All are welcome! Questions? Phone 703-979-1558 or e-mail [mvbccc@mvbccc.org](mailto:mvbccc@mvbccc.org).

**Third Annual Community Day Cook-out, Mount Vernon Baptist Church, 935 23rd Street South, Saturday, September 1, 10:00 a.m. — 3:00 p.m.** Moon Bounce, Face Painting, Games & more. Free! All are welcome! Questions? Phone 703-979-1558 or e-mail [mvbccc@mvbccc.org](mailto:mvbccc@mvbccc.org).

**Arlington Learning in Retirement Institute (ALRI) Fall Course Preview, Saturday, September 8, 9:00 a.m. to 12:30 p.m., National Rural Electric Cooperative Association, 4301 Wilson Blvd.** Information on the courses for the fall session, which begin on October 1, and on clubs, special events and other opportunities will be available. Take advantage of the

chance to hear the instructors talk about their course offerings. Refreshments will be provided and the public is invited. Free parking is available under the NRECA building on North Taylor Street. For information, call 703-228-2144 or visit [www.ArlingtonLRI.org](http://www.ArlingtonLRI.org).

**Vintage Crystal, Sunday, September 16, 2:00 p.m. to 6:00 p.m., parking lot at 2001 Jefferson Davis Highway.** This event has only gotten bigger and better and more fun with each year. Plans show that this year is going to be the best yet, so be sure that you don't miss out. Visit [www.crystalcity.org](http://www.crystalcity.org) for more details.



## How to Join the Neighborhood Listserv:

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

<http://groups.yahoo.com/group/4D-A/>

## How to Join Arlington Alert:

Arlington Alert is an alert system that allows the County to contact you during an emergency by sending text messages to your e-mail or cell phone. Copy the address below into your browser.

Once at the page, click on the blue rectangle marked "Click here to register!"

<http://www.arlingtonalert.com/>

## Oakridge Elementary PTA Email Newsletter

The Parent-Teacher Association at Oakridge Elementary publishes a weekly email newsletter about all the great things happening at our local neighborhood elementary school. To subscribe, please send an email to

[OakridgePTA@gmail.com](mailto:OakridgePTA@gmail.com).

## 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.

## Enter the County Fair: Old Fashioned Summer Fun for Children and Adults

by Whitney Long

Experience the thrill of friendly competition. Encourage your children to enjoy the county fair as their grandparents or great grandparents did. See how your talents stack up against the local competition. Earn bragging rights. Try to win a ribbon in Arlington county fair competition.

Almost any hobby, craft, cooking, woodworking, gardening, school, or art project that you have completed in the past year is eligible for the competition. There are hundreds of categories you and your children can enter (see link below for the Competitive Exhibits listings and rules). School projects also make good entries, including informative posters and science fair projects. The Arlington County Fair organizers even offer a special open competition for the item that best represents this year's fair theme "Live Green, Learn Green," whether it's a cupcake, unframed photograph, needlepoint project, or home-grown vegetable.

The entry process is simple and free. There is no limit on the number of categories you can enter (but you can

only enter one item per class). Be sure to read the rules. They are simple, but you need to know them (e.g., you must provide the recipe with a baked goods entry)! If you will be out of town during the fair dates, a friend can drop off or pick up your entry on the first and last days of the fair.

Maximize the fun: for best results start now and begin planning what you will enter in the fair in August. Put the last coat of finish on that woodworking project, unpack the school artwork, can those tomatoes, get your ceramics fired, and start tending that lovely flower that will be blooming in August. Enjoy the sense of anticipation!

The competition is not fierce – this is Arlington County – the smallest self-governing county in the nation. This means that the county fair competition is also on a neighborly scale (hobby-level). If you have some nice entries, there is a good chance you will come home with a ribbon. Children and adults are judged separately and children's entries are grouped by the child's age, increasing the chance of

winning a ribbon. "Best in show" receive additional recognition, typically including cash prizes.

The fair dates are August 8-12. Judges will award ribbons on Thursday, August 9, and exhibits remain on display for the duration of the fair (four days for you to check out the competition). All entries are returned to you on the last day (except perishable food). Each year dozens of volunteers coordinate the "Competitive Entries" side of the fair. It is open to any resident of Arlington or Falls Church.

The county fair is not just amusement rides, corn dogs and stuffed animals. It's a history lesson! For general information see <http://arlingtoncountyfair.us/> or use your Web browser to search "Arlington County Fair 2012". For a full list of the objects you can enter, follow links for Competitive Exhibits to the guide and program or download a pdf copy at [http://arlingtoncountyfair.us/wp-content/uploads/2012/06/2012ACF-CE-Guide\\_Total.pdf](http://arlingtoncountyfair.us/wp-content/uploads/2012/06/2012ACF-CE-Guide_Total.pdf)



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## NeighborFit

By Maria Joukov

One of the goals in my personal workouts is to target important but often-ignored muscles. This month, we will concentrate on the rotator cuff—a group of small muscles and tendons that connect bones to the shoulder joint. The rotator cuff stabilizes the shoulder and allows it to move, which in turn means greater freedom of motion for the arms. If you've ever had a rotator cuff injury, you know the recovery process can be long, and impacts not only your workouts, but nearly every other daily activity. And if you do work out regularly, developing rotator cuff strength is important to help you perform better in many other exercises, such as the bench press or triceps kickbacks.

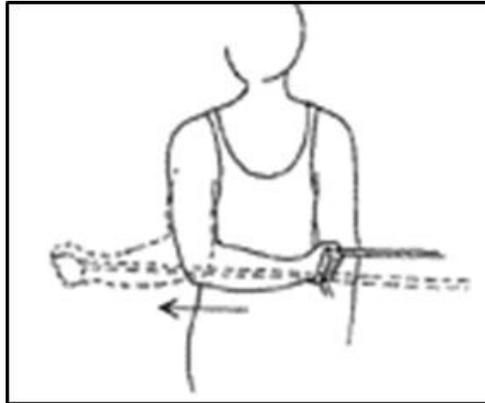
To strengthen your rotator cuff, try the exercise below. Note that because these muscles are so small, you will usually use a weight much lower than you'd use on other muscle groups. For

example, if you're regularly doing bicep curls with 20lb weights, you may only be able to do 5lbs with the rotator cuff. Don't risk an injury by taking on too much weight at once.

To perform the exercise, stand with your feet shoulder-width apart and hold a dumbbell in each hand. (If you don't have a dumbbell, a bottle of water or even can of soup will do. You can also use a resistance band.) Bend your arm at a 90 degree angle, keeping your elbow close to your side then rotate the arm out as if you were opening a door, keeping your elbow pressed to your side. Do this move slowly, and only bring your arm back as far as you feel comfortable. Rotate back to center and repeat. That's

one rep. After 8-10 reps, repeat the exercise with the left arm. That's one set. Aim for 2 sets on non-consecutive days.

As with any exercise routine, please remember to get clearance from your doctor, especially if you have had rotator cuff injuries in the past.



## AHCA Microproject Status

by Bruce Cameron

Our AHCA Microproject was selected for funding under a subset of the Neighborhood Conservation Program. Our idea is to etch the glass on the new bus shelter at the corner of Virginia Highlands Park, South 15th and Hayes Streets.

The design would be

something like a "Welcome to Historic Aurora Highlands" message....the actual message and/or artistic pictures/symbols are not yet decided.

Please think about what you'd like to see and we will discuss ideas from neighborhood at the July AHCA meeting.

## Pre-Kindergarten Enrolling for the Fall!

Our Savior Lutheran School is currently accepting applications for a Pre-Kindergarten program to begin in September. The program is 5 days a week from 8:30 - 11:30.

For more information call 703-892-4846. The school is located in Barcroft at 825 South Taylor Street. (Arlington). Students must be 4 or 5 by September 30.

## HOG Pull, First Saturdays, July 7, August 4 Help Remove Invasives at Haley Park

Haley Park, Oakridge Elementary School, Gunston Middle School Invasive Plant Pull on Saturday, July 7 from 9:00 to 11:00 a.m.

Meet at Haley Park, 2400 S. Meade Street.

Bring:

- ⇒ Appropriate clothing, including good footwear, as some parts of the area are steep and contain poison ivy.
- ⇒ Gloves
- ⇒ Tools - weeders, clippers, whackers, small saws
- ⇒ Drinking water
- ⇒ Insect repellent

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

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.

This is a RiP and ARMN approved project.



Contacts:

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The next two HOG Pull dates are **August 4** and **September 1**. Mark your calendars!



## County Board to Consider No Signs Above 40 feet and Other Options This Month

By Mike Dowell

At the June 19 County Board meeting, the board approved a Planning Commission recommendation to amend the proposed sign ordinance update with several important options and then approved the request to advertise the amended ordinance for public review. The County Board will make a decision on the final language at the July 24 meeting.

The amendments have several additional options for the public and the Board to consider this month. The amendment most relevant to our neighborhood is an option that would prohibit all signs above 40 feet in Arlington County.

There are several reasons that make this a compelling option:

1. It supports the long-standing practice of not allowing signs above 40 feet to face our neighborhood, and extends the same considerations to folks who will live in the urban cores of Pentagon-Crystal City and the Rosslyn-Ballston corridor. (Note that there is another option that would try to prevent signs from facing our neighborhood, but it would be problematic to implement). This option also would avoid the potential for signs that would be viewable from Iwo Jima, Arlington Cemetery and other national memorials.
2. Signs above 40 feet could not be approved by exception by the County Board. This would obviate the risk of prospective tenants trying to negotiate the signs into leasing agreements. As it currently stands, the sign ordinance allows the County Board to approve by exception any sign type that is allowed within a zoning area, but cannot approve by exception a sign type that is completely prohibited. So, if a sign above 40 feet is allowed by the rules, even in a severely limited manner, the board could be pressured to expand the rules in the future. With the signs prohibited, we could all sleep easy.
3. In accordance with recent court decisions, the county can only regulate the technical requirements of signs, not their content. Given the large viewshed of roofline signs, this is a huge

concern, as people would have to see a 'not-nice' sign, every day, forever. Even if these signs were subject to review, the County Board will have very little discretion going forward – they cannot disapprove a sign just because it is ugly, it has a disagreeable message, or that the neighbors don't want it. Furthermore, non-commercial speech (political and issue messages) could be substituted onto roofline and other signs, by right. Imagine being asked to approve a sign application without knowing what is going to be on the sign, and you'll get the basic idea. 4. Last, there are no data available to support the claim that companies will locate elsewhere if they are not allowed a roofline sign. The roofline signs are simply advertising. Given the dramatic and negative impact (very few people consider them attractive; even sign supporters sidestep the aesthetics, arguing that we won't really notice the signs - weird) these signs would have on the visual character of Arlington, the complete absence of hard data to justify the roofline signs is troubling.

The other sign ordinance options under consideration would change the vistas in Arlington significantly. The most generous options would allow most buildings in the mixed use and commercial zones in Arlington to have up to two roofline signs. For a 300-foot high building, with a 300-foot width (roughly the size of the proposed 1900 Crystal Drive building), each sign could be 450 square feet in area for a total of 900 square feet. The signs would be able to face our neighborhoods, the residence of folks living in the urban cores, and our national monuments. At the June 19th County Board meeting, businesses argued that they must be allowed to have signs that face Arlington Cemetery

and Iwo Jima Memorial for Arlington to compete effectively with other jurisdictions. However, we don't think that the availability of a roofline sign is a significant factor in location decisions.

So, there is a lot at stake this month. As discussed in last month's newsletter, many cities severely restrict or prohibit signs above 40 feet: Boston, Cambridge, New York City, Washington DC, Westminster, Chicago and San Francisco. All of these are world-class cities that provide high quality of life and are economically vibrant. What should Arlington do?

Here are some key dates, should you want to express your opinion:

- July 12. Planning Commission public hearings on Sign Ordinance
- July 24. County Board public hearings on Sign Ordinance, decision on final text.

More information is available here at the County Sign Ordinance Update web page: <http://www.arlingtonva.us/departments/CPHD/planning/studies/SignRegUpdate.aspx>



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

by Cory Giacobbe

### My Last Tree Column

This is my last newsletter and tree column. My family is being transferred to Italy for three years. If there's anything to report about trees and wildlife in Rome, I'll send a dispatch, but the wildlife will probably be of a different nature.

Before turning to trees, I'd like to say what a rewarding experience it has been editing this newsletter. Thanks to Bruce Cameron for providing me the design and training to get started. Thanks to my ad man, Marty King. Thanks to my newsletter carriers for going out in all kinds of weather to bring the newsletter to your home. Thanks also to my skillful writers, without whom there would be no news.

Over the last two and a half years, I have gently nudged my neighbors in the direction of tree planting, tree care and native gardening for invertebrate and vertebrate biodiversity support. I'd like to recap here the concepts I think are most important and urgent.

### Plant native trees for all their benefits.

Trees save energy and save you money. They purify the air and the water. They conserve the soil and provide wildlife food and shelter.

**Not all native trees are equal.** We're lucky in the mid-Atlantic region because Dr. Doug Tallamy at the University of Delaware has been measuring which trees provide the most benefit to wildlife here. His prioritized lists can be found on his website. But basically, the most valuable natives for wildlife support are oak, cherry, willow, birch, poplar, crabapple, blueberry bush and maple. Be sure to plant local, native versions of these plants because European and Asian plants don't feed the invertebrates that are the foundation of our local food web. Read Dr. Tallamy's book [Bringing Nature Home](#) or simply click on "What to Plant" on his website <http://bringingnaturehome.net/>

### Water young trees 25 gallons a week.

Every weekend, take stock of the previous week's rain. If it hasn't rained much, soak the ground around the root spread, which is at least as wide as the canopy spread.

**Plant trees in the right spot.** Determine the height and canopy spread the tree will have at maturity. Make sure it won't interfere with power lines, buildings, driveways and neighbors' property. Call Miss Utility before you dig. In Virginia, dial 811. <http://va811.com/>

### Put mulch under trees instead of grass.

Spread it 3 inches thick and keep it 3 inches away from the trunk. Spread it out as wide as the farthest branches. Each year, make the circle a bit wider. Mulch keeps roots moist, provides nutrients and keeps down weeds. It also keeps lawn mowers and weed whackers away from the trunk. Arlington leaf mulch is awesome. Pick some up for free or have it delivered for a small fee: <http://www.arlingtonva.us/departments/EnvironmentalServices/SW/Residential/page83856.aspx>

**Leave the leaves.** Trees make their own best mulch by dropping their leaves. Even evergreens drop their leaves, just not all at once. Rake the lawn, driveway and patio, but leave a circle of leaves at the base of each tree, and leave the leaves that fall on your flowerbeds as well. Not only do they benefit from the nutrients and moisture, but the leaves contain the larvae and pupae of next year's butterflies!

**Let me tell you 'bout the birds and the bees.** Native plants support moths and butterflies, who in turn support the birds. They also provide food for pollinators. Simply put, native plants are the foundation of the web of life. Don't forget we are caught up in that web.

**Tolerate some leaf damage.** Native plants help insects by being their food. If there are holes in your foliage, it means you were successful in choosing good bug food.

**And last, but certainly not least, take ivy off trees.** What looks like a lovely little green plant can actually strangle trees, accelerate rot, attract mosquitoes and cause mature trees to fall down during storms. Visit the TreeSteward website for more information on ivy removal and tree care at <http://treestewards.org/> or visit the master gardener/tree table at the Courthouse Farmers' Market on Saturdays.

## Aurora Highlands Civic Association

### Association Officers & Committee Chairs

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**Vice President** – Nick Giacobbe, 703-842-5441

**2nd Vice President** – William Gillen  
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**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** – Brent Spence  
703-684-8120

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

For past issues of the newsletter, meeting minutes, bylaws, neighborhood boundaries and more, visit [AuroraHighlands.org](http://AuroraHighlands.org)

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.