



AURORA HIGHLANDS CIVIC ASSOCIATION

MAY 2023 NEWSLETTER

NOTE FROM THE PRESIDENT

Dear Neighbors,

It's May, and you may not be thinking of elections, but in fact the Democratic Primary is just around the corner on June 20. There are some significant changes to the process this year, including the first ever use of Ranked Choice Voting for the County Board primary. Please read the article on Page 2 for all the information you need to prepare.

For a demonstration of Ranked Choice Voting, please join us on Wednesday, May 10 for our regular AHCA monthly meeting, virtual via Zoom. [Register in advance](#) to receive the link. On the agenda we have a presentation on how to do Ranked Choice Voting, a training by County Election Outreach Coordinator Tania Griffin, sponsored by the League of Women Voters.

We've also invited Kurt Moser of Four Mile Run Conservatory Foundation to talk about their programs and volunteer opportunities.

We have tips on safe and healthy mosquito prevention by easy yard management, see Page 4.

At our April meeting we had an extremely informative and entertaining presentation on the Arlington recycling program by Erik Grabowski, Chief of the County Solid Waste Bureau. If you missed the April meeting, you can view the [video recording by clicking on the link on our website](#).

Cory Giacobbe, President, AHCA

Calendar

See aurorahighlands.org/events/

- May 1 - 26 - [Gallery Underground Group Show: "Women x Women"](#)
- May 8, 15, 22 - [Virtual Open Door Mondays](#) with County Board members 7-9 pm
- May 10 - 55+ [Mac, iPhone, iPad assistance](#) at Aurora Hills Center, 11:30 - 12:15
- May 10 - 55+ [Mother's Day Music and Tea](#) at Aurora Hills Center, 1:00 - 2:30
- May 10 - May AHCA Meeting, 7 - 9 pm, [online via Zoom](#)
- May 12 - [Bicycle Documentary](#) at Alamo Drafthouse Cinema on Crystal Drive, 6-8 pm
- May 13 - [County Board regular meeting](#) 8:30 am - 5:00 pm
- May 15 - Route 1 Multimodal PIM 4 meeting, 6:30 pm, details below
- May 15 - 55+ [Documentary Discussions](#) at Aurora Hills Center 1:30 pm
- May 17 - 55+ [Inheritance Seminar](#) at Aurora Hills Center, 1 - 2 pm
- May 19 - 55+ [Acoustic Hour in the Park](#) 1:00-2:30 pm, Virginia Highlands Park Plaza
- May 20 - Trash and Treasure Yard Sale @ Aurora Hills Center, details below
- May 26 - 55+ [Movies at Aurora Hills](#) 12:30-2:30 pm
- May 27 - Fort Scott Invasive Plant Removal, 10 a.m. to noon. Register [here](#)
- May 29 - All County facilities closed in observance of Memorial Day
- June 3 - Haley Park Invasive Plant Removal, 9-11 a.m. Register [here](#)

Trash and Treasure Yard Sale May 20!

The annual Aurora Hills 55+ Center's Trash & Treasure yard sale will be Saturday, May 20 at the Aurora Hills Community Center (735 S. 18th St.) from 9:30 am to 1:30 pm. All proceeds go to the Aurora Hills 55+ Advisory Committee and directly support programming at the Aurora Hills 55+ Center. The event is sponsored by the Aurora Hills 55+ Advisory Committee and the Alliance for Arlington Senior Programs.

You can drop off items at the Aurora Hills Community Center on Wednesday May 17 or Friday May 19 between 10 am and 2 pm. Accepted items include household goods, decorative items, small appliances, games/toys, jewelry, luggage, craft and garden supplies. Items not accepted: books, clothes, home electronics (TV's, computers, DVD's, CD's, etc.). All items not sold will be donated to charity.

Time to clean out your houses and garages and help support our local 55+ community. Call the Center with any questions at 703-228-5722.

AHCA Membership Dues for Calendar Year 2023

\$20 per household. Pay dues either by mailing a check to AHCA, P.O. Box 25201, Arlington, VA 22202, or go to www.aurorahighlands.org and click the "Donate" button to pay by PayPal.

** Paying by check saves the AHCA the PayPal transaction fee.

Next Meeting:

Wednesday, May 10

7 pm-9 pm, [Virtual via Zoom \(Register Here\)](#)

<https://bit.ly/May2023AHCA>

AGENDA

7:00 pm - Call to order and approve [April minutes](#)

7:10 pm - Presentation: Ranked Choice Voting by Tania Griffin, Outreach Coordinator for the Arlington Elections Office

8:00 pm - Presentation: Four Mile Run Conservatory Foundation by Kurt Moser

8:30 pm - County requests for Comment

8:40 pm - Committee Reports - Jill Braun on Crystal & Pentagon Cities Council meeting

8:50 pm - Other Business / New Business

9:00 pm - Adjourn

Newsletters & Social Media

We hear from neighbors that they really enjoy having a print newsletter. We'll do our best to continue it, that will depend on continued support from advertisers and volunteers to distribute it. Sign up for newsletters by email at aurorahighlands.org/join-ahca and follow us at @AuroraHighlands on Twitter, Facebook, or Insta to stay connected no matter what.

The 4D-A group list-serve is an alternative to Nextdoor for hyper-local information and to post queries to your neighbors: To subscribe, go to the group website, read the rules and scroll down to the membership button. Here is the website:

<https://groups.io/g/4D-A22202>

All Underlined Items are Links to Websites and Other Content - Go to our Website for Live Links! AuroraHighlands.org

We use many links in the AHCA Newsletter to easily lead you to websites where you can get more information and stay up to date on the issues that interest you. Any underlined text is a hyperlink to a site. To save space in the print version, we haven't printed the long URLs, but it lets you know that you can go to the AHCA website for a clickable version of the [AHCA Newsletter](#). See what I just did there? ;)

Read Up & Reach Out!



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info@aurorahighlands.org



[\(703\) 594-1344](tel:(703)594-1344)



[P.O. Box 25201 Arlington, VA 22202](#)

Neighborhood News

Reducing Helicopter Noise in 22202!

On April 25, our U.S. Representative Don Beyer (D-VA) announced, with federal and local officials, new measures – raising altitudes and altering flight paths - to mitigate the impact of disruptive helicopter noise in Northern Virginia and across the National Capital Region, especially in residential areas. Their announcement followed FAA analysis of data from a pilot program to track helicopter noise complaints by residents using a system developed on recommendations made in a 2021 Government Accountability Office (GAO) report which Beyer requested. The Washington, DC Metro Area Helicopter Noise Complaint System is still active, so please send in your concerns about inappropriate helicopter noise.

55+ Activities - Upcoming Summer Registration for 55+ programs, events and classes: Wednesday, May 24 at 10 am!

The Spring Activity Guide is here. View activities and register! There are great programs for fitness, art, music, dance, trips, hikes, parties and more! I just picked up my 55+ Pass at Lubber Run Community Center. I was having trouble setting up my account online, and the folks at the Community Center solved my problem in just a minute or two. My membership card was printed right there on site. I'm thinking of signing up for bird watching hikes, acoustic hour in the park, and maybe an exercise class.

Upcoming activities for seniors at Aurora Hills Center include Mother's Day Music and Tea on May 10, Documentary Discussions "Cobra Gypsies" on May 15, "Who Gets Grandma's Yellow Pie Plate?" Inheritance Discussion on May 17, Acoustic Hour in the Park on May 19, Movies at Aurora Hills "Ticket to Paradise" on May 26. See the full list of 55+ events here. 55+ Pass holders only. Don't have a 55+ Pass? Learn how to get a pass here.

CCCRC Is Now the CPCC – First meeting Held on April 13

The former Crystal City Citizens Review Council (CCCRC) is now the reconfigured Crystal & Pentagon Cities Council (CPCC). The original purpose of the CCCRC was to help guide the implementation of the Crystal City Sector Plan. With the approval of the Pentagon City Sector Plan, the County needed a County-sponsored committee to oversee its implementation. County Board Member Garvey approached the CCCRC Chair for ideas, the CCCRC members discussed and voted to suggest reconfiguring the CCCRC to address the Pentagon City Sector Plan as well. Changes included modifications to the charge and changing the types of members on the Council to reflect Pentagon City needs. The County Board approved the new charge, new membership structure and new members, and new name for the Council – the CPCC. The first meeting of the reconfigured meeting was held in person on April 13 in the Aurora Hills Community Center. Members of the public are welcome to attend in person or virtually. Meeting materials – posted on the Council website – offer key background information on our community's development. During the first CPCC meeting, County staff demonstrated the new County data dashboard. The new data dashboard breaks down population and demographic estimates for Arlington's civic associations. The dashboard is in beta form, and the County is asking the community to test the dashboard and provide feedback.

County News

Engage Arlington: Visit this site frequently for new opportunities to give the County feedback!

Democratic Primary Election in Arlington – June 20: Information and Correction to April Story

The upcoming June 20th election is a **Democratic Primary only**, but all Arlington registered voters are welcome to participate in voting. Voters in Virginia do not register by political party.

Redistricting: Virginia redistricting is in effect now, and any Democratic candidates running in the Democratic primary for Virginia House/Senate seats will be running for a seat in the new districts. Redistricting does impact Aurora Highlands voters who will be in the 39th Senate District and 2nd House District. See the redistricting maps here: Senate and House.

Who's On the Ballot? See this sample ballot used by Aurora Highlands voters. All Virginia House and Senate Positions will be on the ballot in November, but if only one Democrat will be running for a position, that position and candidate will not be on the Democratic Primary ballot. The Arlington Democrats have a useful page on all candidates for Arlington, with links to brief biographical information and their webpages and social media. Watch for events featuring the candidates as well.

* Note that your friends in Arlington Ridge have a different ballot!

County School Board candidates are NOT on the Democratic ballot. Help select the 2023 School Board Democratic nominee by in person voting on May 7, May 10, or May 13. See more information here.

Ranked Order Voting: The County is implementing ranked order voting for the selection of two Democratic candidates for the two County Board positions for the November Election. Voters will rank up to three of the six candidates running for the County Board. See this County information on ranked order voting; instructions are also on the ballot and join our May meeting discussion.

How do I vote?

Register to vote if not registered. If you are registered, check your registration before you vote and update as needed Last day to register to vote or update existing registration for the June primary is May 30.

Bring an Acceptable ID: See a list here. Note that an out-of-state driver's license is not valid for voting ID in Virginia.

Early in person voting: Vote early from Friday, May 5, through Saturday, June 17. Early voting locations and dates are here.

Vote by mail: By 5PM Tuesday, June 9, request online through Virginia election site or call Arlington Elections Office. Return completed ballot and envelopes by mail; or drop off in Drop Box outside the Aurora Hills Community Center, early voting site, or at Election Office; or at any Arlington precinct on Election Day. Ballots must be dropped off by 7pm Election Night or received in the mail by noon the Friday after the election. Note that regular mail can take up to 10 days within Arlington. You can also track your ballot here.

In person voting on Election Day, Tuesday, June 20, 6AM-7PM in your precinct: Note your precinct location before you go to vote – we have 8 precincts in 22202! If you need special accommodations, please check with the precinct Election Officers. Curbside voting, a magnifying glass, the ballot marker machine, and other voter assistance is available! Same day voter registration is also available in your precinct, albeit by Provisional Ballot.

Missing Middle Housing – Approved and County Sued

On March 22, the County Board approved Expanding Housing Options (EHO), the "missing middle housing" that was discussed for more than two years. The approval summary outlines the types, quantity, and locations for EHO housing and how the program will be monitored. On April 21, a group of neighbors primarily from North Arlington sued the County for approving EHO (see ARLNow story). AFUT (Arlingtonians for Upzoning Transparency), not a participant in the Neighbors for Neighborhoods lawsuit, published commentary and the text of the Neighbors for Neighborhoods news release. The lawsuit outcome could be influenced by the recent Virginia Supreme Court decision that overturned a Fairfax County zoning overhaul because of procedural violations (see ARLNow story). Both County staff and pro- and anti-EHO groups are monitoring the situation carefully – and the implications could impact more than just housing decisions made by the County during Covid-restricted meeting protocols.

County News (Continued)

Adopted FY 2024 Budget Addresses Community Needs Across Arlington

This [April 22 County News Release](#) title says it all. In a continuing challenging economic environment, the County has prepared and passed a budget that supports a wide-ranging set of community needs, as well as new support for behavioral health, affordable housing, schools, and workforce incentives. Learn more about the [FY 2024 Budget on the County website](#), including staff reports and the County Manager's Proposed Budget presentation.

Neighborhood Complete Streets Community Meeting – Virtual on May 8, 7 p.m.

Join the Neighborhood Complete Streets Project team to learn more about the concept plans for the 2023 projects: 8th Road S. between S. Dinwiddie and S. Frederick Street; 14th Street between N. Ohio Street and N. McKinley Road; and S. Irving Road from 2nd Street to 6th Street S. Learn more about the Virtual Open House [here](#).

My Arlington App

The My Arlington app helps you stay informed about Arlington County events, news, Metro alerts, building permits, and is a convenient platform for requesting a variety of County services.

Staying ahead of your commute is easy with Transit Alerts from [Metrobus](#), [ART](#) and [VRE](#), and a Waze-powered Traffic Map and alerts from [VDOT](#). Transit Arrivals show nearby bus stops and [Metrorail](#) schedules. The app also includes a map of [Capital Bikeshare](#) stations.

In time for elections, you can use the app to access information on [Arlington voting](#), find your polling location and even view a map of Voter Precincts (polls are open 6 am - 7 pm).

Use the app to view Real Estate Sales, get information on Planning & Building permits. Stay in-the-know with the latest news from both the County and Arlington Public Schools in one feed, and access a searchable Staff Directory.

The My Arlington app is available for free download in both the [App Store](#) and [Google Play](#).

Draft Historic and Cultural Resources Plan – Open House on May 6

The Historic Preservation Program is seeking feedback on the [draft Historic and Cultural Resources Plan](#) (formerly known as the Historic Preservation Master Plan). Join the [Open House](#) on Saturday, May 6 from 12-3 pm at Central Library to learn more, or share your feedback on the draft plan [here](#), now through June 20. Visit the [project page](#) to learn more.

National Landing BID Is Updating Their 2019 Strategic Plan – and Needs Your Input!

In May 2019, the Crystal City BID (now known as the National Landing BID) released a [Strategic Plan](#) to guide an expanded organization serving all of Crystal City, Pentagon City and Potomac Yard-Arlington. This plan is intended to be a living document for the newly expanded National Landing BID to measure progress and ensure continued engagement with the community and area stakeholders. As the BID continues to grow and thrive, it's time to not just update the Strategic Plan, but to think about how to recreate it to meet future needs. BID consultants have carried out workshops with community representatives and BID Board members and now seek input from the overall community. Please complete this [short survey](#) by Friday, May 5. Of course, you're welcome to send additional comments directly to the BID. The BID hopes to have a draft report ready for the June BID Annual Meeting.

Transportation

Performance Parking Pilot – Includes National Landing

This pilot parking project includes about 4,500 metered parking spaces. The spaces are in two County Planning corridors: Rosslyn-Ballston and **Richmond Highway**. Most of the spaces included in the pilot will be on-street parking. An [online public engagement](#) was held on February 23; an [online survey](#) will be open through this summer. On April 3, County staff began installing the equipment – sensors and recording transmitters – needed for the project.

VDOT Route 1 Multimodal Improvements Study Phase 2 PIM 4 meeting Monday, May 15, 6:30 PM

The final public meeting of Phase 2 of the VDOT Route 1 project will be held virtually on Monday, May 15, at 6:30 PM. VDOT staff and consultants will provide an update, then the public may give comments and ask questions. VDOT will discuss the draft of their final recommendations for Phase 2. We hope to hear VDOT's transportation demand management plan, plans to keep Route 1 traffic from diverting to our local streets, revised proposals for an at-grade Route 1 at 18th, revised proposed details on the Route 1 streetscape, improvements to the intersection with 23rd Street, a new intersection for 10th Street, and many other topics. Plans for management of traffic diversion and safety for bike-peds have not been resolved to our community's satisfaction to date. Please plan to attend! Read prior materials on the main [VDOT project page](#) and also review information on the [Livability 22202 Route 1 Working Group page](#). Pre-register for meeting using this [online form](#). The meeting recording and slides will be posted on the meeting page after the meeting. Please study carefully and send in your comments. Note comments are due by Thursday, June 9.

WMATA's Better Bus Network Redesign

The Washington Metropolitan Area Transit Authority (WMATA) is kicking off a series of in-person engagements to collect feedback to inform its [Better Bus Network Redesign project](#). This project includes new facilities, better bus communication, and signal and lane improvements. WMATA's Better Bus Experience LIVE series will include in-person workshops and pop-up events, as well as virtual lunch and learns and opportunities for feedback. Visit WMATA's [Better Bus Network page](#) to learn more about the redesign, give your input online, and stay informed on in-person events.

METRO – Some Good News Coming!

[Yellow line reconstruction](#) is almost complete. The Yellow Line is expected to reopen fully on May 7, which will make taking Metro to the Mall much easier. WMATA expects the new [Potomac Yard Metro station](#) to open on May 19. This new station is convenient to the Potomac Yard Alexandria shops, future Virginia Tech center, and for residents living closer to 4 Mile Run than the Crystal City and Pentagon City Metro stops. By the way, the large Amazon Fresh in Potomac Yards Alexandria is "paused." The [Crystal City Metro Second Entrance](#) is a complex project in a tight space, being coordinated by WMATA, the County, JBGS, and others. According to the County [project website](#), "A team led by JBG Smith is working to complete the 30% design for the East Entrance project and plans to submit a Guaranteed Maximum Price (GMP) proposal for Final Design and Construction in April 2023. County staff will evaluate the proposal and will provide a recommendation for a County Board action. Final Design is anticipated to begin in Summer 2023 and Construction to start in late Fall 2023."

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Free ART Bus Rides for APS Students:

Middle and high school students from Arlington Public Schools ride free anytime on Arlington Transit (ART), the County's bus transit system, with an iRide SmarTrip card, <https://bit.ly/3B3q84L>

Walk & Drive at the same time! Volunteer as an Oakridge ES Walking School Bus "Driver"!

Yes, you too can "drive" - lead a Walking School Bus by walking with a small group of kids to Oakridge Elementary one morning a week as part of this popular one-year-old pilot program. (For background: <https://www.walkarlington.com/get-on-board-the-walking-school-bus/>)

You'll get your steps in, the kids will learn to safely get from here to there w/out relying on Mom, Dad or the family car—plus Oakridge will have fewer cars clogging the neighborhood! The cost? About one hour of your time one day a week. (Your vacation schedules and other commitments will be accommodated.) We've got the (adorable) student "passengers" but we need more neighbors to be "drivers"! Please give me a call/text at 703-725-1387 for further information or go to <https://friendsofthealliance.org/walking-school-bus/> and click on the volunteer link.

Thank you,
Andrea Walker, Your neighbor on Ridge Rd

2023 AHCA officers

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Recording Secretary Nick Giacobbe
Corresponding Secretary Natasha Atkins

Nature in the Neighborhood

Safe and Healthy Mosquito Prevention

Mosquitos have already started flying this spring. You can reduce their population and make your outdoor time more healthy and enjoyable by using biology-based techniques. The use of pesticide sprays can be dangerous for people and pets, and entomologist Doug Tallamy says they kill all insects, not just mosquitos. Using knowledge of the mosquito life-cycle, Tallamy recommends preventing mosquitos from hatching in the first place. Females bite a mammal and then lay their eggs in nearby standing water. The amount of water can be as small as water trapped in an upturned bottle cap. In warm weather, the eggs will hatch into larvae and then become flying adults within a week. Start by removing all items in your yard or patio that can hold water (toys, gutters, lids, etc.). Do a water check every weekend. For birdbaths, rinse and refill them every weekend. For advanced enthusiasts like me, you can easily create mosquito traps by filling 5-gallon buckets half way with water and organic material like grass, leaves or hay. Add a quarter of a Mosquito Dunk every month. The female mosquito finds this an irresistible place to lay her eggs. The Mosquito Dunks prevent the larvae from developing into adults. The bacterium in the dunks only affects mosquito larvae and is safe for all other living things.

There's a great description of how to create your mosquito bucket of doom at [this link](#).

Fox, Coyotes, Eagles, Oh My!

Our community is home to several foxes and an occasional coyote. Several species of large hawks, eagles, and osprey frequent our area as well. Please keep your pets – and our local wildlife – safe! Report any unusual animal behavior to the Arlington Animal Shelter, which handles Wildlife & Animal Control for Arlington.

Crape Myrtle Bark Scale – Are Our Beautiful Trees at Risk?

Read about this hard-to-treat, easy-to-spread disease at this Clemson University site. Urban Forestry in DC also has a useful website on this disease. The Virginia Cooperative Extension has issued [this report](#) – and recommends ladybugs!

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