



# AURORA HIGHLANDS CIVIC ASSOCIATION

## NOVEMBER NEWSLETTER

### THANK YOU, COMMUNITY!

November is a time to give thanks for so many in the community who make Aurora Highlands a great place to live. Thank you to:

AFAC food drive organizers and Flare for their food pickups

Poll workers who made it a safe and easy voting experience

Ives Park volunteers for their park-beautification efforts

Everyone who helped transform Virginia Highlands Park with art, daily fun, gardens, and weekly or special events

Newsletter deliverers for keeping neighbors informed

Livability 22202 participants for working to improve our community for decades to come

Pentagon City Dogs for getting us closer to our first dog park

Friends of Aurora Highlands Parks for all their park-related efforts

Arlington Ridge and Crystal City for collaborating with Aurora Highlands to improve all of 22202

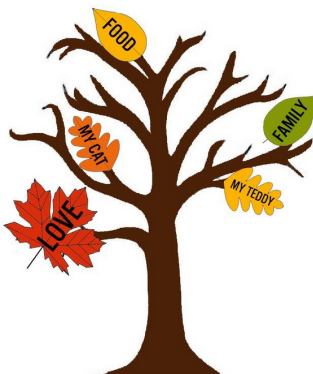
AHCA officers and volunteers, past and present, for helping to inform and guide our community

And to the many kind and generous neighbors who are quietly helping others in this difficult time or helping to make this community a great place to live

If you'd like to get involved, meet great people, and know that you helped to make a difference, join us! Write to us at [info@aurorahighlands.org](mailto:info@aurorahighlands.org)

**Thankful Tree.** What are you thankful for? Help us decorate our neighborhood tree with "thankful leaves"! Create one or more leaves. And on each, write down the people and things you are thankful for. Share your leaves on our social media pages @AuroraHighlands, or email them to [info@aurorahighlands.org](mailto:info@aurorahighlands.org). Very important: save your leaves and stay tuned! You can hang them on our community tree day during Thanksgiving week. Location of our tree coming soon.

#### I'M THANKFUL FOR



### **Next Meeting:** **Wednesday, November 11**

7-9pm, Virtual -- Zoom / Facebook  
<http://aurorahighlands.org/event/nov2020>

#### **Officer Elections**

Meet and vote on the officer candidates for next year.

#### **31st Street Lot Plans**

Arlington Dept. of Environmental Services will present their plans for the lot on 31st Street across from the treatment plan that currently serves as a gravel parking area.

#### **Alternatives to Calling the Police**

SURJ NoVa share some info about their group and their Alternatives to Calling the Police resource for Arlington and why it's important to pursue these alternatives whenever possible.

#### **Open Floor / Discussion**

Raise items or ask questions of interest to the community.

### **Read Up & Reach Out!**



[www.aurorahighlands.org](http://www.aurorahighlands.org)



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[info@aurorahighlands.org](mailto:info@aurorahighlands.org)



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## COMMUNITY NEWS

**Halloween event.** Our creative and ambitious volunteers put together a safe, socially distant Halloween event which drew hundreds of people (and pets) decked in costumes. The event included a park-wide scavenger hunt, a spider web maze, a costume dance party and live music by Gary Chambers. Thank you to National Landing BID for donating candy-filled goodie bags.



### ***Dog Run Survey at Virginia Highlands (still) coming soon***

The Department of Parks and Recreation was supposed to perform an outreach survey in October, but that didn't happen. Their newest date for rolling out the public survey is in the next week. So if you're interested in making sure you can provide your comments, sign up for updates at [www.PentagonCityDogs.org](http://www.PentagonCityDogs.org) and look for the outreach link on our social media Follow @aurorahighlands

**AHCA Officer Elections.** Several new volunteers stepped forward to be civic association officers next year, and we were able to fill all positions. So without further ado, we present the 2021 slate of officer candidates:

|                          |                   |
|--------------------------|-------------------|
| President                | Scott Miles       |
| Vice President           | Natalia Gómez     |
| Vice President           | Stephen D'Alessio |
| Treasurer                | Ben Davis         |
| Business Secretary       | Alistair Watson   |
| Correspondence Secretary | Natasha Atkins    |

With no contested slots, voting should be pretty easy, so you won't have to wait weeks for a final count on this one. 😊

**Elections in Arlington.** Kudos for a big turnout of Arlington voters! According to Arlnow, "More than 75% of active voters had cast ballots by 4:30 p.m. Tuesday, including a record-setting 63% who voted early and by mail by Sunday." <https://www.arlnow.com/2020/11/04/no-surprises-little-drama-in-arlingtons-local-races/> You can view Virginia's election results at <https://www.elections.virginia.gov/resultsreports/election-results/> Thank you to our hard-working and dedicated poll workers.

**Urban Garden Project in Virginia Highlands Park.** During the last two months, neighbors and volunteers worked in the demonstration urban garden located at 1600 S Hayes St., near the park's tennis courts. "Friends of Urban Agriculture is excited for this opportunity to showcase how community-driven agriculture can transform and enhance urban spaces... This project will also demonstrate the power of partnerships across public, private, civic and non-profit communities" David Sachs, Friends of Urban Agriculture Board Member and HUG project manager. More info at <http://home.arlingtonurbanag.org/news/communitygroupslaunchurbangardenprojectinarlingtonsvirginiahighlandspark>





**Ives Park Beautification Continues.** Ives Park is looking better each day, thanks to our Ives Park volunteers. In October they held a gardening day to remove invasive bamboo, weeds and dead trees and added new signage and a native perennial garden along Ives Street. People are already enjoying our new neighborhood pocket park!



**Free Trees, Free Planting: Tree Canopy Fund Applications Open.** Winter is coming but it's not too soon to think about the heat of summer. Tree canopy is diminishing in Aurora Highlands. You can help slow that by adding a free tree to your yard this spring. These are 7' to 8' trees, planted free of charge. A mature tree will give shade, reduce stormwater runoff, provide wildlife food and habitat, and beautify the neighborhood. More info at <https://www.ecoactionarlington.org/community-programs/trees/tree-canopy-fund-application-spring-2021/> Deadline for applying is January 8. Please contact our neighborhood coordinator, Kathy Landis, with any questions or for advice: [landis59@gmail.com](mailto:landis59@gmail.com). She can also put in the application for you.

**Stewarding Nature: Updates to Arlington's natural resource plans.** The public process for updating the Natural Resources Management Plan and Urban Forest Master Plan will begin soon. If you are interested in how Arlington can be a better steward of nature, please get involved. Go to <https://parks.arlingtonva.us/2019/01/updates-natural-resource-plans-coming-soon/> to sign up for updates and to get links to the current plans.

**What To Do with Your Leaves?** The National Wildlife Federation encourages you to leave your leaves where they are. "Leaves form a natural mulch that helps suppress weeds and fertilizes the soil as it breaks down. Removing leaves also eliminates vital wildlife habitat. Critters ranging from turtles and toads to songbirds, mammals and invertebrates rely on leaf litter for food, shelter and nesting material. Many moth and butterfly caterpillars overwinter in fallen leaves before emerging in spring." Read more <https://bit.ly/2I7Qb2X>

**Dominion Substation expansion update.** Dominion needs new capacity in 22202 and will be expanding its substation at 18th and S. Fern. The addition will be on the western side, which is County land, and in return, Dominion will cede its old substation site at 18th and S. Ives to the County, along with improving the public space along Fern street. Community responses to Dominion's public outreach included concerns about narrow sidewalks, amount of paved space, aesthetics, amenities at the site for public use, and the condition of the Ives St. parcel. The revised plans include somewhat wider (6 feet) sidewalks along 18th St. near the corner of Fern and less hardscape. There will be a separate public process for additional art. Visit <https://www.dominionenergy.com/projects-and-facilities/electric-projects/power-line-projects/crystal> to see the latest plans. AHCA is still concerned that 6 feet is too narrow for a sidewalk envisioned to be a major walkway between Crystal City and Pentagon City as the area develops. AHCA is encouraging the County, which owns the roadway and parking lanes, to work with Dominion to provide the space needed to widen the sidewalk. The County is not requiring any environmental remediation as a condition of acquiring the lot, but we believe they should. Regardless of the future use of that site, we would like to have the fence and gravel removed so that safe open space will be accessible until its future is determined. The plan goes before the County Board at its November 14 online meeting. If you want to speak at the meeting, go to <https://bit.ly/36dpstR>

**LRPC Hearings and Committee meetings Nov. 10, 12, 19:** The Long Range Planning Committee (LRPC) of the Planning Commission provides comments and recommendations on tasks and processes related to land use & urban design, long range plans, the Comprehensive Plan, and the General Land Use Plan. Most of the decisions for the next ten years are made in these meetings, and some of them can affect and influence our neighborhood and its surroundings. Neighbors' engagement and ideas are always welcome. Current discussions impact 20th to 23rd street in Crystal City and could affect the future of the Underground. Check the full schedule and details of the meetings in: <https://commissions.arlingtonva.us/planning-commission/lrpc/>

**Construction Updates.** After removal of almost 400,000 cubic yards of earth, the excavation is 95% complete at MetPark. You can see three of the five tower cranes already on site. The remaining two cranes will be erected before the end of November. There is a concrete batch plant on the Pen Place Amazon site between 12th and Army Navy Dr. with increased concrete truck between the two sites. Construction continues between the hours of 7 a.m. and 9 p.m. M-F and 9 a.m. and 9 p.m. Sat, Sun and holidays. Watch for traffic rerouting, flaggers, and bike lane changes in the area. Send questions / concerns to [metpark678@clarkconstruction.com](mailto:metpark678@clarkconstruction.com)

# Mark Your Calendar

## Ice Skating Rink Open

Pentagon Row Ice Rink is now open! Get tickets online at <https://pentagonrow.com/?event=event6>

## Fall Leaf Collection

**Nov 12-14, Dec 2-5**

Vacuum leaf collection for Aurora Highlands. Save yourself the time and effort of bagging! See <https://bit.ly/2oWrey2> for full schedule.

## Zumba Saturdays

Our Zumba classes are a success, and we will continue them throughout this month every Saturday morning (weather permitting) at 10:30 a.m. at the Virginia Highlands Park softball field.

## 55+ Fast Forwards

**Nov 13 & 20, 10-11am**

Looking for a faster walking pace and some hills? Register online at <https://parks.arlingtonva.us/events/aurora-hills-fast-forwards-4/> and meet at the Aurora Hills Community Center.

## ACPD Holiday Toy Drive

**Dec 1, 5-7pm**

Help make the holidays bright for Arlington County children in need by donating to the sixth annual Fill the Cruiser Holiday Toy Drive. Donate new, unwrapped toys to bring holiday cheer to children ages newborn – 17. Our Lady of Lourdes (830 23rd St. S.)

**Pentagon City Planning Study: Public Workshop Nov. 17.** You may have noticed signs around the neighborhood for the Pentagon City Planning Study, “Developing a comprehensive vision and framework for the future of the Pentagon City area.” Pentagon City was “planned” with a Phased Development Site Plan (PDSP) in 1976, which envisioned a cap on density. With the buildout of Amazon’s HQ2 that cap will be achieved, and further growth would require the County Board to allocate additional development potential. Just what that would, or should, look like will depend on this Planning Study and the input from citizens and other stakeholders. The County hosted one virtual workshop in October. The second one will be held on Tuesday, November 17 at 6:30 p.m. Anybody can attend, but you must register in advance. Make sure to sign up for updates and notifications at <https://projects.arlingtonva.us/plans-studies/pentagon-city-planning-study/>

## Local street project public engagement opportunities.

Add your voice: VDOT Boundary Channel Project Virtual public meeting was Nov 5. Find Info and submit public comments due by Nov 16. <https://bit.ly/3eyjCqR>

VDOT Route 1 Multimodal Improvements Feasibility Study Public Comments due November 15: <https://bit.ly/2I2WSTE>

Army-Navy Drive Complete Streets, Public hearing Nov 18, noon-1; Comments by Dec 4. <https://bit.ly/38jG1Hw>

**Ways to Celebrate Thanksgiving.** Unfortunately, many people will not be traveling or celebrating with extended family for Thanksgiving this year. However, there are still many ways to celebrate the day safely.

1. Participate in the virtual 5k Turkey Trot with a loop around parts of Crystal City and Aurora Highlands <https://arlingtonvatrkeytrot.org/virtual/>
2. Enjoy a Thanksgiving picnic at Virginia Highlands Park with your immediate household or organize a socially distant picnic with family and friends.
3. Go for a hike -- parks are open, and it can be a great time of year to see fall foliage. Here are some ideas <https://bit.ly/3l63O18>
4. Enjoy a day in the countryside. Virginia has many vineyards, parks and produce-picking farms just a short drive away. Make sure to check with them about their COVID19 restrictions and holiday hours.

**Winter AHCA Social.** In years past, AHCA has held a winter social in lieu of a monthly meeting. As with so many other 2020 activities, we may have to do things differently. Our AHCA event volunteers are working on ways that the community may still be able to enjoy this winter in a safe and socially distant manner. Stay tuned and follow our social media @aurorahighlands, Nextdoor, and check our event calendar for updates <https://aurorahighlands.org/events/>

Advertise here and reach over 1,000 of your neighbors!

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to [newsletter@aurorahighlands.org](mailto:newsletter@aurorahighlands.org)



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