



# Over the Fence

## News for Neighbors from the Arlington Heights Civic Association Fall 2009 Edition

Visit our website: [www.ahca.info](http://www.ahca.info)  
Join our yahoo group: [ahca-subscribe@yahoogroups.com](mailto:ahca-subscribe@yahoogroups.com)

### PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

By Juliet Hiznay

As the trees start to turn I look forward to building on our neighborhood successes with a renewed focus on communication. One of our goals as an organization is to improve outreach in our community and strengthen connections between neighbors. That is why I am delighted to announce the installation of our new kiosk (information stand) at Thomas Jefferson Park. The kiosk will be used to announce community events and other neighborhood business.

Speaking of community events, I hope you will join us for the **Neighborhood Halloween Parade and Food Drive**, to be held on **Saturday, October 31 from 2 – 4 p.m. at Patrick Henry Elementary**. Thank you, Sara Snow for coordinating this event! Sara could use some volunteers for this event, so please contact her at 703-979-3487 or [sara@mail2Beach.com](mailto:sara@mail2Beach.com) to volunteer. Further details will be announced on the yahoo group and at the kiosk.

New volunteers are always wonderful, but tried and true are great too! I thank Betty Siegel, our intrepid past Neighborhood Conservation representative (and so much more), who has accepted an appointment as the Arlington Heights representative to the Columbia Pike Form Based Code Advisory Working Group. This group works on Form Based Code (FBC) issues and provides feedback on development projects submitted to the County as FBC projects. We want to thank Chris Eremia for her help coordinating the lemonade stands as well as her generous donation of all the supplies for the Arlington County Fair. Thanks also to all her volunteers for their dedication and community spirit. Together they raised \$382!

The civic association continues to monitor development along the Pike, which continues to move forward, and other projects. The dust field replacement and Jefferson Middle School renovation are slated to begin this November, with work continuing throughout 2010. Logistics relating to the improvement projects at TJ will be one of the subjects at our upcoming meeting. Please join us!

### **AGENDA – AHCA FALL MEETING OCTOBER 20, 7-9 p.m.** Patrick Henry Elementary Library, 701 South Highland Street

Among the agenda items are:

#### *Information Items:*

- Jefferson Middle School Renovation
- Replacement of Dust Field

#### *Action Items:*

- Elect nominating committee for election of 2010 officers
- Set dues for 2010

#### *New Business:*

- Discussion on future priorities for Neighborhood Conservation projects.

We will also welcome as part of our *Meet the Neighbors Series* Gerald Caputo, Principal at the Arlington Career Center.

**PLEASE SUPPORT YOUR CIVIC ASSOCIATION – JOIN FOR 2009**

**SEND TO: AHCA, c/o Lisa Bongardt, Treasurer, 319 South Irving Street, Arlington, VA 22204**

**Full Name(s):** \_\_\_\_\_

**Address:** \_\_\_\_\_, Arlington, VA 22204

**Phone:** \_\_\_\_\_ **E-mail:** \_\_\_\_\_

- Enclosed is \$20.00 for a 2009 Family Membership     Enclosed is \$25.00 for a 2009 Business Membership  
 Enclosed is an added donation of \$ \_\_\_\_\_

**I would like to help the civic association by (check all that apply):**

- Serving as an officer     Helping with community social events     Volunteering for park beautification  
 Distributing the quarterly newsletter     Contributing articles of interest



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**2009 Civic Association Officers**

**President:** Juliet Hiznay, 703-685-2596, [strangefruitblues@yahoo.com](mailto:strangefruitblues@yahoo.com)

**First Vice-President:** Stacey Whyte, 703-271-2681, [kandswhyte@gmail.com](mailto:kandswhyte@gmail.com)

**Second Vice-President:** Joy Helring, 703-979-1987, [ghelring1@verizon.net](mailto:ghelring1@verizon.net)

**Secretary:** Mike Sobola, [sobolas@verizon.net](mailto:sobolas@verizon.net)

**Treasurer and Ad Manager:** Lisa Bongardt, 703-851-1561, [lisabergenty@hotmail.com](mailto:lisabergenty@hotmail.com)

**Neighborhood Conservation Representatives:**

Juliet Hiznay, 703-685-256, [strangefruitblues@yahoo.com](mailto:strangefruitblues@yahoo.com)

Tony Halloin, 202-486-0617, [ahalloin@yahoo.com](mailto:ahalloin@yahoo.com)

Lisa Hopkins, 703-979-5967, [torylisa@yahoo.com](mailto:torylisa@yahoo.com)

**Civic Federation Delegates:**

Juliet Hiznay, 703-685-2596, [strangefruitblues@yahoo.com](mailto:strangefruitblues@yahoo.com)

Carole Lieber, 703 892 0362, [carolelieber@hotmail.com](mailto:carolelieber@hotmail.com)

Doug Snow, 703 979 3487, [dbsnow@gmail.com](mailto:dbsnow@gmail.com)

Keith Whyte, 703 271 2681, [kandswhyte@gmail.com](mailto:kandswhyte@gmail.com)

**Alternates:**

Richard Bolczak

Robert Dannemiller

2 vacant positions

**Social Committee Chair:** Jennifer Enriquez, [jennifer.holt.enriquez@gmail.com](mailto:jennifer.holt.enriquez@gmail.com)

**Garden and Tour Hosts:** Rebecca and John Mashaw, 703-892-0162, [rmashaw@comcast.net](mailto:rmashaw@comcast.net)

**Newsletter Editor:** Megan Booth, 703-553-9712, [jimegan@verizon.net](mailto:jimegan@verizon.net)

**Newsletter Distributor:** Adrienne Wood, 703-685-4303, [adrienne.wood@gmail.com](mailto:adrienne.wood@gmail.com)

**Webmaster:** Richard Bullington-McGuire, 703-979-4380, [rbulling@obscure.org](mailto:rbulling@obscure.org)

**Yahoo Group Moderator:** Jay Jacob Wind, 703-920-5193, [jay.wind@att.net](mailto:jay.wind@att.net)

## Real Estate Market Trends

The Northern Virginia Association of Realtors® reports on August 2009 home sales activity for Fairfax and Arlington counties, Alexandria, Fairfax & Falls Church Cities, & towns of Vienna, Herndon and Clifton.

A total of 1,813 homes sold in August 2009, a .06% increase above August 2008 home sales of 1,812.

Active listings decreased by 23.66% from last year, with 7,016 active listings in 8/09, compared with 9,190 active homes available in August 2008.

The average days on market (DOM) for homes in August 2009 decreased by 27.59% to 63 days, compared with 87 days in August 2008.

Sales prices remain lower than those realized last year. The average sales price in August 2009 fell by 3.17% from August 2008, to \$458,172, compared with last August's average of \$473,183 in 2008.

The number of pending home sales in Northern Virginia in August 2009 shows an increase of 9.7 % at 2,070 compared to 1,887 in August 2008.

Consumer confidence has been strong for home purchases in our local market. Most of the activity involves first time buyers targeting affordable and bargain-priced properties in the lower price ranges.

### ***Buyers: It's a great time to buy!***

FHA loans up to \$729,750 with only 3.5% down are available to all qualified buyers, not just first time buyers!

**Time is running out for the \$8000 Tax credit** for first-time homebuyers buying as their primary residence, expiring on 12/1/09. For home buyers who need assistance with downpayment and closing costs, some state housing finance agencies offer a short-term loan based on the home buyer's qualification for the federal tax credit, so the \$8,000 credit can be monetized at settlement. For details visit [www.federalhousingtaxcredit.com](http://www.federalhousingtaxcredit.com).

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## A MESSAGE FROM JEFFERSON MIDDLE SCHOOL

*By Nancy Van Doren, PTA President, Jefferson Middle School*

The Jefferson PTA is extremely pleased that the renovation of Jefferson Middle school is going forward, beginning this November, and that the effort to replace the "kitty litter" field will be underway at the same time (pending County Board final approval – expected completion of field – spring 2010!) The school renovation will take 18 months and will bring much needed light into the building. We are happy to be able to spend this year focused on supporting our students, school, and families, rather than endlessly lobbying for these improvements. But, our efforts— Arlington Heights, Jefferson PTA, Ashton Heights and Lyon Park -- paid off, and now we can get ready for our improvements and focus on supporting our kids! Many, many thanks to all our committed Arlington Heights Neighbors. We couldn't have done it without you.

The Jefferson PTA also has a new and improved web page that we would like for you to visit. You can learn about our upcoming events, peruse the plans for the Jefferson renovation, and keep up on other activities. The website can be accessed by going to <http://www.apsva.us/Jefferson> and clicking on the Parents tab at the top. You can also watch a nice slide show of kids enjoying their school activities on Jefferson's home page.

In closing we would like to thank all of the Arlington Heights residents who attended our fundraising event at The Silver Diner on October 7. The evening was a great success and our PTA received a percentage of the profits. Thank you all so very much for your constant support.

## **NEIGHBORHOOD CONSERVATION UPDATE**

*By Juliet Hiznay, Neighborhood Conservation Representative*

The Neighborhood Conservation program is a program funded by Arlington County. It is currently the only way to get street infrastructure improvements in residential areas. Projects are selected by neighborhoods, and can be anything from park beautification, to playgrounds, to traffic calming.

### **Missing Links Projects**

Our last eligible missing link project in the neighborhood was completed recently on South Garfield Street just south of Second Street. Please join us in thanking Tony Halloin for all his efforts on missing links in the neighborhood!

### **Funded Arlington Heights Projects**

*Garfield Street* (0-100 block) – This streetscape project is virtually complete, with only streetlight and street trees to be installed. Congratulations to our Block Captains Philip Hipley and David Henry for their diligent representation!

*Fenwick Street* (0-100 block) – Just funded last winter, this project has been fully designed, and construction begun with a water line upgrade. Work on sidewalk, curb, gutter, street resurfacing and paving is expected to begin next Spring.

### **Arlington Heights First Priority Proposed Project (not funded)**

*Irving Street/Arlington Boulevard, Phase I* (0-100 blocks) – A new design of this project which preserves both street parking and the mature American elm trees passed petition this summer. This project will be considered for funding in December 2009, and is likely to be funded. The scope includes curb, gutter and streetlights, and improvement of the southwest side of the intersection with Arlington Boulevard (note that the southeast side – access road side -- will not be addressed until Phase II, noted below). Under current policy, the street must be widened, which necessitates removal of the sidewalk on the west (park) side of the street to make way for the utility poles.

### **Other Projects in Queue (not funded)**

*Irving Street/Arlington Boulevard, Phase II* – This project is to improve the access roads between Fillmore and Fenwick and between Hudson and Irving, as well as address the east side of the intersection at Irving and Arlington Blvd, and possibly other portions of Arlington Blvd bordering the highway. Please note that petitioning for this project has not yet been undertaken since the county has yet to determine what criteria an NC project along the highway should meet.

*Consolidated Streetlight Project (South Ivy from 7<sup>th</sup> to 9<sup>th</sup>, and South Highland from 7<sup>th</sup> to Columbia Pike, 9<sup>th</sup> Street Glebe to Walter Reed)* – Petitioning for this project is underway. Although the project had been petitioned previously, the petition is outdated, and it must be re-petitioned as a consolidated project. Consolidating the projects will allow the neighborhood to get more streetlights funded sooner.

*Fifth Street Streetlight Project* – Please contact Juliet Hiznay at [strangefruitblues@yahoo.com](mailto:strangefruitblues@yahoo.com) or 703-685-2596 if you are the block captain for this project, were involved in the petitioning, or live on the street. The project is currently last in queue, and is a very small project (installation of just 2-3 streetlights). At our Fall meeting, the community will begin a discussion on whether it would make sense to consider first a new project that would have a greater impact but is not likely to be otherwise funded in the current economic climate (e.g. possibly a project to replace the playground at the Thomas Jefferson Community Center).

## Wakefield High School Plans

By Cathy O'Malley

Plans for the re-building of Wakefield High School continue to move forward. Last June the School Board approved the Schematic Design (what the building and grounds will look like). Since then, the architects, Bowie, Gridley Architects, along with the APS Design & Construction team have worked diligently on the building's Design Development phase - finalizing what the interior of the school will look like. It is expected that this design will be brought before the School Board for final approval next spring.

The new Wakefield not only will meet all school and educational specifications, but is also expected to meet the Gold LEED (Leader in Environmental & Energy Design) designation. Currently the School Board has requested the design team to determine the ability, the costs and the payback of installing a geothermal heating and cooling system.

For more information and visuals on the current design phase please go to the Arlington Schools website at: [www.boarddocs.com/vsba/arlington/Board.nsf](http://www.boarddocs.com/vsba/arlington/Board.nsf); Click on *Enter public site*, then on *9/24/09 School Board Meeting*; then click on *Monitoring*, and then on *Report on Wakefield....*. The pdf file is on that page.

Although many in the community would like to see it happen sooner, the expected construction start date is 2013-2014 and should take two to three years till completion.



## VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITIES

- Our new kiosk display needs to be designed! If you are artistically inclined, and would like to help, this is your chance.
- Help is needed now to tend the flowerbeds at Thomas Jefferson Park, and to keep the park neat. Some of our stalwart volunteers are starting to see their energies flag, and they need more help

There are also two openings for Alternates to serve on the Civic Federation representing Arlington Heights. This organization addresses the interests of civic associations and other civic groups in Arlington County. This is a great way to get involved in the county. If you are interested in helping with any of the jobs listed here please contact Juliet at [strangefruitblues@yahoo.com](mailto:strangefruitblues@yahoo.com).

## NEIGHBORHOOD NOTES

By Juliet Hiznay

\*Jim Whittaker is stepping down as Columbia Pike Revitalization Organization Executive Director after 3-year tenure. Congratulations to Mr. Whittaker for a tenure marked with great success. Also thanks to Pamela Holcomb for her fine work as Managing Director. Ms. Holcomb will be Acting Executive Director pending selection of a new Executive Director.

\*Columbia Pike got a facelift this summer with new sidewalks and streetlights from South Garfield to South Monroe Streets.

*(continued from previous page)*

\*Congregation Etz Hayim has begun construction to improve its facility.

\*New single-family homes are planned for the vacant lot on South Seventh at Glebe. This will be the first increase in housing stock to Arlington Heights since townhouse development was completed on Fifth Street South. Say goodbye to empty lot weeds!

\*Ethiopian Community Development Council received County Board approval to build Auximite Village, bringing new multi-family units to the Douglas Park neighborhood on South Highland Street, next to the Dunkin Donuts.

\*Sherwin Williams has opened a new store at the former Video Warehouse location on Glebe Road at Fifth Street South.

\*The schematic design for a new Wakefield High School is complete, with School Board tweaking, and pending review by the Building Level Planning Committee, the Planning Commission, and finally the County Board. Congratulations to our long time resident Cathy O'Malley for her work on this project!

\*The School Board has hired a consultant to study secondary school capacity issues, and might be looking at the Career Center as a possible site that could accommodate greater capacity. The Executive Committee will monitor this issue and report on any developments.

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