



March 2009

Barcroft News

Vol 106, Issue 7

President's Report

by Heidi Wicker

As spring is just around the corner and creatures start to emerge from winter hibernation in Barcroft, it seems an appropriate time to discuss a not-very-fun but necessary topic at our next BSCL meeting on **Thursday, March 5, at 7:30pm**—namely, **rodent and varmint control**. We have invited County health and code inspectors to join us for this meeting. If you are seeing an undue amount of rodents or other varmints in your corner of the neighborhood, please give me an email at heidi@bscl.org prior to the meeting so I can follow up with County staff. We will discuss issues with particular segments of the neighborhood which the County has been pursuing and also what we can do to prevent future issues.

At our last meeting, we were joined by County staff to discuss forming a design group comprised of neighbors interested in helping review **designs for the park area at the WO&D Trail and Columbia Pike**. The group had a meeting scheduled for the last week in February to review the County landscape designer's initial plans. We hope to have a final plan that we can bring before the BSCL for approval at our May meeting. This project will be funded by the County as our first Neighborhood Conservation project from our new neighborhood conservation plan.

Neighbor **Chris Ditta** also joined us to discuss the

Barcroft Elementary School PTA's initiative to build a **running track** behind the school, around the playing field. The PTA is currently fundraising for this initiative. Neighbors brought up a number of questions/concerns for the PTA/School to consider in designing the project, such as whether the track would create more water runoff onto neighboring properties, concerns regarding noise from increased use of the area in non-school hours, whether sustainable materials would be used in building the track, general maintenance and safety concerns, and how to keep folks off the track after dark for everyone's safety. Mr. Ditta indicated that it is not the intent of the project to change the scope of use of the area—for example, no lights will be added and, like the playground in general, the track will not be permitted to be used after dark.

The BSCL is forming an ad hoc committee to facilitate closer communication with the School and PTA on this and future projects which may affect the community at large. The committee will meet on an as-needed basis. We hope to schedule our first joint meeting with School/PTA representatives in mid-March. If you are interested in joining this committee, please email me at heidi@bscl.org.



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Deadlines: 15th day of the month preceding the issue month.

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Neighbor to Neighbor Ads

Teenage Babysitter - Week nights and weekends:
 Sarah @ 703-521-8756.

Babysitter: Red Cross certified ninth grader available for neighborhood babysitting. Call Abby at 703-892-1090.

Rebekah's Pet Care (walking, feeding, sitting)
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Yard Work: Teenager available for raking leaves and other yard work. Call Thomas at 703-979-5838

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WANTED: Stories and ideas for the Barcroft News
 Contact Kathy Kerr 703-892-6458 or email kathykerr@gmail.com.

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DON'T GET TOWED!

Barcrofter Steve Wilson reports from unhappy experience that the owner of the Westmont Shopping Center at S. Glebe and Columbia Pike is practicing predatory towing practices. If you park in the lot and don't first use one of the businesses right there, your car will be towed. Word is that there are at least 2 people monitoring the lot with cameras to use photos as evidence. Steve reports that a certain unnamed Barcrofter parked her car and first went to nearby Hair Cuttery, which isn't directly affiliated with the parking lot. Then she went to Boston Market which is part of the shopping center. Then she realized her car was gone. It cost \$100 to retrieve it.



AROUND THE NEIGHBORHOOD

Fox Startles Dog Walkers

By Carol Harvey

Several Barcroft dog walkers report being charged by a large red fox. Is it rabid? No, it's probably looking for love. Alonzo Abugattas, acting supervisor of Long Branch Nature Center, says that this is mating season. The foxes have raging hormones and are "a little crazy" right now. They are territorial and an approaching dog is: 1) a potential mate or 2) a competitor for mates and/or territory. A fox wants the dog to know that it is the owner of the territory and will show off to scare others away. The fox is probably totally focused on the dog and not the human attached to it.

Alonzo says that there are three foxes they are aware of in our woods. They come to the Nature Center to eat leftover peanut butter put out for flying squirrels each night. One is a classic red fox with a bushy tail. A hurt red fox limps from an injured front foot, and the third is "mangy" with a skimpy tail. Fox are normally shy, but raging hormones can cause them to act abnormally. They are yelping in the woods at night, and should come back to their senses in a few weeks.

The fox will rarely come in physical contact with others. If it charges, make loud noises and wave your arms to scare it off. If it actually tries to bite, call Animal Control. The Nature Center, by law, may not trap or noose wildlife. Fox will attack if they are sick or have kits near by. Our dogs can be more

dangerous to the fox than they are to us. A normally well behaved Barcroft dog that is walked off leash (not recommended and against the law) chased a fox kit. Thankfully the kit escaped to safety under the Nature Center, but it could have been injured by the dog and a confrontation with mom would be likely. That would have been dangerous for all involved.

There are some reports of a coyote in our area. A 6th street neighbor reported seeing one trot down his street 2 years ago, and there are other reports of occasional sighting in recent few months. Alonzo says that coyotes are known to be in North Arlington near the Potomac but they are still unconfirmed in South Arlington. Eastern coyotes are large, about the size of a collie. Unlike their Western relatives, they do not howl at night. They will eat cats and small dogs, and are sneaky about stealing pets from a yard when the owner isn't looking. It's wise to keep cats inside and supervise small dogs.

The Nature Center would appreciate pictures to confirm coyote sightings. Even a cell phone picture would be helpful. You can call Alonzo and his staff at 703-228-6535 or email him at:

aabugattas@arlingtonva.us.



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Barcroft Elementary

Upcoming Family or Fitness-related Barcroft School Events Open to Our Neighbors

Family Fitness Night April 3rd

Join us for a fun-filled Friday night of sports and healthy activities

Diabetes 5k Walk April 18th

Barcroft students raise money for Diabetes awareness, and sponsor a 5k walk through the Barcroft neighborhood

Spring Concert & Silent Auction May 6th

Come enjoy our great performers and bid on fantastic items at our Silent Auction to raise money for our new track

Girls on the Run Pancake Dinner May 14th

The Barcroft GOTR team will host a Pancake Dinner to raise funds for the new track and celebrate their upcoming 5k!

Barcroft Goes Green this Earth Day!

Following on the success of last year's Green Fair, Barcroft teachers and staff are challenging students to find new ways to reduce, reuse and recycle at the school. The Barcroft Green Committee is kicking off a contest called "How Green Can You Be", where the children write or draw a picture explaining ways to help the earth. Winners will be chosen based on how well the idea will help all the teachers, staff, and students at Barcroft learn at least one way to protect the planet right here at home.

The winners will be featured in a slide show presentation at Science Night, and any artwork or posters entered into the contest will be on display at Science Night, which is Earth Day - April 22nd.

If you are interested in being a judge, please contact Cathy Davis, a Barcroft neighbor and chairperson of the Green Committee at catherine_davis78@yahoo.com

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Kenmore Middle School

Kenmore's science department hosted a Science Night in January. Students and families participated in a number of student-led, hands-on activities including experiments and student-created games. Several community organizations including Lubber Run Nature Center and 4-H led activities as well. *Science fair winners were recognized and their projects were on display for all to enjoy.*

Kenmore teacher **Shauna Dyer** was featured in the January issue of the Phillips Collection newsletter. Dyer along with colleague **Jeff Wilson** was selected to participate in the Phillips Collection's mentor teacher program in September.

Wakefield High School

The **Wakefield** Orchestra, under the direction of **Gene Pohl**, has received grants from the Washington Performing Arts Society and the Wolf Trap Foundation. The Performing Arts Society grant will allow Pohl to provide a workshop for students with MarcOlivia, a professional string duo. The Wolf Trap grant will be used to bring in professional guest artists from local symphony orchestras to solo with the orchestra at the spring concert.

On February 11 **Wakefield** became the first public high school visited by new U.S. Secretary of Education Arne Duncan. During his visit he praised the stimulus legislation being considered by Congress, particularly the education funding which would be used for school construction, Pell grants, tuition tax credits, and more. Duncan also visited with Advanced Placement (AP) students and faculty and applauded Wakefield's academic achievements and rigorous curriculum

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Neighbors Really Do Matter

Submitted by Ben Harris

We know that young people who report having caring adults in their lives are less apt to get themselves into trouble with drugs and alcohol. And we know most adults believe it's important to support, guide and encourage young people in their neighborhood.

Even so, other than their own children, relatively few adults are actively engaged in the lives of young people. Here in Arlington, only 40% of teens report experiencing a caring neighborhood. Maybe that's because we, as adults, just don't know how to begin.

Here are a few simple ideas for making a positive difference in a young person's life:

- Start with a smile: it's a great way to connect! Children - especially teens - need to know they are not invisible.
- Get to know the names of the children in your neighborhood – and call them by name.
- Need help with yard work or technology or childcare? Ask a neighborhood teen to help you. That's a great way to build a relationship.
- If you see kids doing something dangerous, don't ignore it. Young people are counting on all adults to help keep them safe.
- If you are a parent, help your children and your neighbors get to know and respect each other.

Caring Adults and Caring Neighborhoods are Prevention!

The **Arlington Partnership for Children, Youth and Families** is working to ensure that all young people have the strengths or "assets" they need to become caring, healthy, successful adults. It is currently leading a community coalition to reduce and prevent teen alcohol and drug use. The Arlington data references the March, 2006 *Assets Profiles of Student Life Survey* administered to a random sample of 2300 APS 6th, 8th, 10th and 12th grade students.

For further information, please contact the Partnership –

arlingtonpartnership@arlingtonva.us

703-228-1667 Website:

www.arlingtonpartnershipforyouth.org/

Barbershop Program at TJ

"LOVE IS (UP) IN THE AIR": Musical story of a young man in an airport terminal anxiously waiting for a flight to visit his girl. Presented in the a cappella barbershop harmony style by the Arlingtones Barbershop Chorus, chapter quartets and featuring "Bachelor Party", an Alexandria Harmonizer quartet.

Saturday, April 4, 2:00 PM (\$12) and 7:30 PM (\$12 and \$15), Thomas Jefferson Theatre. Advance tickets-\$10. Groups 10 or more-\$8.

NEIGHBOR NEWS

**Barcroft's Annual
Easter Egg Hunt !**

Please join us on **Saturday, April, 11th** for egg hunting and fun **at the BSCL Community House, 10:00am**, rain or shine! Coffee will be served and any donated goodies you'd like to bring will be appreciated!

And, If you look carefully, you may spot a surprise visitor hopping around!

For more information contact Wendy at 703-892-6712.



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GET READY FOR ARLINGTON'S ANNUAL NATIVE TREE GIVEAWAY

Get ready to place your order with Barcroft civic association contact Elizabeth Rives for your free native trees from Arlington County this spring!

The two species available this year are the Bur Oak (*Quercus macrocarpa*) and the American Filbert, or Hazelnut (*Corylus americana*). The Bur Oak is a very large deciduous shade tree and the American hazelnut is a smaller multi-stemmed shrub with a rounded top and an open, often wide-spreading base. The trees will be delivered as small "whips" in 5-gallon containers, making them easier to transplant with a greater chance for future growth success. Both specimens are ideal selections for starting your own Backyard Wildlife Habitat.

The Bur Oak is often described as a "behemoth," growing as large as 90 feet, so please be sure you have enough space in your yard for this magnificent, slow-growing, long-lived (200 years) species. That means at least 10 feet from a building, overhead wires, or smaller trees and 20 feet from large trees. If you have the space, the bur oak has a lovely rounded shape, is tolerant of a variety of moisture and soil conditions, prefers full sun, and doesn't have serious pest problems. In addition to its notable strength, it is a splendid tree for urban landscapes because it provides acorns for squirrels, has dense shade, and is resistant to air pollution and heat stress. To view pictures of the Bur Oak and learn more about it, go to either of these web sites:

<http://www.cnr.vt.edu/DENDRO/dendrology/syllabus/factsheet.cfm?ID=72>

<http://www.arboday.org/Trees/TreeGuide/TreeDetail.cfm?ID=17>

The American Filbert, also commonly known as the American Hazelnut, is a multi-stemmed, deciduous shrub that grows 8-10' high and wide – often larger. Because of its size, it is adapts well to naturalizing

and other non-formal areas. The shrub tolerates a wide variety of soil conditions and thrives under full sun or in light shade. And, of course, it bears annual, abundant crops of small, sweet-tasting nuts valued by both humans and wildlife only 2-3 years after planting. To view pictures of the American Filbert and learn more about it, go to:

<http://www.cnr.vt.edu/DENDRO/DENDROLOGY/SYLLABUS/factsheet.cfm?ID=208>

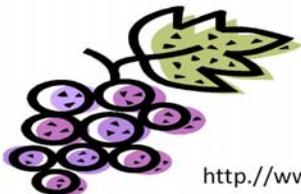
<http://www.arboday.org/trees/treeguide/TreeDetail.cfm?ID=446>

Residents need to place their order for trees by early April – watch for the final deadline in April's newsletter – by contacting Arlington-Alexandria Tree Steward Elizabeth Rives by email at elizabeth_rives@hotmail.com or by phone at 703-486-1323. Please note your name, address, contact information, species and quantity you prefer. Trees may be limited to one or two per person.

Trees will be available for pickup at the Barcroft community house in early May. Arlington-Alexandria Tree Stewards will be on hand to assist with planting instructions, maintenance, and general care tips.

Don't miss out on this great chance to help to replenish our community's declining tree canopy.





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FHA will insure loans in the Metro DC area up to \$625,500. The renovation loan amount is based upon what the property will be worth after it is improved. It is only available to owner occupant buyers to modernize or repair the property after settlement. The loan includes the cost to purchase the property, the cost to fix-up the property, other costs like inspection and consultant fees, finance up to six Months of mortgage payments during the construction period, permits and contingency reserves.

Complete rehabilitation of distressed property is an option; however some of the original foundation must still be remaining on the property for it to be considered.

Here are some simple steps: **1** - Preapproval with a 203K lender. **2** - Locate the property, and consult with the lender to structure the contract with proper contingencies. **3** - Present the contract, and then ratify. **4** - Conduct a home inspection with a 203K Cost Consultant (lender approved), then remove the contingency in the contract. **5** - Go to settlement!

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