



March 2016

Barcroft News

Vol 113, Issue 7

Y to Ride the X

By Mark Wigfield

Winter is when I ride Metrobus/rail the most since rain, snow and ice can make commuting by bike to Southwest DC too uncomfortable or dangerous. My transit “discovery” this year is the 16X bus, which provides a transfer-free trip from Barcroft bus stops on Columbia Pike to Federal Triangle, via the Pentagon, the 14th Street bridge, and the federal employee ghetto of SW DC. The 16Y also provides transfer-free service downtown from Barcroft, terminating at McPherson Square via the Roosevelt Bridge and the lobbyist ghetto of K Street NW.

Riding the X is a change from my grab-whatever-bus-comes-first approach to get to Pentagon or Pentagon City and transfer to the Yellow Line. Why the change? Metro’s GPS-based

Metro/Bus app can accurately predict when the X or Y is coming, so you can snag one of those direct-to-DC busses without much waiting around.

Example: On one snowy day, I walked to the new Four Mile Run Community Center, got on the treadmill on the 5th floor fitness room with the big windows overlooking Columbia Pike, and launched the app to see how well it predicted when the Metro busses would reach the stop below at Columbus Street. The app proved far more accurate than the fixed -- and perhaps fictional --

schedule. Bottom line was the app let me know when to wrap up my workout so I could get to the stop on time for the X -- and not have to wait very long in the cold



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Next BSCL Meeting

Thursday, March 3, 7:30 p.m., Community House
Topic to be Announced



Barcroft News

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Wigfield

Monthly Happenings

President's Report by Chris Kupczyk

It's been a busy month for the Village Center project, as the redevelopment of the Food Star site is known. On February 3, county staff and Orr Partners (the developer) hosted a community forum on the project here in Barcroft, which approximately 60 people attended. It calls for a six-story market-rate apartment building with ground level retail and a public green space located in what is now the Food Star parking lot, which the developer will own and maintain. Work on the project progressed through the Columbia Pike Form Based Code review process during 2015. Orr Partners confirmed that the anchor retail tenant will be a 24-hour, 50,000 square foot Harris Teeter grocery store.

On February 10, the county's Planning Commission voted unanimously to approve the Village Center project, setting the stage for county board approval on February 20. By the time you read this, the board will have voted on the project. Assuming the board approves it, demolition and construction would most likely commence in spring 2017 and last for two years. The county and Orr Partners will convene a follow-up meeting before the work begins to discuss their plans for construction logistics, side-

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A “Beast” of a Party

By Bill Schweigart

On December 4, we hosted a monster book launch party for **The Beast of Barcroft**, right in the heart of our spooky little suburb: the Woman’s Club of Arlington. It was Dark and Stormy night for the grown-ups (the rum kind), with plot twists (licorice), bookworms (Gummy worms), and all sorts of beastly candy and cupcakes for the kids. Thank you to everyone who celebrated with us!

But what’s a book – or a party – with-



out a surprise twist? The party wasn’t a launch for just one book, but two.

In **The Beast of Barcroft**, I revived a bit of forgotten Arlington lore to menace my characters, Ben McKelvie and Lindsay Clark. In the sequel, **Northwoods** (on sale now), Ben and Lindsay facing an even deadlier threat.... Ex-Delta Force Davis Holland, now an agent for the Customs and Border Protection, has seen it all. But nothing in his experience has

prepared him for what he and the local sheriff find one freezing night in the Minnesota woods. Investigating reports of an illegal border crossing, the two men stumble across a blood-drenched scene of mass murder, barely escaping with their lives. Something deadly

has entered Holland’s territory, crossing the border from nightmare into reality.

When news of the atrocity reaches wealthy cryptozoologist Richard Severance, he sends his team to investigate. Ben and Lindsay are still haunted by gruesome memories that make normal life impossible, but there is nothing normal about the horror that awaits in the Northwoods....

Northwoods is available on Amazon, Barnes and Noble, and wherever fine e-books are sold! •

President’s Message, *cont.*

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walk use, and concerns about parking and cut-through traffic.

Many Barcrofters will miss Food Star, and we will face some challenges and disruptions during the construction. However, we look forward to having the first large, new grocer on our end of the Pike in decades, along with some new green space for gathering and holding community events. •

Winter 2016 Updates From Barcroft Elementary

By Jenny Ditta, Barcroft Elementary Liaison

Winter greetings from Barcroft Elementary! The Blizzard of 2016 arrived January 22 and closed school until February 1. Field trips to the National Gallery of Art, Grade 3 swim lessons, and public education programs such as Too Smart to Start were postponed. While Barcroft and other APS students missed a total of 7 days in January, 10 snow days have been built into the APS calendar.

On February 2, the PTA held its monthly meeting and heard from our Gifted Resource Teacher. On February 3, Grade 4 and 5 students participated in the National Geography Bee. Congratulations to all of the participants and to the winner, Barcroft resident Anneliese Odegard! Parent-Teacher conferences were held on February 4 and 5. Conferences started at 2 p.m. on Thursday and continued through Friday. The PTA provided dinner to teachers and staff on Thursday evening. On February 8, the school hosted a Read-In Day to celebrate African American Heritage. On February 12, visiting author Sharon Robinson discussed with students in Grades 2 and 3 a book she wrote about her father, Jackie Robinson. The entire school celebrated the 100th Day of School as well on February 12. Students attended the monthly School Wide Morning meeting on February 17 at the start of the school day.

On February 18, Barcroft hosted the first of three School Information Sessions and

Tours for interested incoming kindergarten families. The additional dates are March 15 from 12:45 to 2:15 p.m. and April 14 from 9:15 a.m. to 2:45 p.m. All are welcome to visit the school at these times and learn more about Barcroft Elementary.

Barcroft will once again host a Jump Rope 4 Heart event to benefit the American Heart Association during the week of February 29 to March 4. Participating students will jump rope that week during P.E. classes to raise money for charity. We hope that you are able to sponsor a student for this cause!

The next several months should be busy. On March 2, the school will distribute free books to students as part of the Reading is Fundamental program and celebrate Dr. Seuss's birthday, a long-time Barcroft Elementary tradition. On March 3, Barcroft will host a Children's Science Center Family Science Night from 6 to 8 p.m. Barcroft was one of 84 schools that submitted applications for the Family Science Night. The Children's Science Center will come that evening and provide hands-on activities related to science, technology, engineering and math for families. Everyone is excited for this amazing event! On March 14, to mark the end of the Third Quarter, Barcroft will host a Leonardo Learning and Math (Celebration of Pi) event. Spring Intersession classes will be held March 28 to April 8. To learn more, contact our PTA President Tara McCabe at tcsm04@gmail.com. •

Neighborhood Conservation Update

By Deborah Wood

Barcroft NCAC Representative

At the February BSCL meeting, attendees reviewed the 2008 Barcroft Neighborhood Conservation Plan (see <http://bscl.org/ncp2008.pdf>) to select a first priority project for funding through the Neighborhood Conservation program (more information at <http://commissions.arlingtonva.us/neighborhood-conservation-advisory-committee/>).

The good news is that quite a few recommended projects have already been completed or are underway. Four of the plan's outstanding recommendations meet criteria for Neighborhood Conservation program funding, two of which concern safety issues at the intersection of Arlington Boulevard and S. Abingdon Street. First, under the Neighborhood Access section, "The County should improve pedestrian, bicycle and motor vehicle safety at this substandard intersection. Monitoring developments is necessary to take proactive steps to improve safety and efficiency."

Second, under Pedestrian and Bicycling Issues, "The County should improve pedestrian safety at S. Abingdon Street and Arlington Boulevard. Crosswalks and stop bars should be painted at the stop signs on the Arlington Boulevard service road. Pedestrian waiting areas on both sides of Arlington Boulevard should be leveled and paved,

providing better access to the walk button." The two recommendations were considered together and voted to be Barcroft's first priority for Neighborhood Conservation funding.

A recommendation to add a no left turn sign at the exit from the Unitarian Church parking lot onto the Arlington Blvd Service Road was included in the same vote. However, further investigation confirmed that NCAC does not have jurisdiction for traffic sign changes, so this recommendation needs to be addressed separately through the Arlington County Department of Transportation.

The two lower priority NC related recommendations in Barcroft's NC Plan come under Parks and the Environment. One requests improved access to Grandma's Creek, between S. Pershing and S. 7th Street. The other is for improvements to the footpath between S. Abingdon Street and S. Aberdeen Street in Arlington Forest.

Barcroft's Neighborhood Conservation representative, Deborah Wood, and new alternate representative, Neal Martin, will continue working with the BSCL Board and NCAC program staff to prepare the proposal for NC funding to be submitted by President Chris Kupczyk. We will review the proposal at the April BSCL meeting, so please mark it on your calendars and come participate in making this request for important safety improvements a good one. ●

Women's Club March Activities

By Cherie Lejeune and Pat Fisher

On March 7 at 1 p.m., Arlington Arts Public Art Manager, Deirdre Ehlen, will address the Women's Club on current and new projects. The public is invited to learn about the selection of the physical space: The where; the why; and the "what" behind the art chosen and, its local community impact. Light refreshments will be served.

The Club will hold its annual prayer breakfast at 10 a.m. on Monday, March 14. Everyone is welcome — men also! A full breakfast will be served. The cost is \$5, payable at the door. After the meal Pastor Graham

F. Bardsley, Director of Pastoral Care at the Virginia Hospital Center will speak. RSVP to 703-553-5800 or 7fisherp@msn.com by March 9.

The Arlington Woman's Club is located at 700 South Buchanan Street, Arlington. •

Acoustic Café Opens

by Gus Guthrie and Rebecca Krafft

There aren't many venues on Columbia Pike that have live music...and there are even fewer that provide a beautiful listening environment that both musicians and audiences appreciate. The Walter Reed Recreation Center at Walter Reed and 16th Street, South has a new free program that showcases local musicians in a relaxed setting, dedicated to listening. It's called the Acoustic Café, and it happens on the third Tuesday of the month, in the spring and fall.

After a winter break, the Acoustic Café opens its 2016 season on Tuesday, March 15 with a lineup headlined by Martinez & Guthrie. This duo features the vocals of Douglas Park resident Gus Guthrie and songwriter, producer and multi-instrumentalist Joe Martinez, playing the original folk-pop that has landed them on Sirius/XM satellite radio.

The next cafés take place on April 19, May 17 and June 21, from 7 to 8:30 p.m. Each evening has two opening acts, plus the featured band. Light refreshments are served. More information is available on Facebook at www.facebook.com/acoustic.cafe.arlington. •

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Mid-Winter Greetings from OSLS

By OSLS National Junior Honor Society

Thank you to everyone who stopped by the Our Savior Lutheran School used book sale in February, and helped us raise money for our school. It was a great success!

Every year, Lutheran schools around the country celebrate National Lutheran Schools Week. Our school will celebrate this special week from March 6 to 11. Our theme for this year is Life Together in Christ. Every day during the week, we dress up in special spirit wear or crazy outfits and have fun activities, like school wide bingo, ice cream sundaes, and student team competitions. On Sunday, March 6, we will have a special church service at 11 a.m. at Our Savior Lutheran Church, located across the parking lot from our school. Please feel welcome to join us for this wonderful service celebrating Lutheran Schools across the nation.

Please join us at Our Savior Lutheran Church for Holy Week services this March. We have a Maundy Thursday service on March 24 at 7 p.m., a Good Friday service on March 25 at 7 p.m., and Sunday Easter services on March 27 at 8:15 a.m. and 11 a.m. We would love to have you worship with us as we remember our Lord.

We are currently accepting applications for the 2016-2017 school year for grades PreK through 8th. We offer both be-

fore and after care. Stop by or call our school office if you have any questions. We would love to show you around and tell you more about our school. •



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Nature: Face Your Fears

By Barbara Farley

Long Branch Nature Center

“Bees, poison ivy, snakes, getting lost, strangers...” the list goes on for why people fear and avoid nature or any green space and park. It’s safer to either stay at home or turn to manufactured outlets for recreation. But at what cost?

I have been an educator for over eight years now and each generation of children and adults are further removed from and more fearful of nature than the last. For so many people, going outside and playing in true nature, not the sidewalks or even back yards, is either completely removed from their childhood or has been reduced to a novelty, like going to an amusement park. Trekking through the woods, catching insects, playing in mud, building forts, coming home scraped, dirty and happy has become an anachronism, an artifact of the past.

Abundant research has demonstrated the benefits of nature exposure for both children and adults: reduced stress and anxiety, greater cognitive and learning skills, increased physical and mental health. Yet, many people justify excising this source of spiritual nutrition over “safety” concerns. That’s like refusing to eat fruits or vegetables for the risk of cracking

a tooth on a seed. Yet, we know how to avoid the risk as to get the benefits in regards to our veggies, why should nature immersion be any different?

While there are inherent dangers anywhere in our world, we know to avoid and be preemptive toward risks. As for kids playing in the forest, let them, just do so with the proper precautions for both parents and children. Go with the kids to the natural spaces to see for



yourself how clean and safe leaves, sticks, rocks, and soil are compared to plastic tunnels and ball pits. Define a large perimeter to be their play area so they don’t wan-

der too far and can be easily found. Learn about the most common hazards like yellow jackets, poison ivy, etc., by looking them up online or in guidebooks. Children can and do absorb this information. Indeed, they have a much greater learning capacity than many adults realize. I have seen small children proficiently use an iPhone or name over 700 toy monsters, so they can learn poison ivy is three leaves on a red stem, to avoid wasp nests and that most snakes are small and harmless.

The inhibition so many people feel comes from fear of the unknown but if people make the effort to become better acquainted

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X and Y Buses, *continued*

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air with hair wet from the shower.

After a brief stop at the Pentagon, the X bus takes the express lanes of the 14th Street bridge into DC. I got off at 12th and Independence SW, right over the Smithsonian Metro station. It's true that the bus was slowed by traffic on the bridge. But it's a pretty short hop from the Pentagon across the river, so the delay didn't last long. And, as anyone who rides Metro knows, train delays are common, so taking the subway doesn't guarantee anything. On my next trip on the X, the bridge was wide open. Go figure.

Face Your Fears

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with the natural world, the benefits and enjoyment will far outweigh the few small dangers. With dozens of parks and nature centers throughout most communities there are many resources available such as loaner guidebooks, marked trails and signage, and guided programs lead by experienced naturalists. The Arlington Department of Parks and Recreation has scores of children, family and adult nature programs, some with free admission. To check out these programs please visit: <http://arlingtonparks.us/snag/>. •

On the trip home, taking the X or Y eliminates the last-minute calculations (and good luck) required for a smooth and short rail-bus transfer at Pentagon or Pentagon City. Just use the app to figure out when to catch the X or Y in DC and you're done.

Another benefit: the through-bus is cheaper. It costs \$1.75, vs. at least \$3.40 for the bus/Metrorail combo. And this marks me as a true nerd: there's something cool about getting on a bus at Barcroft and riding it all the way to work. Pretty good transportation (but not as good as my bike)!

Postscript: the 16X used to circle through Barcroft and end at the Pentagon, but Metro terminated that route a number of years ago due to low ridership. And full disclosure: I have only used the X twice so far this winter. Some of you probably ride these buses regularly and may have more informed views about how well they work. Share those experiences on the Barcroft chat list! •



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Babysitting, Petsitting, and Dog Walking: Emily Barton, very reliable 17-year-old. If you need a baby/pet sitter or walker please contact me. Phone: 703-629-5234 Email: emilykbaron@gmail.com.

Babysitter, house/pet sitter: Carmen Dunlap, responsible 17 year old. Available weekends and weeknights. Dunlap.carmen@gmail.com.

August's Pet Sitting: Responsible high school freshmen available to care for pets. 703-892-6712.

Sophia Field: 7th Grader, available for pet sitting and afternoon walking. Lost Dog and Cat Rescue volunteer and experienced bunny owner/foster. Sophia.b.field@gmail.com.

Kevin's Media: Will convert VHS tapes, TC30 tapes, Laserdiscs and 35mm photograph slides to DVD. Professional packaging/artwork included upon prior request. Please inquire for rates. Email kevinmedia118@gmail.com or text/call 703-919-7605.

Rebecca Bean Babysitter: 11th grader available nights and weekends. Call 571-344-4134 or email: Rebeccahbean@gmail.com.

Petsitter: Responsible 10th grader. Can house sit, water plants, pet sit bring in mail, etc. Email at chrisclaire99@gmail.com or call 571-623-1133.

Babysitter/nanny/petsitter: Jenny Claire, responsible 18 year old available for babysitting, and petsitting! Contact Jenny at 571-484-6445 or jennylclaire@gmail.com.

Babysitter: Experienced, Red Cross certified 9th grader. Call Liza Harold at 703-868-3518.

Babysitting and Petsitting: Tyler LaPointe, responsible 11th grader, experienced pet/babysitter. Will also water plants and take out trash. Email tylerchanlapointe@gmail.com or call 571-244-7555. ●



Barcroft School and Civic League
800 South Buchanan Street
Arlington, VA 22204

Real Estate Market Update

Arlington's February real estate market is starting off strong. Foot traffic (the number of people physically looking at homes) is active for single family and townhomes. We had over 40 people through a recent open house in S. Arlington. The overall inventory in Arlington remains low, especially in the mid to lower price range. In many areas, there are not enough homes for sale to satisfy the number of buyers in that market. This is good news for home prices. It is projected that additional inventory will hit the market in the next few months. As of this writing there are only 27 homes for sale in Arlington County under \$700,000 in the MLS, and 7 of them have been listed within the last 7 days. **30 year fixed rates have continued to drop – current rates are 3.5%.** For home buyers, lower interest rates are always good news. A new Zillow report says that now is a good time for renters to become owners. The

national average time it takes to break even on rent vs. buy is only 2 years. If you know that you'll be staying put and renting for more than 2 years, you'd be better off buying.

There Will Never Be a Better Time to Move Up! If you are moving up to a larger, more expensive home, consider doing it now. Prices are predicted to appreciate by 5.4% over the next 12 months according to *CoreLogic*. Rates are expected to rise by .75% by the end of 2016. Whether you sell your existing home first, or buy your move up home first, we can help with guidance on the best approach with your situation.

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