



January 2024

# Barcroft News

Vol 121, Issue 5

## Volunteer to Help Champion Trees in Barcroft Park for MLK Jr. Day of Service

*By Deborah Wood*

For the MLK Jr. Holiday Day of Service, on January 15th, 2024, here is an opportunity to participate in an event that will benefit three champion trees in Barcroft Park. We will meet at 10 am, in the parking lot of the Barcroft Community Center, 4200 S Four Mile Run, Arlington, VA 22206. Depending on the number of volunteers, it will take one to two hours at most.

Champion trees are the largest tree of their species in Arlington County. The three trees are near the tennis and basketball courts, a playground, and restrooms, so there is a lot of foot traffic around them. We will be spreading mulch around each of the trees to help keep their soil from becoming further compacted, and their roots better able to absorb water.

This service project is organized through the Arlington County Department of Parks and Natural

Resources and the Trees Stewards of Arlington/Alexandria. If you would like to participate, here is the address to sign up through the Tree Stewards event calendar: <https://www.trackitforward.com/site/397421/event/891879>.

Or, you may contact Deborah Wood, at [wooddeb52@gmail.com](mailto:wooddeb52@gmail.com). The County will provide the mulch and tools to spread it. This will be a great opportunity to be outdoors with neighbors, learn about some large trees, and burn calories spreading mulch! •

**Next Meeting: Thursday, January 4, 7:30 p.m.**

**Location: Barcroft Community House**

**Topic: TBD**



## Barcroft News

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**Next Deadline: December 15, 2023**

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Randy Swart, Deborah Wood

*Alternates:* Gary Mason, Daniel Weir

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## President's Message

**By Matthew Field**

Happy New Year, Barcroft! BSCL will kick off 2024 with a meeting on January 4 at the Community House. The agenda is still being worked out, so if there are any new year's resolutions you think your civic association should get started on, come on out and let's discuss them.

There are a few items already on the radar for 2024: the county has been monitoring traffic along the Buchanan/Pershing corridor, and the traffic committee has been working on identifying options for addressing some of the safety issues that have arisen in that area. Once the county reports back its data, expect outreach from the traffic committee to help develop some proposals we can take to the county.

As has been reported previously, the National Fish and Wildlife Foundation has delayed its decisions on grant awards for the Chesapeake Bay Small Watersheds program into 2024. Our application is still pending. In the meantime, the county has continued preparatory and survey work in the Grandma's Creek area, and we'll continue to work them to address erosion and runoff issues. Hopefully we'll see some progress this year.

Don Bennett and I also held a site visit with a representative from Dominion Power and county staff in December to discuss the status of the Dominion lot on Buchanan.

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# Coffee and Conversation

## *Arlington News Network*

"Coffee and Conversation" speaker series. Everyone is invited to join the conversation via Zoom. Bring your own coffee, learn interesting things about our community and hear from the speakers listed below.

Wednesdays, January 3rd, 10th, 17th, 24th and 31st at 10:00-11:00am. Zoom Link below.

**January 3, 2024:** Cheryl Beversdorf, host of the Aging Matters weekly program on Arlington's community radio station WERA Arlington 96.7 FM, will bring us up-to-date on all of the topics covered by her guest speakers over the past several years. We will also spend some time sharing our 2024 New Year's Resolutions.

**January 10, 2024:** Money Management with Christine Dolan. Do your bills and mail never stop? Are you stressed or overwhelmed about being financially organized? C. Dolan & Associates works with individuals to help navigate and manage their finances - bills, taxes, paperwork, budgets, and expenses. Christine will share how a daily money manager can help you stay financially organized.

**January 17, 2024:** Mental Health and Aging. Join the Regional Older Adults Facility Mental Health Support Team (RAFT) for an interactive presentation on mental health challenges, and debunk myths related to aging. Sydney Palinkas, RAFT Dementia Education and Outreach Coordinator, will discuss self-care, resources, and how to support a friend. RAFT is one of the programs of the Regional Projects Office in Northern Virginia.

**January 24, 2024:** Joan Brown will share information about Stephen Ministry, a non-profit, Christian organization through which trained and certified lay 'Caring Listeners' provide one-on-one, individualized compassionate listening to adults who are going through a life crisis such as bereavement, illness or change in health status, divorce, job loss, relocation and more. Individuals experiencing a significant loss receive the gift of a reliable, consistent, empathic and encouraging listening ear.

**January 31, 2024:** Arlington's drinking water distribution system contains over 500 miles of publicly owned pipe, as well as 5 pump stations, 17,000 valves and 3,900 fire hydrants. This system is a vital resource to every home, facility, and business within Arlington County. Join Regan Carver and Amani Eisa, engineers with the County's Water, Sewer, and Streets Bureau, to learn how the water you drink gets to your house and what Arlington County does to ensure that Arlington remains a safe and healthy place to live and work.

Zoom link for Coffee and Conversation:

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/88948577106?pwd=eW0rN1RTTU5ITmJ5NnF2QXZINmdUQT09>

You also have the option to dial in by phone at 929-205-6099. The meeting ID is 889 4857 7106 and the Passcode: 872327 ●

# President's Message,

## *Continued*

### ***Continued from page 2***

That lot is not going to turn to parkland in 2024, but the meeting was a positive first step in opening a dialogue, and we'll continue to press on the issue.

Here's to a healthy and prosperous 2024 to you all. Hope to see you around. ●

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## Help Trees Thrive: Tear Up Some Turf

***By Elaine Kolish, Fairfax County Tree Commission***

It's fairly common in residential neighborhoods to see trees surrounded by grass or by small mulch beds, often heaped high like a volcano. But did you know that your trees would be healthier and grow faster if you replaced that turf and mulch volcanos with a 2-4' deep ring of mulch that extends out to the tree's drip line or even beyond? Let's look at why this is.

Tree roots are not as deep underground as you might think. Instead they are generally fairly shallow, in the upper six inches of the soil, which is where turf grass roots grow. This means trees and turf are competing for the same water and nutrients in the soil. The grass generally wins. And of course, as trees become more established, the shade they cast doesn't do the turf any favor. Turf grass does best with lots of sunlight, and dense shade will significantly affect grass growth and quality. Another factor to consider is that exposed tree roots in your lawn can be a trip hazard. In addition, when you mow over the grass-surrounded roots, you could be damaging them and detrimentally compacting the soil.

If you wonder how much difference turf under trees can make, one study reported that trees in turf grow at half the rate of trees that are not dealing with that competition. So if you want vigorous tree growth, no turf or less turf under them is best.

Another wonderful benefit from eliminating or reducing turf is the improvement in the survival rate of the caterpillars that turn into butterflies and moths that in turn bring beauty into our lives and environmental benefits. According to Doug Tallamy, a famous professor of entomology and wildlife ecology, a hard-packed lawn underneath a tree does not provide adequate pupation sites for caterpillars that may have been feeding on your native tree, such as an oak. The caterpillar may find no leaf litter (because the lawn has been cleaned up) in which to spin a cocoon, or if it is a species that burrows into the soil, it won't find any loose soil if there is only turf under the tree. And we need these insects, not just for their beauty, but for their role as pollinators and as food for other wildlife. As E.O. Wilson, the eminent ecologist, famously said, insects are "the little things that run the world."

So consider eliminating the turf under your trees or combining various smaller mulched areas into a bigger area. Your trees will be happier (and you will have less lawn to mow and maintain)! But, remember, don't let the mulch touch the trees—stay one to two inches away from the trunk to avoid bark rot. Too deep a mulch layer will keep water from reaching the soil two to four inches is ideal. Best of all is to use arborist wood chips (which you can get for free from Chip Drop or from any tree company that needs to dispose of the chips after felling a tree), as they don't mat down the way standard bagged mulch may.

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## Help Trees Thrive, *Continued*

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Once you have wider rings around the trees, you will have the opportunity to create more biodiversity and habitat by under-planting with native plants including shrubs, flowers and ground covers that thrive in shade or part shade (think ferns and wild ginger). Native plants have different root depths compared to turf grass, so you won't have the same unhealthy competition for water and nutrients that you did with turf. You can find details about these plants on the Plant NOVA Natives website.

Pushing back the turf is a project

you can do before the ground freezes, or you can start planning your beds now, while other garden tasks are on hold, for spring installation. ●

# Neighbor to Neighbor Listings

*These listings are free to BSCL members, and run on a space-available basis. The listings run for three issues unless removal, renewal or update is requested. Email listings and renewals to [editor@bscl.org](mailto:editor@bscl.org).*

## **Barcrofter Loki Mulholland Books and**

**Movies:** His complete works available (save shipping costs!) and timely, especially the movies dealing with voting and institutional racism. Several kids books too. Great for gifts. Call and come by: Joan Mulholland, 501 South Taylor Street, 703-979-4719. Pay by cash, check, or Venmo.

**Kyle's Lawn Care:** Mowing, trimming, mulching, gardening and other various lawn maintenance. Email [kylepboll@gmail.com](mailto:kylepboll@gmail.com) or call 571-255- 9034.

**Looking for a babysitter?** Responsible, athletic 14-year old rising freshman is seeking summer babysitting opportunities. Good with kids, and is CPR/First Aid/ Babysitter Training Certified through the Red Cross. Email [barcroftbabysitter@gmail.com](mailto:barcroftbabysitter@gmail.com) for contact.

**Pet Sitting:** Colin and Emmett (6th-7th grades) are happy to pet sit for your cats or other small animals. We have experience with fostering and pet sitting. Available Thanksgiving and Christmas. Call (703)474-2691 or email [Lauren.alyssa@gmail.com](mailto:Lauren.alyssa@gmail.com).

**Yard Work:** Experienced, hard-working kids (11 and 9) available for jobs, including lawn mowing and weeding, leaf removal and snow shoveling. Text or email Will and Owen at [tdaniel7t8@hotmail.com](mailto:tdaniel7t8@hotmail.com) (dad Todd's email) for an estimate and availability.

**Pet Sitting:** If you and your family are out of town and are interested in finding a cat sitter and/or dog sitter, Eve and Lucy would love to help. Our parents email is: [briannegk@gmail.com](mailto:briannegk@gmail.com) and [eddie3@gmail.com](mailto:eddie3@gmail.com). References available upon request. We both have taken an Animal Allies Course at the Animal Welfare League of Arlington, Virginia, Eve is in 6th Grade and Lucy is in 5th Grade.

**Private Drum Lessons:** Local musician offers instruction in your home or in his Barcroft home studio. (Virtual lessons also available.) All ages/levels, multiple styles--rock, jazz, classical, as well as high school marching band, concert band and audition/ performance skills. Complimentary 30-minute lesson/consultation. Local references provided. Also available: drum set tuning, used drum sets, consults for equipment purchase. Contact [mitchbassmusic@gmail.com](mailto:mitchbassmusic@gmail.com), 202-409-4370.

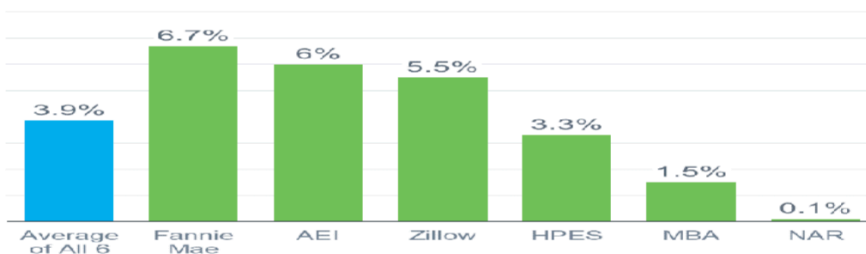
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Barcroft School and Civic League  
800 South Buchanan Street  
Arlington, VA 22204

Just a few short weeks ago, the *Fannie Mae* [forecast](#) was for 3.9% appreciation in 2023. In the forecast that just came out, that projection was updated from 3.9% to 6.7% for the year. This increase goes to show just how confident experts are that home prices will net positive this year. So, if you believe home prices are falling, it may be time to get your insights from the experts instead – and they're saying prices aren't falling, they're climbing. Questions on your home? Let's talk!

### 2023 Year-End Home Price Forecasts



If you have questions about the market and when might be the best time to plan for a move, let's connect so you have a professional's advice. Put my 38 years local market expertise to work for you! **Casey O'Neal, Compass, 703-217-9090**  
[casey@caseyoneal.com](mailto:casey@caseyoneal.com) [www.caseyoneal.com](http://www.caseyoneal.com) \*\*Free Notary Service\*\*