

November 2014

Barcroft News

Vol 112, Issue 3

A Barcroft Story: The Witch in the Woods

By Hank Biddle

Few if any adults living in Barcroft knew about the witch who lived in the woods. But all the children who lived in Barcroft knew the story of the witch who lived on a wooded hill near the railroad tracks in Barcroft. The story changed from child to child, but it was always very scary. Somewhere, no one knew

exactly where, she lived in a broken down log cabin. Naturally, we would always try to find it, but not really wanted to get too close. We knew she could cast a spell or give us an evil eye.

On rainy days when we could not play stick ball in the street, a group of us, three or four,

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BSCL Meeting to Feature Redevelopment Proposal

By Chris Kupczyk

Please join us at the community house for our next meeting on Thursday, November 6 at 7:30 p.m., as county staff present a redevelopment proposal for the northeast corner of Columbia Pike and South Buchanan Street (site of the current El Tutumaso and the former Cafe Sauca). Members of the Douglas Park civic association will attend as well. The proposal calls for the construction of a four-story condominium building, with street-level retail. Under Columbia Pike form-based code (FBC) standards, the proposed development is relatively small--less than

40,000 square feet--and therefore would not require any modifications under the FBC.

By the time you read this, county staff and the developer will have presented the proposal to the Columbia Pike form-based code (FBC) advisory working group. The next step is to present it to civic associations located near the site (hence Douglas Park's attendance at the meeting), after which the developer would file a formal application to the county zoning administrator. We encourage you to attend and learn more about this first major FBC redevelopment effort along our stretch of the • Pike.

Barcroft News

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Monthly Happenings

President's Report by Eric Harold

Boo! Hah! Scared ya! Happy Halloween, my favorite time of the year. Fall has started in a grand, wet and busy fashion. Lots of things going on, most of which will be reported on in this fine publication (all the news that's fit to print). And, we have an exciting potential development happening at Buchanan and Columbia Pike. A link to the drawings will be posted on the BSCL web page, and the County and the developer will be at the November meeting (a joint meeting with Douglas Park).

This being November, I would be remiss if I did not cajole, badger or otherwise beg all of you to vote on Tuesday, November 4. All politics are local, and the vast majority of the laws, rules and regulations that affect us daily are made at the local level. This is a very local election: County Board, School Board, state delegate. School and County bond issues. Add to it our member of congress (replacing Jim Moran) and our senator and you've got a lot of reasons to vote. I hope to see you all (early and often) at the polls. •

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A Great Community in Which to Grow a Family

By Lauren Hefner

Barcroft never ceases to amaze me. As relatively new residents (March 2013), we were blown away when we began posting things to the listserv related to things we needed for our pending adoption of a baby boy in Louisiana. Neighbors came out of the woodwork to offer baby items, recommendations of doctors and daycares, and even babysitting. People we had never met bought our baby gifts and stopped by to see if we needed anything. Thank you everyone for your support.

Our son Bennett was born July 7, 2014 in a swampy bayou town in southern Louisiana. While the average wait to adopt a newborn in the United States can take years, we were blessed to be matched with our son's birthmother just eight months after we became officially "approved" by the state of Virginia. We were blessed to spend the three weeks before our son was born getting to know her and her family, and we are in an open adoption – meaning we communicate with her, send photos, and keep in touch. The adoption process is more complicated and business-like than you would think. Hundreds



Brian and Lauren Hefner with their new son, Bennett

of thousands of families are waiting to adopt; only 15,000 adoptions are finalized each year on average. It can also cost up to \$60,000. Foster children are also waiting to be adopted – these (often older) children need homes and the expenses are almost zero. If you or anyone you know is thinking about adopting, feel free to have them contact us. My masters'

thesis is on adoption and we have become very knowledgeable on the various processes needed. It can be overwhelming but every hurdle in the road was worth it. Thanks again for being part of our journey.

Barcroft is a true community. ●

Renew Your Membership

By Fay Cheung, Membership Secretary

For just \$5 per individual or \$10 per family, you can become a member of the best neighborhood in Arlington—the Barcroft School and Civic League. Your dues are effective from Sept. 1 to Aug. 31. There are two easy way to pay. Drop off at the Community House or mail Fay Cheung, Membership Secretary, 618 S Taylor Street Arlington, VA 22204. ●

Autumn News from Barcroft Elementary

By Jenny Ditta, Barcroft Elementary Liaison

Barcroft Elementary's students are well ensconced in second quarter learning and enjoying the cooler weather. Fall Intersession was a resounding success with over 300 students participating in the 2-week enrichment program. The school celebrated Hispanic Heritage Month with a one-hour celebration featuring food, music and dance performances on Friday afternoon, October 17. On Saturday, October 18, Barcroft families participated in Barcroft Elementary School Night at D.C. United, watching D.C. United play against the Chicago Fire at RFK Stadium. On October 24, the school made a special distribution of free books to all students from the Reading is Fundamental (RIF) program. And in honor of Halloween, Barcroft hosted its annual Halloween Dance Party on Friday evening, October 24. A spooktacular time was had by all!

Discussions continued in October regarding Arlington Public Schools (APS) plans for addressing increasing enrollment in South Arlington, including a potential addition at Barcroft Elementary School. Under the current plan, if an elementary school is not built at the Thomas Jefferson sight, then APS proposes to increase Barcroft from a school with a seating capacity of 460 (the school currently holds 540 students with a 10-room trailer/relocatable) to a school with a seating capacity of 725. If you are interested in having your

voice heard on this important community issue, please send the School Board an email prior to its November 6 vote. The email address is school.board@apsva.us. For information about other ways to contact the School Board, go to: <http://www.apsva.us/page/3052>.

Highlights in November include the 2014 Election Day Bake Sale on Tuesday, November 4, from 7 a.m. to 5 p.m. All your favorite baked goods, including muffins, scones, cookies, sweet breads, cupcakes, pies, bars and much more will be available! So please remember to vote early and eat often! On the ballot in November is a 2014 School Bond requesting approval for \$105 million to address growing APS capacity needs. At the October 14 PTA meeting, parents learned that while Arlington families with school-age children comprise less than 20 percent of taxpayers, Arlingtonians consistently vote in favor of school bond proposals. So many thanks to our Barcroft neighbors for your selfless support of Arlington public education!

SAVE THE DATES: Silver Diner Night is Monday, December 1 at the Clarendon Silver Diner from 5 to 8 p.m. We hope that you can join us for a wonderful evening of food and fun! And on Thursday, December 11 the Barcroft Elementary Winter Concert will be held at 10 a.m., 2 p.m. and 7 p.m., featuring performances from our 4th and 5th Grade Chorus, • School Band and School Orchestra.

Rockin' the Block: 8th Road Has Some Fun

By Lisa Piantanida

Eighth Road hosted its annual block party in September with highlights including a moon bounce, great neighbors, and good weather. While the official block for the party was 8th Road, more than 150 neighbors from around Barcroft attended the festivities. Kids were bouncing from daylight to dark with our neighborhood painter, Joe Walsh, joining them in the fun. We were excited to have several new Barcroft families par-

ticipate, getting to see first-hand why we love this neighborhood. While the party officially ended at 8 p.m., you could hear the sound of laughter well into the night. ●



Neighbors gathered at the annual 8th Road Block Party in September.

Volunteer Opportunity Nearby: Food for Others

By Shirley Gay

Free food from Food for Others, <http://www.foodforothers.org/index.html>, a food bank in Fairfax County, is distributed twice weekly at two sites near Barcroft. To receive food with no questions asked other than family size, folks just show up at 6 p.m. near The Fields at the corner of South

Dickerson and South 8th Roads or at 6:30 p.m. at the Barcroft Recycling Lot.

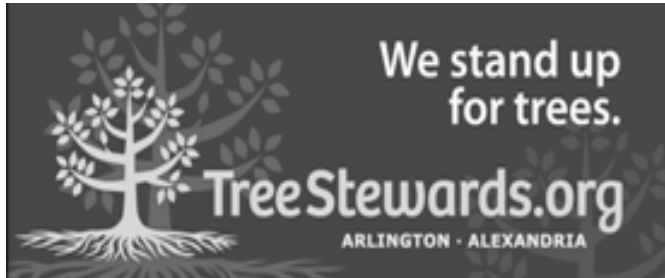
Your help is needed with the distribution. Volunteers are needed on Mondays. If you can help or have questions, please email Shirley Gay, shirleywg@icloud.com. Only one Barcrofter, Cliff Gay, currently assists at these sites. Two others live near Tysons. ●

The Second-Best Time to Plant a Tree

By Debora Southwell

As the old Chinese proverb says, 20 years ago was the best time to plant a tree. But since 1994 is long gone, the next best time is now. Specifically, late fall, winter, or early spring. This is when the trees are dormant and they can focus on their roots and establish themselves before they put all their energy into vertical growth — branches and leaves. Financially this is also a great time, since many nurseries are having clearance sales to reduce their stock for the coming winter months.

Planting trees and saving dollars go hand in hand. As you look down the road, con-



sider that with another tree on your land you can eventually realize an increase in your property value (up to 15 percent home value), savings on electricity bills, an upswing in air cleanliness, healthier soil drainage, and an

increase in the natural beauty around your home. What's not to love!

Check out the Arlington Alexandria TreeStewards' website for a

free U.S. Forest Service Tree Owner's Manual.

Want to help protect and promote our urban tree canopy? If you can't plant a tree, why not plant yourself as a new Tree Steward? Next training starts Tuesday, Feb. 3, 2015, at Fairlington Community Center. Learn more at the TreeStewards website. •

Rosslyn Walk to End Veteran Homelessness

A walk will be held on Wednesday, November 12, 2014 from 11:30 a.m. to 1 p.m. in partnership between Arlington Street People's Assistance Network (A--SPAN) and Rosslyn businesses to help end veteran homelessness.

Join the walk during lunch to learn about what our community is doing to help get people into housing. A one mile walk through the heart of Rosslyn will be guided by A--SPAN

case managers to see Rosslyn from a different point of view. Please join us for a lunch afterward provided by Rosslyn restaurants at Arlington Temple United Methodist Church.

Online registration and onsite registration is available at: <http://www.a-span.org/rosslyn>. For more information, contact Scott Miller at (703)842--0154 or smiller@a-span.org. Registration fees (\$20) are tax-deductible donations. •

What Gall!

**By Cliff Fairweather,
Naturalist, Long Branch Nature Center**

Perhaps you've noticed odd growths on plants, maybe a hard, rounded, fruit-like growth on an oak leaf or twig or goldenrod leaves formed into tight bunches. While these growths are part of the plant, they're not something the plant would have grown on its own and they're definitely not for the plant's benefit. They are called galls and are formed by insects, mites, fungi, bacteria, or viruses.

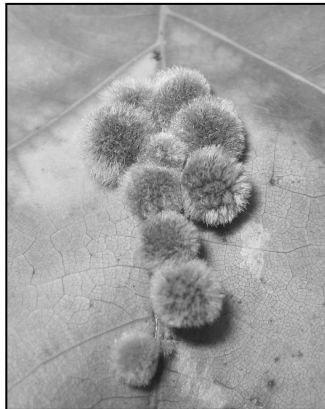
Most of the galls we commonly see are formed by insects. Gall-making insects are found primarily among the wasps, true flies, aphids and related insects, and a few beetles and moths. What they all have in common is an ability to force a plant to grow a structure that is for the benefit of the gall maker.

Scientists don't completely understand the process of gall formation but most, if not all, gall makers in essence genetically engineer a part of the plant to create an edible shelter. This usually happens on a growing part of the plant such as leaves, stems, roots, flowers, and fruit.

Each combination of plant and gall maker results in a unique gall, creating a proliferation of fascinating, sometimes bizarre, and even beautiful shapes and colors. Galls are especially common on oaks, goldenrods and other members of the aster family, hickories, hackberries, and native roses. Galls usually don't kill their host plant, but they do deprive the plant of energy it would otherwise use for reproduction, growth, or other life processes.

Hundreds of species of gall wasps occur on oaks, and the oak-hickory forest in Arlington are a good place to look for these galls. Check fallen oak leaves and twigs for odd growths, such as the hard, round, reddish bullet galls on twigs. One of the largest galls in our area is the oak-apple gall, a light brown, papery sphere about the size of a ping-pong ball. Of course, please leave any gall you come across in the park where you found them.

Galls serve two main purposes for the gall makers. First, they provide a shelter against predators, parasitoids (parasites that kill their host), and adverse weather conditions, especially dryness and, in



Woolly galls on an oak leaf (above), and Midge fly gall on a Wingstem (below).



Continued on page 9

Fall Seasons Greetings from Our Savior Lutheran School

By OSLS National Junior Honor Society

Don't miss out on the opportunity to participate in Market Day and help our school earn money. There are many special items that will help you jump start your holiday grocery shopping and feasting. Call our school office for more information, or to order online, go to marketday.com. If you have never tried Market Day, now is a great time!

What Gall!, continued

Continued from page 8

some cases, cold. Second, galls provide a food supply of plant tissue or sap for the gall maker. Some galls continuously renew the food supply as the gall maker consumes it.

The protection afforded by a gall is far from perfect. Many parasitoids have evolved to penetrate galls and much of the diversity of gall shapes and textures is explained by an evolutionary arms race between gall makers and their parasitoids. Some larger galls even attract the attention of chickadees and downy woodpeckers seeking the insect morsel inside.

Fall is a great time to look for galls among the fallen leaves, bare branches, and dead herbaceous plants. Look for odd swellings, hard or wooly growths, or other anomalies. Once you learn to recognize galls, you'll begin to realize how many kinds there are. ●

Thank you to everyone who supported Our Savior Lutheran School through Giant, Safeway, and Harris Teeter grocery cards. We receive a check from each of these stores at the end of the school year thanks to your naming our school through their programs. In order to help contribute, you must re-link your card or cards to our school every year. Visit our website for information on how to proceed and use the links provided.

Each month, our school enjoys Art Talks from one of our teachers, Mrs. Battaglia. During Art Talks, we learn about an artist and their works. This past month's artist was Andy Goldsworthy. Goldsworthy was born in 1956 and has spent over three decades using natural materials to create his art. Photography is an important part of his art since much of his work is subject to winds, tides, melting snow, and other effects of nature. However, he has produced some permanent art installations, several of which can be found throughout the United States. Locally, his work "Roofs," a large work comprised of nine hollow domes of stacked slate, is a part of the National Gallery of Art's East Wing.

Please join us at Our Savior Lutheran Church for a Thanksgiving Eve worship service on Wednesday, November 26 at 7 p.m. We would love to have you come and worship with us as we thank our Lord for all he has given us.

Barcroft Story, continued

Continued from page 1

would get together and say “lets go find the witch.” Of course it was always a very dark and gloomy day, not the best for hunting a witch. We scouted along the railroad track and the creek hopping from rock to rock looking up through the woods. Marshall, the smallest of us, brought up the rear. Suddenly he shouted, “there she is!” We all looked up at a dark shadow lurking among the trees. We began to run home as fast as we could.

We arrived home breathless and frightened to find my older sister laughing on the porch wearing a black shroud. We never went witch hunting again.

Editor's Note:

Hank Biddle was born in Washington D.C. and spent his early years in Arlington. After service during the Korean war and college he married, bought a house in Barcroft, raised a family, spending more than 50 years in the neighborhood. He is a retired mathematics teacher and coach and now lectures at Northern Virginia Community College. He hopes others enjoy his childhood stories of Barcroft. •



Holiday Bazaar and Bake Sale

By Kathleen Harrison

The Woman's Club will hold a Holiday Bazaar and bake sale on Saturday, November 15. The hours are from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. Items for sale will include the 2013 and 2014 White House ornaments, hand crafted items, large seasonal wreaths, attic treasures and much more. There is a quilt raffle, silent auction and bake sale. The proceeds support the Woman's Club charitable activities. These activities and more information is available at womansclubarlington.org • website.



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Neighbor to Neighbor Ads

*These ads are free to BSCL members.
The listings run for three months unless re-
quested to be removed or updated.*

Babysitter, Pet Sitter, Vacation Help: Responsible 9th grader. Will water plants, bring in mail, etc. Email Tyler at tylerchanlapointe@gmail.com or call 571-244-7555.

4Sunsets Beach House: White sand, gulf front home, 14 hour drive from Arlington or fly into Panama City, Florida. Visit 4Sunsets.com or email Alissa at alissa @4Sunsets.com

Babysitter: Experienced, Red Cross certified 8th grader. Call Liza Harold at 703/868-3518.

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

Neighborhood college student: Available for babysitting, odd jobs, cleaning, housework, etc. anytime. Abby Fram, 703-892-1090 email: abbyfram94@aol.com.

Babysitter, house/pet sitter: Carmen Dunlap, responsible 16 year old. Available weekends and weeknights. Dunlap.carmen@ymail.com.

Jenny's Babysitting, Pet Sitting and Vacation Care: Sixteen-year-old available weekends and some weeknights. Can water plants, bring in mail, etc., while you travel. Contact jenny-claire@gmail.com or call 703-998-5338.

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 kevinsmedia118@gmail.com or text/call 703-919-7605 .

Pool Membership: We're preparing to sell our membership at the Arlington Forest Club pool. If interested, please email only at asfram@aol.com or eileenput@aol.com.

Rebecca Bean Babysitter: 10th grader available nights and weekends. Email: rebeccaahbean@gmail.com or call 571-344-4134. ●



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800 South Buchanan Street
Arlington, VA 22204

Repair or Replace your Windows?

Repairing windows is better for the environment. Keeping the windows you have keeps them out of the landfill and cuts down on the waste and energy consumption associated with the manufacturing process. If sustainability is important to you, repairing them will be your greenest option.

The most common question a homeowner has regarding new windows is whether or not they're worth it. That depends. Do your current windows barely open or have rotted frames? Are they drafty and prone to excessive condensation? If you answered yes, new windows make sense.

For one, windows that don't open are a safety hazard, especially if there's a fire. Second, drafty windows drive up your utility bills and diminish indoor air quality, while excessive condensation could lead to wood rot and mold growth. Last but not least, new windows can boost your home's curb appeal and value. They are also a popular upgrade for home buyers.

You can expect to spend between \$300 and \$700 per window, including tear out, disposal and installation for most standard window sizes. Custom windows are more expensive, often \$1000 or more per window (these costs do not include replacing the window frame). Expect to spend up to twice as much per window if you need to replace the frame. The 2014 Cost versus Value Report shows a 93% (vinyl) and 96% (wood) Cost Recouped for mid-range window replacement in the \$10,000 to \$11,000 price range.

What are the Top 5 Money Making Home Improvements for Getting the Highest Return upon Resale? Spend Your Dollars Wisely - Contact me for advice!

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