



# Neighbor News

July–August–September 2006

## Walking Town Meeting With Arlington County Board

The County Board conducted a walking town meeting with residents of Douglas Park on August 16th. The meeting had been re-scheduled from June, when torrential rains were forecast for the night of the meeting, following record rains over the previous days.

The tour started at Randolph Elementary on Quincy Street, continued past Douglas Park to the Community Gardens and Fire House on 19th St., down Oakland to Monroe St. and Monroe Park, to the Post Office, and then back to Randolph at 12th and Quincy.

The route was chosen to highlight areas to be shown to the board and senior county management staff:

- Traffic calming and street lights on Quincy St., positive results of the popular Traffic Calming and Neighborhood Conservation programs.
- The site of an old family cemetery in Douglas Park, near the entrance from Quincy on the north end of the park. The Civic Association is hoping to be able to locate the graves and provide a historical marker through a park enhancement grant.
- The condition of the parkland at the water tower at 19th St., near the Community Gardens. This area was to be used temporarily as part of a water main replacement project. Now items like snowplows and equipment storage vans are being stored in the area—junk that ought to be removed.
- The area of the water tower is a potential site for a cell phone tower.
- Some improvements to the dog park on the other side of the tower, including lighting within the area, are being pursued. Lack of street lighting in this area is a big concern to the neighbors.
- Oakland St., between 16th and 14th has not been repaved in many years. The Neighborhood Conservation project for curb and gutter and sidewalk on this street has been pending for years. The plan had been for curb and gutter only (necessary for the county to repave), but then a requirement for sidewalk was added, increasing the cost of the project substantially and adding years to the wait.
- Monroe Park is typical of many small parks in Arlington, but problems with late night drinking (and resulting broken bottles) seem to be increasing.
- The Post Office is doing a poor job of keeping up landscaping and appearance.
- A traffic light pedestrian crossing of Glebe Road at 12th St., at the Post Office, is sorely needed.
- The new Majestic Oak project next to the Post Office is moving along, a good example of how the neighborhood



*Kids from the neighborhood enjoy frozen treats at the 4th of July picnic.*

can improve a project through the site plan process, to the mutual benefit of the neighborhood and the developer.

- 12th Street is a good example of the parking crunch we face in Douglas Park.
- The entrance to the bike path to Doctor's Run at 12th St. and Quincy is like going into a cave, even in the daytime. This is a primary route for parents and children walking to Randolph from the Barcroft Apartments (about 40% of the students at Randolph). During the winter months, this is a dark and dangerous route that needs to be lit with streetlights.
- Randolph School is an excellent school, Northern Virginia's first International Baccalaureate Primary Years Program school. But the building itself needs work to repair a chronically malfunctioning HVAC system. The playground is also substandard, with tripping hazards and play equipment that does not meet Arlington Public Schools standards. Promised renovations have been cancelled. Patrick Henry and Abingdon, elementary schools also serving Douglas Park, have similar issues, especially with the HVAC systems.

We enjoyed the chance to talk with the county board about the issues that concern us in Douglas Park, and the chance to brag about what a great place it is to live.

### PEDESTRIAN CROSSING COMING TO GLEBE ROAD

We have heard that the pedestrian crossing light for Glebe Road at 12th Street (at the Post Office) has been

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**DOUGLAS PARK CIVIC ASSOCIATION, ARLINGTON, VA**

**Meeting Calendar:** The DPCA executive committee has scheduled regular meetings on the third Tuesday of the month, 7:30pm at Fire Station #9, 1900 S. Walter Reed Dr.:

October 24: executive committee meeting  
November 21: general meeting

**Douglas Park Executive Committee**

*All area codes 703 unless otherwise noted.*

**President:** John Snyder, 892-2887, jvsnyder54@comcast.net;

**Vice president:** (vacant)

**Treasurer:** Linda Dye, 979-6276, wvwcdyels@starpower.net

**Secretary:** John Roman, 892-2225, roman3606@comcast.net

**At Large:** Bob Cowan, 979-3081, bcowan@rlcjr.com  
Lane Nemirow, 271-1111, lane@pop.net

**Randolph liaison:** Rita Wiggins, 521-4725,  
roserita\_wiggins@apsva.us

**Parks committee:** Marty Nielsen, 979-8777,  
mrtylnsn@gmail.com

**Traffic committee:** Bob Cowan, chair, 979-3081,  
bcowan@rlcjr.com

**Parking liaison:** Lane Nemirow, 271-1111, lane@pop.net

**Neighborhood Conservation****Advisory Commission Delegates**

John Snyder, 892-2887, jvsnyder54@comcast.net

Lane Nemirow, 271-1111, lane@pop.net

Debbie Falco, 919-5131, dfalco@speakeasy.net

**Civic Federation Delegates**

Linda Dye, 979-6276, wvwcdyels@starpower.net

Rebecca Krafft, 553-4140, rebecca\_krafft@hotmail.com

John Roman, 892-2225, roman3606@comcast.net

**Neighbor News**

**Advertising:** Mitch Opalski, 553-1942, mopalski@aol.com

**Layout:** Dan Kaufman, 202-639-8570, dan@dkgpromotions.com

**Editorial:** Sharon Scott, 486-0933, sescottva@yahoo.com

**Distribution:** Jamie Daly, 521-4567, jamie22204@yahoo.com

**Webmaster:** Nancy Limprecht, nlimprecht@yahoo.com

**ADVERTISING RATES AND INFORMATION**

1/8 page (card) \$25 Full page, \$250

1/4 page, \$60 Sponsorships and discounts avail.

1/2 page, \$100 —call Mitch for information.

Send check, payable to DPCA, and ad information to Mitch Opalski, 3129 12th St S., Arlington, VA 22204. He will provide information on preparing and submitting your ads.

**NEXT NEWSLETTER DEADLINE**

Articles/Ads	Due	Distribution
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Issue #4:	Oct. 15	Oct. 30
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## President's Message

**FOURTH OF JULY PARADE AND PICNIC**

The Fourth of July Parade and Picnic was another huge success this year, with dozens of decorated bikes, decorated people, and patriotic floats. Douglas Park resident Lori Sessano was Grand Marshall of the Parade, in absentia, as she is serving our country in Afghanistan. Lori has led the effort of many Douglas Park residents to provide clothes and toys for one of the orphanages in Afghanistan.

Thanks to our volunteers, we had plenty of hot dogs and potluck dishes, snow cones and amusements. Due to the temperature, the dunk tank appeared to be very well used, continuing on until "after hours" to make sure everybody got dunked at least once. The giant slide and moon bounce were also busy through the day. Thanks to some of our talented Douglas Park musicians, we had music through the day, featuring Gus Guthrie and No Better Off and Jamie Daly and the Constituents. And the rain and power outage held off until after the festivities.

Next year will be the 25th annual Parade and Picnic, so start thinking of ideas for your float now.

**KEEP AN EYE ON OUR PARKS**

Some neighbors have pointed out that some young people have started/resumed illegal activity in some of our parks. Specifically, there was an incident in which some young women were in a park inhaling from aerosol cans.

We need to keep our parks for families, not this kind of nonsense. If you see people doing something illegal in the parks, like drugs or drinking, please call the police. Also, the parks close at dark, so no one should be in there at night.

Call 911 in an emergency or Police non-emergency: 703-228-4040 or 703-558-2222.

If you see any graffiti in the parks, please call the police non-emergency number. It helps them to figure out if it has anything to do with gangs. And we want to get rid of it as soon as possible.

Thanks very much for keeping an eye out.

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## MOMS Club Meets

The MOMS Club of South Arlington will meet monthly at the new Walter Reed Community Center beginning Thursday, September 14th at 9:30am. If you are a stay-at-home mom or you work part time and can come to Thursday morning meetings and other activities throughout the week, please come and see if we are a good fit for you. We have quite a few Douglas Park moms already, and we've recently started a babysitting co-op for members. For more information please contact Heather Nemirow at 703-271-1111 or Enid Dunbar at 703-271-5335.

## Development on the Pike

### LITMAN LAW BUILDING PROJECT

A project at the site of the current Litman Law Building is also being pursued under the site plan process. This project is planned to be condominiums over ground floor retail. It is at the corner of Columbia Pike and Oakland St., on the north side of the Pike. This project does not propose public benefits to the extent of the Penrose Square project, and there are concerns about the height and mass of the building along the back, adjacent to the single-family residences in Alcova Heights.

### HALSTEAD OF ARLINGTON (ARL HARDWARE SITE)

Demolition is under way on this condominium project on Columbia Pike at Walter Reed, across from the Cinema and Draffhouse. The façade from the old Arlington Hardware will be maintained and the small white building on the corner (formerly Blanca's Restaurant) will also be preserved. The Halstead project will include nearly 300 condominiums, retail on the ground floor, parking for shared use in the neighborhood and a permanent home for the Arlington Free Clinic. This is the first of the Form Based Code Projects to move to construction, and we look forward to watching it rise up over the next few months.

### PENROSE SQUARE

The Penrose Square development (site of the Giant Food and Pharmacy on the Pike) is proceeding under the site plan process requesting County Board approval. The project is

planned to contain a Giant Food store of a much larger size (over 50,000 sf, like the Giant at Jefferson St. at Skyline/Baileys Crossroads, and about 300 rental apartments on top. The project would have other retail and restaurant space along the Pike, with a public plaza in the front along the Pike. The entrance from the Pike would be in the same location as now, with the plaza to the left, on the side where the small trolley restaurant now stands. In the back, along 9th St., the building would be 3-1/2 stories, with a façade like townhouses, but with apartments inside. In the front, the building would be seven stories.

The project was originally proposed as a Form Based Code project, but would have required many exceptions from the code. Rather than make multiple exceptions, the decision was made that the project is more appropriate to move forward under the "site plan" process, through which a developer can obtain permission for extra density and size for the project, in exchange for public benefits (like the plaza to be created for the community). Use of the site plan process has always been an option in the areas where the Form Based Code applies.

### SAFEMAY SITE

The developer is reportedly moving forward with a new project at the site of the old Safeway store on Columbia Pike across from Bob and Edith's, next to Penrose Square. This Form Based Code project will include apartments over ground floor retail. This project was about to go to the county board for approval, but was then delayed. It is moving forward once again.

### 9 Buyer Traps and How to Avoid Them

**No matter which way you look at it, buying a home is a major investment. But for many homebuyers, it can be an even more expensive process than it needs to be since they fall prey to at least a few of the many common and costly mistakes which trap them into either:**

- \*paying too much for the home they want, or
- \*losing their dream home to another buyer or,
- \*(worse) buying the wrong home for their needs.

#### 9 Buyer Traps

This important report discusses the 9 most common and costly homebuyer traps, how to identify them, and what you can do to avoid them:

#### 1. Bidding Blind

What price should you offer when you bid on a home? Is the seller's asking price too high, or does it represent a great deal. If you fail to research the market in order to understand what comparable homes are selling for, making your offer would be like bidding blind. Without this knowledge of market value, you could easily bid too much, or fail to make a competitive offer at all on an excellent value.

#### 2. Buying the Wrong Home

What are you looking for in a home? A simple enough question, but the answer can be quite complex. More often than not, buyers have been swept up in the emotion and excitement of the buying process only to find themselves the owner of a home that is either too big or too small. Maybe they're stuck with a longer than desired commute to work, or a dozen more fix-ups than they really want to deal with now that the excitement has died down. Take the time upfront to clearly define your wants and needs. Put it in writing and then use it as a yard stick with which to measure every home you look at. For the entire report, visit our new web site:

[www.CaseyOnealTeam.com](http://www.CaseyOnealTeam.com)

**The Casey O'Neal Team**  
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## School Board Candidates Debate

Douglas Park Civic Association will be sponsoring a debate of the candidates for Arlington School Board in the Randolph Elementary School library on Tuesday, October 10 from 7pm to 9pm. Douglas Park resident Cecelia Espenoza ([www.espenoza4education.com](http://www.espenoza4education.com)) and Nauck resident Sally Baird ([www.sallybaird.org](http://www.sallybaird.org)) will present their views on Arlington Public Schools. The format will feature questions from the audience, so this is your chance to engage with the candidates. Since one of the candidates will be on the School Board in January, it is also your chance to make sure that they understand our priorities and issues as they relate to schools.

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## Parent Power at Virginia Gardens

Renovations to the playground at Virginia Gardens were completed August 1st. Parents in the Parent Connection program at the property applied for a Neighborhood Strategy Area small grant from Arlington County and used it to repaint the equipment, repair broken benches, and install a new sandbox and toddler swing.

### MEMBERSHIP FORM

THROUGH 2/07

DOUGLAS PARK CIVIC ASSOCIATION

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I'd like to volunteer for:

- the 4th of July picnic  election day bake sale  
 holiday fund drive  write articles for newsletter  
 call me any time and I'll see if I can help

Mail your check, payable to DPCA, with this form to:  
Treasurer, DPCA, 3621 S. 14th St., Arlington, VA 22204

**THANK YOU!**

*President's Message from page 2*

### HELP WANTED—VICE PRESIDENT

The office of Vice President of the Civic Association remains vacant. We need your help. The duties of the vice president are to preside at meetings in the president's absence—which is becoming more important as the president is having a hard time scheduling meetings due to out of town travel for work. We need to be able to continue with general meetings, as one of the most important roles of the civic association is to be a forum for issues important to members of the community. Help! Please contact me if you are interested [jvsnyder54@comcast.net](mailto:jvsnyder54@comcast.net)

### HELP WANTED—NEIGHBORHOOD STRATEGY AREA REPRESENTATIVE

Pike Village Center, the portion of Douglas Park near the intersection of the Pike and George Mason Drive, and including the Barcroft Apartments, and the apartment complexes up to Monroe Street along the Pike, is a Neighborhood Strategy Area (NSA). NSAs are eligible for federal Community Development Block Grant funding for projects serving the community. Pike Village Center is entitled to be represented on the group that advised the county on allocation of block grant funds, the Community Development Citizens Advisory Council. If you are interested in representing our community, please contact me at [jvsnyder54@comcast.net](mailto:jvsnyder54@comcast.net)



## Douglas Park Integral Yoga

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3507 Columbia Pike at Lincoln Street

### SCHOOL BUILDINGS

We are very fortunate in Douglas Park to have some of the finest schools anywhere. Our high schools are at the top of the nation in rankings by Newsweek, and our middle and elementary schools are also excellent. People literally come from all over to visit Randolph Elementary to learn about the International Baccalaureate program there. Jefferson Middle School is adopting the same program at the middle school level.

But the condition of our school buildings does not match the quality of the teachers, administrators and staff. The buildings need immediate work, primarily on the HVAC systems. For example, the HVAC system was not functioning at Randolph during the Standards of Learning tests this year, requiring teachers to round up fans, so the kids could concentrate. Sections of Wakefield have nearly been closed down due to HVAC malfunctions. These are the basics, conditions that directly affect learning.

The Capital Improvement Plan adopted by the Arlington School Board does not address these pressing needs. Whatever your opinion is about spending for new high schools, we should not even be talking about such projects when immediate needs are not being addressed.

In the coming months, as the bond issue for schools construction is debated, please read about Capital Improvement Plan on the Arlington Public Schools website: [www.arlington.k12.va.us](http://www.arlington.k12.va.us)). It is important that you challenge school officials to do the right thing and take care of the buildings for our neighborhood schools. We really need you as an individual to speak up.

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## Randolph Fall Festival October 28

Come join your neighbors at Randolph Elementary School for food, games and crafts at the 8th Annual Fall Festival, Saturday, October 28 from 10 a.m. to 2:00 p.m. Kids can play games behind the school (everyone loves searching for goodies in the hay stack!) as well as create a variety of crafts. Browse the large “yard” sale in the parking lot where you might find a great bargain and support the fifth-grade class as it raises money for a year-end field trip. You can also reserve a space for your own “yard sale.” Try some of the delicious pupusas (thick corn tortillas filled with cheese or meat and topped with a spicy coleslaw) or some of the other foods from one of the 41 countries represented at Randolph School.

For more information contact Heather McPhail, PTA President, Randolph Elementary School at (703) 892-2887.

## Potomac Harmony Presents Annual Show: “Wahoo!”

Potomac Harmony Chorus, the current Region 14 Champions of Sweet Adelines International, presents “Wahoo!,” a Western theme show, at 3 PM Saturday, October 21, 2006, at the Thomas Jefferson Theater of the Thomas Jefferson Middle School, 125 South Old Glebe Road in Arlington.

The performance will feature a variety of songs, all sung *a cappella* in four-part harmony “barbershop style,” entertaining audiences young and old.

This chorus of 80 women loves to sing barbershop music, an original style of harmony founded in America more than 60 years ago. Tickets are \$15 for adults and \$12 for seniors and children. Advance group sales are available. For more information, please call 703-764-3896, visit [www.potomacharmony.org](http://www.potomacharmony.org), or email [potomacharmony@yahoo.com](mailto:potomacharmony@yahoo.com)

## \$50 Tree Grants

Douglas Park will reimburse you up to \$50 of the cost of planting a shade tree in your yard. A shade tree is defined as a large tree that will shade your home and therefore the neighborhood. (Shade trees should not be planted under utility wires.)

For details or questions about this program email Marty Nielsen at [mrtynlsn@gmail.com](mailto:mrtynlsn@gmail.com)

## Tree Planting and Pruning Workshop

Join Marty this fall as he demonstrates proper planting and pruning technique right in Douglas Park! Workshop tentatively scheduled for November 18th. A real containerized tree will be planted and recently planted trees will be examined for possible light pruning.

*Walking Town Meeting from page 1*

approved by VDOT, the last hurdle before moving to construction. We do not yet have a timetable for construction, and are advised that other similar projects are also in line for construction. Still, we are encouraged to see some progress toward a safer crossing of Glebe Road to and from the “Eastern Shore” portion of the neighborhood, to the east of Glebe Road.

## COLUMBIA PIKE AND FOUR MILE RUN INTERSECTION WORK

The county has met with residents to review plans for improving the intersection of Columbia Pike, Four Mile Run Drive (minor) and Buchanan Street. This intersection is adjacent to the Good Will and the recycling drop off area, across the street from Bob & Edith’s West. The basic plan is to provide left turn lanes for the small shopping center on the north side of the Pike, and align Buchanan St. (north side) with the two-lane portion of Four Mile Run Drive on the south side. This intersection has been an adventure, and not in a good way, for years. The improvements will be welcomed.



*Neighborhood kids take turns hitting the piñata at the 4th of July picnic.*

## Arlington Seniors September Activities

The popular **Senior Singers Chorale** resumes rehearsals Tues., Sept. 12, 2 p.m., Langston-Brown Senior Center. New members are welcome; no auditions. \$30 per semester. Call for details, 703-228-6300.

**Elementary computer classes** for seniors begin Tues., Sept. 12, 1 p.m., Mt. Olive Baptist Church. Free. Call to register, 703-228-0949

**Arlington Public Schools** are looking for senior volunteers to help in reading aloud and homework assistance, gardening work and working in libraries. Learn more Wed., Sept. 13, 10 a.m., Langston-Brown Senior Center, 703-228-6300 or Wed., Oct. 4, 1:30 p.m., Langston-Brown Senior Center, 703-228-0948.

**Dining Out Club** at Lee Senior Center will meet Thurs., Sept. 14 for dinner at Bistro 123 at Tyson's Corner. Call for details, 703-228-0555.

**Learn about Arlington's history** from Arlington Heritage Alliance member Robert McAtee Thurs., Sept. 14, 10:15 a.m., Walter Reed Senior Center. Opportunity to reminisce, share memories and view slides of Arlington's yesterday. Call to register, 703-228-0949.

**Opening day of the 2006 Northern Virginia Senior Olympics**, Sat., Sept. 16, 9:30 a.m., Falls Church High School (7521 Jaguar Trail, just west of Loehmann's Plaza off Rt. 50). The public is invited. Events run through Sept. 28. Opening day features track and field events. For more information, call 703-228-4721.

**Hearing loss support group** meets the third Wednesday of every month at Lee Senior Center, 1 p.m.–noon. Next meeting, Sept. 20. Call for information, 703-228-0555.

**Money laundering** and its connection to terrorism will be discussed Thurs., Sept. 21, 1 p.m., Culpepper Garden Senior Center. Call for details and to register, 703-228-4403.

**Weekly line dancing classes** (\$3.50 per class), drop in, beginning Mon., Sept. 25, 1 p.m., Lee Senior Center, taught by Pinky O'Neil. Call for details, 703-228-0555.

**Volunteer advocates** needed to promote the quality of life and care for people living in Arlington's long-term care residences. Good diplomacy and communication skills are needed. Training Sept. 26, 27 and Oct. 6. For details call 703-324-5435.

**Barbershop harmony show** presented by Arlington's Barbershop Chorus, Sat., Sept. 30, 2:15 p.m., NRECA building, 4301 Wilson Boulevard. Tickets, \$12. Call for details, 703-521-9331.

**Seniors needed to dress dolls and bears** for the Salvation Army to be given to underprivileged children in Arlington at Christmas. Dolls and bears provided; outfits can be handmade or purchased. Call for information, 703-228-4721.

**Volleyball for seniors** on Tuesdays at Langston-Brown Senior Center, 1:30 p.m. (practice), 2 p.m. (games). Call for details, 703-228-4745.

**Arlington Senior Golf Club** will be playing throughout September and October. If you're interested in joining for the final two months of the 2006 season, call 703-536-5916.

**Exclusive seniors hours at the fitness rooms** at Langston-Brown and Madison Senior Center. Staffed by certified fitness professionals. Cost is \$56 for a 16 session ticket. Call for details, 703-228-4745.

**Oil, acrylic and watercolor painting classes** at Lee, Walter Reed and Culpepper Garden Senior Centers. \$3.50 per class. Call for dates and times, 703-228-4721.

**Music appreciation group** meets every Friday, Culpepper Garden Senior Center, 1:30 p.m.–3:30 p.m. September's discussions will feature music inspired by graphic arts, George Frideric Handel, Hungarian composer Bela Bartok, plus Victor Hugo and Edvard Grieg. Call for details, 703-228-4403.

### SEPTEMBER TRAVEL FOR SENIORS, CALL 703-228-4749

Sept. 12 . . . National Portrait Gallery, D.C. \$8

Sept. 14 . . . Fire Museum of Maryland; tour and dinner. \$41

Sept. 15 . . . Charlestown, WV, slots, new games. \$26

Sept. 20 . . . Afternoon Tea at Normandie Farms Restaurant. \$34

Sept. 23 . . . Shenandoah Caverns, Valley Wine, Food & Craft Festival. \$32

Sept. 25 . . . Rehoboth Beach, DE, walk the boardwalk or shop at outlets. \$26

Sept. 26 . . . Baltimore National Aquarium. \$33

Sept. 30 . . . Virginia State Fair, Richmond. Intergenerational event. \$19

## Penrose-Arlington Heights Yard Sale

*Note: Douglas Park residents have asked about this annual event and are invited to participate or simply to attend.*

Back by popular demand! Save the date! The annual Penrose-Arlington Heights yard sale will take place on Saturday, September 30th from 8 am to noon in the Patrick Henry Elementary School parking lot. For a \$10 fee per parking space area, anyone is invited to sell items.

Clean out the house or the shed! Be creative and sell crafts! Share a space with a friend! Don't have anything to sell? Come and buy everyone else's stuff!!

The sale will be advertised in local papers and in the *Washington Post*. The first three individuals who agree to post additional signage at named locations around the area will be excused from the \$10 participation fee.

To reserve a space, please contact Janet Dorn at keudo@juno.com



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