




Barcroft News

Summer 2003

Vol 100, Issue 10

There is a new BSCL president writing this month's column... Eric Harold. He offers a great overview of issues facing the neighborhood and invitations to participate in many different ways. We all owe departing president Pat Williamson-Edwards a great thank you for all of her hard work, energy and commitment to making this neighborhood such an exceptional place to live. No matter what the debate, you could always count on Pat for leadership and keeping the tone civilized and productive.

**15th Annual Barcroft
4th of July Parade!**
Fun begins 10AM, Barcroft Community House
800 Buchanan St.,
followed by BBQ.
See Pg. 15 for details.



President's Report: What's Ahead for Barcroft?

— *By Eric Harold*

When Pat Williamson Edwards took over as president in May 2001, she laid out a set of priorities that would serve as a guide for the neighborhood over her two years as President. In reviewing those priorities, she did a remarkable job at achieving many of them during her tenure. Many, many thanks are due to Pat for her efforts over the last two years as president and leader of Barcroft. She has left quite an example for me as I attempt to fill her role.

In keeping with her example, below I list some areas Barcroft can continue to work on this coming year. Please think through the list and consider selecting an area where we can individually lend oversight and leadership. Some areas already have very active committees and others are not as active right now. Regardless, there are opportunities for people to become involved and to help keep Barcroft the wonderful community that it is. Also, please feel free to provide any thoughts or com-

ments to me (eric@bscl.org) or to any other member of the leadership (see the list on page 2) as to other issues that are of concern to the neighborhood that for some reason did not make the list.

Community: I continue to be amazed at the support of the activities we plan as a neighborhood. Spaghetti dinners, the parade, various picnics and other social gatherings are well attended and enjoyed by many. There are, however, some areas that we could build upon and add to the community spirit that makes Barcroft the envy of Arlington:

- **Membership:** Current membership costs \$3 per person or \$6 per family. That sounds like a deal, right? Well, right now only there are only 408 dues-paying members (241 households). That's only 11 percent of the neighborhood population, and less than 20 percent of the neighborhood households (based on the

(Continued on page 12)

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Deadlines: 1st (ads) or 10th (editorial material) day of the month preceding the issue month.

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The *Barcroft News* is printed on recycled paper with vegetable-based ink by the Stanley Adams Printing Company.
 All phone numbers are area code 703.

Next BSCL Meeting:
 Not until Thursday, Sept. 4
 7:30 PM, Community House

Keep up with events over the summer by joining the Barcroft chat group and news list. Go to: www.bscl.org.

Streetscape Work at Buchanan and Columbia Pike

— *By Eric Harold*

The County is currently moving on plans to fix up the intersection at South Buchanan Street and Columbia Pike. Bill Roberts, from the Office of Neighborhood Services, would like to meet with Barcroft residents at our next meeting (in September) to discuss the potential improvements and solicit input from us. While the design phase has yet to begin, the preliminary concept plan for the intersection includes:

- Left turn lane from Columbia Pike on to Four Mile Run (major)
- Streetscape improvements, to include widening sidewalks, undergrounding of utilities (if budget allows), pedestrian scale street lighting and street trees

- Pedestrian improvements to include improving the crosswalks and shortening the crossing distances
- Consolidating entrances and otherwise improving the circulation into and out of the shopping center on the north side of Columbia Pike (across from Bob & Edith's, with the dry cleaner).

There are no plans at this time to align Four Mile Run (minor) with Buchanan Street. Mr. Roberts envisions the design phase to begin this summer, and construction to begin a year or more from now. Please either email me at eric@bscl.org or call me at 703 486 0879 to let me know if there are any questions or concerns.



**4TH OF JULY PARADE!! Coming Soon!
See Pg. 15 for details!**



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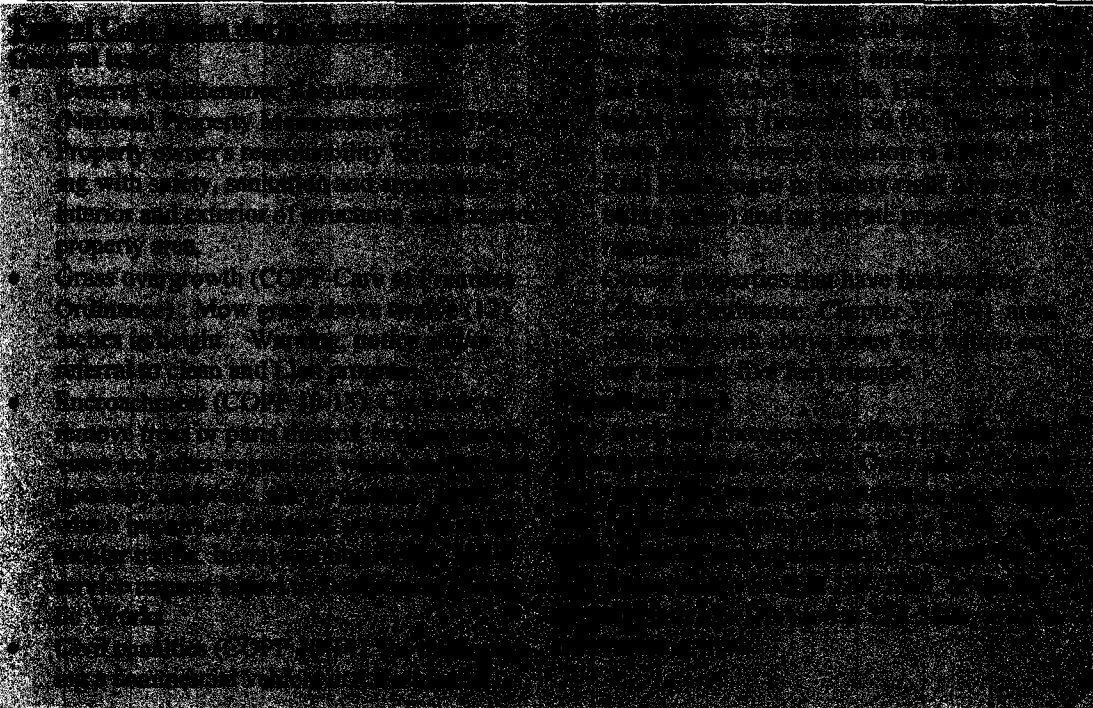
Possible Code Issues in the Neighborhood

As we move into Spring and Summer, the issues of landscaping and new construction become a subject of conversation amongst all household members. Who will cut the grass? What plants should be put in the ground? Are the trees healthy? Should we add a shed? Let's replace our fence. How about a new addition? These questions are generally considered by most property owners including county facilities personnel, especially during the warmer months of the year.

There are some basic rules about landscaping, care of your property, and property maintenance that property owners and management companies should be aware of, before starting outside work. If in doubt, there are three useful numbers. Call Inspection Services Division at 703-228-3800 to get permits for new construction to include fences, accessory structures, additions, interior alterations, etc. Call Code Enforcement at 703-

228-3232 for Property maintenance, Zoning, and Care of Premises issues. The Historic Preservation Program at 703-228-3830 offers information and assistance for items related to the Barcroft Community House, a locally designated district. (See below for an outline of issues our inspectors frequently encounter)

Beyond the need for review and compliance with any approved permit for the Barcroft Community house (Certificate of Appropriateness or CoA) are the Zoning Ordinance regulations governing various aspects of landscaping, setbacks, etc; Care of Premises Ordinance; and Property Maintenance Codes requirements that regulate all property throughout the County. These guidelines cover typical problems such as trash, grass overgrowth, encroachment, property maintenance, and visual clearance at corners.

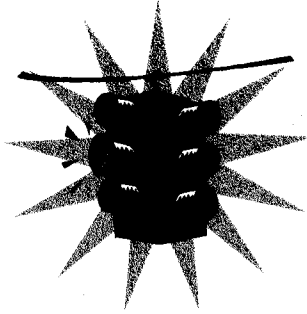


Trav Fick Predicts: The End is in Sight

Our Traffic Calming petitions for Wakefield Street were completed and submitted with a draft summary of results to the County Traffic

Calming Coordinator on May 28. The results showed that of 205 households petitioned, 142 signed in agreement with the revised plan, 13 in disagreement, and 50 with no answer for various reasons:

vacancy, not at home, no answer, etc.; so the required 60% agreement was reached and surpassed by 69.3%. The initial Wakefield plan was based on circles at the intersections between 9th and 6th; however, later on their effectiveness and safety in a school zone were questioned and the circles



deemed too ambiguous as a traffic measure at the Barcroft Elementary School site. Therefore, raised crosswalks will be installed at 6th Street, Barcroft School, and 9th Street; the intersection at 8th with a two-way stop qualified for a 4-way stop.

The total cost of the project has not been officially tallied but, since raised crosswalks are similar to humps, their cost may be approximately \$7,000 each; the final figure will be reported to you. Another report will be due after the total Traffic Calming Project in Barcroft has been installed and in use for at least 6 months; the County will conduct an evaluation. Drive gently!

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Point and Counterpoint: Should Arlington Have a Baseball Stadium?

As the decision for relocation of the Montreal Expos nears, debates about moving the team to Arlington have heated up. The Virginia Baseball Stadium Authority (VBSA) has held several public meetings over the last month to present their preliminary plans, potential locations, and economic studies. Here are two sides of a current and hotly debated issue.

The Case For A Baseball Stadium In Arlington

— *By Walt Belknap*

The argument is simple. Without a stadium, there will be no team. Without a team, a source of pleasure for many people in Arlington and in Barcroft will not exist.

Major league baseball matters. Maybe you don't like baseball. What about your friends and relatives? What about your coworkers? What about your neighbors? What about the kid across the street or the old guy (like me) who you see picking his newspaper off the sidewalk at six in the morning so he can read how the team did late last night on the West Coast?

If we had a team, you might go into a store and encounter a normally quiet, unhelpful clerk who greets you with a big smile because his team won last night. Professional sports has a unique ability to reach out to all kinds of people and make their day just a little bit better.

Washington is a major American city, like New York, Chicago, or Los Angeles. They have two teams — we have none. Cities like Tampa, San

Diego, and Cincinnati have teams and we don't. Why?

Those who oppose baseball will complain about traffic. Baseball is played at night on weekdays and on weekends - not peak traffic hours. Baseball isn't played at all in the winter and played in the other team's park half the summer. We are talking about 81 days out of 365. Opponents never mention all the traffic generated by whatever goes in that empty space if there's no stadium. And something WILL be built in that space.

I took my daughter to a ballet at the Kennedy Center once. I don't like ballet. I've never been back to Kennedy Center. But I'm glad I went. It was a special occasion — like going to a baseball game.

Baseball is like the bus that goes up 4th Street every morning. I don't ride it. It's big, noisy, it pollutes. But to the 15 people in Barcroft who ride it every morning, that bus matters a lot. I respect that. It's not about me. The community needs that bus. We also need a stadium.

Misplaced Priorities

— *By Eric Harold*

The VBSA and its fan-based group Virginians for Baseball are making impassioned arguments for relocating the Expos to Virginia. While I certainly understand the emotional desire to have a baseball team, and I'm not going to argue with long-time fans otherwise, this is a case of misplaced priorities by the Commonwealth of Virginia and by Arlingtonians. Relocating the Expos

to Arlington, as proposed by VBSA, does not make economic sense and should not happen.

Before getting too far, I want to disassociate myself from the rabid opposition to the stadium that has been making the rounds to the recent public meetings. Many of them are associated with No Arlington Stadium organization, while others are residents of the neighborhoods adjacent to the pro-

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(Baseball Stadium? Continued from page 6)

posed sites. I admire their passion and energy in fighting this battle. Their arguments against the stadium, however, border on the dogmatic and can only be categorized as severe NIMBYism. I attended the recent public forum (May 28 at Gunston) as a person trying to gain further insights into the rationale and economics of the proposed Arlington stadium. I left early, only slightly better informed but absolutely sickened by the rudeness of many of those in opposition. There are sound arguments to be made against building the stadium. I couldn't hear them because of the shouts and catcalls of many from the audience.

As a smart-growth initiative, the proposed Arlington locations are textbook examples of good urban planning. The three potential sites are located in already densely developed areas with existing infrastructure (water, sewer, transportation). Access to public transportation (Metro rail and Bus as well as VRE) would definitely lessen the impact of traffic on the adjacent neighborhoods. If baseball were to be relocated to Virginia, any of the Arlington locations would make perfect sense, and would be in keeping with Arlington's award-winning development philosophy of locating denser development along the Metro corridors. VBSA, however, is not concerned about smart-growth.

VBSA argues that Arlington needs baseball to "put it on the map." They seem to believe that there is a self-image problem in Arlington. Baseball and other professional sports do have an emotional impact on regions, and can do much for the public morale. Those arguments, however, do not work for me. Arlington County has much to be proud of: beautiful neighborhoods with active and engaged citizens, a tremendous school system (all four of our high schools were recently named by Newsweek as among the nation's most demanding public schools), prime commercial and retail development that continues to attract builders and developers (even without a stadium), a wonderful park system. I could go

on. We can't make a decision of this magnitude based on faulty emotional premises.

VBSA further argues that no public funds will be spent to build the stadium. While the VBSA will not be using the Commonwealth's general fund for the stadium (your state taxes will not fund the stadium), sales taxes will be used. Through a vehicle known as "state tax rebates," the VBSA will receive the sales tax revenues from all transactions that take place during a ball game. Included in these rebates are personal income tax revenues based on "...salaries, wages and other income generated through employment or the conduct of a trade or business at or within the facility." Retail sales tax revenues will be rebated to the VBSA. Sales and income taxes associated with the development and construction of the stadium will be rebated to the VBSA. All of these rebates go to pay off the debt issued to build the ballpark. This is public money—much of which might otherwise be spent in Virginia and Arlington and go to the general fund.

Finally, VBSA feels that a baseball stadium would be great for the local economy. While much of the revenue in the stadium will go to paying for the ballpark, VBSA argues that additional spending by employees, visitors and others in the community will generate revenues for the Commonwealth and for Arlington County. Those arguments—basically that the stadium will be a catalyst for economic growth in the area—have been proven false time and again by numerous scholars (from both conservative and liberal groups). In the book *Sports, Jobs, and Taxes* (Brookings Institution, 1997) that examined the affects of sports on local and regional economies, the following conclusions were drawn:

- "A new sports facility has an extremely small (perhaps even negative) effect on overall economic activity and employment. No recent facility appears to have earned anything approaching a reasonable return on investment. No recent fa-

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(Baseball Stadium? Continued from page 7)

cility has been self-financing in terms of its impact on net tax revenues. Regardless of whether the unit of analysis is a local neighborhood, a city, or an entire metropolitan area, the economic benefits of sports facilities are de minimus.”

- “Sports facilities attract neither tourists nor new industry. Probably the most successful export facility is Oriole Park, where about a third of the crowd at every game comes from outside the Baltimore area. (Baltimore's baseball exports are enhanced because it is 40 miles from the nation's capital, which has no major league baseball team.) Even so, the net gain to Baltimore's economy in terms of new jobs and incremental tax revenues is only about \$3 million a year—not much of a return on a \$200 million investment.”

There are opportunity costs as well. A paper written by Paul Gessing of the National Taxpayers Union and NTU Foundation stated, “A stadium, like any other investment, is economically beneficial only if it produces more value than other investment opportunities that could be undertaken with the same money. Economists call this principle “opportunity cost.” In other words, the same money used to finance a stadium might otherwise have gone to finance a new park or build a new civic center or library. Also, this money might instead have gone to hire more police, firefighters, or teachers or been kept by taxpayers who are saving for retirement or for their child's college education.” (Policy Paper 133, February 28, 2001). The Commonwealth, Arlington County, and VBSA have not presented any analyses comparing stadium economics to other types of development that could be placed on the same sites. They have not presented the opportunity cost of the stadium. Without that, taxpayers cannot make an informed decision.

The Heritage Foundation points this out as a normal tactic employed by supporters of public financing of sports facilities. Dr. Ronald Utt, in an article titled “Taxpayers Prop Up Sports Profits (July 30, 2002), stated: “As part of the sales pitch, team owners usually hire an economic consultant to ‘study’ the issue, and the consultant invariably concludes that the new stadium will have a favorable economic impact of several hundred millions of dollars per year. What information these consultants never provide, though, is how the economic impact of a stadium investment stacks up against, say, the impact of an investment in a new university, which could be had for around the same price. Nor do their calculations measure the losses incurred by other local entertainment venues as consumer recreational spending is diverted to professional sports. These consulting studies also overlook the fact the those who receive the bulk of the franchise payroll - the players - will likely reside, and spend, elsewhere.”

Arlington does not need a baseball team—not for our image, not for economic reasons, and especially not one that is publicly financed. A baseball stadium built now represents extremely misplaced priorities. As a public investment, sports facilities are poor choices. In this time of severe budget crunches in Virginia, a regional housing crisis, transportation systems in need of overhaul and real revitalization needed elsewhere in Arlington (such as Columbia Pike), spending public time and money wooing a professional sports team and building stadium does not make sense.

Newsletter Note: A Neighbor has suggested that we advertise events earlier than just for the month ahead. I know that people often don't hear about events until afterwards. I will gladly announce things earlier if I get the info earlier! If you know of anything in the months ahead, let me know so I can get the word out.

Announcements

Neighborhood Garage Sale Successful: At least, that's what people told me. There was lots of traffic through the neighborhood and lots of people out selling their valuables... getting up signs definitely pulled in the crowds more than being on the Map. It was fun walking around and talking with everyone, and witnessing firsthand the courageous struggle of yard-sale-seller vs. nature (at least the deluge waited until evening). Interested in doing this next year? Let me know what worked and what didn't, and suggestions for next year. (editor@bscl.org) Thanks for all who helped!

Instructors Needed for Barcroft Elementary Intersessions: Barcroft Elementary will begin school in August 2003 as the first Arlington school to implement a Modified School Year Calendar. Three intersessions will be scheduled during the school year. The intersessions are opportunities for students to participate in short courses that will be designed to enrich our curriculum through engaging, hands-on lessons. We invite teachers, parents and members of the community to consider teaching a course during our intersession time. For mor information, please contact Miriam Hughey-Guy, Principal or Jeannette Kwok at Barcroft Elementary School by telephone or email. Intersession dates are: October 6 to 17, 2003; January 5 to 9, 2004; March 22 to April 2, 2004. Call 228-5838, or email mguy@Arlington.k12.va.us or jckwok@tmail.arlington.k12.va.us

The Plant Sale Success Story: Another successful plant sale for charity! Thanks to the Barcroft Community for their fantastic support and two special members that help create an added bonus to the donation total! The rainy, cool Spring didn't help the turn out for the event, but with a little post event sales, we raised \$2,000 to Tour

de Friends, a fundraising bike ride that benefits Food and Friends. Thanks to all that bought plants and a special thanks to my partner, Tom, for his endless support and creative ideas.
Peace and Plants - Peter Woods.

Time for Spring Organizing! Donations are being accepted for sewing materials (small and large), yarns AND sewing machines for the sewing clubs at Arlington Mill and Harvey Hall Community Centers. Please contact Ginger Geoffrey if you would like to make a donation at (703) 243-7181 or email ginger@Atalk2us

Update on African Immigrant Training Program: Last fall, the BSCL voted to support an initiative sponsored by Our Savior Lutheran Church on S. Taylor St. to establish a janitorial training program for African immigrants in the area. Subsequently, County approval was received and Arlington Cleaning, Inc. was formed. The business is fully operational now and is licensed, insured, and bonded.

Arlington Cleaning is operated by Eritrean immigrants who are Church members and want to help people in our community who are underemployed. They provide services on a weekly, biweekly, monthly, or one-time basis, and their motto is "A Clean House is a Healthy Home." If you're looking for dependable household help or cleaning services for your small business, call 703-892-4846 or 571-723-2219 (cell phone) for a free estimate.

Also, Arlington Cleaning is looking for immigrants who are willing to learn, need job training, and want to participate in the program. If you know anyone who can benefit from this program, give them the phone number. This program provides great returns to the community!

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Have anything to contribute to the Barcroft News? This will be our last newsletter until September. The next deadline will be August 15th. Feel free to send along any items of interest during the summer to:

Contact Christina at 271-0631 or editor@bscl.org or 618 S. Stafford St.

Ads are due by the 13th of each month; contact Jim Kerr at Jim@bscl.org.

Have a great summer!
See you at the Parade!

St. John's Will Hold Annual Vacation Bible School

St. John's Episcopal Church in Glencarlyn, will be the site for a week-long Vacation Bible School July 20-24 (Sunday-Thursday) from 6-8 p.m. St. John's will host the week-long exploration of Bible stories in conjunction with St. Paul's Episcopal Church, Bailey's Crossroads.

Vacation Bible School is open to those from four years of age to rising 5th graders.

The program will begin with dinner at 6:00 p.m., and the program will start at about 6:20. Participants will take part in music, storytelling, crafts and recreation during the program. The cost of the program is \$10 per child, with a maximum of \$25 per family. One parent in each family will be asked to help one evening during the week.

For more information or to obtain a registration form, please contact St. John's at 703-671-6834. Also, if you would like nursery care for children under 4, please let the church know as well. St. John's Episcopal Church is located at 415 S. Lexington St.

(President's Message: What's Ahead for Barcroft? Cont. from pg. 1)

- 2000 census). Joining shows interest in your neighborhood and support of its civic association. The larger the membership, the more strength it carries in dealing with Arlington County government, as well as other private and public organizations. Please, go to our web site at <http://www.bscl.org/memform.htm>, download the form and become a member.
- **Participation:** Don't wait to become a member to participate. The rest of this list outlines only some of the areas where you can lend a hand. Attend some meetings (we'll try to jazz them up this year). I'm tired of seeing the same old faces (thankful that they're present and active, of course).
 - **Programs:** People have some really great ideas for other things we can do to support our neighbors: a neighborhood clean-up day (or days), that would focus on lending assistance to our neighbors who for one reason or the other can not keep up with routine maintenance; starting a tool "library," where neighbors donate extra tools, garden implements, or other items that you no longer use or rarely use. These would then be kept at the Community House and loaned out to Barcrofters. I'm sure that others of you have ideas or thoughts.
 - **Community House:** With the ramp completed, many thanks to Pat's efforts, there remain several tasks for the renovation and upkeep of the Community House. Top priority will be the inside renovation. David Michaelson is heading up the renovation committee and is looking for volunteers. The house con-

tinues to be very popular, so there are wear and tear issues that will need to be dealt with throughout the year. The exterior of the Community House is fantastic, but there remains some final landscaping to be completed. We also have money allocated to build a shed on the grounds.

- **Barcroft School:** Barcroft Elementary School continues to excel and maintain its award-winning qualities. Through Pat's efforts, we have increased our level of coordination. We need to maintain our involvement with the PTA in all levels of neighborhood activities.

Issues: Our committees continue to actively track our issues of concern and advocate for us to the County. The list below represents the most active committees, and in general represents the ongoing issues that we as a neighborhood need to continue monitoring:

- **Parking Committee:** The Parking Committee has much work to do, and no committee chairperson to lead it. Parking along 9th Street from the churches continues to be of concern to our neighbors there. The County continues to pursue a commercial parking ordinance and is in the process of developing a nighttime residential permit parking ordinance. These issues as well as our internal parking concerns need to be tracked.
- **Traffic Committee:** Elaine Squeri, who is also a very active member of the Arlington County Neighborhood Traffic Calming Committee, currently chairs the Traffic Committee. Elaine has masterfully led us through two traffic calming

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(President's Message: What's Ahead for Barcroft? Cont. from pg. 12)

processes for Buchanan and Wakefield. The next step now that Wakefield is completed will be the evaluation of the measures by the County. She will stay on through this process, but will likely step down by next year. Traffic issues do remain, as cut-through traffic continues to be an issue, and as the Pike redevelopment kicks into gear we will need to be watchful of the traffic impacts to our neighborhood.

- **Park Committee:** Shelley Price Fichtner heads up the Parks Committee. The main task is to get the park at Four Mile Run and Columbia Pike out of the design phase and into construction. We also need to stay actively involved with County staff to push for clean up of the VEPCO site at Buchanan Street/Pershing Street to "residential" standards so it can be converted into another park or other suitable use.
- **Columbia Pike Revitalization:** Through the efforts of Bryant Monroe, our CPRO

representative, as well as neighbors too numerous to mention, Barcroft received pretty much everything we wanted from the Columbia Pike planning process. There are remaining issues that will affect Barcroft, such as the ongoing streetscape planning task force and the parking strategy process. These are important issues that are being tracked by several Barcrofters. We need to continue to monitor this, especially as the Pike begins to re-develop.

- **Neighborhood Conservation Plan:** Our conservation plan is over 10 years old and is in need of a thorough review. It is a Herculean effort to produce an updated plan, and a wholesale revision may not be necessary. We do, however, need to review it and bring it more in line with current neighborhood thinking and priorities. This is an opportunity to examine the entire neighborhood and provide more up-to-date thoughts on the pressing issues. The more current the plan is, the greater clout it will have on the County planning level.

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Crying Wolf... When There is None

— *By Bill Nehrke*

As I was driving up Wakefield Street just past Barcroft Elementary School a lady walking her dog started raising and shaking her hands and yelling "slow down!" It caught me by surprise. I thought I might have been going too fast. But when I looked at my speedometer I discovered that I was well under the posted speed of 25 mph. I ignored the incident realizing that the resident did not have benefit of a speed gun to give her accurate speed information. At home several days later I mentioned the incident to my wife. Much to my surprise she said the same thing happened to her near 6th Street. According to her she was only going 20 miles per hour when this happened. To wave and shout when drivers are going over the posted speed is acceptable ... but when drivers are under the posted speed this is harassment which drivers do not need. Let's be a little more driver-friendly neighbors. If residents want the speed limit lower the monthly BSCL is the place to initiate action - not out on the public streets.

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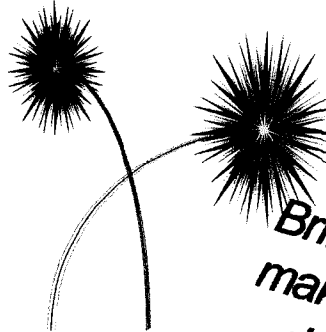
Join us for Barcroft's Annual 4th of July Parade
 Friday, July 4th
 10:00 A.M.



Parade begins at Barcroft Community House
 800 S. Buchanan St.
 Marchers should check in at 9:45

This year's event features:

- Barcroft's own Honor Guard
- Grand Marshall Uncle Sam
- Could Be You — Don't Know if The Barcroft precision lawn-mower team will Show!
- Food, drink, friends and neighbors
- The famous Barcroft Marching Band and other musical enchantment
- High Energy Magic of Speed and Thro
- Parade Medals



*Bring a dish,
 make a float,
 ride your
 bike, join in
 the fun!*

Sponsored by the Barcroft School and Civic League
 For more information, call Andrew Hunter at 979-8247.



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

Added Value with Decks ♦

Adding a deck to your home could recoup anywhere from 75-150% of the total cost. A deck can be designed as an extension of the living space, providing your home with more usability, especially if it can take advantage of a view.

Decks definitely add to the marketability of the house. Buyers can easily imagine themselves outside enjoying a suburban lifestyle, complete with grill. Decks are an excellent way to add value as well as create outdoor space for your own enjoyment. Depending on the time of year, you can use the deck to expand your living space with grills and perhaps even a hot tub.

Here are some things to consider when thinking about decks:

* Deck maintenance can be a big issue. Protect your deck annually.

* Consider vinyl coated decking. It has become very attractive and cost effective.

* Build a larger deck than you think you need. With patio furniture and accessories, most people end up needing more space than originally planned.

If you hire a contractor to build a deck for you, make sure to obtain a detailed plan, description of materials, total cost, and how long it will take. Want to make the right improvements with the best return before you sell? Call or email me for advice on remodeling projects with high returns and a FREE no obligation analysis of your home's value.

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currently for sale?*

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FREE Notary Service for Barcroft Residents!