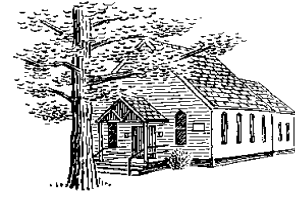


Barcroft School and Civic League
 800 South Buchanan Street
 Arlington, VA 22204



Barcroft News

February 2014

Vol III, Issue 6

Why is Your House Cold and Drafty?

By Scott Donalson

So are you uncomfortable in parts of your house now that it is colder, or did you cringe when that last gas bill came? Is your home dry in the Winter and you have to run a humidifier? Do you feel drafts by the windows and think you need to replace them? Did you think you just needed to add some insulation to solve the problems?

Most comfort and energy consumption issues are related to air leakage. Air leaks are caused by small gaps and cracks in the home and are caused by items such as recessed lights, electrical and plumbing penetrations in the tops of walls, framing gaps, ductwork problems, leaky bath fans, unsealed band joists, and many more. As warm, moist air goes out of the house in the Winter, cold dry air comes in causing humidity levels to drop. Stopping the air loss keeps cold air from coming in, thus no more drafts!

Air sealing is the number one priority by the EPA/DOE when it comes to home weatherization improvements. Insulation is

number two, but adding insulation is only about 50 percent effective without air sealing first. Air leakage and insulation problems can generally be solved with much less expense than replacing windows.

A home acts as a system and can involve many complex interactions which require the proper tools and training to diagnose problems correctly. So where do you start to address your comfort problems and other concerns? Start with a home energy audit, it is an in-home analysis using sophisticated diagnostic equipment to evaluate the home for comfort issues, energy savings, indoor air health, and combustion safety issues. The audit will find the root cause of problems and develop solutions to address them.

Attributes of a quality audit/auditor:

- Company is BPI accredited and auditor BPI certified both as a building analyst and envelope professional — www.BPI.org.
- Includes combustion safety testing, Infra-red imagery, energy bill analysis, and

Continued on page 4

Real Estate in 2014 - Here are a few predictions about where the market is likely headed this year.

Home sales - Sales are expected to continue to outperform 2013 levels in markets with hot economies. In the Metro DC market we don't anticipate any slowing.

Values - While sales will be more intense in some markets and just as steady or slightly cooler in others, home values will increase all around since demand continues to be really strong and the shortage will create more intense situations for buyers – more competition, more multiple bids. All of this points to increased home values.

Inventory - The good news is that rising home values have put homeowners in a better place overall last year and pulled a lot more owners out of negative equity. That means more freedom to sell. We expect lower supply than demand in the affordable price points – the sweet spot for many buyers.

Mortgage rates - Mortgage rates are at incredibly low levels and while we expect some little increases here and there this year, the Fed hasn't indicated any major moves in the near future that would impact rates and home sales on a serious level.

The Economy - Trying to predict the economy is like trying to control an angry teenager. It's a volatile situation that's nearly impossible to predict at times. So far we're hearing news of steady growth. The economy's impact on buyers and sellers really is more of a local thing. Where local economies strengthen, their housing markets follow.

FREE Notary for Barcroft Residents!

Casey O'Neal, Associate Broker

RE/MAX Allegiance 703-217-9090

www.CaseyOneal.com

www.NovaHomeListings.com

www.NovaHomeValue.com

Barcroft News

Editor: Alyssa Ford Morel
703-907-9318,
editor@bscl.org

Advertising: Brian Hefner
advertising@bscl.org

Publisher/Mailing: Christine Hopkins,
christinehopkins@kw.com
703-350-2101

Next Deadline: January 15

BSCL Officers

President: Eric Harold, eric@bscl.org

Vice President: Chris Kupczyk
ckupczyk@verizon.net

Treasurer: Jennifer Lis
Jennifer@bscl.org

Recording Secy./ Randy Swart, 703-521-2080

Web: randy@bscl.org

Membership Secy.: Fay Cheung, fay@bscl.org

Board Members: Michael Behringer, Keith
Fred, Bryant Monroe,
Michael Nazareth

Contacts and Committees

Community House Rental Manager:
Barbara Swart
barcrofthouserental
@yahoo.com

Fundraising: Chris Ditta

Landscaping: Scott Brinitzer, 703-892-0308

Traffic Committee: Heidi Wicker

4th of July Parade: Andrew Hunter, 703-979-8247

Columbia Pike: Randy Swart, randy@bscl.org

Demeter House: Darlene Mickey

Parks: Shirley Gay

Signs: Ken Edwards

NCAC Rep.: Elizabeth Rives
elizabeth@bscl.org

Arlington Civic Fed. Delegates: Eric Harold, Randy Swart, Pat Williamson
Alternates: Karen Darner, David Michelson, Elaine Squeri, Mark Wigfield

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Visit Us Online: www.bscl.org

Monthly Happenings

President's Report by Eric Harold

Happy February, Barcroft! There is a lot going on in Arlington this Winter and Spring. Lots of changes. The special election campaign is in full swing for the County Board seat vacated by retiring Board member Chris Zimmerman, a long-time vocal advocate for Columbia Pike and its neighborhoods. Sally Baird, another strong voice on the School Board, is also stepping down after two terms. Jim Moran, our representative to Congress since...forever? announced his retirement. This promises to be an active campaign season for critical seats with significant impact on Barcroft and all of Arlington. Please take the time to educate yourself or become active in a campaign.

Speaking of Congressman Moran, please come to our February meeting where we will get an update on happenings on the Hill from a staff member for Jim Moran. More details inside.

One more month until springtime. We can make it! •

Mark Your Calendar For Community Meetings:

- **Thursday February 6, 7:30**
- **Thursday, March 6, 7:30**

Neighbor to Neighbor Ads

These ads are free to BSCL members.

The listings run for three months unless requested to be removed or updated.

Rebecca Bean Babysitter: 9th grader available nights and weekends. Email: rebeccaahbean@gmail.com or call 571-344-4134.

Need music for youth-focused party?

Concerned about cost? Call Dylan "DJ VIP" Vega: Local, teenage and reasonably priced. Dylanrvega@gmail.com or 703-907-9162.

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

August's Pet Sitting: 703-892-6712.

Alexandra's Babysitting: high school senior available, afternoon, nights and weekends. 703-307-4889.

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

Vacation Help: Responsible teen to water plants, bring in mail, care for pets, water gardens, etc: Dylan Vega, 703-271-5987, dylanrvega@gmail.com.

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

Farewell to Barcroft from Linda and Rosey

To Our Dear Barcroft Neighbors and Friends:
After 12 years in this wonderful community the winds are casting us west to New Mexico. Our house has sold and we will be pulling up roots at the end of January. I wanted to take this opportunity to thank all the fabulous people of Barcroft for your steadfast involvement in your community, to those that serve in elected positions to unsung heroes that write and deliver our fabulous Barcroft newsletter.

This departure is met with bitter-

sweet happiness as we say a fond farewell to our wonderful neighbors on 5th Street South. We will surely miss you, our block parties and the way we look after one another, always checking on neighbors, taking care of each other's houses and animals and lending a hand when needed. We will miss you so much. Our best to you all in 2014. May the New Year bring you happiness, good health and a dose of wealth. Our best,

Linda Webb and Rosey Rosanbalm

Seasonal Commentary from Neighborhood Teens

The Traditions of Valentines Around the World

By Markarius Nealis

Many places in the world celebrate Valentine's Day. It is very popular to send cards and roses. Another common gift is chocolates. In the United States Valentines day is when the most cards are sent. Valentines Day is a time when you show love and affection to other people in your life.

In Japan it is very common to give chocolates to people. In fact in Japan over half of the chocolates sold during the year are sold during the time of Valentines Day. In Italy it is very common to wait until Valentines day to be married.

Engaged couples will wait until this day to be married. Often many couples will gather together to be married all together as a group. Over 30 percent of marriages happen on Valentine's day. Over thirty countries celebrate Valentines Day and it is one of the most well known holidays. •

The Recent Weather

By Inge Nealis

The weather has recently been really cold, so cold that Arlington county schools were delayed two hours. Lots of houses were left without power and some even had their pipes freeze which caused flooding. Even though it was really cold outside it's hard to

believe some people actually went outside in a t-shirt! There were newscasters even warning people to not let their pets go outside for more than five minutes.

We went from freezing 6 degree weather to a nice 50 degree weather in just a matter of two days. I don't know about you but I think that's crazy. I can't even imagine what it would be like for the people who live in negative degrees weather on a daily basis. I hope that you stayed warm and that we don't have anymore really cold days. •

Letter to the Editor

Dear Editor:

I feel compelled to share a well-kept Barcroft secret -- a class at the meeting house on Wednesday evenings that helps me release stress, sleep better, find calm in the midst of my over scheduled life, get more centered on the present moment, and also flatten my stomach! It's yoga with Everyday Yoga and I highly recommend it. The class, which is for men and women of all ages, has a session on Wednesday evenings (www.EDYoga.com). I get to practice with Barcroft neighbors (which is a much more appealing way to practice than with a group of strangers) and it takes me less than 5 minutes to commute from door to door for a much needed holistic mind, body, spirit lifting end to my work day. Give it a try!

Lisa Cridge

News Notes

OKLAHOMA! IN BARCROFT

The Chalice Theatre, a multi-generational theatrical program at the Unitarian Universalist Church, is celebrating its 18th annual year with a boot-stomping production of one of America's best loved musicals about the exuberant spirit of a pioneer community and the tenderness of the human heart. Oklahoma! is coming to Barcroft!

With a cast of over 40 ranging in age from 8 to over 70, the musical will run for three weekends at UUCA. Opening night is Friday, February 28 and the show closes on Sunday, March 16. Performances are Fridays and Saturdays at 7:30 p.m., Sundays at 3 p.m. and an additional matinee performance on Saturday, March 15 at 3 p.m.

Tickets are \$15 for students and seniors, \$20 for other adults. Reserve your tickets at chalicetheatre.tickets@gmail.com or purchase them in person on Sundays at UUCA from February 2 through March 16.

SPAGHETTI SUPPER

St. John's Episcopal Church in Glencarlyn is having its annual spaghetti supper on Saturday, February 8 from 6 to 7:30 p.m. There will be a choice of several sauces, salads, bread. There will also be a selection of deserts. The cost is only \$5 for adults, \$3 for kids 3 to 6, and children under 3 are free.

We encourage you to bring a non-perishable food item for Arlington Food Assistance Center (AFAC). St John's is located at

415 South Lexington 22204. Questions call 703-671-6834. The website is stjohnsarlingtonva.org.

BLACK HISTORY MONTH OBSERVED AT THE WOMAN'S CLUB OF ARLINGTON

Kyra Hicks, noted author and African-American quilter, will speak at The Woman's Club of Arlington February 3rd meeting. Kyra will tell the true story of Martha Ann Ricks, a young slave girl and her fifty-year quest to see Queen Victoria and present her with a quilt. Kyra's talk is at 1 p.m. in the Woman's Club Clubhouse, 700 South Buchanan Street. The meeting is free and open to the public.

The Women's Club has also announced future events including a Flea Market in the Club Parking Lot on April 19. Vendors can rent a parking spot for \$20. Tables can also be rented. On May 17, the Club will hold its annual paper shredding event. •



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The People in Barcroft: Laurel Curry and Daniel Weir

Compiled by Lisa Piantanida

We moved to Barcroft this summer, at the end of May and live on 9th Street, west of Buchanan. We love the small town feel of the neighborhood and how welcoming everyone has been. Our favorite thing has to be the proximity to the W&OD trail.

Fun facts about our family: Daniel began law school this fall at George Mason and

works full time (ok that's a not so fun fact.). Laurel tries to keep him sane while taking care of their high maintenance felines. Muphy and Sophie,



and working as a public health analyst at RTI International.

We hail from Moorhead, Minnesota, and Charleston, South Carolina, respectively, and met in D.C. in 2008. We were married last year in Charleston. We look forward to getting to know our neighbors! •

Laurel Curry and Daniel Weir, left, and their cats, Murphy and Sophie, above.



Why is Your House Cold and Drafty? *continued*

Continued from page 1

- other mechanical systems assessment.
- Includes comprehensive report tailored to the home with pictures and a prioritized list of recommendations.
- Includes post improvement validation.
- Cost: about \$400, four hours in home.

Additional Resources:

<http://www.HomeEnergyMedics.com>

(answers to frequently asked questions)

[http://www.energystar.gov/index.cfm?](http://www.energystar.gov/index.cfm?c=home_sealing.hm_improvement_sealing)

[c=home_sealing.hm_improvement_sealing](http://www.energystar.gov/index.cfm?c=home_sealing.hm_improvement_sealing) (how and where a home leaks air, air sealing information)

About the author: *Scott Donelson is an Arlington resident and president of Home Energy Medics, www.HomeEnergyMedics.com* •

Winter Greetings from Our Savior Lutheran School

By Nancy Greenwood

Thank you to everyone who stopped by at our open house in January. We are currently accepting applications for grades PreK through 8th. We offer before and after care, making us an easy choice for anyone who works at the Pentagon, NFATC or the AN-GRC.

We want to remind the Barcroft neighborhood that the school acts as a Market Day pick-up site every month. Market Day is a ready-made meal company that delivers the frozen food directly to the school. Anyone from the community can place an order through www.MarketDay.com and pick it up on the monthly delivery day. Delivery to the school is usually the first Tuesday of the month, with the deadline to order being the previous Wednesday. Check out the website for more information or to order.

We are excited to open our doors for the OSLS Used Book Sale on Friday, Febru-

ary 7. Please stop by from 6:00 to 8 p.m. to find some treasures and the proceeds will benefit the school. There will be something for everyone – children's books, mysteries, non-fiction – a little bit of everything! The book sale will be in the gymnasium and the school is located at 825 South Taylor Street.

For the 2nd year in a row, 7th grader Elisha Sutton was the winner of the National Geographic Geography Bee at our school. Elisha answered the most questions of all of the student contestants and will now take a written exam to see if he qualifies for the championship to be held later this year. Last year we were proud of Elisha, who made it to the state finals at Longwood University in Farmville, Virginia.

We are looking forward to our annual spelling bee that we do in conjunction with other Lutheran-area schools and also celebrating Lutheran Schools Week, both in March. •

Upcoming Meetings at Community House

By Christopher Kupczyk

Thursday, February 6 — Mary Giordano, a staff member from Representative James P. Moran's office, will be on hand to provide a constituent services update and to answer questions.

Thursday, March 6 — Henry Dunbar,

executive director of Phoenix Bikes, will give a presentation on his organization—a local non-profit providing youths with real-world skills and education in bicycle repair, mechanics, and sales.

Both meetings will begin at 7:30 p.m. Please join us! •

Woodpeckers

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

Winter is a great time to see woodpeckers. With few leaves on trees, they are easier to spot and they come readily to feeders, especially if nuts and suet are offered. Woodpeckers are most common in wooded areas, including neighborhoods with lots of trees.

From bill to tail, woodpeckers come well-equipped for making a living in trees. The business end of a woodpecker is its chisel-like bill used for opening up insect hiding places inside wood or under bark, carving out nest holes in trees, and for sending messages to other woodpeckers. Woodpecker bills come in a variety of sizes, depending on the size of the species and the kind of work they need to do.

Our largest local woodpecker, the Pileated, is a crow-sized bird with a big bill it uses to penetrate into the heartwood of a tree where it finds carpenter ants. The sparrow-sized Downy Woodpecker has a bill that seems too short for a woodpecker but it's strong and works well for extracting insects from under tree bark.

All that chiseling and pounding requires a firm grip. Most birds have feet adapted for perching, with three toes extending forwards foot and one pointing backwards. Woodpeckers, however, have two toes pointing forward and two pointing backwards to help them get a strong grip on tree bark. A woodpecker's tail is stiff and pointed at the end to provide a firm brace while pecking or moving up and down.

A woodpecker uses its bill to get to in-

sects in wood but uses its long, sticky, barb-ended tongue to do actual catching. The tongue and its supporting structures are so long that they wrap around the inside of the skull and can extend up to five times the length of its bill. The tongue is perfect for grabbing insects in tunnels.

Woodpeckers also use their bills for communication. Instead of announcing their availability as a mate with a song, male woodpeckers drum on a resonant branch, trunk – or sometimes house siding or metal chimney! Females join the males in drumming to proclaim a pair's territory. A shock absorber system protects the bird's brain from the pounding.

Five species of woodpeckers inhabit Arlington all year and another is a winter visitor. In addition to Pileated and Downy Woodpeckers, we have Hairy and Red-bellied Woodpeckers, both about robin-sized, and the somewhat larger Northern Flicker. Flickers spend considerable time foraging on the ground. Our winter visitor is the Yellow-bellied Sapsucker.

Sapsuckers feed heavily on sap from wells they peck into the outer layer of a tree trunk. These wells usually form a characteristic row of holes that sometimes encircle a trunk or branch. Look for streak of sap running down a tree trunk during a period of freeze and thaw and you might see a sapsucker nearby.

For more information on woodpeckers and other birds, visit the Cornell Lab of Ornithology at www.allaboutbirds.org/guide/search -- and, of course, call or visit us at Long Branch or Gulf Branch Nature Centers. ●

Flavors of the Season: Soup

*By Kari Hickman,
virtualgoodyplate.blogspot.com*

Nothing says "I love you" more than chocolate, am I right? And everyone needs a little love in February, when, no matter what the groundhog sees, the cold has set in and spring is still just too far away. These brownies are JUST the thing for any day of this Cold Month — dark, rich and fudgy — but also eye-rollingly, coma-inducingly special enough to make anyone feel loved on Valentine's Day.

Macadamia Fudge Brownies

1 bag (12 oz) semisweet chocolate chips
1/4 cup (1/2 stick) unsalted butter
3/4 cup sugar
2 eggs
1 cup all-purpose flour
1/4 tsp salt
2/3 cup plus 3 T chopped macadamia nuts
1 tsp vanilla extract

1. Heat oven to 350. Line an 8-inch square baking pan with nonstick aluminum foil; set aside.

2. Place 1 cup of the chocolate chips and the butter in a large microwave-safe bowl (make sure it is large - this is the bowl you'll be mixing all the batter in.) Microwave for 1 minute. Stir until smooth. Microwave an additional 30 seconds, if needed.

3. Whisk in sugar, then eggs. Stir in flour and salt until smooth. Fold in 2/3 cup of the




chopped macadamia nuts and the vanilla. Transfer batter to prepared pan.

4. Bake at 350 for 25 to 29 minutes.

5. Sprinkle remaining 1 cup chocolate

chips over brownies and return to oven for 2 more minutes. Remove from oven, and spread melted chips until smooth, to form a "frosting." Top with remaining 3 tablespoons nuts. Refrigerate 1 hour to firm chocolate, then cut into squares. Makes 16 brownies. ●



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Winter News from Barcroft Elementary

By Jenny Ditta, Barcroft Elementary Liaison

Barcroft Elementary hopes that our neighbors are keeping warm during this chilly winter season. Here's a look at events happening at Barcroft in the next several months.

During February, mid-year parent-teacher conferences will be held just before the Presidents' Day holiday, so students will have no school from February 13 to 17.

March is "Arts in the Schools" month. The PTA plans to celebrate the arts on March 4 with some great faculty art and music presentations at the March 4 PTA meeting. The ever-popular Coffee House and Book Exchange will also be held on March 4. Enjoy hot chocolate with friends and neighbors, drop off books that your family no longer uses, and feel free to take home and enjoy books that are new to you. Also in March, three student teams will be competing in the March 15 preliminary Odyssey of the Mind competition. The student teams have been meeting and working hard since November 2013. We wish them good luck!

From March 31 to April 11 is Spring Intersession. Intersession is a wonderful two-week program of special classes offered each Fall and Spring. Because of Barcroft's modified school year schedule, these additional learning opportunities are built into the calendar. Students may take morning and afternoon enrichment classes offered by the school during these two weeks or enjoy time off. The Spring

Break holiday is from April 14 – 18.

Please save the date: May 3 will be the Barcroft Spring Fair. There will be games, fun, food, cake walks, book fairs, bakes sales, jewelry sales, and much more for the entire family. May 5 to 9 is Staff Appreciation Week. During that week, the PTA will plan special activities to thank our wonderful teachers and staff for all that they do to help our students. Annual Virginia Standards of Learning (SOL) testing will also commence this month and end in June.

Finally, Farm to Table week will occur on June 9 to 13. During the week, students will have an opportunity to sample fresh, local produce during lunch. On the evening of June 13, there will be a special dinner and Leonardo learning event. We hope that you will join us! •

Real Estate Tax Relief

Real Estate Tax Relief is available for qualified Arlington County homeowners who are at least age 65, and/or totally and permanently disabled. Eligible homeowners may receive either an exemption, partial exemption, and/or deferral from paying their real estate taxes. The maximum income level to qualify is \$99,472. The maximum asset level to qualify, excluding the value of your home, is \$340,000 for exemption, and \$540,000 for deferral. The filing deadline is March 31 for a timely adjusted bill. The final deadline is August 15. For more information, go to arlingtonva.us/grants or call (703)228-1350. •

StormwaterWise Landscapes Program

The County's StormwaterWise Landscapes Program provides participants with a home stormwater audit and financial and technical resources to install stormwater runoff-reducing practices. We are currently accepting applications for the 2014 program year. Visit www.arlingtonva.us/stormwater-wise to learn more about the program and to apply. Applications will be accepted until February 14, 2014.

With half of Arlington's impervious surfaces located on private property, your property plays an important role in stream protection. The County's StormwaterWise Landscapes Program provides participants

with a home stormwater audit and financial and technical resources to install stormwater runoff-reducing practices.

The following practices are eligible for StormwaterWise:

- Conservation landscapes
- Pervious surface installation to include permeable interlocking pavers and pervious concrete
- Rain gardens
- Impervious pavement removal

Questions? Contact Christin Jolicoeur at cjolicoeur@arlingtonva.us or 703-228-3588 or Jen McDonnell at jmcdonell@arlingtonva.us or 703-228-3042. •



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