

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



Vol III, Issue 7

Arlington Public Schools Seeks Community Input

Arlington Public Schools (APS) faces significant enrollment growth. Between 2008 and 2013, enrollment increased by nearly 4 percent per year (totaling 3,782 new students). Currently, all school levels are operating at or over capacity. Current projections predict continued increase over the next ten years.

isting facilities, and ongoing maintenance needs. This year's CIP process is part of the More Seats for More Students (MSMS) initiative, which is the process for engaging the Arlington community to alleviate predicted overcrowding in APS schools.

To address these shortfalls, APS is engaging in a broad community outreach process to get input on the Capital Improvement Plan (CIP), which will address the APS needs for new facilities, additions/renovations to ex-

The MSMS effort will use a wide range of approaches to reach the APS community. Over 20 countywide meetings and engagement opportunities are planned through April. They have already started, with several meetings held already in February.

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The Moringa Project in Mali – One Year Update

By Mary DeWitt-Dia

Last year, in the February 2013 issue of the Barcroft newsletter, we told you how Mamadou Dia had a dream to be a farmer and that the dream materialized as a Moringa farm in Mali, West Africa. This article is a one year progress update about the farm.

In September 2013, Mamadou Dia made his annual trip to Mali to assess the pro-

gress of his Moringa forest and meet with farm managers and the Centre de Santé de Manabougou. It was a very productive year. The Moringa forest is shaping up with some plants growing taller and flowering while some others are still sprouting. The farm in Manabougou now has more than 2,000 Moringa plants/trees. The bi-weekly leaf harvest donation to the Centre de Santé de

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Arlington's real estate assessments in 2014 grew 5.8% with a strong residential market and construction of commercial properties. Residential sector average prices increased 5.3% from \$524,700 last year to \$552,700.

Barcroft neighborhood saw an increase in 2013 - the average sold price was \$670,084 with 35 listings sold. The average price in 2012 was \$589,494 with 31 units sold.

Looking at January 2014 versus January 2013, the housing market in the Washington DC Metro Region saw average sales prices increase by 7.8%. Arlington County saw a 9.8% increase.

Arlington continues to show resilience and stability, being one of the most popular areas to live. Affordability for buyers seeking housing is an ongoing challenge.

So far in 2014 – buyer demand has been strong and the supply has been low with multiple offers being common in most of the housing sectors. Traditionally the best time for a seller to obtain top dollar has been in the first quarter and early second quarter of the year and this year is predicted to follow those trend patterns.

Considering a move in the near future? I can provide guidance and value added services, offering creative strategies to help you maximize your outcome, including three popular pricing angles.

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Monthly Happenings

President's Report by Eric Harold

Happy Spring? Man, I hope it's close. This winter has truly been that... a winter. Snow, sleet, freezing rain, freezing temperatures, gray skies for days. Makes me homesick for my hometown, Canton, Ohio, where every winter day (and good parts of fall and spring) are gray and cloudy and cold. So, in an effort to speed things up, I've phoned home to Canton and asked them to take their winter back. Please.

We had a great spaghetti dinner on a cold January Sunday night. It was great to see all who came out. The spaghetti dinner does not go off by itself. Many hands make light work, and this year the hands were plentiful. Michael Nazeretz and the absolutely wonderful Spaghetti Tones did it again, provided music and singing to entertain. Maureen O'Keefe and Kevin Donnelly staffed the kitchen the entire evening and helped with the clean up. Ed Foley, the master at set up and take down. Helene Stebbins, master pot gatherer, spaghetti cooking cajoler, and sauce stirrer. My wife, Annie, who does the shopping (who doesn't love to go to Cosco?), chopping, stirring, gets kids lunches and suffers through pots strewn about our house until I get them back to their rightful owners. Ben Harris/Jenny Lindenauer, Bob and Paula Levin-Alcorn, Lisa and David, many others (apologies for forgetting names) who cooked spaghetti, helped make salads, and

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Neighbor to Neighbor Ads

These ads are free to BSCL members.

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

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 kevinmedia118@gmail.com or text/call 703-919-7605 .

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

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

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

Our Savior Lutheran School

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Our Savior, we challenge each grade every month to bring in the most box tops. If you are looking for a way to support our school, and have some box tops for education lying around, you can stop by our school office and drop them off.

Our Savior will be hosting an annual spelling bee for the Lutheran schools from our surrounding communities. It will take place on March 28. Call our school office at 703-892-

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

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.

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.

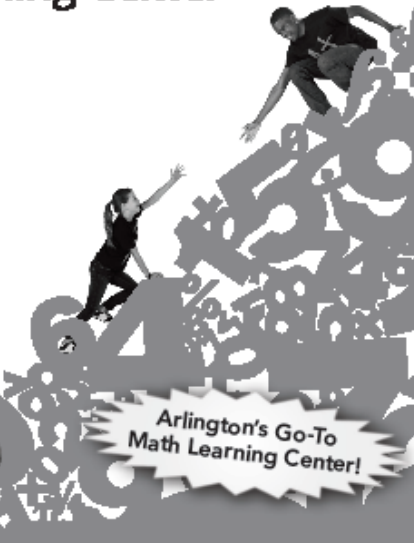
Babysitter, Petsitter, Vacation Help: Responsible 9th grader. Will water plants, bring in mail, etc. Email Tyler at tylerchanlapointe@gmail.com or call 571-244-7555. •

4846 for more information on beginning time. We would love for you to come on in and support our spellers.

We are currently accepting applications for the 2014-2015 school year for grades Pre-K through 8. We offer both before and after care. Stop by or call our school office if you have any questions. We would love to show you around and tell you more about our school. •

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Editorial: Seat Deficit Problem in Arlington Schools

By *Markarius Nealis*

Arlington is facing a problem with capacity at its schools. Most schools are either at capacity or above it. One of the largest problems is the situation for middle schools in North Arlington. The school board is looking at HB-Woodlawn as one of the options for the solution. They have proposed two options. The first is to double the size of HB and make it a 1,200 student school.

I think as a student at HB that this would totally change the community. HB is a community where you can know everybody. At HB it is small enough for the students to be able to interact with the Stratford Program students. Stratford is a program for mentally and physically challenged students. HB has a club that interacts with these students to let them know that they are part of the community. I also believe that if they decide to double the size of HB the HILT students might also feel out of place. HILT students are the students who do not speak English as their first language.

The second option would be to move HB out of its current building and put a middle school in its place solving the deficit of middle school seats for North Arlington. They would then just move HB into a leased office space or building. The only problem with this solution is that the people leasing the building might change their minds and suddenly you have a high school without a school. Someone

proposed at a meeting that we build another HB in south Arlington. I believe that this is a great idea that would solve the seat deficit problem and keep HB the same community. I also think that the Long Branch Aquatics Center should be part of a high school. Also another option could be reopening the current Madison community center to a elementary or middle school. There will be several meeting discussing the options. You can find these meeting discussions at the Arlington

APS Seeks Input, *cont.*

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For more information, email questions to: moreseats@apsva.us. Also, visit www.apsva.us/moreseats for up-to-date information on upcoming meeting dates/times or for information about the CIP process. A more detailed version of this article is available on the BSCL website at <http://bscl.org/>.

Monthly Happenings, *cont.*

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contributed deserts, among other things. Truly a neighborhood event. While the diners were a little light this year (hint hint...invite more friends next year!), the spirit was there.

One more month until springtime? Man, I hope it's less than one month. Chris Kupczyk has another great meeting lined up for March. See you then!

Black History Month Observed at Woman's Club

Kyra Hicks, author of *Martha Ann's Quilt for Queen Victoria* and noted African-American quilter, spoke at The Woman's Club of Arlington on February 2. In her presentation, which was based on her book, Ms. Hicks told the true story of an enslaved girl, Martha Ann Ricks, and her fifty-year quest to give Queen Victoria a handmade quilt.

Mali Moringa Project, cont.

Continued from page 1

Manabougou clinic continues. The villagers are very grateful because the children are becoming healthier and happier. The change in the children is amazing.

Since the start of the leaf powder distribution to the children at the Centre de Santé in October 2012, the first group of twenty one children has been declared cured of malnutrition. From this group, the case of Mabilia Wonogo is heartwarming. When her mother first enrolled her in the program, she was critically malnourished. In her parent's words, "we are feeling very hopeless. She has no appetite and no energy at all and at 22 months she still doesn't walk properly." The good news is since Mabilia began taking Moringa, she now walks, runs, laughs and has quite the appetite. A second group of twenty children was registered in September 2013 to begin their program for the next year.

The awareness about the benefits of Moringa is on the rise in Mali and its daily consumption has significantly increased in the

More than 110 people attended Ms. Hicks' talk, most of them middle school students from Barcroft Elementary School and Our Savior Lutheran Elementary School, as well as community members.

At the end of the talk, Ms. Hicks gave signed copies of the book to each school for their libraries. •

past two years. There is demand for the Moringa powder but very few suppliers. The reason is that many people lack the education and training for the proper processing of the leaves. Therefore, even if some use fresh leaves in their sauces or make their own batch of leaf powder, others would rather go and purchase good quality powder from the very few reputed distributors.

This is wonderful news, but the Moringa Project could do more if we have the means to produce and distribute more healthy leaf powder. Mamadou's goal for 2014 is to raise \$10,000 to purchase a large capacity grinder and build an adequate processing and storage facility. Of course, there is a need for additional manufacturing tools and accessories such as tables, shelves, containers, scoopers, crates and gloves.

More information can be found at <http://ableandwilling.org/AWIEF/default.htm>, go to Projects - Project Moringa. Questions can be sent to moringaproject2012@gmail.com. •

Mid-Winter Greetings from Our Savior Lutheran School

By OSLS National Junior Honor Society

Thank you to everyone who stopped by at our used book sale in February, and helped us raise money for our school. It was a great success!

Every year, Lutheran schools around the country celebrate National Lutheran Schools Week. Our school will celebrate this special week from March 2 to 7. Our theme for this year is Raising up Faithful Disciples: Witness Always. Every day during the week, we dress up in special spirit wear or crazy outfits and have fun activities, like school wide bowling, ice cream sundaes, and a pancake lunch. On Sunday, March 2, we will have a special

church service at 11 a.m. at Our Savior Lutheran Church, located right across the parking lot from our school. On Monday, March 3, we welcome a music ministry group from Valparaiso University, Indiana, for a 2 p.m. performance in our church. Lastly, on Friday, March 7, we will have a Bingo Night at 7 p.m. in our church's Fellowship Hall. Please feel welcome to stop by and join in these activities.

Box Tops for Education is a unique way to raise money for schools and make a difference. Box Tops are those little pink coupons you see on box goods at the store. Once you start looking, you'll see them everywhere. At

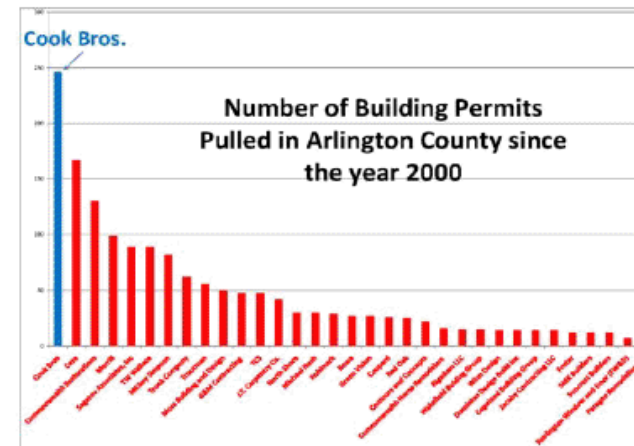
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www.CookBros.org/BarcroftGraph



Get an Early Start on Bird Watching

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

We live in a pretty good place for bird watching. Our many wooded parks and neighborhoods draw in migratory songbirds looking to rest and feed in the spring and fall. The Potomac River attracts a variety of ducks and other waterfowl, along with wading birds and Bald Eagles. A number of hawks and even the occasional falcon grace our skies, parks, and backyards. Winter and summer bring in their own sets of seasonal residents and, last but not least, there are our year-round residents such as Carolina Chickadees, Northern Cardinals, and many others.

Bird watching doesn't have to be difficult or complicated. You don't really need anything more than a suitable pair of binoculars and a field guide to get started. March is a great time to learn, especially before the trees leaf out and birds get harder to see. Also, it gives you a chance to practice identifying birds before spring migrants start coming through and presenting more difficult identification challenges.

Lots of birding field guides are available today and I recommend beginners get one that is limited to species in eastern North America. Get familiar with your guide before going out into the field so you can find things in it quickly. Most field guides include a section on how to watch and identify birds and this is well worth reading.

Binoculars are a must for bird watching but they don't have to be pricey. Good binoculars are available for not much over a hundred dollars but it is important to make sure that you get a pair that fit your eyes. Going to one of the local stores that specializes in birding optics is a good way to ensure getting a pair that will work for you. You'll want something in the 7 – 8 power range and with an angle of view of around 35 degrees.

I recommend that beginners get to know their backyard birds first. They are easy to find and observe and provide good identification practice. Identification of living things is a process of eliminating possibilities, so knowing your backyard birds will help you eliminate these when you see something new or unusual.

The best way to learn bird watching is to go out with experienced birders. Most are more than happy to share their knowledge with beginners and groups such as the Northern Virginia Bird Club, the Audubon Society of Northern Virginia, and the Audubon Naturalist Society offer free walks around our region.

Finally, have fun and don't try to take on too much at once. Try to learn a few new species every time you go out but don't get discouraged if you can't identify everything you see. Even experienced birders get stumped from time to time and that's really part of the fun!

Join us for our free Family Bird Walk on Saturday, March 15, 8:30 to 10 a.m. See **The Snag** for details and registration information. •

Flavors of the Season: St. Patrick's Day

*By Kari Hickman,
virtualgoodyplate.blogspot.com*

Nothing says "St. Patrick's Day" more than...chocolate? It's true. I am of the school of thought that chocolate is right for any and every holiday, and also the other days, too. For St. Patty's, I go back and forth between celebrating with traditional Irish dishes and/or kitschy Americanized green-dyed foods. Both are fun! Here's a cake that may be a little more of the latter, but is so delicious, no one will ask, or care, if it's Irish.

Chocolate Pistachio Cake

- 1/2 cup chopped pecans (or pistachios)
- 1/2 cup semisweet chocolate chips
- 1 package (18.25 oz) plain white cake mix
- 1 package (3.4 oz) pistachio instant pudding
- 1/2 cup sugar
- 1 cup water
- 1/2 cup vegetable oil
- 4 large eggs
- 1/2 cup chocolate syrup
- *Green food coloring (totally optional)

1. Preheat oven to 350. Spray and flour a 12-cup Bundt pan. Sprinkle the nuts and chocolate chips evenly in the bottom of the pan. Set aside.
2. In the bowl of an electric mixer, blend cake mix, pudding mix, sugar, water, oil, and eggs for

1 minute on low. Scrape down bowl and continue mixing on medium for 2 minutes more. Batter will be thick and smooth. Remove 1 cup batter to a small bowl. Pour the chocolate syrup into the small bowl and stir until the mixture is well combined. Set aside.

3. *If using, add a few drops of green food coloring to the remaining batter in the large bowl. (It will cook to a pale yellow-green, add coloring for a stronger green color.) Pour this batter into the prepared pan. Pour the chocolate batter over the top, trying to keep the chocolate away from the edges. Swirl the chocolate batter into the white batter using a dinner knife.

4. Bake cake until golden brown and springs back when lightly touched, 55-60 minutes. Remove and cool in pan for 20 minutes. Run a sharp knife around the edge and invert it onto a rack to cool completely. •



Winter News from Barcroft Elementary

By Jenny Ditta, Barcroft Elementary Liaison

Join us on March 4 beginning at 6:30 p.m. for the ever-popular Coffee House and Book Exchange. 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. You can also celebrate Dr. Seuss' Birthday and find out what is happening with the Barcroft PTA. Have books to donate? Drop them off in the lobby during school hours or bring them that evening! This is a great event for families and book lovers of all ages. There is always a great supply of books for pre-schoolers and young readers, so join us and build your home library.

Is your child attending Kindergarten in Fall 2014, or would you like to learn more about Barcroft Elementary? If so, please join us on March 11 for a Barcroft Elementary Kindergarten Information Session from 12:45 to 2:15 p.m.

Three student teams will be competing in the March 15 preliminary Odyssey of the Mind competition. The student teams are in the final stages of preparation. Good luck and Go Barcroft!

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. Stu-

dents 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 to 18.

May 3 is the Barcroft Spring Fair.

There will be games, fun, food, cake walks, bakes sales, jewelry sales, and much more for the entire family. Please join us for a fun time, and support your neighborhood school. 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 for our students. Annual Virginia Standards of Learning (SOL) testing will also commence this month and end in June.

Farm to Table week will occur 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! •

Gardens Still Needed

Gardens are still needed for the Spring Garden Tour on May 4. Gardens don't have to be a "showplace yard," just have some highlights to feature that the homeowner enjoys. At least five more gardens are needed or the tour will be cancelled.

For more information call Noreen Atkinson at 703-979-4868 or email her at noreenatkinson@verizon.net. •

Next Community House Meeting

Thursday, March 6, 7:30 p.m.

Phoenix Bike Executive Director Henry Dunbar will present about his organization's work providing youths with real-world skills and education in bicycle repair, mechanics and sales.



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