

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

2023 started out with a bang after the second half of 2022 saw a stalled market in many sectors in the local real estate market. Buyers gained power back as the market shifted. Interest rates peaked over 7% last Fall. This year they have been down to 6% and up close to 7%. Currently they are in the low to mid 6% territory.

The Washington, DC, area and many local markets have less than 1 month supply of housing inventory, with an extremely strong sellers' market. In Arlington County, VA, the median sold price for Single Family Homes for March was \$1,250,000, representing an increase of 10.5% compared to February 2023 and an increase of 4.2% from March 2022. The average days on market for units sold in March was 29 days, 21% above the 5-year March average of 24 days. There was a 55.8% month over month increase in new contract activity with 81 New Pending; a 12.6% Month over Month increase in all Pending (new contracts + contracts carried over from February) to 98; and a 22.1% increase in supply to 116 active units. Bottom line – we have a historic low supply of housing inventory and buyers have few choices compared to pre-pandemic years.

If you have questions about home prices or how much equity you have in your current home, let's connect so you have a professional's advice. Put my 38 years of local market expertise to work for you and those you care about! **Casey O'Neal, Compass Real Estate, 703-217-9090, www.caseyoneal.com Free Notary for Barcrofters!**



May 2023

Barcroft News

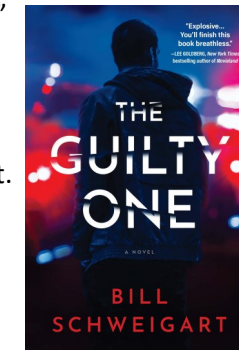
Vol 120, Issue 9

Barcroft Author Publishes More Books

Editor's Note: Barcrofter Bill Schweigart's book "The Beast of Barcroft" was published in 2016. This year he published "The Guilty One" and collaborated on "3 Days to Live," both of which are available now at bookstores and online. In the thriller *The Guilty One*, he swaps Barcroft for Alexandria, and supernatural creatures for real world monsters. *Barcroft News* caught up with him recently.

Barcroft News: Tell us about your new book.

Bill Schweigart: In "The Guilty One," Patrol Officer Cal Farrell is the first on scene to an active shooter event in Old Town. He stops the shooter...but remembers nothing about it. Six months later, he's a detective and the darling of the local press when he makes a grisly discovery: a body hanging impossibly high on a



tree. As more bodies begin to stack up, Cal has to unlock his memories if he hopes to catch the killer dubbed "Old Town Jack" or else there are those who are only too happy to make him the guilty one.

BN: What distinguishes Cal from other detectives?

Schweigart: There's a lot of detective fiction out there where the detective is haunted and obsessed, and though Cal has been through a

lot, he's no dark avenger. He's actively trying to be a better person. He's always narrowing the gap between where he is and his best self.

BN: What is it that fascinates you about the area?

Schweigart: It's more than just "write what you know." This area

Continued on page 6

Next Meeting:

Thursday, May 4, 7:30 p.m., On Zoom

Topic: To be Announced on the Chat List

➡ Send an email to zoom@bscl.org to request an invitation to the meeting.



Barcroft News

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

Advertising: Vacant

Publishers/ Theresa Schweser and
Mailing: Kirt Miller
publisher@bscl.org

Next Deadline: May 30, 2023

BSCL Officers

President: Matthew Field
president@bscl.org

Vice President: Daniel Weir

Treasurer: Jennifer Lis
jenlis@comcast.net

Recording Secy.: Chris Siple

Membership Secy.: Linda Gaines, linda@bscl.org

Board Members: Susan Cohen, Cathy Hogan,
Paula Levin-Alcorn, Eric Parker

Contacts and Committees

Community House Rental Manager:
Barbara Swart
barcrofthouserental@yahoocom

Chat List: Mark Wigfield

Web: Daniel Weir,
webmaster@bscl.org

Fundraising: Chris Ditta

Landscaping: Scott Brinitzer, 703-892-0308

Traffic Committee: Vacant

4th of July Parade: Heather Meade and Jim Moran

Columbia Pike: Katja Helbing, Charlie Smiroldo

Demeter House: Darlene Mickey

Parks & Enviro.: Don Bennett

Signs: Doug Mueller

ArNAC Rep.: Don Bennett

ArNAC Alternate: Deborah Wood

Arlington Civic Fed. Delegates:
Eric Harold, Christopher Hoh,
Randy Swart, Deborah Wood

Alternates: Gary Mason, Daniel Weir

Visit Us Online: www.bscl.org

President's Message

By Matthew Field

May brings warm weather and the annual BSCL Membership Meeting, which features elections for BSCL officers and Board members. The key race this year is for Treasurer. As of press time, our long-serving incumbent, Jennifer Lis, can no longer be persuaded to stay on. Jennifer's been an excellent steward of our finances through some difficult times, and she will surely be missed. Please thank her next time you see her around.

Even if you're not running for office this year, there are plenty of opportunities to get involved with BSCL. Neighborhood volunteers manage the listserv, maintain the Barcroft Community House and grounds, plan and coordinate the Fourth of July parade, serve as representatives to the Arlington Civic Federation, organize invasive plant removals, and edit this newsletter, among other things. There's always something to do, and just a couple of hours here and there go a long way. (Speaking of, we're again looking for an Advertising Manager for the Barcroft News!)

And even if you have no interest in volunteering for anything, I encourage you to attend the monthly BSCL meetings when you can. I promise, you won't "get volunteered" for anything just by showing up. But

Continued on page 3

Neighbor to Neighbor Listings

These listings are free to BSCL members, and run on a space-available basis. The listings run for three issues unless removal, renewal or update is requested. Email listings and renewals to editor@bscl.org.

Private Drum Lessons in Barcroft: All ages/levels either In-Person or Virtual! Local musician offering instruction from Barcroft home studio on 3rd Street South. Fully equipped studio with two full drum sets. Multiple styles--rock, jazz, classical, musical theatre. Lessons can be via Zoom, FaceTime, Google platforms, Skype. References provided. Contact: mitchbassmusic@gmail.com.

Pet Sitting: Colin and Emmett (5th-6th grades) are happy to pet sit for your cats or other small animals. Sorry, no dog sitting at this

time. We have experience with fostering and pet sitting animals. Call (703)474-2691 and ask for Colin and Emmett or email Lauren.alyssa@gmail.com.

Barcrofter Loki Mulholland Books and Movies: His complete works available (save shipping costs!) and timely, especially the movies dealing with voting and institutional racism. Several kids books too. Great for gifts. Call and come by: Joan Mulholland, 501 South Taylor Street, 703-979-4719. Pay by cash, check, or Venmo.

Dull knives? Affordable sharpening: With my 7 years of knife and tool sharpening experience and competitive rates, razor sharp knives and tools could be yours! Cost is \$2/ inch. Serrated knives \$2.50/inch. Price of tools upon inspection. For more information or service contact Zach at 571-598-4760, or email at zstech00@gmail.com. •

President's Message, continued

Continued from page 2

you will have a chance to hear what's happening in the neighborhood and in the County and, in some cases, provide direct feedback on County initiatives that impact the neighborhood.

Thanks to all the neighbors who keep the BSCL running. And here's to a few more joining the ranks! •



Juliet's Housecleaning Service
Honest, more than 10 years experience
with Excellent Barcroft-area References
LOW RATES!

Weekly, biweekly, monthly,
or onetime cleaning.

**Call anytime: 703-628-3434,
703-354-3225, or
571-236-3700**



Local Author Has Two New Books Out, *continued*

Continued from page 1

has so much, from lush nature to iconic landmarks and everything in between. In “The Beast of Barcroft,” Arlington’s trails intrigued me. With “The Guilty One,” it’s Old Town and its history. Cobblestone streets and gas lamps. It’s all incredibly lovely, but with a little imagination, it can be spooky too. This time around, I spare Arlington from the mayhem. Mostly.

BN: You’ve also collaborated with James Patterson. That sounds exciting.

Schweigart: It was the opportunity of a lifetime! We co-wrote “Women and Children First,” a novella in his collection “3 Days to Live.” Our story features a tech executive in Washington, D.C. who must choose between



Author Bill Schweigart lives in Barcroft.

saving his family and saving the city. As in any Patterson story, twists and turns abound! And I made sure to move the climax back to Arlington...

BN: Any advice for other aspiring writers in the neighborhood?

Schweigart: Yes, if you’re going to create thinly veiled versions of your neighbors and have mythological creatures hunt them, don’t use the name of your actual neighborhood in the book’s title. It makes the block parties awkward.



BN: Or set brutal fictitious murders outside of our Community House?

Schweigart: Yeah, sorry about that. Won’t happen again, I promise...

BN: We forgive you. This time. •

Fight Back Against Ticks and Mosquitos

May is a great time to learn how to effectively prevent mosquitos and ticks in your yard. Mosquitos and ticks are annoying and can carry disease. Unfortunately, spraying insecticides is not particularly effective, and kills pollinators and other beneficial insects as well. Insect populations are dropping precipitously worldwide. Register for a free online presentation “Fight the Bite: Steps to a Mosquito and Tick Free Yard” on May 19 from 10 to 11:30 a.m. to learn more.

Learn pesticide-free best management practices to control mosquitoes and ticks in your yard and to keep them away from you and your family. Extension Master Gardener Joan McIntyre explains how to identify mosquitoes and ticks prevalent in this area, their life cycle, how they reproduce, and where they go in the winter. RSVP at: <http://mgmv.org/rsvp-for-public-education-classes/> to receive a link to participate. •

Food For Others Volunteer Opportunity

By Theresa Sanders

For over 25 years Food For Others has provided food for distribution at two nearby sites. The distribution is on Monday evenings, and there are usually 12 to 20 people at each site, collecting food for their families. The current group of volunteers are looking for additions to our group, especially as some of us have summer travel plans. It is not a weekly commitment, but a vehicle is necessary.

Each week, a volunteer with a large car or van drives out to Route 50 and Prosperity in Fairfax to pick up milk crates full of fresh produce. We usually receive between 18 to 24 crates. This

volunteer driver then meets two other volunteers near Barcroft and the three of them bag the food into about 70 bags. The driver then returns the empty crates to a location in Barcroft and is done for the week. The other two volunteers drive the bagged food to two locations nearby. The first distribution is at 6 p.m. and the second at 6:30 p.m. All in all, it is about two hours of time for all involved.



If you might be interested and would like more information, please contact Teresa Saunders at tsaunders@hers.com or Georgina Bramsen at g.bramsen@gmail.com. Thank you. •



McEneaney ASSOCIATES REALTORS®

How may I be of help?
Proudly Serving Barcroft

Buying, Selling or just Friendly Advice

Susan Tull O'Reilly, Realtor®

NVAR Lifetime Top Producer, Over 25 Years Experience
703.509.7222 | soreilly@mceneaney.com | SusanTullOReilly.com
1320 Old Chain Bridge Road, McLean, VA 22101 | 703.790.9090

Equal Housing Opportunity

Shopping for the Birds

By the Plant NOVA Natives Campaign

Warm weather has many of us headed to the garden center, where lovely blooms await. Did you know that those shopping trips can double as one of the most effective ways to contribute to a healthier environment? With a little planning, our plant choices can make the difference between a community that supports the birds and butterflies and a community that completely displaces them. The key is to pick native plants, the ones that evolved right here with those critters and provide them the food they need to survive. Native trees and shrubs are especially important, but even the tiniest plants play an important role in the ecosystem.

How do you tell if a plant is native to our area? A simple way is to look for the red "Northern Virginia Native" stickers at participating nurseries. Over fifty volunteers from the Plant NOVA Natives campaign have been labeling the natives in those garden centers. The trees get hang tags, and the other plants get red stickers. You won't find the stickers in the annuals sections, though, since those plants are purely ornamental and not locally native. Since turnover is rapid this time of year, making it hard for volunteers to

keep up with the labeling, you might want to take along a copy of the Native Plants for Northern Virginia guide, or use the online pdf or search app.

An even simpler way to guarantee that a plant is native is to buy it from someone who only sells native plants. There are four garden centers in Northern Virginia that do just that. In addition, periodic native plant sale events are held around the region in the spring and the fall.

Spring planting for many people consists primarily of filling pots with colorful flowers. The absence of annuals might seem like a problem until you learn that native plants make excellent container specimens as well, with the added advantage that they only need



Juvenile Grey Catbird eating berries of American Beautyberry shrub.

to be planted once, since they will overwinter in the pot and provide the fun of watching their tender leaves emerge in the spring. Visits to the blooms from butterflies and hummingbirds add even more enjoyment. The

Plant NOVA Natives website has plant suggestions for container gardening, but almost any native can be used for this purpose if the container is big enough. •



Plan for the June South Arlington Slow Ride

By Bailey Vanderpoel

The next South Arlington Slow Ride will take place on Saturday, June 10. The ride will begin in front of Our Savior Lutheran Church front steps and end at our driveway at 4307 9th Street South. Please join the South Arlington Slow Riders Facebook group for the route and more information. Rides are at a slow pace that everyone can keep up with, and typically conclude within 30 to 45 minutes. We'll leave promptly at 3:10 p.m.

Need a tuneup? No problem! I have 10+ years

volunteering with Vélocity Bicycle Coop and am experienced ensuring bikes are safe and ready to ride. Please either contact me ahead of time at the email at bayleyvanderpoel@gmail.com or arrive early. I'll be arriving at 2:30 p.m. with my tools and supplies.

Can't make the ride but interested in the party? The party will begin right after the ride concludes or about 4 p.m. at my place mentioned above. My family will provide refreshments and snacks. A small donation is appreciated but not necessary. •



Still the #1 Remodeling Contractor in Arlington
Pulling more permits in Arlington than any other contractor



Specializing in Arlington Homes

GET A FREE QUOTE TODAY
703-536-0900 | CookBros.org