



# Ashton Heights News

## Good Neighbors -- May Be Getting Harder to Find By Scott Sklar, President, AHCA

What makes a good neighbor ?

Our civic association has welcomed businesses and promotes them in our community. In fact, we want local vendors and restaurants, because they make our neighborhoods walkable. These businesses advertise in our AHCA newsletter, and during COVID we promoted them to keep them "in business". We did lose a few businesses during that hard time (I personally miss the leather/shoe repair next to the Clarendon Post Office) but overall, most businesses survived in an extremely hard time.

Now some of you may remember Darna, next to Jiffy Lube, whose night time noise was generating calls and complaints. They did invest in insulation, and four years ago, the co-owners came to our AHCA meeting to make a

presentation, brought some food and gave me their e-mails. We still get some complaints, but they are open to hear from us and take actions.

The exact opposite is Don Tito's, which has generated most of the noise calls, and seems oblivious to their obligation to the surrounding neighborhoods.

In contrast, were the developers of The Lot, the outdoor food and beer place at the corner of Wilson Blvd and 10th Street North. Before they opened, they walked our AHCA Development Committee co-chairs around The Lot. We made some recommendations: fence and shrubs around The Lot so the kids do not wander into the street, lights & speakers facing downward, and a contact phone of someone on the Lot that can be called for noise or other issues. The co-owners

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## AHCA Monthly Meeting Wed., May 17th, 7 - 9 p.m.

### Clarendon United Methodist Church 606 N. Irving St.

- 7:00 p.m.** Mingle and chair setup
- 7:30 p.m.** Scott Sklar, President and Committee reports  
\*\* Vote on 2023-2034 slate of Executive Committee nominations.\*\*
- 7:40 p.m.** Non-Board Candidates' Night: HD2 (McLure vs. Saucedo-Broach) and Commonwealth's Attorney (Dehghani-Tafti vs. Katcher) and Sheriff (Quiroz, Younger and Herring). We welcome, if they choose to come, the unopposed Klinger (Commissioner of the Revenue) and de la Pava (Treasurer). We have not received a response from James DeVita, who has filed to run against Barbara Favola. If we hear from DeVita, we will try to facilitate a debate, otherwise Senator Favola can make a statement of candidacy, if desired.
- Candidate statements followed by audience questions. The order of appearance has not been worked out at this time. Lyon Park residents are invited to join.
- 9:00 p.m.** Adjourn

## Call for AHCA Executive Committee Nominations – Vote at the May 17th membership meeting!

The nominations chair (Rita O'Brien: [reetob@verizon.net](mailto:reetob@verizon.net)) sent an email to the AHCA listserv soliciting calls for nominations. Anyone who is a paid AHCA member may make a nomination.

Contact VP of Membership, Jim O'Brien ([jimob1@verizon.net](mailto:jimob1@verizon.net)) to check on your membership status. You can pay your dues online: <https://ashtonheights.org/about-ahca/join-ahca/>

\*\* The following people are up for re-election, but are open and happy to have anyone step into these roles if you are interested. \*\*

### Current Officers:

- President: Scott Sklar
- VP Programs: Dave Schutz
- VP Membership: Jim O'Brien
- Treasurer: Doug Williams
- Secretary: Chris Armstrong

### Current At-Large:

- Jim Feaster: POSITION OPEN
- David Phillips
- Jim Richardson
- Ken Matzkin

If you are interested or information on requirements of any position, please contact AHCA President, Scott Sklar at [solarsklar@aol.com](mailto:solarsklar@aol.com). Anyone who is an AHCA member in "good standing" may run for any position.

## AHCA Membership Sign-up and dues payment form

Ashton Heights Civic Association annual dues are \$15/household or \$10/individual member. Register for two years for \$25/household.

Anyone who resides or owns property in Ashton Heights and is at least 18 years old may join and then vote at AHCA meetings.

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### Pay your dues online:

<https://ashtonheights.org/about-ahca/join-ahca/>

### Advertise with us!

The Ashton Heights newsletter is distributed to 1,200+ households 8 months of the year. Our readers enjoy supporting local businesses. If you know of a local business that would benefit from advertising in the Ashton Heights newsletter, please email: [newsletterads@ashtonheights.org](mailto:newsletterads@ashtonheights.org).

Business card: \$60  
1/4 page: \$85  
1/2 page: \$145  
Full page: \$245  
Full back page: \$295  
One page insert: \$325

## 2022- 2023 AHCA Volunteers

### President

Scott Sklar  
solarsklar@aol.com  
703-522-3049

### Secretary

Chris Armstrong  
carmstrong07@gmail.com

### VP Programs

Dave Schutz  
porgschu@verizon.net

### Members at Large

Jim Feaster  
jimfeaster1@gmail.com

### VP Membership

Jim O'Brien  
jimob1@verizon.net

Jim Richardson  
jabrichardson@verizon.net

### Treasurer

Doug Williams  
treasurer@ashtonheights.org

David Phillips  
davidphillips1@msn.com

Ken Matzkin  
kenmatz1@gmail.com

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## Committees

### Arlington Neighborhood Program

Christopher Horvath  
christopherhorvath@hotmail.com

### Schools

Gregory Morse  
gregm748@gmail.com

### Arlington School Rep

Stacy Snyder  
stacyasnzyder@yahoo.com

Caroline Rogus  
crogus@gmail.com

### Development/Zoning

Jack Spilsbury  
splisburyj@gmail.com

### Tree Canopy & Native Plants

Brooke Alexander  
brooke.alexander52@gmail.com

Alexander Tuneski  
atuneski@gmail.com

### Transportation

Patrick Lueb  
jiffy64@me.com

### Historian

Jim Terpstra  
terpstrajames2@gmail.com

### Housing

Matthew Hall  
mhall@goldsteinhall.com

### Newsletter Editor

Amy Miller  
amylmiller4@gmail.com

Christina Schultz  
cmschultz@yahoo.com

### Distribution

Bea Camp  
summercamp81@yahoo.com

### Playgrounds & Parks

Christopher Horvath  
christopherhorvath@hotmail.com

Julie Mangis  
jimmangis@aol.com

### PFRC Career Center

Polly Hall  
pollyhall40@gmail.com

### Advertising

Chris Armstrong  
newsletterads@ashtonheights.org

### Safety & Security

Christina Schultz  
cmschultz@yahoo.com

### Listserv Moderator

Betsey Lyon  
etlyon410@gmail.com

## County Board Adopts its “Missing Middle” proposal: What was Decided?

By Jack Spilsbury and Alexander Tuneski, Co-Chairs, AHCA Development Committee

On March 22, the Arlington County Board voted unanimously to allow construction of up to six-unit multifamily dwellings on lots in Arlington’s single-family-zoned neighborhoods [[Click here for the full press release](#)].

After months of sometimes heated discussion and deliberation, the Board’s action enacts the bulk of its original “Missing Middle” (MM) proposal, while avoiding some of the most radical options by:

1. Nixing 7- and 8-unit multiplexes,
2. Imposing an annual cap of 58 MM permits (for five years), and
3. Providing for some geographic distribution of new MM buildings by zoning district.

**The new zoning rules:** Rebranded as the “Expanded Housing Option” (EHO), the new zoning provision will permit these MM housing forms (from duplexes up to six-plexes) in most residential areas throughout the County. Once it takes effect on July 1, 2023, Arlington property

owners will be able to build such multi-unit dwellings “by right,” subject to specified requirements, but without needing further approval by the County Board or other County bodies.

Specifically, the revised rules will allow owners to:

- Build a new MM dwelling (2-6 units), or convert an existing single-family home into MM units, with an annual cap of 58 permits per year for 5 years (of which, 30 permits yearly may be in R-6 zones including in Ashton Heights); and
- Erect these structures subject to the same setbacks and height restrictions as single-family homes, but with an additional 5% “bonus” lot coverage allowance beyond what’s permitted for single-family homes;

Additionally, the new provision:

- Sets on-site parking requirements based on the property’s proximity to transit:
  - A minimum 0.5 on-site parking spaces per unit if the dwelling is within 3/4-mile from a Metro station entrance or 1/2-mile from a stop on the Premium Transit Network along Columbia Pike, or

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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. Last year 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 pendings; a 12.6% month-over-month increase in all pendings (new contracts + contracts carried over from February) to 98; and a 22.1% increase in supply to 116 active units. Bottom line – currently we have a historic low supply of housing inventory and buyers have fewer choices now 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  
Associate Broker  
703-217-9090  
[casey@caseyoneal.com](mailto:casey@caseyoneal.com)  
[www.caseyoneal.com](http://www.caseyoneal.com)  
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## Ranked Choice Voting Comes to Arlington

By Barbara Taylor

In 2020, the Virginia General Assembly voted to allow ranked choice voting (RCV) for the election of county and city board members across the Commonwealth. The Arlington County Board decided in December 2022 to use RCV in the June 20, 2023 Democratic primary, which will select two Board candidates from a field of six. Those two candidates will be on the November 7, 2023 election ballot for the two seats currently held by Katie Cristol and Christian Dorsey, who are not seeking reelection.

RCV advocates say it results in a more accurate reflection of voters' preferences when compared with traditional multi-candidate races where a candidate with a bare plurality can win election.

In the RCV process, also known as an "instant runoff," voters may select multiple candidates in order of preference, though they still can vote for just a single candidate if they wish. Voters' second and third choice candidates can come into play if their first or second choices are eliminated. To be selected as one of the two eventual nominees, a candidate must receive at least one-third plus one of the total votes (the "threshold").

Owing to the limitations of the County's elections software, we will be able to rank order no more than three of the six candidates on the ballot. Here is how the process will work:

1. All first choice selections are counted. If one (or two) candidates reach the threshold, they will become the Democratic nominees.
2. If one (or two) candidates fail to reach the threshold on the first count, the candidate among the six with the fewest votes is eliminated, and the votes from that candidate are transferred to those voters' second-choice candidates.
3. This process continues until two candidates reach the threshold.

To ensure that no first-choice votes are "wasted," the excess votes of a candidate who exceeds the threshold in the first round are redistributed among the remaining candidates according to their voters' second preferences. (For details on the redistribution process for excess votes, Google the "Weighted Inclusive Gregory Method").

Also on the Democratic primary ballot will be candidates for State Senate, County Sheriff, and Commonwealth's Attorney. However, only the County Board candidates will be selected using ranked choice voting. Remember that voters in Virginia don't register by party, so any registered voter may participate in the Democratic primary. No-excuse early and mail voting are available to all registered

voters. Remember to bring your photo ID when you vote early or on Primary Day. For more information, see the County's election website, <https://vote.arlingtonva.gov/Elections>.

Here are some key dates for the primary and election:

- May 5, 2023—First day of in-person early voting
- May 30, 2023—Last day to register to vote or update an existing registration
- June 9, 2023—Last day to apply for a mail ballot
- June 20, 2023—Democratic primary
- November 7, 2023—General election

**Editor's Note:** The newsletter is on vacation for the summer. Deadline for submissions is August 24th for the September 2023 issue.

To stay up-to-date over the summer, join the Ashton Heights listserv. Email: [main+subscribe@ashtonheights.groups.io](mailto:main+subscribe@ashtonheights.groups.io) or email [etlyon410@gmail.com](mailto:etlyon410@gmail.com). Include your full name and street address and she'll get you set up to be "in the know."



ASHTON HEIGHTS'  
NEIGHBORHOOD  
**Farmers  
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[www.lubberunfarmersmarket.org](http://www.lubberunfarmersmarket.org)

## Remembering a Long-Time Neighbor: Jean Hedges

By Betsey Lyon

Few of us live out our lives in the state where we were born, building neighborhood relationships and community that last a lifetime. Our Ashton Heights neighbor Jean Kyle Hedges, who passed away on April 6 at age 93, did just that. A proud Virginian, she was born in Big Stone Gap, Virginia, and moved with her family to her mother's hometown of Galax to complete high school. After graduating from Mary Baldwin College in Staunton, Jean briefly taught elementary school in Fairfax County. She then married Lew Hedges, whom she met after a dance lesson in DC, and they settled in their first Ashton Heights home in 1961. In 1970, they moved with their four children to their spacious property on N. Monroe Street, with its big yard and shed garage where Lew often went to putter. Lew passed away in 2013.

Jean and Lew raised their children in our neighborhood while Lew, formally trained in electronics repair, fixed television sets and other household electronics from his shop on N. Jackson Street, just off Wilson Blvd. Reserved and gracious, Jean offered measured neighborhood counsel over the back fence that separated her property from ours on N. Lincoln Street. A polite Southern lady, she would poke Lew when she felt he offered too much advice

and chide him when he sang in the backyard at a volume she thought might disturb the neighbors. In fact, our young son was thoroughly entertained by the singing and jovial back-fence chats, and he would await an offer of cookies from Jean, who would only offer after securing a parental nod.



Jean was a lifetime member of Clarendon United Methodist Church (CUMC), where she attended services, sang, and volunteered with the church's congregational caregivers. She served as Secretary of the Ashton Heights Civic Association during years when longtime resident Julie Mangis recalls hand-written minutes kept in a bound notebook. Once Jean's children reached high school and college age, she worked in the Arlington Treasurer's office for 10 years. In addition, she served as an Arlington elections official for so many years at the CUMC polling place, that when she finally retired from that role, some of us called her to make sure all was well.

Following a neighborhood memorial service at Clarendon United Methodist Church, Jean's four adult children took Jean to her final resting place in Galax.



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## President's Column -- continued from page 1

have done exactly what we asked, to the letter and noise complaints have been minimal.

That brings us to the new CVS on Wilson Blvd across from Hurt Cleaners, a by-right development under law. Here, the national chain had no discussions with the community, built a solid brick wall facing Wilson Blvd, installed very high lights without shields, and provided no bush/tree barriers closest to the residential neighbors.

AHCA asked if we could have W&L students paint a mural on the Wilson-facing wall. AHCA has asked them to lower the lights and put-up glare shields to keep light out of the residential neighborhoods – so far nothing, even with County intervention. AHCA asked for barrier plants to shield the development from the residents closest to CVS – nothing. So far, not a responsive or good neighbor.

Ashton Heights has been lucky that in most cases, our neighbors have tried to be good neighbors, but with increasing density, changes in County attitudes to intervene to behalf of residential neighborhoods – it's getting tougher.

So the point of this article, as the primary allows voting to start in early May – please begin asking questions and demanding answers. We must have Board members who are not arms-length on day-to-day issues in our neighborhoods. If we don't expect greater awareness and involvement to solve day-to-day problems – our quality of life as individuals, as families and as a community will be significantly downgraded.

### LYON PARK PLANT SALE SUNDAY, MAY 7th from 10 a.m. to 1 p.m. RAIN OR SHINE



The sale includes potted plants from local gardens, as well as a “dig-it-yourself” session led by Deborah Barber. Most plants will be \$5 and proceeds from the sale benefit the community center and park.

## Dangers of the Dog Park

By Emma Miller, Senior, Animal and Nutritional Sciences at West Virginia University

There's a myth that “dog socialization” involves introducing your pup to other dogs, but in reality socialization involves all types of new experiences. Socializing involves introducing your dog to new environments, other animals and people, and new experiences. Veterinarians and animal trainers advise against socializing dogs at dog parks for a number of reasons. Some of the dangers of dog parks include playground bullies, injuries and diseases. There's also a safety risk for pet owners, especially when trying to intervene in an unfriendly interaction.

### Alternatives to the Dog Park

If you find that taking your dog to the park is the only way to burn off their energy, consider taking a more holistic approach to exercise by incorporating mental enrichment into their lives. You probably already know that your dog needs physical exercise, but did you know that mental enrichment is just as important for a healthy, well-behaved dog?

Mental enrichment involves the dog using their brain and can build confidence, reduce destructive behaviors, and prevent boredom. There are many at-home options for mental stimulation, here are just a few to get you started!

- Interactive puzzle toys: These toys can be found in pet stores and online, and encourage sniffing and licking to mentally satisfy dogs.
- Play “go find it”: Play this game by tossing treats (or kibble) around the yard and letting your dog sniff to find them.
- Teach your dog a new trick!



You can still socialize your dog with other dogs in a safe way! For puppies, consider introducing them to other dogs in a controlled and supervised environment, such as a puppy training class. Another option is to enroll your dog in a daycare or playgroup which are supervised by people trained in preventing and managing conflicts. For a cheaper alternative, consider organizing your own playgroup with a few trusted dogs and their owners.

### Helpful Resources

#### Importance of Mental Stimulation and Advice

- <https://www.akc.org/expert-advice/training/mentally-stimulated-happy-dog/>
- <https://vet.purdue.edu/discovery/croney/files/documents/enrichment.pdf>

#### Professional Resources

- The [AVMA](#) (American Veterinary Medical Association) has resources relevant to enrichment, safe play, and tips for how to mitigate conflict.
- [BringFido](#) is an online resource for pet owners who like to take their dogs on adventures. Here you can find a directory of dog daycare and boarding services, as well as pet-friendly places to visit in Arlington.

**Development Committee article -- continued from page 3**

- A minimum 1 space per unit (the current standard) for other locations further from transit and for "all lots on a cul-de-sac;"
- Caps maximum floor area within a range of 4,800 ft for the smallest MM structure (e.g., a stacked duplex) up to 8,000 sq ft for the largest (5- to 6-plexes); and
- Permits additional interior "accessory dwelling units" (ADUs) only for side-by-side two- or three-unit semi-detached homes (i.e., a 3-unit townhome can become a 6-plex if each townhome includes an interior accessory dwelling).

**What's Next**

The County is now readying implementation regulations and guidelines to help Arlingtonians to navigate the new statute. Going forward, the AHCA will closely monitor implementation and continue to advocate for the County to create effective tracking, transparency, and oversight policies.

Finally, we would like to give a special thanks to Lyon Park's Ann Bodine for sharing analysis of the final provisions approved, and offering us to draw from her own MM article prepared for the Lyon Park Newsletter.



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**Calling all Ashton Heights and Lyon Park neighbors!**

Help strengthen our community.

Don't be shy -- please consider yourself or a neighbor for the "Meet Your Neighbor" newsletter column. Nominations are welcome via email ([erikacohenderr@gmail.com](mailto:erikacohenderr@gmail.com)) or by filling out the form at the following link: [bit.ly/AHMYN](http://bit.ly/AHMYN) -- Your community looks forward to meeting you!

# Spring FLING

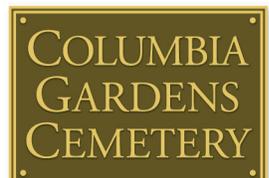
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## Meet Your Neighbor -- Kevin Kaime, Lorenz Lechner, Michael Minner

By Erika Derr

Welcome to the Neighborhood!

Here's an inside scoop: this column is uniquely fun to write when introducing new(ish) neighbors to our Ashton Heights community. Nearly a year after they found their enchanting bungalow, it is a delight to welcome Kevin Kaime, Lorenz Lechner, and Michael Minner to Ashton Heights, though, truth be told, they have jumped wholeheartedly into life in Arlington and are already enjoying much of what our community has to offer.

The “quirky” home on Third Street North sealed the deal for Kevin, Lorenz and Michael, who sometimes go by the moniker KLM. “It was love at first sight,” recalls Kevin, upon seeing their now home. They moved to the region in the fall of 2021 from the East Bay area of San Francisco, where they had spent the pandemic years renovating a home, only to have the chance to move east. Upon relocating, they had rented an apartment in Rosslyn while getting their bearings in the region. “We were dead set on a Capitol Hill rowhouse,” says Kevin, but had committed to looking at three homes in Arlington just to be sure. The house on Third Street was the first they saw, and it's a story that many neighbors can relate to: see a house on Friday, enter a bid on Saturday, learn that you've found a new home on Sunday! With its unique layout, lush backyard, swimming pool, and mature plantings, they knew they had found “the one.” It's the perfect setting to enjoy many of their favorite pastimes - cooking, gardening, travel, music, hosting family and friends, and spending time with Rollo, their Rhodesian Ridgeback rescue dog. Add to that list: enjoying the convenience of a walkable neighborhood complete with easy Metro access and community block parties.

It was Michael's job that brought the triad (or “throuple” in today's vernacular) to the mid-Atlantic; he grew up in the Philadelphia area and was happy to

find an opportunity through work to be closer to his East Coast family. Kevin is originally from the Four Corners region of Colorado, and also claims family in Germany from his time spent studying abroad. Lorenz hails from Regensburg, Germany on the banks of the picturesque Danube River. The three met in the San Francisco area in 2016, and have been together ever since. Kevin and Lorenz also work together, running a corporation in the semiconductor industry. Each travels for work and also works from home, providing lots of opportunities to complete house projects and try new recipes. Lorenz is known for his curries, quiches, European style apple pie, and Bavarian pretzels. They make time to enjoy local outings and events, too. Restaurant favorites include Pupatella for pizza, and Good Company for donuts and brunch

(currently seeking suggestions for favorite South Asian places!). They've run annual road races ranging from the Bunny Hop to the Marine Corps Marathon (Michael), and Kevin touts the joys of seeing the city by bicycle during a monthly casual ‘Bike DC’ meetup. These experiences have already brought some insider wisdom. Last summer, they managed to avoid the



L to R: Kevin Kaime, Michael Minner, and Lorenz Lechner

long lines at Wolf Trap on Memorial Day weekend by taking their bikes on Metro and cycling the last distance to the park, bypassing the glacial traffic. These insights will come in handy this summer as they prepare to host family and friends eager to see the triad's new home and explore the nation's capital.

Moving to the region has brought some serendipitous encounters. Michael recalls: “One night we were out in DC and Kevin saw the back of someone's backpack, it had roller skates and he thought ‘that looks like someone I know...’ and it turns out it was a friend from his high school days in Colorado.” Closer to home, the annual block party was a great way to meet new neighbors. Kevin, Lorenz and Michael are enjoying lots of what Arlington and Ashton Heights, specifically, has to offer. “We're settling in, and we're loving it.”

## Remember the Ecosystem Function of a Pollinator Garden!

By Brooke Alexander, Native Plant and Tree Canopy Coordinator

Pollinator gardens are a joy! They bring in beautiful butterflies, bees, and hummingbirds to feed on the pollen and nectar. When the pollinator plants are native, they serve additional life stages, additional animals, and our ecosystem.

**Here are some of the ways that native pollinator plants contribute to the ecosystem.** As we know, insects are the base of the food chain. Plant leaves all have a poison in them. Our native insects have developed the ability to eat certain native plant leaves without being poisoned. Many of our butterfly caterpillars are specialists, in that they only eat one or two species of plant leaves. This is true for our other native insects, as well.

As a result, having a variety of native plants gives us diversity of animals. And we know that the more diverse our local plants and animals, the more resilient the ecosystem.

Monarch butterflies and milkweed are a well known pairing: if we don't have milkweed for the monarch butterfly caterpillars to eat, we don't have any adult monarch butterflies. Another example: Painted Lady butterfly caterpillars eat lupine leaves. And if you plant lupine, there are 26 species of butterflies and

moths that also use lupine as a caterpillar host plant. See more pairings between native plants and native butterflies/moths here: <https://www.nwf.org/NativePlantFinder/Plants/>



**What other uses do caterpillars have besides growing into butterflies we love to look at?** They feed our baby birds!

Recall that most of our local birds feed their babies caterpillars, even if the adults eat seeds and berries. Native caterpillars have the nutrition the babies need, and are easy to stuff down the baby's gullet.

And baby birds need a lot of caterpillars! A study of chickadees showed that one clutch of chickadees requires 6,000-9,000 caterpillars over 16 days before they fledge, and the parents continue to supplement food of their fledglings for an additional 21 days while they're learning to forage on their own. We need native plants to grow caterpillars to feed our baby birds!

Ashton Heights is fortunate to have Margaret Beach taking leadership in establishing pollinator gardens in yards on the Wilson Blvd end of Kenmore Street. (See her article below). Margaret is a Master Gardener from New Jersey, who transplanted here a couple of years ago, and is jumping in with both feet! Welcome, and thank you Margaret.

## Native Pollinator Gardens By Margaret Beach

As you read this, we, the neighbors of Kenmore-Street-just-off-Wilson, have begun planting several pollinator gardens using native plants in various yards. Here's the story.



We on our end of the street lived through a difficult period due to the dust, noise and congestion created by the demolition of the old Highlander Motel and the construction of the new CVS. So we thought that something better should come of this than a swale of grass at the back of a parking lot. Something better like a pollinator meadow.

Unfortunately though, as we wrestled with the County and CVS, it became apparent that we would not be breaking ground any time soon. For me, the most important issue was that as I tried to test the soil, I could find no soil there. Wherever I dug, it was only stones down at least 12 inches. It's murky why this is and whose plan it serves, but in any case, I do not see a near-term path forward for this particular project.

But the seed of the idea had been planted in our minds and we decided to do something more under our control. Instead of one big meadow, ten families have so far committed to plant smaller pollinator gardens using native plants in their

yards. Some people are replacing other plants with pollinator-friendly plants. Some are developing areas that were otherwise unused and some have agreed to take out portions of their grass for new native plants.

The question is: Why pollinator gardens? Much has been written on this subject elsewhere. In short, what is good for bees, butterflies, birds, worms and microbes in the soil is good for humans. Creating a pollinator garden is not charity. It is not a quaint, Miss Marple-esque hobby. It is a collective act of self-interest.

We have begun our project and I am excited by our progress to date. But, it is important to manage expectations: one plants a garden today for tomorrow, or even the day thereafter. Plants grow at their own rates, and we need to accept their pace, even when we are impatient for them to grow and fulfill our hopes quickly.

This project is centered on our street, but many people in the larger Ashton Heights community already have pollinator gardens and anyone else can join in. If you need any information or help, if it is mine to give, it is yours to have.

Finally, a shout-out to all those Ashton Heights members who responded to my call for gifts of pollinator plants to support our Kenmore-Street efforts. Thanks so much!

## No Harm in Waiting

### Community Safety and Security Corner

By Christina Schultz

Have you noticed a lot more “no turn on red” signs appearing around Arlington lately? They are part of Arlington County’s strategy – known as Vision Zero – for improving traffic safety. The signs have mainly been installed along major corridors, including Wilson Boulevard and Columbia Pike, to accommodate pedestrians crossing the street with a green light. This is in addition to the signs at 147 approaches at intersections that were hanging as of March 2022. The County has also reprogrammed a number of walk signals to initiate from three to seven seconds ahead of parallel green lights to give pedestrians a head start when crossing the street. For drivers, the “no turn on red” signs can prevent congestion caused by too many cars trying to turn and blocking the travel lane while the cross traffic has the green light.

Some drivers may nevertheless to be frustrated by these signs. During peak traffic times, it may cause backups at intersections as cars wait to make the right turn. Late at night, it is unlikely that there are pedestrians crossing a normally busy intersection. Idling cars also contribute to pollution and a larger carbon footprint. Then there are the traffic tickets. If you are caught by a photo-enforced camera, the moving violation comes with a \$50 fine but does not add driver license points or have insurance implications. In these cases, the registered owner of the vehicle is presumed to be the driver unless challenged by affidavit or contested in court. If caught by a police officer, red light violations are penalized with fines up to \$350, although the typical fine is about \$100, and three

demerit points on the driver’s license. Insurance companies also do not look kindly on these infractions.

Until the 1970s, right turns on red lights were not permitted in states along the East Coast. Laws were amended as a fuel-saving measure in response to the oil embargo of 1973. The Energy Policy and Conservation Act of 1975 required states to permit right turns on red lights to be eligible to receive federal assistance in developing mandated conservation programs. All 50 states, the District of Columbia, Puerto Rico, and Guam have allowed right turns on red since 1980, except where prohibited by a sign or where right turns are controlled by dedicated traffic lights. The last holdout was Massachusetts which nevertheless installed “no turn on red” signs on about 90 percent of traffic signals in anticipation of the change. There are still a few remaining exceptions. In New York City, right turns on red are completely prohibited unless a sign indicates otherwise. In addition to the ban on right turns on red lights at 50 downtown intersections in the District of Columbia, the D.C. Council voted unanimously last September to pass a bill prohibiting right turns at all red lights by 2025.

Initial research indicates that measures like “no turn on red” signs make roads safer for pedestrians and cyclists. Arlington County will need to regularly reexamine its traffic flow and control patterns to determine where these initiatives make the most sense.



## Kiwanis Blueberries -- On Sale Again This Year!

By Julie Mangis

“They’re so good you’ll think you picked them yourself!”

Freshly-picked blueberries trucked directly to Arlington from a family farm in New Jersey! The Kiwanis Club of Arlington is taking orders for 10-pound boxes of blueberries again this year. Healthful, nutritious and delicious, berries are expected to arrive in Arlington June 22 and be available for pick up June 23 and 24 at Cherrydale Methodist Church.

The cost for a 10-pound box is \$45, and orders may be placed online at <https://arlingtonvakiwanis.com/>. Customers also have an option to purchase boxes of blueberries for donation to the Arlington Food Assistance Center (AFAC) for distribution to Arlington’s neediest families. Please consider adding a box or two for AFAC to your order and Kiwanis will deliver the berries directly to AFAC. Last year, more than a ton of blueberries were purchased for donation to AFAC.

Proceeds from blueberry sales also benefit the Kiwanis scholarship program for Arlington high school graduates, and non-profits such as Arlington Thrive, Bridges to Independence, Doorways, The Salvation Army, National Capital Treatment & Recovery, VHC Pediatrics, Arlington YMCA, ASPIRE! After-School Learning, and many others. This is the tenth year for Kiwanis blueberry sales, and every year, more Arlington families discover the plump, high-quality berries offered by Kiwanis are far superior to grocery store varieties. Be sure to get your order in soon.



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