



Ashton Heights News

www.ashtonheights.org

November 2023

End of Year in the Neighborhood

By Scott Sklar, President, AHCA

My end-of-year column, is really a "shout out" and I apologize for not being able to include everyone who deserves recognition. There are so many great volunteers within AHCA and our local neighborhoods.

On a practical note, kudos to our AHCA Executive Committee as well as committee and issue chairs. In particular:

- Ken Matzkin who represents AHCA with a coalition of other civic associations on Missing Middle (now called EHO)
- Chris Lewiski who is AHCA's lead on Stormwater Management meetings and policy
- And as always, our untiring Brooke Alexander who is assisting on the greenway behind WBM, tree canopy and native plants discussions, and many Arlington County projects and issues, along with education within our neighborhood and sister civic associations. You deserve our thanks for the extra effort you are doing for our community.

I have two shout outs for neighborhood leaders this fall.

First, long time Jackson Street resident, Peter Joyce (pjoyce0@gmail.com), who has stepped up to fill a void on a range of issues both on Jackson Street and spreading to other Ashton Heights areas. See his update: "Circle Damage Quickly Repaired" below:

*"Given our collective voices and recent conversations with ACPD and DES, we received a quick response to the truck damage to the 6th and Jackson St traffic circle signs. **Halloween Street Closure:** We submitted an application to close N. Jackson Street - between Wilson and Pershing - on Halloween. The committee is reviewing the application and wants to work with us. **DES and ACPD Meeting.** After many emails (some more forceful than others) we are scheduling a meeting between the N. Jackson Street Safety Coalition (under AHCA), ACPD, and DES. **The Coalition.** I am still hoping we can expand our coalition. The more consensus we have around safety ideas, the more likely we can support improvements."*

Peter's take charge attitude, working with his neighbors and AHCA is

Continued on page 4

AHCA Monthly Meeting
Wed., Nov. 15th, 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 |
| 7:40 p.m. | John Orr, from the County, is listed as "Environmental Health Technician." This is because "Pied Piper of Arlington" is not a recognized occupational category. But, John knows his rats! And he will tell us how to limit their damage, fend them off - generally, how to deal. |
| | The second half of the meeting urban forester Jose Portuhondo will discuss pests and diseases of our trees and how to safeguard them. |
| 9:00 p.m. | Adjourn |

Editor's Note: View the newsletter in full color at www.ashtonheights.org!



Mark your Calendar and think about submitting your materials early as a holiday gift to your newsletter editor. Articles for the **January 2024** newsletter issue are due by **December 17th**. Please note: there is no December issue. Send submissions to: amylmiller4@gmail.com.

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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.

Pay your dues online:

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

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President's Column -- continued from page 1

just amazing and typifies what we can do to make our community safer and more livable. Thank you, Peter!

Second, Natalie U. Roy. After losing a close election for County Board as a staunch supporter of more effective and less disruptive alternatives to the Arlington County Board's approach on Missing Middle Housing, Natalie now e-publishes "EHO Watch" Note: Facebook page links to past issues of EHO Watch are being posted on a private Facebook page. If you want access to the page, please shoot me an email.

The publication includes additional information on EHO and EHO-related news. A website might be in the future, but in the interim, Facebook it is. EHO Watch previously known as Missing Middle, the County's detensification program was re-branded as Expanded Housing Option (EHO) Development due to the goal no longer being about affordable housing, and will be sent out to highlight newsworthy developments. If you wish to subscribe to EHO Watch, email natalieuroy@gmail.com. Natalie, thanks for e-publishing this great information tool.

I know we are all busy with our families, jobs, household projects and various community activities, so it is hard to focus on community and neighborhood issues. But it is refreshing to see so many of you stepping up and making a serious dent in issues facing all of us.

I wish all of you in our Ashton Heights community a most wonderful holiday season with joy, health and peace.

SUBSCRIBE TO THE ASHTON HEIGHTS LISTSERV TODAY!

So much happens in between issues of newsletters -- especially when we take a break in December and over the summer. Don't miss out on important information; subscribe to the Ashton Heights listserv today.

Email: main+owner@ashtonheights.groups.io. Always include your full name and street address and we'll get you set up to be "in the know."

Did you know that you can set your preferences on how you receive email from the listserv?

If you're worried about receiving too many emails or missing out, some options include:

- Individual messages
- Full digest (up to 12 messages grouped together in one email)
- Daily summary (one email each morning containing only the list of topics posted to the group the previous day)
- No email (receive no email, but view messages on the groups.io website)

Pre-Planning Gives You and Your Family Peace of Mind

Planning ahead for funeral and burial arrangements relieves your family of the burden of having to make decisions at a stressful time. Pre-planning is a true gift of love for your family—both emotionally and financially. Columbia Gardens Cemetery is approved by the State of Virginia to accept pre-payment for funeral and burial services. If you have not yet decided what arrangements you would like, we are here to guide and support you. We will explain burial, cremation, memorialization, options for funeral services and more.



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The Next Local Scam -- Fake Parking Tickets?

Community Safety and Security Corner

By Christina Schultz

"As goes California, so goes the nation" – let's hope that doesn't happen with the latest scam. Up and down the coast, fraudsters are using new technology to create fake parking tickets. It works like this: You park in a legal parking zone or pay to park on the street or in a lot or garage, all perfectly correct. Even so, you get a ticket. It looks official tucked under your windshield wiper. But it's fake. Scammers use high-tech, hand-held printers to fool you into sending them money. In some cases, the ticket asks you to pay online or via PayPal. In other cases, you are asked to scan a QR code that directs you to a fraudulent payment website. Still other fake tickets request a check by mail. To complicate matters, the websites and citations look almost identical to official city ones. There have even been instances where a fraudulent QR code is stuck on a multi-space meter station to trick drivers into connecting for parking payment on that site. If you follow any of these instructions, you will end up paying for a fine you don't owe or a parking space that only leaves you vulnerable to receiving a real parking ticket. Even more risky, these fraudsters will also have your personal information – including your payment data. Travelers with out-of-state license plates are particularly vulnerable to these scams because they are less likely to be familiar with local parking laws, but anyone can fall victim to a phony ticket.

There are a few measures, recommended by the Better Business Bureau, that can be taken to avoid falling into this trap in California, here in Arlington, or anywhere else.

- **Familiarize yourself before you park.** Before visiting a new place, research available parking and local parking requirements. Read local signs carefully when parking.

- **Examine the citation carefully.**

Scammers imitate

logos and city office names, but a careful look can identify the imitations. Do an internet search for the city's official parking ticket website and compare what you find to what's on the ticket. Government websites usually end in a .gov or .us designation, and if there is a payment page, it should always have a secure connection. Also check any identifying information for spelling or other errors, like the date or time.

- **Double-check the name of who you're paying.** If the ticket allows for payment by check, take a closer look at the address the check should be sent and how it should be addressed. Checks should generally be made to a specific government organization, not a string of initials or personal names.
- **Pay traffic citations by credit, not debit, card when possible.** It will be easier to contest fraudulent charges if you discover you've been scammed down the road.





ASHTON HEIGHTS'
NEIGHBORHOOD

Farmers Market

Barrett Elementary
4401 N Henderson Road
Saturdays 8 am – 12 noon
April – November

For updates and market offerings, follow us:
[@lubberrunfm](#) [fLubberRunFM](#)
www.lubberrunfarmersmarket.org



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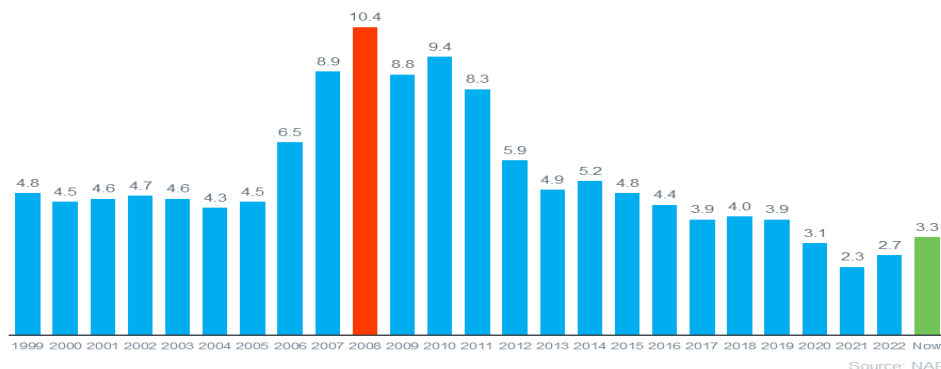
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For the housing market to crash, there would have to be too many houses for sale, but the data doesn't show that happening. Although housing supply did grow compared to last year, it's still low. The current months' supply is below the norm. The graph below shows this more clearly. If you look at the latest data, compared to 2008, there's only about a third of that available inventory.

Average Annual Inventory of Homes for Sale

Months' Supply of Unsold Existing Homes



If you have questions about the market and when might be the best time to plan for a move, 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 (cell)



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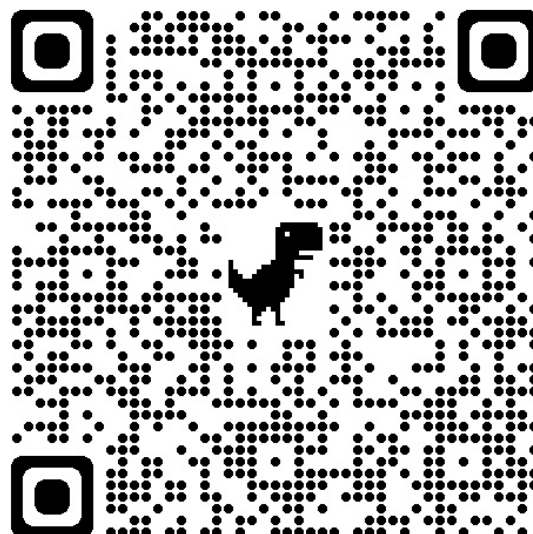
Ashton Heights Housing Prices and Building Style Changes

As many people have noticed, housing prices have grown and changed dramatically. In addition, there have been a number additions to existing houses and new houses constructed.

Given our civic association's long interest in history, it would be useful to research these topics and present an updated review at an AHCA meeting next year. If anyone is interested in helping out and/or researching these topics, please contact me, James Terpstra at terpstrajames2@gmail.com or 703-908-9231.

Calling for Nominations!

The Meet Your Neighbor column is a popular one and we need your help. Do you know someone who we should feature next month or in coming months? Nominate yourself or a neighbor! Fill out the form at this link: <https://bit.ly/3RBQjsZ> or use the QR code below.



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Save the Date

We have lots of events coming up in our area -- here are just a few to put on your calendar. If you're reading this newsletter issue online, all of the underlined text below are hyperlinks that will take you to the website with more details on each of these events.



- The **Fall E-Care** event will take place on **Saturday, November 4th** from 8:30 a.m. to 3 p.m. (rain or shine) at Wakefield High School. Learn more at arlingtonva.us/E-CARE or call 703-228-5000.
- The **18th Annual Turkey Trot** will take place on **November 23rd**. Be sure to register to support this worthy race!
- On **November 4 and December 2**, head to the Earth Products Yard for **Free Paper Shredding and Inert Materials dropoff**. Full details about what is/is not accepted can be found here: <https://www.arlingtonva.us/Government/Programs/Recycling-and-Trash/Events/Free-Paper-Shredding-and-Inert-Material-Drop-Off>.
- The Center for Local History at Arlington Central Library will have an **Open House** on **November 4th and December 2nd**.
- **November 7th** is the **General Election**. Be sure to vote -- polling locations are open from 6 a.m. to 7 p.m.
- Register to attend a **Holiday Wreath Workshop** on **December 2nd** at Long Branch Nature Center. Music, refreshments and basic instruction/materials will be provided. Program is for ages 12+ (with adult) and is \$45.
- The **Lyon Park holiday party** (with Santa) will be held on **Sunday, December 10th** in the afternoon. More detailed information will be posted in the LP December newsletter and on the listserv.

Befriending the Butterflies All Winter

By Brooke Alexander, Native Plant and Tree Canopy Coordinator



Where do butterflies go in the winter? If you are picturing the adults hibernating like bears, that's actually not that far from the truth for a few of them, including Mourning Cloak butterflies. This handsome creature reappears very early in the spring because it overwinters as an adult in crevices of bark or in leaf litter.

Most butterflies and moths overwinter as eggs, larvae or pupae, starting off in the tree tops and riding the leaves down in the autumn. Once they land in our yards, what happens next is up to us. To support butterflies, planting the native plants that are their food source is only half the job. The other half is to create the conditions that allow the butterflies and other beings to complete their life cycles.

Many of us were raised to think that dead leaves should be ejected from our yards as quickly as possible. The concern was that they would smother the grass. Green grass all winter was seen as a sign of a healthy landscape. It turns out that we had that exactly backwards, because the natural color of winter in the Mid-Atlantic is golden brown with a sprinkling of dark green evergreens, not the light green of turf grasses that were imported from Europe.

For those who want a green lawn, dead leaves add valuable organic matter to the soil, making fertilizer unnecessary. It is surprising how quickly dead leaves shrivel up and disappear if there aren't too many of them. If they are piled too thickly on the grass, they can be spread under shrubs or trees where the shade makes lawn a poor choice anyway, or added to a flower

bed, or consolidated in a pile to turn into compost. They can also be left in place on the lawn by mowing them over with the lawn mower, although of course shredding the leaves may also mean shredding the butterflies.

Another landscaping misconception that has been turned on its head is the idea that garden beds need to be "cleaned up" for the winter by cutting the plants down to the ground and removing the stalks. If, instead, the native plants are left standing over the winter and the leaves left underneath, the garden will provide a source of seeds for the birds, and shelter for a myriad of other little critters including native bees and fireflies. What formerly might have been a dead landscape made up of empty mulch beds is transformed into a scene of life and growth, even if most of it is not immediately apparent to the human eye.



In some ways, caring for a landscape that supports life means working less, not more, with less work needed for tidying. Admittedly, humans have devised ways to save even more labor (and labor costs) by turning yards into barren landscapes where every weed is suppressed by chemicals or by thick expanses of toxic mulch that have been sprayed with herbicides, barely a step removed from asphalt in terms of ecological value.

Fortunately, as a species we are coming to see that welcoming life into our yards benefits us as well as our fellow beings. For some basic tips on how to achieve these benefits, see the management plan page of the [Plant NOVA Natives website](http://PlantNOVANatives.org).

**** This is a guest article from Plant NOVA Natives, while Brooke is preparing for her son's wedding. ****

Restaurant Review – CHIKO Shirlington

By Vinh and Susan Nguyen

Website: www.mychiko.com

4040 Campbell Avenue, Arlington, VA 22206

571-312-0774

We had our first taste of CHIKO through one of the stands at the downtown sports arena. There it was, an irresistible call: *BULGOGI TOTS!* There is nothing better with a cold beer in between yelling unprintable things at the hated Pittsburgh Penguins.

CHIKO has a strong Chef pedigree – the creation of Scott Drewno (of The Source fame at the dearly departed Newseum) and partner Danny Lee. One of 5 locations in the Washington area, it blends [CHI]nese and [KO]rean flavors, with emphasis on the latter. The Shirlington dining space is modern and sparse and the focus is on the inventive food served in metal bowls or on lined baking pans.

The food is somewhat hard to describe as most dishes combine an unconventional mix of ingredients and Asian spices, garnishes and/or sauces. Below are some of the dishes we liked most.

Did we mention *Bulgogi Tots*? Of course tater tots are irresistible to start with, but adding thinly sliced, garlicky, sweet and salty beef to them takes it absolutely over the top! Other fun smaller plates include *Chicken Spring Rolls*, which look like fried taquitos rolled by an 8-year-old and yet are meaty and delicious with a mustard dipping sauce; crunchy *Wok Blistered Corn*, with butter and a gochujang (fermented chili paste) aioli dressing; *Pork and Kimchi Potstickers* nicely coated with a

sesame sauce; *Wok Blistered Green Beans* with garlic, chilies and ssamjang sauce (gochujang + fermented soy bean paste); and the *Half-a-cado Salad*, with ripe avocado tossed with cucumber, fried lotus chip, and candied almonds with a citrus soy dressing. (BTW, Korean chili sauces look and sound hotter than they really are.)

Chicken is well represented with Korean style *Double-fried Chicken Wings* and *Sichuan Hot Fried Chicken Sandwich & Tots*. *Orange-ish Chicken* is the best-known dish, with extra crispy chicken, candied orange and chili peppers. We also liked the *Cumin Lamb Stir Fry* on wheat noodles with shallots and mushroom; the *Soy Glazed Brisket*, cubes of beef tossed in butter and picked peppers, topped with a soy brined soft-boiled egg; and the *Smashed Salmon* with mushrooms and a medley of vegetables in a slightly sweet soy citrus sauce.

The drinks selection includes a variety of Korean alcoholic beverages (remember, *Bulgogi Tots!*), some canned cocktails and seltzers, and a basic list of wines.

Adventurous diners will definitely be rewarded at CHIKO, but be assured all will eat well.



Cumin Lamb Stir Fry and Bulgogi Loaded Tots.
Photos courtesy of the CHIKO Instagram account

Plant This -- Not That

By Amy Miller

Did you know that English ivy (*Hedera helix*) is one of the most widespread invasive plants in America? Not only is English ivy an invasive and chokes our trees, but also is host to the *Xylella fastidiosa* pathogen, a major threat to oak, maple, elm and other trees and plants. If you can, please consider removing your English ivy and replacing it with one of these fantastic options:

- **Golden Ragwort** (*Packera aurea*), a very pretty evergreen that can be in the shade or the sun. I have it in both and it is even more pretty in the spring with cute yellow flowers that bloom.

- **Hairy Alumroot** (*Heuchera villosa*), a semi-evergreen plant that flowers June to October. This plant thrives in sun, partial shade and shade.
- **Foamflower** (*Tiarella cordifolia*), a herbaceous perennial blooms tiny white flowers from April to July. This plant thrives in partial shade and shade.

Learn more about what you can replace your English ivy with by reading [this helpful article](#) from the Master Gardeners of Northern Virginia.



Tiarella cordifolia (Foamflower) in April.
Photo copyright Elaine Mills.

KIDS, INC.

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