



# Ashton Heights News

## Little Wins Along the Way, but More to Go!

By Scott Sklar, President, AHCA

Powered by our active North Jackson Street neighborhood about Halloween Safety, we have been able to move more positive action. I talked with Arlington County Board Chair Libby Garvey and had a meeting with Arlington County Police Department (ACPD) Chief Andy Penn. As a result, we will have two police cars on North Jackson Street during Halloween. Additionally, we are working to get a block party county permit without insurance, so we can actually close the street to traffic in 2025. Everyone is working together, which is good news.

Another issue that garnered concern on the listserv, was that of an attempted battery early in the morning of an Ashton Heights resident at Columbia Gardens Cemetery. While the ACPD reported it through their daily criminal report, no effort was made by ACPD to inform AHCA residents of the incident, or

more importantly, provide guidance to morning joggers and students walking to school of any threat assessment. Nor did we have a dialogue with our ACPD liaison with AHCA. Christine Schultz, who Chairs AHCA's Security & Safety Committee will be in further discussion with our designated ACPD liaison. In my ACPD meeting with Chief Penn, I have solid assurances that they will reinvigorate communication, and he plans to come personally to a future AHCA monthly meeting.

As a footnote, Arlington County has put some modern firetrucks off duty due to staffing and budget concerns, and the ACPD is understaffed. In April 2024, [WTOP](#) highlighted the chronic problem of 16 hour shifts by police and fire first responders and chronic under staffing. Also, the fire and police unions asked

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### AHCA Monthly Meeting Wed., November 20, 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
- 8:00 p.m.** Arlington's Vision Zero Program – What is this traffic safety program and how will it change Arlington?

The County Board has established a goal that there will be NO traffic fatalities or serious injuries. Nate Graham is the public engagement staffer with the program and he will open the presentation with a discussion of what Arlington is doing to meet this goal.

- 8:30 p.m.** What happens when you report hazardous road conditions, what kind of results can you expect?

Our listserv exploded this month with discussion of obstructed view hazards here in Ashton Heights – mostly foliage. Nate will discuss how to report violative conditions, including overgrown plants.

- 9:00 p.m.** Adjourn

## Recycling the Right Way

By Amy Miller

Help your community by following these top three recycling tips!



- 1. Do NOT bag recyclables!** If they are bagged (any kind: plastic, paper, etc.), they are considered contamination and are not recycled at the processing facility. Please place your loose items into the blue cart. [Click for more info.](#)
- 2. Food scraps and other organics go into the GREEN cart.** This helps to expand the available composted materials to build healthy soil.
- 3. Please don't place batteries in the trash OR recycling.** Lithium batteries should be taken to the Household Hazardous Materials facility.

*Adapted from the 2024 Arlington County recycling brochure*



**Editor's Note:** View the newsletter in **full color** at [www.ashtonheights.org](http://www.ashtonheights.org)!

Articles for the **January 2025** newsletter issue are due by **December 15th** (early because of the holidays and a firm date). Send submissions to: [amylmiller4@gmail.com](mailto:amylmiller4@gmail.com).

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## Join or Renew your AHCA Membership!

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  
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## 2024- 2025 AHCA Officers and Executive Committee

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## President's Column, continued from page 1

for a 1 cent increase in taxes to address the shortages which the County Board refused to do. And on October 21st, [ARLnow](#) highlighted the Ballston Fire Station, engine 102 (the busiest station of the year) dropped out of service due to staffing shortages. We need to ally with our other civic association partners on this issue – since safety and security are extremely important “quality of life” issues.

Still in progress, dialogues on “The Greenway” between North Ivy and North Jackson Streets behind WBM. A huge amount of time has been put in by our AHCA Tree Canopy & Native Plants Committee Chair Brooke Alexander and I am now involved to accelerate compliance. I will report back through the AHCA listserv with an update.

We have a great AHCA listserv discussion about bushes and trees on private property on corner lots that block clear view of traffic at their corner. Since I teach one of my three GWU courses under the GWU's Graduate Urban Studies program, I am enlisting graduate students to take pictures of these corners to highlight the blockage, publish the with pictures, and see if we can get compliance passively (with love and praise), or, if necessary, hand to the County to prod compliance to code (see below). We will ask for sites on the Ashton Heights & Lyon Park listservs in November.

### 4. Visual clearance (corners) (a) R and RA districts

On any corner lot in an R or RA district there shall be no

planting, structure, retaining wall, fence, shrubbery or obstruction to vision between a height of three feet and a height of 10 feet above the curb level within the triangle formed by the street right-of-way lines and a line connecting said street lines 25 feet from their intersection.

Finally, I have been advised that a porch repair on the 700 block of North Ivy St, which required no changes to size or electricity, and utilizing the old lumber has been stalled by the County for SIX months with little support by the County code officials.

Aside from AHCA putting in a letter at the hearing stage, I plan to use this as an example to open the process, provide more “written advisement by staff,” develop a more user-friendly web site – etc. I will be collecting stories in December by those of you not doing major renovations, just basic repairs, so see “the lay of the land” for conversations with the County.

I want to thank many of you in the Ashton Heights community for helping gather other neighbors, provide information, and work with our AHCA Committee chairs & co-chairs to solve problems, provide insight, and move the needle forward. That's what civic associations were designed to do.

November's AHCA monthly meeting is our last for 2024, please come, and acquaint yourself with Arlington County's Vision Zero -- this traffic safety program and how will it change Arlington and at 8:30 p.m. “How to report hazardous road conditions, and what kind of results can you expect?”. I look forward to seeing you.



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## Portal Maya – Gateway to Guatemalan Cuisine, From a Neighbor

By Chris Armstrong

Great food has the ability to transport you. To a memory, to feelings of comfort or excitement, or to another part of the world. For me, Portal Maya, the new(ish) food truck from our Ashton Heights neighbor Bayron Cisneros, does all three.

After months of watching Bayron and his wife Mayte get the food truck ready in their driveway near Clarendon United Methodist Church, I was eager to try it. Having traveled to Guatemala years ago, I still savored the memories of delicious garnachas, hearty stews, tacos, rellenitos, and other dishes. So, on a recent day while working from home, I packed up my dog (and my appetite) and headed off to Virginia Square Park to finally have a taste. I was not disappointed.

But first, let's rewind and let me introduce you to our neighbor Bayron. After immigrating from Guatemala and working for years in financial services, Bayron decided to make a change. "Food has always been a powerful way to connect with people, and I wanted to bring the unique flavors and rich traditions of Guatemala to my new Arlington community. Starting Portal Maya was a way to introduce my neighbors to the culture and history of Guatemala, from the food itself to the stories and heritage we share," Bayron explained. Combining his business experience with his passion for both Guatemalan cuisine and his local community in Arlington, Bayron made the leap to start a food truck bringing his family recipes to his neighbors.

As if it's just that easy. After Bayron purchased the truck in late 2023, arsonists struck a shop that was preparing the truck, damaging the exterior and windows. Thankfully, the Northern Virginia food truck community came to Bayron's side with support, connections, and resources. He slowly got back on track, and after getting through regulatory hurdles, the truck was open for business in August of this year.

Now, let's talk about the food.

Oh, the food. Guatemalan cuisine is a unique blend of ingredients, traditions, and flavors. As the former center of the Maya civilization, Guatemala enjoys a rich culinary heritage that is different than what many Americans consider the cuisines of Guatemala's Mexican neighbors to the north. A unique blend of Mayan traditions and Spanish influences, Guatemalan food often includes milder spice, expansive and varied use of corn, and thick stews. It's hard to write a paragraph that won't oversimplify it, so you'll just need to try it for yourself.

On to Portal Maya. When Bayron greeted my dog and me at the window, he cheerfully asked what I'd like. Unable to decide (and having the rare discipline not to ask for one of everything), I replied, "whatever you'd recommend!"

What came back a few minutes later was a delicious plate

of garnachas with diced beef, onion, stewed tomatoes, parmesan cheese, jalapeño, and escabeche, a traditional salad of pickled vegetables. The savory flavor and mild heat of the garnachas were paired perfectly by the pickled salad, and the taste of the beef was rich in the way only a meat that is slowly cooked, perfectly seasoned, and perfected through generations, can provide. For some of this, I need to give a shout-out to Bayron's aunt, Adit Vicente, who is the source of many of Bayron's family recipes.



As Bayron mentioned, garnachas are "a perfect balance of bold flavor and a light, satisfying feel, and they've quickly become a favorite among our customers. Everything is made fresh to order, which means a few minutes' wait, but the freshness and flavor are absolutely worth it." I couldn't agree more.

Three months after opening, Portal Maya is going strong. Bayron told me his favorite part of the new endeavor "has been connecting with people and sharing a little piece of Guatemala with the Arlington community. Every time someone tries a dish and loves it or asks about the cultural stories we post on Instagram, it's a rewarding experience."

If you're hungry, looking to try Guatemalan cuisine for the first time, or just looking to support a neighbor on an exciting new adventure, give Portal Maya a shot. These days you can find Bayron and Mayte serving up amazing meals near Trader Joe's, and be sure to say hello, you won't regret it. My bet is you will be going back for more, just like me.

You can follow Portal Maya on Instagram at [@portal\\_maya\\_dc](https://www.instagram.com/portal_maya_dc)



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ASHTON HEIGHTS' NEIGHBORHOOD

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**April – November**

For updates and market offerings, follow us:

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[www.lubberrunfarmersmarket.org](http://www.lubberrunfarmersmarket.org)



## SAVE THE DATE — LYON PARK PANCAKE BREAKFAST

**Saturday January 25, 2025**  
**8:00 to 10:30 a.m.**

*Coffee and coffee cake will be served from 10:00 to 11:00 a.m.*

Adults: \$15

Kids ages 4 – 10: \$5

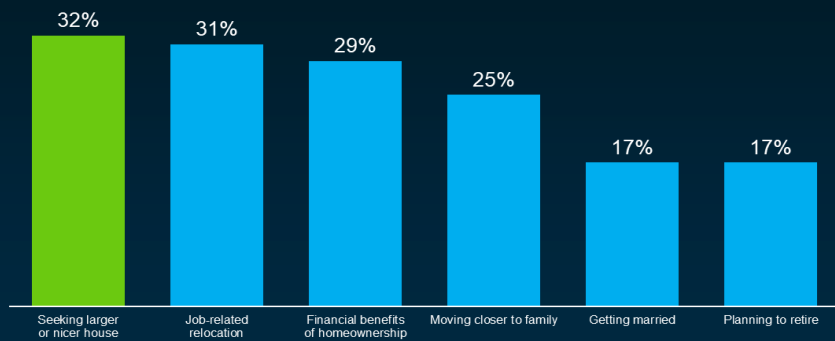
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Have you had thoughts of selling your current home to find the bigger, or smaller home you've been dreaming of? Now might be the right time. Your equity, paired with lower mortgage rates, puts you in a great position to make that move today. To make the best decisions and get the most out of your current market advantage, let's connect to discuss your situation so you have an expert guide through every step of your real estate journey.

### What's Motivating Buyers?

Share of active homebuyers who said their decision to buy is motivated in part by...



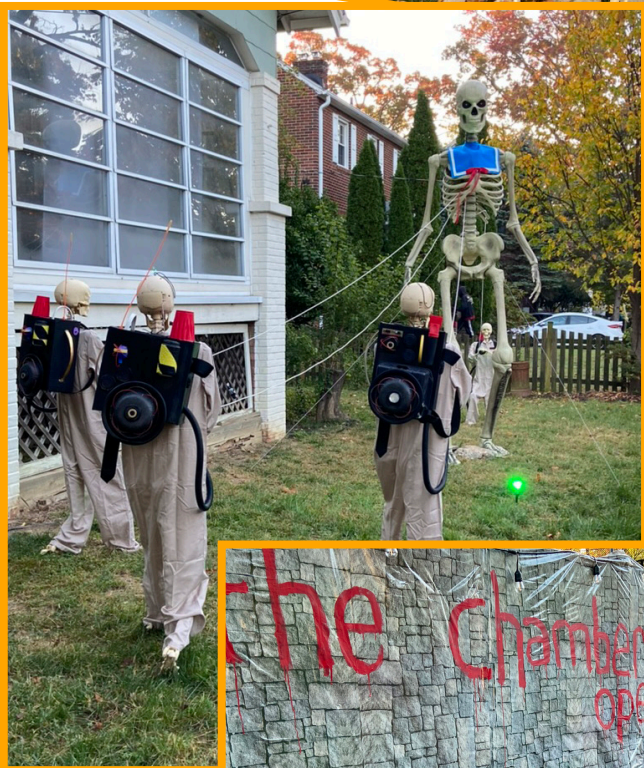
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# Scenes from Halloween in Ashton Heights



## Gumball Park – Biological Aeration

By Brooke Alexander, Native Plant and Tree Canopy Committee Chair



Tree roots need oxygen and water, alternating. Roots also need nutrients, which generally are plentiful in our clay soil. In order for oxygen and water to be accessible to roots, small spaces need to be maintained in the soil. When the soil is compacted, these small spaces get closed up.

Melissa Gildea, one of Arlington's Urban Foresters, said that Gumball Park has the most compacted soil of any park in Arlington. So, Arlington County is working with Ashton Heights to aerate the soil. For the first time in Arlington, biological aeration is being used as an experiment. Biological aeration has an advantage over mechanical aeration, especially in areas that have tree roots: mechanical aeration can damage the tree roots; biological aeration does not damage existing roots since plants are used.

A hardy group of 14 Ashton Heights neighbors, Arlington Regional Master Naturalists (ARMN) and Tree Stewards (TS) started this experiment. It was a brutally hot afternoon for scraping and raking the soil, hauling and spreading leaf mulch, distributing seeds, setting the fence and watering. But that sunny warm day set the stage nicely for the germination of the seeds. And then it rained! How fortuitous! The cover crop seeds have now germinated, and are growing roots. Go by and check it out. Hopefully, the rabbits won't take more than their share!

Assuming this experiment is successful, it will be used on each of the other two thirds of Gumball Park, and other places in the County.

Many thanks to all the neighbors and ARMN/TS members who helped!



Back row (l-r): Carolyn Fleming (ARMN), Mary McLean (ARMN), Louise Marshall (ARMN), Unidentified, Jo Allen (ARMN/TS); Ashton Heights neighbors: Joe Reid, Margaret Beach, Dean Halfacre, Foster Wang, John Guendelsberger, Bianca Sanchez-Koehler. Front Row (l-r): Melissa Gildea (Arlington Urban Forester), Rosanna Butterfield (AH neighbor) and Brooke Alexander (ARMN and AHCA Chair Tree Canopy and Native Plant Committee).

# Wreaths Across America Day

**Saturday, December 14**

Columbia Gardens Cemetery is proud to participate in our 6th Wreaths Across America Day! Please help us reach our goal to place Remembrance wreaths on all the veterans' graves at Columbia Gardens. To sponsor the purchase of remembrance wreaths, please order by December 3.

We invite you to join us in placing wreaths on the gravesites of the more than 1000 veterans at Columbia Gardens on December 14, at 9:00 am.



To sponsor wreaths or volunteer, scan this code.

For details, call us at 703.527.1235 or visit [columbiagardenscemetery.org](http://columbiagardenscemetery.org)  
Columbia Gardens Cemetery | 3411 Arlington Blvd. | Arlington, VA 22201



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## Tree Canopy Fund Update for Spring 2025 Offering By Brooke Alexander, Native Plant and Tree Canopy Committee Chair



Good news! Arlington has money for one more Tree Canopy Fund (TCF) offering. However, EcoAction Arlington is not sure what its funding will be after the next offering. TCF trees are 1-2 inch caliper trees that are 6-10 feet tall. Under this program, the County contractor delivers the tree to your house, and plants it for no cost to you. Applications are made this fall, and trees are planted Spring 2025. Your job is to keep it alive!

Unfortunately, the details of the Spring 2025 offering are not available at newsletter deadline time. EcoAction Arlington has indicated that the particulars will be available by November 2. Generally, the county has 8-10 different native tree choices. **If you are interested in a free TCF, be in touch with me! I will provide details when available.**

This year, trees are going to be awarded first come, first served. To maximize your options, we need to move as soon as possible after the TCF details are made public. Therefore, **if you are interested in obtaining a tree under the TCF program, let me know by 20 November by emailing [brooke.alexander52@gmail.com](mailto:brooke.alexander52@gmail.com).** I will set up individual consultations the first week in December, and help you with the application.

## Recommended on the Ashton Heights Listserv

Recently a neighbor asked for dermatologist recommendations. Here are those that received positive reviews:

- Dr. Aaron Fuchs
- Virginia Square Dermatology – Dr. Isabela Jones and Dr. Amanda Campbell
- Arlington Dermatology
- Dr. Michelle Rivera at VHC
- Dr. Yousefi
- Dr. Bruce Glassman
- Dermatology Associates of McLean – Dr. Nina Fisher
- CityDermNova – Dr. Margaret Kopelman

So much happens in between issues of newsletters. Don't miss out on important information; subscribe to the Ashton Heights listserv today.

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

# TFGBV: A Long Acronym with an Unfortunate Impact

## Community Safety and Security Corner By Christina Schultz

TFGBV stands for technology-facilitated gender-based violence. It is any action carried out using the Internet and/or mobile technology that harms others based on their sexual or gender identity or by enforcing harmful gender norms.



A number of terms around this issue are already familiar – cyberbullying, online harassment, doxxing, hacking, stalking, deepfakes, defamation, sextortion, astroturfing, hate speech – but they fail to capture the breath of violent behaviors that occur in digital spaces and disproportionately affect women, girls, and gender minorities. The continuum between online spaces and the physical world has severe and lasting impacts on victims/survivors. It results in significant health, safety, political, and economic consequences for women and girls, their families and communities, and society as a whole.

TFGBV is widespread. A 2021 Economist Intelligence Unit report found that between 2019 and 2020, 85 percent of women globally (76 percent in North America) witnessed or experienced online violence, with 38 percent having been personally affected. The scale and variety of abuse is increasingly compounded by readily accessible and under regulated deepfake tools, generative artificial intelligence, and ‘nudify’ apps. On social media platforms, the checks and balances introduced to mitigate TFGBV and other online harms have been rolled back or abandoned entirely.

Some women, such as journalists, politicians, and activists, are at heightened risk for TFGBV. This year alone we have seen a rise in vitriol launched at women running for public office. Male politicians and media personalities are normalizing hateful and threatening language against women in public life and inspiring their online followers to replicate it across the Internet. In addition, the lack of regulation around online harassment means there are almost no consequences for abusers, further leaving women exposed.

The first steps we can take in preventing TFGBV and supporting victims/survivors is acknowledging the full range of gender-based violence enacted online or via technology. This includes taking measures to protect ourselves (see box) and sharing this information with our daughters, sisters, mothers, aunts, and friends.

### Tips to Protect Yourself from TFGBV (abbreviated from the Dart Center for Journalism and Trauma)

#### 1. Be social-media savvy

- Understand the digital platforms you are working on, including the key online threats common in these spaces.
- Attend a social media self-defense webinar and learn how to recognize online abuse and its impact on women.
- Know the laws that address TFGBV.
- Understand where you are most vulnerable. (e.g., Facebook, X, LinkedIn, Instagram)

#### 2. Bolster your cybersecurity

- Use long passwords, never reuse passwords, create answers to security questions, and set up two-factor authentication on your accounts.
- Try to keep your personal and professional profiles separate.
- Limit the amount of personal information you share on public profiles .
- Do not use your work email address for private profiles.
- Do not use the same profile image for both professional and personal accounts.
- Talk to your friends about tagging.
- Use a VPN to protect your privacy.
- To prevent doxxing, search your personal information (e.g., name, address, phone number) on Google. You can request Google to remove that information from search results using this form: <https://reportcontent.google.com/forms/rtbf>

#### 3. Document and report TFGBV

- Document any instances of TFGBV. If you report online abuse and succeed in getting it taken down, you could lose valuable evidence. Save emails, voicemails and texts. Take screenshots on social media and copy direct links whenever possible. Ensure the documentation is saved in secure, multiple formats.
- Assess and monitor the origin, characteristics and frequency of the threat. Consider carefully whether the threat might transition offline.
- If experienced repeatedly, create a log that can help identify patterns and establish an evidence base for a claim of TFGBV.
- Block, mute, and report abuse on social media platforms.
- Assess your safety. Is the threat directed and specific? If you feel unsafe in any way, report the incident to law enforcement.

**Blood Drive at the Lyon Park Community Center  
Wednesday, December 4th from 12:00–5:00 p.m.**

To schedule your appointment: Scan the QR code, call 1-800-733-2767, or visit [RedCrossBlood.org](https://www.redcrossblood.org) and enter LyonParkCommunityCenter



## Colada Shop By Vinh and Susan Nguyen

2811 Clarendon Blvd.  
Arlington, VA 22201  
571-771-8400

Website: [www.coladashop.com/clarendon](http://www.coladashop.com/clarendon)

Tucked away between Tatte and Seamore's, Colada Shop has been serving up delicious food and drinks in Clarendon since March 2024 – the sixth out of seven DMV locations. In September 2024, ArlNow readers rated it as the second-best new Arlington restaurant after Carbonara.

The vibe and colors are full-on Caribbean. On sunny warm days the huge front windows are lifted wide open, adding to the feeling of walking in from the beach with sand in your toes.

The drinks menu offers coffee and tea, smoothies, seltzers and rum-based cocktails featuring tropical ingredients such as guava, hibiscus, and passion fruit. At dinner time, the cocktails are hugely popular. The coffee is excellent and authentically Cuban.

There is good variety in the food menu. The mainstay, of course, is the Cuban sandwich and Colada makes an excellent version with a perfect balance of protein (ham and pork), cheese (swiss), acid (pickles and mustard), Cuban bread

(lightly pressed and toasted), and a bright cilantro aioli to tie everything together. The other test for authenticity is ropa vieja, the Cuban version of braised beef. Colada serves it as an entrée with cilantro lime rice, avocado, tostones and pickled onions or as a trio of sliders with griddled plantains on top. Let's just say that this ropa vieja passed with flying colors.

Emanadas come in four varieties: beef, chicken, spinach & cheese, and "breakfast" plus a seasonal choice. The deep-fried pastry is light and flaky and the filling is tasty and generous – although chicken was our least favorite. Similarly, the chicken croqueta felt a little dry, but the ham version compares well to ones found at our favorite Spanish restaurants.

Santiago bowls are Colada's elevated versions of Chipotle. You pick the base (cilantro rice, quinoa or salad mix) and the protein (chicken, beef, pork or cauliflower & mushroom) and you then mix it with black beans, slaw, pickled onions and a cilantro aioli. The balance of flavors is spot-on and the portion is generous. In mid-October the seasonal ingredient is boniato (sweet potato). We had a boniato and coconut soup and tried it in an empanada. Both were absolutely delicious. The breakfast sandwich with pork also hit the spot.

We found the churros excellent, but did not get to try other desserts (too full).

Come to Colada Shop, order a Cuban sandwich and cocktail, close your eyes and picture yourself on the Malecon in Havana!



**Join us on Sunday, December 15  
at the Lyon Park Community Center for our  
Children's Holiday Party & the LPCA Adult Holiday Party**

**Children's Holiday Party (with Santa) 1pm – 3pm**

**LPCA Adult Holiday Party: 4:30pm – 7:30pm**



## Save the Date

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

- Remember! You can **compost your Halloween pumpkin(s)** – if the squirrels haven't gotten them already – either in your on-street composting bin OR you can take them to the Earth Products Yard on Saturday, November 2nd from 8 a.m. to noon.
- Tuesday, November 5 – don't forget to **vote!** [Click here](#) for full details.
- Shop the Long Branch PTA book fair November 11-15. Family night is Wed., November 13 from 5:30-7:30 p.m.
- Skate night returns to TJ select Saturdays including November 2, 16 and 23; December 7, 14 and 21, 2024. You can [pre-register for entry online](#), as well as reserve your skate size.
- Head to Arlington Central Library on Sunday, November 17 for [GameFest!](#) There will be a diverse selection of board games for players of all ages and abilities to try out. This is a free event, but registration is recommended.
- The [2024 Alternative Christmas Market](#) will be held on November 17 at the First Presbyterian Church at 601 N. Vermont St.
- The [Holiday Gift Nook](#) is a free shopping experience for the holidays, will be held at Arlington Central Library, December 7 and 8. Donations are accepted until November 2.
- Shop local at the [LAC Studios Show and Sale](#) on Saturday, December 7 from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m.

## Come & Get It by Kiley Reid By Denise Cormaney Follow all her reviews at @ findyourgoldenhour on Instagram

THREE AND A  
HALF STARS!

I really enjoyed this one! I listened to the audio version, and I think that probably added to my reading experience; the narration is fantastic.

Kiley Reid is an astute observer of human nature. You will recognize every character in this book, especially if you were ever a female student in a dorm setting.

Neither of those conditions are required to enjoy this one; these character feel true to life regardless.



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- \*FLEXIBLE SCHEDULING
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## KIDS, INC.

Our local youth are ready to help when the household hands are not enough. If you would like to be added to this list, please send updates to Ann Felker: [gr8est9@gmail.com](mailto:gr8est9@gmail.com). Include your child's name, birth year, contact information and list the jobs that they are interested in being contacted for hire.



Dog walking



Pet sitting



Babysitting



Leaf raking



Plant watering



Yard work



Snow shoveling



Parents helper



Technology



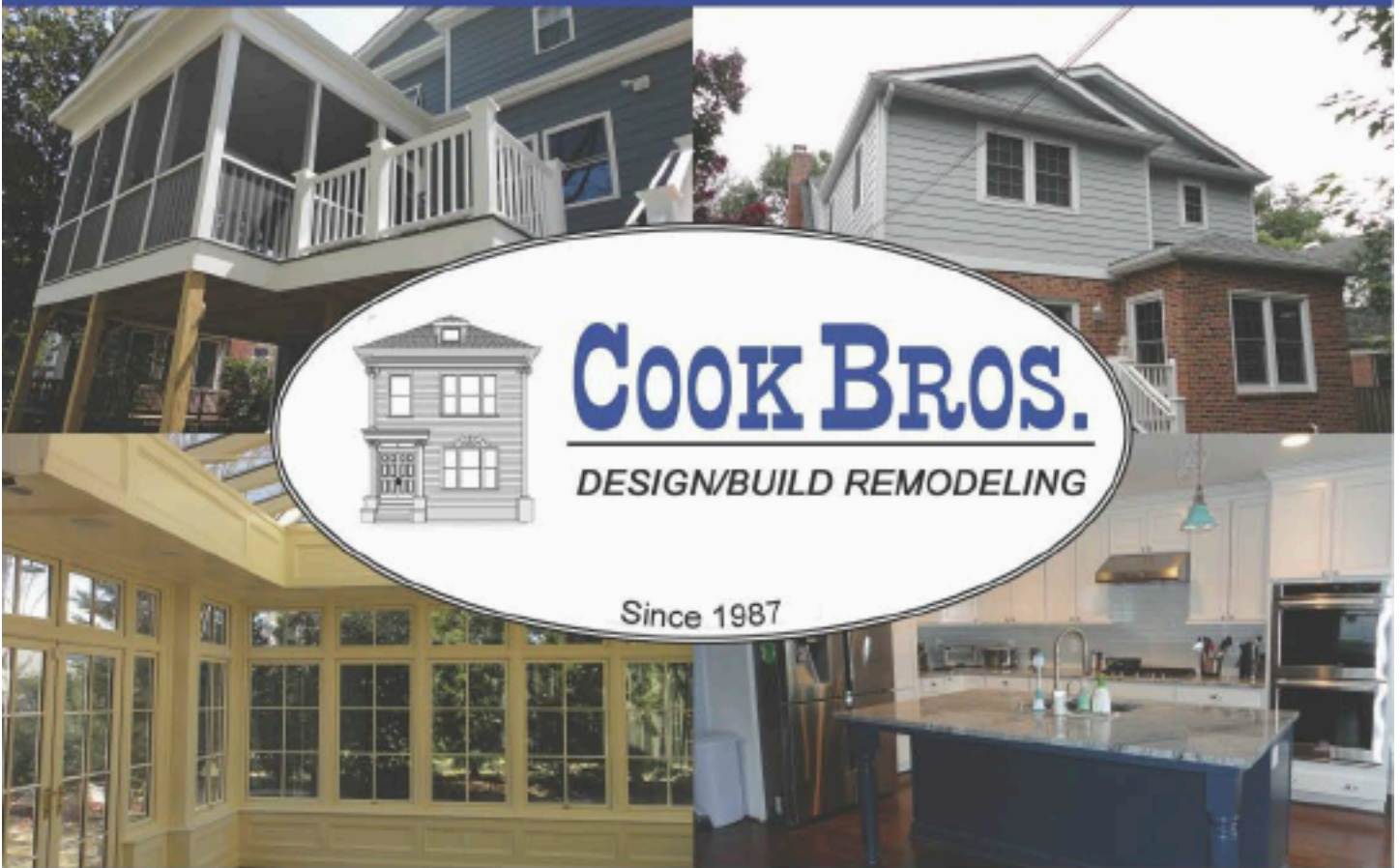
Mail collection

*Icons courtesy of flaticon.com*

**Please consult the newsletter that  
is posted to the Ashton Heights  
listserv or the hand-delivered  
newsletter for a full list of kids who  
are available for hire!**

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