



# Ashton Heights News

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

September 2025

## Issues in Full Gear

By Scott Sklar, President, AHCA

The Ashton Heights Civic Association (AHCA) is in full gear this fall.

As many of you know from the AHCA listserv, we won a Virginia grant to give out tree whips to enhance the Ashton Heights tree canopy. Brooke Alexander, who chairs our Tree Canopy & Native Plants Committee has formed a group composed of 20 residents (the full list is on page 4). They all deserve our thanks and full cooperation. This initiative has profound benefits to Arlington County and specifically to Ashton Heights. Tree canopy has numerous benefits to our community: absorb pollution, buffer traffic noise, act as a habitat for wildlife, take in a huge amount of stormwater thus preventing floods and flooded basement, and absorb carbon, a potent greenhouse gas.

AHCA has been contacted by the county on music permits for The Lot as well as for the new restaurant at the old Silver Diner site. AHCA Development co-chairs Jack Spillsbury and Alexander Tuneski are tracking this issue, along with a range of other ongoing planning and development issues. At our September AHCA meeting, we will hear about development of the NAFCU site which has been vacated at the corner of 10th and North Irving Streets.

We have received a few complaints (speeding cars on Pershing and commercial food truck parking), which are being handled through the AHCA Transportation Committee, chaired by Patrick Lueb. I have been talking with the county to see if they can offer up free parking space at Arlington facilities in Ashton Heights and Lyon Park for these vehicles so our residents with these businesses can sustain themselves. We'll see how it proceeds.

This last quarter of the year, Arlington is already facing some challenges and an

economic downturn. The firing and buyouts of federal workers and curtailing of awarded federal contracts to the plethora of firms in Arlington, Alexandria, Fairfax and Loudoun Counties disproportionately affects this region. Since COVID, Arlington commercial office space vacancy rates are estimated around 22-23% as of late 2024 and early 2025, a trend exacerbated by shifts to remote and hybrid work. To address this, the county launched its Commercial Market Resiliency Initiative (CMRI) and Adaptive Reuse Policy, which streamlines the process for converting outdated office buildings into other uses to reduce vacancy rates and boost the tax base, though efforts are still in progress.

According to Rocket Homes, the list price of homes in Arlington County has decreased by 10.9% since June. Summary: The median home list price in Arlington County was \$780,000 in July 2025, down 10.9% from the previous month, and the median price per square foot was \$487.

In turn, income from property and business taxes will be down, and the Arlington County budget will be stretched thin. This will create some hard choices for reining in services, holding residential property tax rates, and holding back some important initiatives on stormwater management, tree canopy, clean energy and greenhouse gas reduction, among others.

As always, as a community, I am proud of how many of our residents are helping immigrants, fired government workers, improving our parks and playgrounds, overseeing children's sports and activities, among many other service activities.

We are so very lucky living in Ashton Heights and in a large part it is all of you that give your time to make this a better place. I hope to see you at our September monthly meeting in the social hall of the Clarendon United Methodist Church and until then – Happy Fall.

## AHCA Monthly Meeting Wed., September 17, 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 including 15 minutes from Brooke Alexander on the tree canopy initiative.
- 8:00 p.m.** Walking to the subway, you may have noticed that National Association of Federally-Insured Credit Unions (NAFCU) building at Irving and 10th has been sold to a company which runs self-storage units around the country and is currently vacant.
- If you want to hold on to Aunt Tillie's brown furniture, but don't want it in your living room, you are going to have options! The new owners, along with their local lawyer Nicholas Cumings, will talk about their plans for the site, which is intended to include ground floor retail.
- 8:30 p.m.** Jorge Carvajal, from Arlington's office of Real Estate Assessment, will talk about the assessed value on which you are taxed, methods and practices for deciding what the land and building is worth.
- Come and ask your questions and Jorge may be able to answer them for you.
- 9:00 p.m.** Adjourn



**Editor's Note:** View the newsletter in **full color** at [www.ashtonheights.org](http://www.ashtonheights.org)! If you have an idea for an article, reach out, we'd love to have you. The next issue will be the **October 2025** newsletter issue – submissions are due by **September 19th**. Send submissions to: [amylmiller4@gmail.com](mailto:amylmiller4@gmail.com). Thanks in advance for your contributions.

## 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@ashton-heights.org](mailto:newsletterads@ashton-heights.org).

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## 2025– 2026 AHCA Officers and Executive Committee

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## Long Branch Elementary School Updates

By Stacey Tuneski

Long Branch Elementary School PTA has had a great start to the school year. We welcomed students and families back with a family ice cream social and playground playdate. It's so great to see so many returning and new faces at school!

Long Branch PTA will be hosting a book fair through READ (Read Early and Daily) November 10–14 with opportunities to shop for books before and after school. The proceeds of the book fair not only benefit the Long Branch PTA, but also support READ's efforts to provide vulnerable families an opportunity to choose and receive one new FREE book, each month, for children from birth to five years old. Our family night is **Wednesday, November 12 from 5:30 – 7:30 p.m.**, if you want to come and shop for any books.

We are offering sponsorship opportunities for our newsletter to local businesses. If you are interested in being a sponsor, email [lbptafundraising@gmail.com](mailto:lbptafundraising@gmail.com).

To learn more about our book fair, other events, and opportunities to participate, visit our website – [www.lbpta.org](http://www.lbpta.org).



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## Update: AHCA Tree Canopy Campaign

By Brooke Alexander, AHCA Tree Canopy Committee Co-Chair



**What's new?** We changed our name from Blitz to Campaign, but the mission remains the same. This campaign is an Ashton Heights tree planting initiative to reverse our declining tree canopy and become the oasis in central Arlington, again. Join together with your neighbors – we are aiming to plant 1,200 new canopy trees in Ashton Heights.

**What's the 2025 plan?** The plan for Phase One is to plant ten percent of the big picture plan – that means 120 trees. We have allocated 51 trees so far, so we still have 69 trees available for phase one. Trees are first come, first serve. Individual consultations will be done by Ron Rosenberg and me.

**What's happened since May?** Twenty of your neighbors volunteered to bring campaign information to neighbors and encourage them to sign up for a free consultation, and they also circulated the AHCA petition. Many thanks to: Greg Guice, Mary Hibbits, Rob Hobart, Ken Matzkin, Sarah Fridrich, Pam Weeks, John Ruml, Trisha Gruesen, Tim Hartman, Caroline Rogus, Linda Scott, Heather Schildge, Ann Young, Bianca Sanchez-Koehler, Marc Jones, Kevin Kaime, Kathy Killion, Ken Vranich, Ron Rosenberg, and Ann Felker.

**Phase One trees (2025) will be free!** Thanks to Heather Schildge and Joslin Gallatin, AHCA received a grant from the Virginia Department of Forestry to plant 120 trees.

**Interested in a free tree consultation?** I hope that you will join us in welcoming a tree into your yard and investing in our neighborhood's future. Together we can pay this forward for future generations. Do you think you might have room for another tree? Contact the campaign at [treecanopy@ashtonheights.org](mailto:treecanopy@ashtonheights.org), for more information on the campaign, and to set up a free consultation.

**When will the 2025 trees be planted?** Target planting time is early December.

**What about the AHCA petition part of the campaign?** Please see Ann Felker's article on page 5 and sign the [AHCA Tree Canopy Protection Petition](#) remotely!

## Recommended on the Ashton Heights Listserv

Recommendations are always being solicited on the Ashton Heights listserv; here are some recent ones that might be of interest to you.

### Gutter work:

- George Krillis
- Marshall Roofing
- Metro Gutter
- Gutterman Services

### Dentist for older adult:

- Dr. Adam Roca
- Dr. Mary Walker
- Dr. Steve Mabry
- Dr. Tamara Garrett

### Bathroom remodel:

- Looney's Tile & Grout
- EQ Builds
- TriVista USA
- Equity Renovations

### Jewelry design:

- Dominion Jewelers
- Sacramento Jewelers
- The Top Jewelers

Don't miss out on important information in between newsletter issues. 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."

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 1 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)

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## Tree Canopy Protection Petition By Ann Felker, Steering Committee Member, AHCA Tree Canopy Campaign



"The Giving Tree" used to be a feel good, happy ending life story. With few words and naive drawings, Shel Silverstein told a parable about people and trees in partnership. Then I joined the Tree Canopy Committee and learned how the author missed the part about stormwater retention, caterpillar hosting and CO2 management. Mystique shattered! New respect for Giving Trees acquired.

Luckily the Ashton Heights Civic Association is the better source for tree information. Currently, we have the canopy tree planting campaign and a simultaneous **petition to the County Board** to remind them that a healthy world needs trees and trees need room to grow, starting in our own neighborhood. The AHCA Tree Canopy Protection Petition can be signed online: <https://forms.gle/ryM2bhNkame9tcCNA>

**How many signatures do we have?** 281, which is not a convincing number since there are 1,200 households and many more people in Ashton Heights!

**Who can sign?** Renters as well as owners, anyone age 16 to 105. The 16 year old's will be more able to appreciate the outcome, but the seniors can be proud of the effort.

**What is the signing deadline?** The campaign will end on September 30, 2025. We will find an auspicious time to deliver the final petitions, including online signatures, to the County Board at a public meeting where we will ask for silent support. We may ask for kids to come and wave hopeful tree branches. More information forthcoming.

## Volunteer STILL Needed: Help Distribute the Newsletter By Bea Camp

Julie Mangis and I have been partnering on the Ashton Heights newsletter distribution every month for over a decade now.

What had been a one-person job before we took it over became a happy combo — Julie keeps the lists and makes sure all the blocks are covered, while I enjoy the neighborhood exercise involved in carting bags around to the six mid-level distributors.

Thanks to all our volunteers, this three-tiered system (actually four, with editor Amy kicking off the process every issue) works well.

Although Julie is prepared to continue, I have decided it's time to step back. This means we are looking for someone to take over my paper route, which occupies an hour or two per issue, eight months of the year (September-November and January-May).

Please let me know if you are interested; I will be available to guide you through the first month and serve as back-up as needed. Please email me at: [campbeatrice@gmail.com](mailto:campbeatrice@gmail.com)



## Tracking FEMA

### Community Safety and Security Corner

By Christina Schultz

With the increasing frequency and severity of natural disasters driven by climate change and the continued threat of pandemics, the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) has become a household name. It plays a huge role as the nation's primary disaster relief agency, yet FEMA is now itself under threat. President Trump has announced plans to phase out FEMA following the 2025 hurricane season, stating that states should take on more responsibility for responding to and preparing for extreme weather and other disasters. Under this proposed shift, disaster relief funds would be managed and distributed directly by the president's office instead of through FEMA. He has warned states to anticipate reduced federal aid, which would be reserved solely for "catastrophic circumstances." Secretary Kristi Noem of the Department of Homeland Security (DHS), which oversees FEMA, stated that "FEMA should no longer exist as it is" and has said she wants to shrink its authority and capabilities. After the recent floods in Texas, some administration officials seemed to soften their statements about dismantling FEMA. DHS noted that changes to FEMA will not hinder disaster readiness, but some current and former FEMA officials believe that chipping away at the agency's resources and mandate will create only problems and delays for communities during crises.



#### What is FEMA?

FEMA is the U.S. agency responsible for coordinating the federal government's response to domestic disasters, both natural and man-made. While federal emergency management in the United States has existed in one form or another for over two centuries, President Jimmy Carter formally established FEMA in 1978. Congress has continued to expand FEMA's authority since then for both immediate responses to disasters and initiatives to build community resilience. In response to the attacks of September 11, 2001, Congress created the Department of Homeland Security (DHS) which absorbed FEMA in 2003. FEMA's "mission is simple - to help people before, during and after disasters. FEMA provides disaster assistance to individuals, families and businesses whose property has been damaged or destroyed and whose losses are not covered by insurance." (FEMA website) Before a disaster strikes, FEMA prioritizes preparedness by educating the public and promoting actions that reduce risk and vulnerability. In the aftermath of a disaster, the agency offers rapid support to individuals, state and local authorities, and nonprofits providing critical services. FEMA also oversees the deployment of search and rescue teams and ensures critical supplies, such as bottled water, are pre-positioned and ready for use. FEMA has 10 regional offices and employed more than 20,000 people across the country. In past disasters, its workforce temporarily increased to 50,000 personnel.

#### How does FEMA work with states and other localities?

To tap into FEMA assistance programs after a disaster, state governors or tribal chief executives must first request a federal disaster declaration, which the president can grant under the Stafford Act. Once declared, FEMA coordinates disaster response by providing individual and public assistance grants, expert support, and low-interest loans, primarily aimed at helping overwhelmed local and state governments recover. The agency also funds personnel training and supports housing and services for migrants released from DHS custody. The president can issue a declaration without a state request in nation-wide cases, like the COVID-19

pandemic, or when an emergency or disaster takes place on federal property, such as the 1995 bombing of the Alfred P. Murrah Federal Building in Oklahoma City.

#### Is FEMA prepared to respond now that we are in hurricane season?

FEMA's staffing levels have significantly decreased due to mass layoffs and voluntary buyouts, with reports from April 2025 indicating about 20% of permanent staff took buyouts and over 2,000 full-time employees were eliminated since the administration took office. In addition, DHS has reassigned over 100 FEMA employees to assist Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) with staffing its mass deportation efforts, including half of FEMA's HR department and about 50 security personnel. FEMA staff received notice giving them seven days to accept or decline reassignment, with non-response treated as acceptance and refusal potentially leading to employment termination. DHS claims the transfers are temporary and will not affect disaster readiness. However, current and former FEMA officials argue the loss of so many staff will significantly hinder operations, especially as the agency manages multiple ongoing disasters.

For immigrants, the situation has left them feeling distrustful and fearful. Even those with permanent legal status in the U.S. face heightened risks during natural disasters, particularly with the arrival of hurricane season, due to increased immigration enforcement. In January, DHS rescinded its policy of avoiding enforcement in places like schools, hospitals, and shelters. These formerly neutral spaces are now seen as risky, forcing families to choose between physical safety and possible detention. Fears of immigration enforcement continue into disaster recovery, with many households hesitant to seek FEMA aid due to concerns their information could be shared with other agencies. Although DHS has previously paused enforcement during emergencies, its current policy during recovery remains unclear. Limited reassurances from authorities have left many feeling distrustful and fearful.

#### What else is going on at FEMA?

There have been other significant changes this year at FEMA. Here are a few highlights:

- On April 4, the administration announced the termination of the Building Resilient Infrastructure and Communities (BRIC) program, which had supported disaster prevention and mitigation efforts, labeling it "wasteful and ineffective." As part of the shutdown, all pending BRIC applications from 2020 to 2023 were canceled, with \$882 million returned to the Treasury and the remaining \$4 billion redirected to the Disaster Relief Fund.
- In mid-June, Secretary Noem implemented a strict budget policy requiring her personal approval for any FEMA expense exceeding \$100,000. This procedure has severely hampered the agency's operations, particularly disaster response. The approval bottleneck became so overwhelming that the agency assembled a special team of about 20 employees to help expedite the thousands of pending requests piled on Noem's desk. As a result, many states have experienced significant delays in receiving critical disaster funding.
- FEMA has canceled its contracts with unions, ending a nearly 10-year collective bargaining agreement, to comply with President Trump's executive order stripping many federal workers of union protections.
- FEMA funds are being used to build detention centers around the country. For example, the immigrant detention facility in Florida, dubbed "Alligator Alcatraz," is being funded largely by FEMA's Shelter and Services Program.





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## **Planting the Future We Want** **By Heather Schilde, Steering Committee** **Member, AHCA Tree Canopy Campaign**

Greetings Neighbors! I know you have seen a lot in this space about trees and especially about our current Ashton Heights 2025 Tree Canopy Campaign. I'm part of the committee working on the effort and wanted to share a few thoughts about why this is such an important and exciting opportunity to invest in the future through planting trees.

I often walk around Ashton Heights. Lately I've been paying increasing attention to the trees and it's filled me with both awe and gratitude. Awe because our canopy trees – the giants of our urban oasis – are just spectacular. Gratitude to all of our neighbors who host these magnificent beings. As I look, I see trees planted in so many creative ways – between lots, near sidewalks, centered on large and small lots. We have so many incredible trees because so many of you are hosting them. Thank you!

Many of us have been saddened by the increasing loss of healthy mature trees, and yes, trees are on private land and considered private property. But I think we also need to re-conceptualize our role as a community in fostering and protecting our trees. The trees around us benefit much more than one property owner, they are public goods and we all benefit from the shade, the cleaner air, and the absorption of excess water they facilitate. I see many lots being clear-cut for development. Those new houses also benefit from the trees that their neighbors still have but unless we nurture and add to the

canopy, we may someday wake up without any towering trees in sight.

Change is all around us and sometimes it feels hopeless to save pieces of the past and present that we love. But it is not. We can choose to take actions to build the future we want. Of course, there are no guarantees and we can all name reasons that things could go wrong, but the only thing that ensures our failure is not trying. I invite you to join us in admiring, rebuilding, and sustaining the Ashton Heights tree canopy!



Photo: *Acer rubrum* (Red Maple), courtesy of the Master Gardeners of Northern Virginia website.

## **Arlington's Healthcare Safety Net** **By Lesley Daigle, CEO, Arlington Free** **Clinic and Jennifer Sosin, Chair, Board of** **Directors, Arlington Free Clinic**

For over 30 years, Arlington Free Clinic (AFC) has been a cornerstone of Arlington's safety net. Serving an average of about 1,600 adults who have very low incomes and no health insurance, we are a medical home for our patients, providing and coordinating a full continuum of medical care, dental care, and behavioral healthcare, as well as providing services that connect them to other forms of support they may need. We are able to do what we do thanks to the generosity of our community. We are almost entirely funded through private donations, we have more than 400 volunteers who facilitate and provide care, and we have a strong partnership with VHC Health.



We are fortunate in Arlington to have a comparatively strong healthcare safety net. In addition to AFC, we have Neighborhood Health, a federally-qualified health center that serves both adults and children, and which has a sliding-fee scale for those with no insurance; the VHC Outpatient Clinic, which is accessible to all Arlington residents and which is low-cost for basic visits; and the County itself, which provides certain public-health services directly (for example, family planning and immunizations). Both Neighborhood Health and VHC accept Medicaid. AFC does not, as we serve only those who have no health insurance. Essentially, we are the safety net to the safety net.

Despite the strength of Arlington's healthcare safety net, we know that there are far more households in Arlington who lack adequate healthcare than we even now have the capacity to serve. Sadly, we expect this need to grow, perhaps significantly. The changes to Medicaid and the Affordable Care Act that were included in the reconciliation bill passed in July are likely to substantially increase the number of neighbors without health insurance. Current estimates from the Kaiser Family Foundation are that approximately 350,000 Virginians will lose health insurance within the next few years. In Arlington, our best estimate is that the number of uninsured adults will double, rising to more than fifteen thousand—or one in twelve adults.

In addition to the likely increase in uninsured adults, other provisions of the reconciliation bill mean that hospitals and other healthcare institutions will experience significantly reduced federal and state funding. Meanwhile, increased unemployment (already rising in Arlington) combined with pressures on state and local budgets may limit the degree to which local and state governments can fund gaps in healthcare.

Here in Arlington, as everywhere, the combination of a greater number of uninsured combined with reductions in hospital funding will have ripple effects. We know that those without health insurance often delay seeking necessary care. This often means ignoring chronic diseases like diabetes

and hypertension, going without dental care, and delaying diagnoses and treatment of serious issues. Without insurance, people are more likely to turn to hospital emergency rooms, where care is costly and focused on immediate symptoms, and this overreliance on emergency departments places tremendous strain on hospitals, which are legally required to treat all patients regardless of insurance status.

This is entirely apart from the health effects of stress and anxiety created by greater health and financial precariousness, and entirely apart from how all this translates into difficulties in sustaining work, school, and family.

Arlington Free Clinic, along with our safety-net partners, are closely monitoring changes to the healthcare system. We hope that the underlying strength of our community will help us maintain the services we currently provide, and perhaps even to increase our capacity within the limitations of our resources. Nonetheless, we anticipate that many Arlingtonians will lose access to healthcare over the coming years.

If you are interested in learning more about the services that AFC provides, current volunteer opportunities, or other ways to help strengthen Arlington's healthcare safety net, please visit our website, [www.arlingtonfreeclinic.org](http://www.arlingtonfreeclinic.org).

## **Featured Tree: A Yard Filled with** **Trees and a Solar-Paneled House** **By Brooke Alexander, Native** **Plant and Tree Canopy** **Committee Chair**



Trees take time to grow! One of the reasons that the Roman family moved to Ashton Heights was the tree canopy and they have made great contributions to the tree canopy since.

The Roman family lives at the corner of Jackson and 2nd Road. They have planted 6 native canopy trees on their lot of 7,882 square feet. They planted these trees between 2009 and 2017. When they moved here in 1998, there were 2 very large trees on their property: an oak and a silver maple. Over time, these trees declined and needed to be removed. As these large canopy trees declined, the Romans planted young trees to fill in behind.

If you have a chance to walk by the Roman's house, you'll see how a yard full of trees has grown over time. Start at the driveway, walk south on Jackson, then turn the corner. In order, you'll find a pin oak, white oak, red oak, Virginia magnolia, scarlet oak, and black gum. These trees vary in height from 18 to 45 feet tall. These native canopy trees will continue to grow and shade the Roman's yard and house, and contribute to Ashton Heights' canopy for many decades to come.

In 2020, the Roman family installed solar on their roof. They have 55 panels. They have been extremely happy with their solar power. Electricity bills have not exceeded \$90 per year!

Continued on page 9



## Featured Tree –continued from page 8

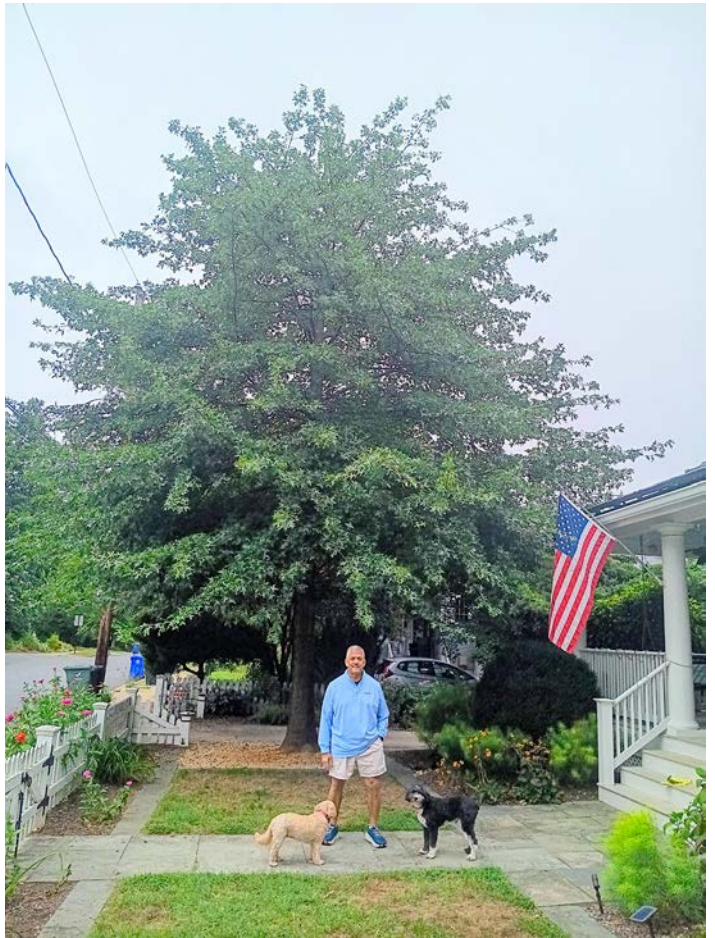
But what about the trees? Isn't there a conflict? Typically, deciduous trees are placed on the south and west of the house to shade the house and reduce the A/C load during the summer, and to allow the sun to shine thru and help heat the house in the winter.

Rafael Roman says that the need for A/C has also been reduced because the solar panels reflect sun off the roof. He is anticipating that his trees and solar use will continue to co-exist for the foreseeable future.

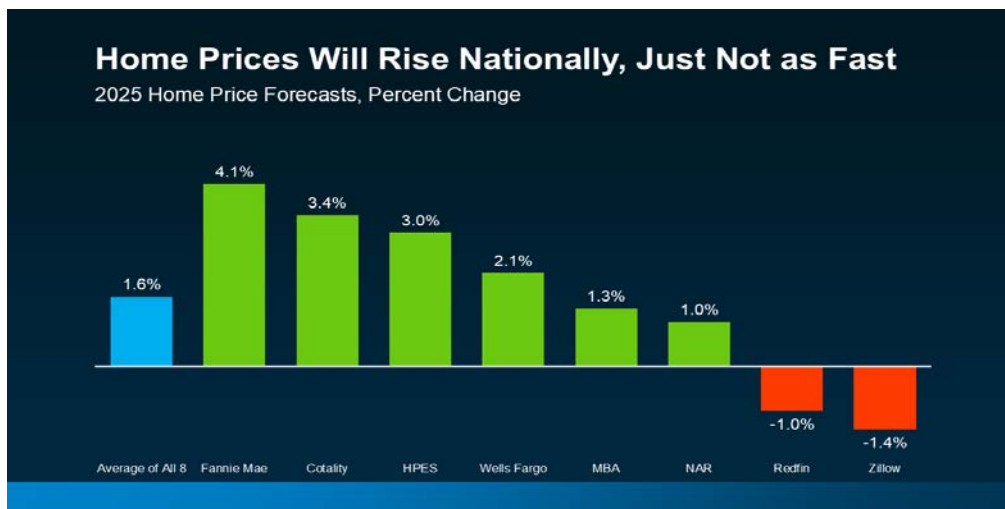
Here is some information from Arlington/Alexandria Tree Stewards about how trees and solar can co-exist. <https://treestewards.org/2024/04/04/canopy-trees-and-rooftop-solar/#:~:text=Canopy%20Trees%20and,Share%20this%3A>

Many thanks to Rafael Roman and his family for contributing to the Ashton Heights canopy. Read the related article on page 4 to see how you can add to the Ashton Heights tree canopy too.

Featured at right: Fifteen-year-old Pin Oak (*Quercus palustris*); Rafael Roman; and the family dogs, Tux and Lucy.



**Will Home Prices Fall?** With uncertain times, some buyers are expecting prices to drop, especially with headlines about slight declines in certain areas. But while price growth is slowing due to high mortgage rates and rising inventory, experts agree this isn't a crash. According to NAHB, the market is cooling after years of rapid gains. Still, home prices are projected to rise nationally by 1.5–2% in 2025, based on the average of eight major forecasts. Let's connect if you have a situation you want to discuss!



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## Save the Date – Upcoming Events

Here are just a few events coming up in our area. Underlined events are links in the online version.

- September is [Hunger Action Month](#) –take part in one of the many events with AFAC.
- Be sure to visit the new exhibit “[From Barriers to Ballots –The Fight for Equal Voting Rights in Virginia](#)” at Central Library as well as several other locations.
- [Jammin’ on Jackson](#) will be held September 5 from 6:30 to 8 p.m. in the Faith Lutheran back parking lot. This event features Ocho De Bastos - a Latin Pop Rock band, food trucks and lawn games. Food trucks will provide the grub and those 21 years or older can bring their own beer and wine. No pets, service animals are ok.
- The [4th Annual Hispanic Heritage Community Festival](#) will take place on September 6 from 1 to 4 p.m. at Tyrol Hill Park.
- The [Rosslyn Jazz Fest](#) takes place September 7 from 1 to 7 p.m. Free and located at Gateway Park.
- The [Arlington Green Community Tour and Celebration](#) will be held September 14 from 10:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. The welcome event starts at the Central Library plaza and then the tour is self-guided across Arlington.
- [Art After Hours](#) at MoCA Arlington will take place October 4 from 5 to 8 p.m. Celebrate the opening of their new fall exhibitions and enjoy the Fall Made in Arlington Market outside.



## Help Restore our Natural Areas: Replace Invasive Plants with Native Alternatives

By Joan McIntyre, MGNV

Some of our most loved ornamentals are not as benign as they appear. Certain non-native plants have become invasive, spreading from backyards into natural areas, where they displace native plant species, alter natural plant communities, and degrade the environment. We can help reduce their spread by removing the ones we have and by avoiding planting invasive plants still sold by nurseries. Here are three common invasives in our area:



- English Ivy (*Hedera helix*) creates an “ivy desert” on the ground, choking out other plants. As it climbs, English Ivy strangles trees, holds moisture near the tree bark promoting rot, and competes with the tree for water and nutrients. The added weight in the branches can bring trees down in storms. Removing English Ivy helps trees stay healthier.
- Nandina (*Nandina domestica*), featured in the second photo at right, was introduced to the U.S. from Asia in the early 1800s and is still widely sold. Birds eat the berries and spread the seeds, allowing the shrub to be naturalized in forest habitat in all southern states from Virginia to Texas.
- Butterfly Bush (*Buddleia davidii*), featured in the first photo at right, was introduced from China in the early 1900s. While butterflies love this plant, it does not support the critical caterpillar stage of native butterflies and displaces the native plants they rely on. A single flower spike can produce up to 40,000 seeds, a plant up to 3 million. The seeds are easily wind dispersed far from the parent plant. Though some nurseries sell Butterfly Bush cultivars labeled as sterile, researchers have raised concerns about these cultivars.

Master Gardeners of Northern Virginia website offers lots of resources, videos, and fact sheets on Invasive Plants and Native Alternatives -- <https://mgmv.org/invasives-native-alternatives/>

## KIDS, INC.

Welcome to the Ashton Heights micro-business community. The kids listed are approved by parents who believe that their entrepreneurs are ready to work. Birth years are included to help employers match people with skill levels. Employers guide:

- Time your request to hit kids phone after school hours. There is a bell to bell phone restriction in APS this year.
- Be clear about the job expectation. Include your address so the kid knows how far they will need to travel.
- Offer the kid an advance visit for a brief orientation/pet or child introduction.
- Work out your pay plan with the kid. AHCA does not give financial advice.
- Write down your expectations and include your address, so they know exactly where they are.
- Attach something noisy and shiny to any key that is necessary so it does not get lost. Do not put the address on the key; just make it distinctive. Some people may have more than one job at a time.

Kids, Inc. sends good luck wishes to five veteran “Kids” who worked around our neighborhood, sometimes for years. Alexandra Abiusi, Henrik Deininger, Nora Parker, Ally Shenk and Rachael Spitzer graduated and moved to their next destination. Best wishes to emptier nest families. We will miss them too but we are happy to welcome some new names, the neighborhood life cycle expands..



Dog walking



Pet sitting



Babysitting



Leaf raking



Plant watering



Yard work



Snow shoveling



Parents helper



Technology



Mail collection

*Icons courtesy of flaticon.com*

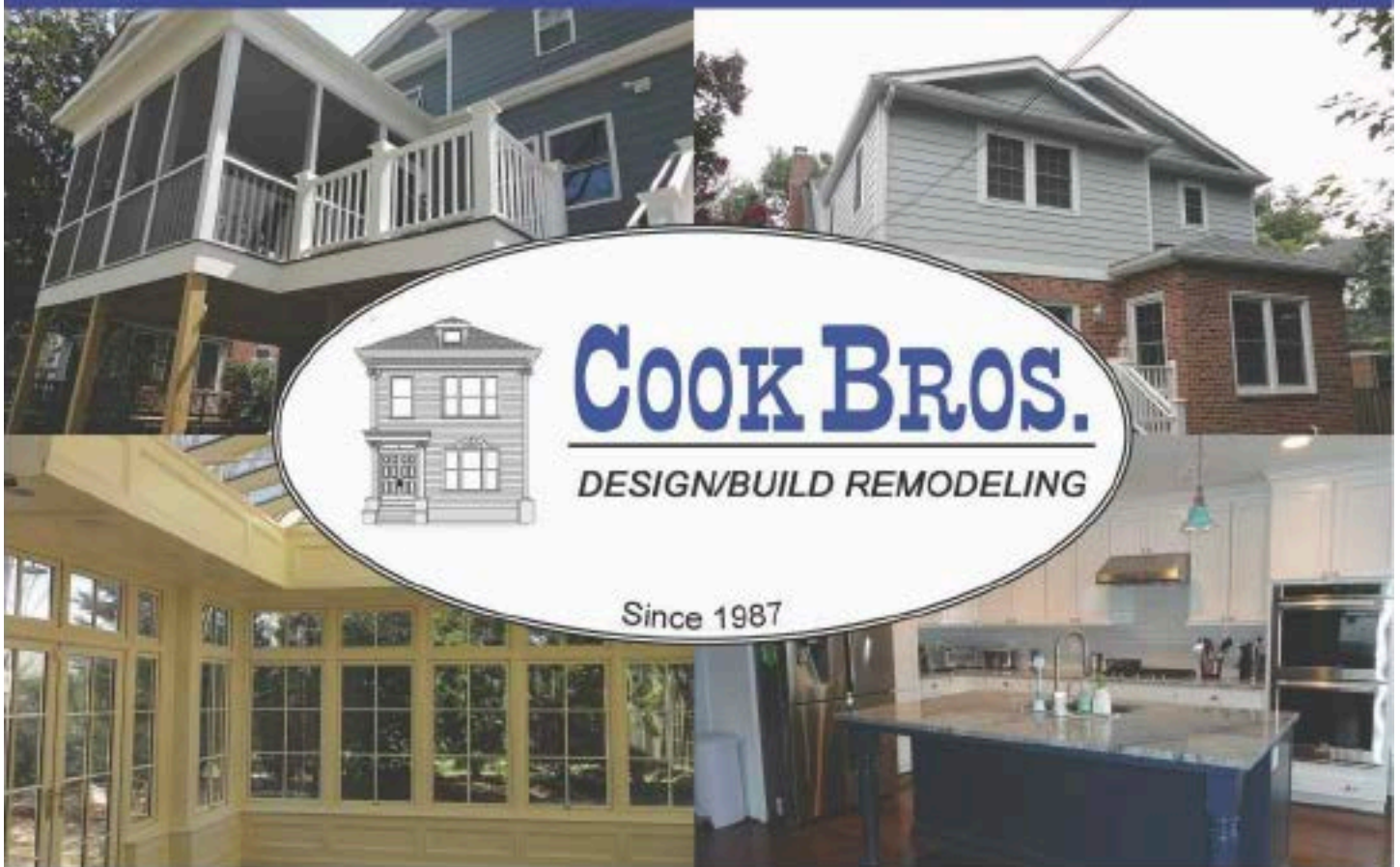
If you would like to be added to this list, please send updates to Ann Felker: [gr8est9@gmail.com](mailto:gr8est9@gmail.com). Include your child's name, birth year, contact information and list the jobs that they are interested in.

**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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