



Ashton Heights News

Community Organization and an Appeal for Volunteers!

By Scott Sklar, President, AHCA

In fall of 1984 I moved onto North Ivy Street buying a 1922 one story bungalow. The first thing I noticed is that most of my neighbors on the street had front porches, which they sat on often. That was my start of being assimilated into my neighborhood. As a young single professional, everyone was nice and welcoming. The older men lent me tools, or went out with me to Virginia Hardware, Cherrydale Hardware, Bill's Hardware and Brown's Hardware in downtown old Falls Church. I befriended all their owners over the years. The older women helped me actually eat well, but as I married and had a young daughter, they helped me out in so many other ways that I could write a whole column on the topic.

The first few weeks after I moved into my house, while working on my front lawn, an old lady with a walker was plodding mid-street and stopped in front of my house. I immediately walked up to her and introduced

myself, and we had a great talk. Before she left, she told me she had a 1929 black and white picture of my house with a cement flamingo in the front yard and asked if I would like it. I said yes. A week later she handed it to me and three months later she passed away. As many of you know, I have huge flurry of lawn flamingos including that original 1929 flamingo, in front of my house. But these experiences set the tone of my 42 years here in Ashton Heights on this three block street living among wonderful people.

What was great to know was these same types of people, with varied backgrounds, histories, experiences, jobs, and interests were all around me. And as we all make friends and acquaintances through our children, jobs, houses of worship, and our associations & hobbies – wow – great, amazing people were everywhere.

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AHCA Monthly Meeting Wed., April 15, 7 – 9 p.m.

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

- 7:00 p.m.** Mingle and chair setup
- 7:30 p.m.** Arlington County Board Chair, Matt de Ferranti will speak for 20 minutes, followed by a 30 minute Q&A session that will be moderated by Scott Sklar.
- 9:00 p.m.** Adjourn

Editor's Note

View the newsletter in **full color** at www.ashtonheights.org. If you have an idea for an article, reach out, we'd love to have you.

Submissions for the May 2026 newsletter are due by **April 18th (FIRM DEADLINE)**.

Send submissions to:
amylmiller4@gmail.com.

Call for AHCA Executive Committee Nominations

Nominate yourself for any position by emailing AHCA Nominations Chair CJ Frisina (cj.frisina@gmail.com) by noon on May 5, 2026.

AHCA members attending our May 20th membership meeting will vote on the slate(s) as reported by the AHCA Nominations Chair. This vote will take place shortly after we start the meeting at 7:30 p.m. Any AHCA member in good standing can run for any position. The following people are up for re-election,

but we are **more than happy to have new people and perspectives run for any of these roles.**

Officers:

- President - Scott Sklar
- VP Programs - Dave Schutz
- VP Membership - Jaya Chavern
- Treasurer - Doug Williams
- Secretary - Chris Armstrong

At-Large:

- Betsey Lyon
- Jennifer Sosin
- David Phillips
- Open
- Open

To check that you are up-to-date on dues to be qualified to run, please e-mail the AHCA VP of Membership, Jaya Chavern (jayachavern@gmail.com).

If you plan to run, please submit your intention by e-mail to CJ Frisina (cj.frisina@gmail.com) by noon on May 5, 2026. Thanks for considering!



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.

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.

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2025–2026 AHCA Officers and Executive Committee

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Arlington250 Launches America 250 Celebration with HistoryFest on May 9

By Bethany Baker



As the nation approaches the 250th anniversary of American independence in 2026, the Arlington250 committee will celebrate this spring with a community festival designed to bring history to life.

Spearheaded by the [Arlington Historical Society](#), the Arlington250 committee will host **HistoryFest** on May 9, 2026 from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. at Kenmore Middle School, a free, family-friendly event featuring interactive exhibits, living history demonstrations, and hands-on activities for visitors of all ages.

A centerpiece of the festival will be the **Virginia American Revolution 250 Commission (VA250) Mobile Museum**, a traveling interactive exhibit that highlights Virginia's role in the founding of the United States. The mobile museum brings immersive displays and engaging storytelling directly to communities across the Commonwealth, allowing visitors to explore the people, ideas, and events that shaped the American Revolution.

"Our goal is to tell America's history through the lens of Arlington," said Arlington Historical Society President Peter Vaselopulos. "HistoryFest gives residents a chance to explore the stories that shaped our community while connecting them to the larger national story."

The event will bring together community partners, historical organizations, and cultural groups from across the county. Visitors will be able to explore Arlington's history through exhibits and activities highlighting the county's development, from early settlements and Revolutionary-era connections to public education, civic activism, and the diverse communities that shape Arlington today.

HistoryFest is a signature event in a broad series of programs the Arlington Historical Society is planning as the country celebrates America's 250th anniversary. Throughout the year, the organization will host exhibits, lectures, and public programs exploring how Arlington's local history reflects the nation's larger story.

More information about the event and other upcoming programs can be found through the Arlington Historical Society and Museum website and social media channels ([Facebook](#) | [Instagram](#) | [BlueSky](#)).

Both the AHS and Ball-Sellers House museums are always FREE to visit.



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Welcome to "Arlington"

By Russ Miller

If you are reading this on paper, it is quite likely you are somewhere in the middle of Arlington County, Virginia, arguably the smallest county in the United States, though the most populous of three claimants. Have you ever wondered why Arlington is so small? Or why it is a county and not a city? Or when it started to be called Arlington?

Let's find the answers and mark our nation's semiquincentennial by taking a look at how Arlington, and our beloved Ashton Heights, came to be on the map. Arlington and indeed the nation's story can be told many ways of course, and for our purposes the Potomac River is a good place to start.

The first recorded residents of this area were members of the Dogue (Doeg) tribe, which ranged along the west bank of the Potomac River from south of what is now Mount Vernon to Arlington's Little Falls, just below today's Chain Bridge.

The Dogue people were on hand to meet one of the first European explorers in the area, Captain John Smith, who sailed from Jamestown up the Chesapeake and eventually the Potomac during 1608. Smith's shallop, an unremarkable small boat carrying fourteen or so Jamestown settlers, might have got upriver as far as the Great Falls, about ten miles upriver from Little Falls.

Across the river were the Anacostians. Like the Dogue, they were also dependent on the river for transportation and subsistence. Fun fact: "Potomac" ("Patawomeck" on Smith's map) is actually an Anacostian word which may have meant "river of swans," "place where people trade," or possibly even "place to which tribute is brought."

In any case, the Potomac offered easy movement of people and goods downstream, and crossings were fairly easy at the

Little Falls, which marks the head of tidewater navigation, the farthest point inland that ocean-going ships could reach. By about 1670 the local Dogue had been pushed out of the area into Maryland, leaving few traces.

River travel became much more complicated about ten miles above what is now Arlington. There, the dramatic Great Falls mark the fall line, the transition from the Piedmont ("foothills") to the coastal plain, where the river falls 80 feet in less than a mile.



The combination of the river and its significant elevation change were to play an important role in our nation's early history: an obstacle to transportation that could be overcome by canals as well as provide a source of power for vast industrial centers, including mills and manufacturing, especially in the northern reaches of the river.

In 1742, Virginia had carved Fairfax County out of Prince William County (carved from Stafford in 1730), as settlement – and removal

of indigenous peoples – took place, moving westward along and up tidal rivers. Getting tobacco to deep water ports and across the Atlantic to European markets was the first reason for colonists to be "here."

Virginia colonists established a tobacco warehouse and inspection station at "Belhaven" on Hunting Creek, soon relocated to the new town of Alexandria in 1749. Meanwhile, Maryland established Georgetown a mile or so below Little Falls in 1752. The unnamed bit of Fairfax County along the Potomac between Georgetown and Alexandria, where you might be right now, is a good place to stop until next month.

Next Month: Canals and the Constitution

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Featured Notable Trees
By Brooke Alexander, Tree Canopy and Native Plant Committee Chair

Elizabeth and Greg Bramham, and their son Henry, moved to 5th and Kenmore Streets in 2003 and have been caring for their trees since then. In 2024 they nominated two of their trees for Arlington's Notable Tree program and both qualified.

The Willow Oak, a canopy tree, is the same species of oak that was taken down at 5th and Jackson for redevelopment. Willow oaks do quite well in Arlington and have high value for wildlife. Oaks altogether host larvae of 534 different species of caterpillars. These caterpillars become our moths and butterflies, and feed our birds.

The Eastern Redbud is a lovely native understory tree. It has rose/pink/purple flowers that come out before the leaves.

As I write this on the eve of the newsletter deadline, redbud flowers are just starting to open. By the time you read this, the flowers may have passed.

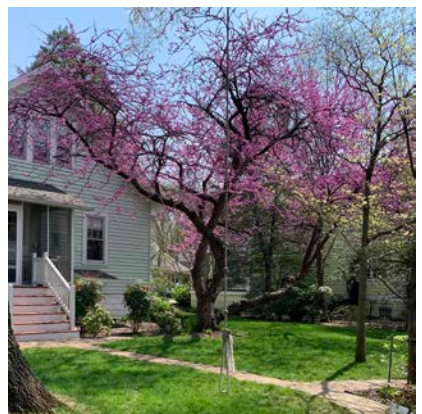


The Redbud's heart-shaped leaves open after the blooms have faded. As the season goes on, look at these leaves around the neighborhood. They are a favorite for some native bees who cut a perfect circle out of the leaf to partition their nest holes for their young.

The Bramhams, like many of us, believe that our large trees are a major contributor to the desirable nature of Ashton Heights. And they observe that it is ironic that our large trees help sell the large homes that developers build thru the neighborhood, but that trees are the first thing that builders eliminate when they prepare properties for redevelopment. Many thanks to the Bramhams for their efforts at preserving their older trees and planting young ones.

If you have a large tree in your yard which you would like to nominate to be on the County's Register of Notable Trees, more information can be found [online](#).

Top photo: Elizabeth and Greg photo by Brooke Alexander, bottom photo: Redbud by Elizabeth Bramham.



Want to help keep *Reclining Liberty* in Arlington?

By Catherine Anchin, Executive Director, MoCA

MoCA Arlington is launching a fundraising campaign to keep the beloved sculpture *Reclining Liberty* in Arlington!

[Reclining Liberty](#) has graced the museum's front lawn since July 2023, quickly becoming an iconic landmark in Arlington. Since then, the sculpture has generously been on loan from nationally-recognized artist Zaq Landsberg. Last fall, Arlington County gave the museum permission to keep the sculpture in its place within Maury Park. Now for the sculpture to stay in Arlington, the museum needs to raise the funds to acquire and care for it.

MoCA Arlington is an independent nonprofit organization that leases its main facility from Arlington County. If you're interested in supporting the museum and the [Keep Liberty in Arlington campaign](#), please visit the museum's website or stop in to make a donation!



Photo credit: Vivian Marie Doering

Donors will receive special artist-designed acknowledgments, such as pins, t-shirts, and prints! And, stay tuned for [special programs](#) to help the museum keep the momentum going and celebrate America250 with *Reclining Liberty* as its inspiration later this summer!

If you have a photo of you with *Reclining Liberty* that you'd like to share with the museum for inclusion on its social media or website during the campaign, please email it to Executive Director Catherine Anchin at director@mocaarlington.org.

Spring FLING

Saturday, May 9 | 12:00 - 3:00 pm
Columbia Gardens Cemetery Grounds
An afternoon of fun activities for children and adults:

- Paint a rock for a Mother's Day gift
- Put on a beekeeper suit and visit our hives
- Learn rose growing tips
- Get advice for planting trees and shrubs
- Play cornhole
- Refreshments served



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Plant One for Your Grandchildren!

By Brooke Alexander, Tree Canopy and Native Plant Committee Chair

You no doubt have seen some of the 92 canopy tree saplings that were planted in December. They have accompanying signs.

Note that in 10 years, these saplings will become the same size that a 2" caliper (8–10 foot tall) tree planted at the same time has become.

Young trees settle in and start growing right away; older trees

first need to recreate the roots they left behind in the nursery.

Would you like a **FREE TREE**? We have 28 more free canopy trees to plant! Sign up for a consultation by April 15; planting is in mid-May. Trees and installations are free thanks to our VDOF grant.

Email: treecanopy@ashtonheights.org for more information.



Ashton Heights History Committee: Preserving Our Historic Legacy

By Julie Mangis

When a Washington Post reporter wrote about Ashton Heights last October, she made a point of mentioning that Ashton Heights is on the National Register of Historic Places and that it has its own unique Style Guide describing the bungalows, American Foursquares and Tudor and Colonial Revivals that make up our diverse architecture. She also mentioned our active tree canopy preservation effort. We think these attributes should be sources of pride for each and every resident.

To fulfill the goal of preserving our historic legacy, the Ashton Heights History Committee has begun a series of initiatives. Our collections are lacking archival material and we would encourage residents to scour their attics and basements for old newsletters, newspaper clippings, AHCA records, and anything that might pertain to the community history. We hope to have more articles in this newsletter about Ashton Heights history, and we plan to present more history programs at Civic Association meetings. This year, we will be supporting the Arlington VA250 Committee celebrations in honor of our country's 250th birthday, and the installation of Stumbling Stones in our neighborhood.

At the March meeting, Tim Aiken presented about the Arlington Historical Society & Black Heritage Museum of Arlington's plan to install two Stumbling Stones in Ashton Heights, likely this fall. These Stumbling Stones will commemorate the lives of two individuals who were enslaved by Bushrod Washington Hunter, who owned "Brookdale," an estate of 400 acres that makes up today's Ashton Heights, Lyon

Park, and Arlington Heights. Six-inch round non-skid bronze plaques will be installed, and the History Committee plans to have a dedication ceremony. More information about the Stumbling Stones project may be found [online](#).

We are also launching a historic plaque program, in which individual homeowners may purchase a bronze plaque to install on their home, displaying the year it was built and the words, "Ashton Heights Historic District, Est. 1921." A similar program was established in Lyon Park a couple of years ago.

Both Lyon Park and Ashton Heights received designation as historic districts in 2003, and were placed on the National Register of Historic Places after extensive inventories of the housing stock were conducted. Ashton Heights qualified with 1,199 contributing buildings. That's an impressive number of historic properties! **Check if your home is one of the "contributing buildings" [online](#).** If so, we would hope that you would consider purchasing a historic plaque, identifying it as contributing to Ashton Heights Historic District designation. More information in the adjacent box. We are planning to place the first order for historic plaques soon.

Please contact co-historians Julie Mangis (jmmangis@aol.com) or Ann Felker (gr8est9@gmail.com), if you are interested in purchasing a historic plaque for your home, in learning more about Stumbling Stones, in donating archival materials, or in just talking about our amazing history! Slides from the March meeting history presentations are available on the Ashton Heights website: <https://ashtonheights.org>.

Do You Own a Historic Home?

You can enhance your home's historic value by purchasing a historic plaque:

- Bronze plaque: 7" by 10"
- Displays the date your house was built.
- Installation on either a wood surface or a brick surface.
- Cost estimate: \$250 to \$300

Your home doesn't need to be 100 years old. Homes built as late as 1950 are considered "contributing" to Ashton Heights' historic district designation.



For the Love of Books

By Kathy Kavalec

There's a new independent bookstore in town, but it's a little hard to pin down since it tends to wander about! Lyon Park resident Tessa Cannon opened [The Wandering Shelf](#) in May 2025 with the goal of having a local impact and sharing her love for books. Originally from California, Tessa moved to Arlington 9 years ago, fell in love with the city, and was keen to find a way to contribute.

After researching her business idea, Tessa renovated her large Ram cargo van into a cozy bookshop and set about on her itinerant mission. She opens her doors at various locations around Arlington, focusing on the Ballston-Rosslyn corridor – aspiring to be both “hyper local” and “Metro friendly.” The Wandering Shelf pops up regularly on Saturdays at Courthouse Plaza as well as other community events such as the recent Arlington Look Arts Experience (held at the old Walgreen's building on Langston Blvd). She often coordinates appearances with the [Rossana Mobile Espresso](#) so book lovers can enjoy some quality java while they browse.



We caught up with Tessa recently at another neighborhood institution, [Simona Cafe](#) (2507 N. Franklin Rd), which along with [The Brew Shop](#) (2004 Wilson Blvd.) sells some of her wares. Asked how she selects her books, Tessa says she picks them with two thoughts in mind: one is escape, to take readers to

a new world; the other is hopefully to stir up questions and perhaps encourage positive action. She describes the genres as “cozy, fantastical and impactful.” Her top sellers to date have been [I Who Have Never Known Men](#) by Jacqueline Harpman and [The House in the Cerulean Sea](#) by TJ Klune. To her surprise, she has found that there is also a significant audience in Arlington for thrillers and horror. More recently, Tessa has expanded to offer children's literature as well as a selection of used books, including some history and other nonfiction.

Tessa says her hope is that, regardless of whether or not visitors buy anything, they have a positive experience and the rest of their day is a little better for having stopped by her van. Though her own dog Autumn is not a big fan of the van, Tessa welcomes both well-behaved canines and humans alike. One recent weekend she counted fifteen dogs among her patrons!

Tessa has been thrilled by the warm reception and encouragement she has received for her endeavor, which has only reinforced her appreciation for all things Arlington. She would love eventually to open a bricks and mortar store where she could expand and host literary gatherings, but high commercial rents in the area remain a hurdle, at least for now. In the meantime, she is happy to wander the streets of Arlington in her pear-green colored van, sharing her joy in the

transformative power of reading.

The Wandering Shelf's schedule is available on its website, where you can also order books online, with free delivery available. Visit <https://www.wanderingshelf.com/>.



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Offer valid from April 1 through April 30.

Pickup or Delivery

President's Column – Continued from page 1

Fifteen years ago I was approached to become President of the Ashton Heights Civic Association (AHCA) which was without a president for over a year. Now I was not involved, but I did read the newsletter thoroughly – but running a trade association for 15 years with long evenings and being an involved dad for my daughter Stella (now 32+ years old), I didn't have much free community time. By the time I was asked, I was single again, my daughter had just moved out of our house to DC for the start of her career and I had started my own global sustainable energy company (promising more time for myself) – so when asked, I decided I needed to give back to this great community. So that started my journey with AHCA.

I met even more amazing people, and many who lived in this community 40 years before I ever showed up. I am still working with Julie Mangis and Ann Felker from the early days in AHCA and who are still running programs for our community. WOW!

A solid group of volunteers has delivered the AHCA newsletter to make sure EVERYONE sees and hears about what is going on in Ashton heights. Our listserv of over 700 people is humming along with interesting conversations over a variety of topics including community issues, events and recommendations.

We also have a dedicated group of people who strive to bring compelling speakers to our monthly meetings at Clarendon United Methodist Church. And we have other community members who chair and co-chair our committees to follow issues within our county and talk with our county leaders and staff to try to make our lives better, solve problems, and become involved in short term and long-term planning.

To top it off, we have individuals who take on more narrow

issues: commercial noise, stormwater abatement, historic preservation and education – to track, intervene and educate us as “events” happen.

We are all better off having this cadre of amazing volunteers – working hard for all of us and our children to preserve and enhance our quality of life – now and also in the future.

I am putting out a personal appeal to all my neighbors in the Ashton Heights community to help fill vacancies on the AHCA Executive Committee, or better yet, jump into running for any of the positions.

Consider joining one of our committees – contact the chairs and co-chairs listed on page two of our monthly newsletter – or our newsletter editor to contribute an article or make a suggestion.

I have been your association President for 13 1/2 years, and plan to step down after 15 years (**or sooner, if someone will consider stepping up**). I am excited to entice you all to work for your community – to make it better, safer, healthier, friendlier. You won't regret it.



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Don't Miss Out – The Lyon Park Plant Sale is April 18

By Susan Bell

One of spring's not-to-be missed events is the annual Lyon Park Plant Sale which supports maintenance of the Lyon Park Community Center. Mark your calendars for Saturday, April 18th from 11 a.m. to 2 p.m. Once again we'll have lots of mostly native plants grown in neighborhood gardens, including perennials, annuals, houseplants, veggies and herbs. We'll be under the big tent in the park, rain or shine! Most plants will sell for \$5.00.

Plant Donations: Please consider potting up and labeling some of your favorites to donate to the Plant Sale. (Please don't donate plants on Arlington's invasive plant list. Check this link if you're not sure: <https://arlingtonva.s3.amazonaws.com/wp-content/uploads/sites/13/2013/10/Invasive-Plant-List-2-19-15.pdf>. We can only sell what our neighbors donate, so please be as generous as you have in the past. Donations should be brought to the park by 10 a.m.

"DIG-YOUR-OWN," hosted by Deborah Barber, the creator and steward of the wonderful gardens around the Lyon Park Community Center, is back this year. The beautiful native plants will be in full bloom, and you can dig some for your garden during the Plant Sale. Deborah and volunteers will guide diggers to the areas that are available for digging. Plants are \$5.00 per shovelful, \$1.00 per seedling. Please bring pots or newspaper for your choices.

QUESTIONS or want to VOLUNTEER? Contact Susan Bell at sibell703@outlook.com.

Arlington

Bunny Hop

April 18, 2025 at 8 a.m.

Running to help others!

**Register today for
the annual**

Arlington Bunny Hop 5K

Visit www.arlingtonbunnyhop.org

Stay for the block party afterwards with activities for all ages! There will be a bounce house and other children's activities. The Arlington Bunny Hop has raised over \$164,000 for Arlington charities. Sign up today to participate in this great event!



NATIVE PLANT GARDENING:

Good for People & Wildlife!

**Saturday
April 11
2:00 pm**

Speaker: Lyon Park resident & trained biologist Libby Lyons, life-long gardener, President of the Northern Virginia Bird Alliance



Free Event:
Details & RSVP

Venue: Christ
Church of Arlington
3020 N Pershing Dr

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Invasives of Concern in Ashton Heights

By **Melania Flores**, Pollinator Pathway Subcommittee Chair, AHCA Tree Canopy and Native Plant Committee

One of the first things I learned in this journey about protecting our local ecosystems is that not all perennial plants are beneficial in my specific area. Surprisingly, many favorites of landscape companies and traditional nurseries are considered “invasives.” When we traveled to the Galapagos islands in early 2020, we saw their native vegetation being choked and displaced by blackberries, causing great ecological harm. I slowly started removing invasives from my garden. The Master Gardeners of NOVA, recall USA’s definition of an “invasive” as a plant that:

- It is not native to the ecosystem in which it occurs.
- Can spread by seeds, spores, or other biological materials capable of propagating that species beyond cultivation.
- Its introduction into natural areas causes economic or environmental harm or harm to human, animal, or plant health.

Around 50% of the plants in Arlington are non-native. [Virginia lists over 100 as invasive](#). Invasive plants spread beyond backyard plantings to roadsides, streams, fields, and forests where they displace native species, alter natural plant communities, degrade the environment, and once established become difficult to eradicate. Most unfortunate, they are being still widely and legally sold by nurseries.

This is why, while my personal pledge to our community is that we progressively introduce native plants, I also pledge that we strive to **not purchase**, **learn to identify** and **consciously eliminate** invasive plants, and consider replacing them with

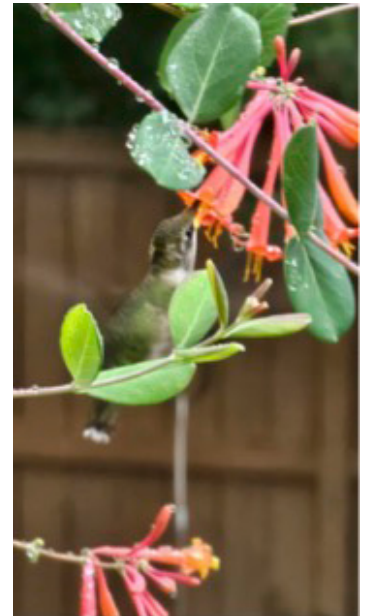
native, or at least non-invasive non-natives alternatives.

Invasive plants are more common than you think. The table below mentions just a few of the most common in Ashton Heights, along with few examples of native alternatives. [Click here for a great fact sheet](#) on many invasives, and their native alternatives, beyond the ones presented here.

Who can sign up for the Ashton Heights Pollinator Pathway Initiative? With almost 20 households already signed, the pledge is that you:

1. Plant more natives!
2. Do not spread outdoor insecticides.

To join, email: melaniaflores@gmail.com. More on the NOVA initiative (plantnovanatives.org/pp).



Hummingbirds are the primary pollinators of coral honeysuckle. Photo by Steven Widmayer

Example of invasive	Examples of Native Alternatives
English Ivy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Chrysogonum virginianum (Green and Gold) • Polystichum acrostichoides (Christmas Fern)
Butterfly bush	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Aronia melanocarpa (Black Chokeberry) • Itea virginica (Virginia Sweetspire)
Bamboo	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Panicum virgatum (Switchgrass) • Schizachyrium scoparium (Little Bluestem)
Japanese & Chinese Wisteria (also: Autumn clematis, Porcelain berry and Wintercreeper)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bignonia capreolata (Cross-vine) • Lonicera sempervirens (Trumpet Honeysuckle) • Wisteria frutescens (American Wisteria) • Clethra alnifolia (Sweet Pepperbush)
Lilyturf (<i>Liriope</i>)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Carex pensylvanica (Pennsylvania Sedge) • Packera aurea (Golden Ragwort)
Japanese honeysuckle	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Clematis virginiana (Virgin’s-bower) • Gelsemium sempervirens (Carolina Jessamine)
Periwinkle (<i>Vinca major/minor</i>)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Phlox subulata (Moss Phlox) • Tiarella cordifolia (Foamflower)
Japanese Pachysandra (<i>Pachysandra terminalis</i>)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Chrysogonum virginianum (Green-and-Gold) • Pachysandra procumbens (Allegheny Spurge) • Parthenocissus quinquefolia (Virginia-creeper)

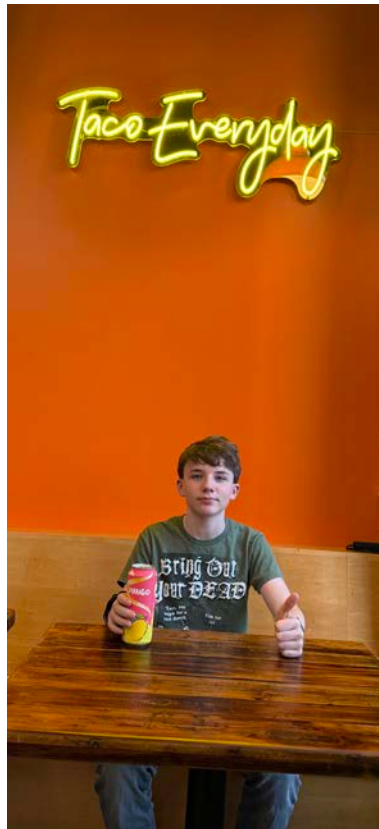
Restaurant Review: Eat More TACO

By Oliver Fry

708 N. Glebe Rd.
Arlington, VA 22203
703-890-0000
eatmoretaco.com

Eat More TACO (EMT) is a Mexican halal restaurant in Arlington, Virginia. We ate at the restaurant like we always do and when we sat down I noticed that their whole coloring was themed around bright Mexican colors: bright orange, green, and white. There was a Dia de Los Muertos mural on the wall that we thought was really cool. It was an indoor eating space on the smaller side but it was still nice and comfortable with outside seating options too.

EMT is fast casual and we ordered at a kiosk. Because of this, we did have to pick up our food at the counter, but that is okay because of the delicious goodness I'm about to talk about. We ordered a few different menu items including birria quesadilla, shrimp street taco, birria empanada, chips and churros. Starting



with the birra quesadilla, this was most likely the best quesadilla I have ever had. It was extremely flavorful and had the perfect temperature that won't burn your mouth.

Next, is the shrimp street tacos. I did not actually eat these but in my dad's opinion, the taco was authentic and the shrimp had a little kick. The birria empanada had the same delicious birra and cheese but, surrounded by a wonderful flakey crust pocket. And finally, the churros. These churros were legit. My dad and I believe the only better churros we have had were in Spain. There was an option to order these with chocolate but my dad missed that when ordering.

Now, it is time to talk about the mango item I ordered. There were a few different mango drink options to choose from but I went with the Oh Fresh mango juice. This juice was 100% mango juice made from real pulp. In other words, it was amazing.

This is a new restaurant that I believe deserves to be known. It is great, ten out of ten.

Homeowners Typically Sell Fast in the Spring

Average Median Days on the Market, 2023 - Present



KEEPING CURRENT MATTERS

Source: Realtor.com

Inventory is higher in spring and early summer, but that is when there are also more buyers in the marketplace. The days on market shortens and multiple offers become more prevalent.

If your next real estate vision is taking shape, let's connect to discuss what that could look like. In 2025, the peak closing month for Arlington County real estate was in June. If your next real estate vision is taking shape, let's connect to discuss what that could look like.



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Was that Really Your Grandson? Community Safety and Security Corner By Christina Schultz

We have all heard the story of the guy who meets a woman online, falls in love, and sends her money only to later find out it was a scam. We wonder how anyone could be conned by that, but what if he actually had video calls with her? And we've all known someone – a parent, grandparent, or even ourselves – who has received a call about a loved one in trouble and needed money. Well, what if the voice on that call was the loved one. Even companies are falling into this trap. A finance employee at Arup was deceived by an AI-deepfake video call with the apparent CFO and several colleagues which led to 15 transfers totaling \$25.6 million. The scale of artificial intelligence (AI) scams is staggering: 1,210% growth in AI-enabled fraud in 2025 (compared to 195% growth in traditional fraud) and \$40 billion in projected losses by 2027. According to a March 2026 survey, about half of Americans have either received a deepfake voice call in the past 12 months (25% of respondents) or couldn't tell the difference between a call from a real person and an AI generated one (24% of respondents). Seniors (55+) are being hit hardest, losing an average of \$1,298 to phone scams, triple the losses of younger adults.

A "deepfake" is a piece of audio, video, or image content that has been manipulated or synthetically generated by AI to make it appear real. Using inexpensive or freely available AI tools, criminals can now clone a person's voice from as little as three seconds of audio, based on a clip from a voicemail, social media video, or YouTube post, and produce a convincing imitation with an 85% voice match. They can also generate realistic video of someone saying or doing things they never said or did. Large language models (LLM) can rapidly generate hyper-personalized emails that reference personal details and individual communication styles. For example, AI can generate a convincing phishing email in five minutes, while it normally takes a human researcher manually crafting the same quality email about 16 hours. Attackers are broadening their focus and experimenting with blended techniques. The latest evolution is known as Agentic AI which

can autonomously plan and execute fraud campaigns from start to finish. It involves AI-powered scam call centers which combine synthetic voices, LLM-driven coaching, and AI responders to run fully automated fraud operations at scale. These tools are often combined with cryptocurrency-based payment systems.



As these techniques become more sophisticated, AI-generated material has become indistinguishable from authentic communications and the usual ways we detect fakes are failing. AI-generated phishing email eliminates the grammatical errors, generic messaging, and manual limitations that filters and awareness training relied on to catch fraud. The lovelorn man was scammed because AI agents can now sustain human-level contact. At this rate, everyday people are simply unable to keep up with the pace of weaponizing AI. Criminals are moving faster, leaving us more vulnerable. While we have to remain vigilant (see box), the toolbox will require more sophisticated responses. Many in the tech industry are looking into how to counter AI scams using AI. Current approaches include behavioral analytics, identity threat detection, network traffic analysis, AI-powered email security, deepfake detection tools, and evolved security awareness training platforms. The challenge here is to embed state-of-the-art AI directly into the telecom infrastructure to strictly authenticate callers before the phone even rings.

Tips for a Cautious and Proactive Approach to Digital Interactions

- Be wary of urgent or emotionally charged messages, especially if they involve money.
- Verify requests through a second channel. If you receive a call or message claiming to be from a loved one or institution, hang up and contact the person or organization directly using a trusted number.
- Limit what you share online. Publicly available photos, videos and voice clips can be used to train AI tools for impersonation scams.
- Use strong, unique passwords and enable multi-factor authentication (MFA) on financial and email accounts to reduce the risk of unauthorized access.
- Be cautious with investment opportunities that promise high or guaranteed returns, particularly those involving cryptocurrencies.
- Consider using reputable security software and staying informed about emerging scam tactics.

(From Filip Truta, "AI Is Turbocharging Scams Worldwide, INTERPOL Warns," March 17, 2026)

Join us at the Lyon Park Community Center on Saturday, April 18 at 11am, for our annual

SPRING EGG HUNT

Lyon Park will be filled with more than 3,500 candy-filled plastic eggs for children to collect.

Three age groups will participate: 1-2, 3-6, and 7-10.

Each age group will collect eggs individually.

Children ages 1-2 will collect empty eggs which are exchanged for parent approved prizes!

Remember to bring a basket or bag to collect your eggs.

Arrive by 10:45am so you don't miss all of the festivities.

Bring your camera and get a photo with our giant Peep!



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. 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



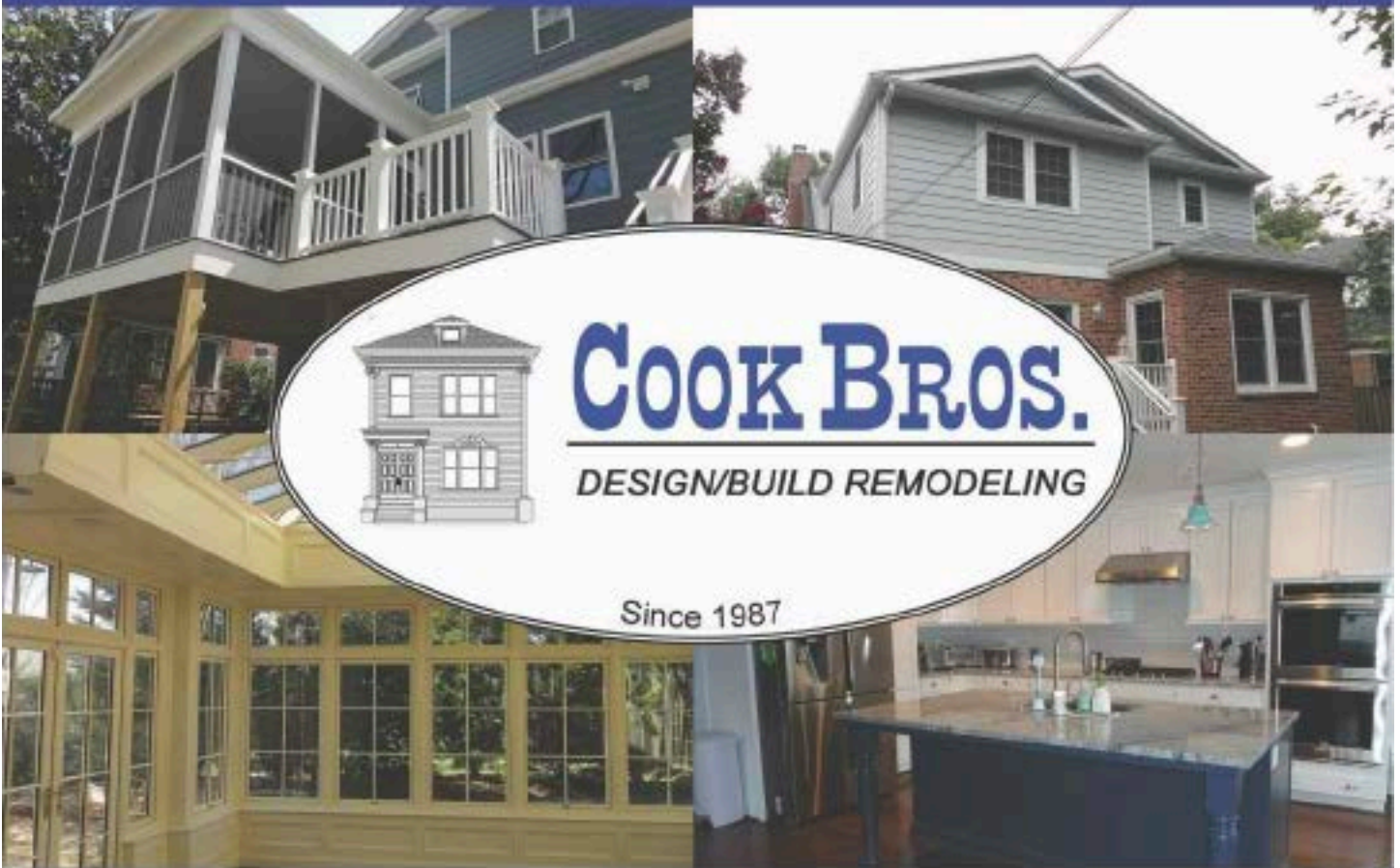
Mail collection

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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