



Ashton Heights News

A Good Year in Ashton Heights By Scott Sklar

The Ashton Heights Civic Association (AHCA) has a program year from May to May. And as many of you know, our AHCA Officers and At-Large Executive Committee (EXCOM) elections are in May to install our new officers.

Elections take place at our May 20, 2026 membership meeting, please come and vote.

This year was a good one in Ashton Heights, aside from the “snowcrete” weeks of winter. AHCA won State of Virginia funding to pass out and plant free native trees. We reinvigorated our Historic Preservation Committee and now older houses can order a plaque to designate their residence to show the historic character of our community.

Overall, our schools, parks, walkways and roads are good. AHCA is actively talking with the County Staff and Board on development issues, the Greenway, and on traffic and parking issues.

But all of the above, while great, is dwarfed by how we act together as a community. We have vigorous and active participating on the AHCA listserv and we have a large group of AHCA volunteers delivering the monthly newsletter.

We work with our sister civic association and residents of Lyon Park routinely on the plant sale, political candidate forums, and a range of policy discussions with Arlington County. This active and

ongoing camaraderie between all of us in your community is what makes Ashton Heights such a great place to live.

To close out this program year, I want to thank:

- AHCA newsletter editor, Amy Miller and listserv moderator Glynis Lough (2)
- AHCA newsletter delivery coordinators Julie Mangis and Sharon Lovering as well as every single one of our monthly delivery volunteers (55)
- AHCA committee chairs and vice chairs (12) and active committee members
- AHCA issue leaders on stormwater, noise and lot coverage (3)
- Officers and EXCOM members (9)

That is well over 75 people and you are appreciated.

In the remaining months of 2026, we will have our hands full advocating on your behalf on issues including traffic and pedestrian concerns, protecting the tree canopy and establishing the Greenway that buffers us from 10th Street North.

Let’s keep up the spirit – coordinate, collaborate and communicate – on issues and concerns that we all share in order to move the ball forward.

I wish you and your families a prosperous and happy 2026.

AHCA Monthly Meeting Wed., May 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.** Nominations Chair Frisina (cj.frisina@gmail.com) will announce the list of candidates for the AHCA Executive Committee and Officers for 2026–2027. Members in good standing will vote.
- 7:45 p.m.** Brief discussion of programming options for the 2026–2027 AHCA meeting schedule.
- 8:00 p.m.** Ashton Heights/ Clarendon Development Presentation

Presented in three parts by the AHCA Development/Zoning Co-Chairs, Jack Spilsbury and Alexander Tuneski. There will be an update on the three buildings on North 10th/Wilson Street, a status report on EHO and a review of other building issues around the neighborhood.
- 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. We are on a summer hiatus and our next issue won’t be until September. Submissions for the September 2026 newsletter are due by **August 21**. Send submissions to: amylmiller4@gmail.com. Thank you.

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/>

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Mosquito Reduction Methods

By Jonathan Zuckerman, Pollinator Pathway Initiative Guest Contributor



One thing nobody ever looks forward to is the scourge of mosquitoes. How can we enjoy the outdoors this year without the constant nuisance of bug bites? Many companies will try to sell you a pesticide spraying service, but **spraying for mosquitoes is ineffective and harmful** to all living creatures.¹

The first neighborhood-level action we should take to reduce this nuisance without harming other wildlife is to regularly **eliminate standing water in our yards**² so there's no place for mosquitoes to breed. Some mosquitoes can breed in only a tablespoon of water. If we all walked our yards within 3-5 days of a rainfall to eliminate standing water, it would be sufficient to disrupt their lifecycle. Be sure to check places you might not regularly notice, such as rain gutters, drainage pipes/tubes, and dense ivy patches. I would also suggest that you offer to do the same for your less mobile or outdoorsy neighbors. Some of our mosquitoes range only about 600 feet but other species go as far as 2 miles. Just imagine: if every household within 2 miles of you spent 5 minutes after a rain shower to ensure there were no breeding spots for mosquitoes, we might completely eliminate them from our own backyards. If you have a birdbath or other water feature, keep the water moving, refresh it every few days, or add chemical larvicide to the water.

The next thing we can do is to **set up mosquito traps**² in our yards - any mosquitoes that do breed nearby can be lured to lay their eggs in a trap where a larvicide will ensure the larvae do not mature into more adult mosquitoes. Making the traps

Footnotes:

¹ Mosquito spraying does much more harm than good (Arlington Regional Master Naturalists, Virginia Cooperative Extension, Master Gardeners of Northern Virginia) <https://armn.org/wp-content/uploads/2024/09/2024-Mosquito-and-Tick-PPT.pdf> (slides 17-19) and <https://www.arlingtonmagazine.com/native-bees-pollinators-protection/>

² Effective strategies to deal with mosquitos (Plant NOVA Native) <https://www.plantnovanatives.org/post/biodiversity-or-mosquito-fogging-you-can-t-have-both>

³ Instructions for how to construct mosquito traps (Home Grown National Park / Doug Tallamy; Northern Virginia Bird Alliance) <https://homegrownnationalpark.org/mosquito-bucket-challenge/> and <https://www.nvbirdalliance.org/news/how-to-set-up-a-mosquito-larva-trap>

takes about 5 minutes and you may already have the materials at hand: it requires only a bucket, some yard detritus, water, and a mosquito dunk.³ You can buy larvicide dunks for the traps at any hardware store but to get the best deal (and meet neighbors that share my passion for the



annihilation of mosquitoes), I make an [annual bulk order](#) and distribute them to participating neighbors.⁴

Click here for the mosquito dunk bulk order form or scan the QR code: <https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLSed9phOyy7QgFH5emlp95qdbZ0FZRQOCvf49Buw7PLENbSqDO/viewform?usp=dialog>



Interested in participating in 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).

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Mother's Day in Action

By Sarah Fridrich

As Mother's Day approaches I am reminded that its origins as an anti-war protest define it as a day of action. While I agree with many in our community who would call for a reconfiguration of the day towards its original intentions - as the Hallmark card version of one day of "appreciation" does feel flimsy as flowers in these times - I would also propose something more widely encompassing.

I would challenge my friends and neighbors to not just "appreciate" but to celebrate, support, and amplify the acts of peace, connection, healing, and justice by mothers in our local community.

Can you think of a few and, in honor of Mother's Day, tell someone else about them? I'll start! Because I am an artist/musician mom myself, I can tell you about local moms whose work, outside of their day jobs, is something you can engage with, explore, enjoy, and be inspired by. Here's a few:

First, Sara Barker, a mother of two in Arlington and the artistic director of Avant Bard theater, recently asked the question: "What role can Avant Bard play in resisting the nihilism, intolerance, and authoritarianism plaguing the world?" Her answer was to offer The Resistance Readings, a free event in Ballston every third Sunday of the month. <http://avantbard.org/project/the-resistance-readings/>

Next, native Arlingtonian Heather Spence, a mother of two young children, is a marine biologist, musician, composer, and pioneer in acoustic monitoring, who combines her expertise to explore the power of listening. I recommend listening to her compositions - created using audio from marine research and her interviews, which will open your heart and mind to what it means to truly listen to the world around you. <http://www.heatherspence.net>

Lastly, I have to tell you about "Oh, Child! A Mother's Day Songwriters-in-the-Round" hosted by our neighborhood arts center, Museum of Contemporary Arts Arlington on Friday, May 8th. This event will be an opportunity to connect, reflect, share tears and laughter offered to you by four singer-songwriter moms of young children, including myself! <https://mocaarlington.org/events/2026/05/oh-child-a-mothers-day-songwriters-in-the-round/>



HELP THE GREAT BARRIER REEF!

BINGO NIGHT

05.17.2026 — LYON PARK COMMUNITY CENTER



EVENT ACTIVITY

- 5\$ Entry Fee and 1st bingo card
- 2\$ per bingo card

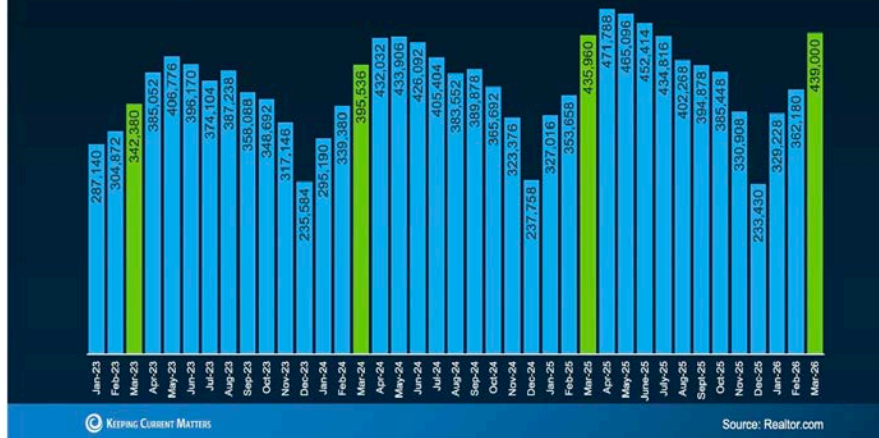
EVENT TIMING

- Sunday May 17th 2026 **STARTS 4:30pm** **ENDS 6:00pm**
- Doors open at 4:15

All profits will be donated to the great Barrier Reef Foundation
Snacks will be sold for 2\$ And drinks will be sold for 2\$

Fresh Listings Are Adding to Market Supply

New Listing Count



New listings jumped 21.2% in March to 439,000, a larger than typical seasonal surge and rose 0.7% year over year. March usually sees the biggest month over month jump in new listings of the entire buying season, averaging an 18% increase since 2017; this year it exceeded 20%.

If your next real estate vision is taking shape, let's connect to discuss what that could look like.



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June is Gun Violence Awareness Month

Community Safety and Security Corner By Christina Schultz

On January 21, 2013, fifteen-year-old Hadiya Pendleton marched in President Obama's second inaugural parade. One week later, she was shot and killed on a playground in Chicago. Sadly, hers is far from an isolated case. Across the country, gun violence claims an average of 46,686 lives per year (a rate of 13.8 deaths per 100,000 people), meaning nearly 130 lives are lost every single day, with hundreds more wounded. Virginia is not immune to this crisis. Each year, an average of 1,226 Virginians are killed and 1,624 are wounded by guns, placing the state 33rd in the nation for gun violence rates.

Virginia's rate of gun deaths has risen 17% from 2015 to 2024, slightly outpacing the national increase of 15%. Within the state, 59% of gun deaths are suicides and 39% are homicides, including shootings by police, compared to 57% and 41% nationwide, respectively. The financial toll is steep as well: gun violence costs Virginians \$14.2 billion each year, of which \$288.3 million is borne by taxpayers. The burden of gun violence falls heavily on the young. Firearms are now the leading cause of death among children and teenagers in America, having surpassed motor vehicle crashes.

In the wake of Hadiya's death, her family and friends began wearing orange, her favorite color, in her honor. The choice was fitting: orange is also the color hunters wear in the woods to signal that they are not targets. The tribute spread quickly across the country, becoming a way to honor victims and survivors of gun violence, raise awareness about the scope of the crisis, and advocate for change. By 2015, the movement had grown large enough to mark the first national Wear Orange Day, observed on what would have been Hadiya's 18th birthday. In 2021, the House of Representatives formally designated June as National Gun Violence Awareness Month, cementing nearly a decade of grassroots organizing into official national recognition. At the heart of the month is National Gun Violence Awareness Day, held each year on the first Friday of June, and the broader Wear Orange Weekend. This year, the 12th National Gun Violence Awareness Day will be observed on June 5, continuing throughout the weekend.

This year, efforts to address gun violence in Virginia have taken shape through state legislation. Virginia's 2026 legislative session produced one of the most significant overhauls of the commonwealth's firearm laws in years. Governor Abigail Spanberger signed legislation restricting the future sale of certain semi-automatic firearms, restoring universal background checks on private sales, raising the minimum age to purchase handguns to 21, requiring safe storage of firearms in homes with minors, and banning ghost guns. A February 2026 Roanoke College poll found that 71% of Virginians support licensing gun owners and 67% favor statewide firearm registration.

Gun Violence Awareness Month is more than a commemoration. It is a catalyst for action. Awareness campaigns have helped drive landmark legislation, including the federal Bipartisan Safer Communities Act in 2022 and the establishment of the White House Office of Gun Violence Prevention in 2023. Experts recognize that every major shooting re-traumatizes the entire country, with 75% of schoolchildren reporting fear that a mass shooting could happen at their own school. Awareness is an important step in changing that reality.



How You Can Get Involved

- Attend the annual Wear Orange event hosted by the Arlington chapter of Mom's Demand Action (stay tuned for details).
- Wear orange on June 5 and tell friends and family about gun violence awareness month.
- Support organizations working on prevention: Mom's Demand Action, Student's Demand Action, Everytown, GIFFORDS, Brady.
- Stay engaged year-round: preventing gun violence requires attention and action every day, not just in June.

Stumbling Stones By Karen Santoro

Since the late 1700s, African Americans made important contributions to the development of Arlington County.

Memorializing the Enslaved in Arlington (MEA), a project sponsored by the Arlington Historical Society and the Black Heritage Museum of Arlington, is helping to bring African American history to light. An important part of the MEA project is installing bronze plaques or "stumbling stones" on sidewalks where enslaved people lived. These plaques are designed and fabricated by Arlington Tech High School students.



Two such stones will be installed in Ashton Heights on **Sunday, August 16 at 4 pm** around First Road N and Jackson Street. Please plan on joining the dedication ceremony. For further information on the MEA project, visit <https://enslavedar.org/s/memorializing-the-enslaved-in-arlington/page/stumbling-stones>.



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AHCA Programs By Dave Schutz

Another glorious year of AHCA programs heads to the history books. But, next year is looming! What can we do to make Clarendon Methodist on a Wednesday night more attractive than your own living room? Please tell your devoted Programs VP what you want, and I will do my best to provide.

Read on for our ideas, but please email david.evan.schutz@gmail.com with ideas for topics and/or speakers.

General themes in the past have been: Arlington land use in general, specific projects in or near Ashton Heights, charitable organizations and needs in the community including immigrant issues, and Arlington government. We have not been doing much on Arlington's schools, and when we have, we haven't gotten a lot of attendance.

I'd like general input on the thrust of what we have been doing, and whether we are missing something.

We received some suggestions from attendees at the April meeting: Partner with Museum of Contemporary Art (AKA Maury School) for visit and program, Vision Zero auto and pedestrian safety, what's on the horizon for area



restaurants, home landscape management tips (local garden centers, master gardener, Arlington naturalists), lot coverage issues and more.

Jennifer Sosin and I did some brainstorming earlier and came up with the following ideas:

Theme: Local Issues

- Affordable housing
- Crime and safety
- Emergency services
- Parks

Theme: Social Services

- Aging
- Healthcare

Theme: Local Institutions and Businesses

- Columbia Gardens Cemetery
- Institutions of Faith
- Restaurants

Theme: General Interest

- Birds
- Pickleball
- Wilson Boulevard and what it looks liked in the 1920's, 40's 60's and 80's.

The Wood Wide Web

By Joslin Gallatin, Tree Canopy Campaign Steering Committee Member

The what? Yes, the Wood Wide Web! We all know about the World Wide Web, but some of us tree lovers are beginning to learn more about the Wood Wide Web. It is used to describe the underground network of mycorrhizal fungal threads that connect the roots of trees to each other allowing an exchange of nutrients, water, and chemicals.

A landmark study by Suzanne Simard in the late 1990s led to the coining of the phrase “the wood wide web.” She wrote a book describing her studies, Finding the Mother Tree, Discovering the Wisdom of the Forest in 2021 (Knopf). There is scientific controversy about some of her basic research, but it is fascinating and forward looking. We have so much to learn.

The WWW creates a symbiotic relationship between fungi and plants. Trees provide the fungi with carbon-rich sugars produced by photosynthesis. Mycorrhizal fungi attach to tree roots, forming a network of mycelium that connects different, sometimes diverse, tree species. Older “hub trees” support younger ones and aid in tree defense against pests. This research suggests that Ashton Heights is on the right track planting more trees and benefiting from these connections; the trees we plant will support each other and be stronger together.

Trees “communicate” by sending signals through the fungal network. Other trees may then act on the warning signals to prepare their own defenses. Is this “intelligence”? The existence of the network is proven but some scientists argue that the extent of resource sharing and any degree of “intelligent” communication may be overstated.

The ecology of the rhizosphere is so difficult to study because of its paper-thin delicacy. While some of our knowledge comes from 19th century discoveries, Simard’s research is the beginning of a new area of environmental research. There are many possibilities about how trees might affect humans including cancer prevention and decreasing human stress hormones.

How much carbon is stored by different fungi? Will some roots act as “climate warriors”? Why do some trees thrive in harsher conditions, could beneficial mycorrhizae accelerate forest restoration, and which edible mycorrhizal mushrooms could support human health?

Along with a bit of scientific controversy, Simard’s book is remarkable, highly rated, and the perfect book to read under your own trees. It is a piece of nature writing that is planted between nature and poetry and hope.

When the Forest Breathes by Suzanne Simard will be published by Allen Lane on 31 March 2026.



Mushrooms are the fruit of the mycorrhizal network fungus, and connect trees through tiny threads called mycelium. [National Forest Foundation]

Watering Trees that Were Trimmed

By Brooke Alexander, Tree Canopy and Native Plant Committee Chair

In the past 6 months, many of our Ashton Heights’ trees were trimmed by Arlington’s Circuit Tree Maintenance Program or Dominion’s periodic clearing of electric lines. What is the best treatment for these trees?

These trees need watering. Please try to establish a bucket brigade for each of these trees, whether on your property or on county property. Each canopy tree in our neighborhood is a treasure to the whole neighborhood.

Trees need 1-inch of water a week during the growing season — by rain or by hose. Water the entire root zone, which generally stretches at least as far as the branches. Watering needs to be done from leaf break in the spring, until Thanksgiving.

Those trees that were more severely pruned will be growing more aggressively in order to bring their leaves back into balance with their roots. These trees in particular need your help. It is most critical during this year when they will be growing aggressively. It is important every year going forward.

Best watering practice for established trees: test the ground with a screwdriver a certain day every week. If difficult to insert a screwdriver, the tree needs water. Water slowly so that the water sinks in. If the screwdriver sinks into the ground easily, don’t water; wait until the following week and test again.

One slow, deep watering a week in the area under the spread of the branches is what’s needed. This is vastly preferable to several short waterings a week, which will cause roots to grow close to the surface where they are more exposed to heat and drought effects.



AH Tree Canopy Campaign Status and Future!

By Brooke Alexander, Co-Chair Ashton Heights Tree Canopy Campaign



By the time you read this article, 28 more canopy trees will have been planted in Ashton Heights – Hooray! Recall that AHCA was awarded a grant by the Virginia Department of Forestry (VDOF) for 120 trees in July 2025. We planted 92 of those trees in December. And the rest will be planted by May 15.

These trees are an investment for our neighborhood's future. These trees will take 50 years to become towering canopy trees, and 100 years to look like the oldest trees in our neighborhood now.

To restore what used to be the oasis in central Arlington, we need to plant more trees, and keep our old trees. Our Tree Canopy Campaign steering committee originally hoped to plant 1,200 trees; that's an average of one canopy tree per household in Ashton Heights.

If you are interested in helping with future tree planting efforts and/or retention efforts for our old canopy trees, be in touch! Email brooke.alexander52@gmail.com.

Restaurant Review: Mario's Pizza House

By Phyllis Shea

3322 Wilson Blvd., Arlington, VA 22201
703-525-0222 | mariospizzaandsub.com

Mario's Pizza has been in Arlington longer than I have...and that's saying something. Mario's claims to have been at the Wilson Blvd location in Arlington since 1957. That was the year that John Lennon met Paul McCartney, the year Russia launched Sputnik and the year O'Malley took the Dodgers to L.A. under the cover of darkness. I was a sophomore in college.

Restaurants in Arlington come and go. Look at the corner of Jackson Street and Wilson. There, in the 1980's and 90's, a Dunkin' Donuts served house made donuts and coffee. When the wind was right, the aroma from those ovens wafted throughout Ashton Heights. To all our disappointment, Dunkin' left that corner and in the years that followed no restaurant or business was ever profitable. Those of us who waited patiently were pleased to see the return of Dunkin'. Although the donuts are no longer made in house, most of the time they are quite fresh.

Right next to our beloved Dunkin' is the legendary, Mario's. There was never someone named "Mario". Howard and Norma Levine thought a pizza place belonged in our section of Arlington and decided that a Jewish name wouldn't sell pizzas – simple as that. History recalls that Howard ran away with the Au pair and gave the business, in more ways than one, to Norma who manned the cash register for twenty years. Norma was, by all accounts, a great businesswoman and good to her employees. Now, decades later, Tuhin Ahmed, a former Mario's delivery boy, is the store's owner and manager.

For a pizza place that assumes such a large outdoor physical space, the interior of Mario's is about the size of a walk in

closet in an Arlington McMansion. There is no interior seating, everything is take out. Signage is everywhere. Besides menu offerings, signs attest to Oprah being a fan, along with positive reviews from former Arlingtonians who left town long ago, only to return to Mario's as soon as they came back to visit. "No WiFi" one sign reads, "Talk to each other, just like the good old days."

There's ample parking to the left and right of the shop; just don't park in the area reserved for the neighboring Dunkin' Donuts or you'll be sorry. I confess that before my visit in mid-April, I hadn't been to Mario's in more than 25 years. The pizza place had been a favorite haunt of my teenage sons because it was open late on weekends and my boys would engage the cooks, whom they knew by first names, as well as catch up with their friends via Mario's bulletin board. The bulletin board was the precursor to the cell phone. Messages were left there at night – who was at Mario's, at what time, and where they'd be going after etc. The boys loved Mario's pizza and I did, too until my sons told me that the cooks, Franklin and Ranveer, kept pepperoni in one pocket of their apron, and mozzarella in another.

But on a recent glorious spring Saturday in April, after an absence of a quarter of a century, I conquered my fears, walked inside, and ordered two slices of pepperoni pizza. It was absolutely delicious. I had to wait quite a long time before my order was ready; the cooks and staff were gearing up for a birthday party under the outside pergola which fronts the store. A lovely long buffet table had been set up with chafing dishes that awaited the cheesesteaks, pizzas and subs. The party was for a child celebrating his first birthday. The friendly crowd invited me to join in...and I did, and had a wonderful time! Franklin and Ranveer are long gone and I don't know if today's cooks still use their pockets for ingredients. The pizza is well cooked, and a cross between Chicago deep dish and the classic thin crust Neapolitan type. And each slice is square, a tradition for almost 70 years.

Whether you know or care, Mario...I'm back, and I'll be a fan forevermore. Your prodigal daughter has returned.



Save the Date – Upcoming Events

Save the date for these events coming up in our area. Underlined words are links in the online version.

- [HistoryFest VA 250: Telling Arlington's Story](#) will take place on May 9 from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. at Kenmore Middle School. There will be live reenactments, musical performances, storytelling, hands-on demonstrations, family activities and food vendors.
- Enjoy [Music by the Metro](#) – free outdoor concerts in Clarendon Metro Park on Thursdays, May 7, 14, 21 and 28 at 6 p.m. Free and open to the public.
- [Arlington Palooza](#) takes place Saturday, May 16 from 1 to 6 p.m. at the Lubber Run Community Center. It's a family-friendly festival with live music, local vendors, food trucks and more.
- A [Community Read of "All the President's Men"](#) will take place at Central Library on Thursday, May 21 from 6:30 to 7:30 p.m. The community discussion will be prefaced by a brief presentation on the Watergate scandal by George Mason University Professor Jeremy Mayer. Free, registration is required.
- The [Columbia Pike Blues Festival](#) will take place on June 13 from 1 to 8 p.m.
- As part of the Arlington Public Library [Arlington Reads program](#), [Antoni Porowski](#), a NY Times bestselling author will be in conversation with Library Director, Diane Kresh on Wednesday, June 24 from 6:30 to 9 p.m. Free, first-come, first-served seating. Registration is required.
- On July 18, the library will host [LibraryFest](#), a community festival to celebrate the best of what libraries offer.
- [Otakon 2026](#) will be held July 31 to August 2 at the Convention Center. The family-friendly convention is run by and dedicated to fans of Asian media, entertainment and pop culture, including anime, manga, music, movies and video games.
- The [Great American Farmers Market](#) will take place August 3 to 8 at 1400 Independence Ave., SW. The market will feature more than 80 vendors from across the country as part of the America250 celebrations.
- The [Arlington County Fair](#) will take place August 12 to 16 at the Thomas Jefferson Community Center.
- The [Library of Congress National Book Festival](#) will take place August 22 at the Convention Center.
- The [DC Jazz Fest](#) takes place September 2 to 6 at a variety of venues across the city, including The Wharf. Some concerts are free; but most require tickets.



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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LYON PARK



Saturday, May 16th | 11 am - 3 pm

Ponies ★ Petting Zoo ★ Games ★ Prizes

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.

Contact Julie Mangis at jmmangis@aol.com for information.



Confederation, Canals, and the Constitution – How Arlington Became a Place on the Map

By Russ Miller

Last month our virtual tour took us along the Potomac River, ending with Georgetown and Alexandria. This month we'll stay along the river, looking to the west.

Inland waterborne transportation was seen as critical to settlement and commerce in the new nation, and few were more keen on the prospects than George Washington, who had surveyed vast tracks as a young man and explored the "west" during Braddock's ill-fated march from Alexandria in the French and Indian War (1755). Following the treaty ending the Revolutionary War, George Washington resigned his commission late in 1783 and returned to civilian life with business opportunities in mind, advocating for the creation of the Patowmack Canal Company and then finding himself voted its president.

Important as they were, commerce, trade, transportation, and internal improvements (called "infrastructure" now) were entirely under the control of the states and not the national government under the Articles of Confederation. The national government handled foreign affairs, declared war, and asked the states for funding. That was about it.

The states established customs houses, levied taxes, and enforced laws and regulations. Because the national government had no authority to encourage or regulate commerce, it was up to the states to arrange trade and commerce business matters between themselves. Eager to establish commercial practices that would benefit the future canal and the new nation, in 1786, Washington hosted the Mount Vernon Conference, a meeting of like-minded Maryland and Virginia business leaders to discuss navigation on the Potomac.

That meeting was to lead to a second meeting in Annapolis attended by representatives of several states a year later, where discussion included shortcomings and disadvantages to trade and commerce under the weak central government. That group ended up recommending to the states a third meeting, a "Federal Convention," to be held in Philadelphia

in 1787. The Congress of the Confederation endorsed the convention for "the sole and express purpose of revising the Articles of Confederation." One of Virginia's delegates, James Madison, arrived eleven days early and armed with a paper titled "Vices of the Political System of the United States," shifted the discussions from revision to a wholesale do-over. The Articles didn't stand a chance, and even contentious issues like voting rights and the role of the chief executive seemed to melt away in the likelihood that Washington would be the first elected.

Washington would not see the fruits of the Patowmack Company's labors, as the system of canals would not be completed until 1802. It would operate until 1828, when the company was dissolved and its holdings transferred to the far larger and more ambitious Chesapeake and Ohio Canal (C&O), which had started construction in 1826 westward from Georgetown.

The canal arrived in Cumberland, Maryland in 1850, eight years after the arrival there of the Baltimore and Ohio Railroad. The canal would never reach Pittsburgh, its intended destination. Rail, the disruptive technology of that era, was to make transmountain and transcontinental expansion a reality, though the C&O Canal would continue to operate until the 1920s...with the B&O railroad a major shareholder.

The brand new federal government, operating under the Constitution ratified in 1788, established a strong chief executive and gave Congress the authority to raise taxes, regulate commerce and ratify treaties. It also determined the need for a permanent seat of government and authorized newly inaugurated President Washington to select a location along the Potomac, and north of the Anacostia.

Next Month: Washington's Choice





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Ellie-Palooza 2026
 By Adrie Custer

My husband and I have lived in Ashton Heights since 1978. Both our children were born and raised here. We welcomed our first grandchild, Ellie, in 2023. But at 9 months, Ellie began suffering apneic seizures. She quits moving, stops breathing, and turns blue. Her eyes are open but she is totally non-responsive.

After enduring a barrage of medical tests which provided no answers, we finally got an answer after a complete genetic workup. Typically every new baby has around 60 to 70 new mutations that their biological parents don't have. These genetic mutations are usually benign. Ellie's was not. Her extremely rare genetic condition (only 350 known cases) is called HNRNPU Neurodevelopmental Disorder (HNRNPU-NDD).

Ellie's seizures are a part of this condition. In addition to the seizures, Ellie has developmental delays in her gross motor movements, as well as in her speech and language. Despite the challenges she faces, Ellie is a happy, playful 3-year old who loves dancing, Elmo, mac and cheese, swinging, and cuddling with her Mom. We don't know what other impacts this condition will have on her life, but we do know that she deserves the best, and a chance at treatment is the best way



to give her a better future. That potential for treatment will require more research though, and research requires funding.

Better Future 4 U (BF4U) is a global advocacy group raising awareness and funds for research for HNRNPU-NDD. Currently, the University of Sheffield in the UK is researching HNRNPU-NDD. But as with most rare disorders, funding is limited. The families of children with these disorders have realized that we must do our own fundraising.

Our family is hosting a fundraiser on Saturday, May 30, at the Lyon Park Community Center from 11 a.m. to 4 p.m. We call "Ellie-Palooza" in honor of our little darling. It's an open house style event with activities for all ages (bingo, cake walks, wine walks, and corn hole), food trucks, a DJ, and some sweet raffle and silent auction prize opportunities. Beer and wine will be available (as well as drinks for the kiddos). We ask that

you, our neighbors, do two things:

1. Visit [BF4U.org](https://www.bf4u.org) to learn about HNRNPU-NDD (and perhaps donate)
2. Go to <https://www.zeffy.com/en-US/ticketing/elliepalooza--2026> to buy a ticket for the event.

All proceeds go directly to BF4U.org which is a 501(c)3 Nonprofit Organization with Tax EIN: 93-2977129). We hope you will join us!

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



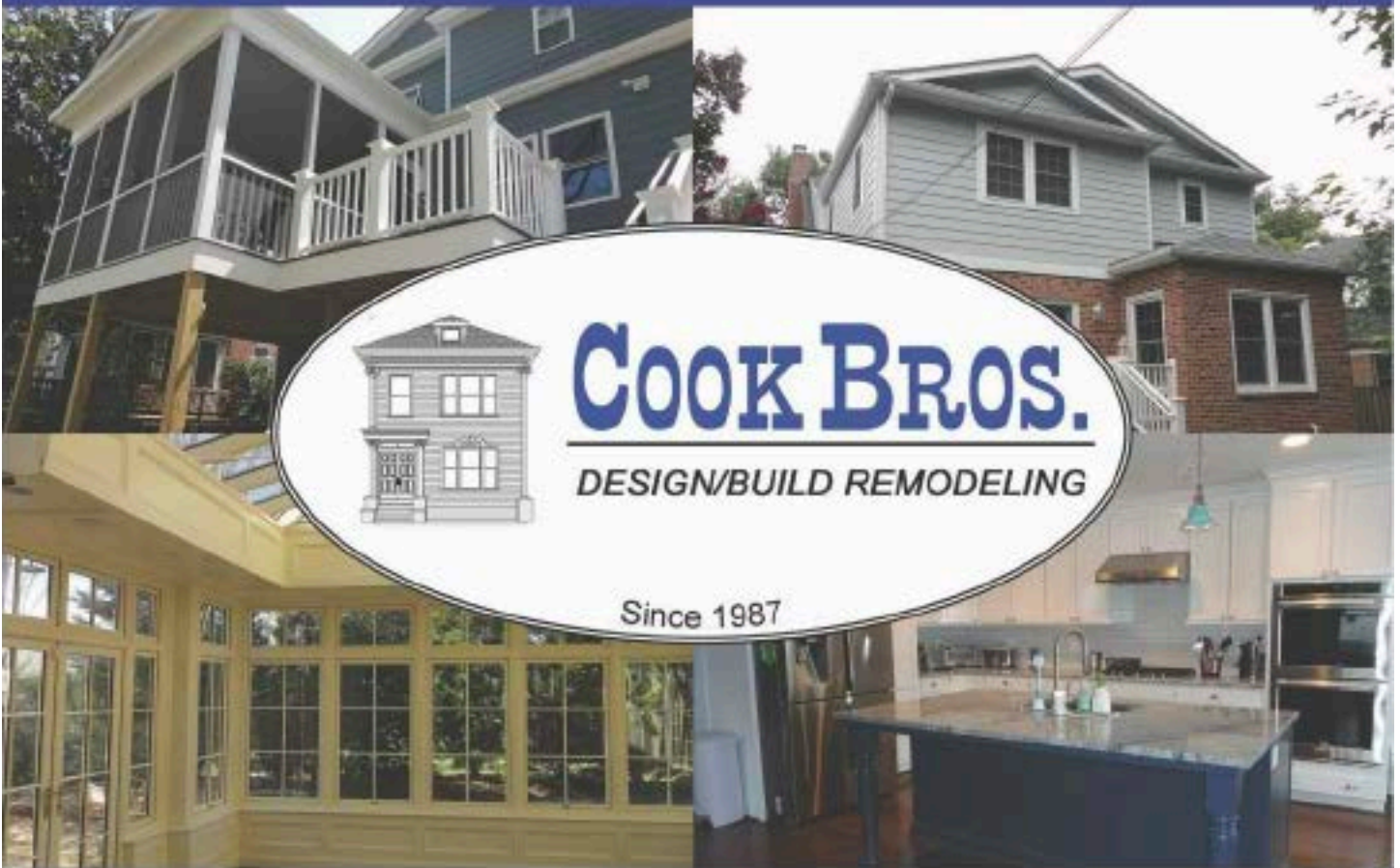
Mail collection

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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