



Williamsburg Civic Association Newsletter

APRIL 2010

WWW.WCA-ARLINGTON.ORG

WCA President's Message

Dear Neighbors:

Since my last note in early February, we experienced the unforgettable Blizzard of 2010, which, in addition to keeping us home from work and school, forced us to reschedule the General Membership Meeting for the first time in WCA's history. The re-scheduled meeting was held on March 16 and featured a great presentation by Arlington County Budget Director Richard Stephenson, who gave us a preview of the proposed 2011 budget. We also heard some positive news on the Arlington housing market from realtors Jim Toronto and Coral Gundlach.



Sonia McCormick

Our May 11 meeting features **Del. Bob Brink**. Bob will bring us up to speed on all of the goings-on in the Virginia Assembly. We'll also have a presentation by EPA representative Jeff Herndon on the safety of lawn care products, including what process they go through to be cleared for public sale, as there has been interest on this topic on the WCA listserv. Please take note that the meeting will be held at **TUCKAHOE Elementary School, not at Nottingham**.

The WCA Executive Committee is doing its best to keep you informed of issues affecting our community. We are open to ideas for improvement. We also need your financial support. The new advertisers and block captains have been a tremendous help in covering the costs of the quarterly newsletter, but we can't rely solely on them to keep the WCA afloat. Unexpected expenses like the postcard that had to be printed take a toll on our very limited budget. Unfortunately, only a fraction of our neighbors have paid their \$10 dues. While \$10 may seem insignificant, when multiplied by 1,000 households, it adds up. If you care to continue to keep this volunteer association up and running, kindly complete the form on Page 7. Thank you.

General Membership Meeting

Tuesday, May 11

7:30 - 9:00 PM

Tuckahoe Elementary School
Multi-Purpose Room
6550 N. 26th Street
Arlington, VA 22213

Report on the Virginia Assembly
Delegate Bob Brink
48th District

Lawn Product Safety
Jeff Herndon

Office of Pesticide Program
U.S. Environmental Protection Agency

EFC Task Force Drafts Plan, Solicits Community Input

The East Falls Church Planning Task Force has completed its draft plan on the future of the East Falls Church Metro Station.

The recommendation is to redevelop the site as a transit mixed use area with ground floor retail oriented around a central civic plaza and residential, office or hotel development occupying the upper floors of mid-size (6 to 8 story) buildings.

Interested in learning more and making your opinion known? Plan to attend one of two community forums being planned at Tuckahoe Elementary School (26th Street N. near Sycamore Street) on Thursday, April 29th and Tuesday, May 4th from 7-9pm.

The draft plan is posted on the Arlington Co. site.

Arlington Distributing Free Trees

The Arlington County Parks and Natural Resources Division is promoting the greening of the community's neighborhoods and enhancement of Arlington's tree canopy through the distribution of FREE trees for this year's annual county Neighborhood Day celebration.

The county is offering a selection of four trees for residents. Descriptions follow. Limit of 1 per home:

- **American Sycamore** – A large and spreading shade tree with showy white, cream, olive and gray bark. It can get up to 80 feet in height and have up to a 60-foot spread. It is very adaptable to wet or dry soils and likes full and partial sun.
- **Swamp White Oak**- A large shade tree that adapts well to dry, wet and areas prone to temporary flooding. The species tolerates full sun to partial shade. Leaves are dark green on top and whitish green underneath, resulting in a bicolor effect in the breeze. It can mature to a height of approximately 60 feet and have a 60-foot spread.
- **River Birch** – A rapidly growing shade tree with outstanding ornamental bark that can handle dry or wet sites and full sun to partial sun. It is generally seen with multiple trunks but can also have just a single trunk. At maturity, it might reach up to 60 feet in height and with a 40-foot width.
- **Sweetbay Magnolia** – A small, multi-trunked tree having excellent semi-evergreen waxy foliage and fragrant, creamy-white spring flowers. It can mature to 20 feet in height with a width of 15 feet. It prefers partial sun in moist, rich acidic soils for best performance but can adapt to sunny or shady conditions in a variety of soils.

If interested in a free tree, please send an email by 4/30 to arl.free.trees@gmail.com. This is an address set up by WCA tree coordinators Lisa McCue and Carolyn Burke. If you have questions, please call Lisa at 703-534-8207. Pick-up will be between May 7 and 15.



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Rock Spring Civic Association Completes NC Plan, Recommends Improvements to Williamsburg Boulevard

The Rock Spring Civic Association (RSCA), which is adjacent to the WCA boundaries at Williamsburg Boulevard and N. Kensington Street, finalized its Neighborhood Conservation Plan. Accepted by the neighborhood in October 2009, the plan is being presented in April to both the Arlington County Planning Commission and to the Arlington County Board.

Created by a team of 12, the comprehensive plan focuses a great deal on the improvement of traffic management and pedestrian safety. "Traffic volume and speed are of great concern to residents, and traffic was cited as a primary threat to public safety" the plan says. "Residents appreciate the current pedestrian network and would like additional sidewalks, improved cross walks, improved traffic control devices and enhanced pedestrian-only walkways."

Williamsburg Boulevard was cited for several improvements, including:

- Examine all of the intersections to enhance safety and discourage cut-through traffic.
- Improve sidewalks and pedestrian safety.
- Add streetlights.
- Add designated crosswalks.
- Add speed limit signs and increase police surveillance.
- Install a curb along the existing median between Glebe Road and Old Dominion Drive and resurface Williamsburg Boulevard with better markings to identify bike lanes and parking lanes.
- Install signs warning drivers that the road narrows to one lane when going north after crossing Old Dominion Drive.
- At Old Dominion Drive, add a left turn arrow/alternate green for traffic turning onto Williamsburg Boulevard.



Storm water runoff is also addressed throughout the Neighborhood Conservation Plan. Among the recommendations to address this increasing problem:

- As traffic management and pedestrian safety are improved, consider the best means possible to mitigate storm water runoff.
- As new sidewalks are constructed, use more pervious surfaces as well as water and litter collection pockets with landscaping incorporated within them.
- Establish and enforce comprehensive storm water runoff plans for new and existing development.
- Better maintain storm drains, especially near intersections, such as the one located near the intersection of N. Harrison and Williamsburg Blvd.
- Remove the requirement to always combine sidewalk construction with curb and gutter work. The unnecessary loss of land to adjacent property owners and removal of mature trees and landscaping seems like overkill and a wasteful expenditure of funds, in addition to adding more impervious surfaces to the over 40 percent rate the County is already enduring.

To see the full plan, visit the association's website at www.rockspringcivassoc.org.

Neighbors Helping Neighbors: 'Make Informed Decisions About Lawn Care'

By Kate Pemberton

In the last few weeks, our neighborhood has received a number of solicitations for lawn chemical contracts. TruGreen (Chemlawn), Bay Country, and Scotts use terms such as "organic," "natural-based," and "healthy," plus pictures of children or pets lying in lush green grass. One might assume from these messages that their services are safe. That assumption is incorrect.

Traditional weed control products are not safe for humans, animals, or our environment. The above-mentioned services are using brand names such as Dimension, Escalade, and Ortho Weed B Gon in addition to fertilizers and soil conditioners. The chemicals and additives in weed control products – even in small amounts – are responsible for serious health and environmental issues. Danger is also present in vapor breathed after application and in residue left on the lawn, even for passersby.

Common chemicals present in traditional herbicides are 2,4-D, Mecoprop, and Dicamba. These chemicals are linked to endocrine disruption, dioxin byproducts, abnormal cell division, DNA damage, and cancers. They persist in soil and groundwater and cause significant disruption to downstream animals and ecosystems. Included in the mixtures are ingredients lumped into the "inert" category. "Inert" in this case does not mean "inactive," but instead that they are not meant to act in the same specific fashion as the listed "active" ingredients. It is not required that manufacturers list these extra

ingredients even though many can be as toxic, or more toxic, than the listed active ingredients and many times are active ingredients themselves in other preparations.

Unfortunately, the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency relies almost exclusively on materials provided by the manufacturers when approving and classifying chemical registrations. Other governments around the globe have recognized that conflicting information and large gaps in knowledge make lawn chemicals a serious concern for individuals and our environment. In 2003, and updated in 2006, Quebec created a very clear Pesticide Management Code:

<http://www.mddep.gouv.qc.ca/pesticides/permis-en/code-gestion-en/index.htm>

Quebec has banned public and private use of 2,4-D and Mecoprop for lawn maintenance. In many areas of Canada, public and private sectors report success using alternatives like corn gluten meal and vinegar-based weed control products.

We must take responsibility for the health of our families and communities by making informed and mindful choices about chemicals. I urge you to do your own research. A great way to start is with Material Safety Data Sheets (MSDS) that list ingredients and manufacturer guidance on handling and safety. There are many methods to care for our lawns and gardens that do not have as many negative effects. Some resources are available at dirtdoctor.com and gardensalive.com.

WCA Volunteers Needed for Various Activities

Want to give back to your community? WCA is in search of volunteers for the following:

1. **Newsletter delivery to block captains.** We have approximately 30 block captains – 15 in 22213 and 15 in 22207. We need someone from each of the two zip codes to deliver the packages of newsletters to the block captains for hand delivery to their neighbors. Requires a car. Should take approximately 1 hour each quarter (4 times per year).
2. **Sharp Park Clean-up Day Team Leader.** According to Arlington County Park Service Area Manager Kevin Stalica, the park could use some TLC. This would involve setting a clean-up date, finding volunteers and overseeing the project. Perfect if you have a green thumb!

If you are willing to take on either of the above, please contact Sonia McCormick at 703.237.2611 or sonia.b.mccormick@gmail.com. Thanks.

WCA's Winston Duncan Honored as Youth Leader



Debbi Jarvis, Dixie and Winston Duncan with LGW's Tim Kime

Congratulations to WCA resident Winston Duncan, founder of Wheels to Africa, who on April 13 was named Leadership Greater Washington's 2009 Youth Leader of the Year. LGW connects diverse regional leaders for the purpose of improving the quality of life in the Greater Washington area.

Winston, 14, a freshman at Yorktown High School, founded Wheels to Africa when he was 11 years old. He had been traveling in Africa and saw there that the only way to reach food, water and medical care was to walk. He came home and organized his friends and family to collect used bikes to ship to southwest Africa.

Since 2005, Wheels to Africa has collected over 2,500 bicycles to send to various nations in Africa, such as Namibia, Ghana, Uganda, Senegal, Sierra Leone and Kenya. The organization has enlisted the help of over 500 volunteers. Once collected, the bikes are re-conditioned to meet the needs of the African people who receive them. The nonprofit's website is www.wheels-to-africa.org.

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Tuckahoe Home Tour Set For Saturday, May 22



Tuckahoe Elementary is proud to announce the 10th anniversary of its annual Home and Garden Tour on Saturday, May 22 from 12-5.

The tour starts at the school with a tour of the 10 different outdoor classrooms of the Discovery Schoolyard, led by 5th grade docents. The Discovery Schoolyard is Tuckahoe's award-winning outdoor learning program, which, along with the PTA, is the beneficiary of the tour proceeds.

The rest of the tour is self-guided and includes eight beautiful homes remodeled by some of the area's most talented architects, builders and designers, as well as two beautiful gardens.

Tickets are \$20 in advance, \$25 at the door.

To purchase a ticket, visit www.tuckahoetour.org.

Jin's Cleaners and Tailoring

Williamsburg Shopping Center
2918 N. Sycamore Street
Arlington, VA 22207

(703) 536-2030

Street Maintenance Begins in May

The 2010 Slurry Seal Program – a preventive maintenance program for streets in the Williamsburg Civic Association – will commence in May and end in September, weather permitting.

The Department of Environmental Services hopes to minimize inconvenience to residents as much as possible, and will send a flyer to those on the block in advance of work beginning.

Residents can help completion of the surfacing project by:

- parking vehicles off the street until the new surface is dry – usually 4-6 hours in dry weather. If you need to drive your car often, consider parking on a nearby street;
- refraining from raking grass, leaves or other debris onto the street;
- protecting children from equipment and paving materials for their safety.

If you have questions about the project, call Alex Portillo at 703.228.7844.

Thank you, WCA Block Captains!

Ninety-five percent of the households in the WCA now have a block captain assigned to hand deliver their newsletter, thanks to many who heeded our call for help. Block captains include:

Sara Anderson	Jeremy Levy
Jim Ball	Susan Levy
Jim Breiling	Charles Lundy
Carol Cohen	Jim & Anne Lunson
Mary Louise Cohen	Julian Mansila
Paul Cullen	Marcia Novak
Allan Dosik	Joan Pepin
Cathy Eckbreth	Robert Shirey
Kevin Farrell	Jon Stoloff
Jim Finley	Carrie Thomas
Coral Gundlach	Jim Toronto
Bruce Gilbert	Elaine Tucker
John Howell	Pat Vinkenes
Ellen Jones	Tony Whitledge
Louis Kluger	Karen Zumstein

These individuals are saving our association hundreds of dollars in postage. Thanks again to all!!

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Please pay your membership dues!!!

MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION FOR WILLIAMSBURG CIVIC ASSOCIATION

The purpose of the Williamsburg Civic Association is to promote the welfare of our community and its residents. We do this by holding meetings, issuing this newsletter, and interacting with the Arlington County Civic Federation, Arlington County Board, and a variety of local and regional organizations. You can support our efforts by paying your annual dues of only \$10 per household. Please tear off this sheet and mail it along with your check (made payable to Williamsburg Civic Association) to our treasurer, Jim Toronto, at 3577 Powhatan St., N., Arlington, VA 22213. You also can pay at the general membership meeting.

Name: _____

Address: _____

Telephone: _____ Email Address: _____

I am interested in: Receiving this newsletter electronically vs. hard copy in the future

Working on conservation plan projects Organizing social events Helping with the newsletter

WCA Officers:

President: Sonia McCormick
Vice President: Coral Gundlach
Treasurer: Jim Toronto
Secretary: Jim Finley
Neighborhood Conservation Advisory Committee (NCAC) Representative: Paul Cullen
Immediate Past President, Webmaster and Representative to the EFC Planning Committee: Mark Moran

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