



# Neighbor News

November–December 2008

## Holiday Fund Drive

It is time once again for the Holiday Fund Drive. This is one of the times I am most proud to live in Douglas Park. We collect donations, pool our resources, and buy toys and clothes and other good things for families with children in our community, in cooperation with Randolph School. In past years we have raised nearly \$3,000 and we hopefully we can do it again this year. For these families, this is not just help with the holidays—without our help, they have no holidays. The families just can't do it without us. I hope you can help with a generous donation.

An envelope is inside the newsletter. Please make out checks to Douglas Park Civic Association, and put "Holiday Fund Drive" on the comment line, and send it to our treasurer, Linda Dye.

We also need help with shopping and wrapping. If you can help, please contact John Snyder at [jvsnyder54@comcast.net](mailto:jvsnyder54@comcast.net) or 703-892-2887.

## Columbia Pike Housing Study

The County Board has just initiated a process to study housing conditions along Columbia Pike, with a particular focus on preservation of affordable housing. This could be a significant issue for Douglas Park, as we have about 2,300 units of affordable housing in our neighborhood. These include the Oakland Apartments near Oakland Street and the Pike, Westmont Gardens, along the Pike between Oakland and Quincy; Quebec Gardens, between Quincy and Four Mile Run Drive; and the Barcroft Apartments, which is among the largest apartment complexes in the county. Barcroft Apartments include about 1400 units, most between George Mason Drive, Four Mile Run Drive and Columbia Pike. Several building are also along George Mason Drive, 16th Street and Four Mile Run Drive on the east side of George Mason Drive. The housing study will also look at similar areas all along the Pike.

First, we need to understand what is NOT happening with the housing study. There are no plans within the county to make any changes to any policies at this time. The idea of the study is to get ahead of events—to understand what we would like to see, and our options, before a property owner or developer decides to re-develop a complex. If we have a plan, we have a better chance of influencing new development to our liking. But while there are no current plans for changes in county housing policy, that is what the study is about. One of the main questions for the study is whether there should be changes in policies as they affect housing on Columbia Pike.

At this time, we are not aware of any plans by apartment complex owners to re-develop or make changes to their

properties within Douglas Park. Quebec Apartments was recently refurbished and the majority of its units are committed to be affordable under the terms of the financing and approval of the county. Virginia Gardens (on Taylor Street, off of 16th) is also committed affordable. But the private owners of the other apartments could change their plans.

There are no plans to change any areas of single family homes or to convert single family areas to apartments. Rather, in setting up the study, the only areas included are areas of multi-family apartments (and some townhouses across the Pike from Douglas Park). Still, we need to understand that changes in one part of the neighborhood can affect the quality of life in other parts of the neighborhood.

No decisions have been made about whether the housing study will recommend particular policies to maintain and

*continued on page 2*

### En Español

#### **DONACIONES PARA LA NAVIDAD**

Estamos juntando dinero para comprar juegetes, ropa y otras cosas buenas para familias con niños que necesitan ayuda. Estamos colaborando con la escuela Randolph. Muchas de estas familias no van a tener nada para la navidad sin nuestra ayuda. Hay un sobre para donaciones. Se puede escribir un cheque para Douglas Park Civic Association y escribe "Holiday Fund Drive" en la línea para comentarios. Manda dinero al tesorero Linda Dye.

También necesitamos ayuda con comprar los regalos y envolverlos. Contactase con John Snyder si se puede ayudar [jvsnyder54@comcast.net](mailto:jvsnyder54@comcast.net) o 703-892-2887.

#### **ESTUDIO DE VIVIENDAS EN COLOMBIA PIKE**

El condado de Arlington va a hacer un estudio de viviendas asequibles. Son varios grupos de apartamentos dentro de Douglas Park que son clasificados como asequible. Tal estudio es solamente para motivos de planear y no quiere decir que va a resultar en cambios.

#### **UN PLAN PARA LA CONSERVACIÓN DE NUESTRO VECINDARIO**

Es hora de revisar nuestro plan de conservación de nuestro vecindario. Este plan esta hecho por nuestro vecindario y es algo que el condado utilice para ver planes y prioridades de mejoramientos.

Necesitamos su ayuda para hacer un estudio, juntar los resultados y escribir el plan para el condado. Si se quiere ayudar, contactase con John Snyder [jvsnyder54@comcast.net](mailto:jvsnyder54@comcast.net) o 703-892-2887.

**DOUGLAS PARK CIVIC ASSOCIATION, ARLINGTON, VA**

**Meeting Calendar:** The DPCA executive committee has scheduled regular meetings on the third Tuesday of the month, 7:30pm at Fire Station #9, 1900 S. Walter Reed Drive.

**Next meeting: February 18, 2009. Election of officers will occur at this meeting. All are welcome.**

**Douglas Park Executive Committee**

*All area codes 703 unless otherwise noted.*

**President:** John Snyder, 892-2887, jvsnyder54@comcast.net

**Vice president:** David Meistrich, 703-920-4001, meistrichd@yahoo.com

**Treasurer:** Linda Dye, 979-6276, wvwcdyels@starpower.net

**Secretary:** Annette Pigott, Annette.Pigott@verizon.net

**At Large:** Bob Cowan, 979-3081, bcowan@rlcjr.com  
Lane Nemirow, 271-1111, lane@pop.net

**Randolph liaison:** Rita Wiggins, 521-4725, roserita\_wiggins@apsva.us

**Parks committee:** Marty Nielsen, 979-8777, mrtylnsn@gmail.com

**Traffic committee:** Bob Cowan, chair, 979-3081, bcowan@rlcjr.com

**Parking liaison:** Lane Nemirow, 271-1111, lane@pop.net

**Neighborhood Conservation****Advisory Commission Delegates**

John Snyder, 892-2887, jvsnyder54@comcast.net

Lane Nemirow, 271-1111, lane@pop.net

Debbie Falco, 919-5131, falcodl@verizon.net

**Civic Federation Delegates**

Linda Dye, 979-6276, wvwcdyels@starpower.net

Reid Goldstein, 697-4941, rgoldstein@stratsight.com

Rebecca Krafft, 553-4140, rebecca\_krafft@hotmail.com

**Neighbor News**

**Advertising:** Mitch Opalski, 553-1942, mopalski@aol.com

**Layout:** Dan Kaufman, 202-639-8570, dan@dkgpromotions.com

**Editorial:** Sharon Scott, 486-0933, rescottva@yahoo.com

**Distribution:** Jamie Daly, 521-4567, jamie22204@yahoo.com

**Webmaster:** Nancy Limprecht, nlimprecht@yahoo.com

**Spanish Translation:** Benjamin and Angel Ousley, ben\_and\_angel@hotmail.com

**ADVERTISING RATES AND INFORMATION**

1/8 page (card) \$25 Full page, \$250

1/4 page, \$60 Sponsorships and discounts avail.

1/2 page, \$100 —call Mitch for information.

Send check, payable to DPCA, and ad information to Mitch Opalski, 3129 12th St S., Arlington, VA 22204.

He will provide information on preparing and submitting your ads.

**NEXT NEWSLETTER DEADLINE**

Articles/Ads Due Distribution

Issue #1: February 6 February 21-22

**DPCA ON THE WEB**

www.arlingtondpca.homestead.com

*Continued from page 1*

promote affordable housing. But there is a broad consensus in the Arlington community, the County government, and on the County Board that affordable housing should be maintained in general. Since most of the affordable housing in Arlington is along the Pike, it will be the focus of preservation efforts. Preservation of affordable housing is also stated as a goal in the County Board resolution setting up the study.

The housing study will be conducted by County staff, with help from outside consultants, and will be guided by a group of representatives of every neighborhood along the Pike. Douglas Park Civic Association will definitely be represented on the group, and we will ensure that the interests or our neighborhood are heard. We expect the housing study to take up to two years.

The study gives us a lot to think about. There is very strong support for affordable housing in our community, as demonstrated by the work our community has already done to maintain and promote affordable housing. But if changes in policy or in zoning are needed to maintain or promote affordable housing, such changes could have an impact on our community. Stay tuned.

## Neighborhood Conservation Plan

It is time for us to update our neighborhood conservation plan. What's that? A neighborhood conservation plan is a plan developed by the neighborhood and submitted to the county to lay out our vision of what we want our neighborhood to be like. It will describe what we would like to see in new development, if any, things we would like to preserve, and improvements we would like to see to improve the quality of life. We pull together the information; we write it; it is about us and where we live.

We need help! Debbie Falco has agreed to help with the effort, but we also need help from other folks. We will need to put together a survey, asking each resident about things that may affect the neighborhood, changes we would like to see, etc. We then need to compile the results and develop recommendations based on what the survey responses say. Then we need to make sure that the neighborhood agrees with the recommendations, and write it all up in a single document. It sounds like work. It is.

But this is very important work. First of all, it helps us understand a consensus on our long term plan for the neighborhood. Second, the county government really pays attention to these plans when they are making plans for the broader community. "What does the neighborhood conservation plan say?" is a common question for county planners. And third, these plans are necessary to keep getting funding for things like sidewalks and streetlights.

If you are interested in helping, please contact John Snyder at jvsnyder54@comcast.net or 703-892-2887.

## Secret Santa

More than 7 percent of Arlington residents live in poverty. Neighbors can help neighbors this holiday season with the Secret Santa program, which helps more than 1,000 individuals each year. The program seeks donations of gift cards to aid children in foster care, disabled persons, low-income seniors and families.

Gift cards should not exceed \$50, but donors can give as many as they like. Cards should be received by Dec. 5 to: Secret Santa Program, c/o Kurt Larrick, Department of Human Services, 3303 Wilson Blvd. Suite 700A, Arlington, Va. 22201.

More information: contact Kurt Larrick at 703-228-1775.



*Arlington*  
presbyterian church

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### Prep Your Home For a Top Dollar Sale

When selling your home, listing it "as is" is an option to appeal to bargain hunters, although the key to ensuring the best possible price for your home is careful preparation.

- Properly preparing a home for sale provides over 300% return on investment (HomeGain)
- Prepared homes sell 4 times faster (Kiplinger)
- When a home is well prepared, they spend 50% less time on the market (Quicken)
- Few shoppers get beyond their first impression (Money Magazine)
- Prospective home buyers form an opinion about your home in 15 seconds (MSN)

**Here are some valuable tips  
for home preparation**

**CREATE SPACE:** The more "space" it appears you have, the higher the price you're likely to get. Eliminate excess furniture. Rent a storage unit for the couple of months it may take to sell your home. De-clutter. Cluttered rooms don't show well to buyers.

**MAXIMIZE AND NEUTRALIZE:** After cleaning, it's time to paint (neutral or earth tone color works best). A fresh paint job will go a long way to attracting buyers, making it easier for them to imagine their stuff in your house if they're not distracted by wild colors or patterns.

**ALL SYSTEMS GO:** Get your mechanical systems serviced by qualified contractors. Service your furnace & AC, repair plumbing leaks, correct any electrical switches or outlets that aren't working, etc. Fix minor problems so they don't become major ones. Get a roof and flashing "tune up".

**OUTSIDE CHECK:** Do a little work to freshen up the exterior. Replace broken windows, repair rotted trim, cutback trees that are too close to the house and make sure your landscaping looks neat.

Need advice? Contact us for our *70 Point Checklist for Selling Your Home*, and/or our *Home Preparation Guide*.

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## Holiday Music Concerts

**THE COLUMBIA PIKE COMMUNITY CHORUS** will present "Messiah" Sunday, Dec. 14, at 4 pm at Trinity Episcopal Church, 2217 Columbia Pike at Wayne Street. Part 1 will be performed, with a sing-along on the "Hallelujah" chorus.

Admission is free; donations will be accepted.

The Columbia Pike Community Chorus was established in 2004 with a vision to provide an opportunity for people of all ethnicities, belief systems and musical abilities to come together with their neighbors in an experience that would promote unity, friendship and fun.

**THE METROPOLITAN CHORUS** presents its annual "Messiah" sing on Saturday, Dec. 6, at 5 p.m. at First Presbyterian Church of Arlington, 601 N. Vermont Street (off Carlin Springs Road, four blocks from the Ballston Metro).

Admission is free; non-perishable food and donations will be accepted for a community meals program. Parking is free and the church is handicapped accessible.

Participants can sing the Advent/Christmas portion of Handel's masterpiece with members of the chorus or simply listen to the music, accompanied by organ, harpsichord and string ensemble. Those singing can bring scores or rent or buy one at the door.

On Saturday, Dec. 20 at 7:30 p.m. the chorus will present "Brass and Bells," a holiday concert featuring the handbell ensemble Virginia Bronze plus a brass at Thomas Jefferson Theatre, 125 S. Old Glebe Road.

Admission is \$18 for adults, \$15 for seniors and military, and \$5 for youth.

Barry Hemphill is the music director. For more information call 703-933-2500 or visit [www.metchorus.org](http://www.metchorus.org)

## Bake Sale a Huge Success

Thanks to the bakers, salespeople and customers, the Douglas Park Election Day Bake Sale was another huge success. The civic association raised over \$1300, one muffin, cookie or brownie at a time. Special thanks to Enid Dunbar and Rita Wiggins, who organized the effort, Linda Dye, Bob Lee and other intrepid salespeople, selling enthusiastically through rain and drizzle, and the set-up and break-down crew, now known as the DP-Bees for their efficiency. Like the voting, everything went without a hitch. Calories or not, it was great to see the neighborhood passing by. We even had a visit by a delegation from the Netherlands here to observe the election. We can hardly wait for the next election!

### WANTED: NEWSLETTER LAYOUT PERSON

The DPCA newsletter is produced by volunteers. We are looking for a new person to produce the layout using supplied text and graphics. If you have design experience and a few hours every two months to devote to this task, please contact John Snyder [jvsnyder54@comcast.net](mailto:jvsnyder54@comcast.net) or 703-892-2887.

## MEMBERSHIP FORM

THROUGH 2/09

**DOUGLAS PARK CIVIC ASSOCIATION**

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 call me any time and I'll see if I can help

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# Thank you!



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