



Douglas Park Holiday Fund Drive

Holiday Fund Drive

By Rita Wiggins

The leaves have changed color and are falling from the trees; there is a chill in the air; the 2025 Trail of Terror, other Douglas Park awesome Halloween activities, and the Election Day Bake Sale are now in the rearview mirror. On the DPCA calendar, that can only mean one thing... It's time to kick off this year's Holiday Fund Drive. Since 1984, the Douglas Park Civic Association has participated in a Winter Holiday fundraising and gift buying effort in support of the children and families at Randolph Elementary School. This year, as they did last year, the school will once again have a "gift shop" where parents can choose their child's gift and have it wrapped or bagged. The parents will also receive a gift card for each child. Randolph ES is planning to "open the shop" on Dec. 12 from 3:30 - 6pm and Dec. 13 from 9am - 11:30am.

There are several ways that you can participate in this worthwhile effort. We are looking for volunteers to:

- **Provide cash donations.** Request that donations be made by **Sunday, December 7**. You can donate online via PayPal to treasurer@douglasparkca.org or via Venmo to [@DPCA_arl](https://venmo.com/@DPCA_arl). You can also donate by writing a check, made out to Douglas Park Civic Association, and mailed or dropped off to Andy Price at 1716 S. Pollard Street, Arlington, VA, 22204. Whichever method you choose, please be sure to include "Holiday Fund Drive" in the note section.

- **Purchase gift items** based on recommendations and ideas provided by the team at Randolph, to be delivered to the school by Dec. 11. (You will be reimbursed for all gift purchases.)
- **Purchase gift cards** to be delivered to the school by Dec. 11. (You will be reimbursed for all gift card purchases.)
- **Purchase gift wrapping supplies** to be delivered to the school by Dec. 11. (You will be reimbursed for all purchased wrapping supplies.)
- **Volunteer to work during the shop's open hours** listed above, as well as setup and cleanup, before and after. (Jobs will include gift wrappers, ticket takers, table monitors, etc.) A Sign-Up Genius will be made available before the Thanksgiving break so that you can sign up directly to help with the shop.

If you would like to purchase presents or gift cards, please contact Rita Wiggins at rmwiggins@verizon.net or by text at 703-822-3601. If you would like to help with the shop, keep an eye out for a forthcoming email with a link to a Sign-Up Genius. You will be able to choose the date, time and activity that best suits you.

Please don't hesitate to contact Rita with any questions you might have. We look forward to hearing from you.

Thank you for your continued support of this important effort!

Doctor's Run Park Feedback

By Steve Jordan Tomaszewski



With plans for park renovations getting finalized for Douglas and Monroe Parks, the next park to be renewed in our neighborhood is Doctor's Run Park on South George Mason Drive. For the last few weeks Arlington County Department of Parks and Recreation has solicited feedback for improvements from the neighborhood. The park will retain most of the same elements that it currently has like the volleyball court, playground, and paths through the woods up to Randolph Elementary School. Two major areas the County was actively soliciting feedback was for what should happen to the volleyball court and the style of playground. Here's hoping we will have a new soft sand volleyball court with overhead lighting, and a modern-style playground!

Election Day Bake Sale

By Steve Jordan Tomaszewski



This year's Election Day Bake Sale brought in \$1,945 for our Civic Association. 28 neighbors stepped up and donated baked goods, 13 folks were kind enough to help sell the goods at Randolph Elementary School, and 9 neighbors helped to set up and take down the tent, tables, and coffee station. With Virginia's off-year elections, it can be difficult getting a good turnout for the bake sale, however this year we saw 25% of the eligible voting population vote on November 4. A big thank you to everyone who contributed, and to those who came out to buy some tasty treats and brighten your day. The biggest thank you to our neighbor Molly who fully took over the bake sale planning in its entirety this year.

Return of the Community Garden Open House

By Steve Jordan Tomaszewski

The neighborhood was abuzz with excitement (people and bees included) on September 20 when we had the return of the Fort Barnard Community Garden Open House! For the first time in many years, our master gardeners at the Community Garden opened their fence to the entire neighborhood to experience and enjoy.



The open house featured a scavenger hunt, gardening information, a trip through the Friends of Urban Agriculture trellis, and some take home-goodies to remember the experience with. Your President was pleased with delicious fresh tomatoes to take home which created the best pasta ever! A huge thank you to Sarah, Cynthia, and all of the gardeners who helped out. Douglas Park has the highest number of community gardens out of any neighborhood in Arlington, and it was lovely to experience the rope swing, apiary, and dozens of well-kept plots helping to feed the neighborhood.

Post Office Upgrades

By Steve Jordan Tomaszewski

For years, the sidewalk in front of our 22204 neighborhood Post Office had fallen into disrepair. The tree roots upended the brick sidewalk and made it difficult to push a stroller or wheelchair in the area. To fix it, the Douglas Park Civic Association had to navigate a complex network of overlapping governmental jurisdictions.



Big thanks to our neighbor Garry, who was able to get the sidewalk fixed while working with the Post Office (a federally-owned property), Glebe Road (a Commonwealth-owned road maintained by the Virginia Department of Transportation), and the sidewalk owners (Arlington County). After persistently working with a County Board member, all three overlapping jurisdictions, and filing a Freedom of Information Act complaint, the sidewalk is back to new condition!

Bye Bye Lost Dog Café

By Steve Jordan Tomaszewski



Our neighborhood was sad to learn of the closing of long-time local restaurant staple Lost Dog Café on Columbia Pike. We had just featured the restaurant in a previous issue of Neighbor News documenting the unique artistic history of their epoxy bottle cap bar tops. This is in addition to 2910 Kitchen & Bar, as well as Woofs! Dog Training Center, which has closed in our neighborhood this year. One reason the restaurant said they needed to close was the impact of the construction along Columbia Pike. To other Columbia Pike businesses that may be currently struggling, our message is to stick with it as the construction will be complete next month, and our Civic Association is standing by to see how we can help tell your story and connect you to the 10,000+ neighbors in Douglas Park. For our neighbors, please help us find new businesses to take over the empty spaces, the more thriving businesses we have the better our neighborhood is to live in.

Stumbling Stones

By Leila Borozjani

On November 8, 2025, we were honored to have so many Douglas Park residents with us to dedicate stumbling stones we sponsored in the neighborhood. The stones represent the lives of three people who were enslaved in Douglas Park just before the Civil War. Two of the stones bear no name because no name was recorded. The third stone is for a six-year-old slave named Lucy.



Our journey that brought us to sponsoring these stones started in 2018. We were living in Europe, and our friends had come to visit for the holidays. One of our friends, who is Jewish, asked to visit the historic Jewish quarter in Amsterdam. While our family was looking up at the beauty in the historic buildings, I noticed my friend and his spouse were huddled together, looking at the ground. I walked over to see what they were looking at and saw a cluster of small metal plaques embedded in the cobblestones in front of a house.

They were the same shape as the cobblestones and had our friends not been looking at them, I would never have noticed them. These plaques detailed the lives of three generations of a family that had lived in that house before they were forcibly removed and sent to concentration camps. Their fates were detailed in a handful of lines. It was so simple, yet so moving. These stones were the idea of a man who conducted the research on his own before installing them, typically overnight without permission or permits. These stones moved me to tears. As we visited other locations in Europe, we continued to see these stones. Before we would have overlooked them, but, instead, we paused to reflect on their lives.

When we learned that the Arlington Historical Society and the Black Heritage Museum of Arlington were bringing this project to Virginia to memorialize enslaved people, we jumped at the chance to be a part of it. We found it especially important to do so during a time when many people are looking to erase our past. These stones give us the opportunity to shift the narrative from the oppressive system of slavery to the histories and stories of enslaved people – even if we don't know their names – because they deserve to be remembered.



These are the first stumbling stones in Douglas Park, but there are many other enslaved people who are waiting to be memorialized. We encourage you to sponsor a stumbling stone of your own. We have found this profoundly moving experience. For more information on sponsoring a stone, please reach out to ahsedlink@gmail.com or visit <https://enslavedarl.org> and <https://arlhisto.org>

Barcroft Park Rope Tower Replacement

By Steve Jordan Tomaszewski

Two years ago, the Twin Towers Terrace Rope Climber piece of playground equipment at Barcroft Park broke down. Arlington County was quick to put up a fence around the broken equipment with a sign that read "Playground Closed." While the Douglas Park Civic Association was quick to encourage Arlington County to replace the equipment, the County tried to get replacement parts from overseas to no avail.



When the County finally agreed with the Civic Association that the equipment needed to be replaced, they found a way to pay for the new equipment through operational funding, instead of a longer major improvement funding program. This August, the Rope Climber was replaced with new equipment called "Play Cubes." The replacement came much later than we would have liked, but it is a wonderful improvement to the park.



Power Substation Fence and Tree Improvements

By Steve Jordan Tomaszewski

In February 2024, Dominion Energy notified our neighborhood that they would be making some fence improvements to the power substation located on South Four Mile Run Drive. The improvements were meant to improve the fence and add security features like cameras that monitor inside the fence line. The project was delayed more than one year past its initial completion estimate, and Dominion Energy explained



this was due to supply chain issues for the special type of fencing and getting easements and permits. The Douglas Park Civic Association identified this as an opportunity to work with Dominion Energy and Arlington County to also beautify the substation – making the substation less of an eyesore by planting shrubs in front of it. In the end we got Dominion Energy to pay for the new plantings, and now have a safer and better-looking substation.



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