



THE NEWSLETTER OF THE DONALDSON RUN CIVIC ASSOCIATION

www.drca.org

September 2024

PRESIDENT'S LETTER

Bill Richardson
Bill@drca.org

The Donaldson Run Civic Association (DRCA) kicks off the new school year with two events this month. See below and the article on page 2 for more details.

On Saturday, August 31, we will be having our third annual Labor Day ice cream social at Taylor School, from 11 a.m. to 1 p.m. Please come and learn more about who DRCA is and what we do, with a chance to meet your neighbors and their families.

On Wednesday, September 18, we will have our next meeting, also at Taylor School, beginning with a social half hour at 7:00 p.m. Our guest speakers will be Bill Browning from Arlington Regional Master Naturalists and Jennifer Toussaint, Chief Animal Control Officer of the Animal Welfare League of Arlington who will discuss the County's recommendation to address the deer population problem primarily with controlled sharpshooting, We also invited County staff but they declined to attend. After this discussion, we will have an open forum to hear from you on any other issues of concern.

DRCA relies on this newsletter -- and our iO Groups e-mail list -- to let you know about developments with major impact on our neighborhood. We often hear that you are unaware of these developments -- including "missing middle" plans and development proposals, Plan Langston Boulevard plans for more intense

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development at the Lee Heights Shops, efforts to reform the generous lot coverage and height restrictions on residential construction, and various traffic and traffic circle issues. We encourage you to read these communications and inform us of your views as we relay our concerns to the County Board and staff.

With help from a recent \$500 grant from the County, we also hope to increase the frequency of those communications with you. One of our goals is to promote participation among a more diverse range of interests among our 948 households. We depend on you to help us achieve that goal. While we provide our newsletter to each of these households, we also depend upon

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The next Donaldson Run Civic Association meeting is at Taylor Elementary School Wednesday, September 18 at 7:30 p.m.

PRESIDENT'S LETTER

(continued from page 1)

modest annual membership dues to fund these communications and our other efforts on your behalf. About 30 percent of our members are current with their dues. Please renew your membership now -- and join our IO Groups e-mail list -- to get further information about these important developments affecting you. See how to do so in the box on page 4.

You can also help shape our neighborhood by helping board members update our 2000 Neighborhood Conservation Plan to reflect the views many of you expressed in response to our survey completed last year. This plan is an important way we can credibly communicate your concerns to the County Board and staff. Please contact me at Bill@drca.org if you can help us in this drafting process.

DRCA WEBSITE HAS BEEN UPDATED (FINALLY!)

Anne Wilson

Like some of us, the DRCA web site was showing signs of age. In response to a "help wanted" ad in the last newsletter, **Megan McNamara** volunteered to revamp the site. If you haven't already seen it, please check it out at www.drca.org. There, you can find links to a number of county services as well as information about upcoming events and meetings. You can also easily establish or renew your DRCA membership via the Membership Request tab.

A new feature of the site is a neighborhood photo album (see the Donaldson Run Photo Album tab) where we showcase photos of DRCA events as well as interesting photos taken by anyone (including you!) in the neighborhood.

Many thanks to **Megan** for modernizing the site. She responded to our request for help, took control, and completed the job quickly. Enjoy the site and let us know if you have suggestions to improve it.

DRCA'S LABOR DAY ICE CREAM SOCIAL

John Fisher

Celebrate community and conversation at our Labor Day ice cream social on Saturday, August 31 from 11

The Current is distributed free of charge to all households in the Donaldson Run Civic Association (DRCA) area. DRCA, like all civic associations in Arlington, is a neighborhood organization, administered by elected volunteers. The DRCA promotes information sharing and discussion on neighborhood, local, and regional issues. DRCA is not affiliated with any political or religious group or with the Donaldson Run Recreation Association that operates the swimming pool on Marcey Road. Meetings are held at 7:30 p.m. at Taylor Elementary School (2600 North Stuart Street). Follow this newsletter for meeting dates. Only dues-paying DRCA residents are eligible to vote. DRCA boundaries are: Military Road on the east (including Marcey Road, North 26th Street, North 25th Place, and North Ridgeview Road); 26th/31st Street on the north; Lorcom Lane on the south (including North Randolph Street and 27th Streets south of Lorcom Lane); and Vernon Street on the west.

DRCA Board

President	Bill Richardson	525-5270
1st VP	John Seggerman	403-2844
2nd VP	Amanda Weaver	202-365-3292
Secretary	Dana Miller	202-841-3696
Treasurer	Kathy Rehill	403-1064
Director	Alisa Cowen	407-5324
Director	John Fisher	623-1111
Director	Charlie Henkin	294-4002
Director	Laura Yoeckel-Kelly	362-5380
Editor	Mary Cooper	407-8045

a.m. to 1 p.m. at Taylor Elementary School. As summer draws to a close, this tradition is not only a chance to savor Ben & Jerry's ice cream and Mexican food from food truck A Toda Madre, but also a perfect opportunity to engage with your community leaders about the issues that are close to your heart.

Why Join Us?

- **Voice Your Concerns:** Discuss important issues with DRCA leadership, who are actively engaged with Arlington County on significant matters.
- **Community Impact:** Share your thoughts and contribute to the dialogue on how we can enhance our neighborhood together.

This event is more than just an ice cream social; it's a platform for community action and celebration. Your insights are crucial as we collaborate with Arlington County to address environmental, safety, and development issues.

COUNTY MAKING PROGRESS ON DEER MANAGEMENT PROGRAM

John Seggerman

DRCA is pleased to welcome to our September 18 meeting Bill Browning from Arlington Regional Master Naturalists (ARMN) as well as Jennifer Toussaint, Chief of Animal Control for the Animal Welfare League of Arlington (AWLA), for a discussion on deer management.

Continuing several years of consideration in the form of surveys, consultant studies, and public engagement, Arlington Department of Parks and Recreation (DPR) is getting closer to implementing a deer management program. The County has determined that Arlington does not have enough predators for deer, so the deer population grows too quickly and upsets the balance of nature. This project aims to identify ways to protect Arlington's county-owned parks so that all the plants and animals that are a part of the County's ecosystem can live and thrive.

In February, a public engagement was held in which community members were invited to join the deer project team for two informational sessions. Project staff were joined by the contractor, White Buffalo Inc., to answer a variety of questions, both pre-submitted and those raised during the sessions. Videos of these sessions are available on the County's deer management page. In early June, the County then released its draft recommendations for deer management. These recommendations were informed by a detailed report from White Buffalo (<https://www.arlingtonva.us/files/sharedassets/public/v/1/parks-recreation/documents/nature/arlington-co-final-report-4-june-2024.pdf>), which includes their recommendations as well as comprehensive research and community feedback from a public engagement in 2023.

The County's recommendation largely entails using sharpshooters "to immediately reduce deer populations by 100-125 deer in county-owned parks." Hunters would operate outside of park hours, using silencers and non-lead bullets. Also recommended is the use of fencing and repellants to protect priority plant spaces in small areas, as well as additional monitoring of deer populations and ongoing studies of deer's impact on parks. Another public engagement took place with an online feedback form, and a virtual community meeting was held on July 11 to answer questions from the community. A video of this meeting is available to view on the County's deer management page.

For many years, DRCA has voiced support for the County's consideration of implementing a deer management program. As far back as May 2021, we hosted deer management advocates from the Arlington Regional Master Naturalists (ARMN) at a neighborhood meeting that took place online due to the pandemic. DPR anticipates releasing a summary of the most recent engagement and next steps on the Deer Management Project before the end of the summer. Next steps, if appropriate, would include additional details on implementing a Deer Management Program. Should the County decide to proceed with a program that includes sharpshooting, the County Board will need to amend the County Code to permit this activity in county-owned parks. We will continue to follow closely the County's consideration of this program given its significant impact on our residents and their properties.

HIRE A NEIGHBOR

Calling all neighborhood teens! Do you mow lawns? Walk pets? Your Donaldson Run neighbors need you. Send an email to Mary@drca.org and we'll list the service you'd like to provide.

Babysitting

- Mackenzie Rau, 14 y.o., 703-655-5718, Mackenzie.rau21@gmail.com
- Iris Aitken, 14 y.o., 571-242-7994 or iris_aitken@icloud.com
- Sophia Aitken, 17 y.o. Call or text 571-218-8924
- Ana Maria Corson, 16 y.o., 571-329-3011, ana.maria.corson@gmail.com
- Molly Doster, 16 y.o., 703-505-0898
- Ella Paris, 15 y.o., 571-317-4962

Cat Sitting

- Ayla Mehmood, 7th grade, text 571-259-9864
Experienced in caring for cats with special needs.

Dog Walking/Sitting

- Ana Maria Corson, 16 y.o., 571-329-3011, ana.maria.corson@gmail.com
- Sophia Aitken, 17 y.o. Call or text 571-218-8924
- Maggie Buchko, 7th grade, 484-803-3189 or maggiesdogwalkingbusiness@gmail.com
- Maia Corson, 13 y.o., 571-329-5871, maia.corson@gmail.com
- Molly Doster, 16 y.o., 703-505-0898

Lawn and Garden Care

- Iris Aitken 14 y.o., 571-242-7994 or iris_aitken@icloud.com

7-STORY SENIOR LIVING FACILITY PROPOSED ADJACENT TO LEBANESE TAVERNA IN LEE HEIGHTS

Bill Richardson

During the County's consideration of "Plan Langston Boulevard" (PLB), Donaldson Run Civic Association (DRCA) consistently urged that the current Lee Heights Shops environment not be transformed into a potential "canyonland" of high-rise buildings. Notwithstanding DRCA's concerns, the County Board adopted recommendations favoring higher 7-story buildings on one side of the shops, and 10-story buildings on the other side. Such proposals will now be evaluated under the County's site review process, in light of community benefits to be specified in each case – benefits that are required for exceeding the current "by right" limit of about four stories. Asserting that Lee Heights is the "heart" of the Langston Boulevard corridor, the County approved recommendations for higher structures there than at Lee Harrison Shopping Center (seven stories), or across from new Fire Station 8 in the Heidelberg bakery area (four stories), or in Cherrydale (not included at all in PLB).

In April 2024, Kensington Senior Living filed a very preliminary plan for County review, proposing a 7-story elder care facility (assisted living and memory care), between Lebanese Taverna and the 7-11 on Langston Boulevard. Kensington, which currently operates a similar facility in Falls Church, is owned by former Sunrise executives. Their plan calls for 130 units and 114 parking spaces.

In July, DRCA and two other adjacent civic associations met with Kensington to discuss their plan. There is considerable support for additional elder care facilities in our area, as recognized by the County. This is particularly true in light of the demise of a similar proposal by another group that would have been located between Cherrydale and Waverly Hills on a different site on Cherry Hill Road, between Lee Heights and the five points intersection at Quincy Street and Military Road.

At our meeting, DRCA raised a number of issues with Kensington, which we plan to follow up on:

- Ensuring that their traffic study required by the County addresses the parking and traffic issues associated with such a large facility in this restricted space. These

would include how they plan to use Upton Street as a back alley for loading without disrupting traffic on Langston Boulevard or continued access to Lee Heights, and possible substantial traffic for families visiting residents.

- Meeting the PLB recommendation for extensive tree canopy – 35 percent of the area for all sites of seven stories or more, and 20 percent for sites under seven stories.
- Meeting the PLB recommendations for setbacks, and also for step-backs for buildings across the street from single-family homes.
- Understanding the size and nature of the "civic and community amenity space" promised for the first floor of the building.
- Addressing how this proposal may or may not fit with future PLB developments affecting the Lee Heights Shops.
- Ascertaining what financial or other commitments Kensington will make for "help[ing] the County achieve its affordable housing goals," given that this facility will include no affordable housing units.
- Exploring whether there is a way to create the kind of adjacent public space that could buffer the stark contrast of the design of the facility to the established Lee Heights Shops environment.

Along with neighboring civic associations, DRCA hopes to be an active participant in the Planning Commission's site plan review process for the proposed Kensington facility, which is among the very first site proposals to result from the County's adoption of PLB.

DO YOU PREFER TO PARTICIPATE ONLINE OR VIA EMAIL NOTIFICATION?

As noted on page 7, you can receive this newsletter by e-mail. We also encourage you to sign up for the DRCA io groups e-mail list, which we use to provide more frequent (but not too frequent!) alerts of issues of particular interest to our neighborhood. You can sign up through this link:

drca-group@groups.io

Finally, we would like to hear if you would make use of Zoom access to our meetings. We offered it for our June meeting, but had only a few takers. Let us know at EC@drca.org.

Thanks!

COUNTY PLANS TO INITIATE STUDY OF LOT COVERAGE AND RELATED ZONING ORDINANCE REFORMS

Bill Richardson

As described in earlier newsletters and meetings, for many years DRCA has urged the County to reform the generous lot coverage and height limits on residential construction, which have been in place since 2005 and earlier. This year, the County Board agreed to conduct a study of these limits, funded by an additional staff position.

So far, this study has been supported by 14 civic associations, the Forestry and Natural Resources Commission, and the Arlington Tree Action Group. Along with others, DRCA met in July with the County Manager and his planning staff, and with County Board members, to emphasize the importance of prompt action in starting and completing this study -- before the accelerated rate of teardowns imposes further irreparable damage to mature trees, stormwater management, climate change initiatives, and neighboring residents' quiet enjoyment of their homes and access to solar energy.

We plan to continue these regular meetings, at which we have offered details on specific problems with the current generous limits and how those limits might be reformed. We have also tried to ensure the opportunity for meaningful civic association and other public participation in the scoping and conduct of the planned study. Among other things, we have pointed out that the County properly recognized in the missing middle proceedings that the limits should apply to both single-family and multi-family homes, since both pose the same problems created by teardowns.

The Arlington County Civic Federation has also taken a renewed interest in these issues. This year, its Zoning and Planning Committee, now co-chaired by two former members of the Planning Commission, has created a subcommittee designed to get additional input on lot coverage, height, and setback limits. DRCA will be an active participant in that subcommittee's work, and we are also reaching out to other civic associations for their input.

CAPITAL IMPROVEMENT PLAN (CIP) FUNDS LORCOM/VACATION INTERSECTION SAFETY MEASURES

Bill Richardson

As part of the School Slow Zone for Dorothy Hamm Middle School, the County previously reduced the speed limit for the nearby segment of Lorcom Lane. In a further measure to address the concerns of DRCA residents, parents, and the Hamm MS principal, the July 2024 CIP approved by the County Board also now devotes about \$2.3 million to installation of improvements to the Lorcom/Vacation Lanes intersection. These will be designed to reduce safety risks associated with the volume of high-speed traffic there.

In October 2022, DRCA requested from staff a traffic study of the problem residents had identified at this intersection. We noted their suggestions of a number of different possible solutions, including stop sign warrants, or HAWK or other signal help. While the new CIP funding would be sufficient to install a new traffic signal if needed, the County's project team will seek public comment on the preferred solution, after its initial scoping and conceptual design work. Staff has found that federal warrants are not met to support an all-way stop, and they do not recommend such an approach given what they say is poor compliance with unwarranted stop signs.

NEW COLUMN! BOOST LOCAL BIODIVERSITY

Amy Brecount White
abwphw@comcast.net

Greetings neighbors! We're Amy Brecount White and Jeff Elder, your friendly Zachary Taylor Park stewards. We're committed volunteers who have received training and county approval. You've likely seen us leading other neighbors to help promote biodiversity in our beautiful park. Join us every third Saturday. Here's where to sign up: <https://www.signupgenius.com/go/508054AADAE2FA13-invasive6#/>

We'll offer tips on welcoming pollinators, birds, and other local creatures into your yard and

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LOCAL BIODIVERSITY

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supporting their life cycle. For wildlife, suburbia can be a tough home. The good news: how you care for your yard makes a HUGE difference. Fall is an ideal time to plant. Here are some faves:

Oaks: Sadly, we've had a die-off across the Eastern U.S. and lost many giants. Oaks support more vital species than any other tree, so plant a native one.

Native shrubs: buttonbush, bayberry, inkberry, winterberry, spicebush, sumac, and Virginia sweetspire

Native Perennials: Virginia bluebells, artemisia, milkweed, butterfly weed, baptisia (false indigo), Joe Pye weed (not weeds at all!), native asters, goldenrod

Native grasses: little bluestem, switchgrass, muhly grass, and carex rosea

Plant NoVa Natives is a stellar source for more site-based recommendations.

<https://www.plantnovanatives.org/>

Happy planting!

PROFESSIONAL HELP AROUND the HOUSE

Appliance Repair

Paul Mills, Master Appliance Service, (703) 938-6910, recommended by Maxine Nagel, (703) 524-5093

Computer Support Services

Pete Herbst, (703) 283-6595, recommended by Judy Cherrington, (703) 243-6034.

Cameron Jones (571) 217-3596, recommended by Rick DeVore (703) 528-3484 and several other neighbors

Gutter Installation or Cleaning and Repair

Auguste Remy, (703) 425-9595, recommended by Dan Sagalyn, (703) 795-5490

Metro Gutter & Home Services, Inc. 703) 354-4333
Recommended by Judy Cherrington, (703) 243-6034

Northern Virginia Gutter Cleaning (571) 352-7292, www.NOVAGutters.com, recommended by Maxine Nagel, (703)-524-5093

Handyman Services

Neil McDonald, 703-200-0746, recommended by Janis Clark and Diane Gronewold, 703-516-0766

Sam Axton, (703)-569-5707 or Sam_Axton@msn.com, recommended by Jeanne Svihart (703) 851-2695

Chris Lamar with Arlington Home Service, (703) 362-0930 or ahservice@verizon.net, recommended by Martha Shmokler, mess14@juno.com

Tulio Pineda, (703) 940-4126, recommended by Chuchi Arevalo, (703) 371-3155

Housecleaning

Nuria Cruz at 571-721-0810, recommended by Susan Martin (susanmartin@icloud.com)

Cynthia Baldo, (703) 843-8272, recommended by Sharon Frey, (703) 405-5674

Sonia Cerna, (571) 428-8616, recommended by Zlatica and Werner Hahn, (703) 528 1982.

Sandra Hueco, home: (571) 277-7579 cell: (703) 338-6160, recommended by Glenn Ward, (703) 527-7315

Jupiter's Cleaning & Services, Barhas at (703) 981-8700 or e-mail Jupiters.2011@gmail.com, recommended by Karen Hanneman, (703) 527-4604

Professional Housecleaning Services, managed by Alba Isabel, (703) 928-9089 recommended by Rob Jones, (703) 276-0545

Squeaky Cleaners, LLC, squeakycleanersnova@gmail.com, recommended by Shany O'Donnell, Shanybenitah@gmail.com

Interior Decorating/Home Design:

Stefani McNair at McNair Designs, (703) 868-3489. Recommended by Alexa & James Fleming, (703) 577-3812.

Landscaping and Yardwork

Lawn and Tree Services, Tu Nguyen, (703) 622-7988, recommended by Barbara and Dan Taft (703) 276-1987

Painting and/or Wallpapering

Ed Wilkerson of C. W. Wilkerson & Sons, (703) 524-1019, recommended by Liz Hayes, (202) 320-0500

Roof and Exterior Cleaning

Smart Wash, (703) 595-4000, recommended by Dug and Judy Gillies, (703) 528-3437

Window Cleaning

Old Dominion Cleanng Co. (703) 569-2000, recommended by Liz Hayes (703) 528-4119

MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION FOR DONALDSON RUN CIVIC ASSOCIATION

Please check your mailing label on page 8 to see how many residents in your home are members and the latest year for which dues have been paid. Dues cover a calendar year. Contributions are not tax deductible. Note that only members whose dues have been paid 60 days in advance are allowed to vote on civic association business.

Dues: \$20 per household per calendar year. Payment for 1, 2, 3, 4, 5 years (circle one)

Total dues: \$ _____ Newsletter contribution: \$ _____ Total enclosed: \$ _____

New resident: Yes _____ No _____ Email only copy of newsletter Yes _____ No _____

Name(s): _____

Phone: _____ email address: _____

Address: _____

Are you already on the DRCA email list? _____ If you are not on the DRCA listserv, we recommend that you sign up for it so that you will be notified of issues in a timely way. Would you like to be added to this listserv? _____

Special Interests/Volunteer Areas/Comment _____

Please make check payable to Donaldson Run Civic Association.
Mail to: Kathy Rehill, Treasurer, 2701 N. Wakefield Street, Arlington, VA 22207 or if you prefer to pay electronically, via PayPal @DonaldsonRunCivAssoc.

Membership Dues

Kathy Rehill

Your dues pay for this newsletter, our upcoming ice cream social and our updated website (see p. 2 for more details on these topics). Paying dues allows you to be a member of DRCA and vote on civic association business. Dues are \$20/household.

Check the mailing label on page 8 of this newsletter to see if your dues are current. If you receive the newsletter electronically, email treasurer@drca.org for an update on your dues status. You can renew your dues by sending a check payable to DRCA along with the form above to Kathy Rehill, DRCA Treasurer, 2701 North Wakefield Street, Arlington, VA 22207. You can also pay via PayPal to @DonaldsonRunCivAssoc

or by pointing your phone's camera to this QR code. Thanks for supporting this all-volunteer organization!



Donaldson Run Civic Association
c/o Kathy Rehill, Treasurer
2701 N. Wakefield Street
Arlington, VA 22207

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This is your neighborhood newsletter.
See page 2 for Civic Association information.

The next Donaldson Run Civic Association Meeting
is on Wednesday, September 18 at 7:30 p.m.
at Taylor Elementary School
A social half hour will begin at 7 p.m.

Agenda:

Discuss Deer Management With
Bill Browning, Arlington Regional Master Naturalists
Jennifer Toussaint, Animal Welfare League of Arlington

Open Forum for Member Questions and Concerns