



March 2010

Barcroft News

Vol 107, Issue 7

IT'S HISTORY:

Winter 2009- 2010 Snowiest On Record !



Amazing Igloo on 6th St. South
An adult could stand inside it!



The noble **Barcroft Snow Brigade** took to the sidewalks with the County-loaned snow blowers. Pictured here are **Chuck and Ben Bean** of S. Woodstock Ct.



Some Kerrs take to the slopes on the cut through path from S. Abingdon St. to Arlington Forest

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Neighbor to Neighbor Ads

For Sale: HOT TUB COVER, 81" X 81", one year old , never used.I paid \$400. Sell for \$275. Call Dave Peacefull @ 979-8287

Alexandra's Babysitting - responsible teenager available week nights and weekends. Alexandra @ 703-892-6712

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Teenage Babysitter - Week nights and weekends: Sarah @ 703-521-8756.

Babysitter: Red Cross certified 10th grader available. Call Abby at 703-892-1090.

Babysitter --6th grader , Red Cross certified. Jenny Claire 703-998-8338

Rebekah's Pet Care (walking, feeding, sitting) 703-521-8756.

Yard Work: Teenager available for raking leaves and other yard work. Call Thomas at 703-979-5838

Babysitting: Brother and sister, ages 14 and 15, can babysit in Barcroft, nights and weekends. Call Thomas or Allison at 703-979-5838.

Mother's Helper/ Babysitting 16 year old CPR certified girl, responsible, great with kids. Daily after 3:30 PM and weekends. Call Christy at (703)-300-1989.

Ongoing Need: Baby items, books, educational toys, household items etc for the Even Start Program at Barcroft School. Call Jenny Lindenauer at 703-228-8846 or email: jennifer_lindenauer@apsva.us

President's Report

By Bryant Monroe

Our next BSCL meeting on Thursday March 4 at 7:30 PM will feature a discussion near and dear to our wallets, **the real estate tax assessment** that we homeowners received not long ago in the mail. If you're like me, I was surprised by the drop in the assessed value, even though I have been keeping up with the news. After talking with friends about their experience, I thought it would help to go right to the source on this matter. We'll have a speaker from the County's Department of Real Estate Assessment to walk us through how the County establishes the assessment on your home, and what you can do if you have questions, or want to challenge the value they have established.

With the County Manager and the Board wrestling with very significant budget deficits (in the neighborhood of \$65 million) the assessment process plays a critical role in the tough budget times ahead. Needless to say they are the starting point in a discussion that will likely end at an increase in our tax rates and cuts in County services.

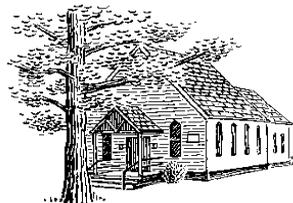
In broad terms the average Arlington residential assessment is \$503,200, down 3.25 percent from 2009 levels. Since peaking in 2007, the average residential assessment has fallen 7.1%. Five percent of existing residential properties increased in value,

while 20 percent remained unchanged and 75% decreased in value. The current assessments are based primarily on neighborhood sales occurring from July 1, 2008 through June 30, 2009.

Community House Renovations

You are invited to come at 6:30 PM March 4, before the BSCL meeting, to discuss completion of renovations to the Community House. The exterior was painted last Fall. Thanks to **Dave Michelson** for his efforts and leadership on this task! Now it's time to focus on the interior. The ceiling and lighting are in need of renovations which will both make it a more pleasing interior for neighbor use and help us rent this great facility. Rental fees go a long way towards paying the basic maintenance/operational costs.

Please let me know if you're interested in helping with the planning, fund raising and execution of this important effort. In my mind this is a wonderful legacy we can pass on to generations of Barcrofters to come!



Around the Neighborhood with Kathy Kerr

Barcroft Weather Geek

While surfing the internet for weather reports, I noticed some local information coming in not just from National Airport but from right here in Barcroft! I looked at the BSCL website and discovered that the data was coming from just across the street from me where **Eric Parker** lives on the corner of Abingdon and 5th St.

About four years ago, just for fun, avid gadgeteer Eric looked online to find an affordable weather station. He set it up, connected it to his computer and linked his data with the website: www.weatherunderground.com. He tracks temperature, barometric pressure and rainfall. As long as his computer is turned on, the data automatically uploads directly to the website every 4-5 minutes.

The home weather station has its limitation. Unfortunately, the part of his station that measures windspeed has broken. The station is unable to measure frozen precipitation, such as snow. So, for measuring snow depths, Eric uses a very high tech system-- a pvc pipe standing in his front yard with measurements on the side facing his window. By looking out the window with his binoculars, he can see how much snow has fallen. The weather station measures rainfall but sometimes it can be inaccurate. Snow does pile up on top of the rain gauge so that on a warm day after a snow fall, when the snow melts, the gauge measures the melting snow as rain and reports it as such.

There are a number of weather stations around Arlington including at several public schools and of course National Airport. Its interesting

to compare the different results. Eric hopes to upgrade his system soon so hopefully his data will be more accurate, though the rain/snow problem will probably still exist.

Eric and his wife **Nancy Galib** have lived in Barcroft since 1998. The recently adopted a dog from the Arlington Animal Welfare League. She is a 2 year old German shepherd/foxhound mix named Laini.



Barcroft Snow Sculptor

Blizzard conditions inspired **César Antezana** to create this snow sculpture entitled "Snow Jesus" in his front yard on 6th St. S. He is an artist, but usually his sculpting medium is paper.

About a year ago, César was thinking about making a pop-up Christmas card for a friend. The friend never did get a card, but César discovered that a single flat sheet of paper could become 3-dimensional. He currently has some amazing and beautiful paper sculptures on display at an art show entitled "Plane Revolution." The exhibit has toured to other parts of Northern Virginia but is currently found in the parlor of Arlington Forest United Methodist Church at Henderson and Rt. 50 until Easter in early April. The church is open Monday through Friday from 9:00 AM to 1:00 PM, and Sundays 8:30 AM to 1:00 PM. (Enter around the back, up the stairs, first

Around the Neighborhood



door on the right.)

"PLANE REVOLUTION" is a series of fragile three-dimensional figures emerging from a single sheet of paper. They represent basic beliefs and the struggle between the flesh and the spirit, in a Christian context. The sculptures are thought provoking, and very open to contemplation.

A native of Argentina, César studied videography in Bolivia before coming to the DC area in 2001. He is currently a proud citizen of the USA. His wife, Cindy McGonigle, is a teacher at Barrett Elementary. In June, 2009 they purchased an interesting, energy efficient home here in Barcroft. They have three children, two of whom attend Arlington public schools.



Annual Book Exchange at Barcroft School Thursday, March 4, 6:30-8:00

Did the long snowy days and nights leave you looking for new reading material? Bring your old books, enjoy coffee and hot chocolate with your neighbors, listen to a storyteller, and leave with armloads of books to keep you reading until summer! All are welcome, even if you don't have books to exchange, and especially those with pre-school age children as there are always lots of picture books left over.



CERT Training Available

CERT (Community Emergency Response Team) training helps citizens prepare for and respond to emergencies. The hands-on training takes place over a 6-8 week period. Learn about disaster preparedness, disaster medical operations, light search and rescue, team organization, disaster psychology, fire suppression and terrorism.

All classes meet at the Arlington County Fire Department Training Academy in Shirlington. Training is free and open to Arlington residents who are at least 18 years of age (16 if accompanied by at least one parent). Classes begin on March 4 and 9. For info or to register contact Cynthia Kellams, at ArlingtonCERT@aol.com.

Barcroft Elementary

February was an exciting month at Barcroft Elementary School. The students celebrated the first 100 days of school on February 4th with a **“100 Pennies for Haiti” Fund-raiser**. All students were asked to bring in 100 pennies to be used for special math activities. The coins were then donated to the American Red Cross. Students also participated in the **American Heart Association's “Jump Rope for Heart”**.

On February 5th, the amazing **Blizzard of 2010** came to town, and children enjoyed over a week break from school.

Amazingly, despite **HEAVY** snow on Sat. Dec. 6, the Annual Rummage & Bake Sale was a big success bringing in over \$1000 for the PTA. Thank you to everyone who volunteered, donated, baked and shopped.

Barcroft celebrated **African American Heritage Night** on Feb 26th and hosted the **PTA Annual Silent Auction**.

MARCH

All language arts classes will celebrate **Dr. Suess Day** on March 4th with special guest readers and birthday cupcakes. That evening, Barcroft will host its annual **Coffee House and Book Exchange**. Drop by, have some coffee, bring along books your family no longer reads, and exchange them for books for the whole family.

Several teams of Barcroft students will participate in the **Odyssey of the Mind (OOTM)** competition on Saturday, March 6th. OOTM is an international educational

program providing creative problem-solving opportunities for students from kindergarten through college. This year Barcroft has three teams registered, totaling 20 students. Barcroft will compete with 62 other regional schools, and will present long-term problem solutions to a panel of judges and participate in a scored team Spontaneous problem solution.

Please join us at the school on Friday evening, March 12th for the **Family Fitness Night** event for March. Head Instructor, Sifu Maiky Tran, of Shaolin-Do Kung-Fu and Tai-Chi, on S. Four Mile Run Drive, will lead families in kung fu instruction at Barcroft school.

Barcroft students will enjoy a **two-week Inter-session Break** March 15-26th. At this time, children who need assistance with the core curriculum can receive additional instruction. All children can take up to two enrichment classes a day, including subjects such as singing and dancing, geology, printmaking, invention and inventors, virtual travel to Latin America, and exploring the languages/customs/foods from countries around the world. All offerings are grade-specific and tailored to state standards of learning. These classes provide a fun, pressure-free way to review math, reading and science concepts.

Barcroft students will enjoy a **Spring Break** holiday, and return to school on April 6th.

Kenmore Middle School

On Thursday April 8 at 7:30pm, the Kenmore Middle School Band will join the professional musicians of the **US Army Band** for a concert in the Kenmore Auditorium.



The Army Band’s concert line is (703) 696-3399 or visit www.usarmyband.com for more information. The Army Band holds many free concerts at Kenmore and they are always fantastic! Hear the Army Blues on April 29 at 7:30 pm.

Kenmore students have studied dance in partnership with the **Bowen McAuley Dance Theater** for several years. The students participate in several performances with the company and they also work alongside company members in movement workshops for people with Parkinson’s Disease.

Bowen McAuley’s joint performance with Kenmore students will take in April. The “Move Me Arts Experience,” is a family-friendly event meant to bring alive the many forms of art to people of all ages. This arts experiential extravaganza takes place Saturday April 17 from 2-5 pm in the Kenmore Auditorium. This is a ticketed event. For more info and tickets, visit www.bmdc.org. The Bowen McAuley partnership is a unique opportunity for middle school girls and boys, and your attendance will support the future of the program.

Wakefield High School

Mariana's Wish, an original play by Wakefield sophomore Mariana Pavon is one of 9 Washington-area student plays selected by the Young Playwrights' Theater (YPT) to be produced as part of its annual New Play Festival. Pavon was one of 11 Arlington students to complete a 12-week workshop which culminated in the creation and performance of the students' original plays. Pavon will work with a professional drama coach. Professional actors will perform the plays April 19-21 at the GALA Hispanic Theatre in Washington, D.C.

In January, Wakefield competed in the Virginia High School League One Act Theater Festival District competition. Wakefield placed 3rd of 7 schools with its production of Aesop's (Oh So Slightly Updated) Fables.

There were only 16 All Star Cast acting awards given out and Wakefield students received 6 of them. Congratulations to **Alexis Lodsun**, Sheila McCloskey, Jame Jackson, Ana Pinto, John Morgan and Mark Tanner.

On Jan. 31, Wakefield seniors Nelson Canales, Libby Lyon and Tim Spicer were featured in a Washington Post article on the effect the Obama administration has had on them.

As a result of this interview, the three were invited (along with others featured in the article) for a private tour of the White House on Friday, Feb 5. The students met with President Obama for about 1/2 hour. Principal Doris Jackson says: “We are very proud of how well our students continue to represent Wakefield!”

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Around The Neighborhood

Barcroft Snow Brigade



**Chuck Bean, Jim Kerr
and the snow blower**

To help with clearing sidewalks, Arlington County has provided Barcroft with two snow blowers.

Randy Swart, near Barcroft School, has one. **Jim Kerr** on S. Abingdon St. has the other. A cadre of other volunteers can be relied upon to wield their shovels at the first flurry.

This winter, the noble Barcroft Snow Brigade has rallied big time for backbreaking shoveling and snow blowing. The 15 member Snow Brigade serves 18 neighbors who have requested help whenever it snows. But there were lots of others who could not handle the snow this year, and many other neighbors who realized that and stepped up to lend a hand as Barcrofters do. Thank you to many unsung heroes who dug out pathways, uncovered buried cars and made our neighborhood safer.

Snow Brigade regulars include **Susan Bartow & Mark Bryer, Chuck & Benjamin Bean, Tim & Fannie Gray, Andrew Hunter, Jim Kerr, Michael Novak, Larry Oresky, David & Lisa Piantanida, Alan, Andrew & Theresa Schweser, Barbara & Randy Swart, Mark & Jake Wigfield, Pat Williamson & Ken Edwards, and Anne Witzig & Laird White.** For our biggest snow, **Chris Whelan** pitched in on the Abingdon St snow blower.

And after THE BIG ONE was well over, our bus stop and traffic light pushbuttons were dug out by Barcroft News publisher **Linda Webb, Rosey Rosanbalm, Steve Prada and Réco Thomas.**

If you are in need of shoveling or are interested in helping those in need, please email randy@bscl.org or call him at 703-521-2080. Thank you to Randy for organizing the Snow Brigade. In fact, if you have a talent for organizing, Randy would be pleased to turn it over to you!

Easter Egg Hunt

Spring is really going to come!! Mark your calendars for the annual Barcroft Egg Hunt at the Community House on Sat. April 3 at 10am, rain or shine. A long-eared hopping visitor is expected! Coffee will be served. Bring a baked item to share.

Barbershop Program

Barcroft's own **Carl Costanzo** will be singing with the Arlington Chapter of the Barbershop Harmony Society as they present: "THE HONEYMOON TRIP": A newly married couple have trouble deciding where to go on their honeymoon. International Quartet Qualifier, "FULL TILT", is the featured quartet. Saturday, March 27, 2010 2pm and 7:30pm at Thomas Jefferson Theatre. \$15/\$12. For info: 703-521-9331 / www.thearlingtones.com

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Short Sales and HAFA

A short sale is a transaction in which the lender(s) agrees to accept less than the mortgage amount owed by the current homeowner. The difference is forgiven by the lender in some cases, and in others the homeowner pays back some of the debt in the form of a promissory note. Due to the recent economic crisis, including rising unemployment, and drops in home prices in communities across the nation, the number of short sales is increasing. Since a short sale generally costs the lender less than a foreclosure, it can be a viable way for a lender to minimize its losses. Short sales present a way out for a homeowner “upside down” on the mortgage since short sales may not hurt their credit history quite as much as a foreclosure. Short sale guidelines and processes have compared to the “wild west” - with no uniform rules.

Each lender had different policies, and could change them any time they wanted to. Last year the Federal Govt. established programs and recently updated guidelines its new Home Affordable Foreclosure Alternatives Program (HAFA), which will help homeowners who are unable to retain their home under the Home Affordable Modification Program (HAMP). HAFA is designed to simplify and streamline the use of short sales by improving the process.

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