



April 2015

# Barcroft News

Vol 112, Issue 8

## Mail and Package Thefts in Barcroft

*By Inge and Markarius Nealis*

Many of the Barcroft residents were a little disturbed due to the recent mail and-package thefts that took place a few weeks ago. It started when the last big snowfall began. This first incident may or may not be related to the mail thefts. Barcroft resident Cathy Cordova was shoveling her pathway and put her shovel outside her door when she went back into her home. She came out a few

hours later to finish the job but realized that her shovel had disappeared! She asked neighbors if they had borrowed it and asked on the chat list as well, but unfortunately none of them had. Cathy was shocked because nothing like this has happened in the eleven years she has lived here.

Then the mail thefts started. Helene Stebbins found a pair of baseball tickets to a

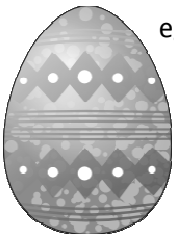
*Continued on page 3*

## Easter Egg Hunt

*By Dedra Curteman*

Hop on over to the Barcroft Community House on Saturday, April 4 for the Annual Easter Egg Hunt. The festivities begin at 9:30 a.m. with coffee, followed by an egg hunt for the youngest children at 10

a.m., and for the older children, an egg hunt at 10:30 a.m. If you would like to volunteer for the event, please contact Dedra at [dscurteman@gmail.com](mailto:dscurteman@gmail.com). Hope to see you there! •



## BSCL Meeting is April 2

*By Chris Kupczyk*

As we say goodbye (good riddance?) to winter and hello to spring, we will have a guest from the Virginia Cooperative Extension to talk about the urban gardening programs they offer throughout the county. In addition, a representative from Arlington Transit (ART) will speak to us briefly about its transit development plans. ART is seeking input on desired changes in Arlington Transit and Metro bus routes and will be passing out a short survey following the presentation.



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**Next Deadline: April 15**

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# Monthly Happenings

## ***President's Report by Eric Harold***

Ok. I'm going to put my snow gear away. Kept them around a little longer, just in case. It's springtime, and our thoughts turn to...primaries! Lots of changes on the County and School Board front. Five candidates have declared for the Democratic primary for two County Board seats (Mary Hynes and Walter Tejada have decided not to run). The primary is set for June 9. Audrey Clement, ever the optimist, has thrown her name in (again) as the Green candidate. On the School Board front, Douglas Park resident Reid Goldstein has filed and relative unknown Sharon Dorsey has also filed. Both will compete for Democratic endorsement at a caucus May 14/16, after which the unsuccessful candidate will withdraw from the race (grumble...don't get me started on this).

In addition to electoral politics, the County Board and the School Board launched a broad-based, year-long community facilities planning effort. The two Boards appointed the 24-member Study Committee to lead a long-range planning effort that will, ultimately, develop framework regarding the community's future funding and facility needs. Barcroft is well represented on this committee. Bryant Monroe was asked by the County to partici-

***Continued on page 6***

# Mail and Package Thefts in Barcroft, *continued*

## *Continued from page 1*

Minnesota Twins game and thought it odd. She asked for the owner to claim them on the chat list. Scott Peterson, another Barcroft resident, put out three pieces of mail for the mail man. He was astonished to find them all in the bushes two doors down, opened and with his check missing. Fortunately the check was returned to him by a Washington and Lee student who found it in Ballston! Even the mailman said he found a few packages opened and emptied. Magdalena Slodkowska-Barry who lives on Buchanan discovered her package opened and the contents gone! She also found someone else's open mail along 7th Street. Another neighbor, Lisa Wilson, who lives on Buchanan, found two of her packages opened, one of which contained gifts for her daughter. Several neighbors described potential suspects whom they had observed. Allison Garcia found some of her mail at the corner of 7th Street and Wakefield. She reported that some of the mail was opened and the contents were stolen. Some of the stolen mail and packages were reunited with their owners because of the chat list. It is recommended that if anyone has lost an item that they post it on the chat list.

Many victims of the thefts used the online police reporting system (<http://police.arlingtonva.us/online-police-reporting->

system/). Mark Wigfield spoke with Postal Inspector Colin Spence about the recent event of mail thefts. The Postal Inspector has requested that anybody who has had their mail stolen contact him. The information is: Colin Spence (Postal Inspector, Northern Virginia Mail Theft Team), 703-280-7201 (office number), 703-698-6435 (FAX).

You can also visit their website at <https://postalinspectors.uspis.gov/>, scroll about halfway down and look for mail theft. If you see a mail thief at work, or if you believe your mail was stolen, call police immediately, then call Postal Inspectors at 877-876-2455 (press 3). •

## ***Save the Date*** **Saturday, May 30, 2015**

Neighborhood Annual Paper Shredding  
*and*  
Lions Club Sight & Hearing Testing Van

*Shredding will benefit The Women's Club's Wakefield Scholarship Fund  
Donations welcome.*

The Woman's Club of Arlington  
Parking Lot  
700 South Buchanan Street  
Arlington, VA 22204  
Time: 10 a.m. to 12 noon

# It's All Sunny at Barcroft Elementary!

**By Jenny Ditta, Barcroft Elementary Liaison**

After a long winter, hints of Spring are a welcome relief to everyone at Barcroft Elementary. Events in March included a special celebration of Dr. Seuss's birthday on March 3 after an ice storm closed school on March 2. Barcroft fielded four student teams to the Odyssey of the Mind competition March 7.

The Third Quarter Leonardo da Vinci Learning Night Open House was held on March 9, showcasing student learning. For example, families visiting Grade 2 classrooms were treated to a Wax Museum that featured talking statues of Helen Keller, Jackie Robinson, Abraham Lincoln and other historic figures. A special celebration of the arts in honor of "Arts in the Schools" month was also hosted that evening. The Girls on the Run program that trains girls in Grade 3 to 5 for a 5K race also began in March.

Two weeks of Spring Intersession classes were held March 16 to 27, followed by Spring Break. Intersession classes introduce students to new learning experiences. Offerings this year included classes in Lego Robotics, Cooking with Scents, and Lewis and Clark Adventures.

Students will return to school on April 6 for the fourth quarter. On April 15, students will celebrate Leonardo da Vinci's birthday and receive a free book from the Reading is Fundamental (RIF) program. April 23 is Spring Picture Day for students.

Please join us for the following events this Spring! A School Information Session is scheduled for April 9 from 9:15 to 10:45 a.m. for parents interested in learning more about Barcroft Elementary. Barcroft International Night will be held on the evening of April 16. Barcroft students will submit a rain barrel for auction in the Go Gaga for Green Operation Rain Barrel Silent Auction to be held April 25 from 5 to 8 p.m. at the Arlington campus of George Mason University. The Barcroft Spring Concert will be held May 5 at 7 p.m. The Barcroft Spring Fair will be held May 9 from 4 to 6 p.m. and will feature international themes and a plant sale. Please join us! •

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# Flavors of the Season: Citrus

**By Kari Hickman,**

***Virtualgoodyplate.blogspot.com***

Here's a lovely spring dessert for Easter or any other day this season. We like to serve it with rainbow sherbet, but a cup of tea or glass of milk goes just as well. Happy Spring!

## **Grapefruit Pound Cake**

*Serves 16*

9 ounces all-purpose flour (about 2 cups)

1 tsp baking powder

5/8 tsp salt

1 2/3 cups granulated sugar

6 T butter, softened

6 ounces 1/3-less-fat cream cheese

2 large eggs

1/4 cup canola oil

2 T grated grapefruit rind

1/2 tsp vanilla extract

1/2 cup 2% reduced-fat milk

1/2 cup fresh grapefruit juice

1 1/4 cups powdered sugar



1. Preheat oven to 325.
2. Coat a 10-inch tube pan with baking spray. Weigh or lightly spoon flour into dry measuring cups; level with a knife. Combine flour, baking powder, and 1/2 tsp salt, stirring well. Place granulated sugar, butter and cream cheese in a large bowl; beat with a mixer at high speed until light and fluffy. Add eggs, 1 at a time. Beat in oil, rind, and vanilla.

3. Add flour mixture and milk alternately to batter, beginning and ending with flour. Spoon batter into pan; bake at 325 for 1 hour and 10 minutes or until a wooden pick inserted in center comes out with moist crumbs clinging. Cool in pan on a wire rack 10 minutes. Invert cake. Cool on a rack.

4. Place juice in a saucepan over medium-high heat; bring to a boil. Cook until reduced to 3 T (about 4 minutes). Cool slightly. Stir in powdered sugar and remaining 1/8 tsp salt. Drizzle over cake.

## **Charlie Clark to Speak at Woman's Club**

**By Pat Fisher**

The speaker at The Woman's Club of Arlington on April 13 at 1 p.m. will be Charlie Clark. A Washington-area journalist, Clark has written the weekly "Our Man in Arlington" column since 2010. By day, he is a senior correspondent for Government Executive Media

Group and has been a writer and editor for the Washington Post, National Journal, Congressional Quarterly, Time-Life Books, Tax Analysts and several education groups.

The Women's Club is located at 700 South Buchanan Street. Everyone is welcome. The event is free. •

# Arlington House Celebrates Surrender Anniversary

Join the National Park Service at Arlington House, The Robert E. Lee Memorial for two special programs commemorating the 150th anniversary of the surrender of Robert E. Lee to Ulysses S. Grant at Appomattox Court House, Virginia on April 9, 1865.

Saturday, April 4: an evening program of period music, dancing and special walking tours to the graves of Union officers who were present at the surrender. Tour the mansion by lamplight. Learn dance steps of the period with the Arlington House Victorian



Dance Society. Take advantage of a rare opportunity to visit Arlington House at night and see the skyline of Washington lit up. Reservations are required.

Thursday, April 9: enjoy a performance of the Federal City Brass Band, and learn about the surrender from a park ranger.

Four Barcrofters, Jim Perlmutter, Alice Eichers, Carol Harvey, and Amy (Kassens) Delery, are volunteers at Arlington House. Carol Harvey and Amy Delery are with the Arlington House Victorian Dance Society. •

## President's Message, *continued*

*Continued from page 2*

pate. Josh Waldman and Rich Jordan are representing the Barcroft PTA. Chris Kupczyk and Daniel Weir represent Barcroft on the Residents Forum, which will provide periodic input to the committee over the course of the year-long effort.

I look forward to hearing from all Barcroft participants, either in this fine news outlet or on the chatlist, about what it is exactly they are doing and what the ramifications are to Barcroft, South Arlington and the County in general.

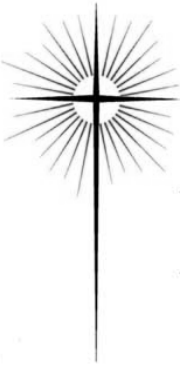
Happy Spring, everyone! •

## Love a Parade?

Barcroft is looking for someone to head up the organizing committee for the neighborhood's premier community event. **Is this you?**

Contact  
*Andrew Hunter at*  
703-979-8247 or  
*Andrew.hunter129@*  
*verizon.net.*





## ***Celebrate Holy Week and Easter with Us***

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**- The Rev. Ann Barker, Rector**

**Sunday Worship Services**  
8 am and 10 am

**Sunday Christian Education**  
Adults 9 am - Youth 10 am

**All are welcome to all services and activities!**

- Sun. Mar. 29** Holy Eucharist and Blessing of the Palms - 8 am and 10 am
- Thurs. Apr. 2** Loaves & Fishes Meal & Service - 6:30 to 8 pm
- Fri. Apr. 3** Good Friday Services - 12 noon and 7 pm
- Sun. Apr. 5** Easter Holy Eucharist with hymns - 8 am  
Easter Festive Holy Eucharist with children's message - 10 am  
Easter Egg Hunt and reception after the 10 am service

## *St. John's Episcopal Church*

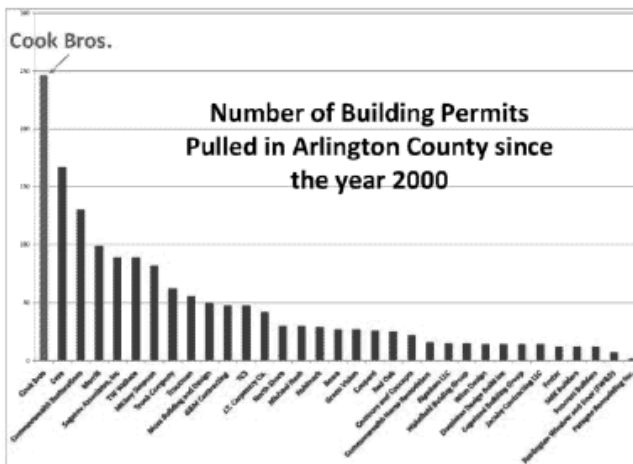


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# You Don't Have to Interview the #1 Remodeler in Arlington... But...



## Why Wouldn't You?

For a larger Graph image and more information about the Graph, visit our website at

[www.CookBros.org/BarcroftGraph](http://www.CookBros.org/BarcroftGraph)



# Arlington Salamanders

**By Cliff Fairweather, Natural Resources Specialist, Long Branch Nature Center**

Lurking beneath old logs, in woodpiles, underneath stream rocks, or in quiet ponds, salamanders manage to hang on in our urban county. Small, with relatively limited mobility and no protective scales or shell, urban life is a challenge for these amphibians. As with their relatives, the frogs, most salamanders start life out in the water and live on land as adults.

A salamander might be easily mistaken for a lizard because it has four legs and a tail. Unlike lizards, which are reptiles with dry, scaly skin, salamanders have soft, moist skin. Their skin is permeable, meaning that water and chemicals can pass through it relatively easily, making them vulnerable to pesticides and other pollutants in the urban environment.

The most common salamander in Arlington is the eastern red-backed salamander. As the name suggests, many red-backed salamanders have a broad reddish (sometimes yellow) stripe down their backs. Others, though, are all dark gray or black and are called lead-backed forms.

Red-backed salamanders can sometimes be found in backyards and gardens, especially in old wood piles. Unlike most salamanders, redbacks lay their eggs on land and the young hatch out looking like miniature adults. Females usually stay with the eggs until they hatch.

Another fairly common salamander in Arlington is the northern two-lined salamander.

This species lives in and near streams and lay their eggs in water. The young have gills and remain aquatic for two to three years. The adults have a yellow to reddish orange back and two dark stripes along their sides.

Spotted salamanders are relatively large, sometimes reaching eight inches and can live for a decade or more. They have dark bodies spangled with bright yellow to orange spots. Spotted spend most of their lives underground but come to small, temporary breeding pools in late February or early March to mate and lay eggs. Small populations of spotted salamanders occur near both Long Branch and Gulf Branch Nature Centers.

A small population of northern red salamanders lives in and near a little spring in the northern part of the county, not far from Four Mile Run. This is the only known remaining population in Arlington. They are spectacular orange to red salamanders with black spots and can grow to up to seven inches long. Their Arlington habitat is on private land and is protected by the property owners.

Two other salamanders recorded in Arlington in recent years include three-lined and northern dusky salamanders, though these are rare. The nature centers are conducting a Reptile and Amphibian bio-blitz on Saturday, May 9 and you can participate. We will look for and count species of reptiles and amphibians, including salamanders, in Arlington parks. Check The Snag or contact us at 703-228-6535 for details and training opportunities. ●



# A Date with Dirt

**By Debora Southwell**

Louis J. Glickman, a 20th century New York real estate investor and philanthropist, said, “The best investment on Earth is earth.” While there’s no confirmation that he cared a hoot about trees and our natural world, his words call to mind those of Wendell Berry, who as an environmental activist cares about the interconnectedness of life: “The Earth is what we all have in common.” And now it’s spring, the perfect time for growing things (and keeping them growing).

Now, before you grab your wallet to buy seeds or plants, take a look outside and find those tall plants made of wood that are already on or near your property. Yes, those lovely trees, not yet entirely leafed out, but still jewels that dot our planet. With the chilling months past, the timing is right for nurturing them.

To do so, the place to start is the soil, the earth itself. Since trees’ root systems are anchored in the ground, knowing more about soil’s characteristics and properties is important for maintaining a good home for your trees and those of your community.

Here in Barcroft, an urban neighborhood, the soil bears the mark of significant compaction, as

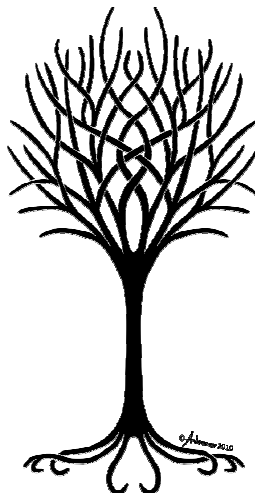
most urbanized soil does. Various sized particles and spaces between those particles form your soil’s structure (of which there are many types). Learning about your soil type and how to minimize compaction can help you keep your trees in good health.

How do you start? It’s easy.

1) Your Virginia Cooperative Extension office, located at the Fairlington Community Center, has free Soil Sample boxes and Soil Sample Information Sheets to get you started. The Virginia Tech Soil Testing Lab in Blacksburg should be able to get you results within one or two weeks.

2) Manage the texture of your soil by adding organic matter to it. Mulch around the base of your trees, without touching the bark, and you will be adding to your soil’s drainage capability.

During Keep America Beautiful month, do your part to invest in Barcroft’s trees, and your property, by starting with their foundation, the Earth’s soil. Samuel Johnson, the 18th century English writer, put it well when he said, “The future is purchased by the present.” Take the time to promote the future health of all of our trees, from the smaller Eastern redbud to the mighty willow oak, by strengthening our soil today. •



# Spring Greetings from Our Savior Lutheran School

## **By OSLS National Junior Honor Society**

Our Savior Lutheran School will be hosting a school open house on April 23 from 9 a.m. to 11 a.m. and from 6 p.m. to 8 p.m. No appointment is necessary. We would love to show you around our PreK through 8th grade school. We are currently accepting applications for the 2015-2016 school year.

Please join us at Our Savior Lutheran Church for Holy Week services. We have a Maundy Thursday service on April 2 at 7 p.m., a Good Friday service on April 3 at 7 p.m., and Sunday Easter services on April 5th at 8:15 a.m. and 11 a.m. We would love to have you come and worship with us.

At OSLS, we have weekly chapel services every Wednesday starting at 8:50 a.m. Please feel free to join us. During the month of March, our chapel offerings supported the building of a Lutheran school for children in Uganda. It was an incredible opportunity for all of us to make a difference in the lives of families in another area of the world.

St. Jude Children's Research Hospital Math-a-thon is an annual event at OSLS and we are happy to contribute to this cause again this year. St. Jude is a pediatric and research facility which treats children with cancer and other catastrophic diseases. Each year, our students help St. Jude by solving math problems and raising money for the hospital. It's a great way to teach children that they too can make a difference no matter their age. For more information on the wonderful work at St. Jude and how you can help • them,



Open House

Thursday, April 23<sup>rd</sup>, 9 - 11 am and 6 - 8 pm

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# Neighbor to Neighbor Listings

*These ads are free to BSCL members, and run on a space-available basis. The listings run for three months unless removal or update is requested.*

**Babysitter, Pet Sitter, Vacation Help:** Responsible 9th grader. Will water plants, bring in mail, etc. Email Tyler at tylerchala-pointe@gmail.com or call 571-244-7555.

**Babysitter/Pet Sitter:** Neighborhood Wakefield Senior, 18, available for most evenings and weekends. Has her own car; can help with drop off and pick up for evening activities as well. mia.e.field@gmail.com.

**Rebecca Bean Babysitter:** 10th grader available nights and weekends. Email: Rebecca-ahbean @gmail.com or call 571-344-4134.

**Babysitter:** Experienced, Red Cross certified 8th grader. Call Liza Harold at 703-868-3518.

**Jenny's Babysitting, Pet Sitting and Vacation Care:** Seventeen-year-old available weekends and some weeknights. Can water plants, bring in mail, etc., while you travel. Contact jennyclare@gmail.com or call 703-998-5338.


**August's Pet Sitting:** Responsible high school freshmen available to care for pets. 703-892-6712.

**For Sale:** Two sets of American Girl-type of doll clothes. One is a school dress with matching shoes, the other is a summer pants/top outfit with matching shoes. \$25 for both. Contact Annette at 703-629-1650.

**Kevin's Media:** Will convert VHS tapes, TC30 tapes, Laserdiscs and 35mm photograph slides to DVD. Professional packaging/artwork included upon prior request. Please inquire for rates. Email kevinmedia118@gmail.com or text/call 703-919-7605.

**Babysitter, house/pet sitter:** Carmen Dunlap, responsible 17 year old. Available weekends and weeknights. Dunlap.carmen@ymail.com.

**Babysitting, Petsitting, and Dog Walking:** Emily Barton, very reliable 16-year-old. If you need a baby/pet sitter or walker please contact me. Phone: 703-629-5234 Email: emilyk-barton@gmail.com. •



*Dance your way to a fitter you!*  
**Barcroft Community House**

**Tuesdays 10 am & Thursdays 7:15 pm**  
*(except 1<sup>st</sup> Thursday of the month)*

[www.ZumbaElena.com](http://www.ZumbaElena.com) [arlingtonzumba@yahoo.com](mailto:arlingtonzumba@yahoo.com)  
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Barcroft School and Civic League  
800 South Buchanan Street  
Arlington, VA 22204

### Home Buying Insights

Some buyers start out looking for a home without using a real estate agent, wanting to shop at their own pace without the pressure to buy something. If you contact the listing agent to see a property, and decide to buy it, don't expect the agent to represent your best interests. Listing agents represent the seller in a transaction, and always have the seller's best interest in mind. Anything you say to the listing agent can be used against you in negotiations. In Virginia, a realtor can legally represent a seller and buyer, which is called Dual Agency, although the current law restricts a dual agent from advising either party, and that isn't good for the consumer. You should hire your own agent who will have your best interest at heart and at no additional cost to you. Like the seller's agent, the buyer's agent is paid out of the transaction proceeds. Your agent can represent you as a buyer's agent, and explain the types of services they offer. What you should get from that agent is help on finding the right house and getting the best lender (also critical in this market).

Next you want advice determining the right price and terms to offer based on current trends. In a hot market like Arlington for example, you need to understand escalation clauses and strategies to compete. You want guidance throughout negotiations, inspections, appraisal and lending process, along with walk through and settlement. *Looking to get the best results when buying or selling? Not all agents are alike!* Put my 30 years of local market experience and knowledge to work for you and obtain the best outcome! Our **Preferred Buyer Guarantee** will save for you at least \$5,000 in price or seller subsidy or we will pay you \$1,000 at settlement. With our **Easy Exit Guarantee** - you can cancel the agreement at any time prior to going under contract.

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