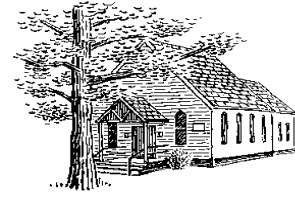


Barcroft School and Civic League  
800 South Buchanan Street  
Arlington, VA 22204



# Barcroft News

February 2016

Vol 113, Issue 6

## Local Program Celebrates 40th Anniversary

*By Phil Cackley*

An Arlington program that helps adult immigrants learn English and adjust to life in the U.S. marks its 40th anniversary this year.



*Students in a REEP class at Arlington Mill Community Center.*

stration project to teach English to Southeast Asian refugees streaming into Northern Virginia following the end of the Vietnam War in 1975. From that tentative beginning, the program has grown into a nationally-recognized language school that currently serves 1,000 learners in classes at two main locations in south Arlington and a number of local community centers.

The program is part of Arlington Public Schools' office of career, technical and adult education, but receives operating funds from Arlington County government, student tuition, and a number of smaller grants. The majority of students are Arlington residents

*Continued on page 9*

The Arlington Education and Employment Program, which is abbreviated as REEP, has strong ties to the Barcroft neighborhood going back more than two decades, including classes held here. The program will celebrate with an Open House on Feb. 11 at its central location, Syphax Education Center.

REEP was started as a 90-day demon-

### Real Estate Market Update

Arlington County experienced a 2.1% year-over-year growth on average sale prices last year for all types of housing. Barcroft experienced another year of solid sales activity last year, with 31 properties closed in 2015 (per MRIS database). The average list price was \$683,922, average sold price was \$676,550. In 2014 the average sold price was \$645,232. Last year, the highest sale price in the neighborhood was \$1,055,000 and the lowest was \$405,000. The average DOM (days on market) was 47.

*What does the Fed Funds Rate increase mean for consumers?* Consumers should not expect home loan rates to rise as a direct result of the Fed's decision. Improving economic factors may influence home loan rates as The Fed's rate increase was based on signs of a strengthening economy. If the economy continues to improve, home loan rates could move higher. Why? Because home loan rates are based on Mortgage Backed Securities, which are a type of Bond. Weak economic news normally causes

money to flow out of higher risk investments like Stocks and into less risky investments like Bonds, causing Bond prices and home loan rates to improve. Strong economic news normally has the opposite result. Recently stock prices have dropped, mortgage bond prices finished the week higher which helped rates improve. Current fixed rates are at 3.875%.

#### Great news for buyers low on cash!

Fannie Mae recently revised their 95% loan program for a primary residence from \$417,000 to \$625,500. Borrowers can now use gift money for all required down payment and closing costs. Contact me for great reliable local lenders who offer competitive financing.

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### Next BSCL Meeting

Thursday, February 4  
7:30 p.m.

Community House  
Subject: Neighborhood  
Conservation Plan  
Projects



## Barcroft News

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**Next Deadline: February 15**

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@yahoo.com  
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*Landscaping:* Scott Brinitzer, 703-892-0308  
*Traffic Committee:* Heidi Wicker  
*4th of July Parade:* Volunteer Needed  
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*Demeter House:* Darlene Mickey  
*Parks:* Shirley Gay  
*Signs:* Glen Li  
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Swart, Pat Williamson *Alternates:* Karen Darnier,  
David Michelson, Elaine Squeri, Mark Wigfield

Visit Us Online: [www.bscl.org](http://www.bscl.org)

## Monthly Happenings

### **President's Report by Chris Kupczyk**

This month, there will be two opportunities to learn about and weigh in on upcoming projects affecting Barcroft. On Wednesday, February 3, there will be a community forum on the proposed Village Center project (the redevelopment of the Food Star site). The developer will be on hand to present an overview of the project and answer questions. The forum will take place at the Women's Club of Arlington, located next to the community house at 700 South Buchanan and will run from 7 to 9 p.m.

The next night, February 4, will be our regular monthly BSCL meeting at the community house, beginning at 7:30 p.m. At that meeting we will review and prioritize the remaining improvement projects in our neighborhood conservation plan. Once prioritized, we will present the project(s) to the Neighborhood Conservation Advisory Committee for approval to seek county board funding for them. Please plan to attend these important meetings. •

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## Neighbor to Neighbor Listings

*These listings are free to BSCL members, and run on a space-available basis. The listings run for three months unless removal, renewal or update is requested. Email listings and renewals to [editor@bscl.org](mailto:editor@bscl.org).*

**Picture Framing:** Frame new pictures or update old ones with creative low-cost solutions. Email: [jaitomlinson@yahoo.com](mailto:jaitomlinson@yahoo.com). Phone: 737-247-8929.

### **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: [emilykbarnton@gmail.com](mailto:emilykbarnton@gmail.com).

**Babysitter, house/pet sitter:** Carmen Dunlap, responsible 17 year old. Available weekends and weeknights. [Dunlap.carmen@gmail.com](mailto:Dunlap.carmen@gmail.com).

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

**Sophia Field:** 7th Grader, available for pet sitting and afternoon walking. Lost Dog and Cat Rescue volunteer and experienced bunny owner/foster. [Sophia.b.field@gmail.com](mailto:Sophia.b.field@gmail.com).

**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 [kevinsmedia118@gmail.com](mailto:kevinsmedia118@gmail.com) or text/call 703-919-7605.

**Rebecca Bean Babysitter:** 11th grader available nights and weekends. Call 571-344-4134 or email: [Rebeccahbean@gmail.com](mailto:Rebeccahbean@gmail.com).

**Petsitter:** Responsible 10th grader. Can house sit, water plants, pet sit bring in mail, etc. Email at [chrisclaire99@gmail.com](mailto:chrisclaire99@gmail.com) or call 571-623-1133.

**Babysitter/nanny/petsitter:** Jenny Claire, responsible 18 year old available for babysitting, and petsitting! Contact Jenny at 571-484-6445 or [jennylclaire@gmail.com](mailto:jennylclaire@gmail.com).

**Futon:** (frame and mattress) - both are in great shape! Frame is light blonde wood; includes mattress cover (new). Contact Alan Schweser, 703-271-6221 (we are on S. Pershing Drive).

**Babysitter:** Experienced, Red Cross certified 9th grader. Call Liza Harold at 703-868-3518. •

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20 percent discount to Barcroft residents!

## History Presentation

The Arlington Historical Society (AHS) will host Dr. Alfred Taylor, who will speak about his book, "Bridge Builders of Nauck/ Green Valley" at its next public program on Thursday, February 11.

This is the first book about Nauck, Arlington County's oldest African American community, which dates back to 1844. Located north of Shirlington, Nauck is rich in history.

The hour-long program will begin at 7 p.m. at Marymount University. The talk will be held in the Reinsch Library auditorium. The program is free and open to the public. For additional AHS information, please contact 703-942-9247. •

## Summer Trip to Spain

*By Carol Harvey*

In the last few years our Barcroft community has been very generous opening their homes (or spare rooms) to host a teenage student from Spain who is working to improve their English and experience first-hand how awesome America is. It's been a great success!! Students said that it was four weeks they will cherish forever.

So this year.... why not offer an amazing trip to your kids? We are offering this summer an opportunity to send your teen to visit and stay with a family in Spain! We have some great activities planned and amazing sights to be seen! Students will stay with a

family in Albacete, a small city in Castilla la Mancha. Yes, this is the part of Spain that inspired Cervantes to write his masterpiece, "Man of La Mancha." Students will take weekend trips to cities such as Madrid, explore ancient castles and several beaches, experience beautiful European-style cities like Valencia and Alicante... plus much more... All the while, of course, learning Spanish and having a great summer! Tell someone you know... spaces are limited... It's a select group for a special trip!

Contact: Will Tucker via email: at spainsummer2016@gmail.com or phone at 703-879-7047. •

## Winter Greetings from Our Savior Lutheran School

*By OSLS National Junior Honor Society*

Thank you to everyone who stopped by at our open house in January. We are currently accepting applications for grades PreK through 8th. We offer before and after care, making us an easy choice for anyone who works at the Pentagon, NFATC, or the ANGRC.

On February 19 at 6:30 p.m., Our Savior will host a family game night. If interested, please feel free to stop by with your family and have a fun evening of playing games with other adults and children. We have a blast!

Box Tops for Education is a unique way to raise money for schools and make a

difference. Box Tops are those little pink coupons you see on box goods at the store. Once you start looking, you'll see them everywhere. At Our Savior, we challenge each grade every month to bring in the most box tops. If you are looking for a way to support our school, and have some box tops for education lying around, you can stop by our school office and drop them off. Thank you in advance for your support.

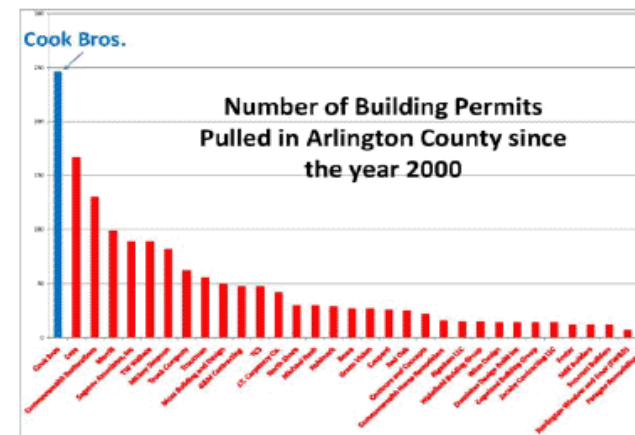
We are looking forward to our annual celebration of Lutheran Schools Week in early March and our celebration of Easter soon after. •

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

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



# Winter 2016 News From Barcroft Elementary

**By Jenny Ditta, Barcroft Elementary Liaison**

Winter greetings from Barcroft Elementary! Students returned from Winter Break on January 5, 2016 and began Third Quarter learning. Events in January included a donation drive sponsored by the Barcroft PTA through January 19. Many thanks to our neighbors who dropped off gently-used clothing and other household items and raised money for our school! The PTA held its monthly meeting on January 12, and discussed the proposed Modified School Year calendar for 2016-2017 as well as school participation in several Arlington Public School parent committees. On January 13, students enjoyed an afternoon Humanities assembly, an Acapella Group presentation.

From January 19 to 25, third grade students spent their mornings at the Wakefield pool attending swimming lessons. Second quarter report cards were sent home on January 20. On Thursday, January 21 the PTA hosted a Barcroft Night at Panera Bread located at Bailey's Crossroads. A huge thank you to the neighbors who joined us for this delicious fund raiser!

On January 27, Grade 5 families participated in the Too Smart to Start program, a public education initiative designed to prevent underage alcohol use. First grade students attended an educational field trip to the Na-

tional Gallery of Art on January 29. Finally, the school administration hosted two morning Bilingual Barcroft Chats in January. These morning meetings are held in Spanish and English and assist parents in learning about school and county programs that are beneficial to student learning.

The next several months should be busy for students and teachers. Parent-Teacher conferences will be held on February 4 and 5. On March 2, the school will distribute free books to students as part of the Reading is Fundamental program. Everyone will also celebrate Dr. Seuss's birthday, a long-time Barcroft Elementary tradition.

On March 14, to mark the end of the Third Quarter, Barcroft will host a Leonardo Learning and Math (Celebration of Pi) event. Spring Intersession classes will be held from March 28 to April 8. During Intersession, students may take time off from school or enroll in interesting Intersession classes.

Barcroft's International Night celebration will be held on April 28. We hope that you can join us for these and other wonderful events hosted by your neighborhood school! To learn more about What's Happening at Barcroft Elementary, contact our PTA President Tara McCabe at [tcsm04@gmail.com](mailto:tcsm04@gmail.com). •

# REEP Celebrates Anniversary, *continued*

***Continued from page 1***

who are working people with jobs ranging from child care and restaurant positions to embassy staff and entrepreneurs.

A typical class may have 25 to 30 learners, from 10 or 12 different countries, speaking three or four different languages.

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## Groundhog, *continued*

***Continued from page 8***

Conversely, in American folklore the groundhog is revered as the prognosticator of spring and is the focus of Groundhog Day celebrations throughout the U.S., especially in German-settled parts of Pennsylvania where the holiday began. Inspired by European folklore in which a bear or badger foretells of spring, German immigrants adopted the readily available Groundhog as the foretelling icon. Also, two other holidays; Christian Candlemas and pagan Imbolc fall on February 2 and the festivities melded into Groundhog Day.

Join us in Arlington at the Gulf Branch Nature Center for "Getting Ready for Groundhog Day" for ages 5 to 8 on Sunday, Jan. 31, 2 to 3 p.m., and at the Long Branch Nature Center for Groundhog Story Time on Tuesday, Feb. 2 from 10:30 to 11:15 a.m. For information, please call Nature Centers. •

Their ages are anywhere from 18 to 80 (or older), but most students are in their 20s to 40s.

REEP has a strong connection with Barcroft – as far back as 1990, the program held evening classes in space at Barcroft Elementary School. In later years, a number of classes were held in the trailers behind the school. For a time, REEP also held classes in borrowed space at Our Savior Lutheran School, as well as in the community room at the Buchanan Gardens apartment complex. Teachers and volunteers – as well as students -- have been Barcroft residents.

Since 2013, REEP has offered tuition classes at Arlington Mill Community Center in the late afternoon and evening. In addition, there are free, drop-in classes at AMCC in the morning, taught by volunteers.

As part of the 40th anniversary celebration, REEP will hold an Open House on Thursday, February 11 at Syphax Education Center, 2110 Washington Blvd. (at Sequoia Plaza, across from the county Department of Human Services offices). Visitors can come from 10 a.m. to 12 noon or 6:30 to 8:30 p.m. Parking is available in the garage on levels B1 or B2. The snow date is Feb. 25. For more information about the Open House or about REEP, visit the website, [www.apsva.us/reep](http://www.apsva.us/reep) or call 703-228-4200. •

# The Glorious Groundhog (Depending on Who You Ask)

**By Bobbi Farley, Park Naturalist  
Long Branch Nature Center**

Groundhogs, also known as woodchucks, get their fair share of attention not only on Groundhog Day, but throughout the year among farmers and property owners. These rodents, which are part of the marmot family, are cousins to other ground squirrels such as prairie dogs and chipmunks. The groundhog is widespread through the eastern U.S. and most of Canada and has a reputation as a pest, causing property damage through tunneling. Ironically, property owners are at some fault for their groundhog infestations, which surprisingly, can be beneficial to the land.

The natural habitat of the groundhog, which can range from Georgia to Alaska, is fields and woodland edge rather than inside forests. And with great expanses of farmland and suburban backyards spreading throughout the continent, groundhog habitat has greatly increased. Since the 1600's colonists have cleared significant portions of forest for fields, causing groundhog populations to grow. Also, the removal of natural predators such as wolves, bear, bobcats, cougars, and eagles from suburban areas reduce predation. However, there are still coyotes, foxes, hawks and even snakes, (which eat babies), to control



numbers as well as little to no hunting restrictions on groundhogs.

In nature, groundhogs are beneficial not only as a link in the food web, but to the nutrient flow of the whole ecosystem. Their tunneling brings nutrient-rich soils to the surface, which helps to feed plants and aerates the ground, saturating soils with oxygen. Their burrows can reach over five feet deep and have 50 feet worth of tunnels, bringing over 5,000 lbs. of soil to the surface. While their digging may cause property or equipment damage to farming operations, I'm sure the free fertilizer would be appreciated.

However, groundhogs can be kept off property and out of gardens with relatively simple methods, whereas extermination just leaves an empty burrow for more groundhogs or other wildlife to occupy. Fencing around gardens with wire mesh extending a foot and a half into the ground can help, but is more than a bit of work and expense. Other low-cost deterrents include planting garlic which is unpalatable to groundhogs, scattering talcum powder and Epsom salts in large perimeters around gardens, and even scattering used kitty litter to leave the threatening scent of a "predator."

*Continued on page 9*

# Barcroft Memories: The High's Store

**By Henry "Hank" Biddle**

Years ago a new four-lane divided highway was built cutting Arlington in half. It was originally named Lee Boulevard, confusing people because Lee Highway already existed. It was renamed Arlington Boulevard or Route 50.

My sister and I were now isolated from Clarendon by the road, as our mother ruled that we could not cross it as its speed limit was 55 miles per hour. But Clarendon had everything, a new post office where our father worked, the Ashton Theater, a toy shop, Yates hardware, and Berkley's Bakery. Occasionally, our father would bring home goodies from the bakery. He told us that a new High's ice cream shop had opened next to the bakery.


High's made the best ice cream cone, three scoops for a nickel. Sis and I started



searching for a way to bicycle to Clarendon without crossing Route 50. One day pedaling west on Columbia Pike, I saw a dirt road leading northward up a hill. I said "Let's try it."

The road was rocky and rutted but we made it to the top where it changed into a gravel road, South Carlin Springs Road. We pedaled through a ford, up hills and down, and, surprise, saw ahead an underpass under Route 50. We pedaled on to Clarendon for the best five cent cone on earth. It was a great circle route, but it took us from Barcroft to heaven.

**Editor's Note:** Mr. Biddle, who passed away last year, was a long-term Barcroft resident, who wrote of his childhood memories of growing up in Arlington in days gone by. Special thanks to his family for providing additional stories beyond those we have already published so we can continue to enjoy them. •

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Saturdays—8:15 a.m.-9:15 a.m. Vinyasa  
Sundays—5:30-6:30 p.m. Candlelight  
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## NEWS NOTES

### St. John's Pancake Supper

St. John's will hold its annual Shrove Tuesday, also called Mardi Gras (Fat Tuesday), Pancake Supper on Tuesday, February 9 from 6 to 7:30 p.m. Prices are \$5 for adults, \$3 for children 6 to 12 and free for children under 6. Fat Tuesday gets its name not because it is a time to overeat, but from the practice of using up fats and other foods that were traditionally not eaten during Lent.

The supper, traditionally hosted by the men of the parish, will feature pancakes, ham and applesauce. Mark your calendars

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and come enjoy a traditional meal before the beginning of Lent. St. John's Episcopal Church is located at 415 S. Lexington, one block from Carlin Springs Road. Use the 5th Street entrance.

### Women's Club Honors Black History Month

On Monday, February 1, the Woman's Club of Arlington will honor Black History month with a presentation from Mary Thompson, noted author and research historian at George Washington's Mount Vernon Estate. The program begins at 1 p.m. at the clubhouse located at 700 S. Buchanan. All are welcome. For more information please phone 703-553-5800.

### Can the Grease This Winter

Fats, oils and grease (FOG) are found in cooking oils like vegetable or olive oil, butter, margarine, lard, shortening, meat fat, food scraps, bacon grease, baking goods, gravy, sauces, mayonnaise, salad dressings and dairy products. When you rinse FOG down the drain, it clings to the pipes that lead away from your home. Many plumbers say emergency calls almost double the day after major holidays! Don't let a sewer backup ruin your day. Pour fats and oils into an empty can and throw the can in the trash. Don't pour oil and grease down drains or toilets.

## MORE NEWS NOTES

### Stop the Squash! Salamander Patrol Training

Every year, with the first 'warm' rain, a dangerous journey begins. Wood frogs, toads, and spotted salamanders that have spent the winter hibernating begin to move to ponds — crossing driveways, parking lots, and roads. Come learn about Arlington's amazing amphibians, and sign up to join our 'safety patrol,' for a 1 or 2 hour shift some night in late February or early March (we can't predict precisely.) Thursday, Feb. 18, 7:30 to 8:30 p.m. Adults. For information: 703-228-3403. Meet at Gulf Branch Nature Center. Free.

### Tree Care Resources

Concerned about your trees? The pruning of medium to large trees is best left to qualified arborists both in terms of evaluating the need, and applying the treatment. While well executed pruning can reduce the risk of storm damage, poorly executed pruning can increase the risk. And always deter tree topping as a risk reduction treatment.

- For a list of certified arborists in this area: <http://www.goodtreecare.com> and look for the Find an Arborist tab.
- Selecting and Working with an Arborist: <http://www.extension.org/pages/66492/selecting-and-working-with-an-arborist>.

- Tips for Checking and Caring for Storm Damaged Trees: <http://www.extension.org/pages/66211/tips-for-checking-and-caring-for-storm-damaged-trees>.
- Storm Damage and Tree Pruning <http://urbanforestry.frec.vt.edu/stormdamage/resources/pruningbroch.pdf>.

### Barcroft's Little Free Libraries

*By Kate Beyssellance*

Barcroft neighborhood now has not one but two Little Free Libraries! The first was at Barcroft School, and now there is a second one near South First Place, at the Unitarian Universalist Church. You can see it from the street - it's next to the sidewalk that leads to the playground, east of the parking lot.

The UUCA's Friends of the Little Free Library provided this fun addition to our neighborhood for all to enjoy, and we try to make sure it always has interesting books for young and old alike. The library looks kind of plain for now - it was all we could do to get it up and operating before the cold weather came. But in the spring we'll be decorating it, and making it even more interactive.

So the next time you visit the UUCA playground or take a walk on First Place, bring some reading material to swap - "Take a Book - Return a Book!" For more info on the Little Free Library movement, go to [www.littlefreelibrary.org](http://www.littlefreelibrary.org). •