

# ALCOVA HEIGHTS

The Newsletter of the Alcova Heights Neighborhood | Arlington, Virginia

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**FEBRUARY 2007**

## MEET THE CIVIC ASSOCIATION PRESIDENT

**By Brad Lehman**

Anne (Elly) Merica is the current president of the Alcova Heights Civic Association. She took a little time out to talk about her time living here, what her role is, and what she hopes the civic association can accomplish.

### How long have you been here?

I moved to Arlington after college (over twenty years ago — yikes!). I first lived in Courthouse, then Glen Carlin, then across from Arlington Village. I loved the Pike (even before it was cool!) and wanted to buy in the area. John and I bought this house in 1994. We got married in our back yard the following year.

### What made you decide to move here?

John and I both grew up in Bethesda, but we didn't know each other then. Ever since John tried the commute over the river instead of through DC, he was hooked too. We love Arlington.

### How have things changed since you have been living here?

A lot of the older working folks have retired or passed on. But, there are a lot of younger singles and couples moving in and we seem to have a baby boom!

It's hard to see some landmarks go. I even miss the Bob's Big Boy building where Eckerd is now. But it's exciting to see others evolve, like the Cinema and Drafthouse with new owners.

### What does the president of the civic association do?

The main job is to get residents excited about being here, enough to participate in activities and build a community. Other than that, it's mostly forwarding emails and information to the list serve or committees.

### Does being an architect influence your approach to the role?

It is fascinating to watch theories about place and community building put into practice. Some of it works, some doesn't. Mostly, I try to act as a translator between the county staff and professionals who are trying to direct growth, and the residents who have to live with the decisions.

## Why should people get involved in the civic association?

It's a chance to get to know your neighbors better, and we have some really interesting people here. When people are connected to their communities, whether family, church, or neighborhood, they tend to be happier.

## What do you hope the civic association can accomplish in the next year or two?

We are victims of our own success — we have kids from Alcova Heights going to seven different elementary schools. We need activities that bring the neighborhood together rather than split it into subsets. We need to update the Neighborhood Conservation Plan to include the homes north of the fire station and to address the issues brought up in the Form Based Code for Columbia Pike. We also need to get fresh, new perspectives and energy to continue our traditional events such as the Halloween Parade and National Night Out, and to develop new traditions such as the Holiday Caroling and Bonfire.

## 2007 MEETING SCHEDULE

**By Marie Van Ness**

Alcova Heights Civic Association Meetings will be held on the third Thursday of the month on the following dates: February 15, April 19, June 21, September 20, and November 15. Meetings are held at the Arlington Baptist Church, located on Monroe St. between 7th and 8th streets. Potluck starts at 6:30 pm and the meeting starts at 7:00 pm. If there is a need for additional meetings, they will be held.

### February 15 Meeting

The speaker at the February 15 meeting will be Capt. Michelle Nuneville, who is the new Commander of the 3rd District. She will talk with us about safety and crime prevention issues, and address our concerns. Let's show her our appreciation by having a good turnout.

Rev. Virginia White, the new pastor of the Arlington Baptist Church has been invited to join us. She is interested in meeting the neighbors. Let's give Rev. White a warm welcome to our meeting.

## EDITOR'S NOTE

By Margaret Rogers

I am pleased to introduce Lorelei Brown and Brad Lehman as coeditors of the newsletter. When I asked what to write here, they said that they are looking forward to meeting more of their new neighbors on 9th Street. So to find out more, come and say hello at the civic association meeting!

## BARCROFT ELEMENTARY SCHOOL 2<sup>ND</sup> ANNUAL SCHOOL WINTER RUMMAGE SALE.

Join your neighbors and browse the rummage sale. There will be furniture, household items, CDs, knick-knacks, toys, bikes and more! All unsold items will be donated to the Salvation Army.

**Where:** Barcroft Elementary School, 625 S. Wakefield St., in the Multi-Purpose Room (Cafeteria).

**When:** Saturday February 10, 2007, 9 am - noon

Barcroft also welcomes tax-deductible donations of goods for sale. You can clean out your closets and drop off your gently used items at the school the week of February 5th. Receipts will be available in the front office. If you have any questions, please contact Barbara Vierow, (703) 521-7822.

## FIRST ANNUAL AHCA SEED SWAP MARCH 3

Don't miss this great chance to share coffee and baked goods with your neighbors while talking gardening! The first annual seed swap will be held at 10 am - about noon, March 3, at Arlington Methodist Church Riddick Hall (corner of Glebe and 8th St. S). There will be an hour-long panel of experts, displays on gardening, and door prizes! Take this chance to swap garden tips and seeds with your neighbors, as well as raise funds for the civic association. Admission will be \$4 at the door for those bringing seeds and \$5 for those who come empty-handed. Participants are urged to bring well-labeled seeds saved from your garden, or purchased seeds, labeled bulbs or plants that you are dividing. You may also bring a pledge card describing a plant you will donate. Pledge cards must include your name, address, email, and phone number, with a detailed description of the plant you're going to donate (example: I will make a forsythia plant available on April 2 - you must pick up and help dig.) Volunteers will take your seeds, bulbs, plants, or pledge at the door. We'll leave you ready to go play in the dirt! To donate a door prize or a baked good, please contact Martha Gibbons at [mgibbons49@yahoo.com](mailto:mgibbons49@yahoo.com) or 703-685-7127.



## NEIGHBORHOOD CALENDAR OF EVENTS FOR 2007

February 10:	Barcroft Elementary School Winter Rummage Sale
February 15:	Civic Association Meeting. (All meetings are held at the Arlington Baptist Church, 6:30 pm potluck, 7:00 pm meeting.)
February 27:	CPRO 20th Anniversary Celebration at Arlington Cinema and Drafthouse, 5-7 pm
March 3:	First Annual AHCA Seed Swap, Arlington Methodist Church, 10 am - noon
March 22-24:	Arlington Forest United Methodist Church Consignment Sale
April 19:	Civic Association Meeting
May 12:	Neighborhood Day
June 21:	Civic Association Meeting
August 7:	National Night Out
September 20:	Civic Association Meeting
October 27:	Halloween Parade
November 15:	Civic Association Meeting
December (TBD):	Caroling in the Park



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**CALLING ALL VOLUNTEERS!**

Alcova Heights Civic Association sponsors a number of special events throughout the year. We are looking for volunteers to join (or chair) planning committees to make these events happen! If you are interested in becoming involved, email [editor@alcovaheights.com](mailto:editor@alcovaheights.com), or come to the February 15 meeting and let us know.

Neighborhood Day, Saturday May 12

National Night Out, Tuesday August 7

Halloween Parade, Saturday October 27 and

Caroling in the Park, December (TBD).

**HELP TUTOR A STUDENT — BE A BARCROFT BUDDY**

Barcroft Elementary School is looking for community volunteers to participate in the Barcroft Buddies program. Barcroft Buddies volunteer for one hour each week and work one-on-one with a 3rd, 4th or 5th grade student. The school can accommodate volunteers before, during or after school or on Saturday mornings. The school provides an individualized packet of reading materials, training, and supervision, and matches volunteers with a student. While the focus of the program is on reading, the hour sessions allow time for assisting with homework or writing. No specialized skills are needed and volunteers speaking English or Spanish are welcome.



If you are interested in volunteering, please call Barcroft's principal, Miriam Hughey-Guy at (703) 228-5838 or Suzanne Day at (703) 271-9383.

**FOOD PANTRY AT THE BAPTIST CHURCH**

The food pantry at the Arlington Baptist Church has reopened. The pantry is in need of cereal (hot and cold), powdered milk, canned fruits, and vegetables. PLEASE NO GOURMET FOODS!

Food can be dropped off at the church on Tues., Wed., and Thurs. from 9 am to 2 pm, or brought to the civic association meeting on February 15th.

**COLUMBIA PIKE REVITALIZATION ORGANIZATION (CPRO) CELEBRATION**

CPRO is celebrating 20 years of community building this February 27. Come join neighbors, enjoy live music and a buffet. Admission is free!

**When: Tuesday, February 27, 5-7 pm**

**Where: Arlington Cinema & Drafthouse**

Mark your calendars. If you have questions, contact CPRO at 703-892-2776, or via email at [cpro1@verizon.net](mailto:cpro1@verizon.net).

**ARLINGTON'S GREEN LIVING CHALLENGE**

Arlingtonians for a Clean Environment (ACE) is sponsoring a Green Living Challenge! ACE's website has a list of 16 actions individuals and families can take to protect our environment. <http://www.arlingtonenvironment.org/greenchallenge/index.htm>. In addition, individuals can win prizes by registering to participate in the challenge, and civic associations with the greatest number of points for new actions taken by their residents in 2007 can also win prizes. Jan Kennemer is spearheading a neighborhood committee to promote the challenge in our neighborhood. If you would like to help, contact her via email at [JKennemer@aol.com](mailto:JKennemer@aol.com).

**FREE TREE GIVEAWAY FOR NEIGHBORHOOD DAY**

In conjunction with Neighborhood Day, Arlington County will again be giving away free trees this year. Many of us have benefited in the past from this free investment in our garden, our neighborhood, our community, and its air quality. It's sign-up time again for reserving trees.



The deadline for our neighborhood's request is Friday, April 6. Trees will be saplings ready for planting. The types of trees available will be announced soon. Look for announcements in this newsletter or on the Alcova Heights listserve indicating what types of trees are available.

If you would like to reserve a tree now, contact Karla Hagan at [hepcats@comcast.net](mailto:hepcats@comcast.net) or 703-979-1959 and indicate the number of trees you are requesting and the address where the trees will be planted. The trees will be delivered by May 9.



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## MILESTONES:

### WHAT'S GOING ON AROUND ALCOVA HEIGHTS

Congratulations to Darcie and Erik Saar of 9th Road, whose son Griffin was born on December 19. Griffin was 8 lbs, 7 oz, and 21 in. tall. Welcome to the neighborhood, Griffin!

Any news to report? Call or email Lisa Cherkasky at 703-731-6575, or spudnut59@comcast.net.

## RECIPE CORNER

By Margaret Rogers

Lowfat Raspberry "Trifle" | Serves 6

It is best to prepare trifle at least 6 hours before serving so that the ladyfingers have time to soften. I like to make it in the morning for an after-dinner dessert.

Ingredients:

- 3 cups plain fat-free yogurt
- 1 cup part-skim ricotta cheese

- 12 oz unsweetened frozen raspberries
- 20 ladyfingers cookies (packaged or home-made)

Mix yogurt and ricotta cheese together in a medium bowl, set aside. Place ten ladyfingers in the bottom of a 9x9 inch glass pan. Place about half of the frozen raspberries on top of the ladyfingers. The berries should be plentiful, but should not completely cover the ladyfingers. Next, spoon half of the yogurt mixture over the berries, covering berries and ladyfingers completely (about 1/4 - 1/2 inch deep). Place a second layer of ladyfingers over the yogurt. Cover the ladyfingers with most of the remaining raspberries, but keep a handful to use as garnish. Spoon the rest of the yogurt mixture over the berries. Sprinkle the trifle with the reserved frozen berries. Cover the pan and refrigerate the trifle for several hours, until ready to serve. The trifle is best if eaten within 24 hours.





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## *Lenten Devotions*

A time of Lenten devotions will begin on Ash Wednesday, February 21st at 11:30 AM and will continue each Wednesday through April 4th in Holy Week. These times of devotional thoughts will lead us on the journey toward Easter. A light lunch will be served at 12:00 Noon.

A different Lenten study will be shared at the 7:00 PM Wednesday Prayer and Bible Study time each week. Plan to join us for one or the other or both.

These six weeks before Easter can be spiritually rewarding for us as individuals, as a neighborhood and a church.





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## 2006 Sales Statistics for Alcova Heights

Data includes homes sold in 2006 from 1/1/06 - 12/31/06 by all real estate companies.

Compiled from Metropolitan Regional Information Systems, Inc. Information is believed to be accurate but not guaranteed.

Status Group	# Listings		Avg. List Price			Avg. Sales Price			Avg Days on Market		
Sold	17		\$616,459			\$614,076			25		
Address	List Price	Sold Price	BR	FB	HB	Lot SF	Yr Built	DOMP	Contract Date	Settle Date	Subsidy
3831 6TH ST S	\$550,000	\$561,000	3	2		10890	1939	65	1/18/2006	2/21/2006	\$13,020
3712 7TH ST S	\$515,000	\$515,000	3	1		8276	1928	4	1/23/2006	2/27/2006	\$0
3901 6TH ST S	\$572,000	\$572,000	2	2		10890	1940	0	1/25/2006	3/7/2006	\$0
3708 5TH ST S	\$799,000	\$799,000	4	3	1	6534	1998	5	1/29/2006	2/21/2006	\$0
3704 5TH ST S	\$799,900	\$799,900	5	3	1	7841	1998	4	2/11/2006	3/10/2006	\$1,479
977 RANDOLPH ST	\$689,000	\$689,000	3	2	1	1331	2006	0	2/15/2006	12/22/2006	\$15,000
3611 6TH ST S	\$629,000	\$629,000	3	2		8712	1938	5	2/26/2006	3/30/2006	\$0
3924 8TH ST S	\$599,000	\$575,000	3	2	0	6558	1939	97	3/16/2006	4/11/2006	\$25,000
842 MONROE ST S	\$445,000	\$445,000	2	1	1	4792	1939	2	3/19/2006	3/31/2006	\$0
3913 8TH ST S	\$899,900	\$899,900	4	2	1	8256	1995	7	3/29/2006	5/19/2006	\$5,000
844 LINCOLN ST S	\$626,000	\$626,000	4	2	1	6098	1978	54	4/28/2006	5/15/2006	\$18,780
3901 7TH ST S	\$640,000	\$622,500	3	1	1	8246	1941	0	6/21/2006	6/21/2006	\$0
3830 7TH ST S	\$615,000	\$610,000	3	2	0	8256	1939	39	6/24/2006	8/3/2006	\$10,000
3904 9TH ST S	\$598,000	\$597,000	3	3	0	10947	1939	22	6/26/2006	7/28/2006	\$0
3829 7TH ST S	\$579,000	\$570,000	3	2	0	8246	1949	61	7/24/2006	8/31/2006	\$10,000
842 MONROE ST	\$499,000	\$499,000	3	1	1	5000	1939	33	10/6/2006	11/15/2006	\$0
4037 8TH ST S	\$425,000	\$430,000	2	1	0	5239	1939	28	11/12/2006	11/22/2006	\$39,000

Alcova Heights sales numbers in 2006 totaled 17 units sold compared to 22 units in 2005. The average sold price was \$614,076 compared to the average 2005 sale price of \$673,258. Most of the properties had price reductions from their original list price, and many were re-listed in the MLS system. The final list price, not the original list price, is what is used in these calculations. Average days on the market in 2006 were 25 in 2006 (down from the 60 day average in 22204 because of a few private sales)

**Recently in Northern Virginia** we have seen an increase in buying activity with the declining unsold inventories. From the 2nd quarter of 2006 through the 4th quarter of 2006 there is evidence of 10% to 20% asking-price reductions seen. Price cuts in the housing prices have stimulated buyers who had been sitting on the sidelines wondering when the market might bottom out to move back in and start shopping. The Washington DC area economy remains solid, with strong employment and significant in-migration.

As inventory continues to decline, the selection of homes will once again become limited. **For prospective buyers, there may never be a better time to buy a home than right now.** Research indicates that home prices will not go any lower. While certain local markets across the country may see limited price declines, the national and local DC area picture remains bright.

**From a historic perspective**, there was an average of 7% growth in area house prices in the last 30 years. From 1997 to 2005 there was a 138% growth in area house prices, which was an abnormal trend. Many industry experts are using the term "normalization", meaning that the housing market is returning to its long-term trend line. What we've experienced over the last several years has been extraordinary in terms of record low rates, record high appreciation, and liberal mortgage underwriting guidelines. The correction process began during the summer of 2005. Current conditions are looking favorable for a balanced real estate market as long as interest rates remain attractive and affordability is there for buyers. Affordable housing has been a problem for many who want to buy, and that will remain a critical issue.

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