

# ALCOVA HEIGHTS

The Newsletter of the Alcova Heights Neighborhood, Arlington, Virginia    [alcovaheights.com](http://alcovaheights.com)    January 2018

## Construction in the 'Hood

### Streetlight Demonstration



Cobra-style pole installed on 7th Street between Glebe Road and Quincy Street. See Lander's column, this page, for more information.

### Gilliam Place



Construction is proceeding at a steady pace on APAH's Gilliam Place on Columbia Pike. It will provide affordable homes for lower income individuals and families.

## President's Update

by Lander Allin, AHCA President

We had a very well-attended Association meeting on January 11th. Most of the evening was spent getting an update from County staff on the State Department's National Foreign Affairs Training Center. They explained their plans to get the GSA (NFATC's landlord) to renew the existing agreement allowing the West Parcel, the area on the other side of George Mason in Barcroft, to continue to be used as a park. Having a long-term agreement will allow the County to invest in upgrading the facilities there. We also discussed GSA's plans to move the security fence around NFATC's child care center. Their proposed fence will cut through the sledding hill. We've known this for some time, and have not been able to convince GSA to move the new fence. At the meeting, we again asked the County to help us save the hill.

Most of the evening's discussion revolved around the easement that the County is pursuing so that it could build a trail at some point in time to connect 3rd Street with 6th Street at Oakland Street (the county's alternative proposal to the moribund earlier proposal to build a trail between Quincy and 3rd St). After a lengthy Q&A session with County staff and a discussion period after they left, a motion was made that Alcova Heights Civic Association oppose the County obtaining an easement on the NFATC land that would allow a path to be built:

*MOTION: To express the views of the Alcova Heights Citizens' Association that we are opposed to any property easements or eminent domain to establish a path or road connecting 3th and 6th Streets via private or federal property.*

The motion passed with 31 in favor and 16 opposed. I followed up with a letter to the County Board informing them of our decision.

We've had a couple of changes to the Association Board and so had an election for the empty seat. Sara Uzel stepped down from the Board several weeks ago. As per our by-laws, the Board filled the vacancy by appointing Marco DeLucca to serve out the balance of the term for that position. Marco had been serving on the Board, but his term expired back in November. To fill his former seat (which had remained empty), we held an election at the Association meeting and elected Heidi Ross. Congrats to Heidi and thanks to Danielle Arigoni for also volunteering to run for the position. Lastly, I'd like to thank Sara Uzel for her years of service to the Association. She will be missed on the Board.

We also agreed at the meeting to set up a committee to update our by-laws which need a complete overhaul. We've had a number of people volunteer to serve. The committee will probably begin its work some time in February.

*cont'd. on page 2*

In other news, the County is about to conduct a streetlight demonstration project that will involve several streets in the neighborhood. They have installed some temporary light poles on 7th and 8th Streets with new Cobra-style lights. On 6th and 9th Streets, the lights in the existing poles will be temporarily replaced with different bulbs. The demonstration will begin in February and last for 2-3 months. The residents of these streets should have received a letter from the County about the demonstration project and a copy is on our Alcova Heights website. For more information on the County streetlight program, please go to <https://projects.arlingtonva.us/projects/streetlights-management-plan/>.

Lastly, we expect that we will be working with the County this year on proposed improvements to Alcova Heights Park. I don't have any additional information at this time other than we expect to put together a committee to work on the effort. If you're interested in serving on that committee, please let me know. That's it for now. Enjoy this beautiful winter weather - spring is only a few months away!



Alcova Heights sign decorated by Mitzi Williams for the holidays.

# KIDS FOR HIRE

**B - babysitting**  
**B-RC - babysitting/Red Cross certified**  
**D - dog walking**  
**H - house sitting**  
**L - lawn mowing**  
**M - Mother's helper**

**Sofia Abela** (B-RC, T, W) 703-317-7630

**Andrew Burd** (L, R, S, T) 571-289-6347

**Quin DuBois** (B, P, D, O, T, W) 703-965-9093

**Charlotte Evans** (B-RC, MH)

**Lily Hoffman** (B, M, P, D) 571-999-3583

**Natalie Manlove** (B-RC, M, D, P, W) 703-862-3867

**Sean Manlove** (B-4 yr+, P, D, L) 571-839-8238

**Lilly Neubauer** (B, P, M, D)

**Maggie Neubauer** (B, P, M, D)

These Alcova Heights youth are available for babysitting, pet sitting and other services. Want your name added to the list? Please e-mail additions or revisions to the editor at [mrhode@gmail.com](mailto:mrhode@gmail.com).

**O - odd jobs**  
**P - pet sitting**  
**R - leaf raking**  
**S - snow shoveling**  
**T - putting out trash bins**  
**W - plant watering**

[susilill@gmail.com](mailto:susilill@gmail.com)

[jrburd@verizon.net](mailto:jrburd@verizon.net)

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[sean.m.manlove@gmail.com](mailto:sean.m.manlove@gmail.com)

[mneubs@gmail.com](mailto:mneubs@gmail.com)

[mneubs@gmail.com](mailto:mneubs@gmail.com)

## School News

by Maura McMahon

Elementary school boundary revisions will be coming up later this year to fill the more than 400 seats that will be vacated at Drew Elementary School (ES) with the Montessori program's move to the current Patrick Henry ES building, whose students will move into the new Alice Fleet West ES, next to Thomas Jefferson Middle School when it opens September 2019. New boundaries are supposed to fill the STEAM neighborhood program at Drew and relieve overcrowding at other surrounding elementary schools. Alcova Heights is adjacent to the current Patrick Henry (soon to be Alice Fleet West) boundary, so this is of direct interest to our neighborhood.

Community feedback on two proposed modified school year calendars for Barcroft's 2018-19 school year has been received. I do not know whether the calendar has been officially adopted, yet, but the option beginning August 6th with only one-week spring intersession break received the more positive responses.

New middle school boundaries were approved for 2019 when the new middle school at the current HB Woodlawn site opens. Thomas Jefferson Middle School will remain the neighborhood middle school for Alcova Heights.

The Career Center Working Group kicked off this month with a tour of the site and facilities. The first meeting took place at the Career Center on January 22nd. All meetings are open to the public. Neighborhood input is encouraged and needed -- now is the time to have your say in what you would like to see, or would not like to see, at the Career Center site.

APS is currently updating its strategic plan, vision and mission statements. People can comment at [Engage@apsva.us](mailto:Engage@apsva.us)

*(Adapted from his memorial service program)*

Pane Symoukda, of the 3500 block of 9th St, was known to family members, relatives and close friends as Kot. He was born on January 1, 1961, in Ban Houaha, a small farming village 17 kilometers east of the Vientiane capital of the former Kingdom of Laos. Kot was the eighth of ten siblings born to the late Mr. Thit Moune and Mrs. Douangpi. His parents were farmers who grew tobacco, sugarcane, tropical fruits and vegetables to support the family.

As the youngest son, he was the jewel of his parents and their devoted Buddhist family. Kot was ordained at nine years old as a Buddhist novice and spent two years learning teachings in the temple. After Kot was released from the monkhood, he completed his elementary education and attended Fa Ngoum High School. During this period, Kot’s education was interrupted by regime changes. In 1975 the Indo-China War had ended, and Laos fell under communist Pathet Lao control. Western education was prohibited, and only Marxist doctrine was taught.

Growing up in Laos in the shadow of the Cold War, Kot witnessed political unrest, several coup d’états, the Secret War (1962-1975) and the Vietnam War that dominated the region. The catastrophe of the Indo-China War marked the end of the 622-year reign of the Lao monarchies, and was one of the darkest chapters in the Lao history. That event was a turning point for Kot and the people living in Laos and abroad today.

In 1980, during the mass exodus, Kot was 17 years old; the unaccompanied minor decided to join the hundreds of thousands of Indo-Chinese refugees seeking freedom around the world. After spending three months in a Thai refugee camp, on January 15, 1980, he was resettled in Des Moines, Iowa by the International Rescue Committee (IRC). Kot spoke very little English, was provided \$35 as pocket money and shared an apartment with Lao friends. From then on, Kot was on his own and started his long destiny as an American immigrant like so many people who came before him. The sleepy Midwest town with big blue sky, surrounded by corn fields as far as the eye could see was not the USA that Kot had expected. A year later he decided to relocate to the Capitol of the nation, Washington D.C., to seek employment and a more active life.

In this new environment Kot survived, sharing a one-bedroom apartment with friends and holding various jobs. He started working in a bakery shop, then as a bellboy, and in hotels. After work, he attended English classes to improve communication. He longed for the opportunity to go to college, but survival was the priority.

Working in hotels gradually gave Kot the idea to pursue restaurant business. Due to his hard work and enthusiasm, his dream of being his own boss finally came true. On January 15, 1998, Kot opened Thai Noy Restaurant on Washington Boulevard in Arlington. His charisma and talent drew in many customers and VIPs who enjoy Thai and Lao foods in an atmosphere surrounded by paintings and Buddhist arts. For the past 19 years Thai Noy has made many headlines in food magazines, and most importantly the restaurant has become a well-known landmark in the Westover community today. The farm boy who started with only \$35 in his pocket had proved that America is the home of the brave and the land of the free with opportunity for all. He achieved the American Dream.

Growing up on a farm surrounded by nature gave Kot a green thumb and agriculture was always in his blood. During his free time, Kot carefully designed and decorated his front and back yards with plants, flowers, ceramic jars, stones, and koi ponds, which were Kot’s signature and showed his hidden spirit. Kot was physically an athlete who exercised religiously, ate healthy food, drank good wines with good company and felt his life was good.

Unexpectedly, in August 2017 he began to complain of stomach pain, could not eat well and lost weight drastically. He was immediately admitted to Arlington Hospital, where he was in and out over his last months. During this period, he was very alert, had good memories and was aware of his environment, but lost his vocal cords and had to whisper when he communicated. Kot was always surrounded by family members and many good friends who took turns caring for him. After fighting the illness for three months, Kot departed this life on the afternoon of November 18; he was 56 years old. Kot is survived by four sisters living in Laos, an older brother, his youngest sister, a nephew, a niece, a grand-nephew and cousins living in Falls Church, who have been helping run the restaurant.



## A Neighbor Profile: Walter & Paula Green

*Walter and Paula Green live on 6th St., near Oakland, and if you've trick-or-treated, you may have been lucky enough to get a look through Walter's telescope on Halloween night. Both of them have careers that have involved helping other people, so I asked them to do a joint interview around the holidays. Ella the cat, the newish third family member, remained mute but friendly.*

**Walter:** We moved to Alcovia Heights in April, 1997. Paula received a promotion with her company, CORT Business Services, which is headquartered in Chantilly, VA. It was a busy time and we were living in Chicago. We were married on March 15, 1997, went on our honeymoon to Florida, and moved into our house on April 14. And "we" moved into the house is exactly what happened: our furniture didn't arrive for three days.

By vocation, I'm a minister in the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) While in seminary, I became very interested in working with people with serious mental illnesses, and those who are homeless. I've worked with people who are homeless for over thirty years, first in Chicago, where I worked in a crisis response program for people with mental illness who were also homeless. I've worked on the streets both in Chicago and DC. I now work for Unity Health Care with a doctor and a medical assistant in a shelter-based clinic in Anacostia. Don't get me started about how expensive it is to NOT provide access to health care for everyone...!

Bicycling is one of my passions. I rode from Seattle to Dayton, Ohio a couple of years ago with one of Paula's broth-



ers -- we did 3003 miles in 45 days. I usually take at least one bike trip each year, usually for a week. I rode on the Atlantic Coast of Ireland in 2017; I've ridden in Provence, Vermont, across Pennsylvania (3 times) and across Maryland. From April to late October, I usually ride 20-25 miles after work, and longer rides on the weekends.

**Paula:** I am Vice President for Learning and Development at CORT and have been with the company for 37 years. I have held many positions within the company and moved seven times early in my career. I feel very fortunate that my last move was to the D.C. area where we found the great neighborhood we live in today. Currently, I am responsible for training across the U.S. and in the UK.

CORT is owned by Berkshire Hathaway (yes, I've met Warren Buffet), and we provide temporary furniture and services. And because of that, we do a lot of work on disasters. It has been a very busy last six months as we've assisted people and companies in the aftermath of Hurricane Harvey and Irma and the fires and mudslides in California. One of my most gratifying experiences at CORT was when I was part of a team that assisted the Pentagon in setting up over 1,000 new offices after 9/11 in six days.

I do ride a little (not like Walter), but my true passion outside of work is singing. I sing many different styles of music – I enjoy the American Songbook, musicals and jazz, and I am currently putting together a cabaret that I will perform later this spring.

**Walter & Paula:** We love our neighborhood, and consider ourselves fortunate that we count many neighbors as friends. We know most of the people on our street, and quite a few in the neighborhood. We also like that we have a fairly deep yard that allows for gardening, bird watching, and sighting of the occasional fox.

## A Neighbor Profile: Lauren Feliz-Durishin



*Lauren Feliz-Durishin recently moved to the neighborhood, and had an interesting sig line on her announcement of a fund-raiser she was conducting. We reached out in December to ask about her life.*

We moved to AH in mid-June of last year. We had found our "forever

home” at the beautiful property on the corner of S. Oakland and 9th St S. We moved from Douglas Park, so it was not a huge move for us. We love South Arlington and absolutely wanted to stay to watch it grow to become what it is and is becoming.

I was an Air Force brat who moved around every few years until my parents settled for the last time when I was in high school. I went to Woodson in Fairfax, whereas my husband is a staunch Arlingtonian. We have two kids, 9 and 4 years old, and they love our new neighborhood and the Barcroft Elementary school families.

I am the owner of my own company, Beauty by Word of Mouth ([www.beautybywom.com](http://www.beautybywom.com)) which is a styling and make-up consultant business. I am not affiliated with selling products, but instead help my clients tell the stories of who they are or who they want to be through the medium of make-up and fashion. I take them on shopping excursions - both for fashion as well as make-up supplies - then I teach them how to apply styles or make-up.

I also have recently founded another group-- it's a not-for-profit organization, Mother2Mother ([www.m2mcabaret.org](http://www.m2mcabaret.org)). Our mission is focused on supporting Washington, DC metropolitan area non-profit foundations which themselves focus on helping/supporting at-risk women and children in our nation's capital region. This fall, I produced/directed/performed in a cabaret fundraiser focused on supporting Bringing Resources to Aid Women's (BRAWS). We were able to raise nearly \$1,300 for our inaugural event. Our next event, supporting My Sister's Place DC ([www.mysistersplacedc.org](http://www.mysistersplacedc.org)), will be held 5 pm on March 10, 2018 at Jammin' Java in Vienna, VA.

## Christine Cottey

## *In Memoriam*

Christine Cottey, DVM, PC, wife of Tal, and mother to Peyton, died on December 14, 2017. Dr. Cottey had lived on 8th Street in Alcova Heights for the last 14 years. She was the veterinary director of the Animal Welfare League of Arlington (AWLA). Chris had survived more than 8 years after diagnosis of cancer and during that time continued to live fully - hiking Pike's Peak, running two marathons, and becoming an avid cook, all while caring for her family and career. Neighbors may have seen Chris running in the neighborhood or walking their dog, Rocky. Chris was a member of Alexandria Presbyterian Church and her memorial service was beyond capacity with those whose lives she touched in our neighborhood and in her family, at AWLA, and in her running and faith communities.

*Top: Dr. Cottey and Dr. Richard Ssuna from Malawi, Africa. Bottom: Dr. Cottey performing a spay surgery.*



As for hobbies, I am a local runner who participates with Moms Run This Town, the Arlington/Alexandria chapter.

Honestly, my favorite thing about AH is the people and the sidewalks! We love the ability to walk around our neighborhood-- at any time of day-- with my kids and our puppy without really fearing for ourselves being hit by on-coming vehicles. That was the one thing that we lamented most about some of the other neighborhoods; as bike/walker friendly Arlington is, the narrow streets don't always allow for safe travel. And the people! What more could we say, we feel at home with everyone.

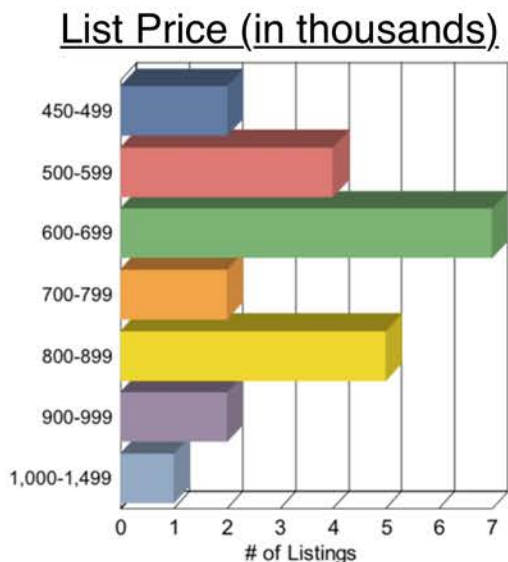
## Announcements & Milestones

**Lauren and Chandler Vogel** welcomed a son, **William James Vogel**, born on November 30, 2017 at 8 lbs, 12 ounces and **Devon** is a proud big sister. **Kristin, Andrew**, and big sis **Ivy** welcomed **John Davis ("JD") Ferriter** on November 13, 2017 and are happily adjusting to a family of four. **Antonio Abela** (12) and 3 of his schoolmates at Gunston Middle School won the top prizes at Arlington Arts' 2nd annual "How To" Video Festival. Their film "How to Make the Best Paper Airplane" won both the Best Video Prize and the People's Choice Award. <https://vimeo.com/240862979>. **Allison Sell** & family are moving from 7th St.

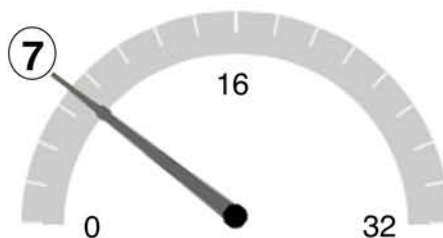


# ALCOVA HEIGHTS

## 2017 Year-End Housing Market Review



Median Days on Market



% of Sold Price to Original List Price

99.5

[AlcovaHeightsVA.com](http://AlcovaHeightsVA.com)

**21 SINGLE-FAMILY DETACHED HOMES SOLD IN 2017**

**Median Sales Price**

**\$695,000**

**7 Homes Sold Above List Price!**

Diane and Mitch are committed to making sure your house looks its absolute best when it goes on the market. Staging is an essential part of that. When you list with us, you get free staging services from StageMaster Homes, the company Diane founded in 2005. If you will be moving out before your house goes on the market, StageMaster Homes will provide furnishings to create a warm, inviting appearance. If you will be living in the home, Diane will advise on how to arrange your furnishings to achieve the best look in the all-important online photos and when potential buyers visit. Go to [StageMasterHomes.com](http://StageMasterHomes.com) to learn more, and call us when you are ready to move!



*With a combined total of 30 years experience, Mitch and Diane know how to sell houses. As residents of South Arlington, we are strong advocates for Alcova Heights and its surrounding neighborhoods. Whatever your real estate needs, we are here to help. If you are thinking of moving or just want to talk about your home's value, please give either one of us a call!*

**Diane Duston**

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