



# Arlington Ridge Civic Association

2604 South Grant Street, Arlington, Virginia 22202

Website: [www.arcaonline.org](http://www.arcaonline.org)

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**Happy New Year!**  
**Our resolution for 2010 is to continue building on the fabulous accomplishments of the past to make our neighborhood a safe, beautiful, and friendly place to live and work.**  
**Join us at the next ARCA meeting to help us achieve these goals.**

## Two Pedestrians Killed in Two Months

Pedestrian deaths on October 10 and November 28, 2009 leave us both saddened and concerned, and heighten our interest in improving pedestrian safety before the next generation of urban growth around us. Neighbor Marco Amoni was walking his dog across from Ft. Scott Park when an out-of-control vehicle crossed the sidewalk and hit him. On November 28, Larisa Taranova was killed when she reportedly stepped out in front of a car at the northeast corner of S. Fern and S. 18<sup>th</sup> Sts. We are staying in contact with Police to learn what we can about these tragic events.

In the past, unfortunate events have spurred changes. Our recent efforts with the County to improve traffic controls and pedestrian crossings on S. 23<sup>rd</sup> St. and on Ridge Rd. actually began in 2004 when a Crystal City resident was killed at Route 1 and S. 23<sup>rd</sup> St. returning home from church at night. The dangers of the 5 blind curves on Ridge Road were highlighted to the County Board with the story of the young boy run down on the sidewalk in front of his house on Easter a few years ago, as well as stories of many cars driving into yards along Ridge Road. In the past year, ARCA has worked with County Parks Forestry crews to remove plants that posed sight obstructions from the S. 26<sup>th</sup> St. medians at intersections of S. Fern, S. Grant and S. Hayes Sts. after a woman stepped in front of a car at S. Fern St.

In the more distant past, residents along S. 20<sup>th</sup> St. organized efforts to control traffic after a neighbor was killed in 1990 just blocks from his home; it still took about 10 years to get a stop sign at S. Joyce St. and parking changes to control traffic. Also a couple decades ago, ARCA got Arlington's only all-way pedestrian stoplight, at Ridge and S. 23<sup>rd</sup> Street, after a hit-and-run of a Gunston student. Until the 2007-2008 improvements along Ridge Rd., this was the only safe pedestrian crossing for over a mile. Several decades back the young son of a neighbor was killed when he lost control of his vehicle on Ft. Scott Dr. in the severe dip at S. June St. As a result, the County modified the dip to be less severe, though it remains a problem in the eyes of nearby parents.

## Adapting Our Streets to Continual Growth in Traffic

ARCA's primary focus the past several years has been improving pedestrian and resident safety via sidewalk construction and clearing, and improved traffic controls and intersection markings. This will continue in 2010, and improvements are already planned for S. Ridge Road, S. 23<sup>rd</sup> St. and S. Joyce St. using funds set aside from developers of Pentagon Row and Potomac Yards. The County's plan to approve additional density for Crystal City early in 2010 places new urgency on seeking improved pedestrian crossings, better traffic controls, and better intersection designs.

The traffic and safety issues ARCA and neighboring Aurora Highlands Civic Association (AHCA) are dealing with began with traffic and growth generated by the World War II construction of the Pentagon, the Shirley Highway, and National Airport. Following the war, 1962 zoning changes to permit the now ubiquitous high rises, offices and shopping around us made cut-through traffic, parking and safety serious problems.

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### **Next ARCA Meeting: January 21, 2010**

at Aurora Hills Community Center, 735 S. 18<sup>th</sup> Street, Arlington VA 22202

**Special Guest: Wayne Wentz, Arlington County Traffic Engineering & Operations Chief**

Agenda: Recognition of Former Officers, Maria Teresa Daycare, Pedestrian & Traffic Control (past, present & future).

## Adapting Our Streets to Continual Growth in Traffic *Continued from page 1*

The pending build-out of Pentagon City and Potomac Yards, combined with proposed increases in density for Crystal City, compel us to look closely at every neighborhood street and intersection and assess how they can be improved to handle traffic growth, while giving pedestrians and residents safe access.

The sheer volume of traffic is just one aspect of the negative effect on our quiet residential community. More dangerous, perhaps, is the aggressive driving and speeding of outsiders drawn to the offices, shopping, restaurants and bars around us. Outsider, cut-through traffic too often means careless drivers without the same regard for neighborhood tranquility and safety that residents have; they may also lack familiarity with our streets, which have many odd twists and turns, being built on a ridge.

Unfortunately, the County's formal Traffic Calming Program criteria for traffic problems does not address the minority of aggressive drivers that can make neighborhood streets unsafe; if one in seven drivers are speeding on neighborhood streets, Traffic Calming Program criteria declare that we have no problem warranting correction. This is not the conclusion of mothers of young children living on Ft. Scott Drive who were rebuffed for traffic calming recently. Fort Scott Drive, like Ridge Road, has blind curves and intersections, dips and hills that make aggressive drivers a particular threat. The Program also fails to address traffic on "arterials," which include Ridge Road and S. 23<sup>rd</sup> Street, though for us these are central, neighborhood streets.

### **Pedestrian & Traffic Control Improvements since the 1997 ARCA Survey**

Results of ARCA's 1997 Neighborhood Conservation Survey were summarized in the February 1998 newsletter stating "The clear winner for the number one neighborhood problem is traffic ...Cut-through commuter traffic... Speeding... High volume traffic... "Problem" intersections... Commuter/commercial parking... bicycle routes inadequate... Access to Metro... Bus service... Pedestrian travel." It is gratifying to look back at how many of the problems mentioned [and a few that weren't] have been addressed in the past 12 years. Specifically:

- Ridge Road speed limit reduction, new pedestrian crossings, radar speed indicators, and through-lane reductions have dramatically calmed traffic, and given pedestrians safer crossings. Earlier, parking was eliminated to permit a double yellow centerline stripe, making it illegal to pass.
- S. 23<sup>rd</sup> Street speed limit reductions, new stoplight at Fern, and pending improvements should make

this safer for the wide variety of community uses along this key neighborhood street. A sidewalk was added between Ridge and Nash Streets – a route to Oakridge Elementary.

- S. 20<sup>th</sup> Street now has 4-way stops at Joyce and at Hayes, sidewalks on both sides for most of its length, giving local traffic and pedestrians more safety, and reducing the long unbroken invitations to speed that 20<sup>th</sup>, Hayes and Joyce Sts. formerly presented.
- Army-Navy Drive now has sidewalks, curbing and landscaping for pedestrians due to an 11-year campaign by Neale Smith and Dick Herbst, using the Neighborhood Conservation program. Proper bus stops, curbing and landscaping were added on the west side as a result of several years' persistent lobbying by neighbors Natasha Pinol and Bill White, who capitalized on the County's heightened attention to bus transit.
- Joyce Street now has a sidewalk and curbing. Pending changes for 2010 will add a crosswalk and neighborhood entrance at 16<sup>th</sup> Street, and stop lines at stop signs.
- I395 exit onto Ridge Road has a reduced speed limit [to 25 mph], with improved signs and markings. We have met again with VDOT engineers and legislators and hope to get clearer signage in an attempt to slow drivers entering this wholly residential area.
- Arlington Ridge/S. Glebe/ S. 28<sup>th</sup> St. improvements include eliminating a barrier median on S. Glebe, allowing only one lane of traffic northbound on Ridge, and better crosswalk markings at S. 28<sup>th</sup>.
- Arlington Ridge/S. 23<sup>rd</sup>/Oakcrest intersection has received an improved traffic signal, temporary rubber curbing to control traffic, and elimination of two lanes through with inadequate merge. Aggressive driving has been reduced. More changes are sought in 2010 to give proper pedestrian space at this key school crossing, on the southwest corner.
- Stop signs have been added at many problem intersections, including Grant and Ft. Scott, and Grant and S. 31<sup>st</sup>, in addition to stops noted previously.
- Pedestrian access to Metro has been improved via several improvements: the Joyce St. sidewalk addition, clearing and improvement of the stairs and path behind Hume School by ARCA's volunteer group and County grants to the Arlington Historical Society and ARCA, the Sidewalks added to S. 20<sup>th</sup> Street. Additionally, ARCA appealed to the County Manager to clear

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## Adapting Our Streets to Continual Growth in Traffic *Continued from page 2*

overgrowth from S. Hayes and S. Grant St. sidewalks from 23<sup>rd</sup> St. north.

- Other sidewalks obstructed by vegetation have been cleared in many places through a cooperative effort begun by ARCA and AHCA in 2002. Improvements include: S. 23<sup>rd</sup> St. from Ft. Scott east to S. Joyce; S. Glebe from S. Fern west to S. Ridge; S. Ridge Road downhill to Gunston and around S. 20<sup>th</sup> Street and by Hume School; S. 31<sup>st</sup> St. Additionally, Kathie Laird had some utility box obstructions moved during our Ridge Road campaign.
- Finally, AHCA's Bruce Cameron has worked diligently with the County's Missing Links Program to obtain many new sidewalk sections in the old Addison Heights section of AHCA/ARCA and on Ft. Scott Drive leading to Eads St. Park.

### Major Pedestrian/Traffic Accomplishments In Past Decades.

ARCA has long benefitted from committed activists who valued and defended our neighborhood's inherent assets. Leading activists still in our neighborhood, who led in the campaigns below, include: John & Joan Quinn [I-595, Pentagon City]; Dick & Deborah Herbst [I-595, Pentagon City]; Derk & Nancy Swain [I-595, S. 23<sup>rd</sup> St., Pentagon City]; Mike Hall [Ridge Rd., S. 23<sup>rd</sup> St.]; Carol Rademacher [Ridge Rd.] We have certainly overlooked others who deserve recognition, and will expand our histories over time on ARCA's website ([www.arcaonline.org](http://www.arcaonline.org)).

### Landmark U.S. Supreme Court Decision allowed Zoned Parking

Between 1968 to 1977 AHCA and ARCA fought to stop Crystal City commuters from flooding our streets. Neighbors worked with the County for over 9 years and waged multiple court battles against Crystal City commuters who wanted free parking on our neighborhood streets. They challenged County attempts to impose Zone parking restrictions, and were successful until the County appealed to the U.S. Supreme Court. Now, communities nationwide can preserve neighborhood tranquility of their streets based on Arlington County efforts on behalf of our neighborhood -- Zone 1.

Unfortunately, a few years ago the County decided that the costs of enforcing this should be funded by a "user fee" for parking sticker, which had been free to residents of neighborhoods threatened by re-zoned, high density areas. ARCA argued against this

questionable logic at a public meeting and to television press.

Nevertheless, the County removed the enforcement costs from our property taxes, which residents could formerly deduct on Federal taxes, and imposed nondeductible "user fees" for a sticker to park on our own streets – while Arlington residents who are not adjacent to dense areas and Metro stations do not pay to park on their streets.

### Defeat of proposed elevated highway I-595 in the 1970s

I-595 was a proposed elevated highway from the 14<sup>th</sup> St. Bridge to the Airport ramp. Defeating this proposal also resulted in stopping a proposed 16<sup>th</sup> St. interstate connector to I-395 that would have eliminated the Hume School/Arlington Historical Society Museum and the quiet neighborhood street that is our current 16<sup>th</sup> Street. The I-595 proposal activated the neighborhood to hire a law firm to bring suit against this Virginia state proposal, acting through a nonprofit entity the neighborhood had already formed to oppose, through suits, the original designs for Pentagon City development. The entity was renamed from Pentagon City Coordination Committee, to Center for Urban Education (CUE), to address the broader threats to the neighborhood. The costs incurred by CUE to bring these suits amounted to hundreds of thousands of dollars – eventually paid by running Bingo games at Gunston School for several years. The I-595 fight and Pentagon City rezoning fights are summarized in *Arlington County Virginia – A Modern History*, by Sherman Pratt, 1997.

### South Ridge Road: Reduction from 4 to 2 lanes & installation of sidewalks in the 1980s

Responding to community concerns and activism over many accidents, inadequate lane widths, and lack of safe pedestrian accommodations on this walk-to-school route, neighbors organized and petitioned for improvements. Perhaps also influenced by our past activism over potential traffic from I-595 and Pentagon City, the County formed a Committee to address "traffic flow, air, and noise pollution in the area south of I-395." The result was to reduce Ridge Rd. to 2 lanes, allowing construction of sidewalks of standard 4-foot width on both sides, with grass utility strips to buffer pedestrians from traffic.

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## Adapting Our Streets to Continual Growth in Traffic *Continued from page 5*

### S. 23<sup>rd</sup> Street Improvements in 1980s

These improvements were addressed by the same task force mentioned above, though a different but overlapping group of neighborhood activists were involved. Missing sidewalk was added on the south side from Ft. Scott to S. Joyce. Nubs were added at intersections to improve sight lines from cross streets, to improve pedestrian safety, and to narrow the road to promote driver caution.

### Future Vigilance and Effort – 2010 and Beyond

For 2010, the County Board announced at its Jan. 1 meeting three planning efforts with potential impact on our neighborhood tranquility and pedestrian/traffic safety. First, the Board intends to approve a new Vision Plan for Crystal City in April that would allow increased density, including buildings 330 feet in height (see article below). We addressed this planning in multiple meetings and newsletters last year, and two ARCA residents – Ted Saks and Neil Sigmon – have participated in the planning for 3 years.

## Crystal City Redevelopment: Land Use and Re-Zoning (Up-Zoning) Primer

*By Nancy Swain*

Recently Arlington County proposed to have a "Coordinated Development District" for Crystal City (CC). This would be, in effect, the GLUP for the CC area. Apparently the County is in the process of figuring out whether or not the coordinated district would have special rules. Some rules might be laid out in the GLUP and the County might develop a new zoning district to go with the GLUP. How this process will fit with the CC Concept Plan, discussed in other newsletters, will be considered by the County.

Projects in CC could be developed as a Phased Development Site Plan (PDSP). Generally this idea means that what will ultimately be built in the parcels will be known before the actual zoning takes place. At a May 2009 presentation at ARCA, a County staff member said, in effect, there are no assurances that anything would be rebuilt as called for in the Concept Plan. The PDSP gives no guarantees that revisions won't be made as development takes place. Zoning generally goes along with the PDSP.

Finally, another part of the process after the PDSP is the individual site plan on a parcel which gives further details of the proposed development. So generally planning for redevelopment goes through many

Second, the draft Streets Segment of the Master Transportation Plan is to be approved by the Board – probably in the fall. ARCA has commented on prior drafts and will continue to critique certain policies and statements in the draft that we find troubling. Citizens are urged to review the draft on the County website – particularly as it specifically expressly singles out 10 neighborhood streets in "Appendix B: Arterial Corridor Plans" – S. Arlington Ridge Rd./S. Lynn St.; Army-Navy Drive; Glebe Rd.; S. Hayes/S. Joyce; Rt. 1/S. Eads/Crystal Drive; and S. 15<sup>th</sup>/S. 18<sup>th</sup> Sts. In addition, it addresses many arterials that you may use regularly in other parts of Arlington.

Finally, the Board announced an AD Hoc Working Group to find new, low-cost strategies to slow traffic on neighborhood streets, given the current budget restrictions. ARCA adopted such strategies in 2006 for our Ridge Rd./S. 23<sup>rd</sup> St campaign, after being rebuffed in a request for Capital Improvement Funds at the January 2006 Board Meeting. We will request a seat on this Task Force to leverage our experience and learn from others.

stages, each offering refinements and revisions. Revisions frequently can result in an increase in density, and sometimes the density increase can provide certain amenities.

REMEMBER: Some of the biggest impacts on the 22202 community appear to be 300'-330' (approximately 30 stories) buildings on the CC side of 23rd Street (try picturing 30 story buildings in front of you as you drive down 23rd Street, and these buildings will be 500+ feet from single family homes); changes in zoning to allow the current transition area on Fern Street from 18th to 23<sup>rd</sup> Streets to have significantly increased density; and changes to 23rd Street between Eads and Fern Streets to allow significant density increases. These changes can have the potential to destabilize our community.

Density is important because it impacts us with traffic, air and noise pollution, pedestrian safety, massive structures...our quality of life. So, to quote Dick Herbst, "A significant increase in density is being requested." We need to keep monitoring the situation. The impacts on our community are important.

## Schools News

Kindergarten Information Night - 25 Jan., 7 p.m., at Washington & Lee H.S. General information session followed by time to talk with principals and representatives from all APS elementary schools.

Summer Activities Fair (Arlington County) - Fri, Feb. 29 from 6-8 p.m. at the Thomas Jefferson Community Center, 3501 2nd Street, South.

Pyramid Orchestra & Band Festival - 20 Feb., at Wakefield High School Auditorium. Band and Orchestra students from Wakefield H.S. and its feeder schools (most South Arlington elementary & middle schools) rehearse and perform. Everyone is welcome to attend the performances.

### Oakridge Elementary

Tutors Needed. Oakridge continues to need volunteer tutors for our after-school program. Tutors work from 3:30-4:45 Tuesday &/or Thursdays with one student (grade 3, 4, or 5) on math and reading skills. Materials and ideas are provided for tutors and close collaboration with the child's teacher helps tutors know which skills to practice. These may include reading together, reviewing addition, subtraction and multiplication facts, reviewing vocabulary, etc. If you are interested in being a tutor in a positive and supportive environment to make a big difference for a child, call us! Contact Ms. Kelle Singleton at 703.228.5840 or Assistant Principal, Dr. Lynne Wright at 703.228.5842. We'd love to have you!

Volunteers Needed. Oakridge also enjoys working with volunteers who are able to help during the day for 'regular' hours, such as two or three days per week for 1-2 hours each time. Volunteers read with students, help in the office, work in the library, etc. Please contact Dr. Lolli Haws, Principal, if you are interested in volunteering during school hours, 9-3.

### Gunston Middle School

Gunston is seeking judges for our science fair. The science fair is Wednesday, 27 Jan., approximately 2:15 - 4 p.m. Judges meet with students, ask questions and review the project. No prior judging experience is necessary, and evaluation materials are provided. Contact: Mary Callow at 703-228-6906 or mconklin@arlington.k12.va.us

Spring Play "Wiley and the Hairyman" - 26 Feb., 7p.m. & 27 Feb., 2 p.m. - This Joseph Jefferson Award winner for outstanding children's play is especially appropriate for elementary-aged audiences. Wiley's adventures are presented in lyric poetry and mime. Tickets available at the door.

Celebrate Gunston - Friday, 19 March, 6-8 p.m. Gunston's annual community open house. All are welcome!

Reading Mentors Needed: Gunston needs volunteers to work one-on-one with students. Students read out loud to an adult volunteer for 20 minutes. This is a very flexible program; we can place volunteers for 40 minutes to 2 hours any day between 8:15am-1:30pm. Contact Mary Callow at 703-228-6906 or mconklin@arlington.k12.va.us

### Wakefield High School

Three Wakefield seniors are the recipients of the prestigious Posse Scholarships for 2010. The Posse Foundation is a college access and youth leadership program that recruits, identifies and trains extraordinary leaders from urban schools and sends them in multicultural teams (posses) to some of the top colleges in the country. Posse Scholarship winners receive a four year, full-tuition scholarship worth more than \$140,000. This year, 62 students were selected from 1,500 nominees. Wakefield Posse Scholarship winners are: Mekdes Kebede (Grinnell College), Jeremy Letournel (University of Wisconsin-Madison), Laura Razzuri (Bucknell University). Congratulations!

### **Keep Sidewalks Clear of Trash and Recycling Cans**

This continues to be a problem for some properties in our neighborhood. ARCA is one of very few Arlington neighborhoods with a good sidewalk infrastructure on both sides of most and we need to preserve the pedestrian access and safety sidewalks provide. Trash containers should be removed from curbside within 24 hours of collection, and stored where they are screened from view from the street, or behind the front of the residence. If you are going to be out of town, ask a neighbor to put your cans out and then return them to their stored location. Leaving them out for an extended period of time tells criminals you are away, in addition to violating County policy.

## \$1 Million to Landscape Sewage Plant

A million dollars are allocated to landscape the perimeter of the renovated sewage treatment plant along Glebe Rd., S. Eads, S. Fern, and S. 31<sup>st</sup> Streets. 30% of this goes to administering the changes by staff and the design contractor; the remaining \$700,000 goes for actual planting.

Interested neighbors had a first design meeting with County staff on January 7, 2010. A major goal was to screen some of the most visible Plant features from homes, streets and walks.

If you are interested in attending meetings of this Landscape Advisory Committee, contact Phil Loar at the Plant at: ploar@arlingtonva.us or 703-228-6867. The next citizen meeting is February 11, 2010.

## UPCOMING EVENTS

- ◆ January 27, 7pm – Police quarterly Meeting at Our Lady of Lourdes Catholic Church, 830 S. 23rd Street, Arlington VA 22202.
- ◆ February 1, 7-8 pm – Water Pollution Control Plan community liaison meeting
- ◆ February 3 to March 3, 6:30-8:30 pm – Money Talk: A Financial Course for Women by Virginia Cooperative Extension and Arlington Public Libraries. Every Wednesday at Central Library. Contact jabel@vt.edu or (703) 228-6417.
- ◆ Arlington County Budget Process:  
February 2010 – County Manager presents proposed budget to County Board  
March 2010 – Public Budget and Tax Rate Hearings  
April 2010 – Board Adopts Final FY2011 Budget

## ARCA MEETINGS

- ◆ January 21, 2010, 7pm – ARCA bimonthly meeting at Aurora Hills Community Center, 735 S. 18<sup>th</sup> Street, Arlington VA 22202
  - Opening Remarks
  - Recognition of Former Officers
  - Maria Teresa Daycare
  - Status Updates: Pedestrian and Traffic Control, Crystal City, Budget, etc.
  - Featured Guest: Wayne Wentz, Arlington County Traffic Engineering & Operations Chief
- ◆ March 18, 7pm – ARCA bimonthly meeting

**Check [www.arcaonline.org](http://www.arcaonline.org) for updated event details.**

For bulletins of neighborhood interest, request to join: <http://groups.yahoo.com/group/4D-A/>. The group is administered by Alice Andors of AHCA.

**Please email [ARCAnighbor@gmail.com](mailto:ARCAnighbor@gmail.com) with your phone no. and email address for ARCA's membership records. Your contact information will be used for official ARCA notifications only.**

## ARCA Officers and Points of Contacts

President	Chick Walter	703-519-9487
Vice-President	Jeff Orner	703-836-6647
Vice-President	Andrew Smith	703-486-4224
Secretary	Kit Whitely	703-739-9515
Treasurer	Chuck McFadden	703-553-8332
Asst treasurer	Renee Messalle	703-931-4842
Traffic Control	Andrea Walker	703-838-6244
Crystal City Dev.	Chris Mailander	703-929-6643
	Joan Quinn	703-892-5050
NC Plan	Sonali Soneji	703-867-6042
NCAC Rep	Michael Reamy	703-683-7499
ARCA History	Dick Herbst	703-892-5290
Membership	Patty Joyce	703-283-2522
Beautification	Bonnie Flynn	703-920-1157
	Chick Walter	703-519-9487
Schools	Kathie Laird	703-685-4371
Webmaster	Chris King	703-931-4842

### We would love to hear from you!

Please send comments and questions on the contents of this newsletter to the editor:

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