



# THE LYON PARK CITIZEN

## NEWSLETTER OF THE LYON PARK CITIZENS ASSOCIATION

February 2026

### President's Message

by Natalie Roy

We had a great turnout for LPCA's first meeting of 2026! Thank you for taking time out of your busy schedules to join us. The meeting featured an extremely informative presentation by Arlington's Commissioner of Revenue Kim Klingler and 4 of her staff, Susan Anderson, Deputy of Communications, Andrés Lazaris, Assistant Deputy Commissioner for the Business Tax Division, and Michelle Neves, Tax Assessor Supervisor. It was an impressive program and the feedback very positive. If you are interested in their PPT presentation, please shoot me an email. As a reminder, our monthly meetings are the 2nd Wednesday of every month, with the next one February 11th. These meetings, which all take place in our neighborhood's hub, the Lyon Park's Community Center, are where you can meet neighbors and take the pulse of what is happening in the community and the County. The next meeting is right before Valentine's Day, so expect a sweet meeting!

A major shout out to Peter Roof who set up the AV equipment and managed the tech for the entire program. You have brought a new level of professionalism to our meetings and we truly appreciate you. Thank you also to Michael Kunkler for the projector and to Paul Showalter for bringing his speaker. It takes a village.

We had a productive meeting with Arlington County Board Member Takis Karantonis on Friday, January 16th. We are truly appreciative of Karantonis reaching out and spending a considerable amount of time discussing key concerns. While we have disagreements about the Lyon Park Gateway tree removal, and the process, this was a prime opportunity to reset the relationship with the County Board and the Neighborhood. Topics we covered included:

- Improving communication between the community and the County Board and County Manager on this program and others;
- Exploring creating a Park/Green Space master plan for the Fillmore Street Triangle. Planting a tiny sapling in the Triangle, (after the County gets around to grinding the stump), and providing inadequate follow-up care is not acceptable; and
- Increasing and protecting our precious tree canopy in Lyon Park and the County.

For those of you who missed both recent meetings and want to get involved as we move forward, mark your calendars for February 11th, the next LPCA meeting, where we will also have a presentation by the Tyndale School (on Barton Street) which will include a discussion of their use permit. Much more info to come. If you are interested in being part of a LPCA tree committee to work on tree issues in Lyon Park, please ping me or anyone on the LPCA Executive Committee.

As I have said many times. This is a wonderfully involved community. We have much more planned this year, including a Lyon Park/Ashton Heights Home and Garden Tour and the launching of the Lyon Park Champion Awards, so get involved and join us!

### Upcoming Events

- |                          |  |
|--------------------------|--|
| <b>2/11</b>              | <b>LPCA Monthly Meeting</b><br>at the Community Center<br>7:00 p.m. Meeting Start;<br>8:30 p.m. Socializing                                |
| <b>2/13<br/>&amp; 14</b> | <b>Valentine's Day Cupcake Sale</b><br>at the Community Center<br>4:00 p.m. to 7:00 p.m. on Friday;<br>8:00 a.m. 'til sold out on Saturday |
| <b>2/19</b>              | <b>Lyon Park Woman's Club<br/>Potluck Lunch</b><br>at the Community Center<br>12:00 p.m.   |
| <b>3/3</b>               | <b>Lyon Park Blood Drive</b><br>at the Community Center<br>12:00 p.m. to 5:00 p.m.   |
| <b>3/8</b>               | <b>Lyon Park Citizen's 50th<br/>Birthday Celebration</b><br>at the Community Center<br>4:00 p.m. to 6:00 p.m.                              |
| <b>3/15</b>              | <b>Chili Cook-Off</b><br>at the Community Center<br>5:00 p.m. to 7:00 p.m.   |
| <b>3/24</b>              | <b>Musicians Celebrating<br/>Women Composers</b><br>at the Community Center<br>7:30 p.m.   |

Delivered free to over 1,900 residences!

Lyon Park Woman's Club Presents its Annual

# Valentine's Day Cupcake Sale

at the Lyon Park Community Center



Friday, February 13th  
4:00–7:00 p.m

Saturday, February 14th  
8:00 a.m.– whenever we  
sell out of cupcakes!



Arlington County Board Member Takis Karantonis  
with Lyon Park community members after their  
meeting on Friday, January 16th.



**The Pets of Lyon Park**

Interested in having your pet  
featured? Submit a photo and a  
brief write-up to [lyonparkeditor@  
gmail.com](mailto:lyonparkeditor@gmail.com) for the opportunity!

**PLEASE JOIN US AT THE LYON PARK**

## CHILI COOK-OFF

**SUNDAY  
MARCH 15TH  
FROM  
5–7 P.M.**



**AT THE  
LYON PARK  
COMMUNITY  
CENTER**

**Adults \$10 | Kids ages 3-10 just \$5 | Kids under 3 are free!**

**Contact [lpccgovernors@gmail.com](mailto:lpccgovernors@gmail.com) with any questions, to contribute, or volunteer!**

**Mailing Address:** LPCA, P.O. Box 100191,  
Arlington, VA 22210

## EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

### President

Natalie Roy: lyonparkpresident@gmail.com

### Vice-President/Development

Anne Bodine: annebodine@yahoo.com

### Vice-President/Neighborhood Conservation

Tabitha Ricketts: tabitharicketts@gmail.com

### Vice-President/Programs

Matt Whitaker: mwhitaker12@verizon.net

### Treasurer

Lynn Shotwell: lynnshotwell@gmail.com

### Secretary/Lyon Park Historian

Elizabeth Sheehy: elizabeth.r.sheehy@gmail.com

### Membership Chair

Rhodri Morgan: rhodri.morgan@gmail.com

### Sergeant at Arms

Annemarie Selvitelli: astanz10@hotmail.com

### Members at Large

Bess Zelle: besszelle@gmail.com

Spiro Roiniotos: spiridon@gmail.com

## OTHER CONTACTS

### Board of Governors (BoG):

lpccgovernors@gmail.com

### LPCA Representatives to the BoG:

Ann Pitts (Vice Chairman), Elizabeth Sheehy,  
Michael Kunkler, Steven Geiger, Bess Zelle

### Woman's Club Representatives to the BoG

Bill Anhut, David Newman (Chairman), Paul  
Showalter, Shelya White, Elizabeth Wray

### LPCA Representative to Doorways

Saiful Amin: saiful.amin@gmail.com

### Newsletter Editor

Elizabeth Sheehy: lyonparkeditor@gmail.com

### LPCC Rental Agent

Lori Cruz: LPCCRental@gmail.com

### Arlington Civic Federation Reps

Laureen Daly: Iddaly12@gmail.com

Saiful Amin: saiful.amin@gmail.com

Jess Thibodeau: JessThibodeau@gmail.com

Natalie Roy: natalieuroy@gmail.com

Alt. Rep: Niels Poulsen: Poulsen.N@gmail.com

### LPCA Representative to the Clarendon Alliance

Debbie Kaplan: debbiekaplandk@gmail.com

## TEEN SERVICES

Fill out the form on the Teen Services page to get listed here and on the website: [[www.lyonpark.org/explore/resources/teen-services](http://www.lyonpark.org/explore/resources/teen-services)]!

- **Ella Bomberger**, 18, Babysitter, Dog Walker, Mother's Helper, Plant Sitter. Red Cross Cert. Text: (571) 775-9205.
- **Zoe Bomberger**, 15, Babysitter, Dog Walker, Mother's Helper, Plant Sitter. Red Cross Cert. Text: (703) 298-3233.
- **Chiara Ciccone**, 12, Pet Sitter, Tutoring, Yard Work, Dog Walker. Text (202) 321-9964.
- **Ellie Earle**, 16, Violin/Viola Lessons or Help. Text (703) 314-5303, Email: elisabeth.caterina.earle@gmail.com.
- **Sloane Escobar**, 16, Babysitter, Dog Walker. Free most days after 3 p.m. Red Cross Cert. Text: (703) 870-1847, Email: sloane\_escobar@icloud.com.
- **Harper Fern**, 14, Babysitting, Dog walker, Plant Sitter, Pet Sitter, Odd Jobs. Text (703) 623-9082.
- **Lily Fine-Albert**, 15, Pet Sitting, Babysitter, Dog Walker, Odd Jobs, Plant Sitter. CPR & Red Cross Cert. Text: (703) 856-5108, Email: lalbertfine@icloud.com.
- **Zoe Fine-Albert**, 13, Pet Sitting, Babysitter, Mother's Helper, Plant Sitter. Red Cross Cert. Text: (240) 796-6962, Email: zalbertfine@icloud.com.
- **Kate Kiriakou**, 17, Babysitter, Odd Jobs, Pet Sitter, House Sitter. Red Cross Cert. Text: (703) 587-9277, Email: kiriakoufamily23@gmail.com.
- **Max Kiriakou**, 17, Shoveling, Yard Work, Lawn Mowing and Trimming and I have my own equipment! Text: (571) 244-8982.
- **Al Metwaly**, 13, Plant Sitting, Dog Walker, Pet Sitting, Mother's Helper. Call/Text: (703) 926-8555. Email: alaa2020met@gmail.com.
- **Emmy Milam**, 13, Babysitter, Dog Walker, Mother's Helper. Two years of experience. Red Cross Cert. Text: (646) 407-6459.
- **Jaquelin Nieser**, 16, Babysitter, Dog Walker, Pet Sitter. Have experience with exotic pets (lizard and hedgehog), Red Cross Cert. Call/Text: (571) 239-7408.
- **Kailee O'Meara**, 15, Babysitter, Pet Sitter, Mother's Helper. Text: (571) 536-8664.
- **Leo Pegoraro**, 14, Babysitter, Mother's Helper, Plant Sitter, Pet Sitter. Scout Certified. Text: (571) 220-6548.
- **Aidan Parks**, 14, Fitness Coach with Expertise in Football, Basketball, and Track. First Session is Free. (703) 582-8670.
- **Emma Pike**, 14, Babysitter, Mother's Helper, Plant Sitter. Red Cross Cert. Text: (571) 440-6189, Email: emmapike24@icloud.com.
- **Olivia Pike**, 16, Babysitter, Mother's Helper, Plant Sitter. Text: (703) 687-8222, Email: oliviaapikee@gmail.com.
- **Kai Rasmussen**, 16, Odd Jobs, Plant Sitter, Shoveling, Yard Work. Text: (571) 699-5579.
- **Rosalie Reilly**, 16, Dog Walker, Plant Sitter, Cat Sitter. Text: (703) 966-3598.
- **Athena Roiniotis**, 10, Pet Sitter, Tutoring, Yard Work, Dog Walker. Text: (202) 250-4206.
- **Ellsie Seward**, 17, Viola and Violin Help/Tutoring/Lessons. Text: (703) 473-5051.
- **Bella Sullivan**, 13, Babysitter, Mother's Helper. Text: (202) 486-5520, Email: irenasullivan11@gmail.com.
- **Lauren Thomas**, 18, Babysitter, Dog Walker, Mother's Helper, Plant Sitter. Red Cross Cert. Text: (571) 352-0605.
- **Morgan Thomas**, 15, Dog Walker, Plant Sitter, Pet Sitter. Text: (240) 810-4834.
- **Charlotte Walsh**, 16, Tutor up to 7th grade. Will help with Math, Science and English. (First Session Free.) Text: (571) 351-9452.
- **Josie Whitaker**, 16, Babysitter, Plant Sitter. Red Cross Cert. Text: (703) 717-1993.



Lyon Park residents and residence owners are eligible for membership in the LPCA. Memberships run from October 1st to September 30th of each year. Only members can vote at LPCA meetings. If you have any questions, please email [lyonparkpresident@gmail.com](mailto:lyonparkpresident@gmail.com)

**MEMBERSHIP DUES:** 1 YEAR: \$10 | 2 YEARS: \$20 | LIFETIME: \$250

Fill out the form on our website to join! [www.lyonpark.org/connect/join-lpca-volunteer](http://www.lyonpark.org/connect/join-lpca-volunteer)

**Order a Historical Lyon  
Park House Plaque by  
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- **Cost:**
  - \$275–\$286 for each 7"x5" Bronze Plaque, which includes shipping
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    - » Send application to:  
Lyon Park Community Center  
PO Box 100191  
Arlington, VA 22210
    - » *Any amount given above the \$275–\$286 cost will be considered a tax-deductible donation and will be placed in the Lyon Park History Fund*
- **Questions:**  
Contact [lyonparkhistory@gmail.com](mailto:lyonparkhistory@gmail.com)

LET'S MAKE YOUR HOME

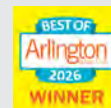
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## Why 2026 Design Trends Feel Right at Home in Lyon Park

By Deborah Sauri, co-owner of TriVistaUSA Design + Build

When walking around our neighborhood, you will notice something: our homes have great bones. With homes dating back to the early 20th century, there's a sense of history here, visible in the charming details, our tree-lined streets, and porches that actually get used, all of which make Lyon Park so special. My husband and I know this well. We've lived here for over 20 years, raised our two kids (and dog) here, and in 2005 the humble beginnings of our home remodeling business started in the basement of one of these homes. It's been an amazing place to build our lives, and that blend of history and community is reflected in the design trends we're seeing as we head into 2026.

One noticeable shift is color. The era of all-white is finally giving way to warmer tones! Gold and green, in particular, is having a moment as well as another trend we're having fun with is clients getting bold with wallpaper. For those of us who remember the '70s, wallpaper might bring back memories of avocado and mustard patterns. But the good news is: it's back, but in a completely different (and much more beautiful) way. Today's wallpapers are sophisticated, artistic, and often inspired by nature.



We're also moving towards softer shapes and curves. I am loving that our clients are choosing to keep their beautiful arched doorways that were popular in the 1940s, and selecting earthy natural materials like wood, stone, and woven textures. That connection to nature is also showing up in larger windows and thoughtfully designed outdoor spaces that become true extensions of the home. Our homeowners are mindful of preserving mature trees and adding native landscaping that help keep our neighborhood cooler during hot summers, reduce air pollution, and support healthier living. Fun fact, we once designed an entire house around saving an old beautiful tree!

With focus on natural materials, technology might feel out of place, especially in Lyon Park built long before Wi-Fi was even a concept. But today we're seeing smart home technology requested more. When planned early in a remodel, technology can be integrated with climate control, security systems and lighting to make homes more energy efficient, safer and responsive to our hectic lives.

And lastly, homeowners are thinking about the long view. We're seeing a rise in helping clients design homes that allow them to age in place, stay in the community they love, and plan for the day their home may be passed down to their children. These trends reflect what many of us value about Lyon Park: homes with history, spaces that bring ease and joy, and a neighborhood where people truly care. Having raised our family here and worked alongside so many of you over the years, it's a good reminder of why we're so lucky to live here.

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**William P. Milby CFP**

Founder & Chief Investment Officer  
[bill.milby@campuspw.com](mailto:bill.milby@campuspw.com)

**Jason Lindner CPFA**

Co-founder & Chief Operating Officer  
[jason.lindner@campuspw.com](mailto:jason.lindner@campuspw.com)

**Julia Madden**

Director of Client Services  
[julia.madden@campuspw.com](mailto:julia.madden@campuspw.com)

## Neighborhood Vibes: Kilwins

By Sophie Oberstein

There's a new sweet shop in town—just in time for Valentine's Day! Kilwins—offering chocolate, fudge, ice cream, and other confections—opened across the street from the Clarendon Metro Station in late December and has been tantalizing taste buds ever since.

It's so new, it doesn't yet have an awning (permits are pending), but step inside for a delightful sensory experience—from the smell of the waffle cones to the sight of the bright blue walls, pink tablecloths, and cases of delicacies. Cases are chock full of chocolates, fudge, candy apples, ice cream cakes, and more.

Wissam is the Assistant Manager. She will welcome you kindly (and recognize you, if, like my friend who joined me, you've been there before) and offer tastes of fudge and ice cream. The Kilwins® Tracks is amazing (creamy vanilla ice cream with chocolate covered peanut butter truffles and swirls of fudge)—and ice cream isn't usually my passion. The Dubai-Style chocolate fudge was being prepared on-the-spot when we arrived and is a specialty of the brand. The peanut butter fudge was tasty and the peppermint fudge tasted, my friend said, "like a melted candy cane."

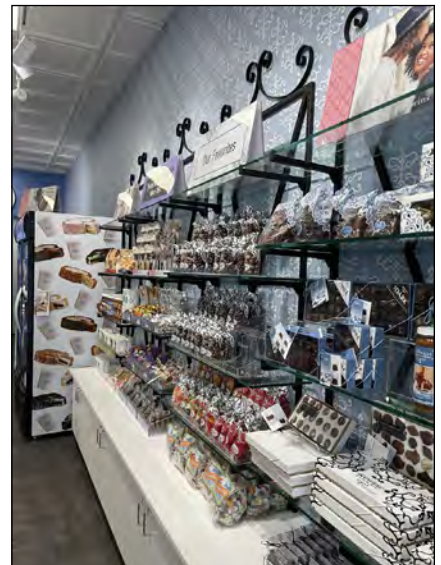
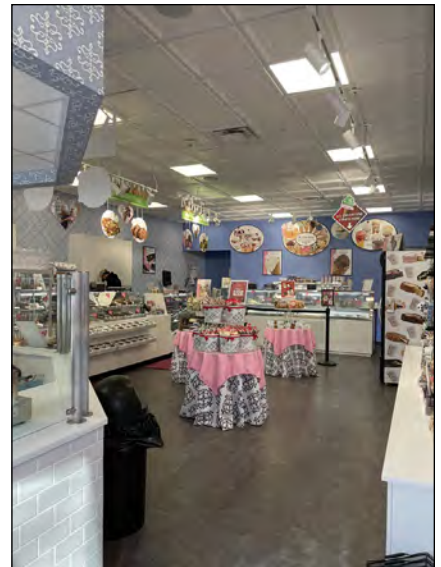
You may be familiar with the Kilwins brand already—there are over 200 franchise locations across the country (including 2 in DC and 6 others in VA, including Old Town Alexandria). Franchise owner, Omneya, says she chose Clarendon because it's "a great neighborhood. The people are so kind. And we have a wonderful, central place in an overall walkable area. It's awesome to be here."

Started in 1947 in Petoskey, Michigan with a promise to "make the best possible chocolate fudge & ice cream," each store still follows the original recipes. The Core purpose at Kilwins is "to create enjoyment and make people happy."

A grand opening is scheduled for Sunday, March 8th at 11:00 a.m. Signage will go up soon, and there will be some outdoor seating. But don't wait for these exterior additions. Get your taste of "Sweet in every sense since 1947" the next time you're walking downtown. And, of course, the store has plenty of things cooking for Valentine's Day, right around the corner.

*Kilwins (313 Wilson Blvd): Hours of operation are 10 a.m. – 10 p.m. Sunday-Thursday and 10 a.m. – 11 p.m. Friday & Saturday. Visit the website: <https://www.kilwins.com/pages/stores-near-me-arlington-va-22201-0282> for more information.*

Have a local business you'd like to see featured in a future issue? Or, would you like to join Sophie for lunch at a local spot she'll be writing up (NOTE: each person pays their own way)? Contact [soberstein@gmail.com](mailto:soberstein@gmail.com).





WHAT'S NEW AT COLUMBIA GARDENS?

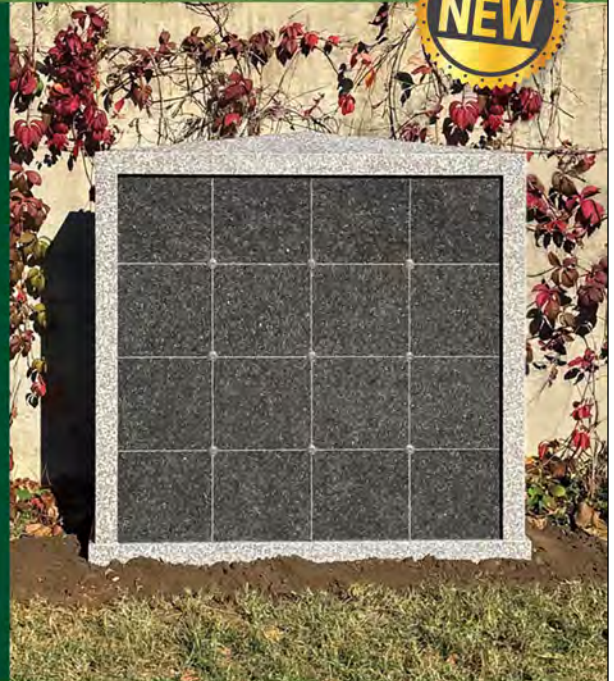
## A Brand-New Columbarium Has Arrived!

With more families choosing cremation, we're expanding to meet their needs. Our newest addition to the Cremation Garden is a beautifully crafted, 16-unit granite columbarium. It's a lovely enhancement to the garden's natural landscape and offers families a serene place of remembrance.

COLUMBIA  
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Check out some  
of our work in  
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(above) and 4th  
Street North  
(right)



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## What to Prune in February

By Lauren Daly

What do you call two flowers on a date?  
A budding romance!

If you're like me, you forget when to prune what. So here is a reminder that February/March is the right time for some plants and not others. The rule of thumb for shrubs and trees that flower in the Spring, before the end of June, is to prune them right after their blooms have finished. These include forsythia, azalea, Virginia sweetspire, quince and rhododendron. If you prune these in winter, you risk removing their flower buds for the Spring season.



Summer flowering plants bloom after the end of June. These shrubs and trees should be pruned in the Winter or early Spring before new growth starts. Our weather, which goes up to 50 degrees for a few days every month makes it harder to find plants' "dormant" period, but generally you want to prune the following in February/March before it warms up in Spring:

- Hybrid tea and shrub roses should be pruned to 12"–18," with cuts made just above a healthy bud at a slight angle. This encourages maximum growth and beautiful blooms.
- Liriope that has turned brown can be cut back to encourage fresh growth.
- Fig Trees can be pruned when dormant, if needed. I have to prune mine to keep it a reasonable size in my small yard and to keep the fruit within reach. Experts say remove branches that cross, space out the branches to allow light and air movement, remove suckers, and remember to cut back to a node or a branch (do not cut half way between nodes).
- Similarly prune crape myrtles, if needed, to remove cross branches and allow space between branches to encourage 3–5 main trunks. Don't commit "crape murder" by topping the tree!

For more Information see Fairfax County Master Gardeners, [fairfaxgardening.org/prune-or-not/](https://fairfaxgardening.org/prune-or-not/)

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## Recycling is Back at the LPCC

By Ann Pitts

You may have noticed that the community center has not been facilitating recycling for the last few months. We found that renters often placed trash in our recycling bins. This caused issues between us and the County. To solve the problem, a separate trash corral was added for the recycling and organics bins. The blue bins are now available so that renters familiar with the County's recycling rules can recycle during their event.



The photo shows the new trash corral, circled in red. The gate for the corral is around the corner on the left. When you use these bins, please remember

- No food
- No glass
- No plastic bags

Also, if you have a caterer or volunteers take out recyclable material, be sure they know the Arlington County-specific recycling rules. Thank you for your efforts to recycle in our community!

## Lyon Park Plant Sale is Gearing Up!

By Susan Bell



Despite the cold and snow, Spring is not far off when it comes to gardening. To help you with early season garden planning, mark your calendars for this year's **Lyon Park Plant Sale**. The sale will be held on **SATURDAY, APRIL 18 in Lyon Park**. Look for us under the tent, rain or shine!

The Plant Sale features favorite, primarily native plants donated from Lyon Park and Ashton Heights gardeners, so you know they'll grow well for you in your garden. We'll have plants that love sun, plants that love shade, houseplants and more! Most plants will be \$5.00.

Deborah Barber will host **Dig-Your-Own** from Lyon Park's flourishing native plant gardens during the Plant Sale.

If you're starting seeds, please consider adding some for the sale. And PLEASE plan to donate potted up—and labeled—plants to the sale, but don't share anything on the [Arlington list of invasive plants](#). *We can only be successful in raising funds for Community Center maintenance if we have plants to sell!* Bring donations to the Park by 10:00 a.m. on Saturday, April 18.

Please contact Susan Bell with any questions at [sibell703@outlook.com](mailto:sibell703@outlook.com).



### Garden Ruminations

By Susan Bell

It's a cliché that a garden is never done, and there's always more to learn.

Our garden began about 20 years ago as a water management project. The natural flow of water ran from the high point on the lot right through our basement on its way to a catch basin near the end of the driveway. To redirect the water flow around the house, contractors moved soil from against the house and created two berms along 1st. St. Suddenly we had a garden to plant before the weeds took over. To start, we added soil, compost and mulch to improve the clay-heavy soil. Given the southern exposure, we planted sun-loving and drought-tolerant plants, a few shrubs and a white lilac, plus hundreds of tulips and narcissus. Eventually we learned that the black walnut tree put a toxin into the soil that many plants can't tolerate.

Twenty years later, the evolution of the garden continues. Redbuds can tolerate the juglone toxin, and now we have an aerial hedge that provides a green screen from the street. The back yard is no longer a heat island and a dozen types of birds visit the yard. Mature trees and shrubs shade some of the sun lovers, some plants are too tall for their spot and other plants need to be moved or divided. There are holes that can't seem to grow anything. And as cute as the rabbits are...

The warm days will be here soon, and with them the reminder that there are chores to be done.

Please note: Paid advertisements in the Lyon Park Citizen do not reflect any official position of the LPCA.





**Got snow pics?  
Share them  
with us (email  
[lyonparkeditor@  
gmail.com](mailto:lyonparkeditor@gmail.com)) to  
have them be  
included in our  
March issue!**



## The Pets of Lyon Park

Meet Wren, a 4-year-old American Hairless Terrier (AHT). He's smallish but definitely thinks he's much bigger than he actually is and has the personality to prove it! He's energetic and affectionate, and you'll see him walking around Barton Street wearing any number of different fashionable outfits: shirts (and sunscreen) in the summertime and big, heavy coats in the wintertime. He definitely keeps the Seward family busy! He loves biting holes in his squeaky toys and getting tummy rubs—dislikes baths, but puts up with it in order to get the lotion rubdown afterwards. AHTs are a relatively new dog breed, and a great option for households with dog allergies!



## Highlights from the LPCA meeting Wednesday January 14, 2026!

By Elizabeth Sheehy

Who knew the Arlington County Commissioner meeting would be so energizing? Over 30 people were present when President Natalie Roy welcomed guest speaker Kim Klingler, Arlington County Commissioner of Revenue, along with her Deputies of Communications, Business, and Transportation. Kim's overriding message was that her team knows they works for us, the residents of Arlington County, and they are always looking to strengthen that partnership. Her team



is responsible for implementing County Board and school board policies: assessing the values of autos and business, while County Treasurer Carla de la Parva collects the money. Some might view that role as adversarial, but she recognizes where problems exist and is actively looking for solutions, especially helping residents understand county policies.

Two hot topics concerned (1) business licenses - and the taxes associated with them (due March 2), and (2) Short-term rentals, known in Arlington as Accessory Homestays. Addressing questions about the Business, Professional and Occupational Licensing (BPOL) tax, Kim explained that the method of taxing off gross receipts is a VA rule that dates back to 1812. She encouraged residents to challenge Richmond to change the law; her role is simply to enforce existing law. Her team explained that property taxes on vehicles are assessed using JDPower values for fairness. There was a lengthy discussion of the wisdom of eliminating car tax.

Another hot topic was Accessory Homestays (Airbnb, VRBO ETC). There is currently no "tip line" to report suspected violations, but Kim encourages residents to discuss that option with the permitting office. There has been discussion about getting better information from the rental companies, but currently TOT (short term rental taxes) cannot be cross-checked with business license rolls. As of July 2025, Airbnb is (FINALLY) automatically remitting taxes directly to Arlington County which is a positive revenue step. There is a concern that Arlington County is not enforcing the 180-day residency rule for Accessory Homestays, which the LPCA may delve into further.

The attendees were highly engaged throughout the discussion and the guest speakers were well informed and transparent with their responses. We look forward to having similarly open dialogue with other members of the County government in the future.

# Opinion: Why We Should Embrace Interpersonal Curiosity

By Carolyn Newman

Fluorescent lights buzzed and feet shuffled down the aisles as I neared the checkout counter. The cashier uttered his routine *How did you find everything?* as he slid my coconut water across the scanner. In this exceptionally ordinary moment, I pondered the opportunity to make both our lives a touch more interesting. As he looked up, boredom masked behind a customer-service smile, I asked, “What’s the craziest thing you’ve seen happen at this store?” An eye-widened expression turned to a grin as he launched into a story from weeks before. We giddily continued the conversation before parting ways. As I stepped out of the store, a grin spread across my face. A mundane moment transformed into a connection between two strangers.

In today’s technologically advanced world, information surrounds us like oxygen; we constantly consume it. When a thumb movement answers any question, why bother asking questions to one another? It’s pointless. Right? Wrong. Curiosity holds a greater function than inspiring a google search; it operates as one of the most powerful human tools to foster connection, deepen relationships, and enrich our lives.

In 2023 the U.S. surgeon general released an advisory on America’s epidemic of loneliness and isolation, noting that connection improves physical health, enhances mental well-being, and even lowers death rates. Yet from 2003 to 2020, social connection drastically declined while social isolation increased by 24 hours per month. Loneliness infects our nation—but our human nature can cure us. Here, interpersonal curiosity takes the spotlight.

Curiosity—the intrinsic desire to understand others, ourselves, and the world around us—functions as an essential part of human development. It drives exploration and learning. Less known is its potential to enhance social connections through interpersonal curiosity: the desire to know and ask about people. Studies show interpersonal curiosity enhances relationships by facilitating bonding between individuals. When someone asks us a question, we feel seen and cared for. Especially noteworthy, interpersonal curiosity promotes positive social interaction between strangers. Research on stranger interactions in major cities found positive stranger interactions increased well-being by making people feel seen, worthy and acknowledged. Kind interactions with strangers reminded participants that goodness existed around them. Expressing interpersonal curiosity allows us to enhance our connection to those in our community and our well-being.

To embrace interpersonal curiosity, we must allow a mindset shift. Mentally separating ourselves from others sparks fear and inhibits interaction. The less we relate to someone, the less willing we are to reach out. Nevertheless, we share more similarities than we realize; we all feel fear and uncertainty. Asking questions helps dissolve the invisible wall dividing us.

So what inhibits interpersonal curiosity expression? For one, small talk stinks. It feels awkward and sometimes fake. But redirecting a dull exchange or adding playfulness can turn a boring conversation interesting and rewarding. Anxiety also quiets interpersonal curiosity. A 2021 study on COVID-19 distancing found higher levels of anxiety discouraged social connection and suppressed interpersonal curiosity. While anxiety and fear—often created by separating ourselves physically or emotionally from others—limit our expression of interpersonal curiosity, realizing the universality of these emotions illuminates our similarities and diminishes fear.

Don’t shy away from the unconventional. Permit extraordinary questions. We’ve all heard “What’s your major?” But what about “Do you believe in reincarnation?” or “What object in nature do you most resonate with?” Intentional engagement with strangers becomes more natural with practice. Interpersonal curiosity also revitalizes existing relationships. Ask your mom about her favorite childhood pastime; I guarantee a smile. Questions communicate caring.

Some fear asking questions will seem invasive or annoying, but while time and place matters (don’t ask about someone’s hidden talent during an exam), curiosity’s overwhelmingly positive impact on connection far outweighs the small chance of irritation.

Interpersonal curiosity encourages an open mind; it replaces judgement with empathy. If we embrace it, we may discover fascination and connection with our communities and loved ones. The solution to social isolation stands a question away. Start with the convenience-store cashier.





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THE LYON PARK CITIZENS' ASSOCIATION NEWSLETTER

Volume II, No. 2  
October 3, 1977

President: Harry "Buzz" Johnson, 525-3207  
Vice President: Billie Johnson, 528-6119  
Secretary: Don Peters, 527-2439  
Treasurer: Paul Brown, 525-2728

LYON PARK CITIZENS' ASSOCIATION MEETING

MONDAY, OCTOBER 3, 1977  
8:00 P.M.  
LYON PARK COMMUNITY CENTER  
414 North Fillmore Street

PROGRAM: CANDIDATES' NIGHT...

Come Hear the Politicians  
Let the Politicians Hear You  
...Then decide whom YOU will vote for.

## Celebrating 50 Years of the Lyon Park Citizen

By Elizabeth Sheehy

Please join us for an afternoon tea to celebrate the army of volunteers who sort and deliver the newsletter every month! We're celebrating the current helpers, the former helpers, and everyone in between!

When: Sunday, March 8 from 4-6 p.m.

Where: The Lyon Park Community Center

*Cheers  
to 50  
Years*

## We want to hear from you!

Interested in contributing to the newsletter? We are looking for articles (350–400 words) about local spots, highlighting the vibe and food options to encourage readers to try something new. Contact [lyonparkeditor@gmail.com](mailto:lyonparkeditor@gmail.com) to offer a submission. Please note: the newsletter deadline for the March newsletter is February 15th.

## Lyon Park Woman's Club

Next meeting: February 19th at noon

The Woman's Club is for everyone, women and men. We meet the third Thursday of the month at noon at the community center for a delicious potluck lunch. We have a great time socializing but we also contribute to the community, such as volunteering for the Chili Dinner, the Spring Fair, the Pancake Breakfast, and the Halloween Bonfire. For more info, contact Elizabeth Wray at [ejswray@yahoo.com](mailto:ejswray@yahoo.com)

The next Lyon Park Blood Drive is March 3, 2026! Sign up at <https://www.redcrossblood.org/give.html/find-drive> and enter this sponsor code: **lyonparkcommunitycenter**

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**Join us for a FREE CONCERT at the  
Community Center Celebrating Music by  
Women, Performed by Women!**

By Elizabeth Sheehy



Please save the date for a community concert on **Tuesday, March 24, at 7:30 p.m.** The Lyon Park Community Center, with assistance from DC Musicians Local 161-710 and the Music Performance Trust Fund, commemorate Women's History Month with an evening of music by women, performed by women!

Neighborhood old timers will see some familiar faces, as principal players from the Kennedy Center Opera House Orchestra join our neighbor Susan Robinson performing music for flute, harp, and strings. The repertoire spans the years from 17th century composer Maddalena Sirmin, to the romantic Fanny Mendelssohn, and includes the works of three living composers: Stella Sung, Libby Larsen, and Lena Auerbach. The quintet enjoyed a thrilling tour to South Africa a few years ago, and are delighted to be reuniting for this event.

This concert is free and suitable for older, concert-ready kids. It will be about 90 minutes, including a short intermission, and a post concert Q and A and reception with the artists. Tickets will become available closer to the concert date, accessible through the link on the [Upcoming Events](#) page.



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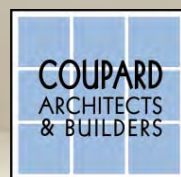


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**Karen Grunstra**

Karen\_grunstra@kw.com  
*Licensed in VA*

**Michele Moore**

Micheledpayne@gmail.com  
*Licensed in VA*

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