

Board Chairman Jay Fisette Highlights Urban Challenge

“Managing the maturing of our vision as an urban community” is the most important strategic issue facing Arlington in 2005, according to new Board Chairman Jay Fisette. He highlighted the County’s challenges for this year and proposed programs and strategies for addressing them at the County Board’s Jan. 1 organizational meeting.

On New Year’s Day, the Board unanimously elected Fisette as Chair and Board Member Chris Zimmerman Vice Chairman. This is Fisette’s second stint leading the board, which he also chaired in 2001.

To support the County’s vision as a “world-class, urban community,” Fisette outlined four objectives for the year ahead: grow smart, be inclusive, promote health and ensure value.

■ **Grow smart.** Arlington’s successful urban densities take place on only eight percent of the land. To build on the County’s award-winning record of Smart Growth, Arlington must “demand high quality projects with



Jay Fisette

substantial community benefits.” He affirmed his continued commitment to building a Conference Center in Pentagon City, completing the Court House Plaza project, and creating Central Place in Rosslyn.

■ **Be inclusive.** Fisette emphasized the importance of retaining and creating affordable entry level housing, to benefit persons of modest income, and supporting small businesses. Efforts will include encouraging private sector employers to emulate Arlington County Government’s

continued on page 5

Affordable Housing, Smart Growth Top 2004 Highlights

In 2004, Arlington achieved a number of milestones—from affordable housing to a walkable Arlington to investing in children.

Affordable housing—The Board approved seven site plans totaling 1,600 housing units, with approximately 250 units designated as affordable—a total of 15 percent. In every one of these site plan developments, the goal of mixed-income housing was achieved in the Rosslyn-Ballston corridor.

Economic sustainability—Currently, eight office buildings are under construction—comprising more than two million square feet and representing approximately \$600 million in new private

investment. This strong economic growth enabled Arlington to invest in the community and to lower the tax rate for the third year in a row in 2004.

Smart growth—Arlington’s “smart growth” strategy has led to walkable neighborhoods well-served by excellent transit systems—creating some of the most desirable neighborhoods in the region. In 2004, a walkable Arlington was enhanced by dozens of traffic calming and pedestrian safety projects. As a result of continued investment in a walkable Arlington, this year Arlington was nationally recognized as the “safest place for pedestrians” in Northern Virginia.

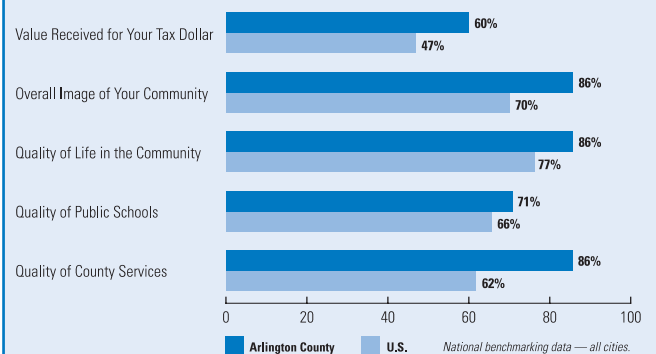
Investing in our children—Arlington found a new, expanded home for the Arlington Community Action Program and Head Start—in the County-owned George Mason Center on George Mason Drive.

High quality of services—In its first comprehensive citizen survey, Arlington ranks “among the very best” in the nation in resident satisfaction with local government services. When compared to other large communities, Arlington rated significantly above average in all service areas.

The survey research experts report that this high level of satisfaction is a direct correlation to the very high level of civic engagement that makes Arlington a very special place.

Overall Satisfaction with the County Arlington County vs. U.S.

by percentage of respondents who rated the item 4 or 5 on a 5-point scale where 5 was “very satisfied” and 1 was “very dissatisfied” (excluding “Don’t Know”)



Inside:

Capital Projects Surge Forward in 2004p. 2

County Board Adopts New Meeting Schedule Formatp. 3

New ART route beginning in Februaryp. 5

News from Arlington Public Schoolsp. 8

Capital Projects Surge Forward in 2004

From neighborhood traffic calming to storm drainage to parks and recreation, the County implemented capital projects at record levels in 2004, completing over 80 projects. Below are just a few of the highlights.

Last year, 55 street and infrastructure projects were completed, almost a three-fold increase over 2003. Neighborhood Traffic Calming alone completed 21 projects, a four-fold increase from 2003. Pedestrian improvements experienced a three-fold increase with 17 projects completed in 2004. That's 38 projects aimed at making the streets safer for Arlington pedestrians. Many more are expected to be completed in 2005.

Neighborhood Conservation

The Neighborhood Conservation program is also making neighborhoods more attractive and pedestrian friendly with 20 projects completed this year. New sidewalks and curbs, pedestrian-level street lighting, park improvements, neighborhood signs and beautification projects are sprouting up all over the County.

New and improved County buildings

County facilities are also being upgraded with 17 small projects completed in 2004, but the big news is the nine major renovation or replacement projects that started construction in 2004. Projects under construction include the new Shirlington Library and Signature Theatre, the new

Fire Station No. 5, the new Walter Reed Community Center and the new Parks Operations Building at the Trades Center.

Parks, parks, parks

The community celebrated three major park dedications in 2004. The new Powhatan Springs Park, dedicated in October, features the County's first skate park, a youth soccer/lacrosse field and a children's rain garden. Funding for the rain garden was a partnership between the County and the Kiwanis. In May, the completely renovated Westover Park reopened, and the new Halls Hill/Highview Gateway Park, which celebrates the rich heritage of the neighborhood, was dedicated. This spring, Parks is planning another dedication as the Barcroft Park project nears completion.

Sports and fitness

Two new synthetic turf fields were installed in 2004: the Wakefield High School field opened in September, just in time for the fall football season. The



In September, construction began on the new, 15,000 sq. ft. Shirlington Library. A new Signature Theatre will occupy the building's second and third stories. Both are scheduled to open in 2006.

Virginia Highlands Park field opened in late November. High-grade lighting, landscaping and new pathways will be installed there in spring 2005.

The future is exciting for aquatic, fitness and sports users as the County begins to implement the North Tract Master Plan, adopted by the County Board in February 2004. In November the voters said "yes" to the referendum, and plans are moving ahead to make the first phase of the Master Plan a reality.

So keep an eye out for new projects as you walk, bike and ride in Arlington, and be sure to take a minute and enjoy the many projects completed in 2004.

DMV Services Now Available in Arlington

Did you know you can now complete most Department of Motor Vehicles (DMV) transactions on the second floor of the County's offices? A DMV Select office has recently opened—a cooperative effort between Commissioner of Revenue Ingrid Morroy and Treasurer Frank O'Leary.

"The new DMV Select office provides the 'one-stop shop' that

Arlington residents deserve," said Morroy. O'Leary added, "We are fortunate to have DMV back after so many years. It is a service that was greatly missed by Arlingtonians."

Arlingtonians can now file applications for titling and registration of motor vehicles in one place, automatically notifying both the State and the County in a single transaction. If you sold or donated a vehicle, you can return license plates to DMV Select and the County will be notified of the change simultaneously.

At Arlington's DMV Select office, you can also obtain the following:

- Motor vehicle license plates (including specialized) and/or decals
- Handicap placards
- Driver transcripts

If you need any of the DMV services listed above, stop by Suite 218 on the second floor at 2100 Clarendon Blvd. Conveniently located on the Metro's Orange Line, Court House Station, the office is open from 8 a.m.-4:30 p.m., Monday through Friday.



County Board Adopts New Meeting Schedule Format for 2005

Changes designed with efficiency, citizen participation in mind

The Arlington County Board, at its New Year's Day organizational meeting, adopted a new format and schedule for its 2005 sessions. There will be 22 prescheduled meetings—including 10 regular meetings on Saturday mornings at 8:30 a.m. and one on Tuesday, Nov. 15, at 3 p.m.

The remaining 11 meetings—scheduled “recessed sessions”—will typically be held on the immediately following Tuesday. These meetings will begin at 3 p.m. with reports and appointments, and public hearing items will begin at 6:30 p.m. One of the most popular forums, Public Comment Period, will continue to be held at 8:30 a.m. during Saturday meetings.

“Residents told us they want to spend less time waiting for the agenda items of interest to them to be discussed and to know with greater certainty when they will be heard,” said Board Chairman Jay Fiset. “This new schedule attempts to make our meetings more convenient and accessible for all who have business before the Board.”

In addition, the Board modified the procedure for addressing items on its consent agenda (multiple items that the Board approves with a single vote): As is now the case, any citizen may request that items be pulled from the consent agenda at Saturday meetings. However, to

provide time to address any outstanding issues, the items now will be heard at the following Tuesday meeting at 6:30 p.m. The meeting schedule and procedures will be evaluated throughout the year, as the Board considers whether to retain them or make further modifications.

In October 2004, the Board asked a working group of citizens, County staff and representatives of the business community “to build on the work of The Arlington Forum, consider the past data of their work and the experiences of neighboring jurisdictions... (with) the intent of (making) these processes more accessible to citizens.”

Among the findings of the Forum's 2003 study, “Arlington's Changing Story, Civic Engagement in Arlington County, Virginia,” was that the Board's meeting schedule made it “difficult for citizens to tailor their attendance to specific agenda items. A wide range of citizens also criticized the unwieldy length of County Board meetings overall.”

The Board's first regular meeting in 2005 will be on Saturday, Jan. 29, at 8:30 a.m. The first recessed session will be held on Tuesday, Feb. 1., at 3 p.m. Consent agenda and public hearing items will begin at 6:30 p.m.

Any carryover sessions from Tuesday meetings may be scheduled for Wednesday evening or at a date and time

to be determined by the Board at the time of recess. The full schedule for the year is available online at www.arlingtonva.us/cbo/meetings.

Your County Board

Jay Fiset, *Chairman*
Christopher Zimmerman, *Vice Chairman*
Members:

Barbara A. Favola
Paul Ferguson
J. Walter Tejada

County Board Office

2100 Clarendon Blvd., Suite 300
Arlington, VA 22201
(703) 228-3130 (voice)
(703) 228-4611 (TTY only)
(703) 228-7430 (fax)

E-mail: countyboard@arlingtonva.us

Please be sure to include your postal address in your e-mail requests. The Office will respond via e-mail when possible but will use postal mail to deliver attachments, for example, that may not be available electronically.

Coming County Board Meetings

Jan. 29; Feb. 1, 12 and 15;
March 12, 15 and 31

For the full schedule, visit
www.arlingtonva.us/cbo/meetings.

Snow Fighting is a Shared Responsibility

After a snow storm—even a light one—the County needs everyone's help to keep Arlington a “walkable,” pedestrian-friendly community.

While County crews focus on clearing streets and County property, residents and business owners are responsible for removing snow from sidewalks, private driveways and entrances. When you're finished, why not consider lending a hand to neighbors who can't shovel their own walkways?

Clearing sidewalks, and school bus and other transit stops, helps our community resume its normal activities that much sooner.

You can rely on County government to be there when you need us, and we rely on you to be a good neighbor.

For more information on the County's snow fighting plan, visit www.arlingtonva.us/winter. School bus routes and stop locations are available at www.arlington.k12.va.us.



Commission on Aging Public Hearing Feb. 28

The Arlington Commission on Aging will hold its annual public hearing on the Area Plan for Aging Services on Feb. 28, from 9 a.m. to noon. Representatives of organizations that provide services to Arlington's older residents will make short presentations about their services and funding requests. An opportunity for

public comment also will be provided. The public hearing will be held at the Warren G. Stambaugh Building, 3033 Wilson Blvd., Suite 7E. For more information, contact the Agency on Aging at (703) 228-1700, TTY (703) 228-1788, or e-mail arlaaa@arlingtonva.us.

Sisterbike Riders Bridge Cultures, Make Friends

In August 2004, a group of Arlingtonians—including Board Chairman Jay Fisette—visited Arlington's Sister Cities, Reims, France; and Aachen, Germany. Among the activities was a one-week bike trek with riders from Arlington and Aachen.

On that ride, Fisette met Helmuth Feuerriegel, a high school teacher who had visited Arlington with a group of exchange students in 2003. Below Herr Feuerriegel shares a special memory from last summer:

Biking in France? Sounds like a good idea. Biking with a German-American group? Sounds like an even better idea. So I joined the 2004 Sister City Ride, starting with a joyous weekend of Arlington-Aachen-Reims sister city celebrations in Reims and finally setting off on Sunday, Aug. 29.

Having changed from more or less formal clothes into bike riding gear, the main question was: Who are these fellow riders? By and by, you gathered bits of information like "I was in the Sister City ride two years ago," "I never used a bike since I was a child" or "Will I be able to manage 80 km (about 50 mi.) on days 1 and 3?"



Helmuth Feuerriegel

Smoothly being led out of Reims by some French cyclists, our conversations turned more personal, and it was fascinating to learn where everybody came from, what that area was like for cycling and living, or what the pros and cons of certain schools were for one's children, for example.

During lavish evening dinners and excursions of stop-over villages and cities (Chaussee sur Marne, St. Dizier, Toul,

Nancy, Sarrebourg, Saverne, Strasbourg) personal and political opinions were exchanged, and friendships were soon deepened.

Learning about the job of a lobbyist, a computer specialist or a councillor was as interesting as getting insights into that of a writer, a chef or a psychologist.

The daily rides—often taking us along the Rhine-Marne Canal or through some picturesque farming villages with long stretches of sunflower fields—turned out to be rides of 45 to 90 km. And we all managed well, partly due to the variety of food organized by Dick (our Dutch friend/mechanic/supplier) and set out at lunch time as surprises waiting for us at some clearing in the forest.

Biking in France? It definitely was a good idea. Biking with a German-American group? It was great! Many thanks to every one of you for your mutual support, your friendship, and for the wonderful common experience we had.

To learn more about Arlington's Sister City program, visit www.arlingtonsistercity.org.



German and American riders pose in front of the European Parliament building in Strasbourg, France, at the end of Sisterbike 2004.

Leadership Arlington Accepting Applications 2005-06 Youth Program

Leadership Arlington is now accepting applications from high school sophomores for its 2006 youth program, which will begin in August. Open to students who will be 11th graders this fall, the Leadership Arlington Youth Program is designed to develop leadership skills and to raise awareness of the need for community service and civic participation.

Applications, due by April 15, can be downloaded at www.leadershiparlington.org/youth.html. Applicants must be Arlington residents or attend high school in Arlington. Youth Program members will meet for a five-day session, Aug. 15-19, and two days in the fall.

The program is funded by local businesses, foundations and individuals, and there is no cost to the students, parents or schools. For more information, please contact Pat Latour at (703) 528-2522 or platour@leadershiparlington.org.



Make Your Yard a Wildlife Habitat

The Arlington Community Wildlife Habitat (ACWH) project has issued a Neighborhood Challenge to see which civic association can certify the most properties within its boundaries as wildlife habitats.

"Creating wildlife habitat holds a host of potential environmental benefits including helping to increase the tree canopy and reducing water run-off and the spread of invasive plants," according to ACWH. "At the same time, it makes the County a more relaxing, beautiful and educational place to be."

To learn more about the project, the public is invited to a Habitat Open House, Sunday, Feb. 6, from 1-4 p.m., at Long Branch Nature Center. It's located at 625 S. Carlin Springs Rd. For details, call (703) 228-6427 or visit www.arlingtonenvironment.org.

Board Chairman Highlights Urban Challenge

continued from page 1

“Live Where You Work” program, which provides modest grants toward the purchase of a home in Arlington.

■ **Promote health.** To ensure a healthy, sustainable community, Fisetto will promote walking—through the WALKArlington program—and biking as ways to improve personal health and regional air quality, by lessening dependence on automobiles. He announced the County’s first-ever Family Bike Day, to be held this spring, as a focal point of this effort.

■ **Ensure value.** To ensure that “our values-based policies are coupled with value-based performance,” Fisetto proposed the formation of a new Committee on Program Performance, to be comprised of two County Board members, the Commissioner of Revenue, the County Manager and a citizen (the chair of the County’s Fiscal Affairs Advisory Committee.

To some, Arlington’s Vision Statement is “a collection of words,” says Fisetto. “To others, these words provide a framework and aspiration that gives meaning to the changes taking place around us. I believe this a lofty yet useful and compelling vision.”

He concluded by asking Arlingtonians to count their blessings. “At a time when our hearts weep with empathy for the victims of the East Asian tsunami, we can feel a special pride in the values and vision that sustain our own community,” he said. “We are well-off, yet we care. We have faced our own tragedies and challenges, and have responded well. And with your help, we will continue to accomplish remarkable things together in 2005.”

Fisetto’s and Zimmerman’s New Year’s Day remarks, and those of their Board colleagues, are available on the County’s website, www.arlingtonva.us. You can also view a re-broadcast of the Organizational Meeting on the County’s cable channel, AVN71.

New ART Route Begins in February

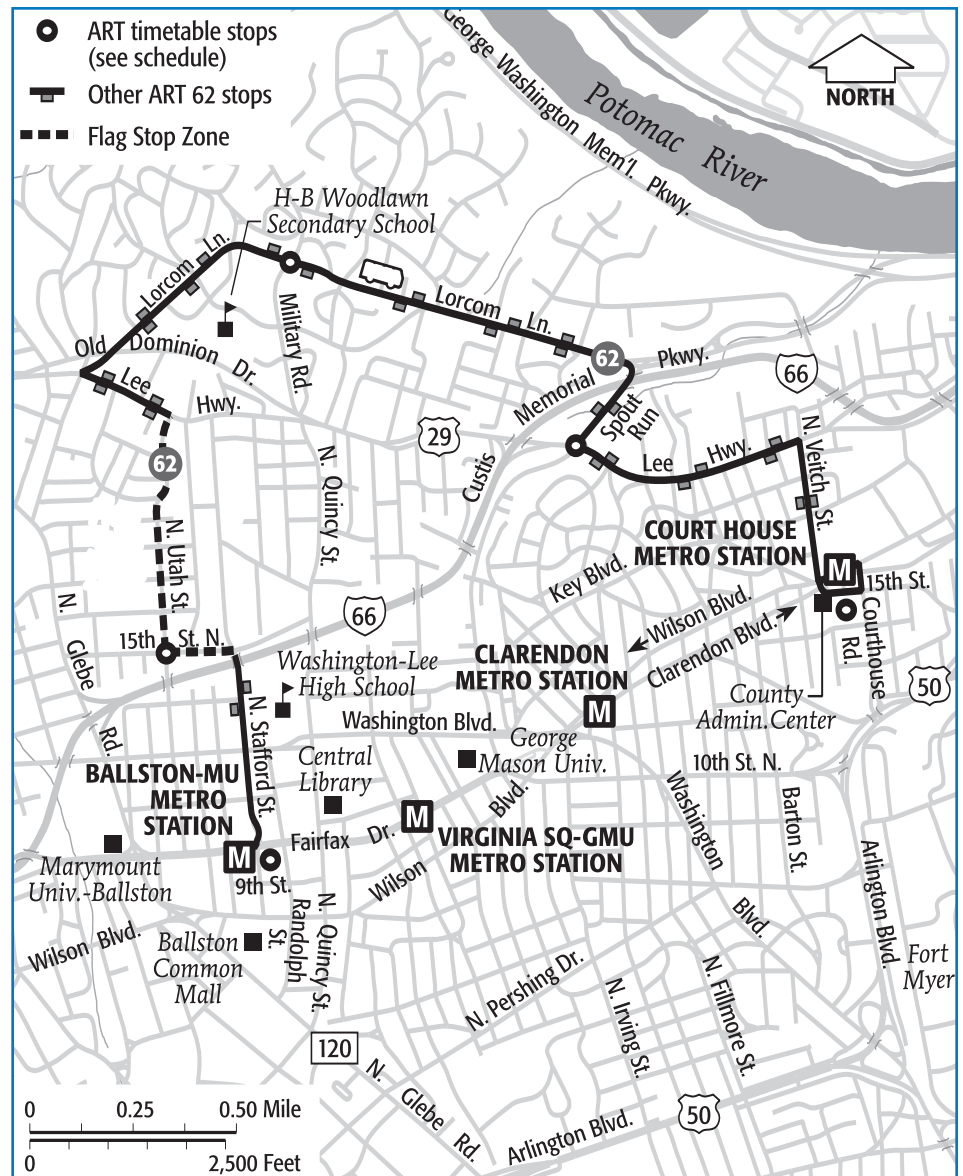
Starting Feb. 7, Arlington residents will have a new way to get to the Ballston and Court House Metrorail stations in north Arlington. That’s when Arlington Transit’s ART 62 route begins service. (See route map)

ART 62 buses will operate every 30 minutes during the weekday rush-hours with two small, neighborhood-friendly, clean-burning compressed natural gas buses. There’ll be approximately 30 bus stops along the route that will be clearly identified. All will have inserts

containing a bus route map, schedule and fare information.

Part of the route—along N. Utah Street and 15th Street N.—is designated as a “Flag Stop Zone.” This means that instead of fixed bus stops, the bus will stop safely anywhere along these two streets. So instead of hailing a taxi, you can flag down an ART bus!

For more information, visit www.ArlingtonTransit.com or contact Eric Smith, transit operations coordinator, at (703) 228-3692, esmith@arlingtonva.us.



County offices will be closed on Monday, February 21, in observance of Presidents’ Day. Check www.arlingtonva.us for other closings.

Help Create a Vision for Four Mile Run

What's your vision of Four Mile Run? Arlingtonians can give their input on plans for the waterway at a Four Mile Run Visioning Session, on Feb. 5, 9 a.m.-1 p.m. It's part of the process to create a Master Plan for the lower section of Four Mile Run, from I-395 to the mouth at Reagan National Airport.

This portion of Four Mile Run was channelized in the 1970's following several floods in the area. Since then, it has safely moved high storm flows through Arlington and Alexandria. However, the concrete channel lacks the beauty and environmental habitat of a natural stream.

In 2000, Congressman Jim Moran secured a \$1 million federal appropriation for Arlington and Alexandria to fund the development of a master plan to trans-

form lower Four Mile Run. The goal of the effort is to restore the habitat and environmental features, recreational opportunities, aesthetics and urban form of the flood control channel.

Staff from Arlington, Alexandria, the Northern Virginia Regional Commission and the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers are working on the restoration effort—along with a citizen task force and a nationally recognized team of consultants.

The Visioning Session will be at Charles Barrett Elementary School, 1115 Martha Custis Drive in Alexandria, at the corner of W. Glebe Road and Valley

Drive (snow date, Feb. 12). To find out more, please contact Aileen Winquist at (703) 228-3610 or awinquist@arlingtonva.us, or view the project website at www.novaregion.org/restoration.htm.



A recent view of lower Four Mile Run, near S. Glebe Rd., and across from the County's Water Pollution Control Plant.

WETA's Arlington Documentary Showcases a County on the Move

Documentary still available to new, renewing WETA members

Farms and forts? Beaches and brothels? In Arlington County? Yes. And much more too—Retrocession from Washington followed by Secession, a world-themed amusement park, a Wright Brothers testing ground, the home of the Sir Loiner burger, the world's largest office building and Little Saigon. Arlington—home to WETA—truly has a rich, colorful past.

All of this and more is vividly chronicled in "Arlington: Heroes, History & Hamburgers," a WETA documentary that aired on Channel 26 last December.

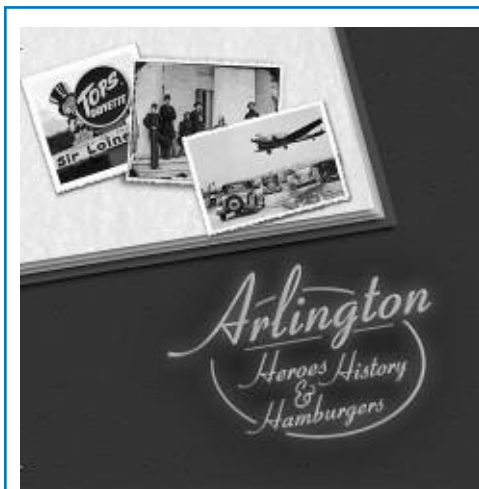
Like a moon caught up in the gravitational pull of a planet, Arlington's march through history—at least since 1791—has been constantly influenced by its proximity to the nation's capital. For that reason, Arlington's story mirrors that of the nation: the change from rural to suburban on the way to urban, population growth alongside economic growth and immigration, changes to the landscape wrought by transportation modernization and development.

"We wanted to make a documentary that explored the fascinating aspects of Arlington's past but also conveyed the warmth of the community," say WETA filmmakers Gary Broom and John Begeny. "The participation of Arlingtonians was invaluable—from residents who recollect the first school desegregation in Virginia to those who remember home milk deliveries and the best burgers at Tops Drivette."

Two years in the making, "Arlington: Heroes, History & Hamburgers" celebrates the County, its glorious past and vibrant present.

What were the catalysts of change in Arlington? *War*. On the frontlines during the Civil War, on the home front for two World Wars—Arlington attracted soldiers and civil servants to keep the government going. *Development*. From neighborhoods designed as national models by the Federal Housing Administration to changes wrought by a grand canyon—I-66—and Metrorail, the face of Arlington has steadily transformed. *Economic growth*. From the days of the milkman and trolleyline shopping hubs in Clarendon—then Parkington, Shirlington and Virginia Square in the era of the car—to the modern vibrance of the community, the County's fortunes have risen with the times. *And immigration*. Arlington's cultural climate has benefited from waves of immigration that continue to expand the County's enormous diversity.

"There's a lot to know and appreciate about Arlington," say Broom and Begeny. "We hope people enjoy this tribute to a community from WETA."



New and renewing WETA members can receive a DVD or VHS copy of "Arlington: Heroes, History & Hamburgers." For information, call audience services at (703) 998-2724.

A New Strategic Plan

Robert G. Smith, Superintendent

The Arlington Public Schools will complete work on its current six-year (October 1999 through June 2005) Strategic Plan at the end of this school year. Over the past year, we have been concurrently working toward the development of the next Strategic Plan, slated to span from July 2005 through June 2011.

Work on the development of a new plan began last school year with the administration of a new customer satisfaction survey conducted by a third party polling firm in the spring of 2004. A scientifically selected sample of parents, community members without children in school, teachers and students responded to questions about their level of satisfaction with the quality of the schools. Additionally, respondents were asked for their ideas on the most important improvements on which to work and the most important issues to be addressed over the next six years. These results became part of the information collected for purposes of developing the goals for the new Strategic Plan.

Two independent consultants then conducted 21 focus groups involving approximately 200 community members, parents, staff and students, all of whom responded and discussed the question: What are three things APS needs to do to be the best school system in the United States?

The School Board considered the results of the customer satisfaction survey and the focus groups, in combination

with reports on accomplishment of current strategic goals and annual priorities, as it worked through the development and adoption of the new strategic goals. On September 21, 2004, after receiving public comments and suggestions, the School Board adopted seven goals (see goal statements in box).

A task group has been appointed to develop a plan to accomplish each goal. Altogether, the School Board appointed 135 parents, community members, students and staff to these groups. The task groups are working on identifying specific objectives, proposing examples of evidence to monitor progress toward accomplishment of the objectives, setting annual strategic targets, and suggesting activities that could be conducted to meet the targets and accomplish the objectives.

We expect that task groups will conclude their work next month and a proposed plan will emerge from a steering committee composed of task group chairs and staff liaisons to the task groups. The School Board will then begin another public process to receive suggestions on the new plan, with adoption scheduled for June 2005.

We welcome participation and ideas from all members of the Arlington community. Look for announcements about our progress and upcoming community meetings about the strategic plan on our website at www.arlington.k12.va.us. Or send us your thoughts and ideas by using the Feedback link at the bottom of our home page.



2005-2011 Strategic Plan Goals

With the help of the Arlington community, the Arlington Public Schools will address the following goals:

Raise achievement

Assure rising achievement for all students on standardized tests and other measures of performance that go beyond state and federal standards.

Eliminate achievement gaps

Eliminate gaps in achievement among identifiable subgroups.

Success after graduation

Prepare each graduate to make choices and experience success in post-secondary education, work, or other pursuits.

Individualized education

Consistently provide high quality instruction, support, and experiences that respond to each student's talents and challenges.

Quality of school life

Ensure that each school is a place where every student and employee wants to be and feels encouraged, supported, and challenged.

Engagement gap

Ensure that every parent and other member of the community knows about the school system and how to participate in the education of our children and feels invited to do so.

Cultural competence

Use Arlington's diversity and the region's cultural variety to thoroughly prepare students to live and work in an international world.

Adopted by the Arlington School Board September 21, 2004

Kindergarten Registration Process Begins on February 1

Beginning on Feb. 1, Arlington parents who have children who will be five years old by Sept. 30 may begin applying for kindergarten. With 22 elementary schools (four countywide alternative schools, four team schools and 14 neighborhood schools), Arlington parents have a plethora of choices available to them, based on the needs of their child. The average class size is 18.3 students, with a maximum of 22 students with one teacher



and one teaching assistant per class. Parents can choose between their neighborhood school and a countywide alternative school or request a transfer to another neighborhood school.

Additionally, before making a decision on what school to enroll their child, parents should attend at least one of the school system's information nights and then visit the schools in which they have an interest.

Information Nights:

To help parents get started, Arlington Public Schools has two countywide events designed to provide parents with general information about the school system and the registration and application process. All parents are encouraged to attend to get a general overview of the kindergarten curriculum and to learn how

to register. During Kindergarten Information Night and Montessori Information, parents can learn more about kindergarten, and the boundaries. During Montessori Information Night, parents can also find out more about the preschool Montessori programs in the county. (See the Calendar of Events on page 11 for the dates, times, locations and snow dates).

School Visits:

All schools in Arlington provide numerous opportunities for parents to visit and meet with the teachers and staff during a typical school day. Orientations will be held at each elementary school on Feb. 22, March 10, and April 7. For a complete listing of times please visit www.arlington.k12.va.us/options/elem/transfer_orientations.html.

continued on page 11

Helpful Hints for Parents to Prepare Children For Kindergarten

By Sandra Lochhead, Early Childhood Supervisor, Arlington Public Schools

Kindergarten is an exciting and important year in every child's academic experience. Because every child begins school at a different stage of readiness, kindergarten teachers are tasked with carefully planning learning activities and instruction to meet the needs of individual children. This ensures that each child is recognized and valued for the uniqueness they bring to the class.

To help prepare children for kindergarten, parents can do the following things;

Parents should share their own love of learning with their child. By sharing positive memories of school and discussing them with the child, parents can get their children excited about learning as well. It's especially important for parents to begin helping their child develop a sense of independence, as that's what will guide the child in their first year in an academic setting. Parents should encourage their child to do things for themselves. Simple things like making sure the child is confident in getting

dressed, using the bathroom, and eating in a timely way can make the kindergarten year go much smoother. Additionally, parents should discuss safety rules with their child, and teach them to say their name, phone number, and home address. It's also helpful for kindergartners to be able to recognize their written name before they start the year.

Social abilities are often the greatest influence on school "readiness." Encouraging children to work with others and use words to solve problems is an effective way of helping prepare children for kindergarten, where they will be expected to behave socially in an academic setting. Parents should also help their child learn to cooperate and wait their turn.

To help the child develop early academic skills, parents should also spend time reading and telling stories to

their child and participating in active discussions with their child. Parents can help their children learn to describe things, not just name them, by having the child retell stories to them. Singing alphabet songs and reading alphabet books encourages the child to become familiar with letters and some beginning sounds. Providing opportunities for the child to

count, play counting games, and sort and classify things is also helpful in preparing a child for kindergarten (Look for all of the "green" cars on the road).

Kindergarten will provide many opportunities to open new windows on learning. Beginning school is usually an exciting and happy experience for children, although it can be a harder transition for parents. One of the best ways to prepare children is for the parents themselves to start preparing for this big step!



Recent Awards, Honors, & Recognitions

Over the past few months, various Arlington Public Schools students, employees, and programs have been recognized for excellence. Below is a list of a few of the recent awards and recognition's. A complete listing, with links to news releases, is posted on the school system's website at www.arlington.k12.va.us/about/awards.html. The listing is updated bi-monthly.

The Washington Post Challenge

Index—The Washington-Post Challenge Index ranks high schools in America based on the number of Advanced Placement (AP) and International Baccalaureate (IB) exams given each year. High schools that receive a score of 1.0 or higher are ranked in the top five percent of schools nationally. In the Washington metropolitan area, only 100 of the 163 high schools received a Challenge Index score of 1.0. All of Arlington's high schools are in that group, with H-B Woodlawn ranking first in the metropolitan area, Washington-Lee ranking seventh, Yorktown ranking 10th and Wakefield ranking 32nd. Reporter Jay Matthews notes that Arlington Public Schools' combined score is a 3.27, surpassing all but one school district (Falls Church) in the metropolitan area.

Eleven APS Teachers Earn National Board Certification

—Eleven APS teachers have achieved National Board Certification from the National Board of Professional Teaching Standards this fall, bringing the total number of APS teachers who are National Board Certification to 43. These teachers successfully mastered a performance-based assessment that has taken up to three-years to complete.

APS 2004 Principal of the Year

—Taylor Elementary School Principal Robert L. Hindman has been selected as the APS 2004 "Principal of the Year." He is also the recipient of The Washington Post's Distinguished



Robert L. Hindman

Educational Leadership Award for Arlington.

2004 National School of Character

—In recognition of its exemplary work to encourage the ethical, social and academic development of its students through character education, Yorktown High School has been selected as a 2004 National School of Character by the Character Education Partnership. Yorktown is one of 10 schools and districts selected as 2004 National Schools of Character. The school will receive a National School of Character flag and a \$2,000 incentive grant, which they will use to support social emotional learning programs.

No Child Left Behind Blue Ribbon Award

—The US Department of Education has announced that Arlington Traditional School is a recipient of the No Child Left Behind Blue Ribbon Award. The award recognizes ATS for providing students with a strong curriculum and making giant strides in state measured standardized testing in recent years.

APS Budget Earns "Distinguished Budget Presentation Award"

—For the second consecutive year, the APS budget has received the "Distinguished Budget Presentation Award" from the Government Finance Officers Association of the United States and Canada. The award is considered the highest form of recognition in governmental budgeting. Budget Director Mary Beth Chambers and the Budget and Finance Office supervised the compilation of the FY 2005 budget through the Department of Finance & Management Services.

Arlington School Facilities Receive Accolades

—Two APS facilities have recently received numerous accolades for their excellence in design. The Langston Brown School & Community Center has received top awards for excellence in design, including the National School Boards Association's 2004 Learning by Design Award, the Northern Virginia AIA Award of Merit for Sustainable Design, and a citation from the 2005 Architectural Jury of the American Association of



Langston Brown School & Community Center

School Administrators (AASA)/American Institute of Architects/ Council of Educational Facility Planners International. Glebe, which reopened Jan. 3 after 18 months of extensive renovations,

has earned the 2004 Best Elementary School Renovation by the Virginia School Boards Association.

Swanson Teacher Named to USA Today All-USA Teacher Team

—Swanson Middle School Teacher Cathy Bonneville Hix has been selected as a member of the 2004 USA Today All-USA Teacher Team. Bonneville Hix is one of 20 individuals selected by USA Today from across the county for being an outstanding teacher. She will receive a trophy and \$500. Swanson will receive \$2,000.

NAACP Recognizes APS Board and Staff Member

—School Board Member Frank Wilson and Margaret Stephens-Reed, an Outreach Specialist with the Department of School & Community Relations, both received awards from the Arlington NAACP on Sept. 27. Stephens-Reed received the President's award and Wilson received the Charles Monroe Humanitarian award for their dedication to the Arlington branch and the cause of civil rights.

Students Recognized as "Jack Kent Cooke Foundation Young Scholars"

—With guidance from Swanson Middle School's eighth grade Counselor Judy Jankowski, Eighth Graders Lina Torres and Travis Snider were recently named 'Jack Kent Cooke Foundation Young Scholars.' The Jack Kent Cooke Foundation Young Scholars program provides high achieving students with scholarships and mentors to meet their educational needs during high school and beyond. Only 35 students nationwide are accepted for this prestigious honor. Assistant Principal Mary Beth Pelosky encouraged the students to apply for the scholarship and helped prepare them for their interviews.

continued on page 11

Recent Awards, Honors, & Recognitions

continued from page 10

Staff Member Elected to Head Position of the American Translators Association—APS Translator Thomas Mansella was recently elected Administrator of the Spanish Language Division (SPD) of the American Translators Association. With over 2,300 professional translators and interpreters, the SPD is the single largest membership group within the ATA (French is second with 800 members). Being elected as Administrator is considered to be a strong recognition of professional qualifications and leadership skills.

National Certification—The APS automotive training painting and refinishing program at the Arlington Career Center has received certification by the National Automotive Technicians Education Foundation (NATEF) and the National Institute for Automotive Service Excellence (ASE).

Student Artwork Published in State Department of Education Calendar—The artwork of four students in Bonnie Greer’s early childhood special education class at Drew Model School has been selected to be displayed in the Virginia Department of Education’s 2004-2005 calendar, the “Family FUNdamentals of Activities and Ideas for Early Childhood Parents and Educators.”

Calendar of Events

January 2005

- 17 School closed for Martin Luther King Jr. Holiday.
- 19 Last middle & high school transfer orientations before the application deadline
Gunston – 8:30 a.m.
H-B Woodlawn – 1 p.m. (middle school) and 3 p.m. (high school)
Jefferson – 10 a.m.
Kenmore – 11:30 a.m.
Swanson – 10 a.m.
Wakefield 8:30 a.m.
Washington-Lee – 9:45 a.m.
Williamsburg – 8:30 a.m.
Yorktown – 8:30 a.m.
- 21 Last day to apply to H-B Woodlawn or for a secondary school transfer.
- 28 Teacher Work Day. No school for students.
- 31 Kindergarten Information Night, Washington-Lee, 7 p.m. (Snow Date – Feb.7)

February 2005

- 1- Apr. 15 Timeframe for applying for a transfer to any elementary school and elementary alternative school

- 7 Snow Date – Kindergarten Information Night, Washington-Lee, 7 p.m.
- 9 Montessori Information Night at 7 p.m. at Drew (Snow date – Feb. 14)
- 10 High School Early Release.
- 14 Snow Date – Montessori Information Night, Drew, 7 p.m.
- 21 School closed for President’s Day Holiday. (Make-up day, if needed.)
- 25 Summer Activities Fair, Thomas Jefferson Community Center, 6 p.m.
- 28 Summer School Registration Begins – *Check the Summer School Catalogue for Registration deadline for specific program.*

March 2005

- 3-4 Elementary Parent-Teacher Conferences. No school for elementary students.
- 3 Middle School Parent-Teacher Conferences. No school for middle school students.
- 21-25 Spring Break. No school.

Kindergarten Registration Process Begins on February 1

continued from page 9

To Apply:

Parents have the option of applying to the countywide alternative schools or requesting a transfer to any of the neighborhood schools. The general application process for kindergarten (and preschool) begins Feb. 1. Applications to participate in the lottery for admission to countywide programs begins Feb. 1 and ends April 15. Transportation is provided for eligible students attending neighborhood and countywide programs. Parents wishing to transfer to a neighborhood school other than their local neighborhood school also need to apply for a transfer between Feb.

1 and April 15 for the following school year. Students applying for admission to a preschool program must apply between Dec. 1 and April 15 as well. (For more information about preschool, please contact the Early Childhood Office at 703-228-8632. Admission for transfers is based on space availability. Transportation is not provided for students who transfer from one neighborhood school to another.

To Register:

Parents may register their child at their neighborhood school unless the student was born outside of the United States or their first language is not English. Then

parents should register the student through the Intake Center (2801 Clarendon Blvd.). Call 703-228-7663 for an appointment and details.

Whether you register your child at your neighborhood school or at the Intake Center, the following are registration requirements:

1. Proof of Arlington residency.
2. Birth certificate or other valid proof of birth date.
3. Current physical examination.
4. Immunization certificate.
5. Child’s Social Security number.
6. Proof of TB (tuberculosis) test.

Arlington News When and How You Want It

Arlington has two new ways to keep up with the issues and events that are important to you—*Arlington Insider* and “Update Arlington.”

Looking for information on an upcoming event, or construction and transit updates? If you live or work in Arlington, look no further than *Arlington Insider*, the County’s new e-mail newsletter.

A quick read, the *Insider* is distributed every other week by the County’s Communications Office.

“Update Arlington” highlights events, news and notables important to Arlington County residents. This five-minute, weekly program airs on County Cable Channel 71 and is available anytime online.

With versions in English and Spanish, new episodes debut Friday mornings at 7 a.m. and air several times throughout the day all week long.

You can view “Update Arlington” or subscribe to *Arlington Insider* by visiting www.arlingtonva.us.


Circuit Court Needs Volunteers

Are you caring, compassionate, and committed and looking for a volunteer opportunity that is truly rewarding? Then consider becoming a Court Appointed Volunteer Guardian or Conservator for an individual who has been judged by the Circuit Court to lack the capacity to manage their personal and financial affairs. Training will be provided. For more information about this unique volunteer opportunity, please call (703) 228-1711 or e-mail egrave@arlingtonva.us.

The Citizen is the official publication of Arlington County and is published quarterly by the Public Information Office, Office of the County Manager. Inquiries should be directed to: Citizen Editor, Suite 314, 2100 Clarendon Blvd., Arlington, VA 22201. *The Citizen* is available online at www.arlingtonva.us. Telephone: (703) 228-3969 (voice); (703) 228-4611 (TTY). E-mail: publicaffairs@arlingtonva.us

Editor: Charles Taylor

Arlington County is an Equal Opportunity/Affirmative Action employer

 Printed on recycled paper

Save the Date!

Neighborhood Day is Saturday, May 14...

Come out and celebrate all the things that make our community a great place to live, work and play.



- Plan a neighborhood event.
- Come to or participate in the Neighborhood Day Parade.
- Visit www.arlingtonva.us/nd2005 for more information.

Arlington County 2005 Tax Calendar

March 1	Business License Tax due
April 15	Federal Income Tax filing deadline
May 1	Deadline to file Business Tangible Property Tax return with Commissioner of the Revenue
May 1	Deadline to file State Income Tax
May 1	First-quarter State Estimated Income Tax due
June 15	Second-quarter State Estimated Income Tax due
June 15	First installment of Business License Tax due for qualifying businesses
June 15	First half of Real Estate Taxes due
Sept. 15	Business Tangible Personal Property Tax due
Sept. 15	Third-quarter Estimated Income Tax due
Oct. 5	Personal Property Tax due; place new decal on vehicle
Oct. 5	Second half of Real Estate Taxes due
Nov. 15	Deadline for displaying new County Vehicle Decals

PRSRT STD
US POSTAGE
PAID
ARLINGTON VA
PERMIT 56

Residential Customer
Arlington, Virginia

ECRWSS

