

BCA News

September 2001 • Vol. 4, No. 5 • Post Office Box 5134 • Arlington, Virginia 22205
<http://members.nbci.com/bluemont/>



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NEXT BLUEMONT CIVIC ASSOCIATION (BCA) GENERAL MEETING:

Wednesday, September 26 - 7 p.m.
Arlington Traditional School - 855 North Edison Street
Multi-purpose room - All are welcome

Does Westover Have it Better?

Some Bluemont residents have commented that the Westover shopping area seems to be a lot more attractive and lively than Bluemont's shopping area along Wilson Boulevard. Can changes be made so that Bluemont's neighborhood center becomes more neighborhood-oriented? If you are interested in looking at this question, contact Carl Hallinan at carl.hallinan@home.com or call 812-4797.

Meanwhile, a BCA working group is continuing to urge the County to make Wilson Boulevard safer and to decrease vehicle speeding. The County recently restriped lane markings, highlighted selected crosswalks and added parking along Wilson Boulevard between George Mason Drive and Frederick Street. The County has also committed to conduct a traffic study to see if more significant configuration changes could make Wilson Boulevard safer for all users. ■

Safety Improvements Targeted for Glebe Road

Following lobbying by the Bluemont Civic Association and other groups, Arlington County has taken a first step toward the eventual re-design of the intersection of Glebe Road and Fairfax Drive. The County in August issued a request for proposals from private contractors to re-engineer the intersection in a way that would make it more accessible and safe. Once a new design is approved, the County would presumably need to seek additional funding and authority to make the proposed changes. Representatives of the Bluemont Civic Association since 1998 have been working with County and State officials to reduce the risk of death and injuries along Glebe Road. Despite these efforts, the intersection of Glebe and Fairfax remains one of the top two vehicle crash sites in Arlington County, and a leading site for crashes involving pedestrians. In August, a motorist was killed in a crash there, and in March, a Bluemont resident was severely injured after being hit by a bus while in a crosswalk at this location. ■

Meet Your Leader: County Board Member Charles Monroe to Speak at September Bluemont Meeting

At the September 26 meeting of the Bluemont Civic Association, Arlington County Board member Charles Monroe will be the featured guest speaker, discussing the proposed widening of Interstate 66 and pedestrian and vehicle safety problems on arterial roads. He will also be ready to field questions on other topics of interest to Bluemont residents.

Charles Monroe is a native Arlingtonian. He was elected to the Board in 1999. Mr. Monroe is a civil litigator with the law firm of Duncan & Hopkins, P.C., Alexandria. ■

Speed Photo Radar in Arlington

At the October 24 meeting of the BCA, a representative of the Arlington County Police Department has been invited to provide information and facilitate a discussion on photo speed radar enforcement programs. Following the discussion, BCA members will decide whether to recommend to the County that it seek authority to begin a photo speed radar program in Arlington.

Speed cameras are now in use in the District of Columbia and other U.S. jurisdictions. Photo enforcement uses radar-triggered cameras to photograph the license plates of vehicles that exceed a threshold speed on public roadways. Tickets are then mailed to the vehicle owner.

Police officials in DC and other areas have supported the use of photo speed radar as a cost-efficient way to make roads safer and to increase compliance with speed limits. However, some groups have opposed speed cameras as an infringement of privacy.

Arlington County currently has special authority from the State of Virginia to use cameras to photograph vehicles that run red lights. The use of cameras to photograph speeding vehicles would require additional special authority from the State legislature. ■

Update on I-66 Widening Proposal

In April, the National Capital Region Transportation Planning Board approved a Virginia Department of Transportation I-66 study proposal that will include examination of a variety of alternatives to widening I-66 inside the Beltway. The alternatives that must be examined include reverse-HOV during peak travel hours, design changes to improve traffic flow, the promotion of Metrochek and telecommuting, and express bus service and bus rapid transit. The study is also to include the effects I-66 widening would have on public trails and parkland and on Metrorail ridership.

For more information about the I-66 proposals, contact the Arlington Coalition for Sensible Transportation, acstnet.org. ■

Bluemont's Beaver Pond

At the October 24 meeting of the Bluemont Civic Association, you can learn more about Bluemont's own wetland reserve. U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service officials working at that agency's Ballston office, who have in the past volunteered their expertise to protect Beaver Pond Park's wildlife, have been invited to the meeting to give an update on the park. The pond, located along the Custis Trail spur near the Fairfax Drive entrance to I-66, has periodically hosted not only beavers, but a number of native birds. ■

Halloween Parade is Coming

McGruff the Crime Dog, storytelling, prizes, refreshments, and activities will be part of the fun for kids at the BCA's annual Halloween Parade in Lacey Woods Park on Sunday October 28

The fun will last from 1:30 to 4:30 p.m. -- come in costume!

CACI Sign Appeal

At the September 26 meeting of the BCA, members will be asked by the CACI company to reconsider the BCA's opposition to CACI's proposal to illuminate their building sign at 1100 N. Glebe Road.

The Arlington County Board, which has the authority to approve or deny the CACI request, typically seeks to take into account the views of local civic associations on such matters. ■

Ringling Our Bell

Parents - give your kids a chance to ring the Constitutional Bicentennial Bell at the corner of Wilson Boulevard and George Mason Drive on federal holidays! The next community bell ringings will be at noon on Columbus Day, October 8, and on Veterans Day, November 12.

At the September 26 meeting of the BCA, members will consider whether to change the Association's bylaws to provide that the BCA president will be responsible for ensuring that the Bell is rung each federal holiday, and that each-bell ringing is advertised as best possible. Currently, the bell-ringing has been arranged and advertised on a volunteer basis by neighborhood residents Ron and Ann Ross. ■

Candidates Night and I-66

Meet the people who want to be your local elected leaders! Candidates night, sponsored in part by the Bluement Civic Association, will be held Thursday, October 18 at Tuckahoe Elementary School, 6550 North 26th Street, beginning at 7 p.m.

The County Board Chairman and his challenger, this year's sole candidate for Arlington County School Board, and the various candidates for the 47th and 48th districts of the Virginia House of Delegates will be among those answering questions from the community. Following the formal Candidates Night presentations will be a panel discussion on the Future of I-66 in Arlington. Light refreshments will be served. ■

Bluemont Junction Railroad Display

Several years ago, Arlington County funded a historical railroad display at the W&OD Railroad's Bluemont Junction in Bluemont Park with the support of the BCA. The County intended to use the site to illustrate the history of the County's railroads and trolleys, to explain the significance of the Junction to the development of the County and our neighborhood, and to interpret the historical features that remain there.

The County placed a caboose, a picnic shelter, and a storage shed at the Junction to begin the project. However, the project's funds unexpectedly ran out before the County completed the display.

At its September 26 meeting, the BCA will consider amending its Neighborhood Conservation Plan to add the project to the Plan. This will permit the County to fund the exhibit through the NC process and will enable BCA members to help develop the display. The BCA will also consider asking the County to fund the project through other programs. ■

Arlington Traditional School Construction

At the September 26 meeting of the Bluemont Civic Association, the Arlington County Public Schools Design and Construction Services Department will present the plans for the new construction at the Arlington Traditional School, 855 N. Edison Street. Mrs. Langan, Director of Design and Construction will give the presentation.

Arlington Tradition School will be increasing its capacity from 302 students to 423 students. This will require the addition of one more class room per grade for grades K-5, two more rooms for preschool, a larger gym and relocation of some playground climbing equipment. The new construction is planned to take place at the Northeast corner of the building. ■

In Memory of Sam Kubiak

Bluemont resident Sam Kubiak died in an automobile crash in Canada in August. He is survived by his wife, Beth, son Clifton and daughter Molly. Among his many other activities, Sam worked hard to make his neighborhood a better place. He was a key advocate for traffic calming in Bluemont and for a sidewalk on Jefferson Street. Thanks in large part to Sam's efforts, construction of that sidewalk is planned for 2003. Sam served as the chair of the BCA projects committee.

At the September 26 BCA meeting, members will consider whether the BCA should make a gift in Sam's memory.

Harrison Street Safety Project

Harrison Street residents are continuing to work with Arlington County officials to design and fund a traffic calming and pedestrian safety project for Harrison between Wilson and Washington Boulevards. County staff and residents have already given preliminary approval for the installation of raised crosswalks or speed humps. Additional measures, such as the improvement of the I-66 overpass sidewalks, are also being considered. The project could be approved as soon as the Fall of 2001 or the Spring of 2002, although any construction would likely occur in later months or years. Funding is being sought through the Arlington Neighborhood Conservation program, as well as the Arlington Neighborhood Traffic Calming program. Want to help? Contact Harrison Street block captain Kate Mesches, mesches@aol.com ; 525-8262

Elm Trees Are Back

Help restore the graceful elm tree to its former glory in the American streetscape! Disease-resistant elm trees are now available at reasonable prices through a local environmental organization, Arlington Releaf. Although Dutch elm disease has resulted in the loss of many elms in the U.S., surviving mature elm trees can be seen in significant numbers at and near the National Mall in Washington, D.C.

To purchase your elm tree, contact
Arlington Releaf
c/o Rebecca Mead
1706 North Adams St.
Arlington, VA 22201
(703) 527-8706

Rose Garden's New Look

In October 2001 Arlington County is planning to celebrate the 50th Anniversary of dedicating the Bon Air Memorial Rose Garden. The County Parks and Natural Resources Division will be making improvements to the garden to coincide with this anniversary.

The County plans to add an expanded palette of plants, or "companion plants", to the garden. These will complement the rose displays, as well as provide interest throughout the year, even when the roses are not in bloom. Other improvements will heighten awareness of the garden as a memorial dedicated to the veterans of World War II. Planted containers, sculpture and garden ornament will add focal points of interest to the garden.

The draft of the project plan can be seen online at http://www.co.arlington.va.us/prcr/scripts/planning/bonair_improvement.htm.

For more information, contact Laura Canfield at (703) 228-3339 or lcanfi@co.arlington.va.us

Give Us an Earful

Neighborhood residents are always welcome to contact an officer of the BCA with concerns, questions, or comments on any neighborhood matter. Officers' contact information can be found in this newsletter.

Won't You Please Join Us?

If your household is not yet a member of the Bluemont Civic Association, we'd love to have you join! The cost is just \$1 per month. An active and robust membership helps the Association to better represent the neighborhood on matters including traffic calming, infill development, commercial development, park improvements, and pedestrian safety. The annual membership fee is \$12. To join from now through December 2002, send a check for \$14 (made out to the Bluemont Civic Association) to Box 5134, Arlington VA 22205. Please include your address, phone number and any email addresses.

BCA Membership

BCA membership costs \$14 per household for a membership through the end of 2002.

To join, send a check to:

Treasurer, Bluemont Civic Association, PO Box 5134, Arlington, VA 22205

Name: _____

Address: _____

E-mail: _____ Phone: _____

Get Your Exercise – Distribute This Newsletter!

This newsletter was delivered to you by BCA volunteers willing to spend an hour or so walking their neighborhood two times a year. **Two additional volunteers** are currently needed.

If you can help, please contact Judy Collins, 276-0124 jcollins@nalp.org.

Bluemont

HISTORY

Did You Know?

Bluemont History 1890 - World War II

Throughout the Washington, D.C. area, improvements in rail and road transportation opened up housing opportunities for workers in the city. The first and largest subdivision in our area was Bon Air, opened in 1890. Other early subdivisions included Ridgecrest, Mulhall, and Kearney's Addition to Bon Air. By 1938 most of the land within the Bluemont neighborhood had been subdivided, although many of the lots were still vacant. The Bon Air church (1914) and the Stonewall Jackson School (1926) began serving the growing population of the neighborhood. Longtime Bluemont resident William R. Birch died in 1916 at the age of 100. Over the course of his life, he had fought Native Americans in the old Southwest Territory, survived the chaos of the Civil War, and lived to see electric trains and automobiles. Among his descendants living in the area were the families of Harry and Julia Thomas on Jefferson Street, and Howard and Cora Fields who lived nearby at the intersection of Wilson and the W&OD Railroad. Howard B. Fields served 24 years as Sheriff of the County before retiring in 1943. Harry R. Thomas and his son Homer both served as judges on the Arlington County Circuit Court.

For more Bluemont history, courtesy John Huennekens, see the Bluemont Neighborhood Conservation Plan at <http://members.nbcl.com/bluemont>

BCA Officers and Representatives

President <i>efendley@juno.com</i>	Ed Fendley 527-6118
First Vice President <i>winb@frognet.net</i>	Win Boerckel 351-9628
Second Vice President <i>ttwrec@aol.com</i>	Talmadge Williams 522-5575
Neighborhood Conservation Advisory Committee Representative <i>bhberne@yahoo.com</i>	Bernard Berne 243-0179
Treasurer <i>spicerca@gunet.georgetown.edu</i>	Carol Spicer 524-7843
Secretary <i>jhuenn@gwu.edu</i>	John Huennekens 524-3853
Past President <i>carl.hallinan@home.com</i>	Carl Hallinan 812-4797
Webmaster	Julie Downie <i>jmdownie@ids2.idsonline.com</i>
Newsletter Editor	Carla Uriona
Newsletter Distribution Coordinator	Judy Collins

Civic Federation Representatives

Delegates	Alternates
Bob Atkins	Ellen Armbruster
Gerry Procanick	Bernard Berne
Talmadge Williams	Melodee Melin
Adrienne Pilot	Ed Fendley

Committee Chairs

- Safety Committee:**
Beth Priaux 243-4714
- Wilson Boulevard Committee:**
Carl Hallinan, *carl.hallinan@home.com* 812-4797
- Wilson Boulevard Traffic Safety Working Group:**
Robert Waffle, *rwaffle@erols.com* 358-9448
- Lacey Woods Park:**
Karen DeCarlo, *KGDecarlo@netzero.net* 525-5467
- Ballston Partnership Representative:**
Talmadge Williams, *ttwrec@aol.com* 522-5575

BCA Calendar - Meetings & Events

Unless otherwise noted, meetings are held at the Arlington Traditional School multi-purpose room, 855 N. Edison, at 7:00 p.m.

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| 26 September General Meeting | 28 October, 1:30-4:30 p.m. Halloween Parade, Lacey Woods Park |
| 9 October Executive Committee (All welcome) | 13 November Executive Committee (All welcome) |
| Candidates Night Thursday 18 October, Tuckahoe Elementary School | 28 November General Meeting |
| 24 October General Meeting | 11 December Executive Committee (All welcome) |