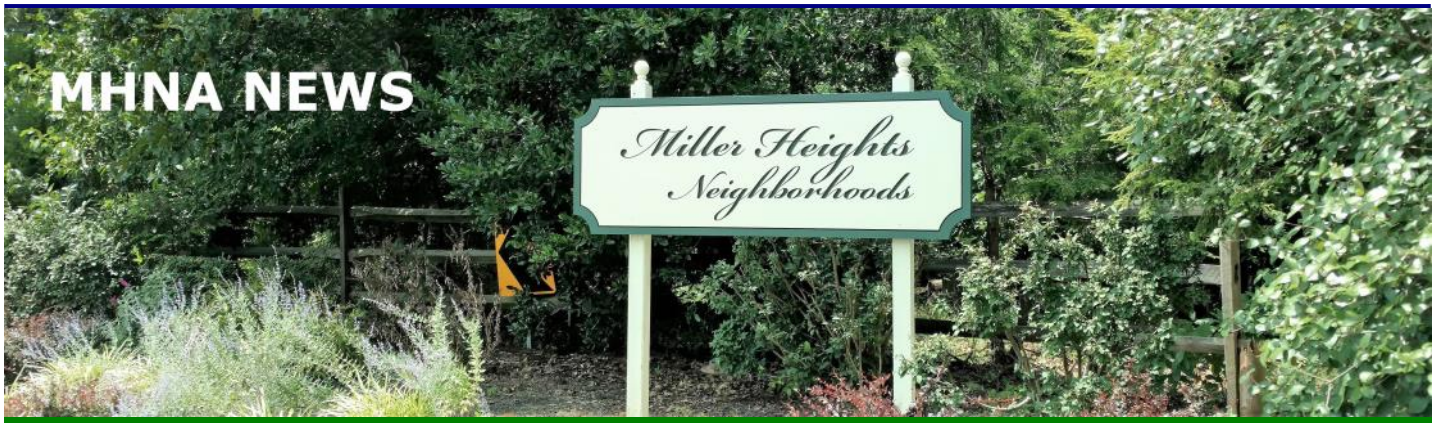

www.MHNAnews.com November 2025

A Message from the MHNA President

Dear Neighbors,

I write this in anticipation of Halloween, one of my favorite holidays. One of the first times I realized what a great community we have in Miller Heights was my first Halloween in the neighborhood. In my old neighborhood in Herndon, each year there were less and less houses open for trick or treaters, but Miller Heights has the spirit of Halloween! The distance traveled per treat (or trick) is sometimes daunting, but most houses are open for business with elaborate decorations and the occasional scare.

We had a great turnout for the annual Miller Heights BASH! Thanks to Mark & Molly for the great music, Deb Cohen for the taco truck, visits from Fairfax County Police, Delegate Bulova, Senator Salim, School Board Member Karl Frisch, and Planning Commissioner Niedzielski-Eichner… and special thanks to organizers Judith Schneider Fletcher and Michelle Kline and all the others who volunteered to make it a great event!

We are (still) in the design phase for the center medians and were hoping to have them installed this Fall but no final dates from FCDOT. If you happen to see a crew out there PLEASE notify me because we want to make sure they do it right the first time (e.g. not leave a bunch of junk inside the median that we have to dig out for plantings). These are landscaped medians and MHNA will be responsible for planting and maintaining them. If you'd like to contribute something (time or money) to the median planting please let us know.

Fairfax County is undertaking an Oakton Congestion Mitigation and Safety Study. The first public workshop is on Thursday, November 13th at 6:30 PM at the Oakton High School Cafeteria. Please join and share your ideas!

We are planning for MHNA elections at our December meeting (time and date TBD). If you would like to nominate yourself or someone else, please let us know. More details to come.

Sammy Shuster has been writing the KIDs Newsletter, but is graduating from high school this year. If your kids would like to take up a role as editors or contributors, please reach out to us.

As always, I remind everyone to please let us know if you have any questions about what we are doing or have suggestions for what else we can do or how we can do things better.

And if anyone wants to work on something in the neighborhood that fits the MHNA mission, let us know. We can always create a committee and support you in your efforts.

Doug Shuster

MHNA President president@mhnanews.com

We Need YOUR Help!

We send out over **582** emails to our MHNA residents each time we have MHNA announcements, meeting notices, Newsletters, and other communications. Although we have **565** homes in Miller Heights, we only have email addresses for about **393** unique homes, since many homes have multiple email addresses and others have not supplied their email addresses. If you know some of your neighbors are not receiving our mailings, please suggest they provide their email addresses to us. They can provide this information by contacting us at: **info@mhnanews.com** or going to our website **www.mhnanews.com** for more information. When residents provide their information, such as address, phone numbers and email addresses, they have the option of keeping the information private if they prefer. We also see that many who are receiving the announcements and newsletters are not opening their emails or their emails may be going into their JUNK or SPAM folders.

You can help get the word out

Contacts

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Our MHNA Website

As we mentioned in previous newsletters, the MHNA website is continually updated with new features and information for you. The site works well and allows you to join MHNA and update your directory and sitter information yourselves. The **Member Portal** contains the MHNA Member Directory and the Sitter/Helper Directory. You can quickly pay your MHNA dues on the site and can easily access and update your information.

Check our website at www.mhnanews.com

To claim your household, register and update your profile and pay your dues, go to:

MHNA Member Portal Login - MHNA Membership Portal (mhnanews.com)

MHNA Board Officers

President	Doug Shuster
Vice President	Michelle Cline
Secretary	Sammy Shuster
Treasurer	Abheshek Narain
Communications	Barry Ingram

MHNA Committee Chairs

Membership	Abheshek Narain
Hospitality	Patti Ogden & Marjorie Itkin
Trails & Environment	Sara Holtz
Landscaping	Judith Schneider-Fletcher

Important Numbers

Emergency - Police, Fire, Medical)	911
Poison Control Poison Control (TTY)	1-800-222-1222 711
Police (non-emergency)	703-691-2131
Victim Assistance Network (Crisis Hotline)	703-360-7273
Animal Control	703-691-2131
Animal Shelter	703-830-1100
Fairfax County Fire Dept. Hdqtrs.	703-246-2126
Fairfax County Health Dept. (Code compliance)	703-324-1300
Fairfax County Health Dept. (sewer/septic)	703-246-2201
Fairfax Park Authority	703-324-8700
Fairfax Water Authority (after hrs. emergency)	703-698-5800
Hazardous Trees	703-324-1770
Household Hazardous Waste Infoline	703-324-5230
Miss Utility (underground utility marking)	1-800-552-7001
National Weather Service	571-888-3500
Storm Drainage Flooding (after hrs. emergency)	703-323-1211
VDOT (road hazards and conditions)	1-800-367-7623
Washington Gas emergency	844-927-4427
Power Outage (Dominion Power)	1-866-366-4357
Report Potholes (VDOT)	1-800-367-7623
Wildlife Assistance Helpline	703-440-0800

Officer and Committee Updates

Miller Heights Facebook Group

The **Miller Heights Neighborhoods Facebook group** is for residents of Miller Heights in Oakton, VA, to share news, information and upcoming events that might be of interest to our neighborhood. This closed group has grown to **625** members and it is still growing with lots of posts.

The MHNA Facebook group is a popular free social networking website that allows registered users to create profiles, upload photos and videos, send messages and keep in touch with neighbors.

You can be invited to join by your neighbor or you can request to join yourself. Check (20+) Miller Heights Neighborhood | Facebook .

Please Slow Down!

We are still seeing far too many instances of drivers, especially on Miller Heights Road, exceeding posted speed limits. We have many neighbors walking and enjoying the fresh air along the roads, children playing throughout the neighborhood and contractors providing service to our residents. Over the years, we have had speed bumps and speed limit signs installed and have asked the FFX County police to place speed cameras in various locations now and then. Now, we have added more visible yard signs and speed humps to remind drivers to slow down .

Editor's Note: We really appreciate all our residents and other contributors for providing us with all the input for our MHNA Newsletter. Thank you!

Upcoming Nearby Events

Friends of Fairfax City Regional Library Book Sale

November 7 - 9

Friday, Saturday and Sunday

10am– 3pm

Local Author Book Festival

At City of Fairfax Regional Library on Saturday, November 15, 11 a.m. - 1 p.m.

Be a part of a wonderful celebration showcasing local talent at our annual festival!

- **Connect** with local authors and delve into discussions about their works.
- **Browse** a variety of their books available for purchase.
- **Delight** in family-friendly activities, including balloon twisting and face painting.

Local Author Book Festival - Adults and 50-Plus - Library Research at Fairfax County Government

Dulles Expo Center Events

Northern Virginia Christmas Market

November 7 - 9

Friday and Saturday 10am– 6pm

Sunday 10am– 5pm

northern virginia christmas market 2025 - Search Images

Capital Art and Craft Festival

December 12 - 14

Friday and Saturday 10am– 5pm

Sunday 10am– 4pm

Home Page

Membership & Treasurer Update

by Abheshek Narain

Membership & Treasurer Update

Membership

As of November 1, 2025, Miller Heights Neighborhoods Association has seen a very nominal increase in paid membership since late August 2025. While we thank all of our current members for the support they provide, we encourage our neighbors to share the benefits and value that MHNA provides with your non-member neighbors and request they join to support. Neighbors can join by visiting MHNA's website (**www.MHNAnews.com**), re-register and submit the annual donations. Only through your outreach will they join and support the neighborhood events hosted by MHNA (e.g. future neighborhood Bash), the efforts to work with Fairfax County on the entrance median for speed reduction, etc. Only together can we continue to keep our neighborhood as amazing as it is.

Below are some of a few highlights of our membership levels. As always, if you have any updates to your contact information, please visit our new Membership Portal (**https://www.mhnanews.com/portal/login.php**), or reach out to membership@mhnanews.com.

MHNA Membership as of November 01, 2025

Total Membership Status			
	8/2/25	11/1/25	% Change
Total Eligible Households	564		
Claimed	251	253	0.80%
Paid	164	172	4.88%
Unpaid	87	86	-1.15%
Unclaimed	322	312	-3.11%

Closing

As a reminder, If you prefer to remit your donation by check, please feel free to submit payment to "Miller Heights Neighborhoods Association" P.O. Box 538, Oakton, VA 22124

Thank you for your continued support of the Miller Heights Neighborhoods Association and its goals and activities. We look forward to your engagement and the continued sharing of information about MHNA and our activities with your neighbors.

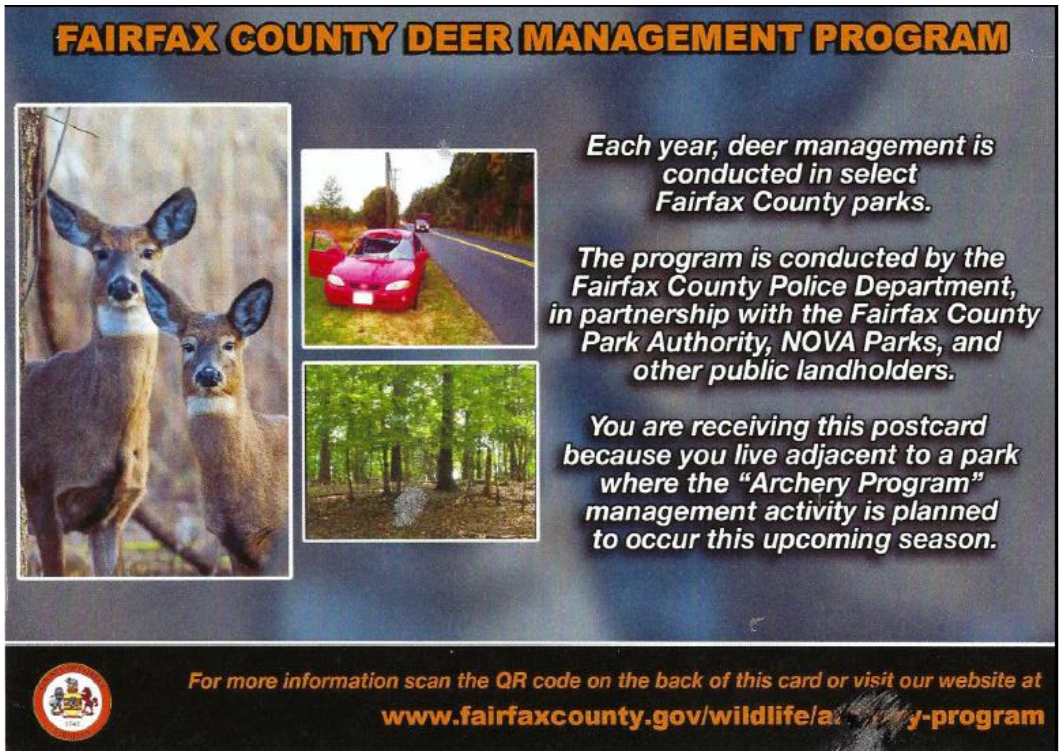
-Abheshek Narain

Treasurer & Membership Chair

Miller Heights Neighborhoods Association (MHNA)

The Miller Heights Social Club

The Miller Heights Neighborhood has another neighborhood group called the Miller Heights Social Club (MHSC). Originally called the Miller Heights Co-op, the organization was formed for families with young children. Over the years the group has changed focus to social events for families and adults of all ages. Our annual events are intended for neighbors to come together, get to know one another, and build relationships. Our events have included: Wine & Beer Tasting, Halloween Family Party & Chili Cook-off, Ladies Bunco Night, Men's Poker Night, Thanksgiving Turkey Trot, Holiday Cookie Exchange, Progressive Dinner, Spring Family Party, Summer Fiesta, and Family Pizza Party. To join visit: https://forms.gle/RmvgQgkq7YvE3Nvh9 or with questions email: millerheightssocialclub@gmail.com. We look forward to seeing you at a future event!



Oakton Nature Instagram Page
(@oakton_nature)

Check out this new Instagram account featuring beautiful photos & fun facts about nature in our amazing Oakton community.

- Follow us!
- Comment on our posts!
- Share your best photos of nature in Oakton (with or without captions) & we'll post them!
- Share Oakton_nature with nature enthusiasts!

(@oakton_nature) • Instagram photos and videos

instagram.com

To those of you on Instagram, check out our new account **@oakton_nature** & follow, like, comment, share our stories & posts. Message us through IG to share nature photos you take in Oakton

A Special Note on Trash and Recycling

There is a lot of very good and helpful information on handling your trash, composting and recycling at the following Fairfax County link for the Fairfax Recycles Newsletter:

Recycling and Trash | Public Works and Environmental Services (fairfaxcounty.gov)

MHNA has been a big supporter of recycling and composting, an effort that Sara Holtz has championed for our neighborhood.

Annual Miller Heights Coat Drive

The annual coat drive is happening!

Bring new or clean used coats to 3312 Saddlestone Court.

Bag and leave them on the stoop between October 30th and December 15th

Thanks

The Miller Heights Board

Our coat drive results in 2024

FARMERS MARKETS

Farmfresh Oakton Market

Open Saturdays 9am-1pm

Jan 4—NOV 22

Oakton United Methodist Church
2951 Chain Bridge Rd
Oakton, VA 22124

For more information

https://www.freshfarm.org/markets/oakton

NEWSLETTER NEWS

This is your newsletter. We want to get community event updates, block party news, general neighborhood news, questions and answers about issues, opinions (not political), and just neighborhood stories written by our residents. **If you have information, items of interest to our community, or human interest stories you would like included in the Newsletter, send it to us. Photos are always invited and welcome.**

If you do have input or ideas about content, contact Barry Ingram at: editor@mhnanews.com

Need service hours?

Join our effort to remove invasive plants from parkland in Miller Heights and replace them with native plants, for the benefit of local wildlife such as birds and pollinators/butterflies.

Contact Sara Holtz at **sh12sh34@gmail.com** for upcoming dates.

A Message from Supervisor Dalia Palchik

Dear Miller Heights neighbors,

I hope you are doing well following the start of the school year and this past weekend's Halloween festivities! The mornings are starting to get crisp, and I've enjoyed the variety of colors in the foliage around our district.

My team and I are always working on improving the ways in which constituents can engage with our office and County resources. Here are some items that are top-of-mind for me:

Annual Providence District Food Drive

My office, along with several community partners, is hosting our 6th Annual Food Drive through November 15th for Food for Others, and the food pantries at Oakton High School, Woodson High School, and Falls Church High School.

Visit our page to find collection sites and donation hours.

Federal Government Shutdown

Federal Workforce Resource Hub

The effects of the government shutdown are being especially felt by our neighbors and community members. Fairfax County has prepared a 'Federal Workforce Resource Hub' which outlines resources available to furloughed federal employees. It can be accessed here.

SNAP Benefits

The State has created an emergency food assistance program called Virginia Emergency Nutrition Assistance (VENA). VENA will provide emergency food assistance to eligible SNAP households while the federal shutdown continues. VENA benefits will be issued weekly, instead of monthly. Learn more here.

Oakton Traffic Study

The Fairfax County Department of Transportation (FCDOT) will hold a Community Workshop for the Oakton Congestion Mitigation and Safety Study on Thursday, Nov. 13, 6:30 p.m., at Oakton High School, 2900 Sutton Road, Vienna.

The workshop will include a brief presentation from staff to introduce the project and a mapping exercise, which will divide attendees into small groups and allow the public to share their recommendations to improve transportation in Oakton. Register here.

Help with Invasive Plant Removal

All are invited to participate in a "Week of Action", November 8-16, when people across Fairfax County will come together to rescue trees from invasive vines. This is the official launch of Fairfax Tree Rescuers Partnership PRISM (Partnership for Regional Invasive Species Management), a community-wide initiative to save our trees and natural areas from the invasive plants that are smothering and strangling them. Find dates, locations, and register here.

Department of Public Works & Environment Open House

DPWES is hosting their Open House at the Noman M. Cole, Jr. Water Recycling Facility. My team and I just toured the facility earlier this month and it is definitely a must see. Their theme this year is A Sweet Journey to Clean Water. Visitors can participate in a variety of activities, and there will be a Touch-a-Truck event for kids, as well as bus, tunnel and walking tours of the facility. Festive drinks and snacks will be provided. But there's also an educational component so visitors can learn what happens to their water when it goes down the drain. It will be December 6, 2025 from 10am to 2pm at 9519 Richmond Highway, Lorton, VA 22079. For information and tickets.

Sign up to receive my bi-weekly updates on what's happening at the Board, local events, ways to give back, and more (bit.ly/PalchikPost)!

All my best,

Supervisor Dalia Palchik

Dalia Palchik

Providence District Food Drive

October 8—November 15

The Office of Providence District Supervisor Dalia Palchik, along with several community partners will be collecting non-perishable food items from October 8 to November 15 for Food for Others, Oakton Highschool, Woodson Highschool, and Falls Church food pantries.

The following items are most requested by our donation recipients:

- Cereal
- Shelf-stable Milk
- Granola Bars
- Fruit Cups
- Pasta
- Tomato Sauce
- Canned Tuna
- Canned Chicken
- Canned Vegetables
- Juice Boxes
- Trail Mix
- Crackers
- Instant Noodles
- Chickpea Snacks

Donations may be dropped off at Oakton Schoolhouse -

2641 Hunter Mill Road, Oakton - 24/7

Fairfax County Parks

Looking for things for you or your family to do? Classes to take? Recreation or exercise? Well, take a tour through the Parktakes Fall and Winter Guides from the Fairfax County Park Authority. Of course, the Oakmont Recreation Center is the closest one to Miller Heights. You can also view the guide at the Park Authority website: https:www.fairfaxcounty.gov/parks/parktakes

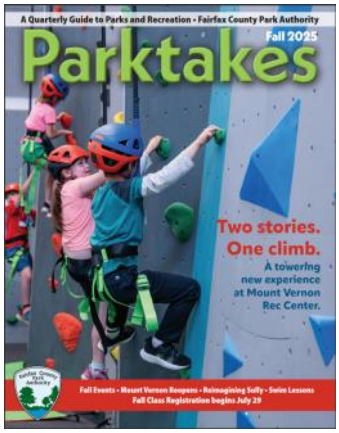
Outdoor, indoor and virtual class options are available in a wide range of interest areas including:

Choose from a variety of options and formats:

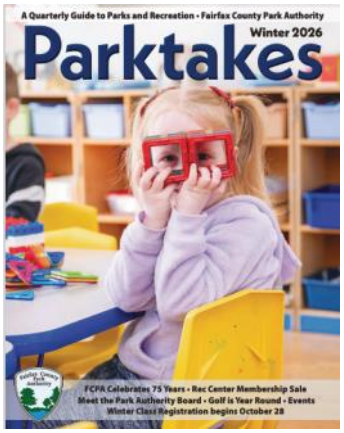
- Outdoor and indoor fitness classes
- Learn to swim group lessons and private lessons
- Children's and adult classes
- Summer Camps
- Nature & history programs
- Sports
- Scouting
- Golf lessons
- Gardening
- Virtual classes and camps – Fitness, nature, music, drama, coding
- Astronomy

The fitness centers offer a wide variety of cardiovascular machines, including treadmills, ellipticals and bikes, most with personal television viewing screens. For strength training, we have several lines of Cybex and Free Motion strength training machines as well as free weights.

Fall 2025



Winter 2026



GOCA Update

(Greater Oakton Community Association)

Dear Oakton Neighbors and Friends,

Here is information about an event GOCA is doing in November:

History Alive! Presents Amelia Earhart, Oakton Schoolhouse, Sunday, November 16, 3 – 4:30 pm. Step back in time with award-winning performer Mary Ann Jung as she brings Amelia Earhart–the daring aviator who made history as the first woman to fly solo across the Atlantic–to life! This lively, interactive program will captivate both adults and children (ages 9+). Don't miss this unforgettable afternoon of history, drama, and inspiration at the Oakton Schoolhouse. Register here.

GOCA is an all-volunteer, nonprofit organization, and 100% of your donations go to our community efforts. To donate, please visit our PayPal link. If you would like to become more actively involved, email us at contact@greateroakton.com and we can match you with the right opportunity.

See our website at: www.greateroakton.com

Join Us for a Fun Interactive Show

History Alive! performer Mary Ann Jung is well known for her authentic portrayal of Amelia Earhart, the first woman to fly solo across the Atlantic Ocean. Both adults and children (9+) are sure to be totally engaged by this unique program.

Sunday, November 16, 2025
3 - 4:30 pm

Oakton Historic Schoolhouse
2841 Hunter Mill Road, Oakton

$10 per person
QR Code or Register Here
More details on the sign-up page

If questions, email
contact@greateroakton.com

GREATER OAKTON
Community Association

The Friends of Oakton Library

The Friends of The Oakton Library could use your donations! We welcome your gently used books, DVDs, CDs, and puzzles. Come and shop for the family. Stock up on kids books, and great reads from current fiction to vintage classics, from non-fiction to memoir and biography. All profits support programming at the Oakton Library and help purchase materials for the county library system. Think of us when you clear out your bookshelves. You may bring up to three bags or boxes per day to the donations cart in the library foyer.

There are plenty of other events going on at the Oakton Library to fill your summer days with fun!

Events - The Friends of Oakton Library

https://www.friendsofoaktonlibrary.org

Mary Colombi - VP Friends of the Oakton Library

Oakton Community Library Hours

Monday & Tuesday - 10 am to 9 pm
Wednesday through Saturday - 10 am to 6 PM

BOOK DONATION INFORMATION

Your book donations help to finance Oakton Library's programs and FCPL's collections as a whole.

When donating used books please note:

- Donations should be in good to excellent condition
- There is a limit of 3 grocery sized bags or small boxes per donation
- All donations should be left on the green cart just inside the Oakton Library lobby

The Oakton Public Library is grateful for all the support from our Miller Heights neighbors.

FCDOT sent a press release for the first Oakton Congestion and Safety study meeting, which will be held at the **Oakton High School cafeteria on Thursday, November 13th at 6:30 PM**

This first meeting will include a brief presentation covering the project background, scope, and timeline, followed by a community workshop and discussion. The workshop will group participants into tables, each with a large map of the study area and drawing materials. A facilitator will be present at each table to help participants discuss their ideas and priorities for Oakton., cost, etc.

Oakton Congestion and Safety Study

FCDOT

Join Us for an In-Person Community Workshop!

Thursday, November 13th at 6:30 PM | Oakton High School Cafeteria (2900 Sutton Rd, Vienna, VA 22181)

Workshop Purpose
The Fairfax County Department of Transportation (FCDOT) will be conducting a congestion mitigation and safety study for the Oakton area. The study will evaluate different roadway improvements and come up with short and long-term improvements. Recommended improvements will also consider the impacts to the bicycle, pedestrian, and bus networks in the study area, including impacts to safety for all roadway users.

This workshop will include a brief project presentation, and will be followed by a group activity where participants will present ideas and discuss priorities for short and long-term improvements.

Visit the project website to learn more about this study!

Fairfax County is committed to a policy of nondiscrimination in all county programs, services, and activities. For accomodations, please call FCDOT at 703.877.5600

TRAILS & ENVIRONMENT

Submitted by Sara Holtz

Fairfax Tree Rescuer PRISM

Our mission is to facilitate a community-wide effort by residents and organizations to stem the epidemic of invasive plants and thereby protect our trees and promote the growth of the life-supporting plants that are native to our ecosystem.

Invasive plants know no boundaries! We must work together and simultaneously on all land types - of course parkland, but also residential, commercial, roadside rights of way, *etc.*

Click here for our Plan of Action.

A PRISM (Partnership for Regional Invasive Species Management) is a community partnership that brings agencies, nonprofits, and neighbors together to tackle invasive plants or animals across a region. Our region is Fairfax County in Northern Virginia and the independent jurisdictions therein including Falls Church.

Fairfax PRISM Launch Event in Oakton

Sat 11/15/25 at 10-12 at Oakmont

Perfect for students who need service learning hours, scouts who need community service hours, Honor Society & Civics students who need hours, ... All ages & abilities welcome!

Register:

https://volunteer.fairfaxcounty.gov/custom/1380/opp_details/190042?slotid=1859464251115

Fairfax TREE RESCUERS
PRISM

Sara Holtz Received the Sally Ormsby Environmental Stewardship Award

Huge congratulations to Sara Holtz for receiving the 2025 Sally Ormsby Environmental Stewardship Award from Fairfax County Park Authority!

Since 2017, Holtz has led 230+ Invasive Management Area (IMA) volunteer sessions in Fairfax County Parks, focusing on invasive removal, native planting, youth mentorship and community education to protect Fairfax County's natural resources.

The Sally Ormsby Environmental Stewardship Award was established by the Park Authority Board on November 14, 2007, in recognition of Sally B. Ormsby's many years of service as a citizen steward. Her actions promoted the responsible and sustainable management of natural resources. These precious assets are entrusted to the Park Authority's care by the residents of this community. Through stewardship we protect these treasures now and for generations to come. This award recognizes individuals and organizations whose actions embody the spirit and values of stewardship and result in tangible environmental benefits.

https://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/parks/awards/ellydoyle

TRAILS & ENVIRONMENT (CONT.)

Fall Plantings in Fencing to Prevent Deer Browse

Fairfax County Park Authority Invasive Management Area (FCPA IMA) site leaders Tucker Newberry, Nick Newberry, Karin Lehnigk & Sara Holtz lead habitat restoration efforts on parkland in our neighborhood by removing invasive plants & planting native plants. In September they planted Christmas ferns, sensitive ferns, swamp white oak, sycamore, and winterberry inside a deer exclosure (fencing) to protect the young plants from deer browse. In October they planted 65 native plants including asters, blue wild indigo, yellow wild indigo, columbine, and poverty oats in a larger deer exclosure. You can see the deer exclosures near the big brown park sign and near the cement sidewalk (where the Miller Rd extension meets the Cross County Trail)

Trash haul on Miller Heights Rd (next to the guardrail north of Cranbrook before Blue Roan)

Miller Heights Real Estate Update
November 2025

Real Estate Activity

Hi All,

Think fall isn't a good time to buy or sell? Think again. This season can offer some of the best opportunities of the year for those ready to act. Here are a few of the benefits to buying or selling in late fall or early winter.

Tax advantages. From mortgage interest deductions and capital gains exclusions to 1031 exchange opportunities, closing before Dec. 31 could make a year-end move financially strategic.

Motivated sellers and serious buyers. Often, buyers and sellers who are looking for a move this time of year are eager to get the deal done. For sellers, you can have confidence that buyers are seriously evaluating your property, and for buyers, you can potentially benefit from a homeowner who wants to move quickly.

Less competition. For those selling properties, you'll find fewer homes competing against yours, and for those buying, you'll have less prospective buyers shopping, giving you stronger negotiating power.

Potential price advantages. With fewer consumers shopping for properties, buyers could benefit from better prices or sales terms—such as covered repairs or credits, as well as a fast or flexible closing date.

As always, market conditions depend on exactly where you live and actual current market activity. For up to date information on the local market, contact me if you are thinking about buying, selling, renting or owning real estate.

Happy Fall!

Liz Potemra

703-581-7759
lizp@longandfoster.com
Long and Foster Vienna/Oakton

Recent Real Estate Activity in Miller Heights:

Status	Address	Number of Beds	Last Update	List/Close Price	DOM
Contract	3014 Apple Brook Ln	5	10/27/2025	$2,250,000	21
Contract	3118 Miller Heights Rd	5	10/29/2025	$1,194,900	92
Closed	11170 Tattersall Trl	4	7/22/2025	$1,225,000	4
Closed	3124 Miller Heights Rd	4	9/11/2025	$1,211,800	5
Closed	3403 Miller Heights Rd	4	7/23/2025	$1,325,000	5
Closed	10912 Blue Roan Rd	4	8/7/2025	$1,095,000	11
Closed	3307 Miller Heights Rd	4	10/2/2025	$1,225,000	18
Closed	3124 Miller Heights Rd	4	6/2/2025	$850,000	29
Closed	3415 Miller Heights Rd	4	8/18/2025	$1,600,000	62
Closed	3206 Wheatland Farms Dr	5	10/20/2025	$1,650,000	80
Closed	3163 Ariana Dr	6	9/10/2025	$1,700,000	114

"Compromise in the Garden: Piles, Projects, and Prickly Pears"

By Farmer Brown (Gordon)

I hear the looks of disapproval as I write this, and can see the tsk, tsk, tsks as well. Yes, yes, I cleaned up my yard last week. You may be thinking, hypocrite, he tells us NOT to tidy the yard until late spring / early summer. And, yes, yes, I do and I stand by that. However, I'm trying a new approach this year… while I have left the leaves, I have trimmed some things back, I have not thrown my yard debris away, I've consolidated the like for like (dead seed heads and dry stalks) into bunches and placed those in their own area around my compost boxes. The Jerusalem artichokes, and milkweed stalks, both excellent options for boring insects, will continue to be a nesting option with the way they are stacked. All the echinacea's have been placed in piles between my berry fences for the hordes of gold finches to enjoy, and any they miss, I hope, will self-seed. The asters, now that they are done, have been transplanted to a spot lower in my yard. The Jerusalem artichokes have performed again, and we will be eating their extra-delicious tubers for dinner this week.

I still have lingering figs that have not yet ripened and in years past, I have collected these and made a delicious bright green fig jam, there just are not enough left over to do much with. Next spring I'll trim some of the smaller branches and see if I can't get them to root.

Repairing our deck has left me with some timber that I have great plans for. The first is to construct a few fence panels to protect my strawberries which are currently hiding below Dollar Tree wastepaper baskets, fearing for their very lives as marauding deer wonder through my garden, undeterred by tight spaces, lights, and other sundry "deer prevention hacks". My father-in-law will be out over thanksgiving, so that could give him something to do, even though he doesn't know it yet. And the second, possibly his second task, is to construct a bed for some type of mushroom – still to be determined, under my deck. I like mushrooms but my family hasn't come round to them just yet. More to come on this effort to correct un-inspired palates.

What has been exciting this year is that my eastern prickly pears bore me some fruit. I picked them, but they're still a bit green, because I needed to re-pot them. I was tired of being impaled every time I wondered about my veggie patch by 4-inch spines and wasn't a fan of the tiny hairs that poke into you when you touched a leaf pad. However, I do like this and hope the new location and tight fencing around them will give them room to impress me next year.

Now, one thing that has thoroughly confused me this year is that I have fully grown pepper plants and cape gooseberry plants dating back to June. Both are only now flowering and fruiting, just in time for the frost action we are getting. I have one green pepper that is about the size of a gobstopper and two the size of peas. They had the prime spot in the garden, were looked after fastidiously and now reward all my love and attention with lunchbox sized yields and one pretty flower. This is why I only grow basil, cherry tomatoes and beans. Why? Because, sun. And to be fair, I grow other things like beans (which were prolific to say the least this year), salad things and herbs.

And while I sometimes think my family is allergic to the great outdoors or maybe it is just when there's gardening work to do, what has brought everyone together is the great daily lanternfly killing. Our grapes were the target of the first infestation this year, but now since those were trimmed back (remember my deck project) the lantern flies have found our Japanese Snowbell to their liking. This is convenient because I can reduce their numbers from my desk using a BB Gun. And then, when everyone gets home, we knock them off the tree and stomp on them. So, if you do happen to drive past, it's not a barn dance lesson in full swing, it's just us taking care of the invasive bug population.

That's it from me, Farmer Brown, but if you are so inclined, join the Miller Heights Garden Club Facebook Group: https://**www.facebook.com/share/g/17AXY8o744/**. We'd love to have you!

Unlawful and Dangerous Practice of Prescribing Wildlife as Emotional Support Animals

Submitted by Phyllis Ingram

The Virginia Department of Health Professions (DHP), in coordination with the Virginia Department of Wildlife Resources (DWR), is issuing this important advisory regarding the **prescription or recommendation of wildlife as emotional support animals (ESAs).**

Please be advised that:

- **It is illegal in Virginia to possess wildlife as pets**, regardless of whether the animal is prescribed or recommended as an emotional support animal.
- **Prescribing or endorsing the use of wild animals as ESAs is both unlawful and dangerous.**
- Wildlife possession without proper permits is a violation of Virginia law and may result in **confiscation of the animal**, legal penalties, and potential disciplinary action.
- **Key Concerns:**
- **Public Health and Safety:** Wild animals can carry diseases that can be transmitted from animals to humans, and pose unpredictable behavioral risks, endangering the patient and the public.
- **Animal Welfare:** Removing wildlife from their natural habitat is detrimental to their well-being and survival.
- **Patient Harm:** Confiscation of an illegally possessed animal can cause **additional emotional trauma** to the patient, undermining therapeutic goals.

We urge all licensed practitioners to **refrain from recommending or prescribing wild animals** as emotional support animals under any circumstances. If you are unsure whether a species is considered wildlife under Virginia law, please consult the Department of Wildlife Resources. To learn more, read their blog article about this emerging issue.

Election Officers

By Joel Schlesinger

I would like to share with our MHNA friends and neighbors my experience serving on election days as an Election Officer for Fairfax County. It has been an honor and a privilege to do so, and I do not employ these terms lightly. Election Officers are the good folks we see at our polling stations welcoming voters and checking them in, providing ballots and monitoring that they are properly cast and, at the end of a very long day, making sure that the results are absolutely accurate and delivered safely to the Fairfax County Government Building. What I discovered when I volunteered was a veteran, thoroughly knowledgeable Election Office staff committed to ensuring Fairfax County voting integrity. The dedicated women and men professionals of that office have established and constantly revise careful systems and protocols, secured state-of-the-art equipment, and provide abundant training to ensure that those of us who serve on election days know how to efficiently respond to voter's needs and get the votes tallied and submitted. At a time when some may feel unsure about election integrity, I can say that I have worked in numerous elections, and with confidence believe that our votes are cast and counted with absolutely no fear of manipulation or error. The Fairfax County Election Office truly deserves recognition and our thanks for safeguarding this most basic of our rights as citizens.

Thanks.

Joel Schlesinger

Editor note:

Joel had submitted this interesting article before the August newsletter, but I missed getting it in that edition. I apologize for that because it is an important subject and we appreciate his service to our community and the information.

Walking Safely!

Submitted by Rebecca Pick

WALK ON LEFT SIDE FACING TRAFFIC! You need to be able to see what is coming at you.
Thank you!

Loose Ends

By Beth Eltinge

During the pandemic I joined a group called "Loose Ends," a group of volunteers who finish fiber related work, such as knitting, crochet or quilting that was started but left unfinished by a loved one due to illness or death. Even though I have my own healthy pile of unfinished work I was drawn to the idea of helping others through their grief by using my hands and skills. I listed my set of skills on the application form and waited for the projects to roll in to me. I joined a Face Book group for Loose Ends Finishers and was heartened by the stories of project owners and project finishers working together to complete a loved ones work and I waited patiently to be called. I waited for several years. As it turns out many other people felt the call to help in this way, and the ratio of finishers to projects is roughly 12 to 1. I have finally been asked to help finish a quilt for the daughter of a woman who died three years ago. We are working out a time when we can meet and discuss the best way forward with this project.

I like the philosophy of this group, as exemplified by these statements from their web page:

"Loose Ends aims to ease grief, create community, and inspire generosity by matching volunteer handwork finishers with textile projects people have left undone due to death or disability."

"We are matchmakers."
In knitting patterns, this is noted as K2Tog (knitting two together).

When Loose Ends receives a project submission, we look through our database of finishers to find a good match. With an eye toward geography, skill level, and druthers, we will identify a good fit based on the information volunteer finishers submitted in their profiles. The next step is running this by the finishers themselves to find out if they're feeling it too.
Once a finisher says yes to a project, we make the connection by introducing the finisher and project holder in an email. Then… we step away and let the project evolve within this new connection. We are always here to troubleshoot, advise or reassign if needed."

If you are interested in becoming a finisher, or, if you have a project you would like finished, please check out the website looseends.org. The website also has several videos and press releases, including the time the project was mentioned on the TV show Jeopardy. I am looking forward to my own work with this wonderful project.

Successful Miller Heights BASH

We had an exceptional annual Miller Heights BASH on September 13th at the corner of Saddlestone and Cranbrook. Large crowd of neighborhood fun-loving parents and kids. Also, many scooters, carriages, bikes, street chalks, hula hoops and entertainment. This was a great opportunity to meet new neighbors and discuss events.

Fairfax Police joined us and we were entertained by the music of Mike and Molly.

A taco truck provided free tacos, sponsored by Deb Cohen of Century 21 Redwood Realty. MMM Good!

Many photos were taken by Michael Simone and Barry Ingram. Here are a few below:

More photos on the following page -

More Miller Heights Bash Photos

We hope everyone enjoyed attending our annual Miller Heights Bash on Saddlestone Ct. and are also enjoying these photos .

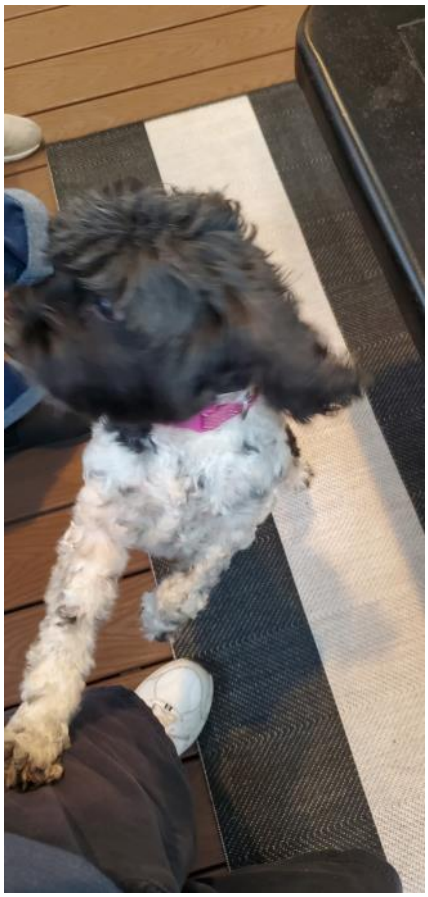
Great Saddlestone Ct. Octoberfest!

Yes, this is a REAL PARTY street!

We had our annual Saddlestone Ct. Octoberfest on October 19th, but this year, we moved it inside, not for the weather, but just to be different. Our gracious neighbors, Aaron and Talia Johansen invited everyone to their beautiful home and deck. A festive crowd of fun-loving parents and kids shared an afternoon and evening of food, drinks, TV football, and friendly neighbor discussions. This was even better than last year. This was a great opportunity to meet new neighbors and learn about things going on in the area.

Aaron spent most of his time at the grill with hot dogs, but that was supplemented by all kinds of food from neighbors. Talia supervised the kitchen and provided hot dishes, pies, cakes, beans, sauerkraut, potatoes, corn souffle, cookies, water, soft drinks, beer and on and on.

MMM Good!

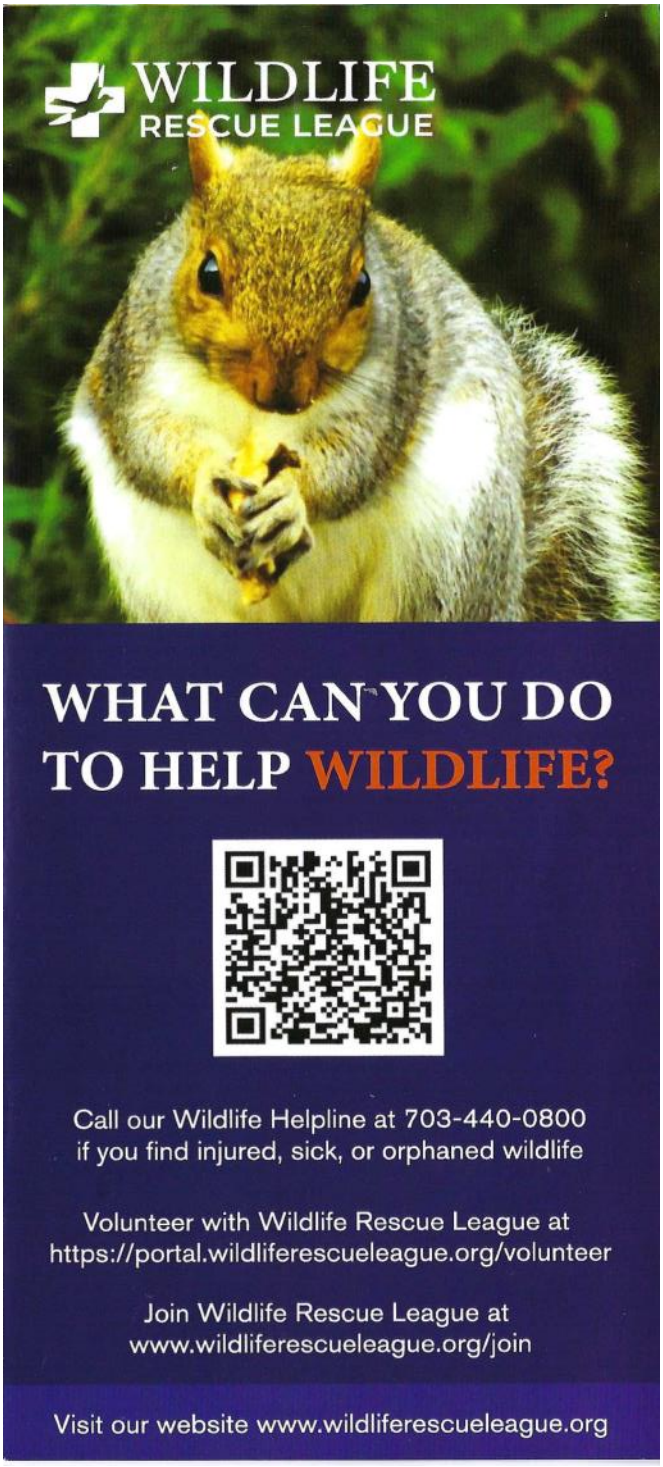


More photos on the following page -

Great Saddlestone Ct. Octoberfest!

Everyone had a great time.
We'll see you all again next year.

Linda Tiani recently attended a lecture on Wildlife rescue and thought we might like to pass this handout around to our MHNA Neighbors



Halloween Memories

By Hope Langan and Barry Ingram

Even scary people in our doctor's offices

More Halloween Photos on Following Page

More Halloween Memory Photos

Spooky Oakmont Rec Center entrance

Fairfax County 2025-2026 School Calendar

Fairfax County Public Schools 2025-2026 Standard School Year Calendar

July 2025

S	M	T	W	T	F	S
		1	2	3	4 H	5
6	7	8	9	10	11	12
13	14	15	16	17	18	19
20	21	22	23	24	25	26
27	28	29	30	31		

4 Independence Day

August 2025

S	M	T	W	T	F	S
					1	2
3	4 NT	5 NT	6 NT	7 NT	8	9
10	11 SP	12 TW	13 SD	14 TW	15 SP	16
17	18 F	19	20	21	22	23
24/31	25	26	27	28	29 H	30

29 Labor Day Break

September 2025

S	M	T	W	T	F	S
	1 H	2	3	4	5	6
7	8	9	10	11	12	13
14	15	16	17	18	19	20
21	22 O	23 H	24	25	26	27
28	29	30				

1 Labor Day Break
23 Rosh Hashanah (begins sundown 9/22 - sundown 9/24)

October 2025

S	M	T	W	T	F	S
			1 O	2 H	3	4
5	6	7	8	9	10	11
12	13 SD	14	15	16	17	18
19	20 H	21	22	23	24	25
26	27	28	29	30	31 QE	

2 Yom Kippur (begins sundown 10/1 - sundown 10/2)
13 Indigenous Peoples' Day
20 Diwali

November 2025

S	M	T	W	T	F	S
						1
2	3 SP	4 TW	5	6	7	8
9	10	11 H	12	13	14	15
16	17	18	19	20	21	22
23/30	24	25	26 H	27 H	28 H	29

1-2 All Saints Day / Día de los Muertos
4 Election Day
11 Veterans Day
26-28 Thanksgiving Break

December 2025

S	M	T	W	T	F	S
	1	2	3	4	5	6
7	8 O	9	10	11	12	13
14	15	16	17	18	19	20
21	22 H	23 H	24 H	25 H	26 H	27
28	29 H	30 H	31 H			

8 Bodhi Day
14 - Chanukah (begins sundown 12/14 - sundown 12/22)
22 - January 2 Winter Break
25 Christmas

January 2026

S	M	T	W	T	F	S
				1 H	2 H	3
4	5	6 O	7 O	8	9	10
11	12	13	14	15	16	17
18	19 H	20	21	22	23	24
25	26	27	28 QE	29 SD	30 TW	31

1 New Year's Day
6 Three Kings Day/Epiphany
7 Orthodox Christmas
19 Martin Luther King, Jr.'s Birthday
19 Orthodox Epiphany

February 2026

S	M	T	W	T	F	S
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
8	9	10	11	12	13	14
15	16 H	17 TW	18 O	19	20	21
22	23	24	25	26	27	28

16 Washington's Birthday and Presidents' Day
17 Lunar New Year
18 First Full Day of Ramadan (begins sundown 2/17 and continues with daily fast and nightly prayer until 3/18)
18 Ash Wednesday
25 Orthodox Ash Wednesday

March 2026

S	M	T	W	T	F	S
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
8	9	10	11	12	13	14
15	16	17	18	19 O	20 H	21
22	23	24	25	26	27 QE	28
29	30 H	31 H				

20 Eid al-Fitr (begins sundown 3/19- sundown 3/20)
20 Nowruz
30- April 3 Spring Break

April 2026

S	M	T	W	T	F	S
			1 H	2 H	3 H	4
5	6 TW	7	8	9	10 SP	11
12	13	14	15	16 O	17	18
19	20	21	22	23	24	25
26	27	28	29	30		

1 Passover (begins sundown 4/1 – sundown 4/9)
3 Good Friday
5 Easter
10 Orthodox Good Friday
12 Orthodox Easter
16 Theravada New Year

May 2026

S	M	T	W	T	F	S
					1	2
3	4	5	6	7	8	9
10	11	12	13	14	15	16
17	18	19	20	21	22	23
24/31	25 H	26 TW	27 H	28	29	30

25 Memorial Day
27 Eid al-Adha (begins sundown 5/26 - sundown 5/27)

June 2026

S	M	T	W	T	F	S
	1	2	3	4	5	6
7	8	9	10	11	12	13
14	15	16	17 YE	18 TW	19 H	20
21	22	23	24	25	26	27
28	29	30				

19 Juneteenth

FCPS

Some holidays and observances, such as Eid al-Fitr, may shift due to anticipated lunar sightings.

Legend

F	First Day of School
QE	End of the Quarter / 2 Hour Student Early Release
YE	Last Day for Regular Classes / Early Release
O	Religious and Cultural Observance(s)
/ O	Religious and Cultural Observance(s) - Evening Only
TW	Teacher Workday / Student Holiday
SD	Staff Development Day / Student Holiday
SP	School Planning Day / Student Holiday
H	Student Holiday
NT	New Teacher Training

Quarter Duration

Quarter	End Date	Duration
1	October 31	49
2	January 28	46
3	March 27	37
4	June 17	48
180 Instructional Days		

Number of 5-Day Instructional Weeks
1st Quarter - 5
2nd Quarter - 6
3rd Quarter - 6
4th Quarter - 8

www.fcps.edu/calendars

Updated 6/17/25