



A MESSAGE FROM THE MHNA PRESIDENT

January 2024

Dear Neighbors,

Happy New Year! I hope everyone enjoyed these past few weeks of real winter weather. I'm from the Northeast so it's about time we got a little snow! In December, just in time for the deep freeze, Miller Heights raised the bar once more with a huge haul of winter coats, led by Judith Schneider-Fletcher and organized with Supervisor Palchik's Office. See inside for the article and photos on this project.

If you missed the December quarterly meeting we had in that beautiful new building at Flint Hill School, we had great presentations from:

- Nick Newberry and Sara Holtz on invasive species management (see inside for an article on this topic); and
- Greg Garber, Fairfax County Health Department Division of Environmental Health, on maintaining on-site sewage systems. Presentation here: <https://www.dropbox.com/scl/fi/347lvcd3y65lnryxsxz96/Miller-Heights-HOA-12-6-23.ppt?rlkey=6of5v3nf7cr2vm8h125pp4tbn&dl=0>

During the meeting we also formally elected new board members Michelle Cline as new Vice President and Samantha Shuster as Secretary. We also updated folks on the Miller Heights Traffic Calming Project – FCDOT tells us that the speed tables and hump are planned for Q1 2024 and the center medians for Q3 or Q4 2024.

If you haven't seen it, there was a recent [article in Fairfax Now](#) updating the developer EYA's proposal for redeveloping the AT&T site. To see EYA's new official plan, please visit [Options for Oakton's site](#).

It's time to pay your 2024 dues! We can't keep up the work

we do without your support. Please do pay your membership dues and please let us know if you have new neighbors that we can reach out to. We have a new Hospitality Committee comprised of Marjorie Geraci and Patty Ogden who will give them a proper welcome from MHNA!

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

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CONTACTS

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 **614** 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](#).

NEXTDOOR MILLER HEIGHTS

Nextdoor is the private social network for you, your neighbors and your community. And, it's free. Nextdoor's mission is to use the power of technology to build stronger and safer neighborhoods

The Miller Heights Nextdoor group has grown to 907 members as of now and it is growing every day,

You can be invited by your neighbor or sign up directly on the website. The link to the site is :

<https://millerheightsva.nextdoor.com>

OUR MHNA WEBSITE

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

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 Geraci
Trails & Environment	Sara Holtz
Landscaping	Judith Schneider-Fletcher

IMPORTANT NUMBERS

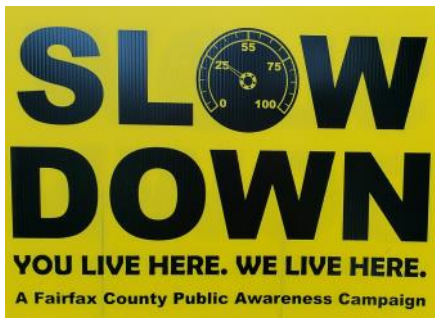
Emergency - Police, Fire, Medical)	911
Poison Control Poison Control (TTY)	1-800-222-1222 711
Police (non-emergency)	703-691-2131
Victim Assistance Network (Crisis Hotline)	703-360-7273
Animal Control	703-746-4774
Animal Shelter	703-830-1100
Fairfax County Fire Dept. Hdqtrs.	703-246-2126
Fairfax County 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	703-324-5033
Miss Utility (underground utility marking)	1-800-552-7001
National Weather Service	703-652-1210
Storm Drainage Flooding (after hrs. emergency)	703-323-1211
VDOT (road hazards and conditions)	1-800-367-7623
Washington Gas emergency	703-750-1400
Power Outage (Dominion Power)	1-800-366-4357
Report Potholes (VDOT)	1-800-367-7623

OFFICER AND COMMITTEE UPDATES

PLEASE SLOW DOWN!

By Barry Ingram

As much as we have discussed, pleaded and warned drivers throughout the neighborhood, we are still seeing far too many instances of drivers, especially on Miller Heights Road, exceeding posted speed limits. As many of you are aware, we have been meeting with FFX County representatives to find better ways to reduce risks to our residents. 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 to remind drivers to slow down and are also working with the County to install additional speed humps and speed tables to help control speeds.



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.

UPCOMING NEARBY EVENTS Oakton Library Book Sale

April 24 — 27

Wednesday, Thursday & Friday 10 to 5:30 and
Saturday 10 - 4.

<https://www.friendsofoaktonlibrary.org>

Dulles Expo Center Events

International Gem & Jewelry Show

February 16 - 18

Friday 12:00 pm - 6:00 pm

Saturday : 11:00 am - 6:00 pm

Sunday : 11:00 am - 5:00 pm

<https://dullesexpo.com/series/the-international-gem-jewelry-show/>

Capital Remodel and Garden Show – Spring

February 23 - 25

Friday 10:00 pm - 9:00 pm

Saturday : 10:00 am - 9:00 pm

Sunday : 10:00 am - 6:00 pm

<https://dullesexpo.com/series/capital-remodel-and-garden-show-spring/>

WE NEED YOUR HELP!

We send out over 560 emails to our MHNA residents each time we have MHNA announcements, meeting notices, Newsletters, and other communications. Although we have 560+ homes in Miller Heights, we only have email addresses for about 380 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

OFFICER AND COMMITTEE UPDATES (CONT.)

MEMBERSHIP & TREASURER UPDATE

by **Abheshek Narain**

Treasurer & Membership Chair

Miller Heights Neighborhoods Association (MHNA)

Membership

As of January 24, 2024, Miller Heights Neighborhoods Association has 73 paid members, while over 200 have registered themselves and confirmed their residence via our site. Thanks to the reminder signs placed throughout the neighborhood by Judith Fletcher, we did see a small surge in donations in January 2024.

However, our membership numbers and donations are *significantly lower* than previous years, with membership numbers showing over a 50% drop in membership and donations. As such, we continue to *encourage you* to speak with your neighbors and urge them to visit our website (www.MHNAnews.com), re-register and submit the annual donation. Below are some a few highlights of our membership levels.

MHNA Membership as of Jan 24, 2024

	Total Membership Status
Total Eligible Households	564
Claimed	232 (41.1%)
Paid	73
Unpaid	155
Unclaimed	332 (59.8%)

Financials

We recently shared some updated financials during our Quarterly meeting in December 2023, highlighting our major expenses and what your membership donations are used for. One of our major annual expenses (approximately 16%) continues to be the cost to cut grass across all open lands within the neighborhood (e.g. entrance area, side areas along MH Road, etc.) as those are not maintained by Fairfax County. Without MHNA, these areas would be growing wildly and would remain unkempt.

Additionally, MHNA undertook two major initiatives in 2023 that required significant funds from our coffers:

1. Neighborhood Traffic Calming (e.g. ballots, postage, mailing envelopes, signs, flyers, etc.)
2. Main entrance to Miller Heights: Redesign and landscaping (e.g. boulders, soil, flowers, etc.)

As an update to that meeting, and in response to several requests, we have provided a brief breakdown of MHNA's Calendar Year 2023 expenses as well as a status of our current account balance:

OFFICER AND COMMITTEE UPDATES (CONT.)

MEMBERSHIP & TREASURER UPDATE

Calendar Year 2023

	<u>Revenue</u>	<u>Expenses</u>	<u>% Expenses</u>
Paypal	\$ 2,516.64		
Checking (Truist)	\$ 800.00		
Service Charges		\$ 36.00	0.61%
Website Maintenance		\$ 240.00	4.10%
Block Party / MHNA Bash		\$ 188.50	3.22%
Entrance Landscaping		\$ 3,574.95	61.02%
Traffic Calming Effort		\$ 886.38	15.13%
BlueSky Lawncare		\$ 933.00	15.92%
Total	\$ 3,316.64	\$ 5,858.83	

Current Balances (as of Jan 24 2024)

Paypal	\$ 1,826.97
Checking (Truist)	\$ 3,454.59
Total Reserves	\$ 5,281.56

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.

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

OFFICER AND COMMITTEE UPDATES (CONT)

OAKMONT PARK, REC CENTER AND GOLF CENTER

Submitted by Sara Holtz

The Fairfax County Park Authority Board has approved a name change for its Oak Marr facilities.

Oak Park, Rec Center and Golf Center will now be called Oakmont Park, Rec Center and Golf Center respectively. The elimination of "Marr" from the name of these park facilities follows the county's pattern of moving away from names and titles that glorify the Confederacy.

Oak Marr was named in commemoration of John Quincy Marr. Marr was the first Confederate soldier killed in combat by a Union soldier in the Civil War during the Battle of Fairfax Courthouse. In 1904, the Daughters of the Confederacy erected a monument at the courthouse to commemorate his death. In 2020, the monument was removed.

The Park Authority is in the process of changing all references in documentation, signage and on the Park Authority website where appropriate.

Oakmont Park, Rec Center and Golf Center are co-located at 3200 Jermantown Road in Oakton. For more information, please contact the Public Information Office at Parkmail@fairfaxcounty.gov.

New DMV Office to Replace the Now -Closed Fair Oaks Mall Location

The Virginia Department of Motor Vehicles (DMV) recently opened a new, larger customer service center at 9855 Braddock Road in Fairfax. This new location replaces the DMV office at Fair Oaks Mall, which closed permanently on January 11. This new location is named "DMV Braddock Road Customer Service Center" and will operate Monday through Friday from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. as well as Saturdays from 8 a.m. to noon. Both service and testing options will be available at this site.

Please note that [more than 50 DMV services](#) can be completed online, which may reduce the need for in-person visits. Some services that require in-person visits can be expedited by submitting a pre-application online in advance. Making an [appointment or reserving a spot](#) for same-day service can also help reduce the length of a visit. The DMV is a state government department, not a Fairfax County Government office.

FARMERS MARKETS

Farmfresh Oakton Market



Open Saturdays 9am-1pm year round

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

For more information

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

Oakmont Farmers Market



Open Wednesdays, May 1-November 6, 2024
8 am to noon

For more information:

[Oakmont Farmers Market | Park Authority \(fairfaxcounty.gov\)](#)

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

OFFICER AND COMMITTEE UPDATES (CONT.)

Settle Down Easy 1st Wednesdays

By Judith Schneider-Fletcher

A Tremendous Success!

Many thanks to all who came out for 1st Wednesday at Settle Down Easy for January. Dry January is tough on our local brewery, so we need to give them some **love!** We enjoyed music from **Molly and Mark** and really good food and friends. Many thanks to all who attended and helped support this local brewery. The **Fermented Pig** was a big hit and Wednesdays are BBQ nite! Can you say Brisket???



Miller Heights next SDE 1st Wednesday is coming up, so mark your calendars for **February 7th** with music at 6pm. You'll notice our sandwich signs say 7pm (preprinted)...we'll officially move to 6pm so people can enjoy dinner out, a pint and some really good music. Molly has an amazing range – I think I heard Metallica and Dolly Parton in the same set!



February marks our 5th time at SDE (Sept, Oct, Nov, Jan, Feb). Let's keep this new tradition strong and invite our chums and buddies and girlfriends! February might be a nice **Pre-Valentine date** for you and your honey!

For more info contact me via a message on the MHNA FB group and RSVP for February while you are there.

Photos from our January 6 Social



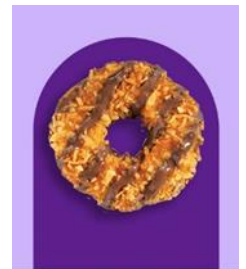
Update on Development of AT&T Property Submitted by Jackie Davey

EYA submitted a plan to the county back in November and the most information on it is in a news article I've linked to here.

EYA, the developer of the AT&T site has made their revised plan public. The plan was submitted to Fairfax county for review in November. This recent [article in Fairfax Now](#) reports on the revised plan including images. You can see EYA's new official plan at the [Options for Oakton's site](#).

Girl Scout Cookies Submitted by Sammy Shuster

I think I can speak for most people when I say that one of the best times of the year is when the Girl Scout cookies finally arrive. In fact, stocking up on Samoas and Thin Mints is one of my favorite family traditions. If you feel like buying some of these delicacies this year, you can find some locations to buy them [here](#). You can buy cookies for the next few Saturdays starting February 3rd at our very own Oakton Giant! Buying these cookies not only makes for a delicious snack, but they are also a key component of what makes the Girl Scouts so special. Each box bought helps girls all over the country learn entrepreneurship skills that will stick with them for the rest of their lives. Learn more about Girl Scout Cookies at



<https://www.girlscouts.org/en/cookies.html>.

OFFICER AND COMMITTEE UPDATES (CONT.)

Providence District Winter Gear Drive

By Judith Schneider-Fletcher

We had another successful coat drive in Miller Heights that helped contribute to the Providence District Winter Gear Drive. From Thanksgiving to New Years (or thereabouts) my house became Coat Central! This was our second year participating with Dalia and her team on the winter gear drive and they are always amazed at how much we collect. I think we had 12-13 big bags this year. When Devin Phar came to collect the coats, he asked me “how did you do this?” My answer, “we have great neighbors!”

A note from Kim Jaramillo

“Thanks to your support, the Providence District Winter Gear Drive was a huge success! You helped us collect over

800 items of warm clothing that have been distributed to the Second Story, The Lamb Center, Fairfax F.I.S.H., and Committee for Helping Others. Programs like this highlight the importance of collaboration among community members, nonprofits, and government.”

Kimberly Jaramillo, *Communications Manager*

Office of Providence District Supervisor Dalia A. Palchik

3001 Vaden Drive Suite 218, Fairfax, VA 22031

Main: (703) 560-6946 | Mobile: (571) 536-1141

If you didn't participate this year, that's ok. Save coats for November 2024 and drop them off after Thanksgiving to my house. Or if you can't wait, make sure to donate them to one of the organizations mentioned above in Kim's thank you.



NEIGHBORHOOD CONNECTIONS



Sign up for the Palchik Post: [Signup Form](#) (constantcontactpages.com)

[Early voting for the presidential primary elections is underway.](#) Three locations are currently open on weekdays including the Fairfax County, Mount Vernon, and North County Government Centers. Additional locations will be available starting **February 24th**.

The Board held its first meeting on Tuesday and we were happy to welcome Supervisors Bierman and Jimenez to the dais. I presented the following Board Matters:

- [141st Birthday of Oakton](#)
- [Oakton High School Wins Metallica's Inaugural Marching Band Competition](#) - jointly with Supervisor Smith and Supervisor Alcorn



The Board also took the following actions:

Providence District

- Held a public hearing and approved RZ 2023-PR-00009 to rezone the site to permit one of the three scenarios: Maintain the existing building in its current state; Expand the current building by adding up to two floors on top; Permit the complete redevelopment of the property which would permit an office, hotel, financial institution, and/or a college/university.
- Held a public hearing and approved RZ 2023-PR-00002 to allow the rezoning of the existing parcels for the development of three single-family detached lots. This would preserve the existing historical structure and provide for two new, single-family affordable housing units.

Countywide

- Approved the Fairfax Connector Spring 2024 Service Changes that include routes along the I-

66 corridor from Centreville, Chantilly, Vienna to Tysons (CCVT) and routes to the Franconia Springfield area. This plan creates a transit network that preserves the best of the existing system while improving linkages and creating new connections based on travel patterns, growth, and service demand in the CCVT and Franconia Springfield areas. The service changes will go into effect in Spring 2024.

- Held a public hearing and approved the proposed zoning ordinance amendment related to landscaping and screening.

Dalia Palchik

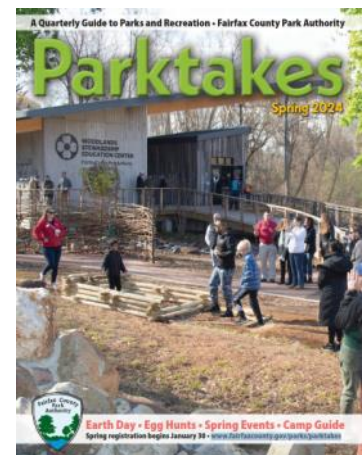
Fairfax County Parks

Looking for things for you or your family to do? Classes to take? Recreation or exercise? Well, take a tour through the Parktakes Fall Guide from the Fairfax County Park Authority. Of course, the Oak Marr 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:

- Outdoor and indoor fitness classes
- Learn to swim group lessons and private lessons
- Children's and Adult classes
- 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.



NEIGHBORHOOD CONNECTIONS (CONT.)

FRIENDS OF THE OAKTON LIBRARY

Don't miss our semi-annual book sale.

BOOK SALE APRIL 24 - 27, 2024



OAKTON LIBRARY

10304 LYNNHAVEN PLACE
OAKTON VA 22124

Wednesday, Thursday
& Friday 10 - 5:30
Saturday 10 - 4:00



friendsofoaktonlibrary.org
friendsofoaktonlibrary@gmail.com

www.fairfaxcounty.gov/library



Fairfax County Public Library
12000 Government Center Parkway
Suite 324
Fairfax, VA 22035



To request reasonable ADA accommodations,
call 703-224-8380 or TTY 703-324-8365.

The Oakton Public Library will be holding its Spring Book Sale April 24 - 27. We 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

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.

Oakton Community Library Hours

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

Visit The Friends of the Oakton Library

[Home - The Friends of Oakton Library](#)

THE MILLER HEIGHTS SOCIAL CLUB

Submitted by Chrissy Moggio, Stephanie Loritz, Irene Pao, and Sarah Soto

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/RmvqOgkq7YvE3Nvh9> or with questions email: millerheightsocialclub@gmail.com. We look forward to seeing you at a future event!

TRAILS & ENVIRONMENT

Submitted by Sara Holtz

Habitat Restoration

Thanks to our amazing volunteers and our resident Fairfax County Park Authority Invasive Management Area (IMA) site leaders Nick Newberry, Tucker Newberry & Sara Holtz for restoring habitat on the parkland in our community. IMA hosted multiple work sessions this fall, including well-attended events to commemorate Indigenous People's Day and Veterans Day. During these sessions, volunteers removed invasive plants; rescued trees from invasive vines such as English ivy, winter-creeper, and oriental bittersweet; and planted native trees & plants.

If you cannot attend work sessions, you can still support these efforts by removing invasive plants from your landscaping and not planting invasive plants on your property. You might be surprised that plants such as burning bush, butterfly bush, and fountain grass are invasive.



Submitted by Nick Newberry

Have you ever seen large numbers of cars parked at trail entrances along Miller Heights Road and wondered what was going on? Since 2017 volunteers from as close to home as, well, Miller Heights and as distant as Ukraine and Afghanistan have worked to restore our wonderful forest. Did you know that a majority of local forests are at serious risk of collapse due to a combination of invasive species, deer overbrowsing, disease, and a changing climate? Check out this recent, widely-shared [article from DCist](#) to learn more. Fortunately there is quite a bit of reason to hope that our forest won't be one of the forests that succumbs to these pressures. Led by neighbors Sara Holtz and Tucker and Nick Newberry, volunteers from Fairfax County's all volunteer IMA (Invasive Plant Management Area) program have recorded approximately 4,500 hours working to turn the tide against invasive species while having fun doing it. To see more stats, background, and photos from the project, check out [this article](#) written by Nick Newberry and fellow Oakton resident Karin Lenigk.



Our Miller Heights Entry after the Snow

NATURE'S CORNER (CONT.)

Submitted by Nick Newberry

"If you're ever curious about the flora and fauna that call Oakton home, then you are not alone. Neighbors Sara Holtz and Nick and Tucker Newberry created the Oakton Nature (@oakton_nature) Instagram page to showcase sightings from the Oakton area. Most of the pictures included so far are from Difficult Run Stream Valley Park, but the other parks such as Oakton Community and Waples Mill Meadow are also poised to make appearances. This page has story highlights from all 12 months of the year and showcases birds, wildflowers, deer, butterflies, and much more. While we are excited share what we've seen, we're even more excited to see what others have found. Please send your photos to Oakton Nature via Instagram direct message for potential inclusion in our stories and posts. We also intend to share tips for finding interesting wildlife and for using apps to identify and learn more about what you see."

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](https://www.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

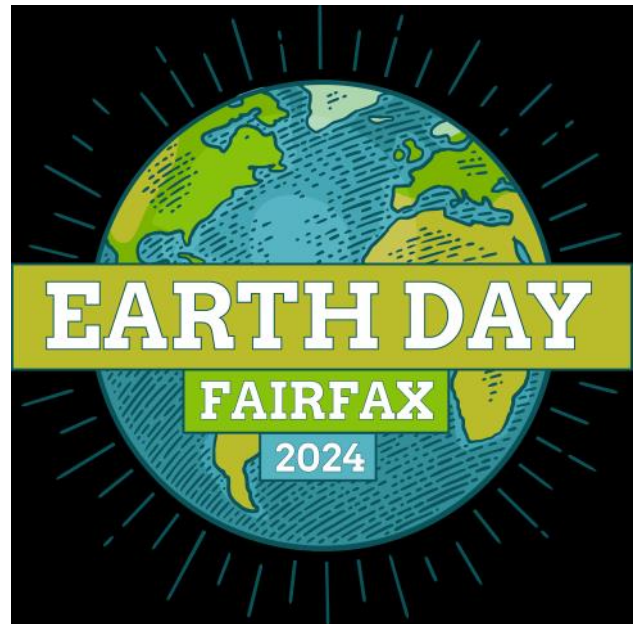
A Special Note on Trash and Recycling

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 \(fairfaxcounty.gov\)](https://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/publicworks/recycling)

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

Come to Earth Day Fairfax



2024, the County's largest Earth Day celebration

Saturday, April 20, 2024

10 a.m. to 4 p.m.

Sully Historic Site

3650 Historic Sully Way, Chantilly, VA 20151

Event admission is free.

Parking is \$10 per vehicle and can be paid at the gate.

Earth day is a rain or shine event.

Discover how you can make an impact on family, community and planetary health through fun, hands-on activities, games and live music and educational entertainment. Engage your senses with craft beer and tasty local cuisine, a visit with your favorite furry farm friends, take the obstacle course challenge and more! Explore the opportunities and experiences available at this year's festival below (information will continue to be added as the event approaches).

<https://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/parks/earthday>

MILLER HEIGHTS REAL ESTATE UPDATE JANUARY 2024

Hi All -

Home Décor Trends for 2024



Welcome 2024! With a new year comes new design trends. If you're planning to refresh your home this year, here are a few decor trends according to Southern Living magazine.

- A Show of Restraint. Remove anything that feels unnecessary to ensure each item makes a statement and impacts the general aesthetic.
- Warmer Hues. Painting rooms, including trim, ceilings, and walls, in earthy tones like rich browns, mossy greens, raisin, amber and sunny yellows is in for 2024.
- Classic Details. Pleated upholstery details on furniture is a twist on traditional style that looks crisp and fresh.
- Layered Furnishings. Eclectic found pieces and beautiful antiques paired next to a modern object create interest in a room.
- Durable materials. There is a trend toward investing in furnishings and finishes that will stand the test of time,

children and pets. Performance fabrics and rugs, as well as indestructible flooring and countertops, will become even more popular this year.

- Outside Influence. Windows are getting bigger with the view and natural light becoming a focal point of the room, creating a comfortable and cozy environment.

If you're planning to sell your home this year, I can recommend home improvements and decor suggestions on how to prepare your house to look its best so you can get the most for your investment.

Wishing you a healthy and happy 2024.

Liz Potemra

703-581-7759

lizp@longandfoster.com

Long and Foster Vienna/Oakton

Recent Real Estate Activity in Miller Heights:

Status	Address	Last/Next Update	Close Price	List Price	D O M
Active	10801 Windcloud Ct	6/12/2023	,	\$925,000	68
Closed	3210 Miller Heights Rd	1/12/2024	\$1,206,000	\$1,199,000	42
Closed	11000 Tradewind Ct.	1/29/2023	\$2,360,000	\$2,350,000	21
Closed	11201 Cranbrook Ln	11/3/2023	\$1,340,000	\$1,340,000	4

COMMENTS AND INPUT FROM OUR RESIDENTS

Thoughts on the Creative Process

Submitted by Beth Eltinge

I recently came across a wonderful quote “Doing and making are acts of hope, and as that hope grows, we stop feeling overwhelmed by the troubles of the world.” The quote was attributed to Sister Corita Kent and a quick dive into Wikipedia told me she was an American artist, designer and educator, and a former religious sister who died in 1986. This quote really resonates with me as I am one who finds joy and hope in making things. The process of creating calms my nerves and gives me a sense of peace.



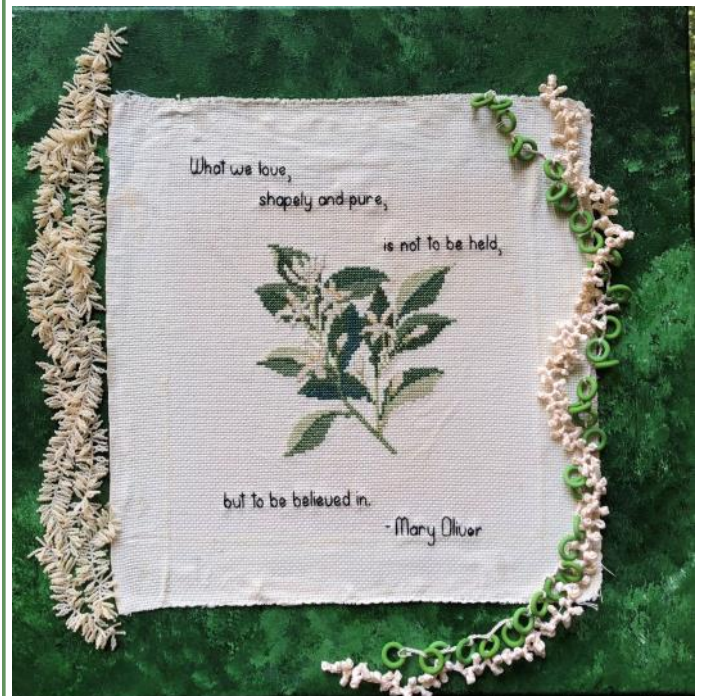
The quote also makes me think of various friends and neighbors who help give me hope through their expressions of creativity and their generous work. I think first of Barry Ingram, who donates so generously of his time to put together and distribute our newsletter. He works hard to get articles contributed in a timely manner and manages to create amazing newsletters full of interesting articles and pictures. In addition, Barry is a very talented woodworker, who I am sure finds hope during the process of creating his work.

I think of Cathy Fellows Jaquette, and all the wonderful work she does with the Oakton High School Pantry, providing hope for so many in need. I think of Sara Holtz and her work taking on a vast amount of fleece and creating hundreds of blankets, her work with refugees and her work encouraging the use of native plants. I think of Judith Fletcher and all her work promoting the neighborhood, collecting coats for the needy and working hard to develop a sense of community and encouraging participation with various events and improving the appearance of the entry into the neighborhood. I think of Eleanor Wang and her wonderful art and all the outreach she does in the community, helping others to learn and explore more about art and artists. There are many more neighbors I could mention, and I appreciate living in such a strong and supportive community.

It is all too easy for me to get sucked down the rabbit hole of news and to feel overwhelmed by all that is going on both here and around the world. It helps me to keep making things. I like to knit, crochet, quilt, sew garments and to create beadwork. As my hands stay busy, I start to feel a sense of peace and hope. Others find the same peace with gardening, cooking, cleaning, painting, exercise, woodwork and other things. Wherever and whatever gives you peace and hope, I wish you much of it in the coming year.



Triceratops I crocheted for Sarah for Christmas.



Repurposing some of my mother's cross stitch. She did the flowers,

COMMENTS AND INPUT FROM OUR RESIDENTS (CONT)

The Illusion of Control

By Farmer Brown (Gordon)

This quarter I was scratching my head about what to write and was listening to an online lecture (yes, I'm back at university doing a Master's degree) and our lecturer sprung this on us:

The Illusion of Control - Gardner's have no illusion of control. We create the right growing conditions, nurture a healthy soil life, set up our lifestyles so we have time to tend our crops, and we plant a diverse variety of sturdy, healthy plants and watch them grow. We adjust as we go along – removing excess weeds, mulching, watering, and fertilizing when necessary – and picking off pests. But ultimately – the end result almost always includes crop failures, and unexpected successes. And we feel more like stewards, sometimes even observers, than masters of our domain.

Before you ask, no, I'm not studying to become a gardener. And my wife will tell you, I subscribe to the concept that all theories are wrong, but some are more useful than others. I am prone to pushing the envelope of reason and reality in the garden, challenging established beliefs, and picking apart ideas from folks who share their knowledge to see what works for me. Based on that, there is no way I'd do a gardening degree.

So... what to talk about this quarter? Well let's start with that illusion of control. I have moved all my warm weather plants indoors – including my olives and papaya's, to protect them from the elements. What I forgot to do was water them since they're sitting in the basement staring at the dreary winter weather outside – out of sight, out of mind... I know for sure that my rosemary perished. That's gorgeous bush is about as good to me now as dried herbs. The Olive simply shed every left but 3 and the papaya is so forlorn I'm not sure it's going to see out winter.

What else has gone wrong for me? Well, I'll tell you.... my master plan to build little green houses over my beds as failed spectacularly. For some reason all my 48 garlic bulbs sprouted and promptly perished – couldn't be the cold... My arugula bed was well set and since that leafy green is why my wife loves me, I popped a cover over that so we'd get bushels of that veggie right into the depths of winter. Well, the warm days we've had meant that I basically microwaved those leaves so they're all dead. Sorrel – normally ignored by the deer, was left out. This time, those quadrupeds broke through my tangled faux fence and even though sorrel can

stand up to the cold, it is no match for those ivory gnashers of the pesky *Odocoileus virginianus*.

Next failure isn't really on me, but I've been lazy. Back in the spring I was perusing my garden and thought it would be nice to get some bulbs and pop those in the ground come fall. Well firstly the online stores didn't ship when they said they would, so being of advance age – (mid-40's) I forgot about those orders and placed more. Again, those didn't show up, so why not do one more order just in case. Low and behold I think USPS was busier than Santa when those bulbs were processed. Anyway, when I get time the weather's bad and now the bulbs have been sitting for a while and frankly, I don't know if some of them will ever make into the ground. I may need see what comes up in 2 months and then fill in some empty spaces but some of those bulbs are drying out quicker than those of us plodding through "dry January".

It's a long 10 weeks of winter from here... please check in again in the spring and see if I made it through winter.

Is this Winter - or Not?

By Barry Ingram

As I am sitting here trying to wrap up this January 2024 Newsletter, recent events make me wonder. First of all, we had 4 days of snow, about 8", beginning around mid-January. That's a lot, and our street was **never** plowed by VDOT, although we finally got some sand spread, with Supervisor Palchik's office assistance, to allow us to safely go up and down the hill on our street.

Here's a photo of our Miller Heights entrance sign and plantings and another from our front porch to our neighbor's home across our lawn and street. And it was well below freezing (about 15 degrees above zero. Brrr! That was just 5 days ago.



So, then what happened?

We went on some errands today and the temperature, according Google, our car and the general feel of great weather was 79 degrees.



Is this still winter? Are we sure?

COMMENTS AND INPUT FROM OUR RESIDENTS (CONT)

INDIGENOUS PEOPLE IN OUR REGION

Submitted by Sara Holtz

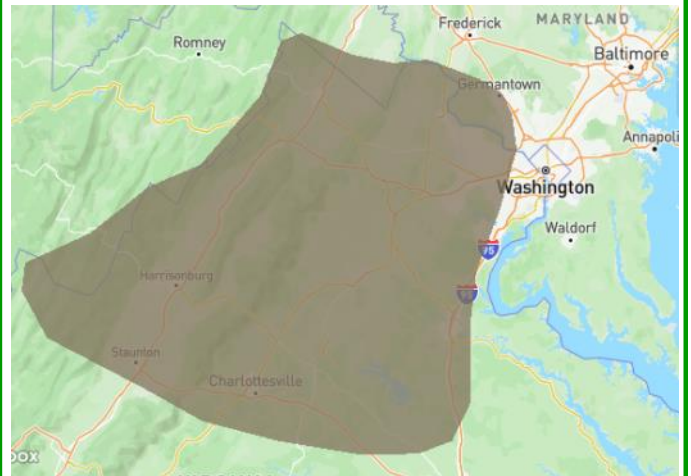
Native Land (Native-Land.ca | [Our home on native land](#))

is a tool that maps Indigenous territories, treaties, and languages. The project initially began in North America and spread worldwide; new areas are added regularly. This tool is not meant to be an official, legal, or archival resource. It is instead a broadly researched and crowdsourced body of information. It is meant to encourage education and engagement on topics of Indigenous land—particularly, where you are located. Native Land brings about discussions of colonization, land rights, language, and Indigenous history tied to our personal histories.

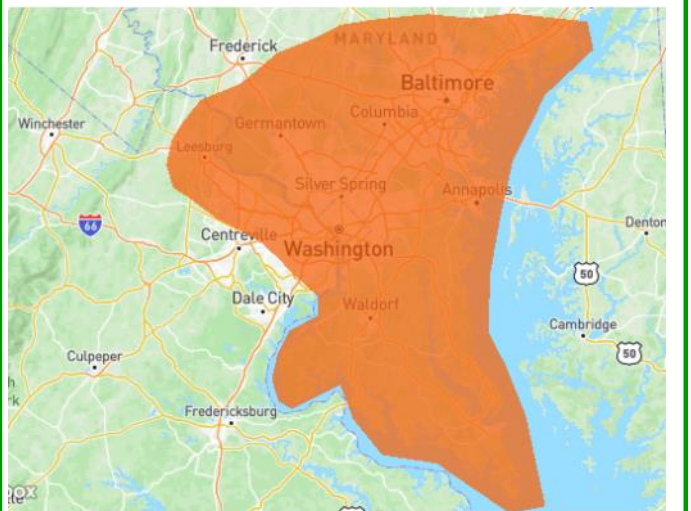
The Manahoac were a small group of Sioux-language Native Americans in northern Virginia at the time of European contact. They numbered approximately 1,000 and lived primarily along the Rappahannock River west of modern Fredericksburg and the Fall Line, and east of the Blue Ridge Mountains. They united with the Monacan, the Occaneechi, the Saponi and the Tutelo. Monacan is one of 11 tribes recognized by the state of Virginia.

The Piscataway, at the time of European encounter, was one of the most populous and powerful Native groups of the Chesapeake Bay region. Today they mainly live in Charles, Calvert & Saint Mary's Counties plus DC. Maryland recognized both the Piscataway Indian Nation and the Piscataway Conoy Tribe as Indian groups in 2012

Manahoac



Piscataway



COMMENTS AND INPUT FROM OUR RESIDENTS (CONT)

The Saddlestone Ct. Holiday Sing-Along

The residents of Saddlestone Ct. like to get together now and then and party (actually, a lot). Swim party, new neighbor party, holiday party, book club party, home redecorating party, house addition party, good neighbor moving party (sad), and just party for not much reason at all.

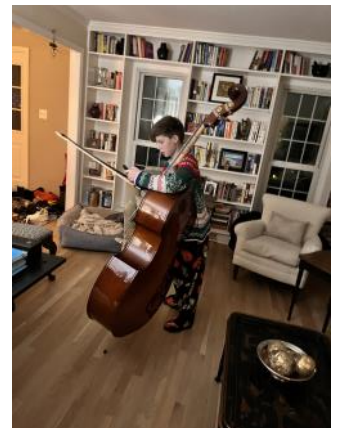
Our most recent party was our Saddlestone Ct. Holiday Sing-Along on December 17, held at Cindy and Dan Pearson's home. Lots of fun and good food with friends. And yes, some of us did actually sing along with our resident maestros on the little recorder instrument, the piano, and the bass. **A good time was had by all.**



Musician #1 on Recorder



Musician #2 on Piano



Musician #3 on Bass



COMMENTS AND INPUT FROM OUR RESIDENTS (CONT)

The Oakton High School Pantry Submitted by Cathy Jaquette

The Oakton High School Pantry is available to help students and their families, as well as members of the larger Oakton community, who are in need. The Pantry offers non-perishable food, personal hygiene items, household cleaning products, and school supplies.

Students and parents are welcome to shop in the Pantry any time during the school day when accompanied by a school staff member. On Thursdays after school, we offer open shopping time when we typically have 30–40 students stop by to pick up supplies. We also distribute 40 pre-packed bags of groceries curbside.

The holiday season can be an especially stressful time for families facing food insecurity. For the 7th year in a row, we coordinated both our Thanksgiving Meal Distribution and our Holiday Gift and Groceries Distribution. The Pantry is supported 100% by donations, and the holidays truly show the depth of generosity and compassion in our community.

Thanks to the incredible generosity of donors and volunteers, we were able to provide 83 OHS students and their families with a Thanksgiving meal and a \$50 gift card so that they could buy the protein of their choice. Local church

groups provided families with homemade baked treats which is always a highlight for recipients.

For the holidays, once again the community's generosity knew no bounds. We provided gifts to 85 families. It's important to note that, for these families, "gifts" were items that most of us would consider to be essential: winter coats, sweatshirts, bed sheets, blankets, and towels. Recipients shared with us that these were more than gifts, they were gestures of love. Students told us that their parents could breathe easier knowing that they had this assistance. Families also revealed that receiving this assistance enabled them to pay their electric and water bills. They feel they are part of a community.

The Pantry accepts donations any time during school hours. In addition, our wonderful neighbor, Dr. Niloo, keeps a collection box in her pediatric dentist office on Miller Rd. For a complete list of needed items and information on how to make a monetary donation, please visit our website:

<https://www.eddiehurleyproject.org/pantry/>.

For any questions or if you're interested in volunteering, please send an email to oaktonpantry@gmail.com.

Thank you!



COMMENTS AND INPUT FROM OUR RESIDENTS (CONT)

ART SALE

You are cordially invited to attend an Open House Studio Art Sale!

Dates: February 10 and 11, 2024

Home Studio of Eleanor Kotlarik Wang

3317 Cranbrook Ct., Oakton, Va. 22124

Time: 1 to 4 pm

The artist is soon relocating and hopes to find new "homes" for much of her work. The paintings are well priced and ready to go home with the interested party! In addition, 50% of the proceeds will go directly to one of the below listed non -profit charitable organizations - choice of the purchaser!

Doctors Without Borders
Bread for the City
Compassion Animal Project

Here's your chance to enjoy a new art piece for your home or as a gift, and also feel good about the humanitarian outreach of the purchase!

Checks and Cash Only, though PayPal will also be available.

Come on over, socialize with the artist and friends while you check out the art scene!

Hope to see you soon!

Contact: Eleanor (703-395-0063)

kotlarik_wang@hotmail.com
www.eleanorkotlarikwang.com



Editor's Note:

The Wang Family have been a great neighbors since the 1970's and we will miss them in our MHNA Neighborhood. Best wishes on your new home.

COMMENTS AND INPUT FROM OUR RESIDENTS (CONT)

The Shurtz Family and Hunt & Peck Estate Services are proud to host an estate sale

February 16th - 18th
3319 Cranbrook Ct.
Oakton, VA 22124

Featuring branded and imported furniture, exquisite fine art, decorative smalls, fashion and so much more. The contents reflect decades of world travel, years of elegant table settings and hosting and a lifetime of fine furniture and decorative accents.



Editor's Note:

The Shurtz Family have been a great neighbors since the 1970's and we will miss them in our MHNA Neighborhood. Best wishes on your new home.

MHNA NEWSLETTER

Wintery Kids Edition

By: Julia and Samantha

And other participators from around the neighborhood!

Welcome to the MHNA Kids Edition!! We hope you enjoy the activities and fun stories that we put in here for all of you to enjoy! If you have any ideas or want to include something of yours in the next edition, please email sammypecci@gmail.com. Enjoy!

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2. Valentine's Day Fun Facts!
3. '23-24 NFL Season Updates
4. February: Black History Month
5. Word Search



Walking in a Winter Wonderland

For the first time in years, Northern Virginia saw massive amounts of snow, with bursts of snow falling through the night on Sunday the 14th and Thursday the 18th. This amounted to a total of about 5 inches! With freezing temperatures in the 10's and 20's, the snow stayed all week and created ice walkways and roads, making many school districts close their schools, including FCPS! These snow days are some of the best days of the entire year for many kids! The mass of snow leads to fun activities outside like sledding, snowman building, and snow angels. The wintery weather can also be a bit too cold sometimes, but as the song *Walking in a Winter Wonderland* says, "the weather outside is frightful, but the fire is so delightful". So, after having a blast in the snow with friends and family, many children head inside to drink some delicious hot chocolate and play games by the delightfully warm fire! The snow also created some of the most beautiful scenery that



Miller Heights has seen in a long time! If you head into the forest using the Difficult Run trails, you will feel like you are truly walking in a Winter Wonderland!

Valentine's Day Fun Facts!

1. Candy hearts were invented to be medical lozenges!
2. Valentine's Day began with St. Valentine.
3. Not everyone agrees on what the true story of Valentine's Day is.
4. 145 million Valentine's Day cards are exchanged every year.
5. It is believed by many that the first "valentine" was a poem!
6. In 2020, ¼ of pet owners spent money on Valentine's Day gifts for their furry friends!
7. Flowers, especially roses, are shipped from all over the world to the U.S. for Valentine's Day!
8. Each flower color has a different meaning.

Sources:

<https://time.com/5516579/history-cupid-valentines-day/>

<https://corporate.hallmark.com/holidays-occasions/valentines-day/>

<https://www.marketwatch.com/story/pets-are-fetching-886-million-in-gifts-this-valentines-day-2019-02-14>

<https://www.goodhousekeeping.com/holidays/valentines-day-ideas/a26863/valentines-day-facts/>

'23-24 NFL Season Updates

It's almost the end of the 23-24 football season, and here we are in the playoffs. The Packers took a hard loss to the 49ers on Saturday, Jan 21 in the second round, while both the Steelers and Rams were closely eliminated the week before. The Ravens had a commanding win over the Texans, while the Cowboys and Eagles pattered out late in the season. So, where do we stand? Who's going to win the Super Bowl? We'll have to find out.



The Chiefs struggled during the middle of the season but turned things around in the playoffs with Taylor Swift in attendance. They defeated the Miami Dolphins 26-7 in the Wild Card round, and are now headed to Buffalo, NY, to take on the Bills. Hopefully, Taylor will be there again to cheer them on again!

Personally, I think it'll be Ravens - 49ers in the Super Bowl, and I'm calling it now. Sure, the Chiefs and Lions are playing great, but the Ravens are playing even better. They're doing well on injuries, too, with most of their players healthy and ready to go. Deebo Samuel, a receiver for the 49ers, suffered an arm/shoulder injury against the Packers, so hopefully he's all ready to go soon. They sure do need him.

That wraps up a quick recap of the 23-24 playoffs so far. Make sure to cheer for your favorite team in these coming weeks!



February: Black History Month

February became officially recognized as Black History Month in 1976 by President Gerald R. Ford. He told the public that this was a time to "seize the opportunity" to honor African American people and their accomplishments in the United States. Millions of African Americans in the United States, and the world have gotten past obstacles and become examples of excellence for everyone! They have impacted everything in society, ranging from the arts and sciences to government and social activism and more! Here is a list of just a few of some of the most influential and incredible African Americans up until 2024!

⇒ Frederick Douglass:

- Was born as a slave and escaped when he was about 20 years old. He made speeches about his enslavement and pushed for the end of slavery for the entire rest of his life. His words inspired many people to fight for an end to slavery.

⇒ Rosa Parks:

- Was born in 1913 after the Emancipation Proclamation, which freed slaves. She refused to give up her seat to a white person on a bus and was then sent to jail for it. She inspired thousands of people to fight for their rights by protesting and boycotting!

⇒ Hiram Rhodes Revels

- In 1870 he became the first African American to fill a position in the U.S. Senate, becoming a role model for African Americans who wanted to take part in government, but didn't believe it was possible.

⇒ Louis Armstrong

- Became known as one of the "founding fathers" of Jazz. His dozens of pieces of music and development of new jazz instrumental and vocalist styles contributed so much to the jazz we know today!

⇒ Katherine Johnson, Mary Jackson, and Dorothy Vaughn

- If you have seen the movie *Hidden Figures*, then you have learned the story of these 3 inspirational women who were very important to NASA during their time. Although they were not recognized for their contributions at the time, their roles in incredible scientific discoveries are now remembered by all and are an inspiration to all women!

Sources:

<https://kids.nationalgeographic.com/history/topic/african-american-heroes>

<https://www.nps.gov/articles/000/hiram-rhodes-revels.htm>

<https://www.nasa.gov/from-hidden-to-modern-figures/>



Word Search

N K J H C F S N O W F L A K E N I I E F
G Z H W V L T I A I V M Q P C I C I H X
C F R F P A X N X H F Q E F A O C J S N
R H U V N S F L I W I I P N N Q T S D M
I N O C S I T R I C U S N G D Y S S R V
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D O Q P A E A T O Z T X S T V R X F D B
P F M U Z R P V B C M M R S V N U S D K

Valentine

Chocolate

Kindness

Heart

Candy

Roses

Snowflake

Snowman

Wonderland

Hot Cocoa

Ice Skating

Winter

Freezing

February

History


African American

inspirational

FAIRFAX COUNTY 2023-2024 SCHOOL CALENDAR

Fairfax County Public Schools 2023-2024 Standard School Year Calendar

Approved

July 2023	August 2023	September 2023	October 2023	November 2023	December 2023																																																																																																																																																																																																																															
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