

# Neighborhood News

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## Fairlington Advocates for Neighborhood Schools

At a March orientation with Abingdon Elementary's principal, Joanne Uyeda, parents from the Fairlington Creative Preschoolers Program (located in the Community Center) were impressed by what they learned. Not only are standardized test scores soaring (third graders scored over 93% in all areas last year), but the school is brimming with unique programs not offered at other schools. For example, Project GIFT eliminates almost all early-release Wednesdays and adds three weeks of instruction time, full-time teachers in science and architecture expand the learning spectrum for all grades, and children create films and newscasts in the Claymation and TV studios.

In the past, many Fairlingtonians have opted for magnet schools and busing offered by the County. These special programs have taken their toll on neighborhood schools, not only in Arlington, but across the country. A national movement is bringing new energy to community schools, and Abingdon is enjoying that support. The school is being embraced by more Fairlington parents, and a network is forming to connect prospective and current parents.

"It's free and it couldn't be more convenient," says a parent from the Fairlington Preschoolers Program, "and – if more kids from Fairlington start going there – it becomes like the elementary schools we used to know, where kids and parents make friends from the neighborhood."

Those interested in learning more about Abingdon and the new support network are encouraged to contact Fairlington Advocates for Neighborhood Schools (FANS) at 703-820-0656 (Amy), 703-671-3460 (Dana), or fans@fastmail.net.



*Abingdon students enjoy learning about the human skeleton during the recently held BioExpress travelling science program from the Science Museum of Virginia. Photograph courtesy of Amy Suardi.*

## Abingdon Elementary School News

As part of Arlington County Neighborhood Day on May 13, Abingdon's student violin players and West African Rhythm Ensemble (AWARE) performed on the main stage in Clarendon. Also in May, Abingdon held its sixth and final Library Night for the 2005-06 school year. The theme for the evening was "Sharing Poetry @ Your Library," which featured a variety of students and teachers performing both original and published works of poetry. As always, the

evening included a bonus library check-out and poetry book giveaways. Abingdon families can look forward to the return of Library Nights for the 2006-07 school year. And finally, it is with great sadness that we report that long-time Abingdon custodian, Mr. Charles R. Jackson, Jr., passed away suddenly on Tuesday, April 25, 2006.

## FANS Holds Its First Meeting

Fairlington Advocates for Neighborhood Schools (FANS) will be hosting an informal meeting from 6:30 to 7:30 PM on Tuesday, June 20 at the Abingdon School library. Anyone who is sending their child to Abingdon in the fall, who is considering sending their child, or who already has children in the school is encouraged to attend. "We want to provide an opportunity for people to network and get to know each other," says Amy Suardi, a FANS organizer. "It's also a chance to voice questions or concerns, or just to show your support and find out how you can get involved."

*Contributors: Lynn Beasley, Tracy Darroch, Natalie Halpern, Vernetta Kukulich, Tina Masclangioli, Virginia McGee, Amy Suardi.*