

AFAC NEAR YOU

In Shirlington, right over the foot bridge across Four Mile Run, is the Arlington Food Assistance Center (AFAC). AFAC provides supplemental groceries to Arlingtonians who cannot afford to purchase all the food they need. You might not think that hunger is a problem in Arlington, but the high cost of living here means that many families struggle to make ends meet. AFAC helps solve this problem by distributing groceries – milk, eggs, bread, canned goods, produce and other foods – to needy Arlingtonians. Supplemental groceries from AFAC mean that families can remain in their homes, workers can stay on the job, children are ready to learn, and mothers and babies get the nutrition they need.

AFAC has grown from a small food provider with no permanent location to a major pantry that distributes groceries to over 500 families each week. In Fiscal Year 2005 (7/1/2004 – 6/30/2005) they served 28,284 families and distributed over 950,000 pounds of food. Volunteers donated over 15,000 hours of time. AFAC invites you to join them in the fight against hunger in Arlington. Contributions of money, food and volunteer time are always needed.

Many churches in Arlington participate, in rotation, in the ritual bagging of groceries for AFAC. Each Friday night, members from one or more churches, assemble literally hundreds of grocery bags with a prescribed list of canned and dry goods from the warehouse shelves. Ask about volunteering today at AFAC, help a neighbor this week. AFAC is located in Shirlington, near the old WETA studios and the ball fields.

FRIENDS OF ABINGDON NEIGHBORHOOD SCHOOL

To better reflect the scope and inclusiveness of their organization, FANS have changed their name from Fairlington Advocates for Neighborhood Schools to Friends of Abingdon Neighborhood School. At their June 20 meeting, FANS discussed some of their goals. Besides spreading the news about Abingdon's exemplary programs, FANS would like to help make Abingdon a community school. Historically, schools have been seen as centers of the community places where families and residents of all ages come together not only to support students but to create a stronger community.

Joanne Uyeda, Abingdon's principal, talked to parents at the meeting about how teachers challenge and meet the needs of children at different learning levels. She emphasized that Abingdon's teachers are experienced in differentiated teaching. Children are assessed at the beginning of the year, and teachers group them according to ability and assign activities of varying difficulty. English as a Second Language children are taken out of regular classes for several hours of high-intensity language instruction. Ms. Uyeda also noted that Abingdon has a gifted program. The school's gifted teacher works with all children and teachers throughout the grades to locate and encourage particular gifts. In third grade, children are identified as gifted and are offered specialized instruction.

For more information about Abingdon's unique teaching programs or to join FANS mailing list, please send an e-mail to fans@fastmail.net or call Amy Suardi at 703-820-0656.

KEVIN BEAMER GARDEN DESIGN, LLC

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