

ABINGDON *elementary school news*

Abingdon's Project GIFT on Channel 70

Abingdon's Project GIFT was chosen by Arlington Public Schools (APS) Superintendent **Dr. Robert G. Smith** for his television program "15 Minutes." In the segment, Dr. Smith talks about the exemplary program with **Principal Joanne Uyeda**, fourth grade teacher **Stephen Utley**, and fourth grade student **Chloe Laird**. The program aired on Channel 70 July 16-31, but it can be viewed online from the Arlington County Public Schools website at <http://www.arlington.k12.va.us/instruct/ITS/15minutes/index.html> by clicking on Video Archives at the bottom of the web page, then choosing Abingdon's Project Gift from the dropdown list under Select a Segment 2005-06.

Throughout the school year Dr. Smith spends "15 Minutes" discussing a host of educational issues with various APS staff members, students, parents and community members during this program that airs regularly on Arlington Cable Channel 70. A new segment begins airing on the first and 16th of each month. Each broadcast begins with an English version of the program, followed immediately by a repeat broadcast with Spanish translation.

Do You Buy Groceries?

The Abingdon PTA wants to remind members of the community that you can support the school by designating Abingdon on Target RED-cards; frequent shopper cards at Giant, Safeway or Harris Teeter; or by

sending in Box Tops from General Mills products or labels from Campbell's soup products to the school. Money raised helps support student assemblies, after school programs, field trips and educational materials. If you already use your frequent shopper card or buy the products mentioned, this is an easy way for you to contribute to the school. For more information, please contact Abingdon PTA co-president **Tina Masciangioli** at 703-931-7086 or tina.masc@verizon.net, or visit the Abingdon PTA on the web at www.arlington.k12.va.us/schools/abingdon/pta/.

APS Superintendent Speaks to FANS

Superintendent of Arlington Public Schools (APS), **Dr. Robert Smith**, spoke to Friends of Abingdon Neighborhood School (FANS) and Fairlington residents at the home of **Amy** and **Enrico Suardi** the evening of July 27. The informal question and answer session was part of the Superintendent's "Summer Chat" series where he speaks with citizens about school-related issues in casual settings. Dr. Smith was accompanied by **Meg Tuccillo**, Assistant Superintendent, Administrative Services, and former Abingdon Principal. **Libby Garvey**, school board member, former Abingdon PTA president and long-time Fairlington resident, gave Dr. Smith a glowing introduction.

The event was well-attended with 14 interested adults ranging from first-time parents with preschool-age

children to those with kids entering middle school. The home setting gave the evening a cozy, intimate feel that is unusual for public school meetings. "We were thrilled to have a private session with him, and he seemed flattered to have an attentive audience," remarked one of the evening's attendees.

Among other things, Dr. Smith talked about how the Arlington school district is not only one of the most diverse, but also one of the highest-achieving--continually ranking as among the best, if not the best in the country. Dr. Smith also discussed the 2005-2011 Strategic Plan, the goals and vision of the school board, and his commitment to upholding educators and students to high standards. Beginning in 1998, the first year of the Virginia Standards of Learning (SOL) testing, the passing rate for all students and each student group (white, black, Hispanic, Asian) has increased each year, and in that same time period, about 40 percent of the achievement gap on the SOLs has been eliminated.

FANS is an organization of parents and community members united in support of Abingdon Elementary. FANS is committed to providing accurate information about the school's programs and to integrating the school into the community of Fairlington. For more information about FANS or to sign up for their e-newsletter, please send an e-mail to fans@fastmail.net.

Contributed by Tina Masciangioli and Amy Suardi.

Highlights of the Minutes

July 11, 2006

Attending were president Kristi Daniels, secretary Nancy Hunt, board directors Hugh Baumgardner, Whitney Broadwell, Virginia McGee and Sheryl Scull and invited guests and residents of Fairlington.

Special Presentation

Amy Suardi, founder of Friends of Abingdon Neighborhood School (FANS), discussed how Fairlington parents are mobilizing to promote Abingdon Elementary School. She said that this group of current and prospective Abingdon parents believe in the school and want to support and promote it as a true neighborhood school. FANS goal is to spread the word about Abingdon's great programs and teaching and to integrate the school into the community of Fairlington. To find out more about FANS e-mail fans@fastmail.net or call 703-820-0656.

Business Meeting

Sheryl Scull gave the Treasurer's report.

The minutes of the June meeting were unanimously approved.

President Kristi Daniels led a discussion of the status of the issues outlined in the FCA Strategic Plan that was adopted in February. A summary of the status of the issues and projects follows:

- FCC renovation: FCA and the Fairlington Historical Society have both committed to fund \$7,500 a piece for a total of \$15,000 for the preservation and installation of the "Tiffany" stained glass panel. The renovation is scheduled to begin in September. During the renovation, FCA will be meeting at the North Fairlington Community Center. Next step: Continue to track renovation progress.
- Helicopter noise: The letter for the Congressional delegation is ready for City Councilman Krupika's review. Next step: Send letter.
- Neighborhood Conservation Plan update: Tabulation of the questionnaires is finally complete and the drafting team is writing up the results. Ed Hilz convened a meeting of the drafting group with Gail Baker, the editor/writer in June. Next step: Drafting of report.
- Shirlington development: Plans for the new hotel have been submitted to the county but have not been accepted by the county manager yet. The county board deferred the Randolph Square office building to its next meeting on September 16. The developer has agreed to fund the Carlyle lighting for the block of Arlington Mill Drive between Quincy and Randolph Streets. Hugh Baumgardner and Virginia McGee testified at the July 11 county board hearing on Randolph Square. Next step: Continue to testify on Randolph Square, sidewalk cafes and other issues as they arise.
- Bradlee Shopping Center: The Alexandria City Council did not fund a study to reconfigure the service road. Next step: Continue to monitor.
- Trash franchising: The report to the county manager and subsequent public meetings are behind schedule due to staffing changes. Next step: Continue to monitor.
- Shirlington bus transfer station: The project has been delayed due to the discovery of an 84 inch sewer main that was discovered under where the building is proposed to be constructed. Next step: Continue to monitor.
- Four Mile Run Streambed restoration: Both the county and the city have approved the concept plan. Next step: Continue to monitor.
- King Street widening at Walter Reed: The city conducted the survey of the intersection. Next step: Continue to monitor. The City of Alexandria is expected to host a meeting in the fall to present the survey to the public. The FCA offered to host the meeting.
- Traffic Calming: The project for S. 31st Street from Abingdon to Randolph Streets was approved by the county. Construction drawings are being drafted by the county. Next steps: Review the construction drawings when available.
- Fire Station #7: No action to date. Replacing this fire station is likely to be a low priority for the county given the lack of funds for construction for the next several years. Next step: Monitor but low priority for now.