



# Columbia Heights Civic Association Neighborhood Newsletter

Issue 4

[www.on-the-pike.com/chca/](http://www.on-the-pike.com/chca/)

Spring 2011

## President's Message

To date, the Columbia Heights Civic Association has secured over \$1 million in funding for infrastructure projects in our neighborhood through the Neighborhood Conservation Advisory Committee (NCAC).

The projects include the new fence end entryways to Walter Reed Park (dedicated this past Winter), new streetlights for South Barton Street between Columbia Pike and 16th Street (with engineering work to begin this summer), and a new sidewalk and paving for South 11th Street (with engineering work to begin sometime this year).

In addition, CHCA secured a mini-grant for a display case for historic materials for the Walter Reed Community Center. This case will help us celebrate the history of Arlington with the help of Sara Collins, our local historian. We appreciate your support of CHCA

--Ron Haddox, President

## Sign up for CHCA List Serve-

Go to <http://groups.yahoo.com/group/ColumbiaHeightsCA/join> and follow instructions to sign up.

## CHCA Board:

Ron Haddox (President); Sarah McKinley (Vice President); Allen Muchnick (Secretary); Ed Miltenberger (Treasurer); Linh Ong, Jennifer Bagnell Stuart and Joshua Folb.

## CHCA Board Member Receives Award

Allen Muchnick, Secretary of Columbia Heights Civic Association, was awarded a Certificate of Appreciation from the Arlington County Civic Federation on April 8 for his many years of service. The Federation cited his 30 years of work within the bicycling community, including his promotion of a bike trail connector between Four Mile Run and W&OD Trail.

"Arlington County has won numerous awards for sustainable growth as a result of Allen's efforts," said the CivFed. The certificate stated that the County's move toward "sharrows" (pavement markings in travel lanes that promote sharing by motorists and bicyclists) stemmed directly from Allen's calls for safer venues for cyclists.

In addition, the award cited his work as President of the Arlington Coalition for Sensible Transportation (ACST). "Allen's work on behalf of people-friendly transportation has also benefitted the non-bicyclists in Arlington," including his work on transportation planning for I-66 to preserve the environment and the quality of life in our community.

The photo below shows his acceptance of the award from Mark Antell. Congratulations, Allen!



## Meeting on Natural Gas Leaks - March 14

CHCA held a special meeting to discuss methane leaks from underground pipes in the area. We met with Washington Gas and invited other civic associations to join us. Local journalists and TV crews covered the event.

Huey Battle from Washington Gas explained that the company tests its distribution lines every three years, but will inspect any time they are called.

For small-diameter pipes, like those leading from the street into individual homes, the company uses a “bore-hole” testing procedure, which basically involves drilling small round holes in the ground where pipes are buried and using “sniffing” devices to detect any gas leaks. These tests leave holes about the size of a pencil in the ground, which may look like they were caused by animals or insects.

One sign of underground natural gas leaks is dead vegetation. Natural gas, released underground, can kill plants and trees, according to Barbara Schubert, the president of the Forest Glen civic association in Silver Spring, Maryland, who attended the Arlington meeting to question Washington Gas.

How can problems be avoided? Here are some tips:

First, natural gas is odorless, but the company adds mercaptan to give it a smell reminiscent of rotten eggs to make detection easier. If residents are unfamiliar with this smell, the company provides “scratch-and-sniff” brochures. Anytime people smell mercaptan, they should make a call. The best way to report a leak--inside your home or on the street, is to call 911.

The company urges anyone doing any digging outside their home to call “MISS Utility” at 811 and ask to have all underground utilities marked. Gas lines will be marked with yellow paint. It takes up to three days to have the lines identified, but it’s worth it, because homeowners who accidentally hit a utility line will be responsible to pay for the repair. Citizens can also ask that the utility lines be identified on other people’s properties. If we suspect that a neighbor or local construction project is not properly identifying utility lines we can call 811 to report it and someone will check.



### Neighborhood Signs!

This spring Neighborhood signs were installed at several locations, including Columbia Pike on the north end of our civic association area, and on Walter Reed Drive. A larger sign is posted at the 16th Street entrance to Walter Reed Community Center.

Below is our new association logo:



## Join Your Local Civic Association!

Membership:  
\_\_\_\_\_ Individual (\$15)  
\_\_\_\_\_ Business (\$25)

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Phone \_\_\_\_\_

E-Mail \_\_\_\_\_

Make checks payable to Columbia Heights Civic Association,  
PO Box 41556, Arlington, Virginia 22204