

# The ARTiCulator

*A newsletter for Arlington Ridge Terrace Condominium owners and residents*

**Volume 4 Issue 1**

**January/February/March 2003**

## **Our Townhome Values Have Officially Appreciated**

### **By how much?**

The 2003 Arlington County real estate assessment notices were mailed to ARTC owners in early January. Although variations exist from unit to unit, many of us received increases of about 35% over the 2002 assessments.

### **The good news**

...is that our homes have increased substantially in value. The last four sales in our community ranged from \$300,000 for smaller units to \$329,900 for larger units. So if your assessment is in that range, it probably reflects the actual fair market value.

### **Better than average appreciation**

The average increase in assessed value of single-family homes in Arlington from 2002 to 2003 was 17%. The average increase for condominium units was 28%.

### **Why?**

Much of the increase in property values was a function of lower mortgage interest rates, which increases the "buying power" of prospective purchasers.



As for why our townhouses increased in value more than the Arlington market, a real estate agent (who is an ARTC resident owner) attributes this increase to a number of factors:

- (1) Sales prices in prior years were depressed due to some "distress sales" by owners who had held their properties through years of declining values and were relieved to be able to sell at a price equal to or somewhat higher than what they had paid.

- (2) The neighborhood surrounding our townhomes was significantly enhanced by the replacement of the Arna Valley apartments with the Avalon Bay Community, the renovation of the shopping center on Glebe Rd., the replacement of the Shirley Bowl bowling alley with Gold's Gym, the renovation of several strip shopping centers on Mt. Vernon Avenue, and the completion of high-end apartments across from the Potomac Yard shopping center.
- (3) The defense build-up after 9/11/01 increased demand for housing close to the Pentagon.

### **So what's it mean?**

In any event, a 35% increase in assessed value does not mean you will pay 35% more in property taxes. Every year, the Arlington County Board sets the real estate tax rate. In years when property values have increased dramatically, the Arlington County Board has sometimes reduced the tax rate to moderate the impact on homeowners. For example, in 2002, the Arlington County Board reduced the tax rate by 3 cents to \$0.993 per \$100 of assessed value.

This is the lowest tax rate of any major jurisdiction in the area. (Fairfax County's tax rate is \$1.21 per \$100 of assessed value, and Alexandria's tax rate is \$1.08 per \$100 of assessed value.) The Arlington County Board will set the 2003 real estate tax rate on April 26, 2003. So, despite the current economic situation and our mutual fund portfolios, it's great to have an official increase in the investment in our homes.

### **We've updated our Web site!**

Now you can locate all the past ARTiCulator newsletters, ARTC policies, and other information. See:

[www.arlingtonridgeterrace.net](http://www.arlingtonridgeterrace.net)

### **Inside This Issue:**

- 2 Your community needs you!
- 2 Welcome to our neighborhood
- 2 ARTC's Mgmt Agent elected to...
- 2 Finalized noise policy
- 3 Have a large item to dispose of?
- 3 Planter Ideas
- 3 Featured photo: Our stream's yellow bouquet
- 3 AFCE update
- 3 Chlorine to disinfect water system
- 4 ARTC Contacts & Announcements



## Your Community Needs You!

Come join us to make a difference by serving as:

### Officer/Assistant Secretary

As an officer of the Board of Directors, you would participate as a non-voting member, take monthly Board meeting minutes in the absence of the Secretary, and assist in other Secretary duties as needed.

### Architectural Review and Grounds Chair

You can help maintain and preserve the community's appearance in the courtyard and outlying areas. You also review homeowner requests for architectural modification of their units in advance of the Board review.

### ARTC Homeland Security Rep

In this position, you would work with the Long Branch Creek Civic Association (LBCCA) HS Rep, who deals directly with the County emergency preparedness officials.

### ARTC LBCCA Rep

You can be the liaison between ARTC and the LBCCA, which serves as our official representative with Arlington County and the County Board.

### From the President

Folks, your community really does need your help. We have too many vacant positions. I ask long-time owners who have not served: Please step up to the plate and take a turn at bat. Others like you have done it over the years. For newer owners, serving in any of the above positions is a great way to become familiar with our Association, community, and/or Arlington County. Our residents who rent are welcome to serve on our committees.

You may decline to serve because you don't think you have time. Or that you wouldn't do a good job with the limited time you can devote. None of us who are currently serving has the time. Nor did those who went before us, going back to the Association's first year under the unit owners in 1990. We do the best we can. We know everyone has a life. You devote as much time as you can afford.

If interested or if you want more information, please call me, any Board member, or our property manager Tim Kirchner. Please give this some serious thought and then decide to make a difference.

Pat O'Day  
Board President

The ARTiCulator



## to Our Neighborhood

... to owners Dawn Sutor and husband Joe Trevisani, as well as Lisa and Shaun Kelleher.

## ARTC's Management Agent Elected to National Leadership Position

Tim Kirchner has been elected as the 2004 president of his association of condominium managers, the National Association of Residential Property Managers (NAPRM). Congratulations, Tim, on this fine achievement!

## Finalized Noise Policy

### Why this policy?

Many residents have notified the ARTC Board of Directors and Northern Virginia Management (NVM) about recurring problems of excessive noise from neighbors in the late evening and early morning--particularly on weekends. Arlington County Police visits or warnings have not deterred the noise problem. Therefore, the ARTC Board of Directors has completed the noise policy that updates the draft policy considered and posted in the January-March 2001 ARTiCulator.

### What is the policy?

Based on the Arlington County Noise Ordinance and ARTC Bylaws, the policy prohibits noise from radios, televisions, musical instruments, amplifiers, and telephones.

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**Important!** Noise-producing activities are prohibited from 11:00 p.m. to 8 a.m.

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Notices and fines escalate if the problem continues:

- 1st violation: NVM will send a warning **letter** to the owner(s) of the unit describing the offense and citing the ARTC policy.
- 2nd violation: NVM will send another letter to the unit owner(s) and impose a **\$150 fine**.
- 3rd violation: NVM will impose a **\$300 fine**.
- Subsequent violations: Each additional violation results in the **doubling** of the fine.

### How do I handle a noise policy violation?

To report each noise disturbance, you must call both of these numbers:

1. Police at 703-558-2222 at the time of occurrence and
2. NVM at 703-941-9002 by the next business day.

## Have a large item to dispose of?

Call Olivo, our trash removal service, at 703-237-1139. They charge a nominal fee to haul it away for you.

## Planter Ideas

*This article originally appeared in the March/April/May 2001 issue 2.2.*

### Calling all Gardeners

One way to keep our community looking lovely and keep landscaping (and our monthly association fee) expenses down is to do easy, minor tasks with our volunteer Landscaping Committee instead of paying a landscaper to do these tasks. If you have any questions, have landscaping ideas, would love to join the committee, or even help just once for a few hours, please contact Janet Gardner, the volunteer chair of our Landscaping Committee, at 703-836-5609.



### Ideas for Flowers You Can Plant Yourself

Another way to lower landscaping funds is to buy your favorite flowers and plant them in the courtyard planters outside your unit.

#### Success Tips:

- Leave in all existing plants.
- For best results, **water your plants every other day** if it doesn't rain.
- Fertilize. Occasional use (such as 10-14-10 formula) is helpful; overusing fertilizer can "burn" plants.
- Although information is readily available from Web sites and local garden centers (even if it is conflicting opinions), experience shows that the annual varieties in the chart below generally do well in our community and grow no higher than the suggested 6" in height.

#### Sun-Loving<sup>1</sup>

African Daisies  
Ageratums  
Cockscombs  
Dianthus  
Dwarf salvias  
Dwarf snapdragons  
Dwarf zinnias  
French marigolds  
Geraniums  
Moss roses  
Petunias  
Vincas

#### Shade

Alyssum  
Impatiens  
Lobelias  
Violas

#### Something in between<sup>2</sup>

Alyssum  
Begonias  
Dianthus  
Petunias

#### Key

<sup>1</sup>Sun for at least 6 hours in the morning or afternoon.

<sup>2</sup>Any combination of sun and shade.

## This Issue's Featured Photo

### Our Stream's Yellow Bouquet

by Wendy A. Albrecht



Can you believe these lovely flowers grew this way last September in our lovely backyard stream—to form a bouquet?! We're featuring these cheery yellow flowers now to remind us that spring is just around the corner.

### Got a great photo of our community?

Have you seen a lovely, landscaped ARTC planter box? Took a picture at ARTC when it was a beautiful snowy scene? Feel free to email it for publication consideration (or even just the idea if you don't wish to take the photo) to Wendy at [wendyalbrecht326@aol.com](mailto:wendyalbrecht326@aol.com).

## AFCE Update

The Arlingtonians for a Clean Environment (AFCE) is an organization that helps educate the communities about the local environment—which includes the Four Mile Run watershed (the backyard stream behind our townhomes).

One of the recent activities that AFCE held was a leadership program on 1/26/03. It's part of a national pilot program being funded by the National Fish and Wildlife Foundation. For information about AFCE activities, see <http://www.arlingtonenvironment.org>.

### Chlorine to Disinfect Water System

As mentioned in the *Washington Post* on 3/13/03, the water system disinfection will use chlorine for its annual water main flushing program now through 4/14/03. You might notice low water pressure, discolored water, or a chlorine odor. If you see discolored water from your faucet, simply run cold water for a few minutes until it runs clearly. If you have any questions or concerns, you can contact Perry Sasser of the Arlington County Department of Public Works at 703-228-6578.

## ARTC Contacts

### Board of Directors and Officers

Contact us if you have any questions

#### President

Pat O'Day 703-836-4830  
[PODay@arl.i-n-s.com](mailto:PODay@arl.i-n-s.com)

#### Vice President/Treasurer

Chas Carron 703-838-0321  
[charles.carron@verizon.net](mailto:charles.carron@verizon.net)

#### Secretary/Assistant Treasurer

David Houser 703-836-5659  
[d.houser@verizon.net](mailto:d.houser@verizon.net)

#### Officer/Assistant Treasurer

Marilyn Kretsinger 703-548-8082

Officer/Assistant Secretary, *vacant*

### Management Agent

Tim Kirchner, Principal  
Northern Virginia Management, LLC  
4306 Evergreen Lane, #101  
Annandale, VA 22003  
703-941-9002  
[nvmanagement@erols.com](mailto:nvmanagement@erols.com)

### Committees

Architectural Review and Grounds  
Chair, *vacant*

#### Landscaping

Chair Janet Gardner at 703-836-5609

#### Communications (Newsletter & Web site)

Chair Wendy Albrecht 703-683-6805  
[wendyalbrecht326@aol.com](mailto:wendyalbrecht326@aol.com)

#### Welcome/Social

Chair, *vacant*

### Representatives

ARTC Homeland Security Rep  
*vacant*

ARTC Long Branch Creek Civic  
Association Rep  
*vacant*



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## Announcements

### ARTC Board Meetings

Come join us on Wednesdays at #3012 at 7 p.m. unless otherwise announced on:

April 16  
May 21  
June 18

July 16  
August 20  
September TBD

October TBD  
November TBD  
December 17

I wonder what happens  
at ARTC Board  
meetings...

Stop by the next meeting,  
visit [our Web site](#), or  
see the breezeway's  
bulletin board!

