

Arlington Friends of Urban Agriculture

2020 Board Slate

New Board Members

Anne Braghetta

Please tell us a bit about your background, career and experiences.

I am an environmental engineer with many years of experience working in water resources, international development and diplomacy. I have been an avid gardener for many years in climates both tropical and temperate. Most recently I served as Peace Corps Country Director in Costa Rica where I led a team of 50 local staff and 120-150 Peace Corps Volunteers in grassroots development.

Why would you like to join the FOUA board of directors?

I have just returned to Arlington after years working overseas, and am eager to get involved in the community. I have many years of experience working with volunteers and volunteerism gained through 9 years of service with the Peace Corps. Prior to returning to the Peace Corps in 2015, I worked as a consulting environmental engineer focused on water quality and resource conservation for many years. I speak fluent Spanish as well as professional Portuguese, French and Polish. I am looking forward to getting to know the diverse Arlington communities. Additionally, I am very interested in exploring the connection between FOUA and the APS school victory gardens program. I have applied to join the Master Gardener training program in the 2021 February class.

Have you volunteered with or attended any FOUA projects or events?

Yes. I helped to bag donated produce this summer at the Rock Springs church.

What is your relevant gardening experience? Are you a master gardener or have you had other similar training?

I have gardened for many years, including in all the climates where we have lived, ranging from the supremely tropical (Brazil, Costa Rica, Guatemala) to the high latitude temperate (Poland), to more domestic locations in California and Virginia. I have learned a lot and am eager to continue learning. I have applied to join the Master Gardener training program in the 2021 February class.

Do you have any relevant food volunteering/training/policy experience?

I do not have food policy or training experience.

What other skills can you bring to FOUA? (example, fundraising experience, accounting background, web/SEO work, graphics, etc.)

I am an experienced public speaker and enjoy photography and videography. I have many years of experience focusing on external communications and donor management. I speak and write in multiple languages (Spanish, Portuguese, French, Polish).

Anything else you'd like to share so we can get to know you?

I am an avid hiker, biker, runner and walker. I enjoy being outdoors almost all the time! I would be happy to answer any other questions. Thank you for your consideration.

Rebecca (Becky) Halbe

Please tell us a bit about your background, career and experiences.

I enjoyed a 32+ year career with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service and am now enjoying retirement. I've been a vegetable gardener for more years than I can remember, sometimes dabbling and sometimes intensive. Graduated from Carleton College in 1981 with an English degree. Graduated as an Extension Master Gardener (EMG) in 2015, and as a Master Naturalist in 2017. I've been a member of the Plot Against Hunger Committee since its inception (?) and have tended several Plot gardens over the years, including Rock Spring UCC Plot, Central Library Plot, Westover Library Plot, and Tuckahoe Elementary School Victory Garden.

Why would you like to join the FOUA board of directors?

It's an easy fit, since I'm already active in urban agriculture as a homeowner, as an Extension Master Gardener public educator, as a Plot gardener, etc. I'll be leaving the Master Gardeners of Northern Virginia Board this month, after a 3-year term, so it will be good to stay active in a like-minded Board. I know and have worked with many of the FOUA board members on various projects and events.

Have you volunteered with or attended any FOUA projects or events?

In my mind, there are so many cross-over events between Plot Against Hunger, EMGs, and FOUA, that I may misspeak here. Most recently, I continue to tend a Victory Garden at Tuckahoe Elementary School. I've participated in several Zoom meetings, including doing presentations for Urban Agriculture Month, and, in pre-Covid days, I attended several FOUA-sponsored events and meetings.

What is your relevant gardening experience? Are you a master gardener or have you had other similar training?

Yes, Extension Master Gardener (EMG) since 2015 with a strong interest in vegetable gardening and native plants. Became certified Arlington Regional Master Naturalist in 2017. Tended the first church Plot Against Hunger in Arlington at Rock Spring UCC since it began. I've helped create several pollinator gardens over the years, and participated in the start or refurbishment of several library and school vegetable gardens in Arlington.

Do you have any relevant food volunteering/training/policy experience?

I've created and presented many classes (some on my own and some with others) on vegetable gardening, foraging, microgreens, native plants, etc. I helped put together events for 2019 Urban Agriculture Month. Most recently, I coordinated the Produce Bagging Program that worked out of space at Rock Spring Congregational United Church of Christ from June 1 - October 29. I also participated in and coordinated several gleaning expeditions and the hauling and delivery of the produce.

What other skills can you bring to FOUA? (example, fundraising experience, accounting background, web/SEO work, graphics, etc.)

Public speaking and training classes, writing skills.

Are you a member/board member of any other community groups?

Plot Against Hunger Committee, Free and Wild Toastmasters (officer and member)

Anything else you'd like to share so we can get to know you?

I'm originally from the Midwest, and have lived in Arlington longer than anywhere else. I share my home with a white Standard Poodle (Dudley Do-Right) and two tabby cat sisters, Olive and Leta. I play flute, swim competitively (or will when it's safe again), travel (ditto), and love the outdoors.

Catie Drew

Please tell us a bit about your background, career and experiences.

I have a bachelor's degree in environmental biology, and a master's degree in museum education. I've been a federal employee for over 35 years, starting out as a Marine Biologist at NOAA, then a Museum Specialist for the Smithsonian Museum of Natural History, and then an Environmental Education specialist for the Smithsonian's Environmental Research Center. I

then worked as an interpretive ranger for the National Park Service at the George Washington Memorial Parkway, then became the Education Director for the DEA Museum, and then finally, a Senior Prevention Program Specialist for DEA's Community Outreach and Prevention Support section doing drug prevention education on a national level. In addition to gardening, I also enjoy hiking, camping, watercolor painting, and my current passion: recumbent triking. My goal is to cycle the entire C&O canal, and maybe also the GAP trail, at least for now (I have great plans for when I finally retire). Life is Good - enjoy it! I'm married to Wayne Botts, and have three adult children.

Why would you like to join the FOIA board of directors?

I was a founding member of the FOIA steering committee which was the predecessor of the FOIA board of directors. I would have continued on in that capacity, but had too many commitments at the time to give it as much as attention as I would have liked. Now with my children grown, many of the other commitments (scouts, band, sports, and youth group) have dissipated, leaving me more free time to pursue my interests, of which a major one is urban agriculture.

Have you volunteered with or attended any FOIA projects or events?

Yes, while I was on the FOIA steering committee, I volunteered for quite a few FOIA events, and also attended many events afterwards.

What is your relevant gardening experience? Are you a master gardener or have you had other similar training?

I was a member of Arlington's Urban Agriculture task force, where we worked tirelessly to research a variety of ways that urban dwellers can grow their own vegetables and fruit, as well as have access to nutritious food despite their location and income. I have been an organic gardener for over 30 years and love the feel of soil between my toes. I began gardening because I wanted organic veggies, but the cost at the time was prohibitive so I thought I'd grow my own. I started out using the double-dug method (a la Mel Bartholomew in Square Foot Gardening) but then graduated to raised beds. Each year, I try a few new varieties, but also do research on one plant that has given me problems in the past so I can figure out how to improve it. In addition to vegetables, I've branched out to fruit (mostly berries) and herbs, and have started researching medicinal herbs and how to use them. I'm now up to around 16 raised beds, as well as a variety of smaller pots and several fruit trees and shrubs that line the property.

Do you have any relevant food volunteering/training/policy experience?

No, most of my experience has been with the actual growing of the food, not the distribution or policy.

What other skills can you bring to FOUA? (example, fundraising experience, accounting background, web/SEO work, graphics, etc.)

I have a background in informal education, and have led many classes and workshops (including gardening) both in-person and via webinars. These include giving gardening workshops at the library. I also am knowledgeable in computer graphics (Adobe's Creative Cloud: InDesign, Illustrator, etc.) and have designed and produced many newsletters, flyers, and posters.

Are you a member/board member of any other community groups?

I have been a member of the Cherrydale Volunteer Fire Department for over 30 years as both a firefighter and EMT, and also the secretary. I'm also a member of the Penrose Neighborhood Association.

Anything else you'd like to share so we can get to know you?

Arlington County has a special place in my heart. My great-grandfather bought our house here in 1920, so our family has been here for five generations and 100 years, and I both live AND work here. I have seen the County change over the years, and am gratified that even though it has moved from a mostly agriculture community to a bustling suburb, it hasn't lost its agricultural roots, and am delighted to further urban agriculture through organizations like FOUA.

Board Member Re-election

David Sachs

Please tell us a bit about your background, career and experiences.

After college moved to area and began career in politics and communications. Spent over decade advancing labor rights for working families, but ultimately lost faith in the mechanics of Capitol Hill and the motives of our elected establishment. Decided to do something about it (!), and shifted focus to family values, community volunteering and healthy food production as part of more resilient lifestyle.

Joined a number of neighborhood organizations, read a stack of books, and fell in love (again) with urban agriculture. Began gardening at local community garden and volunteering at local food bank. At this same time, joined my family with the launch of our organic family farm and new flour milling facility.

Why would you like to join the FOUA board of directors?

It would be an honor to continue my service for another term. There's a LOT of work still to do.

Have you volunteered with or attended any FOUA projects or events?

Attended FOUA lectures in 2015

Spoke and moderated FOUA lectures / events in 2016 and 2017

Joined FOUA board in 2018

Transitioned FOUA to Non-profit in 2019

Led FOUA Victory Garden and Volunteer work in 2020

What is your relevant gardening experience? Are you a master gardener or have you had other similar training?

Professional organic farmer & permaculturalist

15+ years gardening for family & friends

Do you have any relevant food volunteering/training/policy experience?

Good with a shovel, thick skin and strong back - farming is hard work. Organic certification by PCO, Rodale Institute Farmer Program and VDAC food health & safety training. I also have a lifetime of mistakes, and lessons learned in real world experience... :)

What other skills can you bring to FOUA? (example, fundraising experience, accounting background, web/SEO work, graphics, etc.)

Photography, design, carpentry, stone-ground flour milling

Are you a member/board member of any other community groups?

Arlington CERT, Douglas Park CA, Ft. Barnard Community Garden

Anything else you'd like to share so we can get to know you?

Fired up, ready to go!