

## COMMUNITY



PHOTO CONTRIBUTED BY SARAH KIRK

New windows are installed in the garage at Turner Farmhouse. (Aug. 2022)



PHOTO CONTRIBUTED BY SARAH KIRK

Volunteers from St. Luke High and Middle Schools clean the garage's exterior surface before painting. (File photo)



PHOTO BY MERCIA HOBSON/THE CONNECTION

Volunteers cook pancakes for the open house breakfast on Dec. 3, 2022.

# Open House at Turner Farmhouse

Look at what the foundation has been doing.

BY MERCIA HOBSON  
THE CONNECTION

As president of Turner Farmhouse Foundation, Sarah C. Kirk of Great Falls invited the public to 10609 Georgetown Pike in Great Falls on Saturday, Dec. 3, for the nonprofit's third annual open house, pancake breakfast and fundraiser. Kirk serves as the Resident Curator for the property, which includes a 1905 Queen Anne-style farmhouse and outbuildings on approximately 5-acres, under a lease dated Nov. 1, 2018.

Kirk lives there with her family and a caretaker. The lease is between the Board of Supervisors of Fairfax County and the Turner Farmhouse Foundation. Kirk provided the open house opportunity for the farmhouse following the lease's public access clause.

Visitors at the open house saw Kirk's progress toward fulfilling the curator program duties and lease requirements. Kirk has worked on rehabilitating the Turner Farmhouse as a residence, finishing improvements to the Pony Farm field, and raising funds to renovate the existing two-story garage into the retreat center.

Rehabilitation on the farmhouse is nearing completion, and improvements to the garage have begun. New windows are installed, and stud work, wiring, and other construction tasks are underway.

Kirk said they started in 2019 and have received between 2,000 and 3,000 volunteer hours per

year. For three years, Eagle Scout projects and high school and middle school work camps boosted efforts. She described "lots of military support, especially during COVID." Fifty lieutenants from Marine Corps Base Quantico came several times.

The lease estimated the cost of program requirements at \$672,000 and the adjusted fair market rental value for the 20-year lease term at \$672,000, equaling an average monthly rent of \$2,880. The rent does not include taxes or utilities. The structures on the Turner Farmhouse property reflect the rural history of the type that dominated the community in the early 1900s. The parcel remains under the ownership of the Fairfax County Park Authority.

Fairfax County Board of Supervisors appointed Lynne Garvey-Hodge vice-chair of the History Commission. She attended the open house and explained that a committee on the commission oversees the Resident Curatorship Program.

"I've watched RCP grow from nothing to what it is today," Garvey-Hodge said. Having owned a historical home on Main Street in Clifton for many years, Garvey said she "knew way too much about them, leaky ceilings, and things like. I always like to follow success stories, and it appears that Sarah's story has been just an amazing success."

On July 27, 2021, the Board of Supervisors approved Special Exception Application SE 2020-DR-022 for hosting retreats and/or meetings for grief and bereavement support due to the death of a parent, sibling, or others at Turner Farm.

The foundation needs community support in donated time, materi-

als and funds to make the project a success. It partners with the Home Depot Foundation, the Diocese of Arlington's WorkCamp program, Marines, scouts, Cooper Middle School students, and many more volunteers.

"I hope to open in spring 2023," said Kirk. "We need another \$100k

to finish, including the deck and a lift to the 2nd floor."

Visit the Turner Farmhouse Foundation website to follow progress updates, volunteer, and donate. <https://www.turnerfarmhouse.org/>

The Resident Curator Program allows an approved applicant to

occupy a historic property owned by Fairfax County listed on its historical site inventory. Individuals, nonprofits, and for-profit organizations can use the program to secure long-term lease agreements for historic properties, many of which are in beautiful public park settings.

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