



# Newsletter

## Fall 2023

---

**Northern Virginia Families for Safe Streets (NoVA FSS)**

### **World Day of Remembrance**

**Northern Virginia Families for Safe Streets (NoVA FSS)** and its chapters in Alexandria, Arlington, and Fairfax commemorated the **2023 World Day of Remembrance** (WDoR) for Road Traffic Victims at Wakefield High School, two blocks from where Susan Hamlin was killed by a person driving as she attempted to cross King Street in May of this year.





*Keynote speaker Mayor Justin Wilson*

**NoVA FSS's WDoR** event focused on the tragedies our local communities have endured over the last year, which have resulted in the death of 18 pedestrians and other vulnerable road users, and serious injury to dozens more. We will acknowledge the suffering of those affected by traffic violence by giving voice to the families of crash victims.

Participating in the **NoVA FSS 2023 WDoR** were guest speakers:

- Kathy Tran, State House of Delegates, District 42;
- Mayor Justin Wilson, Alexandria;
- Rachel Flynn, Deputy County Executive of Fairfax
- Andy Penn, Arlington Chief of Police
- Stephen Linkous, Arlington Public Schools Chief of Staff

In addition, policymakers and senior transportation and law enforcement staff from all three Northern Virginia jurisdictions attended plus the Chief Deputy Commissioner of VDOT. As part of its efforts to improve safety on our roads, NoVA FSS put forth the following three “asks”.

1. Broaden implementation of automated speed enforcement
2. Implement “quick build” traffic calming projects
3. Improve vulnerable road user crash reporting





Learn more about World Day of Remembrance (WDoR) in the US [here](#).

---

## Giving Tuesday

### Support Safer Streets this Giving Tuesday

Tuesday, November 28, 2023, is a global day of giving back. NoVA Families for Safe Streets needs your help! Please donate today and give what you can to help keep our streets safe.

Our commitment to bring the community together to create safe streets for all remains strong.

- We continue providing education in schools, promoting street safety best practices
- Handing out our Families for Safe Streets handheld blinking lights to increase visibility of pedestrians during the dark winter nights
- Plant temporary street signs at intersections where people have been killed to raise awareness of risk to pedestrians on our roads
- Promote NoVA FSS's Near Miss app to identify high risk crash locations and use this crowd sourcing data to advocate for change
- Advocate for improved street safety road designs and traffic regulations with our Local and State policymakers.

[Join us today to support safer streets this Giving Tuesday!](#) We want our community members to be able to walk outside, enjoy the holiday lights and safely cross streets while being visible to drivers. **Thank you for your support!**



**Giving Tuesday  
November 28, 2023**

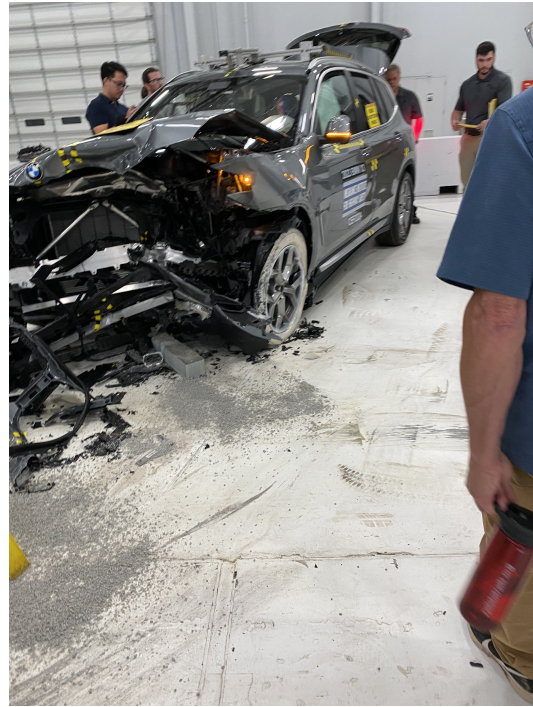
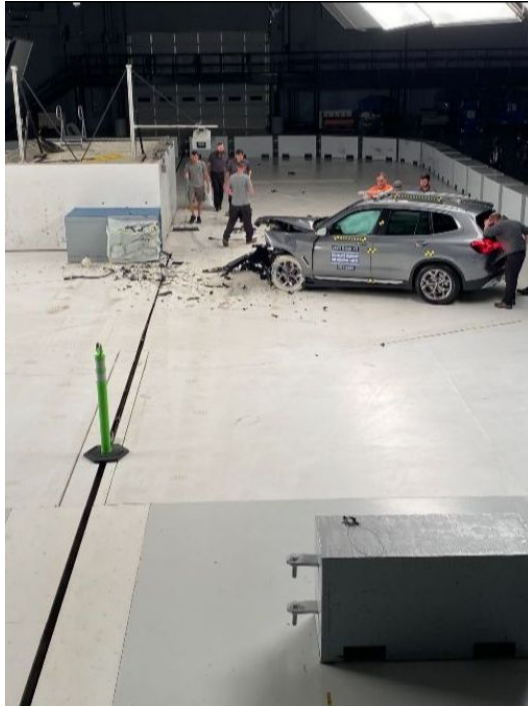
Tuesday, November 29, 2022, is a global day of giving back. NoVA Families for Safe Streets needs your help! Please donate today and give what you can to help keep our streets safe.

Visit [www.novafss.org](http://www.novafss.org) to donate

## Insurance Institute for Highway Safety- Crash Event

In early June four NoVA FSS Board members visited, toured, and witnessed a crash test in the Insurance Institute for Highway Safety (IIHS) in Ruckersville, VA. IIHS's staff at the Vehicle Research Center discussed how the Institute's research contributes to safety features in vehicles that helps to improve pedestrian and cyclist safety, including safety for passengers in the back seat

(which is what the photo on the right showed IIHS testing for the day we were there). What particularly caught our attention was the institute's work on advanced driver assistance, such as automated emergency braking and crash avoidance.



---

## Alexandria Families for Safe Streets (AFSS)

### Sixth Anniversary Celebration

AFSS hosted its 6th anniversary celebration in the heart of Alexandria on September 19th. Joining us were special guests: City of Alexandria's Mayor, Justin Wilson; Alexandria Public Schools Superintendent, Dr. Melanie Kay-Wyatt, Alexandria Police Chief Don Hayes, City Council members Aguirre, Gaskins, McPike and Bagely plus City T&ES staff, among many others in attendance. AFSS Founder, Mike Doyle, described our new public outreach efforts of posting bilingual Near Miss QR code flyers on the inside of DASH buses. Guest speakers Mayor Wilson, Superintendent Kay-Wyatt and Chief Hayes shared their thoughts on the importance of pedestrian safety and how collaboration between all of the organizations attending that evening can help create a safer environment for pedestrians and all vulnerable road users.





---

## Alexandria City Public Schools

### Francis C. Hammond Middle School Pedestrian Safety Lesson



We gave Pedestrian Education presentations to encourage students to practice safe pedestrian crossing strategies and to be aware of their surroundings—recognizing crosswalks, stoplights, and the key differences between drivers and pedestrians.

Students were educated on statistics in Alexandria, using the Near Miss app, and highlighting the number of crashes in the area. Over 600 blinkers and NM QR code cards were handed out at the end of the two days of presentations.

This is the fourth year **AFSS** has had the opportunity to conduct Pedestrian Education session at Hammond Middle School.

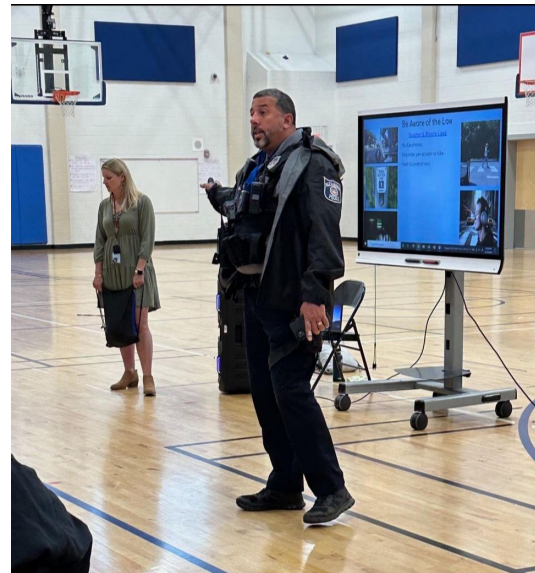
---

## Patrick Henry School

We talked to sixth graders about the importance of pedestrian safety, including Stop-Look-Wave and how to report near misses. We gave out over 100 3-way blinkers and Near Miss QR code cards.

*School Resource Officer Rich Sandoval addressing about 90 sixth graders. To his left, Kristin Donley, ACPS K-12 Instructional Specialist*

**Photo by Brian Shankman**



---

## DASH Bus





Mike Doyle and Brian Shankman met with DASH bus executives to drop off posters advertising NoVA FSS's Near Miss app to be displayed on the DASH buses throughout Alexandria. These posters are now on DASH buses all over the city. Mike and Brian also attached the first bi-lingual flyers to poles at several bus stops.

*Left: Mike Doyle. Right: Mike Doyle meets with DASH Bus executives*



# Duke Street in Motion

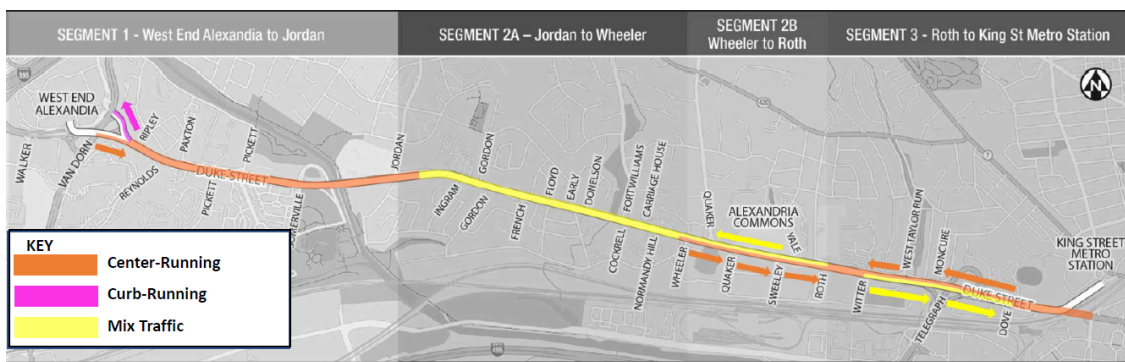
# DUKE STREET *IN MOTION*

[The City's Vision](#): A Bus Rapid Transit project, focused on improving the bus transportation between West End Alexandria to the King Street Metro. While the project aims to make the bus a better option, a lot can go along with that – making Duke Street safer, greener, and more pedestrian friendly. **AFSS** advocated for center lane BRT, bike lanes and higher visibility crosswalks.

What is happening: The concept plan was endorsed by Council on June 27th, 2023. Staff are working to finalize the planning phase through the end of 2023 and aim to begin the design phase in early 2023. The schedule is still being finalized, but construction could begin as early as 2026.

## Next meeting December 7, 2023

The City will host a public meeting to discuss the service roads in Segment 3 at Bishop Ireton High School.



## Speed Cameras Around Schools

In 2022 NoVA FSS, among other street safety organizations, advocated to the State legislators in Richmond for the installation of Speed Cameras around school zones. In 2023 APD installed speed cameras around 6 Alexandria schools. The early results show a discernible reduction in the speed that drivers have been traveling in schools zones since the installation of the cameras.

## Projects where AFSS has supported City staff in reaching residents for surveys:

1. Reducing the speed limit on Seminary West
  2. Mount Vernon North Complete Streets Project
  3. Data collection surveys for street design safety improvements.
- King and Bradlee
  - King and Commonwealth

## National Night Out

**AFSS** participated in National Night Out in Alexandria on August 1, 2023 at the Charles Houston Recreation Center. National Night Out is a neighborhood-focused, national effort to build relationships and bring back a true sense of community between the police, fire departments and members of the neighborhood. Several hundred people attended and were given pedestrian safety 3-way blinkers and the Near Miss QR code cards.







Top: Volunteer Kathy Cantwell at the AFSS table. Bottom left: Kathy Cantwell handing out blinkers. Bottom Right: Alexandria Police Chief Don Hayes interacting with a community member

*Photos by Brian Shankman*

## **ALIVE!**



Blinker and Near Miss Distribution. Left: William Ramsey. Right: Cora Kelly.

## **ARLINGTON Families for Safe Streets (Arl FSS)**

### **Arlington County Fair**

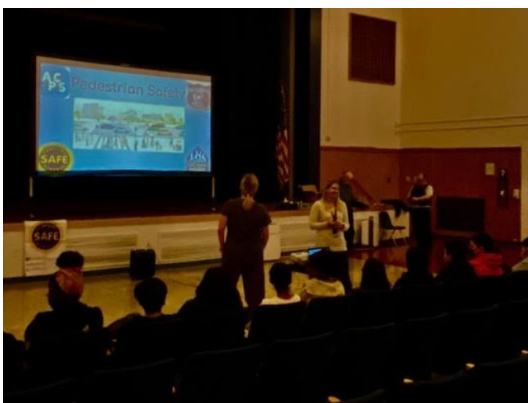


Between August 16-20, Arl FSS members spread awareness of Northern Virginia Families for Safe Streets' message at the Arlington County Fair. Over 1,000 blinkers and over 600 Near Miss QR code cards were handed out to spread awareness of the Near Miss app and how to stay safe on busy streets.



---

## Arlington Public Schools



**Kenmore Middle School**

Arl FSS received a note from a Kenmore Middle School parent whose son attended one of our Pedestrian Education sessions. The



**Swanson Middle School**



parent said, “My son just came home from school and told me he’d gotten a prize from Arl FSS for answering a question at a pedestrian safety presentation! ... He said the presentation was really good. It’s wonderful that you did this! Kenmore has a huge walk-to-school population and Carlin Springs Road is very busy. Thank you for all the great work that you do!”

---

## Fairfax Families for Safe Streets (FFSS)

### Culmore

In response to the tragic death of Lesly Diaz Bonilla in November 2022, Fairfax Families for Safe Streets, in partnership with the Bailey's Crossroads & Culmore PBI Coalition, garnered over 1,000 signatures on a petition advocating for pedestrian safety improvements at the Tyler Street and Columbia Pike intersection. Thanks to this effort, the Fairfax County Board of Supervisors allocated \$920,000 to finance rectangular rapid flashing beacons (RRFBs) at the intersection in addition to a pedestrian refuge island.



---

*Left: Katie Wilson, Fairfax FSS Board member and leader of Culmore's PBI Coalition*

## Walk, Bike, and Roll to School Day



We joined with Fairfax County Public Schools at Lake Braddock Secondary School to participate in their yearly “Walk, Bike, and Roll to School Day.”



It is a county-wide effort to promote student pedestrian safety.

---

## Falls Church Memorial Day Parade



The annual outdoor gathering brought folks from around the three jurisdictions of Arlington, Falls Church and Fairfax to gather with friends and family for a parade, including NoVA FSS members.



We spread awareness of our organization's values and message with a large banner, blinkers, and Near Miss QR code cards. Despite a steady rain downpour that ended up soaking all participants and bystanders, attendees still celebrated in the fun and sense of community. Fairfax FSS Board members Phil Kemelor and Jeremy Hancock, plus Rose Downes (AFSS volunteer) & Mike Doyle walked with the "Falls Church Forward" coalition during the parade.



## National Night Out with Kings Park Civic Association

*Kings Park NNO - with FC EMT, Mike Doyle and FC APD*



On August 1, 2023, the Fairfax chapter of Families for Safe Streets joined the neighborhood's [National Night Out](#) outing in [Kings Park](#). We focused on educating locals on near miss reports, fatalities in the Fairfax jurisdiction, as well as high risk crash corridors and other locations.

---

## Grass roots public outreach of street safety practices

**NoVA FSS** has advocated for pedestrian safety while engaging with the public and distributing 3-way blinkers and the Near Miss QR code cards, posted the Near Miss QR code flyers on DASH busses and at bus stops as well as on all of our social media platforms.

---

### Blinker and Near Miss Cards Distribution

- Old Town and Del Ray Farmers Markets
- Carpenter's Shelter
- Bike to Work Day "Pit Stop" in Del Ray and Arlington
- Culmore
- ALIVE!

### Pending distribution of blinkers / Near Miss QR code cards

- Senior Services of Alexandria
- Alexandria Police Department, Community Engagement Unit
- Near Miss vertical signs posted at bus stops throughout Alexandria

# In the Media

- ARLNow writes about a day of remembrance for lives lost — in Arlington, Northern Virginia, and around the world — to vehicular crashes. The event was held at Wakefield High School on Sunday November 19. Read a preview of World Day of Remembrance [here](#).
- Safety Improvements to Come to Columbia Pike After Death of Teen. [Watch](#) this NBC4 television report.



Lesly Dias-Bonilla

---

Donate

## Who We Are

*[Northern Virginia Families for Safe Streets](#)' goal is to bring communities together to create streets that are safe for people of all ages, abilities, and*



*modes of travel by sharing impact stories to increase public awareness and understanding, educating people driving, walking, and biking on safe behavior, educating public policymakers, and advocating for measures to make our streets safer. NoVA FSS has chapters in [Alexandria](#), [Arlington](#) and [Fairfax](#) counties.*

## Contact Us

Mike Doyle  
Founding Member

**Northern Virginia Families for Safe Streets (NoVA FSS)**

[mike@novafss.org](mailto:mike@novafss.org)

<https://novasafeststreets.org>

Cell: 703 946-8401

---

# DRIVER SAFETY TIPS



## **SLOW DOWN and obey the speed limit.**

Speed Kills. Slow down and don't be distracted.



## **Buckle up and be aware.**

Wear your seat belt at all times. Fully stop at stop signs and look both ways.



## **Keep your distance.**

Observe a safe distance with the car in front of you. Allow at least 3 feet when passing cyclists.



## **Follow traffic signals.**

Prepare to stop at yellow lights and do a full stop at red lights. Yield to pedestrians and cyclists.



## **Never drink and drive.**

Don't drink and drive. Don't wear earphones in both ears or use a mobile device while driving.



---

Copyright © Alexandria Families for Safe Streets, All rights reserved.

**Our mailing address is:**

c/o Mike Doyle, Member  
1800 Diagonal Road, Ste 600  
Alexandria, VA 22314

Want to change how you receive these emails?

You can [update your preferences](#) or [unsubscribe from this list](#).