

The Compass

The Official Publication of the Cameron Station Community Association

Volume 22 Issue 1 • January-February 2021

The Holiday Beauty of Cameron Station

Thank you to all who decorated their homes this holiday season and joined in our outdoor celebration. As such a dark year drew to a close, the lovely ornaments, multi-colored lights and smiling faces gave us all joy and hope. Cheers, and here's to 2021!



(See holiday photos continued on page 2 and page 3)

The Compass is going digital! This is the last mailed copy. The March/April edition will be sent digitally directly to your email. If you would like to continue to receive a paper copy in your mailbox, please email admin@cameronstation.org with the subject line "Compass Mail Request" to ask for a mailed paper copy, or call the office. If you have requested this in the past, please do so again.



(Holiday photos continued from page 1)



(See holiday photos continued on page 3)

About . . . *The Compass*

The Compass is the newsletter for the Cameron Station Community Association and is run entirely by volunteers.

The Compass welcomes your articles and photo submissions, as well as your suggestions for future issues.

Please send us an email at TheCompass@cameronstation.org.

Previous issues of *The Compass* are available online at www.cameronstation.org.

Go under the "News" tab on the home page and click on "Community Communications" on the left-hand side.

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This Issue's Photographers: Ray Celeste, Linda Greenberg, Liz Hujsak, Sherri Mahlik, Lenore Marema, Rebecca Pipkins, Martha Romans, Psy Scott and Tom Styc

Committee Corner

HARD AT WORK ON BEHALF OF OUR RESIDENTS

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Greg Hillson - Director and Liaison to Architectural Review Committee

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COMMUNICATIONS COMMITTEE

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Tricia Hemel - Chairperson

FINANCIAL ADVISORY COMMITTEE

fac@cameronstation.org

Takis Taousakis - Chairperson

(Holiday photos continued from page 2)



Committee Corner

HARD AT WORK ON BEHALF OF OUR RESIDENTS

Activities & Events Planning Committee

By Andy Yang



Due to the pandemic, the Activities & Events Planning Committee held a modified holiday event on December 20 instead of the normal holiday party. The event started with a Santa drive-by, complete with a Santa-themed classic car leading the way along Cameron Station Boulevard, followed by another car with The Grinch in the passenger seat! Glow sticks were made available for residents to wave at Santa and light up the nighttime skies. This was followed by a giveaway of hot cocoa bombs and insulated mugs at the Gazebo. Many thanks to Tom Styc, who came and took photos of families and children enjoying the experience, and Sherri Mahlik, who took photos of the drive-by.

Looking forward to 2021, the Committee plans to continue hosting different events, as appropriate for the times. We'll keep you posted. Happy New Year!

Architectural Review Committee

By Stephen Pearson

I would like to welcome our latest Architectural Review Committee (ARC) member, Paula Caro, who joined in December! She has lived in Cameron Station for many years and brings a wealth of knowledge to the committee thanks to her 17 years of experience as an architect. Paula filled our only remaining vacancy, bringing the ARC to full strength.

With spring in our thoughts if not yet in our sights, residents typically begin to plan improvements to their yard. Don't forget that all substantial yard improvements must conform to the guidelines established in the Cameron Station Community Association Design and Maintenance Standards (DMS) and must be approved by the ARC **before** you begin work. If the improvements you're considering come close to your property line, the DMS requires that applications to the ARC include a site survey/plat describing the boundaries of your property. A plat is usually included with your deed at settlement when you purchase your property.

There has also been heightened discussion online about security in Cameron Station relating to auto and package theft. If you are considering adding a doorbell camera or other type of security camera to your home, it must conform to the DMS and receive approval from the ARC prior to installation. To ensure approval, you should do your best to match the color of the camera to the trim where it is mounted and ensure that all cabling is neatly secured and out of sight as much as possible.

In fact, if you are making any changes to your home that can be seen from the outside of the house, you will probably need to submit those proposed changes to the ARC for approval **before** beginning work. **Always begin your planning by consulting the DMS.** The forms necessary to submit an Exterior Modification Application or a Private Tree Replacement Application, along with the latest version of the DMS, are located here: cameronstation.org/our-neighborhood/hoa-services-fees/covenants. If you have any questions about the process or which changes require an application, contact: Arc@cameronstation.org.

Common Area Committee

By Kathy McCollom

The committee has moved ahead with proposals/contracts for several new projects.

- The Gazebo has some wood in poor condition that needs to be replaced, in addition to being repainted.
- More replacement trees were planted in December, before the ground was frozen.

- The large street repaving project will require a level of technical management beyond what the CAMP staff or committees can do; several engineering companies have submitted proposals to do this work.

- Sections of fence between the community and shopping centers have been in poor repair for some time, and they will be fixed.

- The community street light poles originally had identifying letters and numbers to make it easier to report lights that were out. Over time, many of these numbers have faded or worn off. The Committee reviewed a contract to replace the pole numbers.

- This Spring, the brick wall along Duke Street will be power washed to remove the dark mold.

Watch for daffodils in the gardens along Duke Street in the spring. There are also daffodils coming in many community flowerbeds. These start to sprout in winter. Many common area plant beds have become cut-throughs; this time of year they appear to be only dirt, but dormant perennials and future bulbs are actually in these places. Walking or playing in these areas damages the plants. Please stay off them and walk around the plant beds. Thank you!

Communications Committee

By Tricia Hemel

In 2020, the Communications Committee welcomed 187 new residents to Cameron Station, continued to work with management to get information out to the community via the Cameron Station Communication Association weekly email blast in an easier-to-read format, published five editions of *The Compass* and updated the community map to include more detailed information about amenities such as pet stations, Little Free Library locations and walking paths within our community. The Committee has many initiatives planned for 2021, including creating a social media presence for our community, updating the website and creating a Photography Subcommittee. If you would like to help in any way, please contact communications@cameronstation.org.

Financial Advisory Committee

By Takis Taousakis

Community Association Management Professionals (known as CAMP), our management company, provides a detailed system of financial recordkeeping and reporting. Each month, the Financial Advisory Committee (FAC) members receive the same financial reports provided to the Board of Directors in both summary and detailed form. These reports are fund-based with separate reports for the Operating Fund, the Replacement Fund and the Capital Improvement Fund. They include an updated Income Statement and Balance Sheet, along with management commentary on actual versus budgeted expenditures. We address questions directly to the community manager, but also identify points we feel should receive specific attention from the Board. The Board and the FAC also have access to the online system (CIRANET) that includes financial reports with up-to-date expenditure tracking for operating expenditures as well as repair and replacement and capital projects.

Cameron Club Facilities Committee

By Ray Celeste

We wish you and yours a very Happy New Year! As we move into 2021, we will be installing a new basketball court. We are quite excited and look forward to the many years our residents will use and enjoy it.

Our reservation system to use the basketball court, Fitness Center and fitness classes is working out quite well. If you make a reservation and cannot use it, please cancel it through our reservation system or call 703-567-8555 so other residents can take advantage of our Fitness Center and all that it offers.

We do have an option for residents to walk in and use our facility. There is a 10-minute grace period, but if a resident does not show up for the reservation within this time frame, another resident can take their spot. The walk-in option is working out quite well, so please consider this option.

Unfortunately, we have lost long-time fitness personal trainer and assistant fitness manager, Cody Nicholas. Cody has moved on to a new opportunity after over 10 years of service to Cameron Station. He spent countless hours advising and assisting our residents on the benefits of fitness training. We wish him well as he moves on to new challenges and responsibilities.

Remember: "Motion Is Lotion to Your Body and Mind!"



Community Management

Cameron Station Community Association Community Association Management Professionals (CAMP)

703-821-2267 – On-Site Office 703-567-4881

After-Hours Emergency: 703-821-2267

Jennifer Gilmore, General Manager

kgilmore@gocampmgmt.com

Janeva Sharps, Assistant Community Manager

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Mark Bondurant, Maintenance

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Psy Scott, Fitness Director, Cameron Club Fitness Center

cameronclubfitness@gmail.com 703-567-8555

Condominium Management

The Residences at Cameron Station - A.K.A. 400 Cameron Station Condominium

Angela Luker, Community Manager

angela.luker@fsresidential.com 703-751-5002

After-Hours Emergency: 703-385-1133

Corporate Phone: 703-385-1133

Carlton Place Condominium

Abaris Realty

Dany Abebe, Property Manager

dabebe@abarisrealty.com 301-468-8919

Lawan Trent, Administrative Assistant

ltrent@abarisrealty.com 301-468-8919

After-Hours Emergency: 301-468-8919

Condos at Cameron Station Boulevard Oakland Hall Condominium

Community Management Corporation (CMC)

703-631-7200 - After-Hours Emergency: 301-446-2635

Gita Lainez, Portfolio Manager

glainez@cmc-management.com 703-230-8578

Brittany Byrd, Assistant Community Manager

BByrd@cmc-management.com 703-230-8576

Main Street Condominium

GHA Community Management

John Lyons, Property Manager

jlyons@ghacm.com 703-752-8300 ext. 706

Lauren Gentry, Administrative Assistant

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After-Hours Emergency: 888-660-7132

Woodland Hall Condominium

Richter Management

Steve Richter, Community Manager

steve@richtermanagement.com 703-503-1234

After-Hours Emergency: 703-624-9591

Rebecca Pipkins Receives Community Spirit Award

By Pat Sugrue

The winner of this year's Mark Pillow Community Spirit Award is Rebecca Pipkins. The Pillow Award was created in 2006 in memory of Mark Pillow, a generous and kind neighbor who represented the best of Cameron Station. Below are just a few of the reasons Rebecca was chosen.



Rebecca has been a member of the Communications Committee (ComCom) for three years. In spite of a very busy full-time job, she enthusiastically participates in the work of ComCom, attending Board of Directors and ComCom Committee meetings, editing communications and revising the website. She never hesitates to volunteer her time.

Rebecca is also a Beachbody Coach on Facebook, which means she helps friends and neighbors get started with at-home workouts and then runs an online accountability group to help coach them. In addition to the exercise program videos she posts, she also offers tips for nutrition and healthy eating.

Before Covid-19, Rebecca was a volunteer at the animal shelter. But since the virus hit, she instead has been collecting food for AFAC, the Arlington Food Assistance Center, and delivering this food to the center every Friday – sometimes hundreds of items. She keeps a box at her front door where neighbors can easily deposit their donations throughout the week. She also delivers food to Bridges to Independence, a local organization that “leads individuals and families out of homelessness and into stable, independent futures.”

Rebecca demonstrates her kindness and caring both inside Cameron Station and outside to the wider community. She exemplifies the community spirit the Pillow Award was designed to honor, volunteering her time and talents for the benefit of us all. Congratulations, Rebecca, for this well-deserved honor!



129 items donated!

Volunteer of the Year Award Goes to...YOU!

By Tricia Hemel and Pat Sugrue

The Volunteer of the Year Award was established in 2016 to recognize residents who have had a significant, positive impact on our community by volunteering their time and talents.

While “the norm” is to award this honor to an individual, 2020 was anything but normal. That’s why this year’s recipients are “The Residents of Cameron Station.” Throughout the year, time and time again, we saw remarkable selflessness exhibited by so many in this wonderful community. Below are just a few examples of neighbors helping neighbors.

Due to Covid-19, many neighbors offered to grocery shop for those in high-risk categories. We know of others who took out the trash for their quarantined neighbors, while some organized food bank donations for residents suddenly jobless. Neighbors have come together to create pods to home-school their children. And still today, more than 11 months into this pandemic, neighbors continue to step up their kindness and community spirit in ways none of us could have foreseen last January.

Neighbors have made headbands with buttons to alleviate the discomfort of nurses at INOVA Alexandria Hospital, who have to wear masks strapped around their ears nearly every moment of their shift. We had neighbors organizing food trucks to help local businesses and bring much-needed relief from our new cook-at-home routine.

Many front-line workers live in and serve our community. We have nurses, doctors, police officers and other essential workers who reside here. While we may stay safely inside, they go to work, risking their health to help Cameron Station and the wider community. Today we have teachers working harder than ever to help our kids learn remotely, or in the classroom, during this unprecedented health crisis. Now, more than ever, we realize who is essential and how much they do for us.

So many people have stepped up to help our community. Wearing masks and social distancing is the rule and not the exception in Cameron Station; it means more than

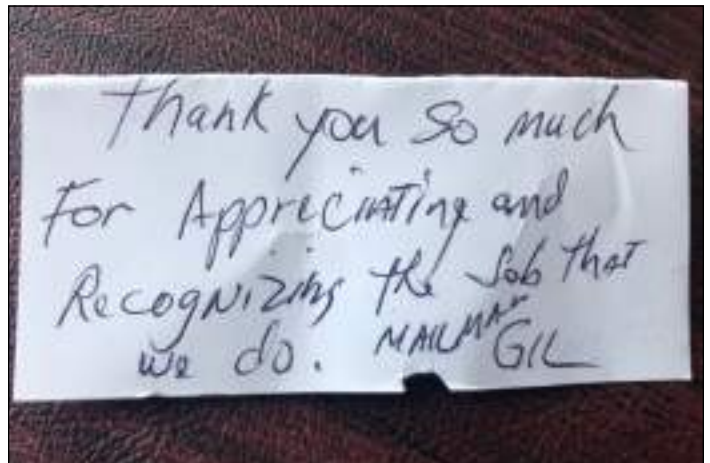


following government directives – it is a testament to our ethos of watching out and caring for each other.

We could not have endured 2020 without our neighbors being, well, neighborly, as demonstrated by their acts of kindness both large and small. As so many of us have been separated and isolated from our family and friends, our neighbors have shown what it really means to be part of a community through their support, volunteerism and compassion. Truly, the residents of Cameron Station have been the saving grace of 2020 and are so well-deserving of this award.



Neighbors expressed their appreciation for deliveries that arrived during the pandemic...



...and sometimes received thank-you notes in return

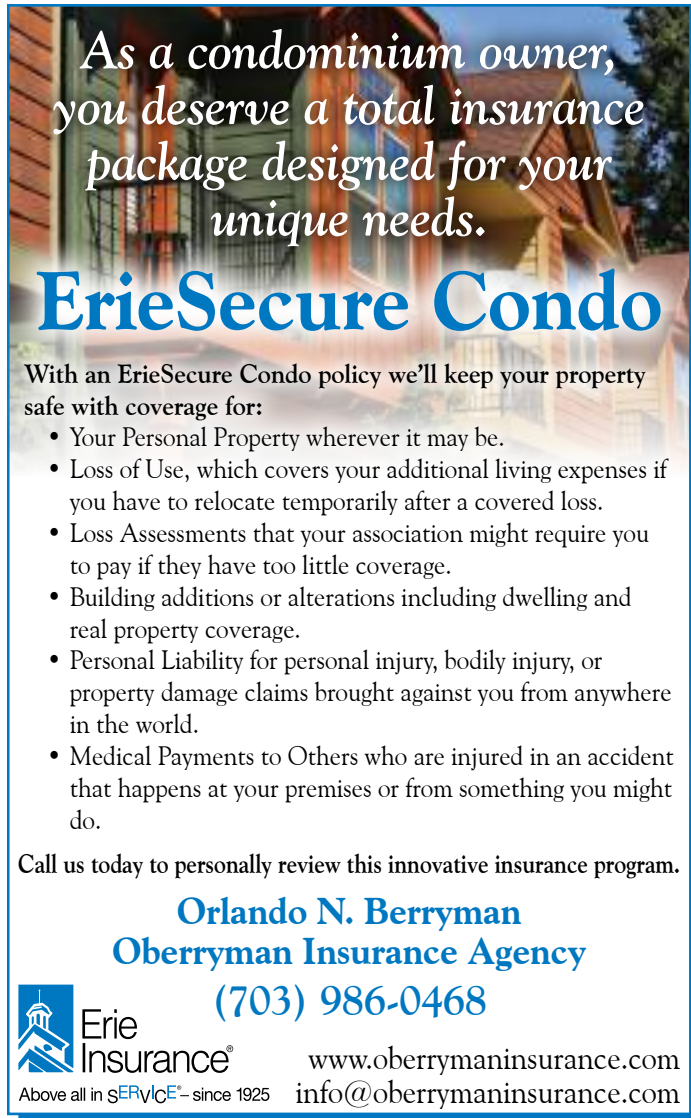
Annual Meeting Draws Large Virtual Audience

By Pat Sugrue

On Monday, November 9, the 2020 Annual Meeting of the Cameron Station Community Association was held via Zoom. There were 171 registered attendees, and a total of 403 ballots were received for the Board of Directors election.

Three new members were elected: Ernest Cage, Megan Christensen and Greg Hillson. They will join current members Andrew Hill, Joan Lampe, Mike Johnson and Sarah Walsh in forming the 2021 board. Congratulations to Ernest, Megan and Greg, and thank you to all who applied for this very important volunteer position.

Speakers at the meeting included Mayor Justin Wilson, who provided current information on the city's Covid-19 response and restrictions, including testing sites and proposals for reopening schools. He also discussed plans for redevelopment of the Landmark Mall site, which has been a multi-decade effort. (Updated information is available on Page 12.)



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Lt. Matthew Weinart, our liaison to the Alexandria Police Department, reported that the number of incidents where police were contacted in the last 12 months was 96, down from 106 for the same time period in 2019. The largest number of incidents involved larcenies – packages from doors, bikes from open garages and items from cars which were often left unlocked.

The winners of the Mark Pillow Community Spirit Award and Volunteer of the Year were announced. (Please see separate articles on pages 4 and 5.)

Various committee chairs reported on their projects and activities, and Board Treasurer Joan Lampe gave an update on the 2020 budget and audit, the 2021 budget and the overall sound financial position of the community. She reminded residents that Cameron Station is more than 20 years old, and we can expect some major expenses down the road as the community continues to age.

Topics covered in the Resident Open Forum included Ring cameras, leaf collection, improving community communication, storm drain dangers, speeding cars and how to improve attendance at meetings.

Board meetings in 2021 are scheduled for the fourth Tuesday of every month, with the exception of November and December, dates of which will be announced. There is a Resident Open Forum at every meeting, and residents are encouraged to attend.



PHOTOGRAPHY SUBCOMMITTEE

Thank you to the following members of our community who have volunteered to take photographs for use in *The Compass* and other venues for communication within Cameron Station:

Natalie Fay, Linda Greenberg, Ian Grove, Liz Hujsak, Sherri Mahlik, Martha Romans and Tom Styc (Subcommittee Chair). We very much appreciate and value their help.

November 10 Civic Association Meeting

By Sash Impastato

There was a very good turnout at the last general membership meeting of the Cameron Station Civic Association, which was held virtually via Zoom on Tuesday, November 10. Three great speakers/organizations joined us for a discussion on the Landmark Overlook development, what was happening in the City of Alexandria with respect to Covid-19 and the Taylor Run Stream Restoration project.

Landmark Overlook

Ken Wire, principal of Wire Gill LLP, and Chris Bell, Senior Vice President, Acquisition and Development for Hekemain & Co., Inc., discussed the initial plans for the Landmark Overlook development. The project is located on an 8.2-acre site bounded by South Whiting Street, Stevenson Avenue and South Walker Street, near Landmark Mall and the Mini Cooper dealership at the southwest corner of South Walker and Stephenson streets. The initial plans call for 88 stacked condos, two seven-story apartment buildings with a total of 360 units, two buildings that will be a hotel and/or office building depending upon what happens at Landmark Mall, and 7,000 square feet of retail. It's hoped that this project will come before the city for approval in March.

Covid-19

Natalie Talis, Population Health Manager for the Alexandria Health Department, provided details on Covid-19 and its impact on Alexandria. As of November 7, 2020, the city had 4,481 cases, 332 hospitalizations and 76 deaths. By early December 2020, one out of 13 persons with Covid needed hospitalization. The most common sources of exposure to the coronavirus are household (44%), workplace (25%) and gatherings (10%). When a vaccine rolled out, it was first provided to healthcare professionals and first responders and then to high-risk individuals such as seniors and those with serious health conditions. The current vaccines require two shots and must be stored in ultra-cool freezers.

Data on Covid and information on where to get tested is available at www.alexandriava.gov/Coronavirus or www.vdh.virginia.gov/coronavirus/.

Taylor Run Stream Restoration

Jesse Maines, Division Chief for the City of Alexandria Department of Transportation & Environmental Services and the Stormwater Management program, and Brian Rahal, Civil Engineer IV/Section Lead for the department, provided background and an update on the Taylor Run Stream Restoration project, part of the clean-up effort involving the Chesapeake Bay that is mandated by law. Climate change and redevelopment in the city that occurred prior to stormwater management requirements have caused certain streams in the city to erode at rapid rates and dump nitrogen, phosphorous and sediment into the waterways that feed into the Chesapeake Bay. Heavy stream flows during rainfall events have caused erosion that damages streams and undermines trees on the banks. The city is in the process of conducting public outreach to address concerns raised by the Civic Association and others about adequately protecting wetlands and habitat along Taylor Run, as well as mitigating tree removal impacts. It's currently anticipated that the actual stream restoration will commence this fall and take about one year to complete. More information can be found at www.alexandriava.gov/tes/stormwater/info/default.aspx?id=117629.

A lot is happening around Cameron Station here in the West End. Get involved now and come to the next General Membership Meeting on Wednesday, February 3, 2021, on Zoom.

If you are interested in being a part of the Civic Association, please email Sash Impastato at aimpastato54@gmail.com. Annual membership dues are only \$10 per household. Thank you!

A Hybrid Learning Model for ACPS

By Mayu Molina Lehmann

The fate of Alexandria's public schools reopening for in-person learning continues to be up in the air, as administrators monitor community health metrics in anticipation of a possible reentry in February.

In December, parents and guardians of Alexandria City Public Schools students were asked to fill out a family choice form indicating their preference for their children to continue online education or transition into a phased hybrid model.

As it stands, the tentative reentry plan for students in the hybrid model would involve attending in-person classes two days a week with three days of virtual learning. The other students would continue a fully virtual education. The same hybrid option would be given to teachers, who have been providing online instruction since March.

This plan is contingent upon staffing and infection rates. For the latest information please visit: www.acps.k12.va.us.

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11th Annual Operation Gobble Gobble – A Huge Success in 2020

By Donna Kenley

Thanks to the generous support of the Cameron Station Community, the 2020 11th Annual Operation Gobble Gobble initiative reached its goal – to provide each of 100 Tucker Elementary School families with \$100 in grocery gift certificates to purchase Thanksgiving meals.

On November 20, 2020, I represented Cameron Station and Michael Johnson represented the Samuel Tucker Elementary Parent and Teacher Association (PTA) as we presented Tucker principal Rene Paschal with grocery gift certificates totaling \$10,000. Cameron Station residents provided these much-needed gift certificates (usable at Giant, Safeway, Aldi and Harris Teeter grocery stores to purchase Thanksgiving meals) to wonderful Tucker families (identified by the Tucker Social Worker) who needed some support this past Thanksgiving season. Your generosity surpassed all expectations! An additional donation of \$2,500 in gift certificates to Target and Walmart was provided to Principal Paschal for December holiday meals and gifts.

Operation Gobble Gobble 2020 was a HUGE success. I pass on my sincere appreciation for a job well done to support this gigantic community-wide effort. Again, thanks to neighbors (over 100); businesses (Irina Babb Homes LLC, Podolsky Group and Lancaster Landscapes, Inc.); philanthropic organizations (West End Rotary Club and Grace Homeless Project, Washington, D.C.); associations (Tucker Girl Scout Troop 61026); Cameron Station community organizations (Grimm Corner, composed of 99 families); and Tucker PTA that rallied to support this worthy cause. Also, I want to mention two special Cameron Station neighbors: a “Secret Sponsor” who matched donations with \$2,000 in gift certificates, and a “High Donor Family” who gifted \$1,000 in certificates. These gestures exemplify the community pride that we have in Cameron Station.



Mike Johnson, Donna Kenley and Tucker Principal Rene Paschal celebrate Operation Gobble Gobble

I was honored to work with all of you to put this project together. I especially appreciated the hope that you provided to families who needed a little help during the pandemic. Again, you exemplify what it means to be a part of our wonderful Cameron Station community. Thank you!



Donna Kenley passes a donation to Tucker Principal Rene Paschal

Alexandria Library Rollback to Phase 2

Due to the upward trend of positive Covid-19 cases and increasing risk of transmission in our area, the Alexandria Library system has resumed its curbside-only and virtual services until further notice. Telephone support and virtual reference will continue during curbside hours. Beatley Library's service hours are Monday-Thursday, 11am-5pm; Friday-Saturday, 11am-4pm. The library is closed on Sundays. Further information is available at <https://alexlibraryva.org/>.



Out and About

By Lenore Marema

Grocery Shopping in 2020

The food industry and supermarket associations that track grocery shopping trends discovered that the pandemic did more than just force us to buy more groceries and stay at home and cook: there was a significant shift to ordering groceries online, some for pick-up, but mostly for delivery. While shoppers remained loyal to their stores, the early shortages led to a notable increase in subscriptions for products used regularly. Whether it was from bottled water, over-the-counter drugs, diapers, paper products or whatever, shoppers wanted to ensure a regularly delivered supply. The clubs where they could stock up on items also gained new members. Those who went into grocery stores made fewer trips and spent less time in the stores. It was more common for one person to shop for the family groceries. These trends are expected to continue for the near future.



Food Trends

While staying in and cooking at home, in 2020 the focus was on comfort food, going with the tried and true, and using familiar name brands. That will continue, with some tweaks to address kitchen fatigue.

- Home cooks are ready to take virtual cooking classes to up their game, including trying international dishes. Look for online cocktail classes as well.
- More and different spices are being used to freshen up a meal or experiment with international cuisines. Retail grocers reported increased requests for spices from North Africa, Latin America and the Caribbean. On occasion, home cooks are trying a restaurant-like experience at home for a change of pace.
- After a year of adjusting to cooking at home, there still will be comfort food but with a healthier twist – lasagna with veggie noodles and cauliflower rice in stir fries will remain as a trend.
- Plant-based food was coming into its own in 2020 and is expected to explode in 2021 in grocery stores and restaurants. The Whole Foods on Duke Street now has a Vegan PLNT burger bar. McDonald's has announced that it will offer a McPlant burger in 2021.
- Hemp is another plant-based alternative; it fits into keto, paleo and vegan diets.
- Almond and oat milk surged in popularity during the pandemic with no sign of letting up. Starbucks started offering oat milk in January 2021 and will launch in all stores this spring.
- Coffee will likely be the flavor of the year. You will get a coffee-flavor jolt in your nutritional bars, granola and yogurt. All these coffee treats may well contain oat milk.

Coffee-infused beer was popular during the December holidays.

- Hard seltzers reigned in 2020 and are branching out to beer and cocktail seltzers. Hard kombucha seltzers are right behind in 2021. When we are able to return to bars, this trend will probably spread there. Think of getting a bucket of wine seltzers instead of beers while watching the game. Sales of canned wine skyrocketed in 2020, and canned cocktails are right behind. Cocktails-to-go from restaurants likely will last, but when bars open, will canned wine and cocktails make the transition to bars? It looks like another tough year for craft distilleries.

Return to the New Normal

When we really feel comfortable again, what's the first eatery you will go to? None of the experts are predicting wild parties with dirty martinis, caviar and ice sculptures. Many believe the first adult outing will be a steakhouse. Think high-quality meat, planked salmon or scallops with a huge baked potato, fancy adult beverages, and outrageous desserts.

After that, tasting menus and wine pairings with tastes and ingredients different from home cooking likely will be popular, starting with small groups and private events. There's a lot to look forward to!

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Adopt-a-Family

By Mindy Lyle

It was an unusual year for the Tucker School Adopt-a-Family program. Due to the pandemic, Alexandria City Public Schools decided that gift cards would be the rule rather than the exception. As always, we had several neighborhood groups, dinner clubs and business partners that continued to go above and beyond expectations with donations. Many of our donations came from our business partners who work in the surrounding community. Greenhill Companies (owner of Van Dorn Plaza and other properties adjacent to Cameron Station) continues to support the Adopt-a-Family program through Greenhill's Pickett Place Community Foundation, a 501(c)(3) entity established to support programs in the West End of Alexandria.

On December 18, we presented Mr. Rene Paschal, Tucker's Principal, with gift cards totaling over \$8,000. These cards were distributed to families who were then able to shop for items needed by their children. We are hoping to return to the family adoption program next year.

During the year, Tucker Elementary will gratefully accept donations of gift cards to help sustain these families. If you would like to donate something during the "off season," please just drop a gift card off at the school office, knowing that it will be put to good use.

Mindy Lyle is a former member of the Cameron Station Board of Directors and has been coordinator of the Adopt-a-Family Program since 2008.



Mike Johnson, Rene Paschal and Mindy Lyle

That Annoying Eye Twitch

By Psy Scott, Fitness Director

Have you ever wondered why, at certain times, your eyes may twitch? Not to worry, as this isn't usually a serious condition. There are a multitude of reasons people experience eye twitching. The most common are eyestrain, fatigue, stress, alcohol consumption and caffeine. Other causes are working in front of a computer screen all day or not getting enough magnesium or potassium in your diet.

Eye twitching usually goes away within a few days or weeks if you get proper rest and find ways to relieve stress. Cutting back on caffeine will also help. If you're having them more often, benign essential blepharospasm is a possible cause. In rare instances, eye twitching may indicate an underlying health condition.

Eye twitches are common – just make sure you stay hydrated and get plenty of rest, and no one will think you're winking at them.



INOVA ALEXANDRIA TO MOVE TO LANDMARK MALL SITE

According to a press release from the City of Alexandria, Inova Alexandria Hospital will be moving to Landmark Mall site. Inova will occupy about 11 acres, which leaves the remaining 40 acres for "residential, retail, commercial, and entertainment offerings integrated into a cohesive neighborhood with a central plaza, a network of parks and public spaces, and a transit hub serving bus rapid transit (BRT), DASH, and Metrobus." The construction is targeted to start in 2023, with the first private housing/businesses to be delivered in 2025. The hospital is scheduled to be completed in early 2028.

The Origin of “The Compass”

By Pat Sugrue

The Cameron Station community was just beginning when the community newsletter was founded. We can't think of a better way to start the 21st year of its publishing than by sharing the story of how *The Compass* got its name. Having been on the original Newsletter Committee (the forerunner of the Communications Committee), I was fortunate enough to work with former neighbor Erin Wetherald, who wrote an article entitled “Naming the Newsletter” for the June 2000 issue. Most of what follows is thanks to her.

The Committee spent a lot of time meeting, thinking, scribbling, debating and voting on about 50 different names for the newsletter. We started with simple yet descriptive names, such as *Cameron Station Community News*.

We contemplated a name conveying a railroad connection, *The Cameron Station Local*, but decided that folks might not want to be reminded that they lived next to railroad tracks, especially because some are reminded of that every night. Speaking of a connection, however, led us to consider *The Connection* as another candidate – except some of the staff grew up watching “The Love Connection” on TV and didn't want the newsletter to be mistaken for a matchmaking service! (Besides which, a group of local newspapers was also using the name.)

We also considered *The Current* because of our proximity to several runs but discovered that another community association's newsletter already used that name. And so it went...

Then we began reflecting upon the history of Cameron Station as a U.S. Army base. *The Bugle* emerged and quickly became a favorite with several members. However,



The original staff of *The Compass* gathers in 2000

we decided to regroup and think of more names and vote again the next time we met.

At a third meeting, we narrowed the field down to three names and cast our final vote. With one person on vacation, we were down to six voting members, causing an even split among *The Bugle*, *The Compass* and *The Communicator*. We each ranked those names in order of preference, and *The Compass* prevailed.

So Why “The Compass”?

Well, it's an icon that clearly denotes a sense of direction. And tying into Cameron Station's past, it's a tool that army soldiers have relied upon to get their bearings in the field. That got us thinking about how the mission of the Newsletter Committee was to help impart a sense of direction to Cameron Station residents, enabling them to maintain their bearings in our community through the news and information we would communicate through *The Compass*.

And finally, the name “*The Compass*” represents the fact that we have all come to Cameron Station from every directional point and found our bearings and sense of belonging in this very special community.



Several current and former members of *The Compass* staff in 2019

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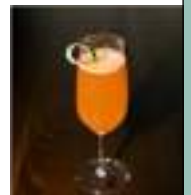
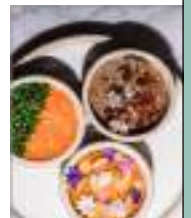
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Put a Lid on Garbage

Rats, raccoons, crows and all sorts of furry and feathered creatures can easily eat their way through garbage bags left on the curb. Please remember to put all garbage in trashcans with tight-fitting lids.



LET US HEAR FROM YOU...

The staff of *The Compass* welcomes your comments and suggestions about the newsletter and community updates. Please send them to thecompass@cameronstation.org. Thank you.

See a Problem in the Neighborhood?

Streetlight out? Sprinkler not working? Moss on brick sidewalks? Potholes in street? If management doesn't know about a problem, they can't fix it. And not every problem occurs during office hours. If you see something that needs repair, call the HOA office at 703-567-4881, and be sure to give a complete description and exact location.

Silver Diner: A New Gem!

By Carla Besosa – Cameron Station Foodie

Historically, the term “diner” brings to mind a small, short-order-grill, greasy-spoon dive. *Silver Diner* is nothing of the sort. Now that the chain has premiered in Alexandria at King and North Beauregard streets, you must check it out! It’s large, spacious, attractive and has a sizable patio with flowers, umbrellas and plenty of heaters. Given the distancing challenges of Covid-19 and winter temperatures, what a bonus to find a great place where you can eat *al fresco*, stay warm and park for free! If sitting outside in the winter is not your cup of tea, you’ll be happy to know about *Silver Diner’s* hospital-grade air purification system with germicidal UV-C lights in the HVAC, UV-C fixtures and dining room air purifiers. Staff members are equipped to explain this state-of-the-art system to you, as well as their other safety precautions. More details are provided on the *Silver Diner* website, shown on Page 17.

I had the opportunity to chat with *Silver Diner’s* Chief Operating Officer, our Cameron Station neighbor Glenn D’Amore. Glenn is excited with *Silver Diner’s* evolving cutting-edge concepts in Alexandria. It’s the “Diner for the Next Generation”! Glenn has helped lead the company into its current incarnation, and his passion is contagious. Managers are excited to greet customers, servers are excited to work there, and customers are excited for the experience.

Silver Diner’s Co-Founder and Executive Chef, Ype Von Hengst, has created an expansive, inclusive, healthy, flexitarian (aka semi-vegetarian) menu with over 100 options. Explore the seasonal menu changes every six months. Listings are clearly flagged as low fat/cholesterol, vegetarian, vegan and gluten-free. There are so many options that it would behoove you to do some menu perusing in advance. I’ll share with you some of the more innovative menu options based on my picks and Glenn’s recommendations, but bear in mind that this is just the tip of the iceberg!

Breakfast/Brunch items are available all day, every day. Options include *Quinoa Coconut Pancakes*, *Caramel French*



Toast, *Avocado Toast & Eggs*, *Bison Huevos Rancheros* and the *Brussels Sprouts & Hummus Bowl*. I love the appetizers, which also make great happy hour noshing, and my faves just happen to score a happy hour discount. I enjoy the *Avocado Toast* (add smoked salmon), *Crispy Fried Brussels Sprouts* (with dried apricots, cranberries and pecans) and *Chicken Sliders*. Artistic salads include the *Warm Roasted Local Veggie Salad*, the *Ancient Grain Shrimp Bowl* and the *Lemony Hummus Greek Salad & Cauliflower Pita Bowl*. If you’re in the mood for a sandwich, the *Pesto Burger*, *Flash-Fried Cauliflower Sub* and the *Wasabi Salmon Sliders* sound tasty. Intriguing entrées include the *Chicken Pot Pie*, *Mushroom Piccata* and *Tarragon Crab Cakes*. For dessert, indulge in the *Signature Apple Pie*, *Smith Island Cake* (rarely found in these parts), *Churro Doughnut Sundae* or *Double Chocolate Triple-Layer Cake* (do the math: is that sextuple chocolate?). You can also splurge on a *Hand-Dipped Breyers Shake*.

Silver Diner has a fully stocked bar to which we will hopefully soon be bellying-up. The *Watermelon-Cucumber Mimosa* is a recent addition. On their café-style patio, some neighbors have been seen partaking of their impressive happy hour deals, weekdays 3-7pm, featuring discounted craft beer, wine, craft cocktails and appetizers, with specials starting at \$4. On Wednesdays, bring the pooch and partake in *Pups on*





the Patio, a 3-6:30pm Happy Hour supporting local animal charities. Leashed pups are welcome on the patio other days as well.

Take advantage of many promotions offered by *Silver Diner*. First Responders receive a 25% discount. Seniors (over 65) receive a 10% discount. Register for the *Eat Well, Do Well Rewards Club*, and sign your children up for the *Kids Club*. The Kid's Menu is geared toward teaching kids to eat healthy.

The location is convenient (I'm there in under 12 minutes), and once you arrive in the *Silver Diner* area of the garage, hop on the elevator and you'll find yourself on the *Silver Diner* patio.

This comfortable farm-to-table establishment is doing it all! Very impressive. Whether you dine-in, get delivery, use the contactless curbside carhop, hit the bar or join me on the heated patio, come relax and enjoy!

I'm amazed at the many positive concepts implemented by *Silver Diner*, which showcase management's commitment to healthy, innovative eating, top-notch service, sanitary conditions, attractive ambiance and quality while simultaneously reinvesting in the community as responsible corporate citizens. *Silver Diner* is a new gem for Alexandria's crown, and I will continue to support them. See you there!



Silver Diner

4630 King St, Unit A3

Alexandria, VA 22303

703-789-9251

<http://www.silverdiner.com/locations/>

SilverDinerWestAlexandria

Hours

Sun.-Sat.:

7am-midnight

Happy Hour

3-7pm Mon. Fri.

Price

Breakfast/Brunch:

\$9-\$19

Appetizers: \$7-\$13

Salads: \$12-\$16

Sandwiches/Burgers:

\$8-\$16

Entrées: \$13-\$20

Bar

Full

Smoking

No

HC Access

Yes

Parking

Garage (FREE/Under

Harris Teeter)

Reservations

No

Catering

Yes

Nach Hause Zurückkehren...Rentrer à la Maison... Volver a Casa... No Matter How You Say It, Carpenter's Shelter Is “Coming Home”!

By Shannon Steene, Executive Director, and Steve Valley, Communications and Development Associate, of Carpenter's Shelter

On December 10, Carpenter's Shelter turned the page to begin a new chapter of its story. We cut the ribbon on our recently completed building at 930 North Henry Street, and we officially entered our new home. But to be accurate, it's not really a new home; it's our longstanding location with a new purpose-built shelter developed on it. A congressman, a governor, a mayor, as well as board members and staff bearing cowbells and confetti were virtually present for a ribbon-cutting ceremony that energetically announced our return to this familiar spot.

We have much to celebrate! With a brand new industrial kitchen with walk-in freezer, stoves and a pantry, resident meals can be prepped and cooked on site. This is a marked change from our very limited culinary capacity at our temporary Landmark location. We have a true classroom for learning, a computer room with multiple screens for residents, a library and a wonderfully quiet outdoor courtyard and secure playground. Resident feedback on the new space is overwhelmingly positive, especially for

the abundance of natural light, which they missed while in the Landmark space. Every shelter room now has a window.

While we are thrilled to have our shelter operating in intentionally designed space, we are equally thrilled to have expanded our service offerings to include permanent supportive housing, a solution to chronic homelessness. By adding 10 of these types of apartments to the affordable housing in the top five floors of the building, we have moved 10 hard-to-house people home for the holidays! These 10 people had been with Carpenter's for long periods of time – nine years on average. They had many things contributing to their extended homelessness and had (in some cases) been through the “system” several times. In short, they needed help. Our permanent supportive housing units became their long-term solution, and we will work with them to maintain it.

So, although we're turning the page to a new chapter, our story is far from over. We bring back to our longtime



The official ribbon cutting at the new home of Carpenter's Shelter

www.cameronstation.org



A confetti-toss in celebration of Carpenter's Shelter's new building

location a firsthand appreciation for the warm welcome and engagement that Cameron Station residents and others in the West End offered to us over our two-and-a-half-year stint in the old Macy's building. And, we invite you to stay with us – come to see our new space as pandemic-related

restrictions allow and continue to serve as volunteers, donors and community ambassadors. **We couldn't do this without you!** With your help and that of all our neighbors, we know we can end homelessness and provide help for those in need who ask for it. Here's to a better 2021!

Neighbors in the News

Cameron Station is filled with interesting people doing interesting things. If you would like to be recognized in a future issue of *The Compass*, or if you have a neighbor you think deserves recognition, please email information to thecompass@cameronstation.org.

No Soliciting

Solicitations are not permitted in Cameron Station. Residents who find flyers, business cards, etc., at or near their doors should turn them in at the Cameron Club so community management can take action.



Book Clubs

Monday Night Book Ball

January: *The Fire Next Time* by James Baldwin

February: *A Woman of No Importance*
by Sonia Purnell

Reading Between the Wines

January: *Educated* by Tara Westover

February: *Daisy Jones & The Six*
by Taylor Jenkins Reid

Reflections on the Pandemic

By Lenore Marema

I've been tracking the impact of the pandemic on local businesses. The following may not reflect every change, but it is a good indicator of the impact on Alexandria.

Those Who Thrived in the Pandemic

It goes without saying that retail grocery stores and Amazon are among those who had a banner year, but so did some other businesses. *The Wall Street Journal* reports that rentals of recreational vehicles – travel trailers and motor homes – has spiked. Netflix and other streaming services reflect increased sales. The local Channel 8 News had segments on bikes and boats: Local bike shops struggled to meet the high demand for new bikes and saw a significant increase in repairing and refurbishing older ones. Good deals on boats also provided another way to get out while still social distancing.



The Virginia ABC reported a \$117 million increase in revenues as of October. (Newsletters from the Culinary Institute of America, however, note that wineries have lost considerable revenue, as their best customers – the restaurants – have purchased far less wine this year. Their tasting rooms and retail outlets also have suffered. Ditto for local distilleries, some of which moved to produce hand sanitizers instead.)

And Farewell to These

West End

- Sears at Landmark
- GNC
- Pier One

Old Town

- Irish Walk
- The Christmas Attic
- Gallery Lafayette
- Ann Taylor Loft
- Sur La Table
- Francesca's

Local Restaurants That Closed

Del Ray

- Nectar Coffee and Wine Bistro
- Charlie's on the Avenue (plans to re-open as Joe's)

Fairlington

- Atlantis Family Restaurant

Old Town

- Pizzeria Paradiso
- Chuck E. Cheese
- Bilbo Baggins

North Old Town

- Pendleton Carry Out

But Welcome to New Alexandria Restaurants

West End

- Silver Diner
- Crafty Crab
- MB Bakery
- Jersey Mike's Subs (coming soon)
- Nothing But Bundt Cakes (coming in 2021)

Old Town

- Emmy Squared (Detroit-style pizza)
- Goodies (Wisconsin-style custard)
- Pho Nan
- Vol Colcan (Coffee)
- Ada's on the River (steak and seafood; opening in January)
- Stomping Ground (scheduled to open in February)
- Mae's Market & Café (coming in 2021)
- Darling Restaurant (coming in 2021)

Del Ray

- Piece Out (Italian)
- Boccoto Gelato (coffee and pastries too – moved from Old Town)

North Old Town

- Chewish Deli
- Wooboi Hot Chicken

Plans have been announced for the construction of Barca, a large new wine and small plates bar. It will be built from two shipping containers and will feature open-air seating. Construction will begin in 2021.

And Welcome to Other New Businesses in Alexandria

West End

- Pawsh Dog Wash (dog grooming in Cameron Station)
- E60 Fitness Gym
- Double Apple Hookah Lounge
- Jaguar Land Rover dealership (coming in 2021)
- Alexandria Lighting & Supply (announced plans to move its main store to Pickett Street)



Old Town

- Old Town Convenience Market
- Mason & Green (sustainable dry goods and beer growlers – to add sustainable liquid refreshment to the dry goods)
- Patagonia (outerwear from South America)
- Salon Monte (hair salon)
- Fat Face (British men's wear)
- Old Town Tobacco Shop

North Old Town

- Mas Seafood (a supplier to many local restaurants, it's opened its first retail store)
- St. Elmo's Coffee Pub (coming in 2021)

Feeling Out of the Loop?

Decisions on community matters made by the HOA Board of Directors and committees are discussed, debated and determined in public, with the exception of private matters between residents and the board that are discussed in closed Executive Session. If you want to know what is going on in Cameron Station, attend the monthly board and committee meetings (and/or read the minutes posted on the website); read *The Compass* newsletters; visit the community website, www.cameronstation.org; and sign up for email blasts. If you have any questions for the board, committees, or HOA management, send an email. These addresses can be found in *The Compass* newsletter.

Fairlington Centre

- Rocket Fizz Soda Pop and Candy Shop (old-fashioned candy store)

New Businesses for Pets

- Barkhaus (an off-leash doggie park with food and adult beverages for owners)
- Mount Purrnon (drink wine, get sandwiches and snacks and adopt a cat)

Signs of the Times

A new online-only store opened at madeinalx.com. Local artists and crafters are selling products made locally.

National Chains Impact Alexandria

Lord & Taylor and Pier One went out of business nationally. The Pier One in the West End closed as a result. The AC Moore craft stores also are winding down.

Other national chain stores are downsizing, resulting in closure of their stores in Alexandria: Sur La Table and Francesca's (women's clothing) closed in Old Town and GNC closed in the West End. Tuesday Morning closed locally.

The Pandemic in Alexandria at the End of 2020

It's good to see that new restaurants and businesses were willing to invest and open in Alexandria during the pandemic. It gives hope for the future.

The commercial relators note that several businesses, particularly restaurants, are up for sale. Most of the new businesses also opened in space that had been vacated for some reason.

Until we return to some kind of new normal, we will not know the full impact of the pandemic on our local economy. Let's hope for the best!

Alexandria Operates 24-Hour Nuisance Abatement Hotline

The City of Alexandria's Nuisance Abatement Hotline, 703-836-0041, is a 24-hour phone number for residents and businesses seeking assistance with public nuisance issues involving violations of city codes. If, for example, there are problems caused by a business operating after approved hours, residents can call this number to report the violation. Please state the nature and location of the problem, as well as your name and phone number, which will enable the city to let you know what action they took to address it. If the problem is urgent, a city agency will immediately dispatch personnel to investigate. If not, action will be taken no later than the next business day.

Days to Celebrate

By Carla Besosa

Feb 2: Groundhog Day (Learn how to spell “Punxsutawney”; impress your friends)

Feb 3: The Day the Music Died (“Bye Bye, Miss American Pie...”)

Feb 9: National Pizza Day (I like Reynolds, Savio’s, Aldo’s & A.J.’s)

Feb 12: Chinese New Year (The Year of the Ox.)

Feb 18: National Drink Wine Day (Great selections from IndoChen and Cameron Café)

Feb 24: National Tortilla Chip Day (I’m voting for Taqueria Picoso’s homemade chips)

Feb 28: National Chili Day (Check out Hard Times in Old Town for FREE CHILI)

Mar 1: Peanut Butter Lovers’ Day (Most popular: Jif; my fave: Peter Pan)

Mar 7: National Cereal Day...and my birthday (Best selling: Honey Nut Cheerios; gimme Grape Nuts)

Mar 14: Daylight Saving Time begins (Clocks/watches spring ahead one hour)



Advertising & Article Policies & Procedures

Advertising:

The Compass newsletter is published bimonthly and distributed to approximately 1,800 residences, provided to our community businesses for customer access, and displayed on the Cameron Station website. Advertising space is filled on a first-come, first-served basis, and the ads published in each issue are solely at the discretion of the newsletter staff or Communications Committee. **Only one ad per advertiser per issue is permitted. Ads must be submitted NO EARLIER than the 15th of the month preceding issue date and no later than the 30th** (see box). Payment must accompany all ads. Artwork must be camera-ready in JPEG or TIFF format: 65 line screen or 300 dpi. ELECTRONIC SUBMISSIONS ARE PREFERRED. Ads appear in black/white in printed copies; but are displayed in color on the website and in the electronic version. Estimated (not guaranteed) time of delivery is first or second week of the second month of issue date (e.g., first two weeks of February for January/February issue).

Articles:

Any submissions for publication must include the writer’s name, address and phone number and must be received **by the 30th of the month preceding issue date** (see box). Please email articles to thecompass@cameronstation.org. The newsletter staff, Communications Committee or Board of Directors reserves the right to edit submissions. They will also determine the newsletter to be “full” at their discretion. Articles are to be factual and of public interest. Editorial content may be deemed inappropriate at the discretion of the newsletter staff, Communications Committee or Board of Directors. Photographs submitted will be returned to sender if accompanied by a self-addressed, stamped envelope.

Submission Deadlines

January/February	December 30
March/April	February 28
May/June	April 30
September/October	August 30
November/December.....	October 30

Advertising Rates:

Display Ads (*Camera-ready*)

1/4 page (3.5” x 4.5”).....	\$150
1/8 page (3.5” x 2”).....	\$125

Classified Ads

(Limit 35 words)

Resident.....	\$5
Non-resident.....	\$25
Lost & Found, Carpool, etc.....	Free

Checks should be payable to Cameron Station Community Association and sent with camera-ready artwork to *The Compass*, 200 Cameron Station Boulevard, Alexandria, VA 22304. Artwork may be emailed to admin@cameronstation.org.

Note: The included advertisements, articles, or references to websites of third parties do not indicate an endorsement by Cameron Station Community Association, Inc. and are not verified for accuracy. *The Compass* will not be responsible for poor ad reproduction due to the quality of the material provided by advertisers.



Carla's Picks ... Virtually Speaking!

By Carla Besosa

The world of live entertainment is still very much in abeyance. Although some venues are seating at half-capacity, many folks are not comfortable going indoors, and shows may get postponed or canceled. As we continue to stick close to home, let's look at some virtual entertainment options. Some are gratis, some are ticketed and some solicit suggested donations. You can enjoy from the comfort of your own home, whether watching real-time or playback.

How To

... fix your toilet, stretch out your lower back, make masks, unclog your drain, install a rheostat, meditate? No matter the task, there is likely an instructional *YouTube* video on the Internet.

Lectures

Learn something new every week! Explore the plethora of topics available on *podcasts* and *TED Talks*. Expand your knowledge on just about any topic imaginable. Here are a few other places to find interesting lectures.

- Free Video Lectures
- Santa Barbara Museum of Art Online Lectures
- The Great Courses Plus
- Puffin Cultural Forum
- Schechter On-Line Lectures

Tours

Although actual travel may be limited, virtual tours abound. At <http://www.goodhousekeeping.com/life/travel>, one can journey through some of the best museums, zoos, aquariums and theme parks. Surf through the switchable live cam options at the San Diego Zoo. Do the 3pm Home Safari at the Cincinnati Zoo. At <http://www.mentalfloss.com>, one can saunter through The Louvre in Paris, The Guggenheim in New York City or the Dalí Theater-Museum in Catalonia.

Library

Our library continues to offer many of its programs online. Go to the Alexandria Library website at <https://alexlibraryva.org> and you'll find discussion groups, lectures and children's programs to enjoy.

Workouts

In addition to our Cameron Station Fitness Center options, just use your web browser to search *online workouts* or *free exercise classes* and you'll come upon many websites to investigate. These include, but are not limited to, *Peleton Digital*, *Daily Burn*, *Fit Fusion*, *P.Volve* and *Gaia*. Do the same for yoga and guided meditation.

Theater

You'll find daily updates from the world of theater at Theatermania: <https://www.theatermania.com/>. Search for online theater and you'll find sites such as Timeout: <https://www.timeout.com>, *WhatsOnStage*: <http://www.whatsonstage.com> and *Playbill*: <http://www.playbill.com>.

Then you can view productions at London's West End, New York's Broadway and the Australian Theater Scene. Stream your favorite Broadway hits at *Broadway HD*.

Netflix

Netflix productions have been a saving grace during Covid-19 quarantining. Here are a few recommendations:

- *The Fundamentals of Caring* (funny and poignant)
- *The Two Popes* (historically educational and insightful; great character interaction; Anthony Hopkins/Jonathan Pryce)
- *Back of the Net* (cute story; good for the entire family)
- *My Octopus Teacher* (documentary; amazing photography)
- *The Umbrella Academy* (quirky superhero series; entertaining plot twists)
- *The Queen's Gambit* (miniseries and my TOP quarantine pick; Anya Taylor-Joy is fascinating as the lead)

Music

Several music venues are opening their doors within the limits of coronavirus restrictions. Some of these performances end up being postponed, cancelled or replaced with last-minute substitutions; proceed with caution if you choose to go that route. In the meantime, there are many great options for music access. Popular providers include *SoundCloud*, *Deezer*, *Pandora*, *Spotify*, *Jango* and *Amazon*. Radio stations can be accessed online as well. I've made many a musical discovery through *NPR's Tiny Desk Concerts*. Weekdays, the Kennedy Center showcases its *Arts Across America* series, bringing you musicians from every part of the country. I also enjoy the *Kennedy Center Couch Concerts* every Monday, Wednesday and Friday at 4pm. I'm a faithful fan of the National Symphony Orchestra's Sunday evening series at 7pm, *NSO at Home*. This weekly production is hosted by my friend, Principal Second Violin Marisa Regni. She reveals the solo talents of various orchestra members broadcasting from their own homes. Cameron Station's own Jan Chong and Glenn Donnellan have been part of this vibrant collaboration. For some additional performances, check for live stream schedules at Bandsintown, Stone Room Concerts, FocusMusic, and DCJazzMail.

Languages

This could be the perfect time to learn a new language, or at least blow the dust off the one you studied in high school. At <http://www.go.babbel.com>, you can register for 3-, 6- or 12-month classes. Or just search your browser for *language online* to uncover multiple sites ready to transform you into an impressive polyglot. American Sign Language (ASL) is taught at <http://www.lingvano.com>.

State Capitals

Yeah! My favorite! Take the time to brush up on your U.S. geography and state capitals at <http://www.allfunapps.com/webapps/statesandcapitals>. You place the states in the correct locations, then find the matching state capital.

Just Do It!

Expand your horizons, broaden your mind and absorb culture. Pick a topic or theme and explore. This commentary is not inclusive of all options – I'm simply offering some suggestions to get your gears turning. Entertain and educate yourself. There are no limits!

"...If we fail this time, it will be a failure of imagination..."
(Brian Andreas)

The compass

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Alexandria, VA 22304

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