

The ompass

The Official Publication of the Cameron Station Community Association

Volume 22 Issue 4 • September-October 2021

MAKING THE MOST OF FALL



Autumn Inside This Issue:

Fall Garden Ideas

Resident's Recipe: Fall French Fare

Explore The Best of Fall

- Short Cameron Station Walks
- Fall Color and Wildlife
- Further Afield
- Fall Farm Bounty at Your Doorstep
- Carla's Fall Fairs and Festivals

Traveling Again – Near or Far

Congratulations 2021 Cameron Station Pride of Ownership Winners!

By Linda Greenberg

Each year the Cameron Station Community Association Common Area Committee recognizes Cameron Station homeowners whose front, or front and side, gardens are exceptionally attractive. The nominees in the Pride of Ownership contest are chosen in several ways. Some homeowners nominate themselves. Neighbors often nominate a home because it is a model for everyone on the block. Kathy McCollom and I often discover garden gems as we walk through Cameron Station. In all cases, we select homes that have not been chosen before. Ideally, we would select one in each of the following categories: single-family home, townhouse, end townhouse and condominium; however, some years we find more of one kind than another.

For example, this year we did not find an exceptional condominium or single-family home, but we found

four remarkable townhouses, three of which are corner townhouses. Also, although nominees sometimes include photos of attractive rear patios, the contest is confined to front or side gardens visible to the public.

The winners for 2021 are as follows: Jeanne Brasseur, 5248 Bessley Place, townhouse; Jeffrey M. Cullen, 232 Medlock Lane, corner townhouse; Kristin M. Hug, 4910 Gardner Drive, corner townhouse; and Chris Roach, 5110 Knapp Place, corner townhouse.

The Brasseur front garden treatment turns a long brick wall into a backdrop for three slim, tall and graceful trees. In front of the trees are a row of shrubs and a few flowers. The trees were chosen for their shape and suitability to an urban space. The Cullen Garden is really two in one. There is an attractive front arrangement of shade-loving plants, as well as a nearby side row of colorful flowers. The Hug townhouse uses a curved, low stone wall to create drama and offset various kinds of plants and colors. The Roach townhouse turns a difficult-to-decorate small front façade into two areas of profuse

The Most Important Meeting of the Year –

Don't Miss It!

Monday, November 8, 2021

Mark your calendars for the Cameron Station Homeowners Association Annual Meeting. The Board of Directors will bring the Community up to speed on current and future plans and financial matters and hold elections for any open positions. *Watch the Email Blast for updates on time and location.*

(Pride of Ownership continued on page 2)

(Pride of Ownership continued from page 1)

flowers. The smaller area centers on a fountain of flowers with two large majolica pots on either side. The area next to the stone staircase is decked out with more plants and flowers.

The winners received generous gift certificates from four local businesses: Pawsh Dog Wash, IndoChen Restaurant, Home Depot and Cameron Café.

We hope you will enter your home in next year's Pride of Ownership contest. With a little planning, some garden work and sun and water, you can create a prize-winning garden. If you have landscaping questions, the volunteer gardeners may assist, please contact Kathy McCollum at Gardeners@cameronstation.org. Remember:

A flower-full and healthy garden gives pleasure to all; it is a gift to share and appreciate.



Hug Home on Gardner.



Brasseur Home on Bessley Place.



Cullen Garden on Medlock.



Roach Home on Knapp.

From the Editor: We filled this issue with the Cameron Station community updates and insights you count on. We also suggest ways you can embrace the beautiful season of autumn, whether you stay close to home or travel. There's nothing like a walk in the crisp air, and we offer ideas for those walks, shorter and longer, nearby and further afield. And don't miss the many food and drink temptations that surround us, including those found in a French cook's recipe, the autumn Farmers Market and Carla's reviews. You don't need to go far to find the great flavors of fall.

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.

Editor-in-Chief: Christine Fisher

Editorial Staff: Carla Besosa, Eliza Dolin, Mayu Molina Lehmann, Lenore Marema, Pat Sugrue, Gwen Toops and Rene Zimmer

This Issue's Photographers: Raymond Celeste, Christine Fisher, Linda Greenberg, Kumar K.C. of IndoChen, Sherri Mahlik, Gwen Toops. *And a special thanks to Ian Grove, who supplied so many of our photos for this issue.*

Committee Corner

HARD AT WORK ON BEHALF OF OUR RESIDENTS

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

(boardofdirectors@cameronstation.org)

Sarah Meyer Walsh - President

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Megan Christensen - Director and Liaison to Communications Committee

Greg Hillson - Director and Liaison to Architectural Review Committee

CSCA COMMITTEES

ACTIVITIES & EVENTS PLANNING COMMITTEE

(events@cameronstation.org)

Andrew Yang - Chairperson

ARCHITECTURAL REVIEW COMMITTEE

(arc@cameronstation.org)

Stephen Pearson - Chairperson

CAMERON CLUB FACILITIES COMMITTEE

(facilities@cameronstation.org)

Ray Celeste, Jr. - Chairperson

COMMON AREA COMMITTEE

(commonarea@cameronstation.org)

Robert Burns - Chairperson

COMMUNICATIONS COMMITTEE

(communications@cameronstation.org)

Tricia Hemel - Chairperson

FINANCIAL ADVISORY COMMITTEE

(fac@cameronstation.org)

Takis Taousakis - Chairperson

Cameron Station Soccer Star Will Thompson Among the "Best XI"

Will Thompson, a Cameron Station resident for over 15 years and recent Gonzaga College High School graduate, was recently named to the "Best XI" by US Youth Soccer. The "Best XI" recognizes the top 11 performers in each age group at the national championships. Players are selected for this honor by coaches, regardless of the positions they play on the field. Will was recruited for college soccer programs by several nationally ranked teams and chose the University of Mary Washington, currently ranked Number 21 in the U.S.



Will Thompson in Action.



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Committee Corner

HARD AT WORK ON BEHALF OF OUR RESIDENTS

Activities and Events Planning Committee

By Andy Yang

With most restrictions lifted, the Cameron Station Community Association Activities and Events (A&E) Committee was able to plan more traditional activities as in past years.



We began with the Patriotic Parade, held on July 4. Starting at the west end of the Linear Park, hundreds of Cameron Station residents made their way down the trail towards the Cameron Club. At the end of the parade, they were greeted with giveaways, Rocklands BBQ and shaved ice. Our thanks to the Podolsky Group for sponsoring this event.



On July 21, an outdoor happy hour – “Yappy Hour” – was held at the Donovan Drive/Kilburn Street pocket park thanks to the efforts of many pet-friendly organizations. Residents learned about pet services while snacking on pizza and drinks courtesy of the A&E Committee.



This year also marked the return of the annual pool party. On August 14, almost 500 people joined the party, which included music by the pool, a balloon artist, indoor games, a Mission BBQ buffet, shaved ice and ice cream novelties. Thanks to the volunteers for making this event possible. For future volunteer opportunities, please don't hesitate to contact events@cameronstation.org.

To close out the summer, an ice cream social was held on August 22. Two ice cream trucks were serving at the Cameron Club, alongside an airbrush tattoo artist and a juggler. The Cameron Station Boulevard Circle gazebo was decorated with an extravagant balloon arch, providing many photo opportunities, and Irina Babb also provided neat giveaways. Thanks to Irina for sponsoring this event.

It is still too early to say, but October will likely see the return of a more traditional Halloween event. Be sure to follow the weekly Cameron Station Email Blasts to learn about all the latest Cameron Station events.



Architectural Review Committee

By Sharon Wilkinson

In early August, Cameron Station Community Association (CSCA) lost the services of Bethlehem Kebede (Mimi), our long-time covenants administrator at Community Association Management Professionals (CAMP). She was such a wonderful facilitator of the work of the CSCA's Architectural Review Committee (ARC). We'll miss her and wish her well. Succeeding Mimi is Brandon Throckmorton, with whom we've been working for the last few months. At our August meeting, we selected Paula Caro as Vice-Chair of the Committee to succeed Gayle Hathaway, who moved away.

The summer exterior modification applications we received remained consistent with what we've seen over time – roof and window replacements, landscaping upgrades and fence replacements. Meeting virtually has increased the attendance of residents with applications before the

ARC; this makes it easier for us to get clarifications and sometimes approve applications on the spot. We strongly encourage homeowners to appear before the Committee to discuss their applications and answer questions!

We continue our work with the CSCA Board of Directors to update the Design and Maintenance Standards (DMS) to make them both more reflective of community concerns and consistent with the CSCA's Declaration of Covenants, Conditions and Restrictions. The ARC hopes to have some DMS revisions completed soon; watch the weekly Email Blast for the final details. We thank all our neighbors for their thoughtful recommendations, all of which were taken into consideration. Remember: **Always begin your exterior modifications planning by consulting the DMS.** The forms you need to submit (the 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 us at Arc@cameronstation.org.

Common Area Committee

By Colby Hostetler and Kathy McCollom

The Cameron Station Community Association (CSCA) Common Area Committee (CAC) thanks the many residents who provided feedback regarding the fountain located in the Donovan pocket park. It is no longer functional, and it would be cost prohibitive to repair it. We are happy to report that the CSCA Board of Directors has approved replacing the original fountain with one of similar design.

As the CAC continued its monthly summer walk-throughs, we observed that storm water drainage is a common issue. Ensuring effective drainage requires cleaning blocked drains, regrading or redirecting water accumulations and repairing or controlling erosion.

Teaming with CAMP, the Committee continues patching potholes, repairing uneven or loose brick pavers, renovating or replacing worn park benches and painting light poles. (Yes, dog pee is very corrosive to the paint on the light poles.) Additionally, tree trimming or removal/replacements and turf maintenance are ongoing as needed. The CAC encourages residents to report problems to CAMP.



A recent modification near the Cameron Station Boulevard Circle Gazebo acknowledges the reality that the spot between townhomes off the Circle is used as a pedestrian cut-through. The stepping stones prevent further damage to growing things and encourage foot traffic away from private property.

Communications Committee

By Tricia Hemel

The Communications Committee (ComCom) and our subcommittees have been busy with a variety of projects. So far in 2021, the Welcome Subcommittee has welcomed 130 new residents to Cameron Station. The Photography Subcommittee has taken beautiful photos at various community events and of the neighborhood in general. Further, the Newsletter Subcommittee has created four fantastic issues of *The Compass*.

ComCom also continues to work on our social media presence. You can find official CSCA information on Facebook at [@CameronStationCA](https://www.facebook.com/CameronStationCA); Twitter at [@CameronStation](https://twitter.com/CameronStation); and Instagram at [@CameronStationCommunity](https://www.instagram.com/CameronStationCommunity). Please like and follow!

Other projects we are working on include updating the website and creating consistent branding for our community.

It continues to be a busy year for the Communications Committee, and, as always, help from our neighbors is welcome. If you are interested in any of the projects mentioned above, or if you have ideas on what the Communications Committee could tackle that would help Cameron Station, please contact us at communications@cameronstation.org.

Facilities Committee

By Ray Celeste, Jr.

The pool season was a huge success for our beloved community! Once the Commonwealth of Virginia lifted capacity restrictions at the end of May, pool use by adults and children alike increased dramatically. Roxroy Thompson, our pool manager, did an outstanding job, as did our lifeguard team, which included three Cameron Station residents: Madeline Esposito, Peter Schuman and Luke Stasza.



Resident use of our 10 monthly complimentary fitness center classes is up, and we hope this trend continues; the classes are a great benefit to our residents, physically and mentally. For the class schedule, see <https://www.cameronstation.org/calendars/fitness-calendar>. I am very grateful to Cameron Station Community Association leadership for its untiring support during the pandemic: our CSCA Board of Directors, including our board liaison, Andrew Hill; our Homeowners Association management company, Community Association Management Professionals; our Fitness Center management company, ProFIT; and members of the Cameron Station Facilities Committee.

(Facilities continued on page 6)

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
jgilmore@gocampmgmt.com

Toni Mancinelli
tmancinelli@gocampmgmt.com

Brandon Throckmorton, Covenants Administrator
bthrockmorton@gocampmgmt.com

Juana Michel, Administrative Assistant
jmichel@gocampmgmt.com

Mark Bondurant, Maintenance
mbondurant@gocampmgmt.com

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
lgentry@ghacm.com 703-752-8300 ext. 716
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

(Facilities continued from page 5)

Please note: Our lost and found box in the fitness center and at the pool is overflowing. If you or your family lost something, please ask our front desk personnel to check these two boxes. (We keep lost keys and some resident community identification materials in the Fitness Center safe.) Thanks to all residents for your cooperation!

“The five S’s of sports training are: stamina, speed, strength, skill and spirit, but the greatest of these is SPIRIT!” – Ken Doherty

Financial Advisory Committee

By Takis Taousakis

The Cameron Station Community Association Financial Advisory Committee is preparing to renew the community’s reserve study. To help residents better understand this process, here’s a reminder of the basic functions of these studies:

What Is a Reserve Study?

A Reserve Study is a capital budget planning tool used to determine the physical status and repair or replacement cost of capital components and to analyze an association’s funding capacity to maintain, repair and replace those capital components (not including improvements or enhancements).

- It is not a spending plan.
- It is not a prescription for the community.
- It provides a factual basis for budget planning.

Reserve Study Requirements

- We must conduct a reserve study *“at least once every five years.”*
- We must review reserve study results *“at least annually to determine if reserves are sufficient.”*
- We must make any adjustments deemed necessary to maintain reserves.

Steps for Performing the Reserve Study

- Gathering information
- Listing reserve components
- Physical inspection
- Cost estimates and service lives determinations
- Funding analysis
- Management and board review
- Communicating results to the community

Elements of Cost Estimates

- Cost history for the property
- Reference sources from engineers’ databases
- Contractor estimates, when available
- Design and project management costs

Baseline Funding and Cash Flow

- Use cost estimates and service lives information to generate projections of total costs by year.
- Select a study period.
- Start with current assessment and current fund balance information and calculate a stream of assessments that will fund all costs during the study period.

Cameron Station: Thanks to Our Lifeguards!



Asheeka Gayle



Brisa Sifuentes



Christian Kappel & Julien Freeman



Danielle Gray



Erica Campbell



Fiona Sekerke



Hillary Navarro



Indrah Plowright



Jackson Lewis



Luke Staszak



Marvin Clayton



Matthew McFeaters



Matthew Tejada & Evan Puck



Megan & Morgan Cannigan (twins)



Michael Abbott



Peter Schuman & Madeline Esposito



Rebecca Arias



Scott Davidson-Miller



Talya Bogle 2

SOME PEOPLE WHO ENJOY SERVING YOUR COMMUNITY

Meet Toni Mancinelli, Assistant Community Manager

By Ray Celeste

Ray Celeste (RC): How did you get involved in the property management industry?

Ms. Toni Mancinelli: I fell into it. I majored in marine science/biology and minored in environmental science/chemistry in undergraduate school. These are great fields where I learned that to be successful you must pay attention to detail.



My mother is a property manager for Community Association Management Professionals [CAMP]. I started as an administrative assistant at CAMP's corporate headquarters. I was also the recording secretary for five of Cameron Station's Board of Directors' meetings from August 2020 through December 2020. I continue to do this type of service for other associations: it gives me a great opportunity to see how other associations work. I am a very observant person and very motivated. I find this work exciting and fulfilling.

RC: What type of formal training did you receive?

Ms. Mancinelli: I have my M-100, The Essentials of Community Association Management, which is the first certification you need in this industry. I hope to have my Certified Manager of Community Associations by the end of the year.

RC: Why do you like working at Cameron Station?

Ms. Mancinelli: Cameron Station is one of the most beautiful properties I have seen. I appreciate that the residents are very aware of their community. Also, I am project-oriented, and there are a lot of projects which are ongoing. I like this challenge.

RC: What role do you see for yourself at Cameron Station?

Ms. Mancinelli: I plan to see many of these ongoing projects to a successful conclusion. I am more than up to the challenge!

RC: What professional advice from your perspective would you give Cameron Station residents?

Ms. Mancinelli: Stay on top of things; please take the time to mention your concerns to us; play a positive role in your community. This helps the community flourish; things get fixed, and problems get solved.

RC: Do you have a motto you live by?

Ms. Mancinelli: Always do your best. Do things with care, and try to do it right the first time.

Neighbors Gear Up for Adopt-a-Family

By Mindy Lyle

Once again, the Cameron Station Community will help those less fortunate to have a wonderful Christmas holiday. Over the past 20 years, Cameron Station residents have adopted hundreds of families with students attending Samuel W. Tucker Elementary School, who without our help might not have any holiday celebration. This year, we are anticipating a return to the traditional Adopt-a-Family format since school is convening in-person. Before all the demands of the holiday season kick in, we wanted to let you know about this wonderful tradition.

While this year has been difficult for all of us, it has been extremely difficult for these families. Many who were already living day-to-day have now lost their jobs due to the closing of many businesses. Their needs are greater than ever.

Family needs are screened by the social worker and principal of Tucker. Lists of needs, some as basic as dishes, are compiled by the school, along with clothing and shoe sizes and wish lists made by children for toys and games. When that is completed, families can be "adopted" by Cameron Station residents.

There are many ways to participate in this worthwhile program. In previous years, streets banded together, families adopted other families, and one condo community adopted four families. Many area businesses adopted families, as well. We also have established a Section 501(c)(3) charitable organization to accept monetary donations. Monetary donations can be mailed to Greenhill's Pickett Place Community Foundation, 4901 Fairmont Avenue, Suite 200, Bethesda, Maryland 20814. Please put "Adopt-a-Family" in the subject line. If you'd like to help us continue this tradition, email adopttuckerfamily@comcast.net.

www.cameronstation.org

Giving Thanks to Good Neighbors: The Mark Pillow Award

By Pat Sugrue

Cameron Station has always been known for its community spirit and kind, caring neighbors. Just look at the issues of this newsletter published during the pandemic, and you will find many examples of why this is such a special place to live.

Mark Pillow was a wonderful neighbor and a generous community volunteer who embodied the spirit of Cameron Station. Mark died in December 2005; the following year the Mark Pillow Community Spirit award was founded in his memory, to honor those who have followed in his footsteps.

Please think about your good neighbors and how they add to the quality of your life. There are those who help out the entire community – they volunteer to serve on committees, lend a hand at community events, organize meetings and parties, serve on the Cameron Station Community Association Board of Directors, work on Cameron Station Civic Association

matters Cameron Station could not function without these dedicated volunteers, many of whom toil year after year after year. And there are those who help on a personal level – they feed and walk your pets, water your plants, pick up your newspapers, shovel your driveway, provide rides to doctors or airports Their day-to-day neighborliness makes such a difference in our lives.

How do you thank these neighbors for all they do? Nominate them for the Pillow Award. You may nominate as many neighbors as you wish, but **NOMINATIONS MUST BE RECEIVED BY October 25, 2021**. Send their names and a description of their contributions to boardofdirectors@cameronstation.org. Then, attend the **Annual Homeowner's Meeting, Monday, November 8**, where the winner(s) will be announced. (*Watch the Email Blast for the Annual Meeting time and location.*) Winner(s)' name(s) will join those of prior winners on the plaque in the Cameron Club, outside the Victoria Hebert Great Room.

IndoChen:

Happy First Birthday!

In the face of many challenges, IndoChen hits the one-year mark! Music, food and libations were graciously provided as Cameron Station neighbors came together to congratulate Kumar, Ashok, Hari and Chef Ram on their success!



2021 Fall Garden Ideas from Volunteer Gardeners

By Kathy McCollom and Linda Greenberg

Fall is such an exciting gardening time: It's finally cool, at least sometimes, and there is much to do to make your garden look great for next year. One very helpful thing to do is take notes of what survived the summer heat – or didn't. Write it down ... you think you will remember but you won't. (The "Notes" utility on the iPhone, or Android equivalent, is a great place for this as your phone is always at hand.) Once your favorite garden center gets new plants next spring, it's too easy to get captivated by what is tempting and right in front of you. Best to keep track, so next year you buy what flourished and don't waste money on what died too soon (or required more time than you wished for gardening).

On fall-planted bulbs. These give you bright color in early spring and beyond; you'll be thankful you took time to plant bulbs this fall. Not everything can handle our clay soil and rocks, but some bulbs can. Experiment with what does well over time. You need a sunny spot that isn't soggy wet. Squirrels will dig up and eat many bulbs, especially tulips. They leave daffodils and hyacinths alone, or dig them up then leave them on the surface when they realize they aren't edible. Many daffodil varieties naturally multiply if they are happy in their location, so plant in clusters a few inches apart. Smaller Tete-a-Tete daffodils do very well here. *All bulbs look better planted in clusters*; it's more natural than isolated bulbs widely spaced. Bulbs are good near other plants that are bare in early spring or under



ground cover. Once the bulbs have bloomed, you need to leave the green to naturally die back to build a bulb for the following year. They discolor in later spring, so better it's partly hidden by another plant filling out with leaves.

Ornamental ceramic pots. These must be emptied before a hard freeze. The moisture in the dirt will expand when frozen and crack the pot. The first hard freeze can sneak up on you when it's mild in December. The safest time for emptying containers is the weekend after Thanksgiving when it's still likely pleasant to work outside.

Examine your bushes for wild plants. "Volunteers" growing among your bushes can make a garden look sloppy, crowding out the attractive growth you want. Almost anything can blow in from the nearby woods, be dropped by a bird or come from an acorn left by a squirrel. If you suspect it might be poison ivy, it probably is. Small plants can be pulled out by hand after a good soaking rain softens the soil. Some larger weeds can be cut at ground level, but watch for new growth. Keep an eye out for vines; they get out of control quickly. And check for blown-in trash. Winds can bring in surprises!

Pruning. One thing *not* to do is prune anything that blooms next year on old growth, such as azaleas and some types of hydrangeas. The safest time to prune these is immediately after they bloom in the spring. Tree pruning is best left for winter when trees are dormant. Nuisance or dead branches should be trimmed at any time.

New perennials or bushes? Fall is the ideal time to plant these; the ground is still warm so they have a good start, and they have growing time without high heat stress. Keep them well-watered until they are established next year. Some cool-weather flowers can survive the winter outside and return with vigor in the spring. Violas have smaller flowers than pansies and are more resilient after winter for example. They are available in almost all of the same colors as pansies. Be sure to water them through the winter. If they look wilted, it isn't damage from freezing; rather, frozen dirt prevents them from bringing up water. They will perk up with a little warm water.

Want some ideas for your garden? Contact the volunteer gardeners at gardeners@cameronstation.org. We are a small group of experienced gardeners who know what grows here, and we can offer some friendly, free suggestions.

Hi, Neighbor! Thinking of Buying or Selling Your Home? Get in Touch Today!

COMPASS



Long-time resident and professional in the region, I have the skills in customer interaction and negotiation needed to help you buy and sell your home in this competitive market.

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NEIGHBORS IN THE NEWS

A Trailblazer: Agata Rucz Litecky, U.S. Marine Corps (Ret.)

By Colonel Ray Celeste Jr., U.S. Marine Corps (Ret.)

Agata Litecky (formerly Rucz) is one of our newer Cameron Station residents. In 1999, she came to the U.S. from Poland, settling first in New York City. As with many immigrants, she came because of the many opportunities the U.S. offers. Agata majored in mechanical engineering at the City University of New York after being awarded a full scholarship.

When the U.S. was attacked on September 11, 2001, Agata lost her scholarship. After this terrorist attack, she had an overwhelming motivation to serve our nation, her new home, in its time of need. She decided to join what is perhaps its most challenging military service: the United States Marine Corps. Ironically, her recruiting station was close to where Manhattan's Twin Towers once stood. She did not yet have full American citizenship when she joined the Marine Corps.

Agata's Military Occupational Specialty was as a paralegal, working on court martial and nonjudicial punishments. During her Marine Corps career, she deployed three times.



Agata in Iraq.

In 2005-2006, Agata deployed for the first time to Al Assad and Al Taqadum in Iraq, experiencing firsthand a nation at war. She volunteered for the Marine Corps' Lioness program, in which female Marines checked female Iraqis for improvised explosive devices on their person. Agata and her fellow female Marines never knew when they might find an explosive device or when one might explode.

Agata was preparing to deploy to Djibouti in 2007 when she met her now husband, Andrew Litecky. After returning home from Djibouti, in 2008-2009 she deployed again to Iraq, serving in the Female Engagement Team (former Lioness program) in Ramadi, the capital of Al Anbar province, and working in Fallujah, Al Karma and Habinaya. She also worked with Iraqi police, offering humanitarian assistance to families and children.



Agata with Iraqi Family.



Agata with Iraqi Child.

While in Iraq in 2009, Agata sustained life-threatening injuries in combat action; it took her a year and half to recover. As a result, she was medically retired from the Marine Corps. Unfortunately, Agata, like many Marines deployed to Iraq, Afghanistan and Djibouti, breathed in contaminated air from burn pits. Fortunately, she so far does not appear to be suffering ill effects from this exposure. Throughout her deployments, her work was complicated by her ill-fitting personal protective equipment and boots, neither of which were designed for the female body.

Her experiences in the Lioness and Female Engagement Team programs remain with her today, and she is very proud of being a trailblazer in programs that saved many lives, serving in a role that female Marines had never previously filled.

In 2009, Agata fulfilled a dream by being sworn in as an American citizen, a momentous day for her and her family. She now works at the U.S. Department of State.

Agata and Andrew have one child, Tony; their second child is due in January 2022. They moved to Cameron Station in 2020, fittingly on July 4. Andrew remains on active duty as a Marine Corps Captain. Agata finds Cameron Station to be a very special place to live thanks to the neighbors who immediately embraced her and her family in the midst of the pandemic. She and Andrew look forward to living in Cameron Station for many years to come.

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.

MAIN STREET RETAILERS

CAMERON STATION DRY CLEANERS

- Drapery & wedding gowns
- Household items
- Suede & leather services
- Alterations
- Embroidery & Monogram
- Same day service with no extra charge !! 😊



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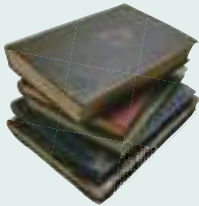
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Book Clubs

Editor's Note: Wondering why we publish these book club readings in each issue? Cameron Station's first book club was "Reading Between the Wines," founded in November 2002. From the start, *The Compass* promoted the club by providing contact information and the titles of the books members were reading - while not everyone who enjoys reading wants to join a club, many appreciate book recommendations. Now we have three book clubs and when they have room for more members, contact information is provided. **If you'd like to start a new book club,** *The Compass* would be happy to help you. Email us at thecompass@cameronstation.org.

Third Tuesday of the Month Book Club

(Former Third Thursday of the Month Book Club)

This group meets the third Tuesday of every month. If anyone is interested in joining, please contact Marilyn Lenihan at vinoyking@aol.com.

September: *The Night Watchman* by Louise Erdrich

October: *Mexican Gothic* by Silvia Moreno-Garcia

November: *The Sin Eater* by Megan Campisi

Monday Night Book Ball

September: *Memorial Drive: A Daughter's Memoir*
by Natasha Trethewey

October: *A Life on Our Planet...* by David Attenborough

November: *The Book of Lost Names* by Kristin Hamel

Reading Between the Wines

September: *The Dutch House* by Ann Patchett

October: *Braiding Sweetgrass* by Robin Wall Kemmerer

November: *Cave Dwellers* by Christine McDowell

RESIDENT'S RECIPE

The Art of Using Leftovers: French Cooking with Bénédicte Dellaria

By Gwen Toops

As homeowner and local chef Bénédicte Dellaria has described her food philosophy, influenced by her upbringing in France's Loire Valley, I can almost taste the fresh-from-the-field produce of her childhood. Bénédicte reminisced about the crates of just-harvested apples, pears, asparagus and berries delivered directly from local farmers and enjoyed in simple, creative dishes that celebrated the ingredients' flavor. Bénédicte and her family made the most of the local produce and sought to minimize food waste. They viewed enjoying the bounty of fruits and vegetables as an exercise in flexible creativity: excess summer berries were preserved into jam to brighten dreary winter days; leftover sliced potatoes were transformed into potatoes au gratin with bits of cheese and fresh garden herbs; and vegetables just past their prime were roasted for the dinner table.

Bénédicte brought this outlook on cooking with her when she moved to Washington, D.C., in the 1990s to work in sales. After a few years, she was ready to move back to France, but meeting her now-husband Jon convinced her to stay. The two are original owners in Cameron Station and have raised their two daughters here. Both are actively involved in the community. Jon is a former Cameron Station Community Association Board of Directors president, and Bénédicte has long taught fitness classes at the Cameron Club,



Bénédicte (on the right) and Eleanor Beardsley (Ellie) are long term friends. Ellie is a journalist living in Paris, often reporting for National Public Radio.

including her current Monday evening vinyasa yoga class. She is a certified yoga instructor who teaches throughout northern Virginia.

With a busy schedule, Bénédicte is always focused on making quick, seasonal food that can be repurposed into different meals. One of her favorite recipes – especially at this time of year when fruit is abundant – is a flexible fruit compote made with whatever fruit is available. Compotes were a mainstay of Bénédicte's early life, and she has continued that tradition with her daughters.

This recipe is perfect for using up that wrinkled apple in the fridge, an impulse purchase of too many strawberries at the West End Farmers Market or a lone banana left to languish on the counter. Bénédicte encourages inspiration and adaptability to create new dishes using what you have. She notes that

compotes can be eaten on their own or repurposed into a variety of other uses: spooned over yogurt or made into a fruit crumble with a topping of oats and chopped nuts. You can even make a party-worthy dessert of layered compote, whipped cream or pudding and cookie crumbles.

Merci for sharing, Bénédicte!

Recipe: Seasonal Fruit Compote

Ingredients

- About 2 pounds fruit
- ¼ cup sugar
- Pinch of salt

Flavor of choice to complement fruit used: a splash of vanilla extract, a sprinkle of cinnamon, a drop of almond extract, or some citrus zest

Preparation

Step 1: Trim off any inedible parts of the fruit and roughly chop into large pieces.

Step 2: Add fruit to a large pot and stir in sugar and salt.

Step 3: Cook over low heat for approximately 30-40 minutes, stirring occasionally. Smash the fruit to make a finer consistency or leave the fruit in larger pieces.

Step 4: Stir in flavoring of choice.

Step 5: Taste and adjust, adding flavoring or more sugar as desired. Serve hot, cold or at room temperature.



www.cameronstation.org

Cameron Station Joy: The Wedding of Jackie Rizzie and Doug Arendt

The Cameron Station Boulevard Circle Gazebo was the setting for the May 2021 wedding of Jackie Rizzie and Doug Arendt. Jackie and Doug met while undergraduates at Virginia Tech and moved to our community a few years ago, along with their puppy, Yuki. Like many couples, Jackie and Doug had to postpone their wedding due to the pandemic. They decided to hold the ceremony here, with a small group of family members and Cameron Station's favorite officiant, neighbor Rob Burns. Congratulations, Jackie and Doug!



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Thinking Outside the Box – An Interview with Tucker’s Principal

By Mayu Molina Lehmann

For the City of Alexandria’s 2019 Principal of the Year, Rene Paschal, the future seemed clear. After nearly four decades in education, he was looking forward to a smooth school year. Instead, 2020 presented him with the biggest disruption of education in American history. Samuel W. Tucker Elementary shut its doors for in-person learning in March 2020 and didn’t reopen until early August 2021. Mr. Paschal spoke about his perspective.

Mayu Molina Lehman (MML) : How is it going with the reentry?

Mr. Paschal: Several things have gone remarkably well. Take the buses for example. For the first time, we had an orientation day which allowed bus drivers to trial run. This made the bus arrival and dismissal go smoother than at any time in the past.

MML: What has been the biggest challenge of the Covid-19 pandemic?

Mr. Paschal: The frequent changes that kept us always questioning, wondering and not being able to settle in. And that is continuing today. For example, we planned strategically to increase the number of entry points required to screen every student. We planned different scenarios. But no one can really grasp all of the variables.

MML: What are some lessons learned?

Mr. Paschal: Reflect constantly and make sure you have lots of different stakeholders weighing in on decisions. Let the people closest to the issue have the most input. The pandemic taught us that nothing is set in stone for a full year. All is subject to change. It gave us the opportunity to think outside the box, listen to ideas and restructure. For example, the kindergarten teachers had been pointing out for years that it would be better if younger students came in through the playground doors, which we implemented. We now have students coming in through the gym, main door, bus doors and the kindergarten playground. These multiple entry points provide a safer environment with fewer students interacting. We planned for that and yet we had a positive Covid case in the first week.

MML: What happened in that positive Covid case?

Mr. Paschal: The Alexandria Health Department and the Central Office of ACPS [Alexandria City Public Schools] contacted the people who had been in close proximity with the positive case. Then Tucker got to pilot a set of guidelines by the broader school division,* asking these students to quarantine for 14 days while receiving virtual instruction. Teachers gave them assignments and feedback through our Canvas online platform and hosted office hours to connect personally via Zoom with students affected. Additionally, the quarantined students got access to live streaming of the classroom to “listen in” while the teacher provided direct instruction.



MML: What are you most proud of?

Mr. Paschal: The way the entire community has come together. The unparalleled support that parents have offered and how gracious they have been in their support of their classroom teacher. I am proud of the teachers who from day one have gone above and beyond the call of duty. For example, one of them did Zoom sessions with kids in quarantine on her day off, knowing that kids would benefit.

MML: Is there anything else you would like to share?

Mr. Paschal: The pandemic allowed us to rethink how we operate, to remember the importance of checking in with one another, the importance of inquiring, “How are you doing?” Before we address education, we are connected as human beings.

* Find the Continuity of Learning Plan 6.0 Fall 2021 Reopening Playbook at www.acps.k12.va.us/domain/1554

Explore the Best of Fall

Brighten Your Day – Take a Walk in Cameron Station

By Marian Cavanagh

One of the many things I enjoy about living in Cameron Station is walking around this friendly, welcoming neighborhood. No matter the season, there's always a lot to see and appreciate while also getting in much-needed exercise. In spite of the seasonal ups and downs that can make it tricky to be outdoors, it reminds me that every day is a gift.



White Egret Ben Brenman Park.

There are numerous paths to explore, as noted in the community map. Almost anyone could undertake the pleasant, fairly short route I follow. My almost daily outings usually begin on the far side of Samuel W.

Tucker Elementary School as I make my way to the Linear Park. (Thanks to the Zimmers who introduced me to it when I moved here!) On some mornings, there's little pedestrian or bike "traffic," so I pay more attention to how the trees and bushes are faring. I know nothing about gardening, but I always stop to admire the beautifully decorated patios along the path. Great gardening skills are evident throughout my walk.

And then there's the wildlife. Depending on the time of year, there might be a flock of Canada geese on the Armistead Boothe Park field, but they're more often up by the pond. I sometimes fixate on the birds and squirrels flitting around trees with bird feeders that some kind neighbors have put up. I know a few on sight: cardinals, jays, robins, sparrows, pigeons, an occasional murder of crows and a mockingbird or two (thank you, Harper Lee). And every 17 years, the sound and fury of cicadas. See you in 2038!

The path I take is clearly a big draw for walkers (with or without dogs), joggers, runners, bikers, scooters, parents with kids in strollers and groups of families and friends. Despite being fully vaccinated, I am limited in my interactions due to Covid-19, so I can't resist greeting everyone and appreciate getting a wave and smile in return. Sometimes I get to pet a dog or give some children a virtual high five. Very good for mental health.

Walking around the pond area is always a delight. In the spring and summer, watching the baby Canada geese being carefully minded by their parents, both on grassy areas and while floating and swimming in the water, is a high point. They're often joined by ducks, the occasional cormorant or heron, the colorful koi, and of course the spectacular turtles. My wildlife knowledge is limited, but here's another chance to stop, stare and maybe take a photo on my phone. There's usually a professional photographer or two around to help identify an unknown visitor. Everything's a treat.

The second half of my walk may be briefly interrupted by a visit to the Cameron Café. I only have to wave to LemLem to get my chai latte started. Treat in hand, I might pass by children and teachers from Bright Start or local families on their way to outdoor fun and games. As I head home, I enjoy looking at everything from the opposite direction and maybe noticing a few things I missed earlier. Wearing my "I'm Silently Correcting Your Grammar" T-shirt (a gift from Grammar Queen Carla Besosa) can spark some fun banter; several people have politely asserted that their grammar is faultless. I withhold judgement with a friendly nod. My regular jaunt only includes a small fraction of Cameron Station, but the sightings and interactions brighten my day, reminding me again how fortunate I am to live in such a great neighborhood. Thanks, everyone!



See Community Map at Cameron Station website: https://www.cameronstation.org/images/Map_Brochure.pdf

Further Afield: Fall Color, Wildlife and Hiking in Shenandoah National Park

By Ian Grove

We have wonderful trails and wildlife areas near Cameron Station, but if you want to walk or view color further afield, consider a scenic fall day trip to the easily accessible Shenandoah National Park in the Blue Ridge Mountains of Virginia, about a two-hour drive west of Alexandria. The well-maintained Skyline Drive runs north-south for 110 miles along the center of the park, with resplendent views from its overlooks. The forest changes with the seasons; autumn brings a myriad of colors, with stunning reds and burnt oranges across the mountainsides.

Skyline Drive. If you don't care to walk, you hardly need to leave your car to take in the park's majestic views from Skyline Drive. With concrete markers at every mile, your position and progress are easy to track on the map from the Front Royal entrance station, the easiest entrance to get to from Alexandria. The nearby Dickey Ridge Visitor Center offers a restroom and park ranger orientation. The rangers are very helpful, but they cannot always answer the most asked question: "Where will I find a bear?"

Plan to arrive early at the Front Royal entrance and head south along the road; stopping at the overlooks on the right side offers you the best photographs of the Shenandoah River Valley when the sun is at your back. In the afternoon, travel back north, again stopping in the right-hand side overlooks – the ones missed in the morning, as the sun is now on the west side of the ridge. At dusk on a clear day, watch a spectacular sunset over the mountains to the west.

Taking your time along Skyline Drive, with its 35 mile-per-hour speed limit, while scanning the woodland edge is a great way to spot animal shapes among the trees, but keep your eye on the winding road for cyclists, walkers or possibly even a bear surging out to cross the road. If luck is with you, you'll see plenty of wildlife along Skyline Drive, potentially



Ok ...Time to Back Away.

including black bear, white-tailed deer and wild turkey. BBear jams can slow progress, but stop for a minute and grab your camera. Usually, a ranger will arrive quickly to move traffic along and give everyone a sighting opportunity. Of course, a bear sighting in the wild is thrilling. There are an estimated 200-1,000 bears inhabiting the park's 300 square miles. This should put a couple of bears in every square mile: the chance of a sighting is high. Bears should be watched from a distance and not approached too closely; thus, many hikers adorn their rucksacks with bells because the tinkling lowers the chance that a bear will be surprised when you stumble across it.

Hiking. There are around 500 miles of marked routes in the park, and some less frequented trails let you enjoy the quiet of nature. Many people want to say they have walked a part of the **Appalachian Trail**, the longest (2,190 mile) hiking-only footpath in the world; there are sections of walks you can do to achieve this bucket list item within Shenandoah Park. One of my favorites is the **Dark Hollow Falls Trail**, at the mile 50.7 point. (All walks are referenced by their position between or at mile markers on Skyline Drive.) If the Dark Hollow parking lot is busy, park in the Big Meadows lot and hike a short separate trail to the start point. (Map: https://www.nps.gov/shen/planyourvisit/upload/BigMeadows_RoadTrail.pdf)



Beautiful Face Shenandoah.

A relatively short (1.4 miles) but steep walk, it is a very popular trail, with the picturesque cascading water of the 70-foot-high falls. Pathways at the top and bottom of the falls offer views. Birdwatchers: you can see Dark Eyed Junco, Indigo Buntings, Chipping Sparrow, Downy Woodpecker, American Goldfinch, Tufted Titmouse, Eastern Towhee and American Redstart birds flitting between branches or feeding on grass seed. Keep an eye out for large millipedes with bright orange striped bodies curling along bush stems. Even on this touristed trail, you may see white-tailed deer and black bears.

If the short walk to the falls is not enough, take along snacks and drinks and extend your hike to the **Rose River Loop Trail**, **Rose River Falls** and **Skyland-Big Meadows Horse Trail**. You will loop back to the point where you parked. (See the Big Meadows map; trails are well signposted.)

*Once you have been bitten
by the beauty, you will
want to return and return*

This extension covers a significant variation in altitude and hiking over rougher terrain, so boots and walking poles are recommended. This route, which includes the 67-foot-high Rose River Falls and more great photo opportunities, starts and ends near the Big Meadows Visitor Center, with its amenities and restrooms. A road behind this visitor center leads you to the Big Meadows Lodge. No hike's end would be complete without replenishing your energy, and you could fare a lot worse than doing that with a bowl of blackberry ice cream from the Big Meadows Lodge restaurant!

Plan your visit. Skip the peak periods for the park (weekends, federal holidays). Even on "normal" weekends, small parking lots can fill before 9am; parking off road is limited, and you don't want to get a ticket. The National Park Service website offers a great selection of trails for different skill levels: <https://www.nps.gov/shen/planyourvisit/day-hikes.htm>. You can buy a day pass, but an "America the Beautiful" annual pass (\$80) lets you repeatedly visit any of the 424 National Parks or National Wildlife Refuges in the U.S. Prior to starting any trip, download some maps onto an electronic device, even though wireless phone signals are generally reliable in the park. The map of the park at <https://www.nps.gov/>



Indigo Bunting.

[carto/app/#!/maps/alphacode/SHEN](https://www.nps.gov/shen/carto/app/#!/maps/alphacode/SHEN), gives a scrollable, zoomable option for selecting routes, but you'll still want to get a paper map from the rangers: phone batteries are notorious for failing at that moment when you may get lost, even on well-marked trails.

A trip to Shenandoah is a long, full day, but a worthwhile one, with plenty of restaurants on the route home to stop, eat and drink. For a more relaxed pace, consider a weekend stay in a log cabin or lodge within the park (but book well in advance). You can skip the traffic, stay longer on trails and avoid driving home when you are tired. Cabin amenities are frugal, but the cabins are quaint and homey.

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Carla's Picks

By Carla Besosa

Arena Stage (D.C.)

Sept. 3-Oct. 3 *Toni Stone*
Oct. 8-Nov. 21 *Celia & Fidel*

Atlas Performing Arts Center (D.C.)

Oct. 28-Nov. 21 ExPats Theater: *Pankrác '45*

Barns at Wolf Trap (Vienna)

Oct. 8 Karla Bonoff

Bethesda Blues & Jazz (Bethesda)

Oct. 3 Motown & More: The Legacy Live
Oct. 15 Spinners
Oct. 17 70's Best Show
Oct. 22 Freddie Jackson
Oct. 24 Ruben Studdard
Oct 29-30 Ohio Players

Birchmere (Arlandria)

Sept. 30 Keiko Matsui
Oct. 7 Lori McKenna
Oct. 9 The Guess Who
Oct. 13 Damien Escobar
Oct. 17 Judy Collins
Oct. 18-20 Bony James
Oct. 21 Tab Benoit

Blues Alley (D.C.)

See bluesalley.com/events.cfm for the Encore Stream Series

Capital One Arena (D.C.)

Oct. 14 Enrique Iglesias & Ricky Martin
Oct. 15 Trevor Noah
Oct. 31 Simone Biles
Nov. 18 Genesis

Del Ray Artisans (Del Ray)

Oct. 1 October Exhibit Opens:
"EXPANDING THE COMMON GROUND"
Nov. 5 November Exhibit Opens: "GROOVY MOVIES"

1st Stage (Tysons)

Oct. 7-17 *Book of Mamaw* (Logan Festival Solo Performance)

GMU Center for the Arts

Oct. 2 *Cartography* (theater)
Oct. 7 Visual Voices (virtual lecture)
Oct. 7 Wind Symphony Concert
Oct. 8 *Originals* (Mason Players)
Oct. 16 The Magic of Bill Blagg Live

Oct. 17 Sphinx Virtuosi
Oct. 21 Visual Voices (virtual lecture)
Oct. 28-31 Concert Presentation of FOOTLOOSE

Hamilton (D.C.)

Sept. 24 Bruce in the USA (Bruce Springsteen tribute)
Nov. 2 Sonny Landreth

Harmon Performing Arts Center (D.C.)

Oct. 6-17 *Remember This: The Lesson of Jan Karski*

Jammin Java (Vienna)

Oct. 10 David Wilcox
Oct. 14 Toby Lightman
Oct. 23 Ellis Paul

Jiffy Lube Live (Bristow)

Oct. 2 Brooks & Dunn
Oct. 9 Dierks Bently
Oct. 10 Jonas Brothers
Oct. 23 Florida Georgia Line

Keegan Theater (D.C.)

Oct. 23-Nov. 20 *Good People*

Kennedy Center (D.C.)

Sept. 30-Oct. 2 Hilary Hahn Plays Brahms
Oct. 7, 9, 10 NSO Tchaikovsky's Symphony No. 5
Oct. 7-9 Paul Taylor Dance Co.
Oct. 13-31 *Hadestown*
Oct. 14-16 NSO Pops: Marvel Studios' Black Panther
Oct. 28-30 Ravel's Daphnis et Chloé

Little Theater of Alexandria (Old Town)

Oct. 16-Nov. 16 *Wait Until Dark*

Lost Boy Cider (Eisenhower Corridor)

Sept. 28 Cookie Decorating & Cider

MGM (National Harbor)

Oct. 1 Counting Crows
Oct. 8 Chicago
Oct. 12 John Legend
Oct. 29 Temptations and Four Tops
Nov. 5 Gladys Knight

National Harbor (P.G. Co.)

Sept. 25 Salute to Sunset with U.S. Army Concert Band

Round House Theater (Bethesda)

Sept. 8-Oct. 3 *Quixote Nuevo*
Nov. 10-Dec. 5 *The Great Leap*

Signature Theater (Shirlington)

Nov. 2-Jan. 2 *Rent*

The State Theater (Falls Church)

Oct. 1 Trial by Fire (Journey Tribute)

Strathmore (Bethesda)

Oct. 13 David Foster Hitman Tour
Oct. 15 Gipsy Kings
Oct. 28 Tony Bennett

Synetic Theater (Crystal City)

Oct. 11-31 *The Madness of Poe*

Theater J (D.C.)

Sept. 30-Oct. 24 *Becoming Dr. Ruth*
Nov. 10-Dec. 5 *Tuesdays with Morrie*

Veterans Plaza (Silver Spring)

Oct. 31 Silver Spring Holiday Crafts, Desserts & Sweets

Warner Theater (D.C.)

Oct. 8-9 Randy Rainbow
Oct. 15 Brian Wilson

Wolf Trap (Vienna)

Oct. 6-7 Jim Messina

Woolly Mammoth (D.C.)

Sept. 22-Oct. 17 *Teenage Dick*

And Another Thing ...

(in my stream-of-consciousness order)

***Emmy Squared** replaced Pizza Paradiso at 124 King St. in Old Town.

***Elo's Italian** replaced Live Oak at 1603 Commonwealth Ave. in Del Ray.

***Beeliner Diner** to replace Atlantis in Bradlee Shopping Center at 3648 King St.

***Bob & Edith's Diner** to replace Ernie's Original Crab House at 1743 King St. in Old Town.

***Taco Bamba** to replace Chef Guo at 6259 Little River Tpk.

***Jollibee** to replace Boston Chicken by Landmark Plaza at 4809 Beauregard St.

***&pizza** open in Bradlee Shopping Center at 3690 King St.

***Old Hat Bar** to open soon at 112 N. St. Asaph St.

***Goodies Frozen Custard & Treats** open in the historic Ice House, 200 Commerce St.

***Rosemarino D'Italia** in Del Ray has closed.

***Hank & Mitzi's Italian Kitchen** on Montgomery St. in Old Town has closed.

***Stracci Pizza** to move from food trailer to 106 Hume Ave. (formerly Nectar Del Ray).

***Joe's Kitchen** to replace Charlie's on the Avenue at 1501 Mount Vernon Ave.

***Mae's Market & Café and Virginia's Darling Restaurant** to open at 277 S. Washington St.

***Nick's**, at 642 S. Pickett St. has become *Nectar Restaurant & Lounge*.

***Cortado's Café**, coming soon to Foxchase Shopping Center.

*I recommend the Pork Chops (Chuletas de Cerdo) at **Sardi's Pollo a la Brasa**, 1480 N. Beauregard St. (and I don't even like pork chops!).

*Some more new(ish) places to check out: **PLNT Burger** at 1700 Duke St. (Whole Foods), **Via Volcán** at 110 S. West St., **Pho Nam** at 606 King St, **Thai Signature** at 722 King St.

*The **African American Museum (D.C.)** plans to resume tours in October.

*The **Stabler-Leadbeater Apothecary Museum**, S. Fairfax St., Old Town, reopened.

***Woodland Press Winery** opened off S. S. Richmond Hwy, (8733-B Cooper Rd.) They make both traditional and sweet/fruit wines, situated in a strikingly unassuming shopping strip. Three of us from Cameron Station went to explore - we tasted nine wines and liked eight! Impressive batting average!

***Recommended Day Trip**: Venture to Cambridge, MD (Dorchester Co.) and do the **Harriet Tubman Underground Railroad Driving Tour**. The tour is guided by audio download and includes stops at the Visitor's Center and the Harriet Tubman Museum & Educational Center. History made tangible! To split up the driving, perhaps consider a stay at the Queen Anne Victorian B&B, the **Albanus Phillips Inn**.

*Northern Virginia Magazine's 2020 'Best of the Rest' list includes three Alexandria restaurants: **Makeda** (Van Dorn Station), **Royal Nepal** (Arlandria) & **Rus Uz** (Hoffman).

***Glory Days Grill** (Alexandria Commons) - live music on the patio Thursdays, 6-8pm.

***Lena's Wood Fired Pizza** (Braddock & Mount Vernon) - live music in the Beer Garden Tuesdays, 6-9pm, and the Loft Thursdays, 6-8pm, fits with Happy Hour (runs 'til 7pm.)

What Am I Listening To?

Solar Power by Lorde

A Summer in Italy by Brian Crain

Monk's Greatest Hits by Thelonious Monk

Fall's Bounty at Your Doorstep ... and the Farmers Who Bring It

By Christine Fisher

Our community is fortunate to have healthy, fresh produce offered each week at the West End Farmers Market. After great summer produce these last few months, autumn brings new offerings: apples and pears, honeys, cider, autumn squashes, including the pumpkins everyone wants in October, and more. We're used to mega-supermarket chains, corporate growers and mass distribution of produce, but at our farmers market you buy from family farmers: devoted, hard-working people whose farms are their livelihoods. According to the *Wall Street Journal*, August 16, 2021, "Nearly one-third of small farmers are expected to face bankruptcy by the end of the year [based on a survey]." *Our small local farms survive by the patronage of people like you, who care about their food and their farmers. We hope you will enjoy hearing the backstories of some of our farmers in our "Market Insights."* (See spring issues for more Farmers.)



Market Insights: F.J. Medina & Sons, Michelin Star Restaurant Suppliers

Karla Bojorquez is well known at the West End Farmers Market. She is as engaging with her customers as she is knowledgeable about her products. Behind that smile is a mountain of hard work and devotion. Karla is responsible for her family farm's Northern Virginia farmers markets, each week hauling heavy bins filled with their produce, exactly at peak. Karla is a perfectionist ... and she learned it all from her husband, she says.

Karla's husband is Francisco J. Medina, the founder of their farm in Montross, Virginia. Francisco shunned his father's farm – such hard work – and went into another business. After his father died of cancer and the farm was divided, Francisco felt terrible about abandoning his father's work. In 2006, to honor his father, Francisco used the small parcel of land he inherited to start his own farm, named F.J. Medina & Sons. Today he and Karla have almost 35 acres of farmland and five greenhouses. Karla reports that



Autum Squash, Medina Farms.



Karla Bojorquez.



Francisco J. Medina

Francisco works endlessly, planting and harvesting with only two full-time and two part-time helpers even at peak season. In February, he wakes every few hours to monitor his greenhouses. Francisco is indeed a perfectionist.

The Medinas specialize in offering a variety of each product, e.g., seven or more types of heirloom tomatoes; peppers from mild Italian to hot habaneros; purple, white, neon and Fairytale eggplants. In autumn, Karla not only offers butternut and acorn squashes and pumpkins, but delicata, kabocha, honeynut, blue hubbard, spaghetti and others. That kind of variety is hard to find in mega-markets! The couple's perfectionism has led them to supply produce to Eric Ziebold, chef and proprietor of two restaurants in Washington, D.C., *Kinship* and *Metier*, the latter a Michelin One Star. That this chef-customer buys from Karla at our Market underscores the Medinas' achievements. Beyond restaurants, Karla says a boon for small farms are Community Supported Agriculture boxes, wherein customers pre-order produce boxes to be available on a schedule. This provides farmers with a better cash flow and planting forecast. Karla hopes you know that F.J. Medina & Sons loves West End Farmers Market shoppers, and that small farmers survive thanks to you.

Market Insights: Papa's Market, The Best Pennsylvania Can Offer

David Argento runs the show at Papa's Market, from a table laden with many types of fruits and organic vegetables. He is quick to smile and quick-witted. But behind all that is a reflective man who pens the *Papa's Market Newsletter*, offering up, yes, discussions of fruits and vegetables, but also poetry and philosophy ... and filled with the love of family.

Papa's Market near Ortanna in Adams County, Pennsylvania, is a real family operation. Over 46 years ago, David's sister Kathy Reid bought land to start a family orchard. Today the

orchard encompasses 115 acres, with about 20 acres for grapes and Reid's Winery, run by Kathy and her husband Dave Reid. (They also make apple, pear and hard ciders.) David's brother Michael helps at farmers markets, and David's son Nick runs customer service. David's partner, Chef John Arnold, helps run the operation and cover farmers markets.



David Argento.

Family ties run deep here. David's father Barry ("Big Papa") worked as a boy in his Italian immigrant Ar-



Michael Argento at the Papa's stand.

gento family grandparents' market. After a government career, Barry joined his children's orchard; for 32 years it's been "Papa's Market." Papa Barry, often at our Farmers Market, died in March 2021, but his legacy continues. David uses Papa Barry's supplier networks, selling his family orchard fruit, plus that of "Adams County Royalty": Catoctin Mountain and Boyer's Orchards. Thus, we get specialty and hybrid peaches, apples, pears, nectarines, cherries and more not seen in commercial markets. (David is an expert on his fruits' botanical lineage, which he eagerly shares.) And Papa's offers specialties like Brubaker's raw honeys and local cheeses and pretzels.

David is formally partnered with Amish farmers Aaron and Emma Stoltzfus of Quarryville, Pennsylvania, for their "certified organic" vegetables. David sells his fruits and these vegetables not only to us, but to chefs Jeff Black (*Black Salt, Black Coffee*) in Washington, D.C. and Tracy O'Grady (*The Green Pig, formerly Willow*) in Arlington, as well as to Philadelphia chefs – a testament to Papa's quality. David and his family's one goal: to offer the best fruits, vegetables, and specialty farm available in the region.



Brubaker Raw Honeys at Papa's.

The West End Farmers Market is located at the southern parking lot of Ben Brenman Park and is open Sundays from 8:30am to 1pm, through November.

Fun Fall Festivals and Farms to Forage

By Carla Besosa

- Oct. 2 One Loudon (Ashburn)** The Virginia Wine Festival
- Oct. 2-3, 9- 10, 16-17 Graves' Mountain (Syria, VA)** Graves' Mountain Apple Harvest Festival
- Oct. 3 Lincoln Memorial (D.C.)** Autumn Remembrance Day Arts Festival
- Oct. 9 Bowie Town Center (Bowie)** Savor Bowie Fall Festival (food/wine/music)
- Oct. 10 Veterans Plaza (Silver Spring)** Silver Spring Arts & Crafts Fall Fair
- Oct. 16 Dock 5, D.C.** Fall edition of the D.C. Wine Fest
- Oct. 16 National Harbor (P.G. Co.)** Taco, Beer & Tequila Festival
- Oct. 30 Manassas Museum** Old Town Manassas Holiday Desserts & Sweets
- Nov. 6 Nats Park (D.C.)** D.C. Beer Fest
- Nov. 10 Rustico Restaurant (Slaters Ln.)** Novemberfest (back lot)

** **"Pick Your Own" Farms** I started to list them, then realized there are over 40 of them! So instead, go to <https://pickyourown.farm/farms/alexandria-va/?p=2>

Covid-19

Throughout this issue we offer ideas about places to dine and things to do this autumn. Before you visit or attend such places or events, we suggest that you check with the establishment or event organizers regarding any Covid restrictions, precautions or requirements they may have in place, including events held here at Cameron Station. Relevant Covid protocols should be available on websites, in social media posts, through direct contact or in event advertising. You may check the official Covid websites for the City of Alexandria at <https://www.alexandriava.gov/health/info/default.aspx?id=117876> and for Washington, D.C., at <https://coronavirus.dc.gov/healthguidance> for further information on their restrictions and precautions.

How to Start Traveling Again

By Lenore Marema

A recent seminar hosted by the Smithsonian Institute and featuring representatives from the U.S. State Department, travel agencies and tour providers, generated advice on travel going forward and changes to expect.

Where to Go

Domestic: The biggest change since 2020 is that Americans have fallen in love all over again with the outdoors. This summer, most major national parks were jammed. Panelists advised would-be travelers to not leave home without reservations for any national or state park. The cost of renting a recreational vehicle is also much higher.

You should always check the Covid-19 situation at your destination, but one benefit of domestic travel is that you do not need a Covid test to cross state lines.

- *Tips:* Try lesser-known national or state parks or a car trip on scenic byways.

International: Be sure your desired location is open to U.S. travelers and investigate the conditions governing your visit. You will need a Covid test 72 hours before an international flight departing from the U.S. Testing positive for Covid before you head home may find you quarantined for extra days. The panelists urged travelers to consider before they go whether they are willing to pay the associated costs and whether they can spare the time in light of work or other obligations back home. Sign up for the State Department's Smart Traveler Enrollment Program (STEP) to receive emails regarding risks in the countries to which you will travel, including special Covid considerations.

Travel Insurance

Buy travel insurance – but buy it from a company other than the one you are traveling with and make sure you understand the coverage. If you are hoping to travel in 2022, *book soon*, but wait and see what happens with airfares: Lots of travelers have deposits and other payments from cancelled travel in 2020. Popular tours departing in 2022 are filling up.

- *Tips:* If traveling with a tour group, consider using a travel company that requires all participants to be fully vaccinated. Ask your tour operator upfront for the Covid and other requirements applicable to your trip. Know before you go what happens if one person tests positive for Covid, such as cancellation of the whole trip or parts of it, and the time and expense that could cost you.
- If traveling internationally independently, consider visiting just one country. Requirements for crossing borders internationally vary and change.

Getting There

Always check current Covid requirements of your travel mode.

Trains: Amtrak has reasonable rates for travel to most destinations it serves. Seasonal/holiday travel can cost more. The Amtrak Northeast Corridor is upgrading its trains.

Planes: There has been an increase in domestic air travel this year. Expect higher fares, in part because business travel by air has not recovered to pre-Covid levels. Middle seats *are* being filled. In the U.S., international travel is still down, and there may be deals on prices for international coach or even business class seats. Due to staffing shortages and other factors, changes in your flights and even cancellations may arise.

- *Tips:* Tuesday, Wednesday and Saturday are the cheapest days to travel, while Sunday the costliest. Airline miles may not buy free flights; you may try to use them for upgrades.

Rental Cars: Shop around and book rental cars early. Rental cars at major airports are the most convenient and most expensive. Try using an offsite rental location to save on the price and avoid airport taxes, since the savings may be more than the cost of a cab or car service to get there. Some car manufacturers offer rentals at local dealerships. Car sharing platforms have emerged for private owners to rent their cars, but check insurance coverage.

Cruise Lines: They are coming back slowly, but space is filling up fast with prices at an all-time low.

Cameron Station Travelers

The Compass asked Cameron Station residents if they had started to travel again and their plans for the rest of 2021. Soon after the survey was circulated, the Delta variant contributed to a case surge, which may alter travel plans. Some reported that they have not traveled outside our area and have no plans to travel this year. Other residents have traveled in the U.S., mostly to see family and friends gathering for an event such as a wedding, graduation ceremony or memorial service. There were some getaways after long stays at home in 2020. Some responses noted there are few places open for international travel, other than Canada, Iceland and parts of Europe, so some plan trips there. Those who had traveled in the U.S. to see family and friends generally indicated they will do so again for the holidays or other events later this year.

Virtual Traveling

Just not ready to start traveling again? You can stay at home and travel safely! See www.thingstodoinDC.org to view their virtual tours, which take one to two hours and cost around \$20 each. Recently, there have been trips to Tibet and Mount Everest, canals of Amsterdam, Rome, Alaska, Morocco, Kyoto and the North Pole.

Ruthie's All Day

By Carla Besosa – Cameron Station Foodie

Behind every Guide Michelin chef there was a woman, usually a four-foot cataract-ridden old granny, from whom he'd filched his best recipe —Karen Karbo

The name Ruthie's conjures a vision of someone's granny in the kitchen with an apron on. Well, from that vision was born **Ruthie's All Day**, named in honor of Chef Matt Hill's Grandmother Ruthie! Hill, along with co-owner and general manager Todd Salvadore, developed their concept based on a passion for good, southern, home-style cooking.

Ruthie's opened in September of 2020. Despite the unfortunate pandemic timing, they have made a name for themselves, fostering a fruitful following. In an area overrun by frou-frou overpriced venues, Ruthie's is a breath of fresh air with locally sourced, seasonal ingredients. The restaurant occupies a tastefully refurbished freestanding building with wonderful expansive windows and an inviting patio that seats about twenty. The neighborhood vibe is prevalent: it is a "feel good" place!

Weekdays, Ruthie's opens at 7am for breakfast. Rather than table service, the game plan is more a grab-it-&-go/grab-it-&-stay breakfast counter. The spread includes such items as *Biscuit Sandwiches*, *Warm Apple Pancakes* and *Steel Cut Oats*. I cannot comment from firsthand experience, as I am generally not acquainted with mornings.

My go-to choice at lunch is the *Hearty Grain Salad*, a compelling composition of quinoa, roasted corn, avocado, sunflower seeds, crispy black-eyed peas, lemon, watercress, crushed cucumbers, cherry tomatoes and hummus. One can add chicken, salmon or steak, but I like it as is. Other appealing lunch offerings include *Yellowfin Tuna Tartare*, *Brunswick Stew* and the *Big Bad Brisket Sammy* cooked in the wood-burning hearth.

I've been to Ruthie's thrice for dinner, each time with different neighbors. Everyone was very satisfied with their picks and pleased with the wide range of selections. Start off with *Wood Grilled Octopus*, *Harry's Hot Hushpuppies* or *Southern Skillet Cornbread*. My top pick would be the smoothest, creamiest *Deviled Eggs* I've ever had. The slate includes *Smoked Pulled*



Ruthie's Spacious Patio.

Pork Shoulder, *Wood Fired Citrus Marinated Chicken* with raisin caper vinaigrette, *Wood Grilled Hanger Steak* with almond romesco (or *Striploin* with herb chimichurri), *Wood Grilled Delicata Squash* with hazelnuts and pomegranate or *Grilled Gulf Shrimp* in Old Bay curry sauce. Entrée pricing varies with your choice of two or three sides. (Believe me, two are sufficient!) Many gluten-free options are available as well.



Room for dessert? Who cares; order it anyway! There are three options that speak for themselves, and you could share ... or not. Opt for *Warm Campfire Cookies* with ice cream, *Butterscotch Pudding* with Heath Bar crumbles or warm *Apple Donuts* with raspberry jam. (YES! Pick me!)

Ruthie's bar has about 10 comfortable stools (with backs) and one TV. If you're looking for a sports bar, go elsewhere. At this time, there is no happy hour *per se*. (Fingers crossed.) We made our own happy hour with wine and a smattering of appetizers. I went with a hard-to-find Grüner Veltliner, but they mix mean cocktails like *Ruthie's All-Day Lemonade* made with Tito's, Galliano, lemon and raspberry; eight rotating local brews are available on tap.

Ruthie's All Day	Prices
3411 5th Street South Arlington, VA 703-888-2841	Breakfast Counter: \$3-\$12 Lunch Sandwiches & Salads: \$8-\$18
Hours	Dinners: \$17-\$26 (Striploin: \$40)
Monday-Thursday: 7am-9pm	Full Bar, No Smoking, HC Accessible
Friday: 7am-10pm	Parking Lot
Saturday: 9am-10pm	Reservations: Highly Recommended
Sunday: 9am-9pm	



Ruthie's Dining Room.

Ruthie's is easy to find – hop on 395 North, exit at Glebe Road, head north and continue to 5th Street. I can get there in 15 minutes (less if the planets and traffic lights are aligned). You'll encounter pleasant, knowledgeable and accommodating staff. Prime times are busy, so plan accordingly.

If God had intended us to follow recipes, he wouldn't have given us Grandmothers—Linda Henley

Days to Celebrate

By Carla Besosa

Sept. 29: Confucius Day (Confucius say, “It does not matter how slowly you go so long as you do not stop.”)

Oct. 1: International Music Day (Absolutely anything by António Carlos Jobim)

Oct. 4: National Taco Day (*Chop Shop Taco, Dos Amigos* and *Taqueria el Poblano*)

Oct. 6: National Noodle Day (Pad Thai at *Sugar Palm, Rice & Spice* or *Thai Lemongrass*)

Oct. 7: National Kale Day (*Lena’s Diavola Pizza, IndoChen’s Kale Chat* are great options.)

Oct. 8: National Salmon Day (Yelp says Roasted Main Salmon at *The Warehouse* in Old Town; I say Grilled Salmon at *Aldo’s Italian Kitchen* or Sous-Vide Salmon at **IndoChen**)

Oct. 13: English Language Day (Conjugate away!)

Oct. 14: National Dessert Day (New Magnolia Dessert Bar at *Sisters Thai, Old Town North*)

Oct. 17: National Pasta Day (Try *Osteria Marzano, Vaso’s Kitchen* or *Aldo’s Italian Kitchen*)



Advertising & Article Policies & Procedures

Advertising:

The Compass newsletter is published bimonthly (except July/August) 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, or the 28th in February (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 (<i>Camera-ready</i>)	
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.

How to Vote ... and Where

By Laura Leussing

An important election is coming up! On Tuesday, November 2, 2021, Virginians will be voting for Governor, Lieutenant Governor, Attorney General and members of the House of Delegates. Alexandrians will elect a Mayor, City Council Members, Commonwealth Attorney, Sheriff and School Board members. To vote, you must be registered by Tuesday, October 12! Check your registration status/register at vote.elections.virginia.gov or call Alexandria Voter Registration, 703-746-4050.

Early voting began Friday, September 17, at the **Office of Voter Registration & Elections**, 132 North Royal Street, Suite 100. Early voting dates and hours are:

- September 17-October 30, Monday-Friday, 8am-5pm (closed October 11)
- Saturday, October 16, 23, 30, 8am-5pm
- Evenings, October 25, 26, 27, 28 until 8pm

Early voting begins Friday, October 22 at **Beatley Library**, 5005 Duke Street. Hours are:

- Friday, October 22, 1-5pm
- Saturday, October 23, 10am-5pm
- Monday-Thursday, October 25, 26, 27, 28, 1-8pm
- Friday, October 29, 1-5pm
- Saturday, October 30, 10am-5pm

In-person early voting ends on Saturday, October 30, at 5pm at both sites. The deadline to apply for an **Absentee Ballot** is Friday, October 22. To apply to vote absentee by mail, go to <https://vote.elections.virginia.gov/VoterInformation>

A secure outdoor **Ballot Drop Box** will be available in front of the Office of Voter Registration & Elections from the start of early voting until 7pm on Election Day. This drop box is under video surveillance, and available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. Ballot drop boxes will also be available during early voting hours at Beatley library and all polling places on Election Day, 6am-7pm.

For more information go to:

<https://www.vote411.org>/or <https://www.alexandriava.gov/Elections>

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