CS Residents to Advise on Delaney Walkway Connector

By Judy Coleman

Cameron Station is getting a new next-door neighbor. The owners of 100 South Pickett Street are developing a building called The Delaney, which will house new luxury “city residences” (i.e., apartments), as well as retail. There is currently a bowling alley and a parking lot on the site.

One proposed feature of The Delaney site is a walkway connecting to Cameron Station. The elevation drawing above shows the proposed design of the walkway, which would proceed down the grade from the rear of The Delaney and connect at a point on the western edge of Cameron Station.

At the June meeting of the Board of Directors, a number of residents expressed enthusiasm for the connection, but others had concerns about the location and security of the access route. The general sense of the board and residents in attendance was that more community notice and involvement would be helpful.

To address those concerns, the board approved the formation of an Ad Hoc Pedestrian Access Committee of Cameron Station homeowners, headed by director Alvin Boone. Although the board has not made a decision whether to approve the walkway, the committee will serve a valuable function in keeping residents and the board informed about The Delaney’s proposals and making recommendations about the location of the walkway, the layout of the area around it and the design of any elements facing Cameron Station.

The board emphasized at the June meeting that it would not make a decision to approve or disapprove the pedestrian connection until it had more information from the committee.

Residents who view the project favorably say it will allow for more walkable access to retailers, including a potential small grocery tenant, and bring more business to Cameron Station retailers. Residents who dislike the proposal raised concerns about security, foot traffic through common areas and home values.

At the June meeting, City of Alexandria Deputy Police Chief Blaine Corle said he would not expect security to be a significant concern, particularly if the area is designed properly to ensure lighting and line-of-sight to public streets. The police department will review the proposed site for safety when the design is finalized.

What’s Inside

*The Compass* is publishing this short issue to cover all the fresh news in the community. Inside you’ll find an update on the Cameron Club renovations, a list of the Pride of Ownership winners, photos from the Pool Party and events at Café Pizzaiolo and more.
Pride of Ownership Awards

The Common Area Committee announced the winners of this year’s Pride of Ownership awards at the annual Pool Party on June 16. The awards celebrate those who have contributed to Cameron Station’s beauty and spirit through the upkeep of their homes’ exteriors:

Single Family Home: 331 Cameron Station Blvd, Keith & Cortney Nahigian
Townhouse: 5137 Brawner Pl., Edward & Jennifer Johnson
End-Unit Townhouse: 5250 Tancreti Lane, Daniel & Roni Modica
Condominium: 400 Cameron Station Boulevard

About . . . The Compass

The Compass is the newsletter for the Cameron Station Community Association and is run entirely by volunteers. The Compass welcomes your article and photo submissions, as well as your suggestions for future issues. Please send us an e-mail at TheCompass@cameronstation.org.

Back issues of The Compass are available online at www.cameronstation.org. Roll over the “Community” button at the top and go to “Newsletters.”

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Residents Attend Pool Party in Record Numbers

By Stephenie Zvonkovich

Cameron Station couldn’t have asked for a better day to host the Annual Pool Party. Under a clear blue sky, a record-breaking 747 residents attended the party on June 16 to enjoy fun, food and the company of fellow neighbors. Adults enjoyed the delicious BBQ provided by Red Hot & Blue while the kids gravitated toward the moonbounce and talented balloon artist. Many thanks to the residents who volunteered to make the event a success!

Pool Rules Reminder

Please know that the Cameron Club Operating Rules & Procedures state that Cameron Station Facilities Pass holders may bring only four guests per household to use the pool at any one time. Also, guests must be accompanied by at least one Facilities Pass holder 18 years or older.

Join the Activities & Events Committee for these upcoming events!

Snow Cone Party sponsored by Maid Brigade – Sunday, August 12
12-3pm in the Gazebo
Kids can enjoy free snow cones while adults have a chance to win $100 gift card.

Adult Happy Hour – Friday, September 14
5:30-7:30pm in the Gazebo

Upcoming Board and Committee Meetings

All meetings start at 7pm unless otherwise indicated, in the Henderson Room upstairs in the Cameron Clubhouse.

July 24 – Board of Directors Meeting
August 1 – Common Area Committee
August 6 – Activities and Event Planning Committee
August 7 – Architectural Review Committee
August 9 – Cameron Club and Facilities Committee
August 12 – Town Hall Meeting and Sno-Cone Special
August 20 – Communications Committee (7:30)
August 24 – Board of Directors Meeting

Please check www.cameronstation.org to confirm the time and location for each event.
I was the Cameron Club and Events Committee Chairperson from 2008 to 2010. During this period I had numerous dealings with Wayne Babb, a retired Marine Lieutenant Colonel, who had served with great distinction in the Marine Corps, especially in the Vietnam War where he received a Silver Star, Bronze Star and Purple Heart.

His Silver Star citation read like one for a Medal of Honor, in that by his great leadership ability he was able to guide his unit in repelling a North Vietnamese Army attack against his Marine Artillery Battery when they were overrun. The fighting was intense but Wayne’s unit prevailed in large part to his coolness under fire as he gave orders during the intense, fighting that took place!

We took an instant liking of one another due to our common Marine background and our desire to support and make Cameron Station a better community.

Wayne and his business partner, Irina Babb, gave to our Committee thousands of dollars to support the many events that were organized and hosted by the Cameron Club and Events Committee. Wayne told me, time and time again, of his fondness for Cameron Station and how he and Irina were indebted to the Cameron Station residents for making his business and Irina’s such a huge success.

Additionally, Wayne donated an original blueprint of Cameron Station, which he paid to have appropriately framed. It now proudly hangs in our clubhouse in the Henderson room where our Board of Directors meets. Wayne passed on in March, but I am very grateful for all of his kindness and generosity, and for Irina’s too.

God bless you, Wayne! Thank you for your service to our nation; and to our Cameron Station residents; and may you rest in eternal peace, Marine and Semper Fidelis!

Café Pizzaiolo – The Place to Go  by Judy Coleman

Beef Encounter
On June 25, Pizzaiolo featured Cameron Station resident Claire Carroll, who gave a live performance of her one-woman show Beef Encounter as the audience enjoyed a buffet dinner and drinks served by guest bartender and Cameron Station resident Jeanne Edwards.

Claire Carroll performs her one-woman show.

Election Night
Reporters from the Alexandria Times liveblog election results for the city council primary.

Café Pizzaiolo hosted the Alexandria Democratic Committee’s election night party on June 12 to celebrate the winners of the Democratic primary for city council. Congressman Gerry Connolly, State Senator George Barker and State Representative Charnielle Herring were among those in attendance. Cameron Station resident and ADC chairperson Dak Hardwick organized the event.

Clubhouse Renovation to Start in August

By Alvin Boone, Member of the Board of Directors

With construction set to begin in mid-August, the Cameron Club is about to get a much needed facelift. The project is expected to take until the end of November. During this time, all of the clubhouse meeting rooms will be closed. The fitness center and basketball court will remain open, except at the end of October when the fitness center will close for about two weeks while a new floor is installed and other work is done.

Since last fall, when the board approved the clubhouse renovations, a team of Cameron Station residents has been working with Rust Orling Architects on the design, which is nearly complete. The City of Alexandria recently approved the construction permit, and residents and members of CMC management have been working with the architect and the furniture vendor on the finishing touches.

The next major step is to finalize and sign the construction contract. Then, CMC will begin to remove furniture, existing appliances and other items in preparation for the start of construction. After construction is complete, the clubhouse will still have another month of furniture installation and other work before it is fully open and functioning again.
The Compass Visits…

F. J. Medina & Sons Farm

By Nicole Gauvin

This article is the second in a series exploring interesting, entertaining and educational places and events around the region that can be appreciated by residents of Cameron Station.

Last year, I volunteered for the West End Farmers Market and, in the process, made friends with many of the vendors. Karla Medina of F. J. Medina & Sons Farm invited my husband and me to visit the farm in Montross, Virginia, about 85 miles south of Cameron Station. We drove down on a Monday, one of two days a week that Karla or her husband Frankie are on the farm all day and not selling produce at one of seven farmers markets.

I had a sense that farming was hard work, but after a few hours with Karla, Frankie and their two sons, my education on small family farming had increased by 1000%. There are many more stages to growing a single piece of produce than I had ever imagined.

Stage 1: Seeds are planted in a seed tray and allowed to sprout in one of their hot houses.

Stage 2: Seedlings must be thinned out to give the starter plants more growing room. They are removed from the original container, and each one is carefully replanted by hand in an individual cell.

Stage 3: Fields are tilled using a cultivator, which prepares the soil by stirring and pulverizing in careful patterns. This aerates the soil and makes a loose, smooth seedbed and mixes the nutrients evenly throughout the field. Rows are then fertilized. After that, the plastic sheeting and irrigation system are installed. Black plastic is used in the spring to help attract and retain heat, while white plastic is used for the summer. The starter plants are inserted by hand, one at a time.

Stage 4: Growing. Make-shift scarecrows make noise and provide movement to scare crows.

Stage 5: Harvesting. A few extra workers might be hired, but for the most part, everything is done by 5-8 people.

Stage 6: The field has been plowed to remove the plastic sheeting and irrigation system from the field so that it can rest.

Stage 7: Storage options are limited but necessary, since the truck can only hold so much at once. Almost everything is harvested and transported immediately. Onions, garlic and potatoes are kept outdoors in a sheltered area that is covered on three sides. There is also an outdoor refrigeration unit about 14’ x 40’ x 8’ for delicate produce like tomatoes, berries and squash.

Stage 8: Transporting the produce to the farmers market. The drive to each market can take up to 2 hours and 30 minutes. Karla frequently wakes at 3am to load up the truck with as much produce as it can hold, drive to the market and set up the stand before customers start arriving.

Every time I’ve seen Karla at the West End Farmers Market, she is always cheerful, funny and nice. For someone who works 12 hours a day, 6-7 days a week, this is nothing short of amazing. My appreciation for the Medina family and everything they do to provide fresh produce for us has increased immensely.

More information about the F. J. Medina & Sons Farm is available on Facebook at www.facebook.com/fjmedinansonsfarm.
Pouneh Barnes and Megan Podolsky developed a friendship and a business idea during playtime that is reaping dividends now and for their children’s future. Several short months ago, the Cameron Station neighbors pondered how to add to their household coffers and small children’s education funds, while staying home and caring for them.

Their solution was a deceptively simple business plan – sell the clothing that their kids and others outgrew. And so, the idea that launched their store 529 Kids Consign was born.

Before they started out, Pouneh and Megan were intimately aware that clothing for well-sneakered, fast-growing sprouts has a low return on investment and involves high turnover. So, with a preference for mid- to high-end brands like Gap, Hannah Anderson, Mini Boden and Lily Pulitzer, they accumulated enough inventory to create their first resale “pop-up” shop. They announced their pop-up date on local listservs and Facebook. Owners of the former Food Matters lent the space. To their amazement, that cool fall day found many like-minded moms lining the red bricks of Brennan Park Drive, waiting to find and consign. Business was brisk.

With their first test behind them, planning quickly began for their next pop-up event. The owners of Toka Salon and the former Cameron Perks temporarily lent their storefronts, and several events were held in Cameron Station. As the consigners’ reputation and following quickly grew, they expanded venues “moving closer to our customers,” Megan explained. A network of new Old Town business owners, like Boccato Gelato, Salon de Zen and Telegraph Station, supportively lent temporary spaces.

The pace of growth soon made it obvious that the business required a permanent address. As soon as they found a spot just off King and South Royal Streets, the partners went into high gear renovating the 1200 square foot space. Megan’s husband Aaron, a realtor, lent much of the sweat equity needed to convert the former antique store into a cheerful kids shop. In addition to lending his support, Pouneh’s husband Scott named the business 529 Kids Consign – a reference to the 529 education savings plan that sparked their business idea. The shop opened in May of this year.

The quaint, two-level space, located in a small courtyard, is comfortably appointed with enough room for moms to navigate with strollers and toddlers. It is filled with an ever-changing inventory of seasonally appropriate infant, boy, girl and maternity clothing with intermittent arrivals of equipment and furniture. All are offered at 40-60 percent off the original retail price, and consignors earn 40 percent of the selling price.

With the popularity of resale chains, I wondered if they had considered any franchising opportunities. Megan exclaims, “We didn’t need a franchise!” The former Macy’s merchant was confident about setting up shop on her own terms, but does ponder the possibilities of franchising their brand.

These marketing Moms have accomplished their original goal and remain true to their values. They still take their children to school and pick them up. There’s a feel-good factor in knowing that other Moms can earn too. Asked if she was happy with their progress, Pouneh reflects that “it’s a lot of hard work, but it’s worth it.”

As for the future, they will launch www.529kidsconsign.com soon and as Megan enthuses they are, “content to pay it forward and offer other moms the chance to pop-up” in their space if it’s a good fit.

529 Kids Consign is at 122A S. Royal Street, open Tuesday-Saturday 10am-5pm and Sunday noon-4pm. They are now accepting consignments of fall clothing. Find them at www.facebook.com/529kidsconsign or call 703-567-4518.

Cameron Station Moms Launch Kids’ Clothing Venture

By Deirdre Scott

Cameron Station residents will hold a fundraiser for Alex’s Lemonade Stand, a foundation that fights childhood cancer “one cup at a time.” This fundraising event, on Thursday, August 23 at 4pm in the Gazebo, will honor Abby Furco, age 5, who survived childhood leukemia. Abby’s parents formerly lived in Cameron Station. More information about Abby and the event can be found at http://www.alexslmonade.org/mypage/86228.
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Mindy Lyle, Vice-President
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Robert Duncan, Treasurer
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Management Company: Community Management Corporation
Deirdre Baldino, Manager on site at Cameron Club:
703-212-8020, 703-212-8021 (fax),
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Main Street Condominium
Management Company: GHA Community Management, 703-752-8300
After-Hours Emergencies, 888-660-7132
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Unit Owners Association of the Condominiums at Cameron Boulevard (Centex Condos)
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The Residences at Cameron Station
Management Company: Armstrong Management
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