

# Wheel

April 2020, Vol. 46, Issue 4

Watergate at Landmark Unit Owners Association

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## PRESIDENT'S UPDATE

By Gary Dahl, Board President

We are in challenging times and the Association is adapting daily. As changes occur, residents' health and welfare are paramount in our decision-making process. I'm in daily contact with Management, who

are involved with planning action items for current and future conditions. Your Board is engaged in the process as they ask questions and receive input from Management on the changing conditions. Following are a few things I'd like to share with you this month.

### COVID-19 Response

By now you are aware that the Board out of an abundance of caution and with the goal of supporting the CDC guidance regarding social distancing during the Novel Coronavirus (COVID-19) outbreak, took major steps to protect the health of residents at Watergate at Landmark by implementing the following until further notice:

- Terrace Lounge is closed.
- Pools, Exercise Room, Racquet Club are also closed.
- Shuttle bus to Metro and shopping center trips are still occurring for now with modified schedules and shopping trips in place.
- Committee chairs will decide if meeting next month is critical. If so, they will use telephone conferencing in lieu of an in-person meeting.
- Board Meetings will use a conference call platform that allows residents to hear the meeting's events. Forty-five residents connected to March's Board Meeting via conference calling.

### Construction Challenges

The Association realizes that construction projects create noise. Management had two meetings with the contractors to discuss ways to reduce the noise. The work requires concrete demolition and the noise resulting from such work is impossible to contain. With that in mind, please prepare and adapt to the temporary inconvenience. The



Construction projects help maintain your property's value.

concrete demolition is only required for a short time, thankfully, on each tier with other less noisy activities taking the bulk of the time. Management will distribute announcements to buildings when demolition is planned.

### Election Results

The Association had an election on March 2. Phil Schrock, Bob Lee, Luke Lopez and Mark Drake were selected by the owners to remain on the Board. On March 5, the Board voted for its officers. I will remain your Board President, Eileen Greenberg is the Vice President, Susan Boldin is the Treasurer and Vivian Moran is the Secretary. Many owners voted this year, and I thank you for participating in the election process.

### Congratulations, Theresa!

The Board of Directors appointed Theresa Mulrane to fill a vacant Board position at our March 2020 Board Meeting. I congratulate her and welcome her to the Board.

### Electric Car Charging Station

The Commercial Opportunities Ad Hoc Committee submitted their final report in October 2019. One of the recommendations was for the installation of Electric Car

***Forty-five residents connected to March's Board Meeting via conference calling.***

Charging Stations. We are currently researching a two-car charging station located at the Racquet Club beside the existing vacuum station. Charge Point stations would be smart-networked stations that allow the Association to set our own pricing policies. This gives the Association the capacity to receive reimbursement for electricity usage, control who uses the stations and determine the usage time. The Infrastructure and Budget Committees will provide recommendations to the Board once cost estimates are received.

### Speed Humps

WAL will install two speed humps this spring behind Bldg. 2. Each will be across the roadway on either side of the Loading Dock. They will be five feet wide and three inches high, have an inset into the roadway surface with a slight indentation and adhere to the roadway surface with asphalt adhesive. The cost is \$4200, and work will be performed after the asphalt plants reopen.

Please remember your neighbors during this new normal for WAL. I assure you the Association will do what is best for the residents per the guidance from city, state and federal officials.

# Inside the Wheel



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## ON THE COVER: ENVIRONMENTAL SERVICES

The Environmental Services Department works diligently to clean and sanitize our community each day, demonstrated by Elizabeth (Regina) Robertson in this photo. These efforts have only increased since the outbreak. We appreciate their hard work!

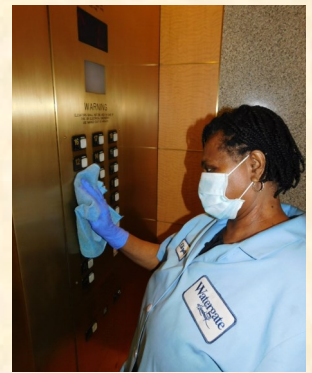


Photo: Tom Curry



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# COVID-19 ACTIONS

By Tom Curry, General Manager

Out of an abundance of caution and with the goal of supporting the CDC guidance regarding social distancing during the Novel Coronavirus (COVID-19) outbreak, On Friday March 13, 2020 the Association took major steps to protect the health of residents at Watergate at Landmark. The Board of Directors agreed with Management's request to cancel all activities and social events at WAL effective Saturday, March 14, 2020. They included:

- Fitness Center
- Indoor Pool
- Locker Rooms and Saunas
- Game Room
- Library
- Card Room
- TV Room
- Terrace Lounge
- Blue Room
- ALL Party Rooms
- Indoor Racquet Club

Alexandria and the Alexandria City Public Schools (ACPS) announced the closure of public play spaces (playgrounds, fenced basketball and tennis courts, park amenities, etc.) in its March 21, 2020 press release. The Association closed the following amenities as of April 1, 2020 to keep in step with the City's actions:

- Community Center's Upper and Lower Terrace sitting areas
- Gazebos
- Playground
- Multipurpose Area
- Sand Volleyball Court
- Basketball Court
- Outdoor Tennis Courts

Scheduled Committee meetings and club gatherings are canceled until further notice. Fitness classes, Association social events and scheduled Thursday A&E shuttle trips were canceled. The Association's Handyman Service was also temporarily put on hold.

To encourage social distancing and slow the spread of the COVID-19 coronavirus, the City of

edly washing hands. Should more measures be required per governing authorities, we will implement such.

This past week, Governor Northam mandated closure of a long list of non-essential businesses and activities. He stated, "This is an unprecedented situation and it requires unprecedented actions to protect public health and save lives."

The following adjustments were implemented as a result of the mandated closures.

## Meetings

Board meetings are now held via conference line or video conference calls. Committee meetings are canceled except for emergency needs. Meeting dates are announced in the Friday Watergate Weekly newsletter. Residents who wish to attend a meeting must email their name and unit number to Brittney Copeland at [ea2bod@watergateatlandmark.com](mailto:ea2bod@watergateatlandmark.com).

Residents will then receive the phone number and access code that allows them to listen to the meeting.

## Bulk Trash

Our trash hauler has temporarily stopped Bulk trash collection. Residents are forbidden to place bulk items on the loading dock. Household trash must go into the trash chutes and residents must follow the recycling rules.

## Shuttle Bus

Metro shut down the Van Dorn Street Metro Station. Our metro shuttle morning and afternoon runs now go to King Street station in Old Town. Due to the Commonwealth mandated store closures and lower ridership the Shopping Shuttle schedule has been shortened to Monday, Wednesday, Friday and Saturday. The shopping shuttle stops are Walmart, Home Depot and local grocery stores.

## Community Center and Resident Services Office

The Community Center remains closed and the Resident Services counter now has a plexiglass window.

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### While Social Distancing



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The Association staff is on-site providing Environmental, Patrol, Facilities Maintenance and Residents Services. We are frequently wiping down all common area touch surfaces including door-knobs, elevator buttons, push bars, and countertops with disinfectant. Facilities is handling emergency facility infrastructure problems. All staff members are adhering to social distancing, wearing appropriate protective equipment and repeat-

# PROJECT UPDATES IN OUR COMMUNITY

*By Tom Curry, General Manager*

Our community has been busy with several projects aimed at protecting your property's value and supporting a high quality of life here at Watergate. Following is a brief summary of our community's major projects in progress.

## **Building One Balcony HVAC Utility Closet Façade and Vent Replacements**

The Contractor has altered the way the project is being completed. HVAC technicians on this project will no longer enter units. They will instead ride the fly scaffolding on the outside of the building. This eliminates a COVID-19 distancing concern in the units. The project has completed nine of twenty-five tiers. The contractor is currently moving to Tiers 15, 17 and 19 located at the rear of the building.

## **Building Two Balcony Renovations**

This project is an outdoor project that does not enter any unit and will therefore continue. The contractor is nearing completion of thirteen of twenty-five tiers. They will move to Tiers 17, 19, and 21 in a few weeks.

## **Building Four Elevator Machinery Replacement**

Working within the rooftop elevator machinery room, Schindler elevator will be postponed for about 60 days. When the project begins, one elevator will be placed out of service for approximately five weeks to replace the machinery prior to servicing another elevator.

## **Upper Terrace Community Center Stairwell Improvements**

Working outdoors on a stairwell entrance to the currently closed community center, this project begins April 15, 2020. It will improve upper terrace drainage and prevent stairwell flooding that has in the past led to major insurance flood caused claims in the Community Center.

## **Market Café Renovations**

Located in the closed Community Center this project has required many infrastructure improvements to plumbing, electric, exhaust ventilation, hot water supply, flooring, ceiling grid, and lighting. Work continues many of the items, once they are completed kitchen and market equipment will be delivered and the facility will be turned over to the tenant for a future opening.

# A SPECIAL DELIVERY

*By Tom Curry, General Manager*

These days, it's really hard to find cleaning supplies such as Lysol that will specifically disinfect surfaces exposed to COVID viruses. Trust me, I know. I've been trying to locate some for awhile now. However, I didn't expect what happened last month as the outbreak began to spread in the DC Metro area.

We were lucky to find Lysol disinfectant concentrate right under our nose! A resident had a package delivered to our office. Yet, nearly a month later, the package wasn't claimed. Realizing what it was, we called. The resident gave us permission to use the cleaning supplies. We plan to pay him for it but it was a wonderful find! It was like finding liquid gold, as each gallon bottle makes over 500 gallons of disinfectant!

Just to be sure, I spoke with Lysol about the product due to concerns about its effectiveness and the concentrate instructions. Apparently, it only requires 1/4 ounce per gallon (for reference 1.5 ounces is a shot glass). We were also able to obtain spray bottles. Now we can disinfect with a product labeled specifically to treat COVID viruses!



*This is one batch that our staff uses to disinfect surfaces in the common areas and offices. Photo: Tom Curry*

# NEED HELP AMID THE COVID-19 LOCKDOWN?

By *Rashawnda Atkinson*

The coronavirus pandemic resulted in self quarantines and social distancing. Many have retreated to their homes, but some are limited to what they have on hand due to mobility, financial or health challenges that increase the risk of contracting COVID-19.

“I turned to my husband and said, ‘We *have to do something*. I don’t know how but we have to help, especially the elderly here [at WAL].”

So in between the conference calls and her responsibilities as a director for a Fairfax non-profit organization, Maria’s been working on helping the most vulnerable in our community during this crisis after the CDC guidelines came out.

Maria’s motivation was simple. “I live in a community where there are mainly elders. With people staying home, there are things that they need



*Neighbors offer to help with some critical tasks during COVID-19.*

help with while keeping the CDC guidelines in mind. What will happen if their home health aide or [housekeeper] can’t come? Who’s going to drive them to get their medications? Who will give them water? How will they eat?”

She continued, “I lost my grandmother in December. She was 95 and we talked every day. It’s just terrifying

for me to think that someone who was like my grandmother would have no one to help them.”

Right now, Maria is assessing the need for help and then will go from there. So far, one resident has contacted her to help with the efforts. Several residents signed up to receive help as well. She hopes that others will join along and create a neighbor-to-neighbor taskforce that will assist with grocery runs, medicine pickups, food prep and meal delivery during the lockdown period.

Please note that this effort is independent of the Association. For Maria, it’s an effort of the community to help our fellow neighbors who are in need. To request help, refer someone who may benefit from such services or join Maria’s team, you may email [HyM.120719@gmail.com](mailto:HyM.120719@gmail.com) or call her at 703-587-9877.

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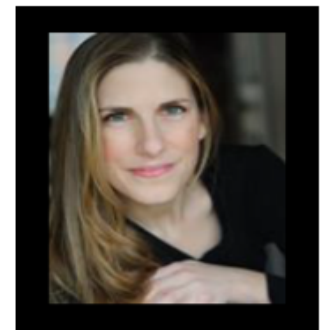
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# DON'T GET TOO CLOSE... SOCIAL DISTANCING IN HIGH-RISE CONDOS

By Rashawnda Atkinson

Everyone is susceptible to contracting coronavirus or COVID-19, even when age and health factors are accounted for according to the Center for Disease Control (CDC). As a part of the effort to reduce the spread of COVID-19, the government has extended the guidelines for social distancing through April 30, 2020; VA Governor Northam issued a stay-at-home mandate until June 10, 2020.

The federal agency defines social distancing during the COVID-19 pandemic as “remaining out of congregate settings, avoiding mass gatherings, and maintaining distance” of about 6 ft. from others not living in one’s primary residence when possi-



The CDC guidelines on social distancing seek to curtail the spread of coronavirus-19.

ble. That may be simple to do in a grocery store, in a hospital environment or at work with remote options or alternating schedules. However, one question remains: How does social distancing work in the one of the largest communities in the City of Alexandria?

We encourage you to take precautions such as handwashing and wearing personal protection equipment like masks and gloves. But please refrain from crowding the elevators or using the common elements in groups larger than 10 per the CDC

guidelines. You may also want to wipe down packages and bags received from grocery stores and mail carriers, as a recent study published in the New England Journal of Medicine found detectable amounts of COVID-19 on common surfaces for hours after exposure.

Social distancing may seem inconvenient. However, be encouraged that you are helping to curtail the spread of the novel coronavirus when you follow the CDC’s guidelines of social distancing.

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# Nowruz Celebration 2020 "Persian New Year" at WAL

Photo Credits: Hayat Ahmadoueh, Sara Eidi, and Zohreh Khoshnamak



"We live in a multicultural community and need to learn more about the various [cultures here] from each other." ~ Lynda Soady





# NOWRUZ 2020

By Zohreh Khosknamak

On Saturday, March 7, Watergate at Landmark celebrated the coming Nowruz. The event, sponsored by the Youth Committee and hosted by several Iranian and Afghani residents, introduced Nowruz, one of the oldest new year celebrations in the world, to the WAL community.

Otherwise known as the Persian New Year, Nowruz is a festival that marks the coming of spring and celebrates the renewal of life by nature. The event at WAL included a traditional Haft Seen Table at the Terrace Lounge and a brief overview of Nowruz's history. Additionally, there was a sampling of food from the various cultures that celebrate the holiday along with music and dancing that remained true to the spirit of Nowruz.

"I had a great time at the Nowruz party and everyone I spoke with felt the same way. The food was delicious, and it was probably my favorite thing of the night. The music was fun too...I think the best part of the event is that people learned to appreciate a [different] culture..." one attendee commented.

On Friday, March 19 at 23:49:37 EDST, approximately 300 million people worldwide celebrated Nowruz.

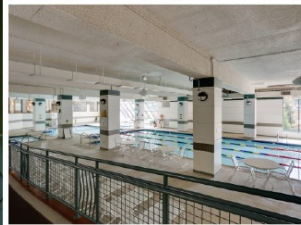
## HOLD the Elevator, Please?!

It's a complaint that Watergate at Landmark front desk staff have been fielding frequently of late – "residents are not adhering to social distancing in the elevators!"

Rather than post signage or rules for absolutely every situation, we remind residents to exercise common sense in high-density and high-traffic areas such as elevators, (laundry rooms and lobbies too) here at Watergate.

Specifically, extend adherence to the now-familiar social distancing guidelines of national authorities (if not with members of your immediate household) into these areas and if necessary, simply await the next elevator or step out on an earlier floor if uncomfortable with the crowd.

~Jene Lyons, Deputy General Manager



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# PICKLEBALL CHAMP

## RESIDENT WINS AT SENIOR OLYMPICS

By Terry Schlossberg, Recreation Committee Member

Sports have been put on hold since the Racquet Club closed. That's too bad because April is National Pickleball Month *and* we have an Olympian right here at WAL!

One of WAL's avid "picklers", a term often associated with pickleball players according to sports website [active.com](http://active.com), won a bronze medal at the Northern Virginia Senior Olympics last year.

Isamu Danura, a nine-year resident from Bldg. 2, is a tennis player who began playing pickleball before he retired from the National Institute of Health (NIH) last year. He especially enjoys the camaraderie at WAL. "I've played at recreation centers in Alexandria," he said, but my favorite players are here at the Watergate Racquet Club."

### Pickler's Unite!

On a recent Sunday afternoon, more than a dozen residents gathered for drop-in play on our Indoor Courts. Some players had never even held a paddle in their hands before they started having fun in what is commonly described as a blend of Ping-Pong and tennis.

As one of the game's enthusiasts, Isamu likes to share what he's learned with newbies to the sport.

"It provides [me with] new friendships and *lots* of exercise," he says.

### Start Playing at WAL

Typically, there are men and women of all ages every Wednesday at 6 p.m. and Sunday at 2 p.m. taking Isamu and others on inside our Racquet Club. It's fun watching everyone play, even though Isamu is hard to beat.

If you haven't been inside, you should plan to do so once things get back to normal, as the courts are among the best in the area. The courts are modified for pickleball play and two hours of drop-in pickleball costs \$4. If you prefer, you may play at any of the four Outdoor Courts that are also lined for pickleball. Paddles and balls are provided, though some may bring their own. Wear your court shoes [sneakers] and join the fun once everything reopens.

Contact Activities Director Becca Spencer via email [activities@watergateatlandmark.com](mailto:activities@watergateatlandmark.com), by phone (703-370-7092) or visit the Activities Office for details.



Join Isamu, Northern Virginia Senior Olympian, for a game of pickleball...if you dare! Photo: Terry Schlossberg



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## ACTIVITIES OFFICE

### Activities and Fitness Classes Status

Out of an abundance of caution, activities and fitness programming are currently on hold. The Activities Office is sorry for this inconvenience. Please keep an eye out for information on future events in the weekly flyers. Office hours will be posted at the Activities Office.



### Racquet Club Contracts and Fitness Pass Status

All fitness passes and contracts will be extended from the time the Community Center closed until it reopens.



## Community Shuttle Service During the COVID-19 Situation

Due to the closure of the Blue Line Metro stop at Van Dorn St., WAL's shuttle will instead go to the King Street Station. As a result of the increased



distance, the shuttle will only be able to make three runs in the morning and four in the afternoon. If you haven't done so already, you may visit our website to print out a copy of the amended shuttle schedule. Print copies are also available at Resident Services.

The shopping shuttle will operate on Monday, Wednesday, Friday and Saturday. This temporary change went into effect on Monday, March 30. **No shopping trips will occur on Tuesdays and Thursdays.**

Non-essential store closures and greatly reduced ridership have forced the alteration to the Shopping schedule. This schedule provides a variety of grocery store shopping options.

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*Attorney Gregory Wade is a Watergate at Landmark resident and makes home visits for estate planning and probate issues.*

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# WAL's TINY TOWN CRIER

By Eileen Greenberg, Vice President

Emma, was only supposed to visit for a little while on April 4, 2014.

"The little guest dog is cute, but no thank you," I said.

Besides, I already had a rescue dog named Ella who I adopted from Tucson, AZ in June of 2013.

However, the Miniature Pomeranian won my heart and she never left Wattergate at Landmark. From that day in April, Emma fit in just fine with Ella. The two were pals and sisters until Ella went "over the rainbow" in January of 2016.

She's a teeny one at 3.5 pounds but she's still quite mighty at 12 years old. I suppose that's why she likes to bark at the "entry arms" that allow



Emma loves to be out and about in our community! Photo: Eileen Greenberg

the cars on property when we're on one of our walks near the Front and Back Gate. Sometimes Emma will stand near the security huts at the gate as if she's guarding our property. She makes the most unusual growling

sounds, which you wouldn't expect coming from her little body. Even though the barking and growling makes many people laugh, earning her the nickname "WAL Town Crier."

One neighbor though prefers to call my precious pooch Wee One, as the two share the same name.

Whenever you see Emma with me as she walks rapidly on her feet as if she's wearing high-heeled shoes, just come and say hello to us. Emma really loves when you pat her or rub her head. She doesn't have any teeth to bite, and there's not a shy bone in her body, another reason why she's absolutely the perfect WAL Town Crier!

Do you want to feature as the Pet of the Month? Send your story to [schlunn@yahoo.com](mailto:schlunn@yahoo.com), or drop by as a guest at the Pet Committee meeting the first Thursday of the month at 7:30 p.m. in Conference Room 1.





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# DIGITAL EARTH DAY

By Bob Lee, Board Member

Although this year's Earth Day event will not occur in efforts to keep everyone safe from the COVID-19 pandemic, we can keep the spirit of Earth Day alive individually.

I am not referring to wearing a shirt from the previous Earth Day events at WAL, though pictures of people in their old t-shirts might be nice to display somehow.

For those who are interested, you may participate in the first Digital Earth Day hosted by the [Earth Day Network](http://www.earthday.org), the global organizers of Earth Day. Learn more by visiting [www.earthday.org](http://www.earthday.org).

## Earth Day History

Earth Day was the brainchild of Wisconsin Senator Gaylord Nelson. Building on the environmental consciousness generated by Rachel Carson's 1962 best-selling book, *Silent Spring*, Nelson authored several landmark environmental laws—including the Wilderness Act—and was instrumental in laying the groundwork for the Environmental Protection Act as well as the Clean Air and Clean Water Acts. After his U.S. Senate career, Nelson served on the board of the Wilderness Society.

The first Earth Day was celebrated in 1970 as a day of education on

environmental issues. There were national teach-ins at several American universities. Initially Earth Day was inextricably associated with Vietnam War protests and youthful political activism. As time went on, the focus shifted



*Digital Earth Day 2020 is an event hosted by the Earth Day Network.*

towards environmental issues and concerns. Earth Day is now observed in more than 190 countries, with more than one billion people worldwide participating annually according to [earthday.org](http://www.earthday.org).

## Earth Day at WAL

For several years, Watergate at Landmark has formally observed Earth Day with a series of events that have included different committees, their members and other WAL residents. Perhaps as a reflection of a growing concern for the environment, participation in the annual event has increased

each year. Usually, activities begin with a clean-up of community grounds and areas adjacent to WAL, including Yoakum Parkway, Stultz Road, and nearby parts of Stevenson Avenue. It's a pretty modest affair compared to global celebrations, but we're all doing our part to be good stewards of our planet and its environment.

It is a tradition that Earth Day trees are gifted by residents and friends of the Association and funded through the WAL Enhancement Fund. All trees installed to date have been October glory red maples to form a canopy along the drive lanes at the back entrance to the community. The first of those trees was named "Emma's tree" in recognition of the youngest participant in Earth Day observances

in 2017, followed by "Barbara's tree," named in honor of Barbara Bush who died just before Earth Day in 2018. Last year's tree was donated by long-time WAL resident Sylvia Linke and her brother, Ernest Cook. Known as George's tree, the maple was dedicated to their father, Dr. E. George Linke.

Even though we're unable to celebrate Earth Day together this year, I am encouraged that WAL residents will continue to care for the community and our world.



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