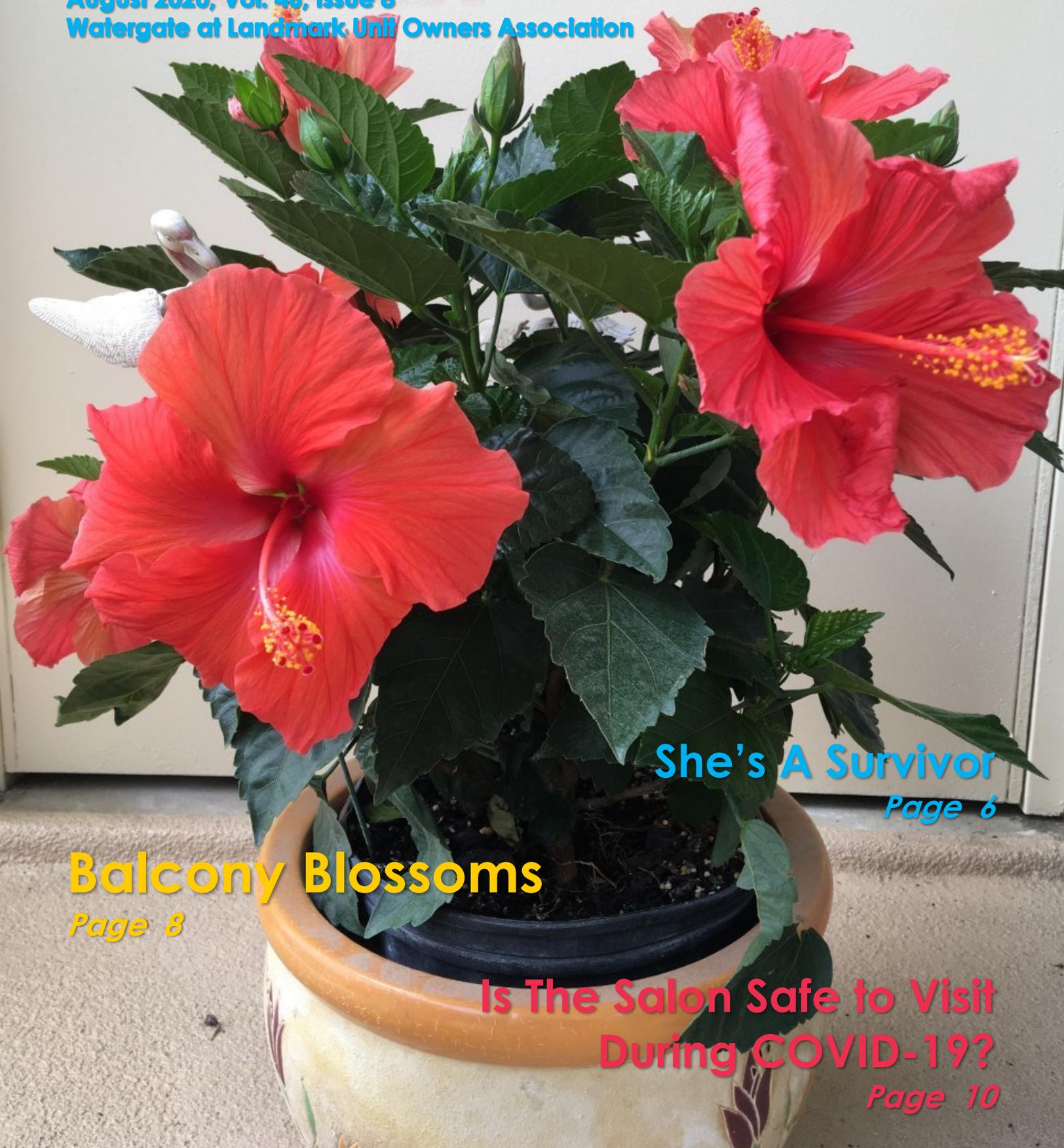


Wheel

August 2020, Vol. 46, Issue 8

Watergate at Landmark Unit Owners Association



She's A Survivor

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Balcony Blossoms

Page 8

**Is The Salon Safe to Visit
During COVID-19?**

Page 10

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Inside the Wheel



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2020 - 2021 WATERGATE OF LANDMARK BOARD OF DIRECTORS

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ON THE COVER: BALCONY BLOSSOMS

Libby Cooperman grew this hibiscus on her balcony. Other residents share their plant photos on page 10.

Photo: Libby Cooperman



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WATERGATE ROUND-UP

By Gary Dahl, Board President



Photo: Gary Dahl

Summer is here and all our outdoor amenities are operational here at Watergate at Landmark. It is a pleasure to watch our residents enjoying the Outdoor Pool, Lower Terrace, Tennis Courts and our wonderful landscape again. Also, our store/café is reopened under new management. The Watergate Restaurant and Market now has an all-day breakfast menu along with its traditional menu from which residents may select. The venue also offers a delivery option.

FY 2021 Budget

August is when the Fiscal Year (FY) 2021 Budget is determined and your Condo Assessments are established. The Budget Committee spent a significant amount of time analyzing each line item. The process culminated in the Budget Committee submitting a document to the Board who conducted a first reading on Tuesday, July 28.

- At the end of the month the Board of Directors will approve a budget for FY 2021 that includes your monthly payments. There will be a Virtual Town Hall that discusses the budget on Thursday, August 6.

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| History of Watergate at Landmark Condominium and Garage Assessment Increases | |
|---|----------------------------|
| Fiscal Year | Percentage Increase |
| 2005 | 3.75 |
| 2006 | 6.78 |
| 2007 | 13.31 |
| 2008 | 8.14 |
| 2009 | 7.03 |
| 2010 | 2.98 |
| 2011 | 0.84 |
| 2012 | 3.25 |
| 2013 | 2.53 |
| 2014 | 0.22 |
| 2015 | 2.22 |
| 2016 | 1.84 |
| 2017 | 2.32 |
| 2018 | 2.15 |
| 2019 | 1.77 |
| 2020 | 1.92 |

- Key highlights from the Budget's First Reading are the cautions that WAL's income other than your assessments (which include rental of party rooms rental and various other fees) will decrease by 3.79% as a result of COVID-19 closures and restrictions. Our utilities will increase by 10.95% and insurance rises by 8% due to the virus. The projected unit condominium assessment is 1.84%.
- This budget funds vital projects, maintains the property an essential level and forecasts reserve spending requirements through FY 2025. It is a budget that will keep our property in a safe, usable and satisfactory condition. It is a constrained budget.

Pool Information

Our pools opened last month due to an extensive effort from Management, the Board of Directors and our pool contractor, American Pools. Yesterday I was reading a report from the Community Association Institute (CAI) that a significant portion (41%) of community association pools have not opened this season because of the COVID-19 pandemic. Our insurance agent said about 80% of the communities they serve did not open their pools. I'm thankful that we were able to open all of our pools for the enjoyment of our residents.

Lifeguards

The lifeguards have received several complements for their professional conduct and assistance. Our rules changed to comply with COVID-19 mandates. These changes resulted in some residents verbally confronting the pool reception desk personnel in an inappropriate manner. Please remember the lifeguards are enforcing the rules established by the Board of Directors. Please follow the pool rules as published and posted. They are there to help

with water safety at our pools. Kindness and respect go a long way.

Face Coverings in Public Buildings

I encourage you to please wear a face mask while in our residential buildings. As we adjust to life after the COVID-19 Executive Orders from the Governor and the “Safer at Home: Phase Three” guidelines published by the Commonwealth of Virginia, we are **REQUIRED** to wear face masks indoors (to include elevators) per the *Virginia Executive Order #63: Requirement to Wear Face Covering While Inside Buildings* dated May 26, 2020. This Executive Order does not apply this requirement in outside public spaces.

The Governor made a distinction between being outside the home and being inside a public setting in the order issued. He stated that “I strongly urge all Virginians to wear face coverings when leaving their homes. But as to indoor settings to which the public has access, mere encouragement is not enough to protect the health and safety of Virginians.” His written statements concerning face coverings is a part of the mandate through Executive Order #63 and it is in accordance with the Alexandria Health Department’s guidance for indoor public spaces. They also suggests that residents wear face masks when leaving the home.

Committee Meetings

Committees are an integral part of how our Association operates. Now that we are in Phase 3 of the Executive Orders, our committees still need to conduct monthly committee meetings virtually. Management will provide a teleconference phone number or web link. Virtual meetings are strongly encouraged versus in-person meetings per

Face coverings are required in indoor public spaces to include elevators, lobbies and hallways.

Executive Order #67 Phase 3 guidelines, which state: “Use technology solutions where possible to reduce person-to-person interaction.” Remember it is safer to conduct our Committee activities virtually rather than in-person.

Enjoy our beautiful grounds, amenities and remember to socialize at least 6-ft. away from your neighbor. Please be safe and ready for the next change that is coming as we live in a time of turbulence. I encourage you to dial into our virtual Board Meeting on Tuesday, August 25.

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THE 900-DAY SIEGE SURVIVOR

WAL RESIDENT EMILIA BRODSKAYA RECOUNTS HER LIFE DURING THE LENINGRAD BLOCKADE

By Rashawnda Atkinson



A family photo of Emilia (center), her father Naum, and her mother Sofia, taken before the Siege of Leningrad began. Photo: Emilia Brodskaya

How many days could you survive under the threat of starvation, disease and bitterly cold temperatures in the midst of a war that would mean certain death if the opposing forces won? Emilia Brodskaya, a long-time WAL resident, managed to do it for 872 days as a 10-year-old child living in the Russian port city of Leningrad, now known as St. Petersburg. The following is a recollection of her life before, during and after the Leningrad Blockade (also known as the Siege of Leningrad or the 900-Day Siege).

A Summer “Surprise”

“I was a happy, happy child,” says Emilia. “My mother, my father, and I lived in an apartment on Chekhov Street in Leningrad with five different families. It was where I

*“I think it [the siege] made me stronger...I’ll fight through anything that comes my way.”
~ Emilia Brodskaya*

was born. It was an ordinary communal apartment. There was a kitchen and a toilet. There was no shower or bath [but] I have good memories of my childhood.”

Every summer, her family spent their days relaxing in a village outside Leningrad. But September 8, 1941, proved to be a very different day. Nazi forces began to encircle the

city from the west and south while the Finnish army proceeded towards Leningrad from the north.

“We were all taken by surprise when the siege began. Of course, no one expected [the Nazis] to arrive so soon. Our family usually spent three months resting in the village and it was three hours away from Leningrad. Once the announcement was made, my father brought us back to Leningrad,” Emilia says.

What they found on their return were fires burning across the city, fires that threatened the now meager food supply and destroyed the city’s infrastructure. According to A.G. Medvetsky, 840 factories, 526 schools and kindergartens, 21 scientific institutions and 15 million square meters of living space were destroyed.

“Everything [in the city] was disrupted, broken...,” Emilia recounts child and adolescent survivors entitled [translated] *Leningrad Blockade Through the Eyes of Children and Adolescents: A Sociocultural Aspect*. The Nazis targeted key warehouses and cut

off trains and roadways leading to the city. The original plan of razing the city down as a symbolic defeat to Stalin’s rule was replaced by the formation of a blockade to avoid the potential for heavy casualties due to street fighting. The hope would be that Leningrad’s 2.5 million citizens, about 400,000 of those citizens being children, die from starvation so the remaining supplies could be used to support the Wehrmacht, or the combined naval, air and armed Nazi Germany forces. Historians estimate about 1.1 million people died during the siege as a result of the severe food shortage combined with winter temperatures dropping as low as -40 °F.

“One of my aunts, a doctor, and my father volunteered in the Leningrad frontlines,” says Emilia. “I stayed with my mom until she was taken to dig the trenches. Once they were built, we stayed in Leningrad. She was a shy and modest person who was afraid to evacuate,” she added.

“Mother thought the war would be over soon. We remained in the city the entire time even as everybody was leaving, including my [other] aunt and her children who fled to the Urals,” Emilia said.



Emilia's story and others can be found in this memoir on the Leningrad Blockade.

The Nazis and Finns completely besieged the city in only a few months. The only way in or out of the city was by making a dangerous crossing over the frozen Lake Lagoda, which made any form of relief a rare occurrence.

Strength Amid the Struggle

Unfortunately, the war and the siege continued forward. As grocery shelves began to empty, the government provided ration cards for the scant food supplies.

“With the ration cards, you were given a certain amount of flour, sugar [and so on]...you couldn't get more than what was on that card.”

The workers were given 250g of bread; the rest of the population received half of that amount to eat. Some people ended up eating leather soup, bread made from bran and cellulose (sawdust), wallpaper, dogs, cats and birds.

“Some people lived worse [than I did] during the blockade. There wasn't any electricity or power. Some of my neighbors died,” says Emilia.

A reported 650,000 people died in 1942 alone due to starvation, disease, exposure to the elements and shrapnel from the Nazis fighting in the distance. At the time, Emilia believed that death was certain for her—but then a family friend gave a live-saving gift in the form of food scraps taken from the pots she scrubbed.

“My neighbor's nephew worked at a food place. [His aunt brought home the scraps from the pots she scrubbed there.]

She'd say to her daughters and me, 'Come and eat.' I think she saved me...” Emilia says.

Although she had many experiences to share, one of Emilia's most vibrant memories is when she was 11 years old. During the harsh winter of 1942, Emilia walked through ice and freezing temperatures to visit her father who was sent to the Leningrad hospital due to an injury he sustained during the battle.

“At that time my mother was in the trenches,” says Emilia. “I still cannot understand how I found this hospital. I walked through the entire icy city of Leningrad,” Emilia shared in the *Leningrad Blockade* memoir. Even though her father eventually recovered and returned to the battle a few weeks later, it's a memory that evokes an unspeakable emotion in Emilia's mind.

The Bright Side

Life wasn't completely consumed by the dire circumstances surrounding the blockade, however. Due to the barriers built by Leningrad's citizens and Russia's Red Army fighting against the attackers, Emilia and the other citizens of Leningrad were still able to enjoy a few things they did before the blockade began. She, like many other children during the time, listened to the radio, attended the theater and went to school. Some people who lived through the blockade's early days received land parcels and seeds from the Russian government. They used this land to grow food. Emilia remembers her mother planting onions, carrots and radishes in the spring of 1943. The crops were vital to the survival of Leningrad's citizens who remained in the city.

Once the Nazis were defeated, citizens across Leningrad listened to the news over the radio and crowded the streets.

“When the war finished, things got better...it was limited but little by little life did improve,” Emilia says.

Most of her loved ones who lived during and after the blockade have passed on but the impact of that time was lasting. “I think [the siege] made me stronger. I'm a fighter, you know. I'll fight through anything that comes my way,” Emilia says.

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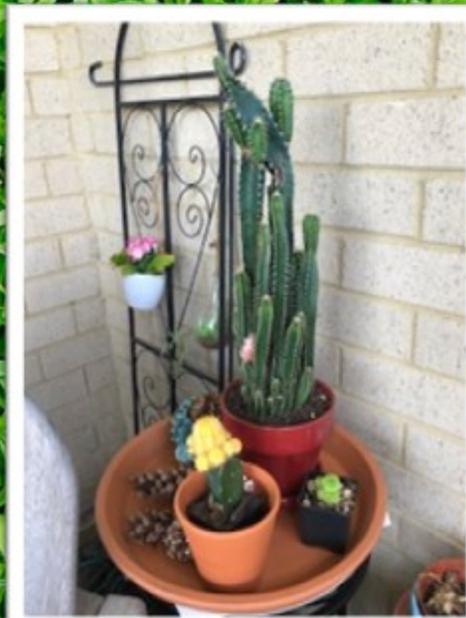
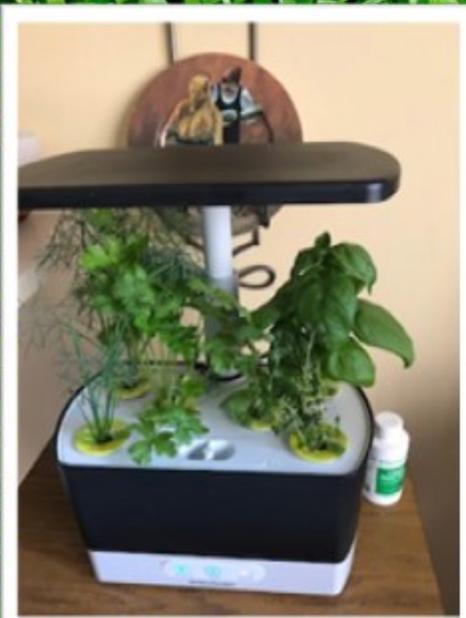
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Herbs and Blooms

*Look at what your neighbors grew!
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few to your home!*

Plant Name and Photo Credits (Clockwise From Top Left):
Hibiscus - Chuck Cook, *Herb Garden* - Nina Reynoso-Ray, *Coleus* - Leslie Wilder, *Red Star Geranium* - Kay College, *Cacti* - Benzina Family, *Baby Sun Rose* - Kay College and *Herb Garden* - Benzina Family



WATERGATE'S "MINI" GARDENS

By Nina Reynoso-Ray

Who said one cannot grow a garden on a balcony? I beg to differ. I'd like to share my story (with a few others) and present a challenge to all the naysayers.

The blooms on my second floor balcony are thriving since I moved to Bldg. 3 at Watergate once I remarried in 2013. In my garden, I have herbs of lavender, mint, cilantro, parsley in addition to jalapeno peppers (red and green), collard greens and scented jasmines flowering abundantly. Fast growing aloe vera and mini-palm trees greet me every morning as I sit in my rocking chair sipping tea laced with fresh mint leaves from my mini-garden. A refreshing sight greets me every morning as I go out to water my garden.

Maintaining my garden is pretty simple. I sprinkle used coffee pods

and tea bags along with discarded egg shells as an organic fertilizer. When the cold spell comes, I leave the annuals outside and the rest I bring them in. Once they convert to house plants, I make sure the plants face a good amount of sunshine or daylight.

But I'm not the only gardener. There are quite a few of us at Watergate.

"I love coleus. They grow just about anywhere as long as they don't get too much sun and [they] add a bright pop of color to my mainly green plantings. [I also have] basil, flat leaf parsley, lemon balm and rosemary in my culinary herb garden," fellow resident and gardener Leslie Wilder shares.

Speaking of herbs, the Benzina family keeps their herbal plants indoors

in an aerogarden. They "like having basil, mint, dill, chives, parsley and thyme always at hand for cooking." The Bldg. 2 residents also have some cacti, which you might not expect in such an urban place. Maintaining the plants "doesn't require a green thumb" according to them.

"I bought my red star geranium at the end of the season last year," WAL resident Kay College said. "It looked pathetic and had only one cluster of 'stars' but it intrigued me. It didn't do too much and then [it] was left on the balcony...throughout the winter. When I went out to start preparing the balcony for spring, I saw that it was still green and trying to put out a new star cluster. I'm so happy with what some TLC did!"

During a photo swap online, Chuck Cook exclaims the following about his beautiful hibiscus, "Even I can grow them!"

Note: Plant photos are on page 8.

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BEAUTIFUL AND SAFE

By Dawn Carvajal, Dawn Marie's Visage Owner



Face coverings and a portable sink are items used as safety precaution measures at Dawn Marie's Visage. Photo: Dawn Carvajal

We are living in unprecedented times. It has been a time of fear, anxiety and anticipation of when life will return to the normal we once knew. For many of us, a pampering session in the salon was our way of relaxation and self-care. Who doesn't love a soothing scalp massage or feel renewed after getting an awesome pedicure or hairstyle?

The current state of our country has thrown a curve to our routines and visits to the salon. Sometimes we step outside the comfort of our homes with trepidation. That is why I made it my mission to help make it safer and as close as I can to what used to be a pre-COVID fun visit to the salon.

Dawn Marie's Visage COVID-19 Precautions

I spared no expense to make Dawn Marie's Visage your relaxing safe space. Plexiglass shields protect us all. The nail table has a shield between the nail technician and guests. A shield hangs from the ceiling between your pedicure provider and you. The front desk also has shields between guests and customer service providers. There are social distancing markers on the floors and soon there'll be partitions between stations.

Everyone is encouraged to wear a mask to the salon. However, if you have an adorable mask that you want to save from discoloration or other damage, we have masks for you to wear. Every station, chair and shampoo sink is completely cleaned and sanitized between each and every guest. Capes, neck strips, towels and guest robes are used only once and then thoroughly washed and sanitized. The pedicure chair utilizes bowl liners so that there is never used water that runs through the pipes.

Our check-in and contact tracing recording procedures are intense but necessary. Temperature is taken prior to services beginning as a precaution and a portable sink is located near the front of the salon for guests to wash and sanitize their hands. You will need to fill out a COVID-19 waiver with a new pen that you may keep.

Let The Fun Begin

Once you have finished checking in, your service provider escorts you to the necessary station. There, you will have a thorough consultation to get to know each other and discuss your needs and desires for your visit. Records are kept to ensure that upon your next visit we can discuss your last visit and make adjustments or create a completely new experience! At the salon you can choose to lighten, brighten or highlight your tresses. Our DevaCurl treatment can enhance your natural curls. If you choose to relax that curl then we can provide a Brazilian Blowout or Keratin Treatment that lasts up to 5 months.

The staff at Dawn Marie's Visage are always training and learning new techniques or treatments to keep our skills fresh so that we can continue to provide our guests with high-quality service. We love what we do and welcome you to share in this journey with us!

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DO I HAVE TO WEAR A MASK?

By Rashawnda Atkinson

Since we've entered Phase 3 of the Virginia Forward plan, there's been some confusion as to how the state guidelines concerning face coverings apply to indoor areas where maintaining the Centers for Disease Control's social distancing recommendations present a challenge (i.e. hallways, elevators). Many may wonder, "Does the face covering mandate apply to all indoor common spaces?"

The Alexandria Department of Health's (AHD) says yes as a part of its latest comments following complaints from City residents about people not wearing them in indoor public areas. AHD Health Director Stephen Hearing, MD, MPH, FACPM stated the following in a letter written to

Alexandria Property Managers on July 14, 2020:

"Executive Order 63 does apply to indoor common areas of apartment [and] condominium buildings. This may include [but not be limited to] lobby areas, mailrooms, laundry facilities, and elevators."

The City's Health Dept. also has published recommendations for how to care for and use face coverings:

- Wash hands with soap and warm water BEFORE putting on a face covering.
- Your face covering needs to cover your nose and mouth and fit snugly behind the ears or back of head.
- Do not touch the front of your face covering when wearing.
- Even when wearing a face covering, practice physical distancing and stay home when sick.

Wear your mask when leaving your unit. Photo: AHD

- After using, place your cloth face mask in the laundry and wash your hands with soap and warm water.

Proactive measures taken by Watergate at Landmark staff include ensuring signage is posted in all buildings and replacing such when updates occur. Please do not confront violators in any fashion. You may call 703-7464988 if you have questions.

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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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MAYOR BLUEBERRY

By Rudy Munoz, Pet Committee

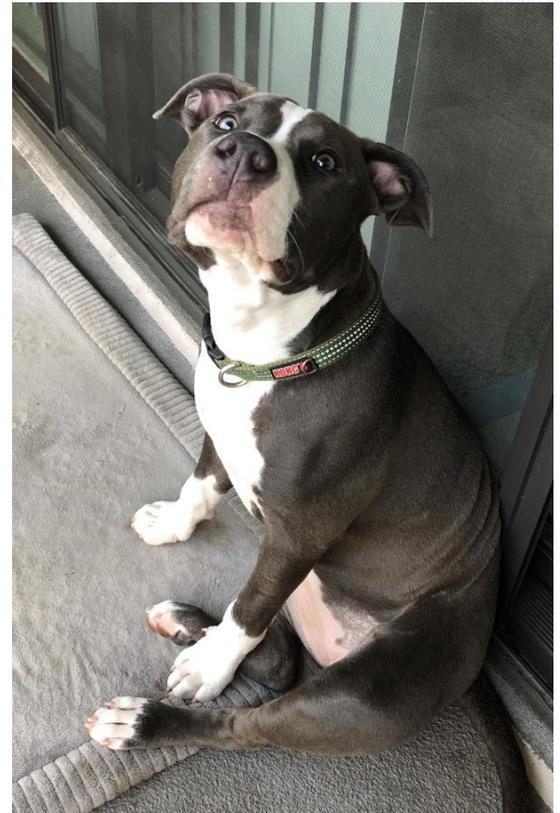
When my dog was very young, her eyes looked like a couple of blueberries, so she was named Blueberry or as I like to call her "Booboo." I don't really know how to begin describing how my beautiful and intelligent "little" dog has given my life a new purpose and direction. Because of her, I understand why dog lovers and animal lovers must be very special people to love and selflessly care for their pets. I'd be closer to death had I never taken her in because I was becoming a serious couch potato. She gets me outside and exercising or at least walking and meeting other dog owners.

Blueberry's probably the friendliest dog I've seen who loves people first! She is like the self-

appointed doggie mayor. I get a big kick just watching Booboo work her magic with every person within reach of her friendly tongue. I've never seen anyone turn her effervescent personality away!

I have been privileged to go and discover the many parks this doggie-loving city has designated for our four-legged family members. I've met many fun and dedicated doggie owners from all walks of life whom I may never have met had it not been for Blueberry, the Doggie Mayor!

Do you have a bird, reptile, dog, cat., etc. that you'd like to feature for the Pet of the Month? Send your story to scunn@yahoo.com. Please submit your story in first-person rather than your pet's voice.



Blueberry, the Doggie Mayor! Photo: Rudy Munoz

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THANK YOU Watergate Neighbors for Social Distancing and Keeping Each Other Safe.

THANK YOU Board of Directors, Committee Members and All the Volunteers Who Work Tirelessly to Keep Watergate Moving Forward

THANK YOU to Everyone That Works on the Landscaping. My Wife and I Enjoy It Every Day on Our Walks.

THANK YOU Food Truck Operators for Our Friday Break of the Monotony.

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BEWARE OF THE TOILET “BLUES”

By *Rashawnda Atkinson*

Most people want to find an easier way to clean their toilets. Bleach is a common household cleaner and the dissolvable toilet tank tablets have a no-scrubbing-required appeal. The consequences of using these products while cleaning your toilet can result in costly repairs, however.

“I’ve seen those things reduce the life of a toilet’s internal parts by half I suppose. Those toilet parts are made of plastic [or rubber] and the bleach just makes it weaker over time,” David Wilborn, owner of Metropolitan Water, warns. The company is a long-time Association contractor who aids the Association with water waste reduction due to running or leaking toilets.

The [North Carolina Consumers Council](#) supports Metropolitan Water’s perspective. To preserve the life of your toilet and its parts, they recommend you re-



Refrain from using bleach or toilet tank tablets to clean your toilet.

frain from using bleach and tablets in your toilet’s tank. The caustic nature of bleach causes damage to a toilet tank’s

weaker parts such as the seals and other components made with rubber. The Council also says that some types of these tablets can break apart rather than dissolve. These chunks can block the water from flowing through the toilet, decreasing the toilet’s efficiency until it dissolves. This can take several months and may have an unsightly appearance.

So what should you use instead? Put on your gloves, grab your toilet brush and some spray cleaner that can be used in the toilet as the NC Consumers Council recommends. A bit of white vinegar works as well according to an article published by [Huffington Post Canada](#).

Ditching the bleach and toilet tank tablets may prolong the life of your toilet and help you avoid the unexpected repair bill due to water leaks from the loo!

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| Sunday | Monday | Tuesday | Wednesday | Thursday | Friday | Saturday |
|---|---|--|--|--|------------------------|--|
| LOCATION KEY BL= Building Lobby; BP=Billiard and Ping-Pong Rooms; BR=Blue Room; CF1=Conference Room 1; CF2=Conference Room 2; CR=Card Room; FC=WAL Fitness Center; IP=Indoor Pool; LB=Library; LD= Loading Dock; LT=Lower Terrace; M=Market; MA=Multi-purpose Area; OP=Outdoor Pool; OT=Outdoor Tennis Courts; P=Playground; PG=Putting Green; PR=Party Room; RC=Racquet Club; TC=Teleconference; TL=Terrace Lounge; TS=Town Square; TV=TV Room; UT=Upper Terrace | | | | | | 1 |
| 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 |
| Pickleball 2 PM - RC Robotics Club - 3 PM - CF2 | Pilates - 10:30 AM - TL | Tai Chi - 8 AM - TL Covenants - 7PM - TC | Tone/Balance/Stretch 12 PM - TL Pickleball - 6 PM - RC Recreation - 5 PM - TC Infrastructure - 7 PM - TC | Tai Chi - 8 AM - TL Aqua Fitness- 7 PM - OP Pet - 7:30 PM - ZOOM VIRTUAL TOWN HALL FY 2021 Budget 7:30 PM - TC | Tai Chi - 9 AM - TL | Tai Chi - 8 AM - TL Yoga - 9 AM - CR Comic Book Club - 5 PM - CR |
| 9 | 10 | 11 | 12 | 13 | 14 | 15 |
| Pickleball 2 PM - RC Robotics Club - 3 PM - CF2 | Pilates - 10:30 AM - TL Lions Club - 6 PM - TV | Tai Chi - 8 AM - TL | Landscape - 11 AM - TC Tone/Balance/Stretch - 12 PM - TL Pickleball - 6 PM - RC PRC - 7 PM - TC | Tai Chi - 8 AM - TL Aqua Fitness- 7 PM - OP | Tai Chi - 9 AM - TL | Tai Chi - 8 AM - TL Yoga - 9 AM - CR Comic Book Club - 5 PM - CR |
| 16 | 17 | 18 | 19 | 20 | 21 | 22 |
| Pickleball 2 PM - RC Robotics Club - 3 PM - CF2 | Pilates - 10:30 AM - TL Budget - 7 PM - TC | Tai Chi - 8 AM - TL | Tai Chi - 9 AM - TL Tone/Balance/Stretch - 12 PM - TL Pickleball - 6 PM - RC | Tai Chi - 8 AM - TL Aqua Fitness- 7 PM - OP | Tai Chi - 9 AM - TL | Tai Chi - 8 AM - TL Yoga - 9 AM - CR Comic Book Club - 5 PM - CR |
| 23 | 24 | 25 | 26 | 27 | 28 | 29 |
| Pickleball 2 PM - RC Robotics Club - 3 PM - CF2 | Pilates - 10:30 AM - TL | Tai Chi - 8 AM - TL Board of Directors Meeting - 7:30 PM - TC | Tai Chi - 9 AM - TL Tone/Balance/Stretch - 12 PM - TL Pickleball - 6 PM - RC | Tai Chi - 8 AM - TL Aqua Fitness- 7 PM - OP | Tai Chi - 9 AM - TL | Tai Chi - 8 AM - TL Yoga - 9 AM - CR Comic Book Club - 5 PM - CR |
| 30 | 31 | | | | | |
| Pickleball 2 PM - RC Robotics Club - 3 PM - CF2 | Pilates - 10:30 AM - TL | | | | | |

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