

Wheel

June 2022, Vol. 48, Issue 6

Watergate at Landmark Unit Owners Association

WAL's Budget

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Too Cold
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Love and Mushrooms
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You're on Fire
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2022 - 2023 Board Officers

Susan Bouldin, *Treasurer*

Vivian Moran, *Secretary*

FUN TIMES

We really know how to throw a party, event or get-together here at WAL. Whether it's dining on the Lower Terrace, mingling with pets and pups or spending quality time building and flying kites (as shown in this photo), having a great and diverse social activity life is the worst kept secret about our community. And to be honest, we'd like to keep it that way. View our most recent activities recap on page 15.



Photo: Zohreh Khoshnamak

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KEY WATERGATE AT LANDMARK CONTACTS

Shuttle Bus Updates: Text "watergate" to: 844-612-2165

Resident Services Office: 703-370-7000

FirstService Residential: 703-385-1133

Activities Office: 703-370-7092

Metro Water: 703-461-3418

Gate Communications*: 703-370-2674

*You may call this number for after-hours emergencies.

Lobby Entrance Camera

Comcast - 971

Master Antenna - 3

WAL CCTV Channels

Comcast - 970

Master Antenna - 8

PRESIDENT'S UPDATE

By Phil Schrock, Board President

June is upon us and we're almost halfway through the year. How time flies! So let's take a pause, slow down and consider a couple of important days we celebrate in June: June 14 and June 19.

June 14 is Flag Day

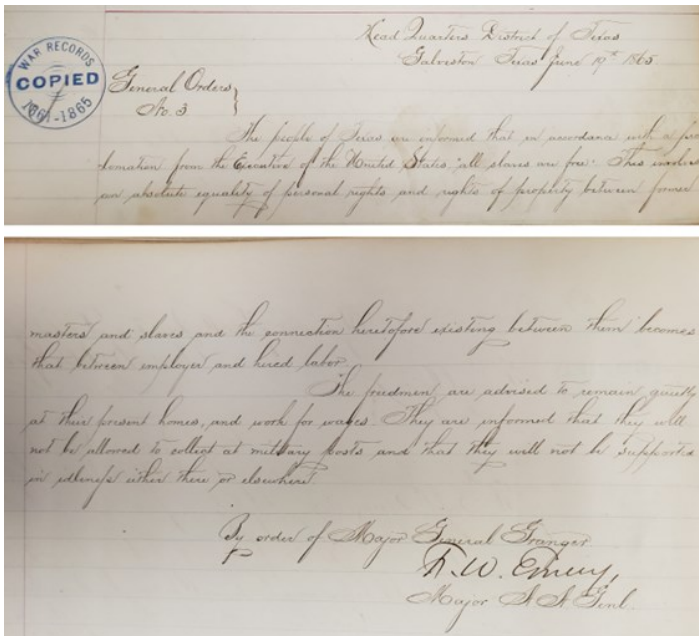
Although this Patriotic Holiday is not officially a federal holiday, it commemorates the official adoption of the US flag by the Second Continental Congress in 1777. The National Archives reminds us:

"On June 14, 1777, the Continental Congress adopted the Stars and Stripes as the official flag of the United States. Flag Day has been observed in various forms since the late 1800s, but it wasn't until 1949 when Congress permanently designated June 14th as Flag Day."

Watergate at Landmark proudly flies "Old Glory" at both our front and back gates.

June 19 is Juneteenth

In June of last year, Congress passed a bill and the president signed into law an act designating June 19 as Juneteenth National Independence Day as a federal holiday. National Archives articles again provide context for this important day:



General Order 3, shown above, informed the former enslaved people of Texas of their freedom. Photo: [National Archives](#)

"On June 19, 1865, two and a half years after President Abraham Lincoln's historic [Emancipation Proclamation](#),

U.S. Maj. Gen. Gordon Granger issued General Order No. 3, which informed the people of Texas that all enslaved people were now free. Granger commanded the Headquarters District of Texas, and his troops had arrived in Galveston the previous day."

Watergate's Board of Directors in June of last year also unanimously approved the inclusion of Juneteenth as a part of the employee benefits and directed Management to implement such.

FY2023 Budget Formulation

Among the numerous duties of the Board of Directors, first on the list is *"Prepare and adopt an annual budget, in which there shall be expressed the assessments of each unit owner for the common expenses."* (WAL Bylaws) This is not done in isolation. It's a collaborative process. Developing the budget involves our General Manager, Management Agent (FirstService), Budget Committee and the Board. Last month the Board and Budget Committee conducted the FY2022 mid-year review to assess our finances in terms of the current budget. This month the Budget Committee and Management will be fully engaged in preparing Watergate's FY2023 budget. In a recent Wheel update I noted that the FY2023's budget would be especially challenging, given the highest inflation in 40 years. This will be a tough year as we balance funding requirements and simultaneously strive to curb costs. Therefore, I've again asked Board member Bob Lee to write an article describing Watergate's budget process. Director Lee is Watergate's longest serving board member and a former vice president. He also has been a Budget Committee member for the past several years. I encourage you to read his timely article in this month's Wheel.

Why so many projects?

Some owners may be asking why we continue to spend money on so many projects if we're facing high inflation and rising costs. Expansion Joint Repairs, Balcony Restoration Project, Balcony HVAC Utility Closet Façade Project, Elevator Machinery Replacement, Gazebo Renovation, and the future Hallway Corridor Redecoration Project and Outdoor Courts Renovation Project all cost money – a lot of money! Can't we just defer them and do them later? We *could*. However, the Board is obligated to uphold its responsibilities and make decisions in the best interest of the Association. We are committed to repairing, maintaining and renovating our aging infrastructure to ensure a safe and secure place to live and maintain property value. At the same time we will continue to prioritize "required" vs. "nice to have" projects, and look for ways to improve efficiency and trim costs.

Watergate must maintain its enviable reputation as the best value condominium in Northern Virginia.

COLD SHOWERS

By Watergate at Landmark Management



Alert the Association if you have water temperature issues.
Photo: Pixabay

Imagine waking up to go to work or coming back after a long day. Hopping into the shower to get a jumpstart to your morning or to wash the day's troubles away, you turn on the shower only to find that the water feels like a snowy day in January. So you wait a few minutes, but nothing changes. At the risk of being late or out of frustration, you tough out one of the coldest showers you've had in a while and go on with your plans. But with one change. You make a call to Resident Services or send an email highlighting that there's an issue with your hot water.

This scenario's currently playing out for some of our residents. Management is aware of the inconvenience this is causing, and has taken measures to identify the root cause and employ a solution. But what's causing the problem?

The answer may be due to a faulty diverter cartridge in a unit's water system. However, since there is a common water supply system for our condos, units that have a defective or incorrectly-installed diverter cartridge will affect other units on the tier. Even if a unit has a new or working diverter cartridge, it can still be affected by another unit that has a bad cartridge.

To tackle the problem, diverter cartridges will be inspected for every unit on several tiers across multiple buildings with this issue. Defective diverter cartridges will be replaced on the spot and charges will be assessed to the unit. Notification will be sent to those affected tiers when the evaluations (and replacement if needed) are scheduled to occur.

If you notice there are issues with or no access to hot water in your unit, please contact the Management Office right away at 703-370-7000. Please be sure to provide your bldg. and unit number as well as your best contact information.

Best Wishes Becca!

Becca Spencer's last day as the Activities Director and Program Manager was Saturday, May 21. She will become a Custom Framing Manager in Northern Virginia.



"Although I'm returning to my artistic roots, I'll definitely miss working with the Committees and the event planning process...[WAL] is a fun place to work, yet it's the universe's way of reintroducing into my life a passionate part of me as a hands-on creative," she said.

When Becca began working here at the end of January 2020, there was no warning about the impact that COVID-19 had on her duties. Still, she navigated the Activities and Fitness programs through the most difficult parts of the pandemic, implementing an online reservation system for WAL's Racquet Club.

WAL appreciates Becca's contributions to our community and will announce when a new hire is onboarded. In the interim, Pro-FIT's Selin will staff the office.

~Rashawnda Daniels-Atkinson



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I THINK I SMELL SOMETHING

By Jene Lyons, Deputy General Manager and
Javier Ortiz, Chief of Patrol Services

Patrol Services occasionally gets complaints from a resident suffering from secondhand smoke infiltrating his home from a neighboring unit. This isn't an issue WAL residents experience alone. In fact, "an estimated 44 to 53 percent of multi-unit housing residents that do not allow smoking in their home, have experienced secondhand smoke infiltration in their home from elsewhere in or around their building," according to the American Lung Association's [official website](#).

Smoke and cooking odors can travel throughout a condominium's stairwells and hallways, vents and electrical outlets. Beyond the odor, there are serious health problems associated with secondhand smoke. In addition to cancer, secondhand smoke exposure can cause heart disease and stroke in adults who have never smoked, according to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention's Secondhand Smoke (SHS) Facts and ear infections, more frequent and severe asthma attacks, respiratory issues and a greater risk for sudden infant death syndrome (SIDS) for children exposed to such.

To minimize odors and effects in your unit or the chances of your cooking odors or smoking habit affecting others, please consider the following suggestions from Patrol Ser-



Many options exist for smoke and odor reduction or elimination.
Photo: Pixabay

vices Chief Javier Ortiz to help curtail the amount of smoke and smells coming from (or into) your unit.

Turn on Your Kitchen Exhaust Fan

It is important to turn on the kitchen exhaust fan, especially when preparing fragrant or spicy foods. You may also want to put white vinegar and water 1/10 in a spray bottle and just spritz the air. You can boil a 1/4 cup of vinegar with a quart of water in a pot while cooking fragrant foods.

Open the Windows and Balcony Doors

While you're going around cleaning or cooking in your unit, make sure to keep all the windows and balcony doors open. This way, fresh air can enter the home and help eliminate the unpleasant odors. Also make sure to remove all signs of cigarettes, like ashtrays and butts, so there isn't any way for the smell to linger.

Clean Behind Bathroom Vents

Here's a suggestion from a fellow owner. He said, "I was experiencing communal odors until I unscrewed my bathroom vents and cleaned off the dust and dirt retaining the odors behind them."

Buy Odor-Eliminating or Reducing Products

If you prefer options besides natural remedies, you can buy odor-eliminating products to combat the pesky smoke smell. There are sprays, gels, candles, air purifying bags, diffuser, wax melts and so much more. Keep an eye out for those that need to be plugged into the wall or a flame (e.g. candles). Check to see if any sprays or other options interfere with any health conditions.

Replace Light Fixtures

Believe it or not, cigarette smell can even take a toll on your light bulbs. It's a good idea to clean your light fixtures thoroughly. Ideally, you should replace them completely since heat attracts smoke residue and creates a coating around the bulb.

Use an Air Purifier

If nothing else seems to do the trick, you may need to enlist the help of a home air purifier. Air purifiers with activated carbon-based filters will remove all traces of smoke smell and other odors from the unit. It's recommended that you choose an air purifier that uses a carbon filter, as this may ensure the most effective odor elimination.

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THE BUDGET PROCESS

By Bob Lee, Board Member



Budgets provide guidance for spending, saving and managing the costs of running the Association. Photo: Pixabay

Each June, the process of developing a new fiscal year budget for the Association begins in earnest. This is a collaborative effort involving multiple players including WAL Management, the Budget Committee, the Board of Directors, WAL committees and Association staff.

The first formal step in the process is Management's preparation of a draft budget which must be completed by June 1. That draft document is then presented to the Budget Committee which begins a systematic analysis of each line item in the proposed budget. Typically, the Budget Committee Chair appoints "working groups" to conduct in-depth reviews of various categories of income and expenses, such as supplies, repairs and maintenance or utilities. Some of the numbers are relatively easy to determine. Others can be very challenging, such as utilities which are heavily influenced by factors no one can easily predict, including weather, volatile energy markets and unique circumstances such as the COVID pandemic. During this phase of the process, the Budget Committee may meet twice a week and working groups even more frequently.

Once the groups complete their assignments, their work product is scrutinized by the Budget Committee as a whole. This is a valuable exercise in that the perspectives and insights of all 11 current members are added to the

mix, usually validating the conclusions of the working groups, but occasionally refining and improving those forecasts.

When all the individual components of the budget have been reviewed and a relatively small number of problematic items resolved, the chair presents the proposed Operational Budget along with a five-year Capital Repair and Replacement Plan (CRRP) to the full committee to review and determine the specific budget plan and proposed unit assessment schedule to be recommended to the Board of Directors.

As the process nears an end, the Budget Committee recommends revisions to the new fiscal year's Schedule of Fees. These fees govern such facilities and activities as the Racquet Club, party rooms and gazebos, move-in and move-out charges and Handyman Services. All of this work is accomplished in little more than one month's time.

At its July meeting, the Board of Directors conducts a First Reading of the Budget and may make revisions to the document. A Town Hall meeting is then scheduled in early to mid-August to inform the community of the proposed new budget and elicit comments and suggestions from unit owners. At its August meeting, the Board of Directors formally adopts the Association's new Operational Budget, Reserve Plan and Fee Schedule, which take effect on October 1.

The creation of any budget is a difficult endeavor requiring the balancing of different, sometimes conflicting values, interests and priorities. The FY 2023 budget will be unusually challenging due to inflation and other economic and financial uncertainties, many of which we haven't experienced in decades. These factors will unavoidably affect budget deliberations and members of the Budget Committee, and eventually the Board, may be forced to make decisions they wish were not necessary, but which may, in fact, be required. As with any other community, WAL is not insulated from conditions impacting this country and the world.

I believe all of us can play a constructive role in helping to soften the impact of rapidly rising costs and, correspondingly, higher Association fees. As a community, we can defer less urgent wants and perceived needs, limit the number, scale and cost of discretionary projects and tamp down excessive expectations which, if indulged, will only serve to make matters worse.

Over the past decade, this Association has come a very long way in restoring solvency, paying down debt, generating surpluses and building unit owner equity while simultaneously completing a significant number of necessary infrastructure improvements. It would be unfortunate if these gains were stalled or reversed for a lack of discipline at the very moment it is most desperately needed.

ONLINE “TREASURES”

By Rashawnda Daniels-Atkinson

There's so much more to Watergate at Landmark's public website than reading the [Wheel](#) or [Weekly](#). Though this content is popular amongst the website's users, there's more to access from www.watergateatlandmark.com.

WAL News

The [News](#) section is the gateway that highlights communication avenues the Association uses.

[Alexandria West End Coalition](#)

Some updates about current and future developments that may impact the West End of Alexandria are posted here. Section is updated as news is shared or events pass.

[CCTV Online](#)

This abbreviated slide show of WAL's CCTV channel allows you to view and click through slides at your leisure. Events, meetings, the Move Schedule and some Policy Reminders are posted here. It's usually updated weekly.



[Watergate Tweets](#)

Our Twitter page is an unidirectional channel for communicating WAL-related activities and some relevant information from local, state and federal entities.

[Watergate at Landmark - A Great Place to Live](#)

WAL's Facebook page is also an unidirectional channel for sharing WAL-related content and some relevant information from local, state and federal entities. Some photos are shared on Facebook Stories and event pages are created here.



What Else is Available Online?

Save a trip to the Community Center and visit our website to download many of the forms used by the Association (e.g. Gazebo and Party Room Rentals, Resident Forum and Work Order Request Forms). More of these forms are becoming fillable so you can enter your information directly onto the form. From the homepage, scroll down to the **Help Me Find** section and click on the **Common Forms and Documents** button.

The Wheel Calendar is also on the homepage. Scroll down the page and view it online or to download it click on **Wheel Events Calendar**. It's updated monthly.

Some residents submit unsolicited reviews on contractors they've worked with to the **Contractor Referrals from Residents** page. Find it under the **Buy or Sell** tab.

There are so many things owners, residents and visitors can do via our online platforms. What information treasures can you find at www.watergateatlandmark.com? Scan the QR code on page 3 of this magazine to find out!

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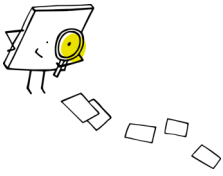
Attorney Gregory Wade is a Watergate at Landmark resident and makes home visits for estate planning and probate issues.

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WAL UPCOMING EVENTS



ONLINE SCAVENGER HUNT

Daily from Wednesday, June 1 - Thursday, June 9

Virtual (on Facebook Only)
Clue Revealed at 9 a.m. Each Day

The Wheel Magazine turns 46 years young this month! To celebrate, the Communications Committee is hosting an online scavenger hunt on its Facebook page. For nine days, a clue will be posted along with a photo. Posts will be permitted under the clue for approx. 24 hours (the final clue will be until 7 p.m. on June 9). **Facebook accounts are required to post a response. Participants who liked AND follow the page will get a bonus entry.** The winner will be randomly selected from eligible entries after the Committee's June meeting for a special Watergate prize!

LUCY BURNS MUSEUM SHUTTLE TRIP

Thursday, June 2

Pickup Starts at 9:15 a.m.

Sold Out

Immerse yourself in the history of women's suffrage with the A&E Committee. Then, buy your lunch in Occoquan.



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WATERGATE BOOK CLUB

Thursday, June 2

Conference Room 2 and Virtual • 7:30 p.m.
Qualityland by Marc-Uwe Kling

Welcome to Qualityland—the best place on earth! Life there is built around algorithms, social rankings and whatever TheShop delivers to your doorstep. However, one of its citizens discovers how imperfect this “utopian” society may be. Email dpmullens@comcast.net for details.

FRENCH OPEN VIEWING PARTY

Sunday, June 5

Terrace Lounge • 9 a.m.



Join the Recreation Committee as they watch the men's final of the French Open. Breakfast pastries and drinks will be available. RSVP with the Activities Office.

END OF SCHOOL CELEBRATION

Friday, June 10

Multipurpose Court • 4 – 7 p.m.

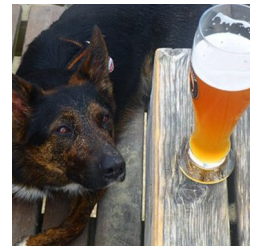
Celebrate the end of another school year with sweet treats, water games and music outdoors. Donations are Requested and Encouraged. Sponsored by the Youth Committee.

YAPPY HAPPY HOUR

Friday, June 10

Upper Terrace • 7 p.m. • FREE

Hang out with your pet or love on one at this pet-friendly social sponsored by the Pet Committee!



OLD TOWN ALEXANDRIA SHUTTLE TRIP

Thursday, June 16

Pickup Starts at 10:15 a.m. • Shuttle: \$12

Residents will be dropped off at the Torpedo Factory. Plan to buy your lunch on your own at one of Old Town's restaurants. A&E Committee sponsors this event.

WAL UPCOMING EVENTS

SHREDDING SCHEDULE

10 – 11 a.m.	Bldg. 4
11 a.m. – Noon	Bldg. 3
Noon – 1 p.m.	Bldg. 2
1 – 2 p.m.	Bldg. 1

SHRED-IT EVENT

Saturday, June 18
Bldg. Loading Dock
10 a.m. - 2 p.m.

The Association has arranged for *Shred-It* to come onsite. A list of accepted items can be found at Resident Services and at www.watgateatlandmark.com.

KENILWORTH GARDENS SHUTTLE TRIP

Thursday, July 7
Pick Up starts at 9:15 a.m. • Ticket: \$12

The beautiful flora and fauna transports you to a natural paradise in the nation's capital with the A&E Committee! Lunch will be on your own at The Shoppes at Foxchase.

PICKLEBALL TOURNAMENT

Saturday, June 25
Racquet Club • 3 - 7 p.m. • WAL Residents Only

Please email terrerschlossberg@comcast.net to register.

SIP & LISTEN FEAT. SURF JAGUARS

Saturday, July 30
Terrace Lounge • 7 p.m. Tickets: \$15

Don't miss the Social Committee's final summer concert! The Surf Jaguars band plays a mix of Yacht rock, Surf and Rockabilly and classic tunes. Doors open at 6:30 p.m. All ticket sales are final; tips are excluded from the price.

WIMBLEDON VIEWING PARTY

Sunday, July 10
Terrace Lounge • 9 a.m.

Watch the men's final of Wimbledon with the Recreation Committee and enjoy some breakfast pastries and drinks. RSVP with the Activities Office.

**SAVE
the
DATE**

REACH AT THE KENNEDY CENTER SHUTTLE TRIP

Thursday, July 21
Pickup Begins at 9:15 a.m. • Ticket: \$12

REACH's artistic green spaces seek to draw visitors into the creative process. Lunch in Shirlington on your own.

ROB BLITZER'S Watergate Sales Report

Information provided by MRIS and represents sales by all REALTORS.

ST#	FLOOR	MODEL	BR/FB/HB	SGFT	DATE SOLD	SOLD PRICE	GARAGE
307	3rd	A	1/1/0	863	4/29/22	\$210,000	No
203	12th	A	1/1/0	863	5/17/22	\$230,000	No
203	10th	C	1/1/0	986	4/27/22	\$235,000	No
307	18th	E	2/2/0	1,098	4/26/22	\$329,500	Yes
307	12th	F	2/1/1	1,211	5/10/22	\$280,000	Yes
205	15th	G	2/2/0	1,309	5/3/22	\$345,000	No
309	7th	H	2/2/0	1,365	5/19/22	\$385,000	Yes
309	15th	J	3/2/0	1,621	4/28/22	\$390,000	No



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SPECIAL SHUTTLE TRIP



MANSION ON O STREET SHUTTLE TRIP

Thursday, August 4
Pickup Time TBD
Shuttle: \$12 plus Tour: \$30

Join your A&E Committee for this highly-anticipated trip to The Mansion on O Street Museum, which has over 100 rooms! Search for secret doors (there are 80), find your way through themed rooms and covert passages to an unknown world. Walk in the footsteps of presidents, freedom fighters, historians, authors, artists, musicians, athletes, scholars and more. Leaf through manuscripts, touch sculptures, hear rare studio cuts and journey through an array of styles and exhibits. The mansion's exhibits embrace life from every culture, reflected in its wide-ranging collection that includes Bob Dylan's signed guitar from the Rock and Roll Hall of Fame, Prince's Purple Rain jacket, an original letter written by John Lennon and a Miss USA crown.

This venue was named the Coolest Place in DC by *booking.com*, Top 5 Historic Venues to Explore by *Smithsonian Magazine* and Top 7 Hotels in DC by *Forbes*. *Tickets will be reserved upon payment in full; all ticket sales are final.*

PRO-FIT INFORMATION

Spring Group Exercise Schedule

Session Ends on June 30, 2022!

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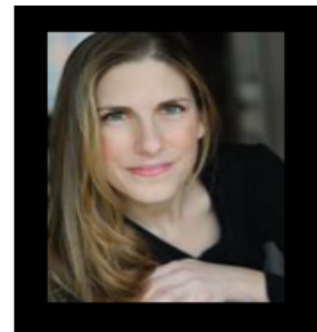
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LOVE STORY FEATURED ON PBS

By Rashawnda Daniels-Atkinson

Would you be brave enough to share how you met your “perfect” match with strangers? That’s what WAL Resident Diane Parker Mullen did as she performed on *Stories from the Stage*, a nationally-syndicated storytelling show on PBS. Residents may know her from the WAL Book Club, Scrapbooking or Knit & Stitch. Some may know her husband, Phil, who’s an avid chess player and on a few Committees. Read on to find out how her love story landed her an appearance on the show.

How did you get onto the show?

I found out about *Stories from the Stage* from my storytelling mentor/friend. In fact, she’d been on the phone with the show’s producer and found out that they needed a third love story for their “Match Made” episode. She sent them a video of me telling “the mushroom” story for another show. They sent us both an email saying they were interested. After I submitted a few recordings, they asked me to tape the story in Boston [in-studio].

When was this episode shot?

We filmed on Valentine’s Day this year. Because of the pandemic, my episode didn’t have a live audience, so it was a challenge to generate my own energy and excitement throughout the story.

Your story begins with living by a new set of “rules.” Describe what that was like.

When I started dating again, my options were bars, match.com and singles dances. I made a rule that I had to do something social every weekend. I also became active with an organization called Single Volunteers. Even if I didn’t meet someone, I was contributing to my community by doing things like working on park trails, sorting out kale and potatoes for distribution to local food banks and hot meal programs, and celebrat-

ing the 4th of July together at the mall. Being in my 50s at the time, I had limited opportunities to meet people in my age group. Most men my age were looking for a match with [younger women]. It was very humiliating at times, as well as ego deflating.



Stories from the Stage posted Diane’s mushroom love story on YouTube.

Photo: Pixabay

Did you have any other “rules?”

My dating “rule” was basically if I liked the guy, I went out with him. “The Rules” were all the rage in the mid 90’s. [Popular] authors [at the time] were on talk shows and women shared their success stories. I realized early on that there may be some merit in following them, but I eventually felt they were too contrived and manipulative...I never really took them to heart...I was too romantic to be able to stick to any rules—especially the one about not calling him or returning his phone calls. I thought that was just plain rude and I knew that he probably wouldn’t call back. I know I wouldn’t.

After you accepted Phil’s date invitation, he begins to tell you the mushroom story. How do you see that moment now?

When we were talking during dinner, I was interested in his experiences in the service and in law enforcement.

He was embarrassed that he got the Purple Heart when he was wounded in Viet Nam. He said it was just a scratch (he still has shrapnel close to his left eye). Downplaying the risks of being a cop, he spoke mainly about the jokes his fellow policemen played on each other, like harvesting the dots from paper punches and tucking them in another cop’s folded up umbrella, waiting for a rainy day when the “confetti” would be released in restaurants, the subway, or in the office. When he so convincingly told his sad “mushroom story,” it was my introduction to “cop” humor. I get to live with [that] kind of humor although I still fall for one [of his jokes] every once in a while.

Are you glad that you “broke the rules” to find your match?

I am SO glad I didn’t obey the rules...I believe the natural way is the best: jump back in and, if you fall, hopefully someone will be there to catch you. Phil was the first guy I dated after I read the book, so maybe NOT following “The Rules” was the secret to capturing his heart.

What people should get out of this story is...

Never give up on anything—life, love, your dreams...you don’t always get what you expect. I wanted to be onstage as a professional actress and ended up as a professional storyteller sharing *my* stories, without a script, as myself, hoping that my stories connect with even one person.

What’s your favorite thing about storytelling?

I love when the audience can relate to my story and it triggers memories of their own. And I relish their laughter. We all have stories to tell, and they should be shared.

Are there any upcoming events?

I’m now working on a one woman show to present at community centers and senior living communities.

To hear Diane tell the mushroom story, visit <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=VZP26hvyRTg&t=1029s>.

PLAYING ON THE TUNDRA

By Karen Hamlin, WAL Resident



Finland's Lapland is a beautiful place to explore. Photo: Pixabay

The snow beneath us is like none I've ever seen: a frozen rippled ocean with thick white waves meet a tangerine sky. Finland leaves me in awe.

There is a purity not often experienced in urban centers. Helsinki itself is a fairly small city of only 560,000 inhabitants with a pristine quality that we will experience throughout the trip in Finland.

We check into The Kämp, the only five star hotel in town with a distinctive Finnish elegance and an immense candle-lit lobby. Lit with real candles, it casts a golden glow over the 19th century lobby.

Close to the hotel is La Bodega and the famous Arctic Ice Bar, which is the size of a small meat locker and holds a maximum of eight people. Any more and the ice would start to melt. Cloaked in an insulated cape, we are led into an antechamber. Once that door is closed, another opens into the Ice Bar. I walk into a mysterious blue fog giving the bar a surrealistic glow. Once inside, the bar is actually cozy, although a bit crowded. As one patron leaves, another is given access. The bartender serves ice-cold Finlandia drinks with more flavors than an ice cream shop. The drinks create a warmth that seeps through me making temperature a non-issue.

The Feast

A Reindeer Feast at Hullu Poron Kammi is the real thing. I found reindeer meat to be quite tasty, not too gamey and included in every dish. At this candle-lit feast, we sit at a communal long rough wooden table. Reindeer skins and their heads decorate the walls. I fill up on reindeer roast, striped reindeer fry, reindeer sausage, pork ribs, salmon and three other richly reindeer stewed dishes.

At the next table, a party of rugged, bearded men burst into Finnish folk songs. Clinking mugs of vodka, they sing with gusto creating a renewed energy in the room. Their

happy spirits spread and soon we are all singing along (the melody anyway because the words are Finnish).

The man next to me leans over and says in a matter of fact tone, "You're on fire." Thinking he is paying me a compliment, I blush and reply demurely, "Am I?" "Really, I'm serious; you're on fire," he repeats.

My hood caught fire from the candle burning behind me. Slapping my back and head with their bare hands, the two men sitting beside me put out the flames. How romantic.

Snowmobiling

There is a certain comfort in being enclosed in a personal cocoon, warm, dry, and almost indistinguishable from fellow travelers. Because this is a dry cold, -55°F really doesn't feel so bad.

In my Michelin man snowsuit, I take off on my snowmobile with a jerk but begin to relax as I enjoy the ride floating over the soft white snow, hearing the landscape crunch. I'm in my own small world, cocooned in my helmet and face shield, I find myself humming, then singing aloud: old camp songs and long-forgotten Pat Boone tunes. Lapland can have the strangest effect on you.



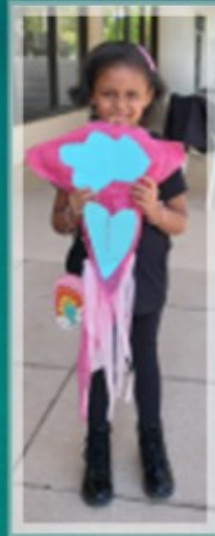
Snowmobiling in Finland while snowing. Photo: Karen Hamlin

The snowmobile I'm following disappears in a cloud of snow. Looking around, there is no sky and no earth, just snow. An eerie feeling enshrouds me like I am suspended in a world of total whiteness. With no direction, I grip the handles and increase my speed: 50, 60, 70, 80 miles per hour and I still don't catch up. Finally, I see a glimmer of a red reflector ahead and I race towards it. Heart pounding, I find our guide.

"Just another great day," he yawns as he sets out to find his lost soldiers.

*Comments or questions? Email travelingkh@gmail.com.
Karen is an award-winning journalist living at Watergate.*

From Spring Breaks...



Our residents enjoyed a few live concerts, ate good food, bonded over our love for pets and made or flew awesome kites this spring. However, it's time to bid spring farewell and welcome the summertime fun and weather!

Photos: Bridget Jaspart,
Zohreh Khoshnamak, and Carolyn Winters

Design: Rashawnda Daniels-Atkinson

... To Summer Vibes!



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Bea is the first resident at
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OVER THE GARDEN GATE

By Bob Lee, Landscape Committee Liaison

With the arrival of warm weather, it's timely to consider the attention and care given to our landscape over the past four decades. Much credit is owed to those who have been good stewards of our grounds since the inception of this community. However, even before the first resident moved into Watergate, the ground-work for our unique and exceptional landscape had already been established.

The consultant responsible for implementing Watergate's original landscape design was Mark Avon. Today, Mark operates a successful construction company responsible for many recent improvements at WAL, including the retaining wall in the Pet Area near Building 2. Mark's company will replace the retaining wall leading to the B1 and B2 level garages of Buildings 3 and 4 in the very near future.

Following is an article authored by Carl R. Hahn and published in The Washington Star on August 27, 1976. Sadly, some of the trees and shrubs referenced in the article have been lost over the years. But there are several that still thrive, including a weeping Blue Atlas cedar near the putting green. Note that it was estimated to be 50 years-old when it was installed at WAL 46 years ago. It has aged remarkably well.

Condos Can Have Class, Too!

It's always been refreshing to see rare or unusual plants used in Washington area gardens. What is really surprising is seeing such plants used in landscaping large apartment or condominium projects. The plants used at such buildings are typically an uninspired collection of a few shade trees, pines and a blah sprinkling of forsythias and arborvitae.

The Watergate at Landmark, a new condominium project in Alexandria, has

incorporated into its landscaping a collection of dwarf and low-growing conifers, some of which are quite old and rare. The plants are more typical of what one might see at the National Arboretum's Gotelli Collection of dwarf conifers than on grounds of a condominium.

Credit for finding and bringing in these unusual plants goes to Mark Avon, landscape consultant for West Alexandria Properties, the developer of Watergate at Landmark. Avon, who is directing the landscaping at the 37-acre complex, found the plants at a nursery near Philadelphia. He was looking for plants that would give the complex a distinctive appearance.



This Blue Atlas cedar is one of WAL's original natural beauties.
Photo: Rashawnda Daniels-Atkinson

Included in the group of unusual conifers are two weeping blue atlas cedars (*Cedrus atlantica* "Glauca Pendula"). Each tree is about 14 feet tall and Avon estimates their ages to be about 50 years.

Many gardeners are familiar with the Blue Atlas cedar, but the weeping form with its bluish white foliage is rarely seen outside of botanical gardens and a few private collections.

Another Avon introduction into the landscape is the weeping Norway spruce (*Picea abies* 'Pendula'), a form with pendulous branches.

In contrast to the drooping habit of the weeping Norway spruce are three specimens of bird's nest spruce. These, too, are variants of the Norway spruce. Bird's nest spruces are shrub-like. They form a flat, dense shrub that is more broad than tall. At first glance, one never guesses that the weeping spruce and the bird's nest spruce are variants of the same species.

The landscape planting also includes two odd conifers that local nurseries often stock, the weeping white pine and Sargent's weeping hemlock. H.G. Hillier, one of the world's most respected authorities on dwarf conifers, says of this hemlock, "The most beautiful variety of Canadian hemlock. It forms a series of arching domes with the strongest growths weeping to the ground and becoming prostrate."

One of Avon's personal favorites is a plant of *Juniperus rigida*, the needle juniper or stiff-leaved juniper. Though not a dwarf conifer, it is a tree that is rare in cultivation. It has a naturally weeping habit that from a distance, Avon says, "gives the effect of Spanish moss."

The landscape consultant also points with pride to another rare conifer with the unwieldy title of *Chamaecyparis obtusa* "Tetragona Aurea." This is a beautiful mutant of a Japanese species. Its inner foliage is cream colored, deepening to old gold on the outer branches. The new growth is bronze.

The unusual conifers are used as focal points in the landscape. Avon is pleased with the effect they produce.

The project superintendent had strong doubts, though. The day the plants arrived, he told Avon that the planting crew should be cautioned about accepting "funny-looking, crooked trees."

H.A.W.K.E.Y.E.

By Alex Davila, Bldg. 1 Resident



Hawkeye is a happy-go-lucky cat who likes to play in water wherever it can be found!

After I moved to WAL, I wanted to have a pet. My initial preference was to adopt a dog. I didn't just want a dog, I wanted a big dog, like a Boxer. After thoroughly reviewing my options, I decided a cat would be more practical for my lifestyle at the time. So, I decided to get a Bengal cat and I adopted Hawkeye from a breeder in Maryland.

I named him Hawkeye after the character from the TV show M.A.S.H., since I grew up watching the show with my dad, who is a Korean war veteran. He was about 2 years old at the time and he is now 17.

Hawkeye is a great happy-go-lucky guy with an assertive personality. Like many cats he's shy at first, but his need for attention quickly takes over. He's very active, vocal and likes to play with water wherever he can find it; water bowl, kitchen or bathroom. Like me, he's a creature of habit and makes sure I'm up on time, by any means necessary, so I can serve him wet food in the morning.

Have a pet (dog, cat, lizard, bird, etc.) you want to feature as the Pet of the Month in the Wheel? Send your story to FeaturedPet@watergateatlandmark.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. Please be sure stories submitted are written from your perspective and not your pet's. Looking forward to reading about your precious pet!

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JUNE 2022 EVENTS

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
			1	2	3	4
			Wheel Magazine's 47th Birthday Facebook Scavenger Hunt Begins - 10 AM - VI Tai Chi - 9 AM - TL Tone/Balance/Stretch 12:15 PM - TL Bridge - 2 PM - CR Recreation - 5 PM - VI/CF1 Youth - 6 PM - VI Infrastructure - 7 PM - VI	Tai Chi - 8 AM - TL Facebook Scavenger Hunt Clue #2 - 9 AM - VI Lucy Burns Museum Shuttle Trip - 9:15 AM Pick Up Watergate Book Club - 7:30 PM - CF2/VI Budget FY 2023 Kick-Off - 7 PM - VI Pet - 7:30 PM - CF1/VI	Facebook Scaven- ger Hunt Clue #3 - 9 AM - VI Tai Chi - 9 AM - TL Knit and Stitch - 10 AM - CF2	Tai Chi - 8 AM - TL Facebook Scaven- ger Hunt Clue #4 - 9 AM - VI Yoga - 9 AM - CR Introduction To Pickleball - 12 PM - RC Scrapbook Club - 2 PM - VI Robotics Club - 3 PM - CF1
5	6	7	8	9	10	11
Facebook Scavenger Hunt - Clue #5 - 9 AM - VI Wimbledon Viewing Party - 9 AM - TL	Pilates - 10:30 AM - TL Facebook Scavenger Hunt - Clue #6 - 9 AM - VI Budget - 7PM - VI	Tai Chi - 8 AM - TL Facebook Scavenger Clue #7 - 9 AM - VI Mahjong - 11 AM - CR Seniors - 2 PM - TL/VI A&E - 5 PM - CF2 Covenants - 7PM - VI	Facebook Scavenger Clue #8 - 9 AM - VI Tai Chi - 9 AM - TL Landscape -11 AM - CF2 Tone/Balance/Stretch - 12:15 PM - TL Bridge - 2 PM - CR PRC - 7 PM - VI	Tai Chi - 8 AM - TL Facebook Scavenger Clue #9 - 9 AM - VI Budget - 7PM - VI Communications - 7:30 PM - VI via Microsoft Teams	Tai Chi - 9 AM - TL Knit and Stitch - 10 AM - CF2 End of School Year Celebration - 7 PM - MC Yappy Happy Hour - 7 PM - UT	Tai Chi - 8 AM - TL Yoga - 9 AM - CR Introduction To Pickleball - 12 PM - RC Scrapbook Club - 2 PM - VI Robotics Club - 3 PM - CF1
12	13	14	15	16	17	18
	Pilates - 10:30 AM - TL Budget - 7PM - VI Outdoor Pool Weekday Openings start at 10 AM Monday - Friday (Federal Holidays Outdoor Pool Open- ings are 9 AM)	Tai Chi - 8 AM - TL Mahjong - 11 AM - CR Social - 6 PM - CF2	Tai Chi - 9 AM - TL Tone/Balance/Stretch - 12:15 PM - TL Bridge - 2 PM - CR	Tai Chi - 8 AM - TL Old Town Alexandria Shuttle Trip - 10:15 AM Pick Up Budget - 7PM - VI	Tai Chi - 9 AM - TL Knit and Stitch - 10 AM - CF2	Tai Chi - 8 AM - TL Yoga - 9 AM - CR Community Shred Event - LD Bldg. 4 - 10 AM Bldg. 3 - 11 AM Bldg. 2 - Noon Bldg. 1 - 1 PM Scrapbook Club - 2 PM - VI Robotics Club - 3 PM - CF1
19	20	21	22	23	24	25
	Pilates - 10:30 AM - TL Budget - 7PM - VI	Tai Chi - 8 AM - TL Mahjong - 11 AM - CR	Tai Chi - 9 AM - TL Tone/Balance/Stretch - 12:15 PM - TL Bridge - 2 PM - CR	Tai Chi - 8 AM - TL Budget - 7PM - VI	Tai Chi - 9 AM - TL Knit and Stitch - 10 AM - CF2	Tai Chi - 8 AM - TL Yoga - 9 AM - CR Scrapbook Club - 2 PM - VI Pickleball Tournament - 3 PM - RC Robotics Club - 3 PM - CF1
26	27	28	29	30		
	Pilates - 10:30 AM - TL	Tai Chi - 8 AM - TL Mahjong - 11 AM - CR Board of Directors Meeting - 7:30 PM - TL/VI	Tai Chi - 9 AM - TL Tone/Balance/Stretch - 12:15 PM - TL Bridge - 2 PM - CR	Tai Chi - 8 AM - TL		

LOCATION KEY

BL=Building Lobby; BP=Billiard & Ping-Pong Rooms; BR=Blue Room; CF1=Conference Room 1; CF2=Conference Room 2; CR=Card Room; FC=WAL Fitness Center; GZ=Gazebos; IP=Indoor Pool; LB=Library; LD= Loading Dock; LT=Lower Terrace; M=Market; MA=Multi-purpose Area; ME=Meadow; OP=Outdoor Pool; OT=Outdoor Tennis Courts; P=Playground; PG=Putting Green; PR=Party Room; RC=Racquet Club; TL=Terrace Lounge; TS=Town Square; TV=TV Room; UT=Upper Terrace; VI=Virtual

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