



# The FRONT PORCH

COMMUNITY NEWSLETTER

WINTER 2017

## Will it be Covington Elementary, Harper Elementary, or ?

By Michelle Wilson

On Jan. 30, the Naming Committee of the Prince William County School Board solicited suggestions from the public for possible names of the "Potomac Shores" Elementary School. This meeting was held at Potomac High School and over 30 people presented their ideas for names of the school. Most nominations were for two community leaders: Betty Covington and LTC (Ret) John Harper, Jr. No one spoke in favor of naming the school Potomac Shores Elementary but residents may still submit suggestions until Feb. 15 by email to: [planning@pwcs.edu](mailto:planning@pwcs.edu), or in person at the school board meeting that day.

Betty Covington has over 50 years of experience in the Prince William County

School system. She started her career as a teacher at Dumfries Elementary School and then moved into administration positions--most notably principal at Kilby Elementary and Dumfries Elementary. She then served four terms on the Prince William County School Board until 2016. Many of her supporters spoke of her being a "teachers' teacher" principal.

LTC (ret.) John Harper, Jr. lives in Southbridge and is a highly-decorated Army Vietnam veteran. After his military service, Harper was employed as the director/administrator of the Dale City Sanitary District and Recreation Center. He was the first African American elected to the Prince William Coun-

ty School Board in 1995 and was appointed by Governors Mark Warner and Tim Kaine to the VA War Memorial Committee. Harper has also held various leadership positions in the local chapter of Alpha Phi Alpha Fraternity, Inc.

The Naming Committee made a recommendation to the Board on Feb. 1 of one of these two names or one from suggestions submitted on-line. The Board will make a final decision on Feb. 15 at a regularly scheduled school board meeting at the Edward L. Kelly Leadership Center, 14715 Bristow Rd., Manassas, VA 20112, starting at 7pm. Construction of the school is reportedly on schedule and is scheduled to open in the Fall for the 2017-18 school year.



Out with the old...



...in with the new

*In the blink of an eye, the old greeting house on Potomac River Boulevard was demolished and replaced by a new greeting house in The Crossing. Two new houses will be built where the old greeting house was located.*

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## Calendar of Events:

- February 21 The Book Hens meet at 6:15 pm at the Social Barn Kitchen to discuss **The Pecan Man** by Cassie Dandridge and **Lost and Found** by Brooke Davis
- February 21 New Resident Orientation at 7 pm at the Social Barn.
- February 25 Mardi Gras Party at the Tidewater Grill from 5 – 8 pm. New Orleans themed menu. Free King Cake provided by the Social Committee. Prizes for best mask; free bead give away.
- March 4 Parent/Child Art Workshop from 10 am – 12 pm in the Social Barn Kitchen. Contact Kelly Whitzel at 703 640-3967 for further information.
- March 8 Communications Committee Meeting at 6 pm at the Social Barn.
- March 9 Ladies Who Lunch meet at 11:45 am, Tidewater Grill.
- March 14 Homeowners' Construction Update meeting at 6 pm in the cafeteria of St. John Paul the Great. A guest speaker will discuss Neighborhood Watch Programs.
- March 14 New Resident Orientation at 7 pm at the Social Barn.
- March 15 HOA Board of Director's meeting at 2 pm at the Social Barn.
- March 17 St. Patrick's Day celebration at the Tidewater Grill from 6-9pm with live music.
- March 17 St. Patrick's Day Scramble at 11am. Shotgun start. Sign up/pay through the golf club.
- March 18 Cooking Class from 6 – 9 pm in the Social Barn Kitchen. Contact Kelly Whitzel at 703 640-3967 for further information.
- March 21 Social Committee meets at 6 pm at the Social Barn.
- March 25 Family Karaoke Night and Potluck Dinner at the Social Barn; starting time to be determined.
- April 5 Nationals/Orioles Home Opening Party at the Tidewater Grill; starting time to be determined (tentative approval needed from Tidewater Grill).
- April 7 Wine and Paint Party at the Social Barn. Contact Kelly Whitzel at 703 640-3967 for further information.
- April 10-14 Art Camp at the Shores Kids Club. Contact Kelly Whitzel at 703 640-3967 for further information.
- April 12 Communications Committee Meeting at 6 pm at the Social Barn.
- April 13 Ladies Who Lunch meet at 11:45 am, Tidewater Grill.
- April 16 Easter Sunday Hunt and Brunch from 10am-2pm. Easter Egg Hunt begins at 11am. Make reservations with the Tidewater Grill.
- April 16 Easter Egg Roll and arts and crafts event at the Shores Club from 2-4pm.
- April 18 Social Committee meets at 6 pm at the Social Barn.
- April 18 New Resident Orientation at 7 pm at the Social Barn.
- April 18 Tax Day at Tidewater Grill.
- April 22 Cooking Class at the Social Barn Kitchen. Contact Kelly Whitzel at 703 640-3967 for further information.
- April 25 The Book Hens meet at 6:15 pm at the Social Barn to discuss **The Nest** by Cynthia D'Apriz Sweeney.
- May 6 Kentucky Derby Party at The Tidewater Grill. This event is tentative.
- May 7 Brunch Cooking Class at the Social Barn Kitchen. Contact Kelly Whitzel at 703 640-3967 for further information.
- May 11 Ladies Who Lunch meet at 11:45 am, Tidewater Grill.
- May 14 Mother's Day Sunday Brunch from 10am-2pm. Make reservations with the Tidewater Grill.



*Congratulations to Bill and Peggy James of 17213 Flatstick Court for winning the Holiday Decorating Contest.*

## New Resident Orientation Provides Information about Entire Community

Both new and old residents are invited to attend an Orientation Meeting to help become better acclimated to our community. These meetings are held every month and provide information about our schools (now and in the future), public utilities, police and fire protection, how to access our community website, rules for using the Social Barn, Fitness Barn, and Pool, how to get approval for exterior home improvement, how to get involved in various social activities, and more. Information is not just about Potomac Shores but also about Dumfries and Prince William County.

Gary Hopkins of Silver Arrow Drive hosts these informative sessions; he has been a Potomac Shores resident since Dec. 2014. "One of my new neighbors suggested the idea to me and I felt it was important for new residents to feel welcomed. I hope all who attend learn something new and feel as lucky as I do to live in this community," said Gary.

Both new and old residents are invited to attend. Reservations are not necessary but are encouraged by contacting Dianne Skinner at: [dskinner@cmc-management.com](mailto:dskinner@cmc-management.com). The next Orientation Sessions are planned for Feb. 21, Mar. 14, and Apr. 18 at 7 pm at the Social Barn.

## The Front Porch Community Newsletter

**The Front Porch** is a quarterly newsletter prepared by the Resident members of the Communications Committee: Kerri Pagel, Chairperson; Tiffany Alm, Jennifer Brande, Mark Chin, Melissa Hopkins, Alan Knapp, Michelle Wilson, and Dianne Skinner, General Manager.

Publication dates are February 15, May 15, August 15, and November 15. News articles, opinion pieces, and photos for possible publication are due no later than the first day of the month of publication and should be mailed to: [communicationspotomacshores@gmail.com](mailto:communicationspotomacshores@gmail.com)

The Potomac Shores' Residential Association, Inc. Board of Directors will meet on March 15 at 2 pm in The Social Barn

# A Busy Holiday Season at the Social Barn

By Melissa Hopkins

Although the Holidays may seem like a distant memory, it was only six weeks ago that The Social Barn was a very busy place providing the perfect location for residents to get together and celebrate the season. Dianne Skinner, Community Manager, was responsible for decorating the Social Barn and chose beautiful silver and white reindeer, sleighs, pictures, and other decorative items. She did a terrific job and we are lucky that she has such good taste!

The fun started on Thanksgiving Day with a pot luck dinner organized by Rob-in Legg of Sea Skiff Way. Many families participated and shared in the abundance of food and fellowship.

The next big event was on Dec. 4 when several residents who have home based businesses set up booths to sell their merchandise. Items for sale included Lularoe clothing, TraciLynn jewelry, Scentsy candles, Pampered Chef kitchen cookware and gadgets, and monogrammed tote bags. This event was organized by Shon Lyublanovits of Conqueror Court.

One of the most popular events held over the holidays was for the kids and called "Icicles in Wonderland." This event was held on Dec. 10 and started at 11 am. Kids decorated sugar cookie

trees and ornament balls with different colored icings, sugar sprinkles and jim-mies. Next, the kids could cut out paper snowflakes, color them, and decorate them with glitter. However, the highlight of the day was a visit from Santa Claus who posed with the kids for pictures and left with the letters the kids had written to him about the gifts they hoped to receive. Gary Hopkins of Silver Arrow Drive and Barbara Speller of Takeaway Lane were the Social Committee members who executed this wonderful event.

The next day, Dec. 11, was a Cookie Swap organized by Kelly Whitzel, Activities Director. About ten bakers participated by swapping homemade cookies with each other.

The week before Christmas was the "Enchanted Winter Masquerade Ball." This was an 'adults only' event where everyone wore festive formal, cocktail attire and some people even wore masques. The lobby of the Social Barn, i.e. the big room closest to the Fitness Barn, was transformed into a dance floor and a professional DJ played everyone's favorite dance tunes. This event cost \$15 per person which paid for appetizers and snacks (cheese, shrimp, wings, cake, veggies, chips and



*Ginny and Bill Murphy of Silver Arrow Drive danced and mingled with neighbors at the Masquerade Ball.*

dip, etc.) and the DJ. The event was limited to 50 couples but only about 15 signed up.

The last holiday event at the Social Barn was a Christmas Eve pot luck party organized by Megan Beasley of Gloucester Pointe Drive. This event was planned only about two weeks before Christmas Eve. Word of the event spread through NextDoor and [potomacshoresresidents.com](http://potomacshoresresidents.com). Sometimes the best parties are the ones that just pop up. Over 75 residents (kids and adults) attended.



*Ava Knapp of Harmsworth Drive enjoyed decorating cookies at the "Icicles in Wonderland" event.*



*All of the kids at the "Icicles in Wonderland" event, patiently waited for the main event: a visit with Santa!*



*After decorating cookies, many of the kids cut out paper snowflakes and embellished them with color and glitter.*

## Neighborhood Club News

### The Book Hens

Since forming in October 2016, The Book Hens has grown to twenty members and has met three times. The next meeting will be on Tuesday, Feb. 21 at the Social Barn at 6:15 pm and the books to be discussed are **The Pecan Man** by Cassie Dandridge Selleck and **Lost & Found** by Brooke Davis. The Book Hens typically read only one book every six weeks but chose two very short books for this upcoming meeting. Linda Cahalen of Silver Arrow Drive is the hostess; Meera Kuckreja of Belle Isle Drive is the co-hostess; and Kathy Sullivan of Takeaway Lane is the moderator.

On April 25, the Book Hens will meet again at the Social Barn at 6:15 pm and discuss *The Nest* by Cynthia D'Apriz Sweeney. The hostess is Sandy Hoffman of Takeaway Lane; the co-hostess is Lynn Galgano of Silver Arrow Drive; and the moderator is Suzanne Wright of Silver Arrow Drive.

Due to the "intimate" nature of a book club, The Book Hens is open only to Potomac Shores women, age 50+, who love to read, talk about books and life, and, perhaps, enjoy a glass of wine. Come to any meeting and don't worry if you can't be right on time—the first 30 minutes or so is social time. If younger women or couples or any other group would like to form a book club, contact Dianne Skinner at: 703 640-3968 or [dskinner@cmc-management.com](mailto:dskinner@cmc-management.com), for tips on how to get a group started.



Meera Kuckreja of Belle Isle Drive, and Mary Lou and Richard Koehl of Silver Arrow Drive enjoy playing mah jong because it's a fun game that requires some luck and skill.

### Ladies Who Lunch

Ladies Who Lunch is a group of women who meet for lunch every month at the Tidewater Grill. It's that simple. Some of the ladies are retired, some work from home every day, and some have jobs that allow them flexibility to come for lunch. Meetings are **always** the second Thursday of the month at 11:45 am; so, mark your calendar for March 9, April 13, and May 11 and join the group. Typically, about 14 women come for lunch and everyone comes for fun and good conversation.

### Mah Jong

The Mah Jong club meets most every Monday afternoon at 1 pm and Wednesday evenings at 6 pm at the Social Barn or members' homes. Mah jong is a game that originated in China and first became popular in the United States in the 1930s. It is played with tiles decorated with dragons, red Chinese characters, dots, and bamboo symbols. It takes about 30-45 minutes to learn how to play and involves some skill and some luck. If you would like to learn how to play or if you already know how to play, contact Melissa Hopkins at: [missy.hopkins57@gmail.com](mailto:missy.hopkins57@gmail.com) for information about the next playing/training session. The club has about 15 members and about 8 regular players.

### NOVA Mothers and Daughters: As She Blossoms

This is a meet-up group for mothers and their daughters between the ages of 5 to 8. Its purpose is twofold: young girls get the opportunity to develop a circle of trusting and loving girlfriends and mothers get to share their experiences of raising a daughter. If you are interested in joining this group or learning more about it, please contact Shon Lyublanovits of Conqueror Court at: [www.meetup.com/NOVA-Mothers-Daughters-Group-As-She-Blossoms](http://www.meetup.com/NOVA-Mothers-Daughters-Group-As-She-Blossoms)

### She-Blossoms.

### Crafter's Anonymous

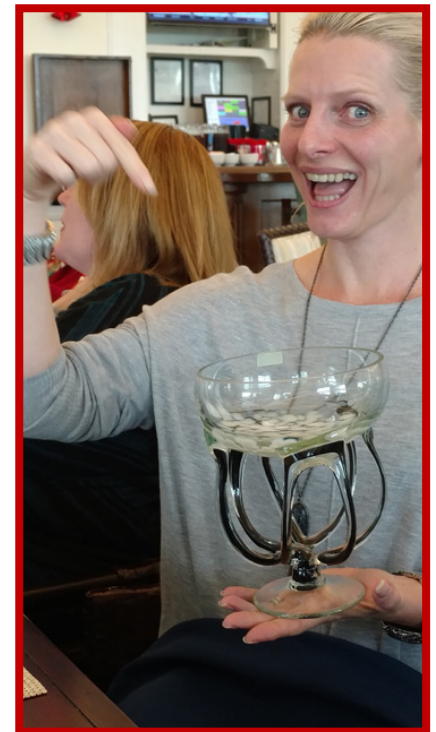
On most Sunday afternoons from 1 to 3 pm, Crafters can be found at the kitchen table at the Social Barn knitting, crocheting, or making jewelry or wreaths. If you are a crafter of any kind, come join this casual group. Contact Tiffany Alm at: [tiffanyalm@hotmail.com](mailto:tiffanyalm@hotmail.com), to confirm when the group meets. Tiffany and the other members agree that it is nice to specifically set aside time each week to work on crafting projects.

### Mommy and I

This group is no longer meeting but if you are interested in trying to get the group going again, contact Kelly Whitzel at: 703 640-3967 or [kwhitzel@cmc-management.com](mailto:kwhitzel@cmc-management.com).

### Other Clubs

If you would like to form a community-wide club, please contact Dianne Skinner at: 703 640-3968 or [dskinner@cmc-management.com](mailto:dskinner@cmc-management.com), Kelly Whitzel at: 703 640-3967 or [kwhitzel@cmc-management.com](mailto:kwhitzel@cmc-management.com), or [potomacshoresactivities@gmail.com](mailto:potomacshoresactivities@gmail.com). Dianne and Kelly can give you suggestions on how to form your club and how to get the word out to residents.



Marion Gonzales of Miss Packard Court "shows off" the unique vase she received at the Ladies Who Lunch White Elephant Exchange held Dec. 8 at the Tidewater Grill.

# HOA Fee Increase and Update on Construction Provided at December Homeowners Annual Meeting

By Tiffany Alm

At the Annual Meeting of Homeowners held Dec. 8, residents learned that HOA fees have increased by \$5 to \$180 per month and, that a check for \$35 must accompany the Design Review Application that residents submit for exterior property improvements to the Covenants Committee at CMC.

Many residents complained about the increase in HOA fees because they were told by their Sales Agent that the community did not foresee an increase until about 2024. Andy Wagner, HOA President, said the increase was necessary due to ongoing and projected deficits now that the amenities are operational and because home sales are behind initial projections. Another measure to reduce the HOA deficit is the \$35 that homeowners will pay when submitting a Design Review Application. CMC charges the HOA \$35 for every application they receive; therefore, this measure simply passes the cost directly to the homeowner who files the application.

## Construction Update

Brian English, Senior Project Manager for SunCal, reported that there are only 26 lots remaining to sell in the northern neighborhoods. Not included in this number are the lots in The Crossing. The final paving of the roads within the Northern Neighborhoods will begin in the spring of 2017 and will be turned over to Virginia Department of Transportation in phases beginning in spring 2018.

The tot lots on Potomac River Boulevard and Spring Cress Drive have been completed.

It is anticipated that Pulte Homes will START construction on their model homes near the Golf Clubhouse in March.

Brookfield Construction has contracted to build homes in the southern neighborhoods, however no timeline could be provided. Currently, Brookfield is nearing completion of their Sales Center on

Potomac River Blvd. A mixed-housing neighborhood will be developed near the soccer fields with models appearing in March as well.

## Recreational Spaces, Other Amenities

Spring will provide many opportunities for residents to use their green thumb. English said that the greenhouse will open in early spring and garden plots will be available for rent for a small fee. Contact Dianne Skinner at 703 640-3968 for more information about the greenhouse or garden plots. Resident input will be needed to get the gardening program going.

English reported that sometime prior to July 2018, residents will have the opportunity to vote on whether the community wants to build tennis courts or have the developer deposit money to the HOA.

SunCal is actively marketing the marina, hotel, and town square retail space to commercial users and builders. Although interest is high, nothing has been finalized. Nevertheless, SunCal is hopeful that once the VRE station opens, the commercial pads will start to move and a developer will come forward. Construction of the VRE headhouse and parking lot will begin once those plans are approved. For more information on the

current VRE plans, please read The Front Porch article on page 8.

## Schools

Construction of "Potomac Shores" Elementary School is on schedule and should open in time for the 2017-18 school year.

## Miscellaneous

The Shores Club has one full-time

manager, Dianne Skinner, and several part-time workers keeping everything running smoothly. Badges for approximately 700 residents have been issued for access to the Social and Fitness Barns. The Social Barn is still available, free of charge, for activities planned for Potomac Shores residents.

The fishing and canoe launch, located at the end of Cherry Hill Road, is open to all residents throughout the year. Please make sure you have your resident badge with you when utilizing this park as it is a residents-only space.

Roughly 50 residents attended this meeting held at Saint John Paul The Great Catholic School.

All residents are invited to attend a Construction Update Meeting on March 14 from 6 to 7 pm in the cafeteria of St. John Paul the Great High School. Residents will be able to ask questions following the presentation.



The tot lot along Potomac River Boulevard opened in late January. There is another similar tot lot on Spring Cress Drive near Sweet Pepperbrush Lane.

## Get Ready for Spring

By Kerri Pagel

With warmer weather right around the corner, it's time to start thinking about your lawn and shrubs. Spring will wake up your dormant grass and shrubs and, before you know it, they'll be growing like weeds. (You see what I did there?? ;) Yes, that means it's time to tune up the lawn mower and sharpen your hedge trimmer! Listed below is information regarding lawn and landscape responsibilities for all homeowners:

1. All portions of a lot that are not improved by an impervious surface or a structure must be maintained with grass or other vegetation installed by the builder or approved by the Board of Directors, as required. No bare earth may be exposed on a lot, except for flower beds and shrubs with appropriate approvals.
2. All turf areas on a lot must be kept neatly mowed during the growing season. Grass should not be permitted to exceed 6 inches in height. It is highly recommended that sidewalks and driveways be edged regularly during mowing season.
3. Homeowners are responsible for caring for the grass strip between the street and sidewalk to include mowing, weeding, edging, and raking. Homeowners are not responsible for maintenance of trees located there. Please contact Dianne Skinner at: [dskinner@cmc-management.com](mailto:dskinner@cmc-management.com), about tree condition issues.
4. Turf areas should be kept as weed free as possible. At no time should weed cover exceed more than 25% of the total turfed area.
5. Turf areas and other vegetation should be watered during dry periods. Any dead plants, shrubs or trees shall be removed immediately. This includes removing dead vegetation from trellises, landscaping, vegetable gardens, and arbors at the end of each growing season.
6. All hedges, trees, shrubs and plants must be neatly trimmed and maintained and their size maintained in proportion to the lot, home and Design Guidelines through pruning.

Make sure your Carriage Lights are on and that no bulbs are burned out. Carriage lights are located on both sides of your garage and take the place of street lights. Chronic violators will be fined after receiving a notice from CMC.

## Exterior Home Improvements Require Preapproval From The Covenants Committee

By Kerri Pagel

With the chilly temperatures still lingering, getting outside to work on projects may be the furthest thing from your mind! However, spring is right around the corner which will bring warm weather and a long "To Do" list. So, as you dust off your tools and get ready to spruce up your home, here are some reminders about modifications to your yard and home exterior that you must adhere to, as per the Potomac Shores Residential Association Supplemental Design Guidelines 2014, revised as of Nov. 21, 2016.

All improvements, changes, or additions to the exterior of your home or yard require an approved Design Review Application prior to start of work. Design Review Application forms can be found on the Community Website at: [www.potomacshoresresidents.com](http://www.potomacshoresresidents.com).

1. Please allow 45 days for application review upon receipt by the Covenants Committee.
2. Only completed packets will be reviewed by the Covenants Committee. Incomplete packets will delay your approval and start of your project. Complete packets must include the following components:
  - A. Design Review Application Form to include neighbor signatures of all adjacent homes
  - B. A site plan (plat) showing the property boundaries, house and existing improvements, and the location and dimensions of the proposed improvement. In addition to showing the property boundaries, it is important to show the dimensions from your proposed improvement to your property line on all sides of your lot. By showing these dimensions, the Design Committee will know exactly where your improvement will sit on your property and improve your timeline for approval. Plats can be obtained from The Engineering Groupe, 13580 Groupe Drive, Suite 400 Woodbridge, VA 22192; a plat was probably included among your closing documents when you purchased your home.
  - C. Plans:

-Elevation drawings for porches, decks, and sunrooms  
-Architectural drawings or plans, as applicable  
-Landscape plan showing dimensions of beds and the type or species, and height and width of plants upon maturity. A list of approved plant species can be found in the Northern Neighborhood Design Guidelines.

D. List of all materials to be used in the project to include manufacturer, part numbers, color, lighting watt age, representative photos, etc.

E. Check for \$35.00 to cover application processing fee payable to Potomac Shores Residential Association.

3. Completed packets should be submitted to the Covenants Committee for review:

Covenants Committee  
Potomac Shores Residential Association, Inc.  
c/o Community Management Corporation (CMC)  
4840 Westfields Blvd., Suite 300  
P.O. Box 10821  
Chantilly, VA 20153-0821

4. Please refer to the [Potomac Shores Supplemental Design Guidelines](#) for approved materials and design rules for your desired projects.

5. In addition to Potomac Shores Design Review Application, homeowners are responsible for obtaining all necessary PW County building permits and inspections as required by PW County building codes. Permit and inspection requirements will vary by project type.

This information should be helpful as you search Pinterest for the perfect patio or relaxing deck to tackle as your next improvement to your Potomac Shores oasis.



## Three New Teachers to Offer Classes at The Shores Club

By Melissa Hopkins



### Pilates/Yoga Classes

The Fitness Barn's newest instructor is Vicki Burnett who offers PiYo classes on Wednesdays at 6:30 pm and Barre Fit classes on Thursdays at 7:30 pm. She has over 15 years of experience in the fitness business and offers both private and group Pilates and yoga classes and wellness seminars. Vicki believes that a consistent practice of yoga and/or Pilates improves flexibility and mental clarity, reduces stress, and, in general, contributes to an increased feeling of well-being.

### Art Classes

Donna Merchant will offer her first art class to residents on Mar. 4 from 10 am to noon at the Social Barn Kitchen. This is a Parent/Child Art Workshop wherein children, with parental assistance, will create a paper sculpture, watercolor-oil pastel painting, or pipe cleaner/styrofoam abstract artwork.

Donna received her BFA in Art Educa-

tion from Virginia Commonwealth University. She was an art teacher at Lincolnia Private Day School in Alexandria and at Merritt Academy in Fairfax. For the past 2 1/2 years, Donna has been a contract art teacher at Red Art Studio in Occoquan, teaching drawing and painting to children, teens and adults. She has also taught art classes at The Four Seasons Retirement Community and given art instruction at "Wine and Paint Parties." A member of the Prince William Art Society, Donna has participated in local art shows exhibiting acrylic landscape and still life paintings, and has illustrated two children's books. She accepts commissions for graphite pencil portraits.

### Cooking Classes

Chef Dorothy Albano will offer a Cooking Class to residents on Mar. 18 from 6 – 9 pm in the Social Barn Kitchen. Among her many accomplishments, Chef Albano is the lead Culinary Arts Instructor at Potomac High School, a program she started in 2011, and a NY and VA certified teacher with a master's degree in education. According to Chef Albano, her greatest passion is making people happy with a belly full of food and sharing her love of cooking with family and friends. Her

part-time business, Breaking Bread, allows her to share her joy of teaching how to cook at cooking parties at client's homes. Chef Albano will donate 5% of every booking to charity focusing on teen homelessness and family and community violence.

### Additional Info

For information, such as the cost and how to make a reservation for PiYo and Barre Fit classes, art classes, or cooking classes, contact Kelly Whitzel at: 703 640-3967.



An example of the artistic works of Donna Merchant.

## The Shores Club Hosts a Fitness and Health Fair

By Michelle Wilson and Kelly Whitzel

The Fitness and Health Fair held Jan. 21 at The Shores Club was a terrific way to start the New Year, especially since many people make resolutions to lose weight and get in better shape. Many residents took advantage of a free massage, food samples, and health tests that were made available. Additionally, residents received raffle tickets and the opportunity to win free services from vendors and fitness trainers.

In the fitness barn, several classes (Pilates, Tai Chi and Dance) were demonstrated and some were available free of charge.

Of the many vendors who participated, Sentara Medical Group provided im-

portant information on community health and prevention of illnesses; Saxson Integrated Approach, LLC, offered information on weight loss programs, smoking cessation programs, how to manage allergies, how to prevent and manage pain, and how the body can heal itself through hypnosis; Pleasure II Wellness, LLC provided recommendations on holistic healthcare using medical, therapeutic, relaxation, and mind/body work therapies, as well as natural pharmaceutical approaches; Kamper Chiropractic and Bwell and Bmore offered wellness coaching tips; and, Brickhouse Body, LLC, offered nutrition planning and personal and group fit-

ness training.

Kelly Whitzel, Activities Director, organized this event and offered her thanks to all the organizations who participated and residents who attended.

**Count Down to Pool Opening: 14 weeks! Is it time to hit the gym or book an appointment with a personal trainer? Contact Kelly Whitzel, Activities Director, at 703 640-3967 for a fitness class schedule or information on personal trainers.**

## Potomac Shores' VRE Station Running Behind Schedule

By Alex Koma, [akoma@insidenova.com](mailto:akoma@insidenova.com)

(January 15, 2017) - When a California developer announced plans for the new, 4,000-home "Potomac Shores" development in Dumfries, the addition of a \$20 million Virginia Railway Express station at its heart was a key incentive designed to lure home buyers to the area.

VRE officials and local politicians gathered for a ceremonial groundbreaking in July 2014, targeting 2017 as the year VRE would be ready to start ferrying passengers along the I-95 corridor via the new station.

But as the new year dawns and construction on the rest of the development continues apace, it's unclear when exactly trains may start rolling through Potomac Shores. State rail officials are now targeting 2018 for the full completion of the project, though there are few definitive answers available just yet.

Dean stressed that VRE has little to do with the project, even though its trains will ultimately serve the station. Instead, the developer of Potomac Shores, SunCal, is the one actually building the station, while Virginia's Department of Rail and Public Transportation ("DRPT") is responsible for constructing the improvements necessary to connect the station to the state's existing rail lines.

Chris Smith, director of policy, communications and legislative affairs for DRPT, said his agency's section of the project is the primary cause of the delay. While the state earned just under \$75 million to fund rail improvements in the area through the massive stimulus bill enacted in the wake of the Great Recession in 2009, Smith said the project's engineers soon realized that they would need another \$9.1 million to put the finishing touches on their work.

"Unfortunately, there's been some issues on the project with the geotechnical design," Smith said. "We're talking physically; there's a reason they call it Potomac Shores. It's right along the shores of the river. That's added to some of the cost."

Smith added that the state is also aiming to ensure that VRE's commuter and commercial freight trains can both flow smoothly through the area.

"Just like [Interstate] 95 is congested with trucks and cars, the train corridor is congested with passenger, freight and VRE commuter rail," Smith said. "And much like VDOT needs to build more lanes to up highway capacity, our department needs to add rail capacity to get rail service up."

But Smith said his agency could not simply spend the \$9.1 million it needed from the "pot of money the agency manages dedicated to passenger rail." First, DRPT had to ask for permission to change its Six-Year Improvement Plan from the Commonwealth Transportation Board, which gave its blessing for that alteration on Dec. 6.

With that money in hand, DRPT can now move ahead, fully assured that it can fund the project. Smith noted that the federal funds set aside for the rail construction expire on Sept. 30, meaning that they will have to finish the bulk of the work by then.

Then, DRPT will be able to bring the new state funding to bear on wrapping up the project.

"Our estimates show a 2018 project completion when it's all said and done," Smith said.

SunCal's work on the station itself is not affected by DRPT's delay, giving the developer the chance to start grading the site and working up architectural drawings on the "head house"

that will eventually serve as the passenger station.

The station will be located in the middle of a spacious retail town center. SunCal is developing plans to include a coffee shop or restaurant within the station itself.

SunCal is certainly anxious to open its doors. The developer spent an extra two years on the project to ensure the town center and many of its homes would be within walking distance of a rail station.

"We all know traffic is an issue along the 95 corridor. The HOT lanes have helped, but this really is an important piece," said David Soyka, SunCal's Vice President of Public Affairs.

"These types of huge infrastructure projects probably tend to take longer, and probably don't happen on time," Soyka said. "So I'm not saying I expected that, but if it's a year delay and it's only a year, people, I think, can still see the progress that's being made. And we're going to see this thing to completion."

That's little comfort to people who live nearby and commute into Washington, D.C., like Meghan Henry.

"It's just all been a little silly, in my opinion. I'm kind of invested in this project, as one of the appeals of the area is the VRE station and ease of commute."

But Soyka hopes that frustration will fade as people see the project start to kick into high gear over the coming months.

"Sometimes people don't really see what's going on beyond their backyard fences, and they don't see how much work is going in right now," Soyka said. "So I think there are some people who will be fairly disappointed, but I think once they see the amount of work that's happening, once they see the head house start to stick in the air and everything, it'll be a disappointment, but they can be sure it's going to happen."



A VRE sign sits on the bluff above its future station in the yet to be developed town center.

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# County Will Offer Variety of Tours of Cockpit Point

By Warren Lopez & Alan Knapp

If you are interested in more hands-on personal experiences of the trails and the Battle of Cockpit Point, there are several tours and community workshops scheduled over the coming months, including the dedication ceremony for the Civil War Trails Marker at the Cockpit Point Civil War site on Saturday, Mar. 11 at 10 am. The event is open to the public with parking and the marker located at 18245 Cockpit Point Rd., Dumfries, VA 22026.

Due to the current lack of safe access to Cockpit Point, private access is limited. However, opportunities exist to further explore Cockpit Point beyond the dedication ceremony. The county will offer guided walking tours for \$20 per person. A bus tour led by a historian will be offered by the county on Apr. 8 from 8:30 am to 4:30 pm for \$80 per person (lunch included), and an exciting boat tour out of Leesylvania State Park,

with unparalleled views of Potomac Shores from the water, will be offered on April 22 from 10 am to 1 pm for \$45 per person (lunch included). Call the Prince William County Historic Preservation Division at: 703-792-4754 to make any of these tour reservations.

Cockpit Point was one of several strategic batteries constructed along the Potomac River in Prince William County by the Confederate army in the early days of the Civil War, joining those at Evansport (now the town of Quantico), and Freestone Point (now Leesylvania State Park). The goal of the batteries were designed to disrupt the supply lines to the Union capital in Washington, D.C.

The batteries along the Potomac in Prince William County had an intimidating presence and immediate effect on the U.S. Navy as it commanded nearly 15 miles of Potomac River



The new marker for Cockpit Point Battlefield Park located at 18245 Cockpit Point Road, Dumfries, VA 22026.

shoreline.

For further information on the Battle of Cockpit Point and the strategic role it played during the Blockade of the Potomac from 1861-1862, please visit: [History on the Cherry Hill Peninsula](#), and [Page 7 of The Front Porch from Fall 2016](#), both on the Potomac Shores Resident's website.

Start training now for the Second Annual Potomac Shores 5K Run/2K Walk to be held Saturday, May 20. Addition information and registration forms will be available soon on the community website: [www.potomacshoresresidents.com](http://www.potomacshoresresidents.com).

## Community Contact List



DESTINATION for a LIFETIME

1801 Potomac Shores Parkway  
Dumfries, VA 22026

### Public Service:

American Disposal Trash	703-368-0500
Electric- Dominion VA Power	888-667-3000
Fire/Rescue Triangle Stat.#3	703-221-4242
Fire/Rescue Triangle Stat.#17	703-680-3517
Fire/Rescue PWC Stat.#23	703-441-6460
Hospital-Sentara	703-523-1000
Hospital-Stafford County	540-741-9000

### Association Management:

Community Manager: **Dianne Skinner**  
Email: [dskinner@cmc-management.com](mailto:dskinner@cmc-management.com)  
Phone: 703-640-3968  
Activities Director: **Kelly Whitzel**  
Email: [kwhitzel@cmc-management.com](mailto:kwhitzel@cmc-management.com) or [potomacshoresactivities@gmail.com](mailto:potomacshoresactivities@gmail.com)  
Phone: 703-640-3967

CMC Corporate Office:  
4840 Westfields Blvd., Suite 300  
Chantilly, VA 20151  
Phone: 703-631-7200

Hospital-Inova Healthplex	703-797-6800
Police-Garfield Station	703-792-7200
Police-Non Emergency	703-792-6500
Verizon Bulk Service	800-501-1172
Washington Gas Customer Svc	703-750-1000
Washington Gas Emergency	703-750-1400
Water & Sewer-PWCSA	703-335-7950

### Potomac Shores Entities:

The Social Barn:	703-221-1600
The Fitness Barn:	703-640-3970
Tidewater Grill:	571-383-3050, ext. 2
Tidewater Sales Mgr.:	571-383-3052
Golf Shop, Tee Times:	571-383-3050, ext. 1
Greeting House:	703-520-2070

### Communications Committee:

**Kerri Pagel**, Chairperson  
[CommunicationsPotomacShores@gmail.com](mailto:CommunicationsPotomacShores@gmail.com)

### Social Committee:

**Andy Weedon**, Chairperson  
[SocialPotomacShores@gmail.com](mailto:SocialPotomacShores@gmail.com)

### Trails Committee:

**Josh Pagel**, Chairperson  
[TrailsPotomacShores@gmail.com](mailto:TrailsPotomacShores@gmail.com)

## Trails Committee Discuss Trail Plan, Cockpit Point Access with County Officials

By Warren Lopez

The Potomac Shores Trails Committee recently met with Prince William County historic preservation and parks officials to discuss the further development and expansion of the community's trail systems. Trails Committee members Warren Lopez and Josh Pagel met with Brendon Hanafin, from the county's Historic Preservation Office and Ryan Delaney, Trails Planner for the county's Office of Parks and Recreation. The meeting focused on development plans for the county's segment of the [Potomac Heritage National Scenic Trail \(PHNST\)](#), SunCal's plans for trails along the Potomac Shores' southern neighborhoods, and how to unify efforts to connect the community's trails to the Civil War site at Cockpit Point.

Mr. Hanafin presented possible routes of access to Cockpit Point from potential trail plans by SunCal and was excited about our community's interest in providing input on how to develop and maintain the trail. "With the combined efforts of Potomac Shores' residents, Prince William County, and SunCal, we will be part of preserving and telling history and have a voice in how the neighborhood's future trails are developed. This is an exciting time for Potomac Shores since we are in the very early stages of the development and in a

unique position to influence and shape how we connect to history and nature by serving as a junction between the PHNST and Cockpit Point," said Hanafin. "How many communities can claim to have access to a national trail system AND a Civil War historic site," he continued to say.

Aside from recreational health benefits of having a trail system within our community, we will be able to protect the ecosystem of the Cherry Hill Peninsula while providing our local schools, scout programs, and outdoor clubs with opportunities to adopt the trails for maintenance and education.

Some have raised concerns about possible crime and unwanted activity in

our community if the Potomac Shores trail system is opened to the public. Ryan Delaney, however, stated in the meeting that studies show that crime does not increase with trails opening to the public. "On the contrary, public use of trails can act

as a deterrent due to public use, maintenance, and monitoring", Delaney said. [The economic benefits are also evident in several studies.](#) Communities with developed trail systems realize an average increase in property values by 5% to 10%.

Prince William County is interested in hearing from residents and their ideas as to how local trails should be developed and will be hosting a public workshop and break-out sessions to brainstorm with fellow county residents. The event will take place on Saturday, Feb. 22 from 6-8 pm at the Ferlazzo Building Atrium located at 15941 Donald Curtis Drive, Woodbridge, VA 22191.



Brendon Hanafin and Josh Pagel look at the trails map while Ryan Delaney and Bret Coulson look on.