



The CHRONICLE

Spring 2024

Some call it a Resort. We call it Home.

Williamsburg, Virginia

A One Hour's Drive, A Day's Adventure: The Glass House Project

by Cass Liberman, Chronicle Writer and Editor

The *One Hour's Drive, A Day's Adventure* story is a little bit different this time: we're cheating, adding about 15 minutes to that hour's trip. Your reward is a visit to an amazing 18th-century house. There's no shortage of restored 18th and 19th-century house museums in Virginia, all beautifully finished and furnished; they are *nothing* like the historic house you'll see on this trip. Prepare to meet what might be the Commonwealth's most nightmarish fixer-upper. It will be worth it. *Promise.*

Welcome to *Menokin*. Your trip, by highway or backroads, will take you across the York and the Rappahannock rivers into the beautiful rural landscape of Virginia's Northern Neck. In 1608, Captain John Smith explored land and waters along the Rappahannock creeks in an area the native peoples called "Menokin." Smith's written accounts of his trip preserved the name for future generations. No one today knows what "Menokin" means, only that it was a place name at that time.

In 1769, Founding Father Francis Lightfoot Lee, with his brother, signed the Declaration of Independence. He married Rebecca, a daughter of John Tayloe II, one of the wealthiest Virginia planters. Tayloe gifted them 1000 acres of plantation land and built the newlyweds a manor house: *Menokin*. Built with local materials—sandstone blocks, pine, white oak, brick—the couple lived in the house until their deaths there in 1797.

The lovely house passed from owner to owner, and time was not kind to it. Unoccupied after about 1950, the house deteriorated. In 1965, three UVA architectural graduate students found the house deserted, damaged, and overgrown. Inside they found that most of the hand-wrought woodwork was intact and in place. They left the unsecured house, concerned that the woodwork—walls, stairs, chimney breasts, mantels, wainscoting, doors, floors—would be stolen or ruined. Two years later, two of the grad students returned to



THE VISION FOR THE MENOKIN GLASS HOUSE PROJECT.
CREDIT: BY PERMISSION OF MACHADO SILVETTI ARCHITECTS, FOR THE MENOKIN FOUNDATION.

find their worst fear realized: the woodwork was gone, its fate unknown. In the late 1960s, a large tree fell on the house, slicing through the building bringing down much of the roof and seriously damaging exterior walls and interiors. The ruination was extensive.

Nearly 20 years later Calder Loth, one of those UVA students and now an architectural historian, contacted the home's owners, the Omohundro family. By then Menokin had earned National Historical Landmark status but because of its steady

(see THE GLASS HOUSE PROJECT - continued on page 3)

The Chronicle of Colonial Heritage is the official publication of Colonial Heritage, providing information of interest and importance to the residents of Colonial Heritage. It is published quarterly and delivered to residents free of charge. All submitted material will be considered for publication. Articles and ideas should be sent to newsletter@colonialheritageclub.org. *The Chronicle* Newsletter Committee reserves the right to edit submitted articles for style and content.

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From the Editor's Desk

by Carol Frix, Managing Editor

It's 2024 and that means it's our 20th Anniversary here in CH. Cheers to all of us, and please see our first two articles of the year on this remarkable topic! Thanks to Sue Leitzsch and Josephine Loizzo for getting us off to a good start.

It's also Spring, so why not a short drive to a day-long adventure? Cass Liberman is our tour guide, as usual, as she heads toward the Northern Neck and gives us a look at the Menokin national landmark and its ongoing Glass House Project. Cass gives us another great story about a former CH resident who was part of the Manhattan Project in the early 1940s. So interesting and heartwarming too. Cass wraps this issue with a fun piece on spring cleaning that I doubt many of us will find heartwarming, but reminds me that Cass brings us other contributors also, with photos from her husband Howard, and drawings from her daughter too!

Our CH Spotlight had to be rewired this time, as we shine the spotlight on a significant **group** of residents—our female veterans of the armed services. We have great admiration for all of our CH veterans and much respect for all residents who served or who supported the work of our military. In this issue, we focus on and recognize some of our women veterans. We thank all of you for your service. Our email blast outreach to set up interviews got a good response, and Josephine Loizzo did a banner job with those. Then, working with our talented retired U.S. Army Lt. Col. James A. Scott, she wrote one of the best and most far-reaching articles *The Chronicle* has published.

We're proud to offer other interesting articles; you can never go wrong with *The Pet Corner* by Doreen Conoscenti, with our *Book Reviews* by James A. Scott, or with other standard features. Those reliable contributions along with the good stories we receive from our CH Clubs, Committees, and Interest Groups go a long way toward making *The Chronicle* the well-rounded magazine that many appreciate.

This issue has other articles you really shouldn't miss! Josephine Loizzo tells us about CH photographers Barry Smith and Steve Caffery, introduces us to the new leaders of our Neighbor-to-Neighbor group, gives us an inside look at the recent CH Golf Cart Parade, and even works in a fun story on the Aqua Volleyball Blast group!

Finally, and with sincere thanks to Glenda Knowles who's provided so many interesting and educational gardening articles over the years, we call your attention to a similar article this time written by our newest writer, Snow Juanpere.

To all of you who write for, read, and support our quarterly magazine, we thank you and we hope you'll enjoy reading along with us this time. Let's think Spring—coming soon! ☐





(THE GLASS HOUSE PROJECT - continued from cover)



MENOKIN RUIN, 1994 - TWO YEARS BEFORE MENOKIN FOUNDATION FOUNDED.
CREDIT: DAVID JERNIGAN.

decay, and the missing woodwork, it was in danger of losing that important designation. Calder Loth asked if Mr. Omohundro knew the fate of the missing woodwork. Turns out, he did; the woodwork was not missing. It had been carefully removed and was safe.

The family agreed to let *Preservation Virginia* take custody of and store the wood at *Bacon's Castle*, a historic site in Surry. (See the Summer 2023 issue of *The Chronicle* for more on Bacon's Castle.) Secure and cataloged, the woodwork was safe, as was Menokin's National Historical Landmark designation. In 1995, with the continuing decay of the house making it clear that the family could not save it, T. Edgar Omohundro gifted the house to the newly formed *Menokin Foundation*. By then, the house was in nearly complete ruin. What to do with a pile of rubble, a couple of standing walls, and a fraction of a roof?

Reconstructing the house wasn't feasible, and in any case, historic restorations had been done before. The Foundation decided upon *dynamic preservation*, preserving at least part of the ruin. The *Glass House Project* was born.

Menokin has some things strongly in its favor. The Foundation has identified about 80 percent of its original building materials to be on site. The original 18th-century drawings and plans are available, as are pictures and

renderings from a Historic American Building Survey (HABS). What this massive jigsaw puzzle will produce is a reconstruction of some parts and a shoring up of others. Some areas will be covered in structural glass, walls, floors, and roof, to expose



MENOKIN IN EARLY 2024

the skeleton of the house. Machado Silvetti of Boston is the lead architectural firm, but many professionals and volunteers are working on this project.

When we visited Menokin, my husband and I knew basically what to expect. It is still a work in progress, still a wreck of a gracious dwelling, still waiting for its partial restoration and its Glass House installation. What we weren't prepared for was our strong emotional response to this sad, beautiful, inspiring site, with its promise of a unique window into the hard demanding work of building this house, and its echoes of the people who did that hard work.

By July 4, 2026, the Menokin Foundation aims to have the Glass House Project completed and ready to welcome guests on our nation's 250th birthday. We will check the progress periodically, and someday we'll visit the completed Glass House and marvel at it, and the amazing people who made it happen. How did they have the inspiration and the courage?

- We thank Michael Beller and the Menokin Foundation for their insights, hospitality, and photo access.
- See <https://www.menokin.org> for pictures, history, tours, and information on the future. When going in person, go to the Visitor Center first. It's where they keep the hard hats that you may need!
- You can take a general one-hour tour or choose 2023's newest tour—The Revolutionary Women of Menokin, about women from all walks of colonial life who fought back in their own ways during the fight for independence.
- We encourage you to see this historic site, and the eventual Glass House Project. One hour and 15 minutes is for highway travel from CH; backroads will add five or ten minutes.
- Virginia's Northern Neck is dotted with historic landmarks, charming villages, vineyards, distilleries, farms, and places to buy those famous oysters. We'll highlight the Northern Neck's attractions in an upcoming issue of *The Chronicle*. □

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CH Anniversary – Twenty Years Of Progress

by Josephine Loizzo, Chronicle Writer and Editor

From a rudimentary trailer sales office on a large plot of farmland on Richmond Road to nearly 1,500 homes in a vibrant, beautiful community, Colonial Heritage has indeed seen twenty years of progress. The intrepid early settlers chose their plot and house plan from brochures in the office with a three-dimensional display model of the planned community. Rosemarie Brennan was one of those earliest residents, as were Tony and Rosemarie (Rosie) Crocco. Rosie says “In July 2005, there was no golf course, no pool, no clubhouse, and no athletic center. There were a few model homes. So, Tony and I decided to go separately to look at the models. Then we met in the trailer to declare our favorite house. We both picked the same home, the Tiger Lily. We had NEVER done anything impulsively in our lives, but within 48 hours we picked out a lot and signed a contract for our house to be built!”

The Chronicle was launched in the spring of 2005 by Rosemarie Brennan and a property manager. It was an eight-page newsletter (we have seen progress, too!) that reported on the new

activities in the community and followed the momentum in the building of the Clubhouse and Golf Course. There were 148 early settlers by the end of 2005; they had faith, courage, and vision. *The Chronicle* added staff, and Ken Jenkins and Elaine Moser came on board as layout manager and managing editor, respectively. The Clubhouse and Golf Course opened in 2006.

Rather than devote one issue to this significant 20th anniversary, *The Chronicle* will devote a portion of each issue this year to celebrate our community, our residents, and our progress through the years, including the dynamic resident-driven activities and the amenities that make living in CH so special.

If you wish to review some of the early history of CH, there is a “CH History” drop-down menu on the <https://colonialheritagehoa.org/homepage/38074/home> website, which includes several interesting articles by Doreen Conoscenti, long-time writer for *The Chronicle*.

For now, sit back and enjoy our first article on the CH Anniversary and our *Twenty Years of Progress!* □



Colonial Heritage, Twenty Years Ago

One of our earliest residents shares her memories

by Sue Leitzsch, Chronicle Writer and Editor

This year marks the twentieth anniversary of CH. Most of us moved into this already-established community, with beautiful landscaping, a clubhouse, a golf course, pools, and a variety of interest groups and clubs. The experience was different for the earliest residents. Some might call them pioneers.



ARLEEN RINKER

Sweethearts from Wilkes-Barre, Pennsylvania, Dale and Arleen Rinker were Northern Virginia residents for 35 years. Dale worked for the FBI in accounting for 22 years and later became comptroller of the National Gallery of Art in Washington, D.C. Arleen was a critical care nurse for most of her career. They loved Williamsburg and visited the area, often with their family, two

daughters and a son. They enjoyed Colonial Williamsburg, Busch Gardens, the Pottery Outlet, and a train shop in Norge so much that they eventually bought a timeshare nearby.

As they neared retirement, the Rinkers saw a tourist magazine advertisement for a new 55+ development by U.S. Homes (now Lennar). They visited the site and stopped at a trailer which served as the CH sales office. There was nothing here—no models, no clubhouse, no pool, no golf course. Just architectural sketches and layouts. The Rinkers visited a sister community in Manassas to view actual homes and check out amenities.

They liked what they saw, and with a little trepidation and a lot of faith, they signed the contract. It would be a year before they moved in as the first residents on Pinebrook Road. In the first couple of years, there were about ten to 20 houses in the community. There was no clubhouse, athletic center, or golf course; they came later.

(see TWENTY YEARS AGO - continued on next page)



(TWENTY YEARS AGO - continued from previous page)



GROUNDBREAKING OF THE ATHLETIC CENTER; ARLEEN THIRD FROM RIGHT.

During the first five years, the Rinkers enjoyed a pot-luck dinner with the whole community every Friday night, attended monthly parties—Octoberfest, Superbowl, and such—and people got to know one another. That small-town feeling now seems long ago.

As amenities were built, the Rinkers took advantage of them. Both learned to play golf with coaching from the golf pro. Arleen also joined a one-hour Tuesday evening program for women. The pro would pick two practice holes that changed each week. Arleen said, “It was a great way to learn, and it was fun!” She added, “There was also a couples group on Friday evenings in the summer, just for fun. We finished playing early enough to go into The Grille or sit on the porch for dinner or drinks.”

Arleen also shared memories of their early days, as they began to enjoy other amenities. The Veranda at the new Clubhouse was very popular, and they did a lot of socializing there, eating and drinking, and enjoying gorgeous sunsets. One resident taught ballroom dancing in the new Ballroom. Well before a CH Athletic Director and instructors were hired, an outside man came in and taught Tai Chi. He had studied with the monks in the Himalayas. Residents paid him directly for each class they took.

The Social Director organized bus trips to the Tides semi-pro baseball team in Norfolk. There were community parties, outdoor movies with an outdoor bar, and dances on special occasions, such as New Year’s Eve.

Early on, if you had an idea for an interest group or club, you would have to start it. Arleen and another resident, a travel agent, started a travel club. Residents would talk about the trips they had taken and show photographs of their travels. Most meetings were presentations and sharing ideas. Arleen took over leadership of the travel club for five years, bringing in cruise lines and all-inclusive resorts for presentations. She organized two trips: a land/cruise tour of Alaska, and a trip to the Galapagos Islands. She remembers shuttles picking up residents from their driveways!

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After moving to Williamsburg, Arleen continued to work, retiring from her job in clinical documentation (medical records and coding) in July 2016. Sadly, her husband passed away in August 2016, just before he was to become President of the Men’s Golf Association (MGA). Arleen’s children wanted her to move back “home” to Northern Virginia, but she stayed here! She said, “This IS home. It is a very supportive community.”

Finally, Arleen mused, “Having been here all these years, it is proof that I am very happy with our original decision and the chance we took moving into this community. It speaks volumes as to my experience living in Colonial Heritage.” □

HA! Dave lost his wife’s audiobook, and now he’ll never hear the end of it.

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SPOTLIGHT ON: CH Women Veterans Of The Armed Forces

by Josephine Loizzo and James A. Scott, Chronicle Writers and Editors



On March 29th each year we celebrate National Vietnam War Veterans Day, just as we honor all veterans' sacrifices on Veterans Day, November 11th. We recognize the contributions and sacrifices of ALL our veterans, men and women, who served their country. However, we want to pay special tribute in this issue of *The Chronicle* to the women in our community who have served in the armed services. We reached out to find these special women, and, whether they are included by name and have been interviewed or not, we want every one of our women veterans to be aware that we recognize their sacrifice, thank them for their service, and applaud their character and their courage as trailblazers for women who follow in their footsteps.

PROLOGUE

As was true in many fields at the time, women entering the military in the '60s or '70s faced many special challenges brought about by restrictive and outdated rules about women's roles, responsibilities, and rights in the workplace. For women joining the armed forces, things may have been the toughest of all. Many women literally faced rules governing their eligibility to enlist based on their marital or motherhood status. Such restrictions meant many complications, and much difficulty, and sometimes led to mistreatment or abuse. These policies, described as serving the purpose of keeping all recruits "instantly deployable," often actually seemed designed to hold women back.

Throughout this article, there are threads that run through our portraits of these women who served in the military. They are adventurous, smart, independent, and disciplined. All these characteristics proved very important and served them well in dealing with their experiences as part of the US armed services.

Nearly all the women we interviewed were proud of their service and most of the men and women they served with. It is also important to remember the context of their achievements. The women operated in an environment that was imbedded with official and often non-official discriminatory practices. Officially, women were restricted to certain jobs. They could not serve on ships or, in some instances, attend field exercises with their units. Pregnant women were required to leave the service. Unofficially, many male service members were opposed to women in the service and they made tours quite difficult for women

in their unit. Fortunately, not all women interviewed for this article experienced such difficulties. Many were mentored by male officers and enlisted supervisors.

Regardless of obstacles they may have faced, the women we honor here rose up. They persevered and they served their country proudly. The following sampling of CH women veterans' profiles will acquaint you with their accomplishments.

VETERAN PROFILES

CATHERINE CALL, Colonel (Retired), U.S. Army Nurse Corps, RN, BSN, MSN

Colonel Call's grandmother served in the Army Nurse Corps in World War I. Her mother served in World War II. Catherine Call earned a nursing degree from the University of Connecticut through the Army Student Nurse Program. Her first assignment was at Walter Reed Hospital in Washington, D.C. She later returned to Walter Reed and ran a 240-bed unit, the equivalent of a full hospital!

Col. Call was Chief nurse in a MASH hospital, served in four years in Washington on the staff of the Army Surgeon General, where she used her field experience to help with the development of deployable medical systems. She traveled to Europe and set up deployables to serve patients in need. This fieldwork and her work on deployable hospital systems on the Army Staff were her favorite jobs.

Cathy often felt challenged to prove that her skills were the same or superior to her comrades, and her efforts held her in good stead throughout her career. When asked what she is most proud of in her Army career, she said it was decision-making at the Office of The Army Surgeon General. She added that her Army career gave her leadership skills, strategic planning skills, and the ability to "think out of the box."

DEBBIE THURMAN, Captain, U.S. Air Force, (Retired)

Raised on a farm, Debbie joined the service to get a college education, earned a master's degree, and stayed for the challenge. She rose to the rank of master sergeant before being commissioned as a second lieutenant.

(see CH WOMEN VETERANS OF THE ARMED FORCES - continued on next page)



(CH WOMEN VETERANS OF THE ARMED SOURCES - continued from previous page)

Debbie managed US Vietnam POW issues as part of OPERATION HOMECOMING in the Philippines and later at the Defense Intelligence Agency; served in the Carter White House on women's issues; and was a principal contracting officer responsible for procuring parts for the F-16 fighter, B-52 bomber, and military satellites.

She worked at Langley Air Force Base with tethered aerostats (blimps) used for drug trafficking surveillance. This job took her to countries where her life was in danger. Her favorite work was with POWs coming out of Vietnam and she is most "proud of [her] accomplishments at a time when only two percent of the Air Force were women."

**DOREEN JAGODNIK,
Captain, U.S. Navy, (Retired)**

Captain Jagodnik joined the Navy in 1980 out of a sense of patriotism. Doreen signed up for four years and stayed for twenty-two. She earned master's degrees in management and finance, and served several tours as a comptroller and one on the Pentagon's Joint Staff as a strategic planner in logistics. However, the tour she enjoyed most was managing the airport at the Naval Support Facility on the island of Diego Garcia, in the middle of the Indian Ocean. She points out that, in her time, women went from not being able to serve on a ship, to the current situation where a woman is the Chief of Naval Operations.

**TERRY BACKUS,
Colonel, U.S. Marine Corps, (Retired)**

Terry Backus was on active status for thirteen years and in the Reserve for fourteen. When she joined the Marines, she was one of only 199 women officers in the Corps. After completing Officers Candidate School at Quantico, she recruited female officers for eight years

in Washington, D.C., and was a military social aide in the Ford and Carter White House escorting VIPs and handling press conferences. That tour was followed by 18 months at the Amphibious Warfare School where she commanded the Student Administrative Company, supporting infantry trainees and managing their assignments.

Terry was married in 1977, had a baby, left active duty, and joined the Marine Reserve. She returned to active duty during Operation Desert Storm (against Iraq) and retired in 1995. Her most satisfying job was counseling young troops at the infantry training school.

**KAREN CHAFFEE,
Lieutenant Commander, U.S. Navy, (Retired)**

Karen is a graduate of the Naval War College and had been an agricultural biochemistry teacher before attending Officers Candidate School and being commissioned in 1981. Subsequently, she was assigned to teach chemistry at the Naval Academy Prep School. Her next assignment was as a program officer at the Antisubmarine Warfare Operations Center, where she collected fleet requirements and wrote budget defense papers.

Karen transferred to the Reserve in 1987, but was recalled to active duty during Operation Desert Shield/Desert Storm (1990-91) and was a logistics manager, moving passengers, cargo, and mail from the U.S. East Coast to Saudi Arabia. She found her true passion in the Navy, teaching young people ethical behavior, life skills, and subject matter, and loved the variety of jobs and the camaraderie in the service.

**BARBARA CAILTEUX-ZEVALLOS,
Commander, Nurse Corps, U.S. Navy, (Retired)**

Barbara served in the Navy from 1989 to 2009, and as a civilian Navy nurse from 2009 to 2017. She has a Master's Degree in Education and Training and applied that knowledge in many assignments from hospital ward supervisor to the Bureau of Medicine and Surgery at Navy Headquarters and the DOD Tricare Management Activity. In the latter jobs, she developed Internet e-learning platforms used by all DOD military services. She is fluent in Arabic, and, during the first Gulf War (Desert Shield/Desert Storm), as her command's only Arab speaker, translated for staff and Arab patients. Among her many firsts, she became the first Navy nurse selected for training as a Foreign Area Officer (Arabic language specialist).



OUR FEATURED WOMEN VETERANS, LEFT TO RIGHT: DEB THURMAN, LENORE CHAMBERS, DOREEN JAGODNIK, KAREN CHAFFEE, IRIS GRAVES, CATHY CALL, AND TERRY BACKUS. (UNAVAILABLE FOR THE PHOTO SHOOT WERE MARILYN MELTZER, BARBARA CAILTEAUX-ZEVALLOS, AND RENEE TAYLOR.)

(see CH WOMEN VETERANS OF THE ARMED FORCES - continued on next page)



(CH WOMEN VETERANS OF THE ARMED FORCES - continued from previous page)

**RENEE TAYLOR,
Lieutenant Colonel, Air National Guard.**

After college, Renee took flying lessons and pursued a master’s degree at Embry Riddle Aeronautical University. She enlisted in the Colorado Air National Guard for pilot training, but was eliminated due to the 20/20 vision requirement. She later trained in aircraft maintenance and—the only woman in the program—graduated first of two thousand students. After serving as an F-16 fighter crew chief, she was commissioned as a second lieutenant and served as a combat communications officer, establishing communications networks in remote areas.

In 2005, Renee transferred to the California National Guard’s Combat Communications Squadron, which was transformed into the first National Guard cyberspace wing in 2007. She became an expert in cyberspace operations. She later served tours at the Pentagon and the Air Combat Command at Langley Air Force Base, providing advice on doctrine, manpower, and equipment for the creation of the Air Force Cyber Command (AFCC). Renee received a commendation medal for that work and is most proud of that accomplishment.

**IRIS GRAVES,
Captain, U.S. Army**

Iris enlisted in the Women’s Army Corp in 1974 and was trained as a draftsman of engineering plans. After assignments in the United States and Germany, she attended Officer Candidate School in Fort Benning, Georgia, and was commissioned in the Army Finance Corps. Iris served in finance officer positions in several field units, ending her career as a budgeting officer at the Army Materiel Command. Like other women in the services, Iris encountered unfairness many times. On one occasion she was denied “Soldier of the Month” honors because the selection board misinterpreted women’s hair length standards, but refused to reverse its decision when informed of the mistake.

**MARILYN MELTZER,
Captain, U.S. Army**

Marilyn joined the Army in 1971 and was assigned to the Women’s Army Corp (WAC) unit at Fort McClelland, Alabama, as were all women not in the medical field. During her three-year tour there, Marilyn was liaison officer and mother hen to women trainees from Far East allied nations. When the Army received notice that the WAC would be disbanded and women integrated into regular units, Marilyn briefed visiting—and skeptical—generals from the Pentagon and major commands on women’s issues. She considers this her most important accomplishment.



Marilyn attended a signal intelligence school—she later married the commandant—and was assigned to Germany where she supervised a staff of 200 involved in gathering signals intelligence and analysis. Her final tour was at the National Security Agency headquarters. Her career frustration was not knowing the impact of the intelligence she helped collect. After six years of service, she left the Army in 1977 to start a family.

**LENORE CHAMBERS,
Lieutenant, U.S. Navy**

Lenore spent eight years in the Navy. Entering with a business degree, she attended Officers Candidate School. She is very humble about her service, stating “I did not have hard duty or combat experience.” During her service, she managed the Officer’s Club at Guantanamo Bay, Cuba, and was later assigned to the recruit training command in San Diego. She also served as a non-tactical information technology officer, after obtaining a degree in that specialty. She left the service in 1984.

OUR GRATITUDE

We have not had the opportunity to interview all the women veterans in CH. No doubt there are others that we did not discover, but we honor you as well. As evidenced by these profiles, these women had similar experiences; they met with challenges, developed leadership skills, and loved serving their country. We are grateful for their trailblazing efforts and their service.

We offer our sincere thanks to ALL who have served our country, all risking much and working hard to keep the United States of America “the land of the free and the home of the brave.” We salute you all! □



CH Meets World War II

by Cass Liberman, Chronicle Writer and Editor

You never know who you might meet, living here in Colonial Heritage. We are a community from many places, with many stories. Some may be a bit surprising, and they may be as close as right across your street.

Meet Alta Holmes Dell, our neighbor. Alta was 97 when we moved into our house in CH; to meet her was to like her. We chatted with Alta when outside and learned she enjoyed a glass of wine in the evening. At her 98th birthday party in October of 2021, we discovered her surprising life story: Alta had worked on *The Manhattan Project* at the giant, secret “atomic city” in Oak Ridge, Tennessee.

How did a small-town girl, born in Sylacauga, Alabama in 1923, become involved in the race to make the world’s biggest bomb? Alta and her twin sister Alma were good students and dreamed of college, but the money just wasn’t there. Like so many of their generation, they went to work after high school. “But we had a benefactor,” she told me. A wealthy man in their town paid for the sisters to attend Auburn University for two years. “We majored in chemistry,” and that became the step that would lead the sisters to Tennessee.



Alta was using her chemistry knowledge back home working at the local drugstore. In 1943, the U.S. Army found both Alta and Alma and offered them work at salaries they could not resist.

Welcome to Oak Ridge, Tennessee. A top-secret military installation had been hastily built in the Tennessee mountains in the early 1940s. Tens of thousands of people were recruited to live there, working in one secret job or another, all of the recruits unknowingly contributing to The Manhattan Project—the development of an atomic bomb more powerful than any weapon ever built. *Second only to the Bomb, the most important product of Oak Ridge was secrecy.* Alta and Alma would spend the next two years there. The sisters traveled together by train from Alabama to Tennessee. Once at Oak Ridge, they shared a room in one of the dormitory buildings for single women. “It was like a hotel,” Alta said. “They cleaned our room, did our laundry, fed us well, took care of us. We were in hog heaven!”

The recruits learned that they were working on an important piece of the American war effort, and total secrecy was vital. At its peak, Oak Ridge had 70,000 residents, each one sworn to



ALTA WITH HER SON CELEBRATING HER 100TH BIRTHDAY

silence about their jobs. Once recruits agreed to maintain the strict rules, their training began. Many of the young women, some fresh out of high school and still in their teens, were trained to operate *calutrons*. Ten thousand Calutron Girls separated uranium with these machines 24 hours a day. They learned their job and they did it very well, out-performing the PhDs at UC Berkeley where the calutrons had been invented.

Alta and Alma were not Calutron Girls. Their chemistry studies at Auburn qualified them for other things. They worked at purifying and enriching uranium. Their protective gear was collected at the end of each shift and carefully cleaned for any uranium dust. Did they ask questions about their work? I asked Alta. “Questions? I didn’t ask any questions. You did your job, and you didn’t talk about it.” Alta remained vague about details of her work. That pledge of secrecy was deeply ingrained. Alta’s daughter Cindy says her mother didn’t tell her children about her time at Oak Ridge until they were adults, and even then, the details were few. This wasn’t uncommon among Oak Ridge veterans.

The bombing of Hiroshima made the puzzle pieces come together when the Oak Ridge workers finally understood what they’d been working toward. “Little Boy” was dropped on Hiroshima; it was the bomb that the Oak Ridge workers made possible.

Alta said goodbye to Oak Ridge in 1945 when the war ended and used her savings from her well-paid work to study and earn a chemistry degree at the University of Tennessee. At UT she met Bill Dell, the man she would marry. Alta went back to work at Oak Ridge in 1947, working to help her husband finish his Physics degree at UT. “I married a rocket scientist!” she said.

What did Alta remember most about Oak Ridge? “The money. I never saw so much money.” For a child of the Depression, the money was unimaginable.

With Bill out of college by then, and beginning his career, Alta left Oak Ridge again in 1950. Bill’s work

(see CH MEETS WORLD WAR II - continued on next page)



(CH MEETS WORLD WAR II - continued from previous page)

involved travel and, when possible, they traveled together, their golf clubs tagging along. They raised a family and welcomed grandchildren. In the 1980s, Alta took her family to the museums at Oak Ridge and showed them where she had worked. When she saw her cubicle, she wasn't happy. "That's not my desk! That's wood. My desk was stainless steel!"

Welcome to Colonial Heritage. In time, she and Bill retired to CH, golfing and enjoying a glass of wine in the evenings. "I never drank alcohol until I met Bill." Alta lost Bill some years ago, but she stayed in her home here on the golf course. Eventually, her daughter Cindy moved in to help.

A 100th birthday party, planned for October of 2023, was held, but the guest of honor was in the hospital, having fallen a few days beforehand. Alta had visitors, friends, and family on her 100th birthday, who brought flowers and wine. She strongly objected to moving to assisted living, and she didn't. Shortly after her 100th birthday, Alta passed away in her sleep.

"Did you worry," I asked her last September, "about your exposure to uranium affecting your health?" She smiled. "No. I'm almost one hundred years old. I think I did okay."

I feel privileged to have known Alta Holmes Dell; I see her in my mind's eye walking to her mailbox each day, in her white polo shirt and khaki pants: ever the golfer. □

More About The Manhattan Project

by Cass Liberman, Chronicle Writer and Editor

If you are interested in reading more about World War II's Manhattan Project and the personal stories of the people who worked at Oak Ridge, there is an excellent book: *The Girls of Atomic City* by Denise Kiernan. It's available to borrow for free if you have a Kindle Unlimited account, or through a local library. It's also an Audible recording. The book is very well-researched, and well-written, and the interviews with the women who did so much of this work are fascinating. The book covers much more than just the people who were recruited; it tells the complete story of the genesis of the atomic bomb. The book is not a novel—these are real people with real memories, the people who, like Alta, lived that story.

Among the 70,000 residents at Oak Ridge were those unknowingly working to build the bomb but also people working to make it possible for Oak Ridge to function: cleaners, cooks, mechanics, builders, electricians, masons, plumbers, shopkeepers, laundresses... and all of them sworn to secrecy. Those of us living in our tell-all society have a hard time understanding the enormous undertaking it was to keep loose lips tight and secrets safe.

Spring Gardening Tips

by Snow Juanpere, Chronicle Writer and Editor

It's Spring and time to spruce up your garden. Here are some tips for getting it ready:

Pull out weeds. If weeds have sprouted in the cool weather or are left over from last year, get rid of them now while the ground is still soft and moist.

Prune. This is the time to prune shrubs that flower from late June through fall. This includes plants like butterfly bush, hydrangea, crepe myrtle, rose of Sharon, and summer-blooming spirea, to name a few. Spring-blooming shrubs such as azaleas, rhododendrons, weigela, lilac, forsythia, and viburnum are best pruned after flowering.

Get rid of dead perennial leaves. If you haven't already cut back any frost-killed perennials, rake or clip off browned foliage. This allows for new healthier growth. Rake matted or other leaves on the lawn. Leaves that have blown under trees, shrubs or perennials can be left in place as compost and mulched over.

Fertilize the beds. Once the ground starts to thaw, apply granular fertilizer around trees, shrubs, and perennials. Be sure to match the type of fertilizer to the plant, shrub, or tree being fertilized.

Inspect trees, shrubs, and other plants for winter damage. Remove any broken, dead, or damaged

branches. Also, snip the tips of evergreens that have suffered diebacks from the winter's cold weather.

Divide perennials. Just before new growth starts is a good time to dig and divide up most perennials growing beyond where you would like them to be. Replant the new clumps as soon as possible and water thoroughly. Early-season perennials that have started to bloom or are in bud getting ready to bloom should be left alone. It is best to divide this type of plant in the fall.

Edge beds and mulch. If the ground needs replenishing to provide nutrients to your flowering plants, it is best to apply some garden soil, peat moss, or compost before mulching. Mulch about 1" to 1 ½" to your beds and around trees and shrubs.

During the long growing season here, the *James City County Williamsburg Master Gardener Association* offers free home clinics. The clinics may be free, but the information is priceless, shared by Master Gardeners. If you want some educated advice about your garden and yard, visit www.jccwmg.org. After March 18th, be sure to get an appointment for your free visit from the *Landscape Love* team.

Mark your calendars for Historic Garden Week April 20-27, 2024. It's also important to note that, effective immediately, USDA changed our area's plant hardiness zone from Zone 7b to 8a. Happy gardening! □



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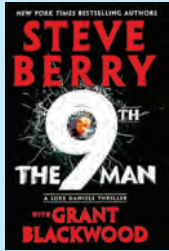
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Book Reviews

For the New Year, I thought I would try to find some good political/military thrillers I could recommend as worthy of your time and money. I scoured the hardback databases for thrillers printed after December 2019. Sad to say, that period abounds with lots of thrillers ranging in quality from “so-so” to “why did I buy this?” So, in this issue, I divided the review space into two parts. Part 1 is the GOOD, which describes a book you might enjoy. Part 2 is the BAD, and the UGLY, popular novels with questionable plots and/or badly written.

PART 1. The Good.

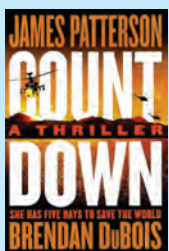


The 9th Man (2023) by Steve Berry and Grant Blackwood, Grand Central Publishing, New York, pp. 353. This book is a thrilling and unique take on one of the most tragic events in our history, the assassination of President John F. Kennedy. The appeal of this fiction is that it is built on a solid foundation of facts. The Writers' Notes on pp. 347-351 are fascinating. The plot involves

one powerful man attempting to cover up a truth that has not been told. Opposing him is a small group of dedicated men trying to reveal that truth. A former female Marine (Jillian Stein) and a former Army Ranger (Luke Daniels) are drawn into this conflict and try to help uncover the truth. The action ranges from Europe to the Louisiana bayous, Wyoming, and the Bahamas, as the ex-military duo search for assassination photos taken on Dealey Plaza, a mysterious rifle, and a manuscript that will document and reveal the truth. Two groups are tracking Stein and Daniels to stop them (or follow them and confiscate their findings). One of their pursuing groups is a pack of Indonesian killers who are, in turn, being followed by a pack of home-grown killers to make sure the Indonesians don't bungle the job. Both groups of heavies leave a trail of mayhem in their wake as they try to eliminate anyone or any building that might expose the coverup.

For the reader interested in the details of the shooting in Dallas there are a few interesting diagrams and explanations, but you can skip them and grasp the key events and questions. As an added gift, there are a few surprising twists you won't see coming. The military purist will see some research holes and improbabilities in the story. This shouldn't (and didn't) trouble the average reader. The book has an Amazon rating of 4.6 of five stars, based on 2,184 responses. Enjoy!

PART 2. The Bad and the Ugly.



The first is *Countdown* (2023) by James Patterson and Brendan DuBois, Little, Brown and Company, NY, pp. 451. The plot, stop-the-evil-rich-Arab-terrorist-before-he-destroys-NYC, is stale and convoluted. At great expense of time and money, the terrorist purchased and refurbished a railroad to carry out his fiendish plan. He misleads authorities with threats of a nuke and anthrax.

There is a point in the story when you wonder why there are no casualties from an anthrax explosion, but, hey, it's fiction. The heroine

is CIA assassin, Amy Cornwall. She uses expletives to prove she's one of the boys, and too-frequent references to her unique female anatomy to prove she is one tough gal. Her partner is MI6 operator Jeremy. Amy and Jeremy have friends who just pop up, without warning, in the right place and time to get them within striking distance of the terrorist. Will they make it in time? Will you care?

Now, for the writing, which is high-school-bad. Here's a dialogue sequence from page 152:

Amy says, "I'm with you."

"And glad of it," [Jeremy] says, meaning every word.

"I know." "Do you?" he asks. "Amy says . . ."

These “he says,” and “she says” dialogue tags occur throughout, appended to conversations devoid of relevant content. The stilted dialogue was so annoying that I switched from the digital to the written edition so that I could skim over the drivel. Never mind, this book had a 4.5-star Amazon rating with 6,000+ responses, but some die-hard Patterson fans just could not give this book the bad rating it deserved. One reader who provided four stars wrote: “Promising but empty.” Find yourself another book!



Here is the second *thriller* I don't recommend: *The Secret Weapon* (2020), by Bradley Wright. Again, we encounter the same tired stop-the-evil-rich-Arab-terrorist-before-he-destroys-something. The target is the US government, from within. A character demolishes this plot by asking the stupid terrorist mastermind (and here I'm paraphrasing), “How could you believe that once your man is in the White House, you can control him?” Alexander King, a CIA hitman, is the hero. His competition is assassin Doug Chapman. In a ridiculous sequence, Chapman shoots and kills the CIA director in her Langley office. To accomplish this, he entered the building using his old pass (yeah, right!), smuggled a weapon past metal detectors and guards, skulked around the building without an escort, killed the director, and erased his image from all camera recordings. How he accomplished these miracles remains a mystery. You just have to take ol' Doug's word. A reader-reviewer wrote, “This was a waste of money, and more importantly, precious time when I could have been reading something better.” Again, there is no accounting for the varied tastes of readers. As of this writing, the book had 6000+ ratings. More than 80 percent were four- and five-star ratings. Go figure . . . and go find something else to read. □

by James Scott, Chronicle Writer, Editor and Award-Winning Author of International Spy Thrillers



We Have Fun!

Holiday Celebrations





LIGHTS! CAMERA! ACTION!

The CH Community Photographers at Work

by Josephine Loizzo, *Chronicle Writer and Editor*

Almost anyone who has lived in Colonial Heritage for more than three years knew Ken Jenkins, the community's former photographer and *The Chronicle* layout and production manager since its inception. Ken and his wife, Marty, left CH three years ago to be closer to their family.

Immediately, CH was fortunate to have Barry Smith step into the void left by Ken Jenkins. Barry "loves being the community photographer."

BARRY SMITH

Barry comes from Pennsylvania and has spent many years in the Northeast: Connecticut and New York. He has a B.A. in History from Marist College, but he always loved photography; he even had a darkroom in his basement from age 16. After college, he became involved in managing printing companies. Barry and his wife Sally Pittman-Smith have three children, nine grandchildren, and two great-grandchildren, all in Virginia and North Carolina. Barry loves to play golf; music is his other hobby.



Barry retired in 2009 and moved to Colonial Heritage. He was the occasional backup for Ken Jenkins at community events. Barry tells us he enjoys taking pictures of the community and has improved his skills as a photographer while equipping himself with more sophisticated photography gear.

You can see Barry—and have him take a picture of you and your spouse or companion(s)—at all social events, including dinner dances, whether sponsored by the HOA or Social Committee. Look for the event-related backdrop, get in the queue, and *voila!* you will have a picture that may appear in the next issue of *The Chronicle*, but will definitely appear on Barry's website of pictures and events, <https://barrysmith.smugmug.com>. Follow the easy directions on his website to download pictures, print, or purchase them. If you choose to purchase pictures, you can pick the size and get a print, wall art, greeting card, or album!

When you see Barry at a CH event—whether it be the golf cart parade, the doggie swim, or the Christmas Tree Lighting, or in his role as official *Chronicle* photographer—say, "Hi!" to this quiet, unassuming man. We should all thank him for the countless hours he has devoted to serving our community!

STEVE CAFFERY

Steve Caffery calls himself the "stringer" photographer for CH. He is our on-call photographer when Barry Smith can't attend an event, or when we need two photographers at the same time—yes, it happens! He is quite happy to act on our behalf in this role and has the experience and skill.



Steve was born in California, but at age 25 went to graduate school in New York City to earn his Master of Fine Arts in Performing Arts Administration. Subsequently, he held jobs in performing arts around the country and finally settled in Yakima, Washington. There, for thirty years, he was CEO of the Capitol Theatre, a performing arts facility with 1,500 seats, later expanded to include another 500-seat theater. The facility hosted first-class national musical tours, Broadway musical productions, and other entertainment and community events.

Steve retired and moved to Glens Falls, New York, for five years, but the cold weather drove him and his wife, Anne, to Colonial Heritage and a better climate. They bought their house here three years ago, without seeing it in person, and love the community.

Steve "played with" photography for most of his adult life. After retiring, he volunteered for Habitat for Humanity in Africa, where he renewed his love of nature photography. He was accompanied on this trip by his daughter Abigail, an artist, who lives with Steve and his wife.

Steve currently shoots performing arts production pieces, as well as street, travel, and infrared photography. He has done headshots and on-location photography (e.g., the JCBVFD Firehouse) for *Chronicle* articles, and has also taken pictures in the Colonial Historic Triangle: Jamestown, Yorktown, and Williamsburg. Steve says photography allows him to use both his left and right brain. He has a good eye for composition and loves to spend time on the computer manipulating pictures with Artificial Intelligence (AI). In addition to photography, Steve spends his time taking W&M Osher courses and reading.

You can see his work and download photos at <https://www.smalltownstreetlife.com>. Thank you, Steve, for being a great volunteer photographer in our community. □



The Colonial Heritage Golf Page

Golf Committee

A Great Time to be a CH Golfer

by Gary Parriott, Committee Chair



Welcome to 2024. This is an exciting year for the Colonial Heritage Golf Club and the Golf Committee is already hard at work. But before getting into what we have planned this year, I'd like to welcome aboard our two newest members to the committee: Jim McGinn and

Jody Kelliher. They are both great additions to our team and we look forward to working with them.

Working closely with the Pro Shop and Up to Par, the committee has planned an exciting schedule of member and resident events. Starting with the Icebreaker Tournament in March and ending with the always-popular Superintendent's Revenge, we have a total of seven events planned throughout the year. One of the events we're most excited about is the Colonial Heritage 20th Anniversary Tournament on September 26th. This will be a community-wide event to help celebrate the anniversary of the first home closing in Colonial Heritage. So, please save the date and watch for announcements as we get closer to September.

In the past, we had offered a Colonial Heritage Scholarship for local high school golfers heading off to college. Last year the committee decided to reprise this effort and will be raising money for the scholarship during the Master's Par 3 Tournament in April. In addition to raising money for the scholarship fund, we will be raising money for cancer research with the USO during the Armed Forces Challenge, and for mental health during the 20th Anniversary Tournament, and Superintendent's Revenge.

So, what can you do to help? Get involved. We are looking for volunteers to help with planning club events. So, here is your chance to make a difference and make sure you get the events you want. If you'd like to help, reach out and let us know. Then sign up to play! The more participation we have, the better we can make the events—hope you'll come out and join your fellow golfers. Have fun and meet new neighbors. What could be better?

Whether you're a competitive golfer or just want to play a friendly round, we have many different

opportunities to play. There are the Men's and Ladies Golf Associations, the Monday Afternoon Recreation League, and the always-popular Nine & Dines. If you're not a golfer, there are many ways to start enjoying this great game. We have a large selection of new golfer events throughout the year to help start you on your golfing journey. Just reach out to the Pro Shop for more information.

Anyone who has questions, concerns, or good ideas on how to make the golf experience better, please email the committee at golf@colonialheritageclub.org. Better yet, attend Golf Committee meetings on the third Thursday of every month at 2 PM and let us know in person. We'll see you on the putting green! ☐

Men's Golf Association

by Bob Efird, President

The CH Men's Golf Association (MGA) had a terrific year in 2023. We finished the season with 124 members, including 22 new members! Our Wednesday weekly events averaged 60 players with 45 playing competitive and 15 playing social. Each week, golfers chose to participate in either the competitive or social flight.

The MGA Awards Banquet was held in November with 90 people in attendance. The evening was full of good food, drinks, fellowship, jokes, stories, prizes, and fun. Awards were presented to the following members:

- Match Play Flight Winners: Brock Smith, John Arpin, Raoul Dalusung, Rich Mellor, Joe Romelczyk and Melvin Boyd.
- Low Gross Score: Steve Romanko.
- Low Net Score: Pete Diakun.
- Most Improved Player: Steve Douglas.
- Most Prize Pool Winnings: Steve Romanko.
- Sharpshooter Award: Rich Mellor.
- Hole-in-Ones: 7 in 2023 by MGA members.

Congratulations to all the winners and many thanks to the following members who made the evening a great success: John Muzzi, Joe Romelczyk, Tom Cahill, Leon Via, Mike Seigfried, Rob Van Sant, and especially John Roberts, who was our master of ceremonies.

At our December annual meeting, we re-elected the following officers for 2024:

- Bob Efird, President 757-784-1440
- Leon Via, Vice President 717-395-3293
- Mike Seigfried, Treasurer 703-431-5343
- Rob Van Sant, Secretary 717-360-0063

(see MGA - continued on next page)



(MGA - continued from previous page)

Anyone interested in joining the MGA can contact one of the MGA officers.

The 2024 MGA season kicks off on March 6th. We will play every Wednesday morning through November 20th. Some of the key events on the 2024 MGA schedule include:

- The popular MGA/LGA Captain's Choice events in May and September.
- Captain's Choice Open House for non-MGA members in May.
- Match Play Tournament starting in May.
- CH golf events such as the Masters Par 3 Tournament, Armed Forces Challenge, Club Championship, Member/Guest, Member/Member, Superintendent's Revenge, and the CH 20th Anniversary Tournament.
- Home and Away matches with Williamsburg National GC, Stonehouse GC, and Kiskiack GC.

In 2024, the MGA will continue to focus on pace of play, timely posting of our scores for accurate handicaps, care of the course, raising money for special projects, and, of course, having fun.

The MGA is all about golf, fellowship, fun, and a little competition. The weekly pairings are made randomly, so the MGA is a terrific way to meet people and establish new friendships. Following the round, players gather in The Grille for lunch, socializing and getting the weekly results.

We look forward to 2024 and encourage all local golfers to join the MGA and see what a great time we have each week. MGA dues are \$40 per year, which entitles you to play in all our weekly events. You don't have to be a good golfer to join the MGA. Everyone is welcome. So, come join the fun! ☐

Ladies Golf Association

by Jody Kelliher, President

The Colonial Heritage Ladies Golf Association (CHLGA). If you are a woman and interested in golf, you're invited to come to our spring membership meeting on March 12th at 9 AM in the King and Queen Room. We begin play on April 2nd and run through October. Our goal: to gain members and promote women's golf. We offer two levels of play: Regular (competitive) and Social (non-competitive). Regular is for players with established handicap ratings. There are weekly 9 and 18-hole games and five annual tournaments. Social members play friendly, non-competitive 9-hole games. We grew our membership to 74 in 2023, a 20% increase from 2022!

In November of 2023, we elected to the CHLGA board for 2024:

Jody Kelliher – President
Cathy Cope – VP of 18-holes
Joyce Lucas – VP of 9-holes
Chris Walker – VP of Social
Kathy Wheeler – Secretary
Lisa Van Divender – Treasurer

Regular dues are \$35, Social dues are \$15. Dues are for administrative purposes and activities, with a percentage paid out in prize money from tournaments at the end of the season. The ladies put in \$2 for non-tournament weekly games (optional) and the winners have money put into their credit book at the Pro Shop. Signup for weekly games is done online. You do not need a CH Golf Membership to be in the CHLGA. For information about the CHLGA contact us at colherlga@gmail.com. ☐

Women's Golf Day (WGD) Here in CH

Save the date! We are excited to bring Women's Golf Day back to CH on May 28th this year. We have a new and enthusiastic committee hard at work. The co-chairs of the event are Beth Brown and Linda Duchaine and below is a peek at what the WGD committee has planned.

Have you been dreaming of playing golf? We can make your golf dreams come true. Whether you have not played in years, or never played at all, the CHLGA has a special day of golf planned just for you! Come join us for WGD, designed to ignite your passion and spark your love of the game. You will make new friends, learn new skills, and enjoy playing on a "world-class" course accompanied by members of the LGA.

Women's Golf Day (WGD) began in 2016, and since then it's been held in 1200 locations in 88 countries, in collaboration with committed golf management companies, like our own *Up To Par Management*. The mission is to engage, empower, and support women and girls playing golf and learning lifetime skills. That means getting *you* into golf! This is our second year hosting WGD and we plan even more new experiences and fun.

What Does Our WGD Look Like? Upon your arrival, you will be welcomed by your very own LGA sponsor. Ride along with your LGA partner through the course to learn about it firsthand. Each hole will have exciting activities and games, and you will sharpen your skills and learn some new strategies. Our home-course golfers will share tips and tricks along the way!

After playing, what's next? It's inside for a festive ladies' lunch and fashion show. There will also be speakers, a meet and greet, and a charity raffle for prizes and golf gear. Our hope for the day is that you experience everything we offer, from facilities to friendships, and that you leave wanting to come back for *more* golf with the CHLGA. Realize your dreams; come join us for Women's Golf Day 2024. The CHLGA wants to inspire your return to golf this year! **SAVE THE DATE!** Women's Golf Day is MAY 28th. ☐

THE PET CORNER

SAVE A LIFE! RESCUE A FOREVER FRIEND

by Doreen Conoscenti, CH Resident

You can't buy love, but you certainly can rescue it. At last count, there were about 3,500 brick-and-mortar animal shelters in the United States, with roughly 6.5 million animals entering each year. Sadly, there are only 3.2 million reported adoptions. Did you know that the Netherlands, through a government-funded program, is the world's first country without any stray dogs? The Netherlands government even created a police force for their animals.

In Williamsburg, we are fortunate to have an active and thriving rescue organization, the Heritage Humane Society (HHS). Located on Waller Mill Road, their mission is "to work as compassionate stewards of companion animals that are in transition from stray/surrender to forever homes." These animals include dogs, cats, bunnies, guinea pigs, hamsters, and even an occasional mouse. Over 90 % of the HHS operating budget is raised from the local community, mostly from individual supporters, with assistance from businesses, clubs, and foundations. Throughout the year, the HHS sponsors fundraising events, including a *Holiday Bazaar*, *Spring in Bloom* online auction, and *FURever Homes Fun Runs*.

While the HHS does an amazing job finding homes for felines, since July 2022, they have had the additional support of *Schwartzky's Cat Cove*. Located on Main Street in Newtown, Amanda Wilbourne opened this space adjacent to her shop, *The Nautical Dog*. This large room is filled with toys and perches, allowing the cats to live in a stress-free environment—to roam free, socialize, and replicate an actual home setting. The HHS selects which cats are brought to the Cove, ranging from kittens to seniors, and those with special needs. *Schwartzky's* can house as many as 24, but the usual number is closer to 15. Once accepted, the cats remain until adopted. Most felines are gone within a week or two. Amanda covers housing costs; HHS receives the adoption fees.

Adopting a rescue is nothing new to Barb and George Talley. Sophie, a lovable eight-year-old Golden Retriever, is their fifth—all rescued from Southeastern Virginia Golden Retriever Rescue, Education, and Training (SEVA GRREAT). In July 2020, the Talleys moved from the Richmond area into their home on Lord Dunmore Drive. Before that, they spent 26 years in Hampton. Barb is originally from Philadelphia and spent

her 45-year career as a medical technologist. George hails from Bucks County, Pennsylvania, served in the Air Force, worked for the Newport News Shipbuilding Company, and was an instrumentation specialist for NASA. They met on a blind date and have been married for 51 years.

They found Ben, their first Golden, when he was eight. He stole their hearts when he kept raising his paw as if to flag them down. Their second rescue was Foster, a four-year-old who actually jumped up and tapped Barb on her shoulder saying, "Pay attention to me!" He was to be a foster pup but, after one weekend, he was theirs for good. Third on the list was Cash, a six-year-old, named after the five-dollar bill he found while out on their first walk. They thought Max would be their last dog, adopting him at ten years. Amazingly, he lived to over 14 which is quite long for a Golden.

Last, but certainly not least, is wonderful Sophie. Initially, she was about 20 pounds over her ideal weight and had low energy. Now, she's up for anything, including hikes, runs, and long walks. The Talleys say Sophie is quite the socialite, a "party animal" in their neighborhood's family of dogs. After her fun activities wind down for the day, she's ready for her nap. If napping was an Olympic sport, Sophie would have a shelf of gold medals.

Whether you adopt from the HHS, *Schwartzky's Cat Cove*, or a breed-specific site like the Talleys used, rescuing a pet not only saves a life, but these pets seem to know they have been saved and are forever grateful. □



THE BEAUTIFUL SOPHIE



BARB AND GEORGE WITH THEIR "PARTY" POOCH



Fun In The Pool — Sunday Night Aqua Volleyball Blast

by Josephine Loizzo, Chronicle Writer and Editor

Bonnie Tracey loves sports. She is a Christopher Newport University graduate and was an administrator there for 34 years. She plays evening pickleball regularly. One summer Sunday, she encouraged a few of her friends to play catch in the outdoor pool. They were breaking the rules—no balls are allowed in the outdoor pool. They had so much fun, they went to the BOD to see what they could arrange. Her idea was volleyball. The BOD and the Pool Committee approved. Sunday night indoor pool volleyball was launched.

Bonnie and her husband, John Moffat, created an interest group that plays on Sunday nights from 6:00 to 7:30 PM. They use a standard volleyball net and are very cautious about safety. The pool is only 3 ½ to 4 feet deep where they play (in the center of the pool). So, the play is done in seated floats, the most popular of which is from Amazon and called *Swimline*. By requiring the players to sit in the floats, the playing field is leveled, since the players are of different heights and the net is so low. It makes for what Bonnie calls “wacky volleyball.”

There are 28 registered players, but on any given Sunday night, there are usually six to eight players. Bonnie would love to have more residents join the group, and the ideal number of players each time is 12, (six on each side of the net.)

I attended the January 7th Volleyball Blast and watched the players laugh themselves silly, batting the beach ball over the net. The pool temperature was 85 degrees, and the pool room was very comfortable. If interested in exercise, the pool, and/or volleyball, check out this game! Our pictures speak for themselves, but if you want to go observe, show up at 6 PM on any Sunday. If you have questions, contact Bonnie Tracey at bonniet290@gmail.com. ☐



BONNIE TRACEY AND ANDY POOLE



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WHAT A BLESSING!

The CH Helpers completed their 500th service call in our community on January 13, 2024!



Hi, neighbor. We're the **CH Helpers**.

We're fellow CH residents here for your household odd jobs, if you're not able to do them yourself.

- Use a ladder
- Change lightbulb
- Change batteries
- Plant flowers or bushes
- Change filters
- And more!

We charge no fees; we just want to help so that all may know that others care.

Just email us at CHHelpers13@gmail.com and include your phone number and a short description of what you'd like done. We'll contact you to set up a time that's convenient for you.



Clubs and Interest Groups

Club One

by Marci Kaplan-Lips, Group Leader

This year looks to be a great year for the club. We started the year with a New Year's celebration dinner at Francesco's and then a ball drop gathering at a member's home. We are continuing with our first Wednesday morning Coffee Klatch, and the First Friday social and dinner. Newly added are luncheons on the third week of the month; the day varies to make it more accessible to all our members.

Over the last few months, members have hosted wine dinners at Carrabba's, birthday celebrations at Olde Towne Pizza, and a Feast of St. Valentine's gathering. We look forward to having many more exciting events and gatherings in 2024.

Are you new to Colonial Heritage and Single?

Moving is a difficult transition at best but moving to an unfamiliar area can be even more daunting. Meeting people and making friends under these circumstances can be emotionally difficult. This is especially true for single seniors who often feel left out when activities are designed around couples. The Colonial Heritage Club 1 is a networking club made up of single senior residents who can help other single seniors transition to this community.

Newly single but not new to Colonial Heritage?

Please know that this group is for you. As a resident who has become single you are welcome to come and join in as if you had just moved here.

Club 1 is for ALL CH Singles.

Our networking venue provides an opportunity for both single men and women to enjoy group activities designed with them in mind. This allows singles to



FUN WITH CLUB ONE!

participate in many activities and enjoy everything that the Williamsburg area offers. There is almost always someone interested in joining in any activity that interests you. So, you don't have to sit at home because you don't want to go out alone. Members are encouraged to explore and find new events and assist in the planning of new group activities. New members may find that helping plan some of the activities provides a faster way to meet others and make new friends.

Joining Club 1 is simple, easy, and, best of all, FREE. Join us every First Friday of the month at 5 PM at the Clubhouse or reach out to the administrative team at Colonialheritageclubone@gmail.com. You will be pleased with the warm welcome you receive and the people you meet. Be forewarned that this is a jovial group that can be noisy at times; so, prepare to enjoy yourself. There are many activities in the planning stage. Come join us and have some fun! ☐

Model Railroad Club

How Do They Do That?

by Mike Conrad, Club Leader

Visitors to the Colonial Heritage Model Railroad Club's Christmas and summer displays are amazed to see model trains performing in ways that are quite different from the trains they may have operated as a child. In this article, we take a look at one way the world's greatest hobby has changed over the years and, in the process, answer the question that we often hear, "How do they do that?"

In model trains you may have played with as a kid, electricity was applied to the rails and ultimately the locomotive by a power pack. This device took the lethal high voltage in your home's outlets and lowered it to a much safer level. It also converted the alternating current (AC) to direct current (DC). A lever on the power pack allowed the user to vary the voltage applied to the track and, in turn, control the speed of the train. To change the direction of the train, most power packs also included a switch that would reverse the way power was applied to the rails and reverse the direction of the locomotive. This relatively simple system is still in use today but it has limitations. What if you wanted to run two trains at once on the same track or wanted to run trains in opposite directions on parallel tracks? Traditional power packs could not do this.

In our digital age, simple DC is being replaced by a system that gives additional flexibility and control options to the operator. The system is called DCC which stands for **digital command control**. In DCC, there

(see CLUBS AND INTEREST GROUPS - continued on next page)



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is a constant power level in the tracks. A special controller electronically communicates with a micro-chip called the *decoder* in the locomotive. The chip directs more or less current to the locomotive's electric motor controlling its speed. Because each decoder can be controlled separately, several locomotives can be operated simultaneously on the same track and different trains on different tracks can run in opposite directions. Hand-held controllers can be plugged into the layout at various locations along the right-of-way and, recently, a system was developed which allows wireless control using an app on a smartphone.

As remarkable as all this sounds, there's more. Many decoders use a sound function that allows a mini-speaker installed in the locomotive to activate engine sounds that match its type. These decoders usually include the sounds of various horns, bells, and whistles. They can turn the locomotive's headlight on and off and some can control lighting in passenger cars, smoke or no smoke in steam locomotives, and accessory signal lights on the train and along the tracks.

Our club is always looking for new members. Monthly meetings are held in the Hearts and Diamonds Room in the Clubhouse at 11 AM on the second Wednesday of the month. If interested, contact us at chmrrc2019@gmail.com. □

Woodworkers Club

by Monty Dionisio, Club Member

In a resounding vote of confidence, members of the Woodworkers Club unanimously reelected their incumbent officers, led by Chairperson Joe Bruno and Treasurer Ken Slack, into their second term through 2024. This year marks the 15th anniversary of the founding of the CH Woodworkers Club and there's palpable excitement in club members' interest, cooperation, and participation in ongoing projects.

CHWC's participation in the Craft Fair held at the Clubhouse was a huge success. A team led by Pete Costanzo and assisted by Garrett Byrnes, Larry Muncy, and Jake Pell organized the fundraising project. Net proceeds of \$600 to benefit the



JOE BRUNO'S WALNUT/CHERRY TABLE

JCBVFD were raised from sales of wood items donated by club members. Kitchen cutting boards with artfully designed 3-D patterns sold out quickly. In appreciation, members chipped in to give a holiday cash gift to the HOA woodshop maintenance crew, Don Criswell and Mike Moreals, for their outstanding job of keeping equipment in operational mode, including ordering machine parts.

On the topic of proper equipment use, Chairperson Joe Bruno cautioned that, for projects using glue, such as cutting boards, the glue be removed on the belt sander first. The glue can easily damage the drum sander, which is difficult to repair. In addition, nails or metal of any kind embedded in the wood will cause havoc on the band saw or the circular saw. Everyone understands that accidents happen and machine breakdowns occur periodically; however, in a case where negligence or deliberate abuse of shop or equipment is suspected, HOA now has a procedure to review the woodshop video to hold those negligent accountable.

F&B had asked CHWC to scope the work of designing and building a wine cabinet for the Clubhouse's main dining room. Final F&B approval of the wine cabinet design is pending. The Banquet and Events Committee also requested CHWC to look into possibly reducing the size of their conference table. On another task, JCBVFD requested CHWC to build a speaker's podium. Garrett Byrnes volunteered to spearhead the project.

Show and Tell period during club meetings allows members the opportunity to show off their favorite projects and share woodworking techniques. Kevin Kimmel displayed his first pen made from the wood of a golf club. Additionally, he shared the beautiful wooden bowl he crafted. Tom Clark generously shared a well-researched chain saw that he and Joe Boyle had purchased. Chairperson Joe Bruno shared photos of a 30-inch square walnut/cherry table he proudly built in the last few weeks, highlighting the use of biscuits vs. dominos in its design.

CHWC membership is open to all CH residents and meets every second Tuesday of the month at 3:30 PM in the King and Queen Room. Annual dues are \$10 for a single membership and \$15 for a family. If interested in joining, please contact Heidi Johnson at mrhbjohnson@gmail.com. □

How to Submit an Article

All articles should be submitted to newsletter@colonialheritageclub.org. Submit your article as a Word file. Regular articles should be between 300 – 500 words. All articles go through an editorial process, and exceptions can be made. Articles of a political, religious, or solicitation nature will not be published. □

Tech Club

Electric Vehicle Types

by Glen Thompson, Club Member

EVs are a hot topic. We thought it would be helpful to provide some clarity regarding the types that exist and their differences. There are three basic types of electric vehicles on the market today: Hybrids (HEV), Plugin Hybrids (PHEV), and Battery Electric (BEV).



Hybrids (HEV)

The most well-known hybrid is the Toyota Prius, sold in the US since 2000. Hybrids save fuel by combining an efficient **gas** engine with an electric motor powered by a small battery pack. The engine is designed for high efficiency when cruising but suffers from poor power output. The electric motor makes up for that with high torque for acceleration. The Prius generally gets 50+ miles per gallon. The battery for the electric motor is recharged by regenerative braking as the car comes to a stop. The Prius can only go one to two miles on electric power alone. Additional fuel savings are realized when the motor shuts off at traffic lights.

Plugin Hybrids (PHEV)

Plugin hybrids retain the **gas** engine but the battery pack size is increased allowing electric-only operation for longer distances. That range varies from 10 to 50 miles depending on the model. The vehicle can be plugged in at home and recharged in a few hours. A Prius Prime can be driven from CH to New Town every day and never use a drop of gas.

Battery Electric Vehicles (BEV)

A BEV runs on electricity alone using a large battery pack. Tesla is the most well-known American manufacturer but others are available or coming soon. Examples include the VW ID4, Ford Mustang Mach-E, Nissan Leaf, and Hyundai Ioniq 5. Battery ranges vary widely between 100 and over 400 miles. BEVs are more efficient with about 90% of the input energy delivered to the wheels compared to only 20% for internal combustion

engines (ICE). Most BEVs have excellent performance with instant torque. They can accelerate from 0-60 in under 5 seconds and are much quieter than ICEs. The noise level is about 10 decibels lower, which is half as loud. Range anxiety can be an issue for some drivers. Unless you drive in certain mountain states, charging is usually not a problem. Tesla has a built-in navigation charge planner that tells you where to charge. Unfortunately, some BEVs don't have this capability and require a bit more trip planning. There are apps available such as "A Better Route Planner" to help make non-Tesla charging easier. Of note, every BEV maker, except for Stellantis, has adopted the Tesla North American Charging Standard (NACS). This will allow all the major BEVs to use Tesla's extensive supercharging infrastructure. Range anxiety will be a thing of the past.

Which one should you choose?

That depends on where you live and travel. Most CH residents would be well served with a BEV for local and short-distance trips. Those who frequently travel long distances (hundreds of miles in a single trip) might need to consider a HEV or PHEV. Many people overestimate the amount of long-distance driving they do.

When deciding on your next car purchase, keep a few things in mind. First, ICE, HEV, and PHEV vehicles all require significantly more maintenance than BEVs. Second, a BEV is far more economical. This is because both HEVs and PHEVs still have **gas engines and transmissions** in addition to their batteries. You still need to go to a gas station and need periodic engine, drivetrain, and brake maintenance. BEVs use no gas, have no transmission, and don't wear out brakes.

The Tech Club's mission is to share knowledge and skills among CH clubs, committees, and residents. We meet at 2 PM on the third Tuesday of every month. For more information go to Campsite. bio/CHTC, or use the QR code. □



Garden Club

by Rosie Crocco, Club Member

Founded in 2012, the Colonial Heritage Garden Club has continued to grow to over 100 members. We are a vibrant active organization that brings members together for socialization, gardening education, floral design, workshops, beautification of our landscapes, and environmental responsibility.



(see CLUBS AND INTEREST GROUPS - continued on next page)



(CLUBS AND INTEREST GROUPS - continued from previous page)

We welcome you to become a garden club member and we invite you to attend our meetings held on the third Tuesday of each month. The meetings feature speakers on various topics such as landscaping, gardening, environmental issues, and care of our natural resources. There are exhibits on floral design, tablescapes, and horticulture. Lunch follows the general business meeting, and lunch reservations are required. We always look forward to being inspired by our members, and we welcome those who join us for the first time.

We have several fundraisers throughout the year. Funds are donated to the Williamsburg Botanical

Gardens, Nature Camp, JC Bruton Volunteer Fire Department, Blue Star Marker, the CH Wildflower Meadow, Penny Pines Reforestation Program, Hospice House, Garden Therapy Programs, and the Williamsburg Community Growers.

Garden Club members are responsible for the beautiful holiday decorations you see within the Clubhouse, as well as on the grounds of our community. We were excited to host the second CH Tree Lighting in December. The garden tour held every other year allows homeowners to explore and be inspired by the many beautiful gardens in our community.

(see CLUBS AND INTEREST GROUPS - continued on next page)

Travel Club

by Terry Murphy-Lewis, Club Leader

The 2024 travel season is off and running! So far, we have two show events (The *Tina Turner Musical* and *Menopause*) and five trips in place for 2024: the Turkey land tour, the Viking Elbe River Cruise, the Beaches of Normandy River Cruise, and two Iceland land tours.

We are working on the Christmas 2024 trip which will take place between Thanksgiving and Christmas. You will see the details on that trip very soon. We are going to do our best to plan for two groups, since the Christmas trips are so popular.

Hard to believe it, but we have already released two trips for 2025: The Princess Norway Cruise and the Canadian Rocky Mountaineer tour. We know it seems like a long way out, but it is already getting to be a challenge to secure space for 2025 groups.

The Travel Club will host another annual community event this year. We are scheduling the event for July 17th in the Ballroom. We use these events to present our new trip options and then we take a survey on the interest level. The results of these surveys help us determine which trips to prioritize.

Some trips are easier to put together than others and some are proving more difficult to meet everyone's needs. Based on last year's survey, folks want to go to Australia but they don't want to be gone for over two weeks and they don't want a long commute to get there. Well, that presents quite a challenge! Unfortunately, my "Beam Me Up Scotty" transporter is out of order. So, we will have to do this the old-school way and fly. Hope we can pull off this trip.

Please keep checking the website for the most current information. It is our "go-to" place for all updates and forms. As always, you can contact the Travel Club at chtravelclub@gmail.com or visit our website at www.chtravelclub.org. □



CHRISTMAS TOUR – NOVEMBER 2023



CHRISTMAS TOUR – DECEMBER 2023



(CLUBS AND INTEREST GROUPS - continued from previous page)

Please join the Garden Club for our annual SPRING FLING, featuring a silent auction, bake sale, and fashion show to be held this year on Tuesday, April 23rd. Tickets are \$35 per person. Food will be served and a cash bar available. For further information, please contact Stephanie Lupo, President, at stephanie5990@gmail.com, or Carol Lee, Event Chair at carol@donandcarol.net. ☐

2023 Beautiful Fall Garden Winners

by Jan Renehan, Club Member

Each year, in the spring and fall, the Colonial Heritage Garden Club (CHGC) presents an award for the Beautiful Garden of the Season. Nominations are solicited and a committee of club members conducts reviews. The group visits and judges the gardens based on predetermined criteria such as curb appeal, tidiness, maintenance, variation, balance, rhythm, flow, originality, and individuality.

The winners of the 2023 Beautiful Fall Garden are Cookie and Tom Rittenhouse, 6318 Cordelia Road. CHGC President Stephanie Lupo presented them with a gift card and placed a sign in their yard announcing the win.



Cookie and Tom moved to Williamsburg from New Jersey in September 2017. They lived in 14 different houses in New Jersey, including a 38-foot power boat! Their “hobby” was to build the house, live there for a while, sell, and start over again. Tom worked as an auto dealer and Cookie was an assistant in a doctor’s office, not because she had medical experience but because she loves people! Cookie enjoys painting with watercolors when she isn’t gardening, and Tom is an avid golf fan. Cookie and Tom have two children, four grandchildren, and two great-grandchildren in New Jersey.

Wherever you look in their yard, there is a myriad of colors and textures including begonias, roses, English ivy, mandevilla, mums, aster, geraniums, hydrangea, and ornamental peppers. While sitting on

the patio surrounded by the panorama of color, we asked Cookie what her favorite flower is. She politely responded she couldn’t possibly tell us, “Because the other flowers are listening!” Cookie uses *Leafgro* mixed into the soil. It is an organic compost that helps condition our clay soil. She also recommends *Ozmacoat*, a slow-releasing plant food, as well as *Holly-Tone* for plants and shrubs.

Congratulations, Cookie and Tom, and thank you for sharing your beautiful garden!

If you are interested in joining the Garden Club, please contact Stephanie Lupo, President, at stephanie5990@gmail.com or Membership Chair Kathi Keating at Kathikeating@gmail.com. They will be happy to answer your questions. The club meets in the Ballroom on the third Tuesday of each month at 9:30 AM from September through June. ☐

Friends of the Meadow

by Flo Tull, Group Leader

Hear Ye, Hear Ye! More Wildflower Meadows are coming to Williamsburg!

In the Fall of 2023, the *Friends of the Meadow* interest group was busy planting more food for pollinators, including more common milkweed to support monarchs. In addition to striving for more native plants per square foot, we also reach out to “talk up” the benefits of converting grass fields to include native plants and natural methods of care.

We hope this creates more interest in native habitats and, in turn, provides more food for pollinators, birds, and butterflies.

During the past year, I’ve been able to lend technical and logistical support to three local communities for the creation of their own *new* wildflower meadows.

Those communities are *Kingsmill*, *Ford’s Colony*, and *River’s Bend at Uncle’s Neck*. We hope that by sharing our lessons learned, natural land stewardship practices, native plant listing, best practices, and vendors, we can save others the learning curve we experienced. This will enable these three communities to gain traction and support the environment more quickly. It also offers more residents exposure to the advantages of a wildflower meadow and hopefully encourages planting more native plants in their yards.

We want to let CH residents know that we have been sharing our mission with other communities and they

(see CLUBS AND INTEREST GROUPS - continued on next page)





(CLUBS AND INTEREST GROUPS - continued from previous page)

are not only hearing that message but are implementing it for their communities. The word is getting out on the many benefits of natural meadow habitats and native plants. Our Wildflower Meadow serves as an example to other communities, and we can be proud of sharing our experiences with others in James City County.

We look forward to a beautiful blooming spring! Thank you for your support and if you have an interest in joining *Friends of the Meadow*, please contact Flo Tull at florecetull@msn.com. □

Olde Towne Stitchers

by Sue Leitzsch, Group Member



It was a busy winter for the *Olde Towne Stitchers*. The holiday party at the home of Trish Byrnes was festive, with delicious food and the always exciting grab bag. At a pre-holiday meeting, Pam Curtis instructed the group on the basics of making felted wool Christmas ball ornaments. An artist, Pam encouraged the group to use their imaginations and creativity to form festive ornaments using the newly learned technique. Everyone went home with a beautiful work of art!

The first meeting of 2024 was devoted to sewing walker bags, production style! These walker bags are donated to the *Foundation for Rehabilitation Equipment & Endowment (F.R.E.E.)*. This nonprofit organization donates a range of mobility-related rehabilitation equipment to low-income uninsured or under-insured adults in Virginia. In February, members learned how to make rope bowls using scraps of fabric, a technique also used to make trivets, placemats, and baskets.

A group trip to the *Mid-Atlantic Quilt Festival* was a February highlight. Several members had quilts on display. Spring plans include a garment alteration class, a mini shop-hop in Richmond, and the ever-popular sewing room tour, where members show off their sewing spaces and share good ideas. The *Olde Towne Stitchers* meet in the Arts and Crafts Room on the third Wednesday of the month. All are welcome.

Annual dues of \$10 offset the cost of materials for service projects such as the walker bags. If you are interested, contact Patti Clark at pacnj0256@gmail.com or Kathy Smith at kasmith55pa@yahoo.com to be included on the email distribution list for all upcoming events. □

Memory Care Interest Group

by Chris Kormis, Group Leader

The Colonial Heritage *Alzheimer's Interest Group* has changed its name to the *Memory Care Interest Group* to provide educational and resource information to residents interested in memory care and health.

Our group meets on the fourth Tuesday of the month at 1:30 PM in the Hearts and Diamonds room at the Clubhouse.

Topics for 2024 will include:

- How to Help an Out-of-State Loved One with Memory Concerns.
- Aging and Driving, plus Area Transportation Options.
- Making Your Home Safe as You Age.
- Research Updates and Clinical Trial Information.

The group is always looking for suggestions on topics, so please feel free to contact us with ideas. You can send ideas to Sherry Wolfson at bimergal@cox.net. The January meeting featured a talk on *Keeping Your Brain Healthy* by Dawn Shier, certified senior advisor, and the February meeting was scheduled to focus on *Music and the Mind*, with guest speaker Cass Liberman.

For educational resources and information, visit the group's website: <https://sites.google.com/view/ch-alzheimers>. □

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Our Newest Neighbor 2 Neighbor (N2N) Leaders

by Josephine Loizzo, Chronicle Writer and Editor

The Neighbor 2 Neighbor (N2N) program is focused on its mission of reaching out to neighbors, encouraging everyone to help when needed, and keeping all residents informed of news affecting our community. For almost eight years, Seth and Judy Wilson and Cathy Coradetti led the organization with unflinching effectiveness, even as the community grew by leaps and bounds.

Suz and Dan Courtney picked up the ball when the Wilsons and Cathy chose to retire from the herculean task. Suz and Dan did an outstanding job, notable especially for organizing the help provided instantly and flawlessly by the community to our residents who lost their home to a fire last year. Circumstances and other community volunteer responsibilities have made it necessary for the Courtneys to retire from their large and time-consuming role with N2N.

We now introduce you to our newest N2N leaders, Tom and Sharon Sobieski. Tom is from Philadelphia, and Sharon is from New Jersey. They met at Lehigh University where they both earned degrees in Electrical Engineering. Tom is an Air Force Colonel (Retired) who worked as a combat engineer. His second career was in chemical biological radiological engineering. Sharon has also worked as an engineer and a tax preparer with a CPA firm. They have two grown sons, and are both very organized and detail-oriented. They moved to CH in 2019 after living all over the country with the Air Force.

As co-chairs of the N2N program, Tom and Sharon intend to navigate a middle road approach between Seth, Cathy, Judy, and Suz and Dan's ideas. Tom and Sharon see that the CH community, and the N2N program, have grown so much that a new type of leadership is needed. More sharing of responsibilities, with subcommittees handling some aspects of the program, will allow all the volunteers to do their jobs well without becoming overwhelmed. They have already established some subcommittees. For example, Tim Kloth will be the point of contact for all information for and from residents



SHARON AND TOM SOBIESKI

regarding the List of Services. Kathy Luzzi will track and announce the openings and closings of businesses, professional offices, restaurants, and entertainment venues.

There will be three meetings a year for block captains, the first of which was in February. The meetings will follow Seth, Cathy, and Judy's format with PowerPoint slide presentations on important issues for block captains to bring back to the residents.

Sharon and Tom will continue to have email welcome packets for new residents. They want to foster a sense of community and keep N2N a source of resident social connection. They hope to foster more social interaction within neighborhoods as well.

Tom and Sharon need volunteers to help the organization keep up with our growing community! They have a message for all of us: "We are happy to be here, and we want everyone to love the community and help it thrive!" You can reach Sharon and Tom at N2Nchairs@gmail.com. □

'Tis The Season To Be Cleaning!

by Cass Liberman, Chronicle Writer and Editor

Welcome to March, the month that is home to the spring equinox, St. Patrick's Day, the Ides of March, Daylight Saving Time, sometimes Easter and Passover, and... **spring cleaning**. Yes, spring cleaning, that age-old ritual of scrubbing your house and its contents from attic to basement and wall to wall. More than 70% of Americans say they do spring cleaning of some sort or other. But... why? And why *now*?



Is it because our mothers taught us to do it? Is it because longer, brighter days highlight a winter's accumulation of dust? Do stacks of books or magazines that used to look cozy by a fireplace now look cluttered? Are our winter clothes begging to be packed away? Maybe. But there is more going on here, more egging us on to tackle what is a big, big chore.

Spring cleaning inspiration comes from many sources, not just the practical ones. Religion, tradition, hygiene, health (physical and mental), and a human yearning for order and light have all played their parts in this centuries-old custom. This history goes back to ancient civilizations. Among the oldest known spring-cleaning rituals is part of the Persian festival of Nowruz, or the

(see 'TIS THE SEASON TO BE CLEANING - continued on next page)



(*'TIS THE SEASON TO BE CLEANING* - continued from previous page)

New Year, celebrated on the spring equinox. Even in present-day Iran, days before the equinox, people practice a ritual house cleaning called “shaking the house,” in which an entire home and its contents are scrubbed and polished and made spotless. Sound familiar?

In Judeo-Christian tradition, spring cleaning is reflected in a Passover ritual. Passover is a dinner celebrated in remembrance of the Israelites’ flight from Egypt, when the people left so hurriedly there was no time to allow their bread to rise before baking. Therefore, during Passover, leavened baked goods are not eaten, and before the first night of Passover the house is thoroughly cleaned to make sure there is no trace of a leavening agent or of leavened bread (chametz) in the house. A house cleaned, top to bottom.

In April, Thailand’s Songkran Festival, people pour water over one another, in a cleansing ritual to chase away bad thoughts. In this centuries-old Buddhist purification rite, they also deep clean their temples and their homes to purify them. More spring cleaning!

Throughout history, spring cleaning has had a practical aim: to banish the accumulated grime of the winter months. It was ambitious to tackle a top-to-bottom cleaning of a house, especially in times when such things as vacuum cleaners, water heaters, and indoor plumbing were not in common use. A spring cleaning then was a vital exercise in home maintenance. Rugs were pulled up and brought outside for cleaning. Walls, windows, woodwork, everything in the house was washed without the blessing of detergents. Curtains were taken down and cleaned, dried outside, and rehung. Windows were opened to let the fresh March winds blow through.

There was a more than cosmetic reward for all this back-breaking work. The winter grime had its dangers. Bacteria, viruses, lice, insects, and other unwanted free-loaders made their homes in the dark corners and grimy fabrics of the pre-industrial home. A thorough spring cleaning could save lives.

What about today? Why do most of us indulge in this annual, and often exhausting, scrub-fest? We don’t have to wait till spring to have clean air, and we clean our homes and our clothes year-round. Then why? Turns out there are other compensations for the big clean. One is our mental health. We *feel* better and more in control when our homes are freshly ordered and squeaky clean. We can be more social with no fear of unexpected visitors. It can mean a fresh start, with cleared-out closets or a redesigned living room. Getting a house in order is an accomplishment and not an easy one! In short, a good spring clean helps self-esteem. And isn’t that enough? □

Thank you, Queenie!

by Carol Frix, Chronicle Managing Editor

Colonial Heritage residents enjoy a good holiday party, and I’ve always liked the CH tradition of holding a party for a given “section” or area of the community. Even better is the practice that these gatherings also serve to raise money for our local volunteer fire department or another good cause.



That’s exactly what we did at the 2023 Section 5.1 Holiday Party, and we dedicated our party to a very special person. Our December get-together was a tribute to our section’s original resident, Lynne Salisbury, whom we all know as “Queenie.” Why *Queenie*? She earned the moniker because, for most of us, she was the first person who knocked on our door when we moved into our homes. She welcomed us, advised us as needed, and proceeded to be the Section 5.1 organizer of ladies’ lunches, holiday parties, field trips, and other special events for nearly ten years. Consistent with her title, she called “her” block captains “Princesses.”

As she has begun to step down from this role, *Queenie* just had to be recognized. Section 5 resident Robin Clinton organized our party with lots of help from dedicated and very generous neighbors, and a special effort from Cindy Dunham and our gifts-for-Lynne team. All came together to enable us to surprise and honor Lynne with gifts and good wishes galore. So, here’s to *Queenie* and all the other talented neighborhood and community leaders here in CH. Long may they reign!! □





Committees

Facilities Committee

by Craig Lozak, Committee Chair

The Facilities Committee meets the second Tuesday of every month at 2 PM in the Hearts and Diamonds Room at the Clubhouse.

Residents are encouraged to attend and address the committee in the Homeowner's Forum section of the meeting. Additionally, if there is a question that requires a response from the committee, the resident should email their inquiry to the Facilities Committee mailbox in advance so that a discussion can take place with a response formulated for the homeowner. Our meeting minutes will be posted to the CH resident website within one week after our meeting. Residents can view them there rather than wait for the next monthly meeting.

The Facilities Committee's purpose is to advise the HOA Board of Directors (BOD) of maintenance issues or concerns about the exterior of the Clubhouse, Guardhouse, Pools, Tennis Courts, and Athletic Center. In addition, the committee advises management of any issues or concerns about the interior structure as well as the mechanical components of the public areas, including fountains, street lighting, and traffic safety features. Our committee is the link from the residents to the BOD, but the BOD has the sole authority to execute this committee's recommendations. The Facilities Committee continuously partners with management to accomplish many tasks throughout the year.

Our committee is very excited to have 18 new approved budgeted projects in 2024. Highlights of these projects include the completion of the interior renovation of the Athletic Center, a new refreshed Snack Bar at the Athletic Center, a new Athletic Center roof including new 6-inch-wide gutters with leaf guards, and a new translucent Kalwall roof over the indoor pool. The Clubhouse lower level will be refreshed, including the Banquet Sales Room, to welcome new business opportunities. The Heritage Dining Room will also be refreshed.

The committee will continue to promote pedestrian and vehicular safety with increased emphasis on crosswalks, signage, speed monitoring, and gate mechanism controls. In general, our dedicated committee ensures that residents see and enjoy facilities that are well-maintained, attractive, and safe. We welcome suggestions from residents so that we can maintain the amenities and lifestyle we all desire.

Many thanks to my fellow 2024 Facilities Committee members: Wayne Schleder, Rick Hunt, Bill Evers, Dave Bennett, Keith Peacock, Garrett Byrnes, and Brock Smith. □

Infrastructure Committee

by Walter Hall, Committee Member

The Infrastructure Committee (IC) is a standing committee of the CH Homeowner's Association (HOA) established by the Board of Directors (BOD) to advise and report on HOA-owned assets including roads, sidewalks, bridges, ponds, storm drains and piping, retaining walls, and water control areas such as BMPs. The committee consists of seven residents and meets monthly at the Clubhouse. CH Residents may attend those meetings and are encouraged to communicate to us any concerns that they have with HOA infrastructure and its effect on their homesteads. Annually, in conjunction with the Finance Committee and subject to BOD approval, we develop a budget to make needed repairs to CH Infrastructure. Our most recent 2024 budget proposal was approximately \$1,006,200. The committee performs its functions with the assistance of HOA Staff. Major expenditures, once recommended by the committee, are approved by the BOD prior to project initiation. In 2023, the committee completed 79 projects within its charter, including 59 of 85 new issues that arose during the year. We have completed 550 projects since January 2018.

Last year's largest completed project involved correcting serious erosion problems on properties adjacent to Newport Forest Road in CH Section 1. A large rainstorm overwhelmed the drainage swale and stone level spreader and eroded a depression more than four feet deep and eight feet wide and long in front and side yards. Substantial silt removal was also required from adjacent woodlands. The project required three phases to complete for \$230,000. Numerous additional sinkholes and stone channel erosion projects were also addressed. A major problem has been leakage from storm sewer inlet structures causing such erosion.

Several projects have been undertaken to address matters affecting the future safety of residents, including studies of the structural integrity of the Massie Pond Dam and the guardrail structure on the Colonial Heritage Bridge. The latter fails to comply with Virginia road safety regulations. Studies have also been initiated, in conjunction with the Golf Committee, to determine the extent to which Massie Pond and the 18th Fairway Pond might be used in the future as a source of irrigation water

(see COMMITTEES - continued on next page)



(COMMITTEES - continued from previous page)

for the Golf Course and Clubhouse should Deer Lake water not be available. Finally, the committee monitored the recent installation of an underground electric transmission line along portions of Colonial Heritage Boulevard to ensure that roadways, walking trails, and adjacent grounds were returned to their original and acceptable condition.

Residents are requested to assist in maintaining and protecting the CH community infrastructure, and to properly dispose of lawn and garden waste at James City disposal sites, and not through the community storm-water sewer system. Such materials clog that system and increase the number and cost of repairs the community must bear. Residents are requested to carefully monitor and plan their use of irrigation systems in the coming spring and summer seasons to avoid overwatering that exacerbates drainage problems in the community.

The Infrastructure Committee meets on the third Monday of the month at 10 AM. □

Social Committee

by Judy Cohen, Social Committee Chair

The Social Committee is in full planning mode.

It is a pleasure to announce the exciting events planned for you this spring:

Ladies Night Out will take place on **March 26th**. The theme is “Girls Just Wanna Have Fun...But Do They?” Find out at the Ladies Night Out “Never Have I Ever” party. Come join in the laughter as we share stories only our closest friends know. Remember, what happens at Ladies’ Night Out, stays at Ladies’ Night Out!

Woodstock Musical Bingo will have you dancing in your seats on **April 4th** as you name songs from the Woodstock era. The fun is enhanced if you come dressed for the theme! You might win the costume contest. It will be a groovy time. Don’t forget to wear your love beads.

Colonial Heritage Talent Show—On **April 18th** come out and cheer on your neighbors as they take the stage. We have a fabulous lineup of performers. Our talented residents will entertain you with song, dance, magic, and more.

Celebrity Squares—This is our take on the popular television trivia game show *Hollywood Squares*. On **May 2nd** the X and O teams will be competing against each other. Our MC, impersonating Peter Marshall, will have you match wits with our CH celebrities featuring Dolly Parton, Elvis Presley, Ringo Starr, Audrey Hepburn, Princess Diana, The Fonz, Flo from Progressive, Lily Tomlin, and our center square Paul Lynde.

The Masquerade Ball Dinner Dance will take place on **May 16th**. Plan your costume, select your favorite

mask, and get ready to compete in several categories. It will be a night of mystery, music, and dance.

If there are events or games you would like the Social Committee to consider, please let us know. Several resident suggestions will be featured this year. Write to us at social@colonialheritageclub.org. Attend our monthly meetings! We meet the first Monday of every month at 10 AM in the King and Queen Room. It’s a wonderful way to hear firsthand about our upcoming events. We look forward to seeing you at our spring events. □

F&B Committee

by Susan Delano, Committee Member

As representatives of the F&B Committee, Jeff Thompson and I met with Chef Syndia Richardson and Food and Beverage Director Travis Brazil in mid-January to discuss the new menu being developed and accommodations for special dietary needs. We all hope that you are enjoying the new and varied menu options.

We were particularly interested in finding out how the servers and kitchen staff address special dietary needs and restrictions. We learned that all staff are trained and understand that failure to comply with a requested food preparation could have very serious health consequences. When servers enter orders in the computerized system, they click a highlighted button to alert the kitchen to an allergy/restriction. In the kitchen the order is checked by the expeditor, then the person preparing the dish, and, finally, the server. We also learned that in addition to the regular fryer, the kitchen has a free-standing fryer vat, located away from the main fryer to prevent cross-contamination, and used only for gluten-free items.

Our Chef is happy to accommodate special dietary needs and can modify many dishes on request. Remember to read the menu carefully for dishes already labeled as vegetarian (V), vegan (G), or gluten-free (VO). Items with the V, G, and VO designations CAN be prepared to accommodate that diet. Don’t worry if you see ingredients listed that are not compatible with that designation. Just let your server know when you order that you need your dish prepared that way.

The Food and Beverage Committee encourages your input. We meet on the first Wednesday of the month at 10 AM. Residents are welcome at our meetings. Written questions, concerns, and suggestions can be submitted at any time to foodandbeverage@colonialheritageclub.org □

(see COMMITTEES- continued on next page)



(COMMITTEES - continued from previous page)

FitnWell Committee

by Ed Luzzi, Committee Chair

As we start a new year, let us update you on the FitnWell Committee's 2024 happenings. The Pickleball Courts resurfacing and the installation of six courts with portable nets will commence in the spring, once the weather warms.

We have formed a working group spearheaded by Joanne Grubb for upcoming presentations on fitness and wellness topics. This group will reach out to W&M and other organizations to get speakers to bring their expertise to CH residents.

Our CPR classes are back and I encourage everyone to take advantage of these informative classes given by residents Mike Powers and Peter Brown of the Bruton

Volunteer Fire Department. Tai Chi classes have resumed on Zoom; please refer to the schedule on the CH webpage. Julie, as always, has provided our residents with a full class schedule. Take advantage of the classes in the aerobics room, or her instruction on equipment in the exercise room. Look for Julie's Fitness Assessments, dates to be announced.

We are in the process of getting three new treadmills for the exercise room since the old ones need to be replaced. We have not ignored your concerns about the size of our Athletic Center and will be looking into options during the coming years; we ask for your patience and support.

The FitnWell Committee looks forward to receiving your suggestions at fitness@colonialheritageclub.org. Our committee meets on the second Thursday of the month at 1 PM, and our goal is to keep Colonial Heritage an "Active Adult Community." □

DID YOU KNOW? A Potentially Lifesaving App

by Carol Frix, Chronicle Managing Editor

Imagine you're in a car accident. You're unconscious or otherwise incapacitated. How could emergency personnel be sure they provide you with the help you need without causing more harm? How can they get in touch with your emergency contacts who can provide them with important information?

Your smartphone can be very helpful in these situations, whether Apple or Android. We will focus on Apple iPhones here. Read about Android phones on the next page.

With an iPhone, you should have or can easily install an app that will allow a stranger or medical personnel to obtain SOS information even when your password is unavailable. The app is called **Health** and is displayed on your iPhone as a white square with a small red heart in the upper right-hand corner.

To activate the Health app, select the option to set up your **Medical ID**. This process will allow you to record your key information, medical conditions, medical notes, allergies and reactions, and medications. Continuing with your Medical ID, this is the place to enter your blood type, language preference, organ donor preference, and more. Perhaps most importantly, this is a perfect place to record your emergency contact information. If you or another person uses the *Emergency SOS* feature on your

iPhone (by pressing right-side button five (5) times to get urgent help) the emergency contacts set up in your Medical ID information will be notified of your status and location.

Once you've entered your information in the Health app, you'll want to keep it current. I'd also recommend that you go to the bottom of the Medical ID tool and make sure that the "**Show When Locked**" feature is **Enabled**. This allows medical personnel or others assisting you to view your information when needed. (Your medical information can be seen when the iPhone is locked by tapping **Emergency**, then **Medical ID** on the bottom left.)

None of us look forward to finding ourselves in an emergency, but taking some time to prepare for the possibility can make a huge difference if that situation should occur. □





HA! When Anne told her contractor she didn't want carpeted steps, they gave her a blank stare.

HA! I lost my job as a stage designer. I left without making a scene.

HA! Prison is just one word to you, but for some people, it's a long sentence.

HA! I got over my addiction to chocolate, marshmallows, and nuts. I won't lie, it was a rocky road.

HA! Doctors got together to study the effects of alcohol on a person's walk, and the results were staggering.

HA! What did the surgeon say to the patient who insisted on closing up his own incision? Suture self.



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DID YOU KNOW? A Potentially Lifesaving App

by Cal and Roni Croucher, CH Tech Club

Android Phone's Robust Emergency Features

Android stands out for its commitment to user safety with its built-in automated emergency features. One notable feature is **Emergency SOS**, which allows users to call for help in critical situations swiftly. By pressing the power button five times, users can activate 911 emergency services and share their location with predefined contacts. In a vehicle crash, the Android phone can automatically initiate a 911 call.

The "Emergency Information" feature built into all Android phones is another noteworthy addition,

allowing users to store crucial medical information, emergency (ICE) contacts and relevant details accessible even when the device is locked. This information can be invaluable for first responders during emergencies, ensuring swift and informed medical assistance. Moreover, Android's location-sharing capabilities through Google Maps offer real-time tracking, enabling friends and family to monitor a user's whereabouts in emergencies. This feature adds an extra layer of security.

Android's emergency and safety features showcase a built-in holistic approach to user well-being, combining technological AI innovation with practical solutions for real-world situations.

It's always better to be safe than sorry, and we hope you'll take advantage of this issue's information on the **Health** app on Apple iPhone and **Health Connect** on Android phones. If you have questions or would like some assistance, you can contact the CH Tech Club at **Campsite.bio/CHTC** or use the QR code below to visit our website! ☐





Santa's Golf Cart Parade A Big Success

by Josephine Loizzo, Chronicle Writer and Editor

On December 16th, a mild and sunny Saturday afternoon, CH's third annual Golf Cart Parade rode through the community with music, laughs, and beautifully decorated golf carts for all to enjoy. The criteria used by the judges (Seth Wilson, Alice Kauss, and Josephine Loizzo) were more formal this year: visual impact, creativity, and enthusiasm evidenced by the golf cart entries. There were 30 golf carts in this year's parade!

All the carts were extremely well done, but the top three blew us away. The helicopter golf cart decorated by Mary Lee and David Berger, with therapy dog Casper as a passenger, had a working rotor, and skids on both sides and was named *Santa Express*. The *Baker Girls'* cart (Patty Boyd and Barbara Blizzard) was decorated in full boulangerie/patisserie equipment, with rolling pins,

baguettes, checkered tablecloths, and baked goods, a Christmas mobile bakery. The third winner was the *Elf* cart, by Debra Poust.

There were three honorable mentions, *The Gnome for Christmas* cart entered by Peter and Beth Brown and Vicki Milliken, *The Nutcracker "Sweet"* cart entered by Rosie and Tony Crocco, and the *Santa and the Gnomes* cart entered by Ron and Becky Hubbard.

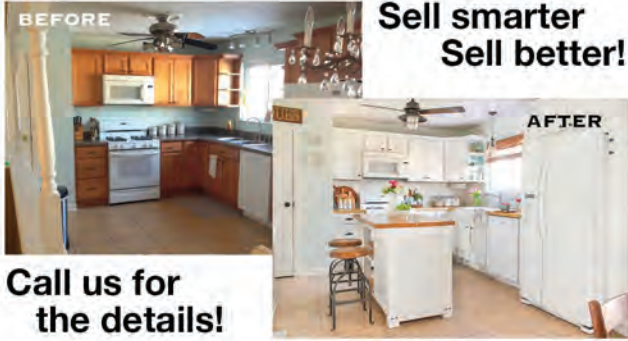
The prizes for the three top winners and honorable mentions this year included gift cards and prosecco sparkling wine provided by Ellen Gajda and Williamsburg Realty. Ellen and Williamsburg Realty also provided a great deal of hot coffee and donuts at the start/finish line. Thank you, Ellen, for sponsoring our Santa Parade!! Everyone had lots of fun. We are all looking forward to next year's parade; start planning soon! ☐





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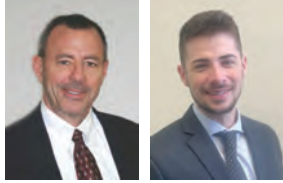
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Happy St. Patrick's Day!



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