



Photo by George Drake

LIBRETTO 🎵

SYMPHONY VILLAGE NEWSLETTER

JANUARY 2020

Vol. XV No. 1

MISSION STATEMENT: To enhance the quality of life and promote a harmonious community through the timely publication of accurate information about residents, events, and activities in and around Symphony Village.

Welcome to the Neighborhood!

Bernard Hopkins
302 Harmony Way



SYMPHONY VILLAGE HOME OWNERS ASSOCIATION

HOA OFFICERS

President	Bob Nilsson
Vice President	Pat Fox
Treasurer	Arlyn Marshall
Secretary	Joe Brown
Member at Large	Skip Kornmeyer

NEXT HOA MEETING

January 31, 10 a.m.
Concert Hall

COMMITTEE REPORTS

ARTISANS GUILD NEWS – SUE CANFIELD, CHAIR

We are having a new Art Show Reception, *Artist's Choice*, on **Sunday, January 19, from 4 to 6 p.m.** Please stop by the Clubhouse to see the new artwork and share some snacks and beverages with us!

Please **drop off** all Art pieces for the show on **Saturday, January 18, between 10 a.m. and noon**. Also, all Artwork from the *winter* show should also be **picked up** between 10 a.m. and noon.

The theme of our next show on **Sunday, April 5** will be *Pets and Wildlife*. So please get busy photographing, painting, and creating new works for us to display.

CERT – JOHN OLSON, CERT COORDINATOR

DEPARTMENT OF EMERGENCY SERVICES



The Symphony Village Community Emergency Response Team (CERT) is sponsored by the Queen Anne's County Department of Emergency Services (DES). For CERT, they educate volunteers on disaster preparedness and basic disaster response skills. Members are taught based on nationally recognized guidelines, and the material is adapted to conform to the hazards that could be faced within Queen Anne's County. However, there is a lot more to the DES.

DES Mission: The preservation of the lives and property of the citizens and visitors of Queen Anne's County through the provision of efficient and effective communication resources, emergency medical services, emergency preparedness, and fire prevention and education. These critical services are provided with pride and compassion.

The Department of Emergency Services, led by Director Scott Haas, brings together four closely tied, yet distinct functions or divisions, operating under one umbrella:

Communications: 911 and emergency dispatch
Assistant Chief Jim Alfree, 410-758-4500, ext. 1104

Emergency Management
Assistant Chief Lori Morris, 410-758-2086, ext. 1121

Emergency Medical Services:
Assistant Chief Scott Wheatley, 410-758-4500, ext. 1108

Office of the Fire Marshal
Assistant Chief Jeffrey Morgan, 410-758-4500, ext. 1135

These functions are led by the listed Assistant Chiefs who manage their divisions as separate operations, while at the same time enjoying a close partnership with the other Assistant Chiefs sharing ideas and resources. This model creates a functioning team of emergency services providers under a common infrastructure. Administrative and support costs are shared across divisions providing for economies of scale. Division staff are cross-trained to better serve the community and accomplish the mission.

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COVENANTS — DEBI WELLS, CHAIR

MEETING DATE CHANGE & UPDATE

The community's Covenants Committee meetings during 2020 will be held the 2nd Thursday of each month, at 10 a.m. in the Concert Hall, unless the community is notified otherwise. You will soon see a community eBlast to alert residents that the February meeting will be held on a different date (*not* February 13) since two of the three officers of the Committee cannot attend. The February meeting will be held on **Monday, February 3, at 10 a.m.**, in the Concert Hall.

All Exterior Modification Forms (EMFs), as in past years, will be due at least one week prior to the Committee's monthly meeting(s); due dates for EMFs are: January 27 (for a review at the February 3 meeting), March 5, April 2, May 7, June 4, July 2, August 6, September 3, October 1, November 5, and December 3. Of course, the earlier an EMF is submitted the better your Covenants member will be prepared to represent it for a vote at the Committee's monthly meeting.

2019 was a successful year for the Covenants Committee! Some of the Committee's achievements included: finalizing the 2019 Architectural Requirements (AR) HOA document, which encompassed receiving and responding to resident feedback; creating a welcome letter for new residents, with a printed copy of the AR as an attachment; originating new language for the AR regarding barbecue/grill and fire pit requirements; authoring a violation letter for HOA Management use to send to residents, if ever necessary; walking the community to identify wood-burning fire pits, which are not permitted in Symphony Village; and much, much more. Additionally, the Committee reviewed and made decisions on 80 EMFs, which in itself required more than 20 hours of discussion.

2020 is off to a good start! During January we reviewed the community's first EMF; identified and approved manufacturers for the community's exterior lamp fixtures, which will be approved in the future by the HOA General Manager (to help expedite the approval process and repair for residents); and we are embarking on a number of other covenants-related projects we believe will benefit the community. As always, all residents are welcome to attend a meeting or join the Committee!

If you have a question about covenants in Symphony Village, please feel free to email or contact the Chair, Debi Wells (home: 443-262-8248; email: debwells2011@gmail.com). I'll try to find an answer for you!

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LANDSCAPE & IRRIGATIONS — TOM McMANUS, CHAIR

WHAT IS HANGING IN THAT TREE?

Well, I thought I knew most things about bees and wasps; after all, I had taken entomology courses and during my college days my Wildlife Club even sold large wasp nests to benefit NC State. So, recently, when Dave Peterson let me know of a nearby large wasp nest, I found the tree it was perched in and got it! I thought it would be perfect for a show and tell for my grandsons' elementary school classes. I began to gather information on the nest and was surprised to find what I thought was made by paper wasps was, in fact, made by bald-faced hornets or aerial-nesting yellow jackets. These nests are often confused with paper wasp nests. The big difference is paper wasp nests are never enclosed; instead, they are always open to the elements. You have probably seen paper wasp nests under house eaves or in the corners of windows.



Paper wasp and its nest



Bald faced hornet

Both the bald-faced hornet and the aerial-nesting yellow jacket are types of wasps. They are protective and will sting repeatedly if their nests are disturbed. They usually do not sting when away from the nest unless they are threatened. Both types of wasps become very numerous toward the end of summer and may be persistent, unwelcome guests at picnics, where they

scavenge for food. (Yes, along with spiders and insects, they feed on human food, especially meats and sweets. Unlike bees, wasps do not make honey or store food.) Of course, there are differences in their anatomy, but that's for another article.

Every late fall and early winter these wasps die off. But, it's not the cold that kills them; it's the lack of food. However, the queen will stay in the nest through the winter; then, in early spring she'll emerge and fly off to find a new place to begin building her next nest. She nor any other insects will use the old nest again. Over time the weather and animals will finally destroy the nest until there is nothing left.

Both types of wasps control many harmful insects such as crane flies, house flies, and caterpillars. This natural control keeps us from constantly relying on pesticides. So, before acting with haste to kill or remove nests, make sure they pose a risk! Nests that are high in trees do not cause concern unless someone in the vicinity is allergic to their stings. To avoid risk, always have professionals remove an active nest.

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New Ad!

LIFESTYLE – MARY COLLING-OFFICER, CHAIR; JOE SIKES, CORRESPONDENT

The Lifestyle Committee welcomes everyone to the new decade that kicked off on January 1. We look forward to organizing many fun and interesting activities for the new year. The 2020 Committee had its first meeting on January 6 and unanimously elected Mary Colling-Officer to replace Mary Jo Volpicelli as our new Chair. Mary Jo asked to take a well-deserved break after leading us to great heights over the last two years. Luckily for us, she agreed to remain on the Committee. We also welcomed Skip Kornmeyer as our new Board Representative. This is Skip's first assignment since election to the SV Board of Directors. We will break him in as soon as possible!

A small but dedicated group of about 100 Villagers gathered on **New Year's Eve** in the Clubhouse to welcome in the New Year. There was much enthusiastic dancing to our wonderful DJ, and we all watched the ball come down in Times Square on screens throughout the Clubhouse. Our energy had definitely expired once 2019 was gone, but now we're rested and eager to enjoy 2020!

The first **Social Hour of 2020** was held on January 3 and featured re-gifting of presents that, shall we say, were underappreciated. Twenty orphan gifts found happy (?) new owners. Participants enjoyed pizza, meatballs, lemon meringue pie, cannoli, and other assorted goodies. The evening also included the special treat of music from our piano in the Foyer.

Coming Soon to the Village:

The Lifestyle Committee is testing a Speaker Series this year. We will start at **noon on Monday, January 20**. Brandt Moran has been invited to travel down from Maine to tell us everything we need to know about Orchids. Mr. Moran is a genius when it comes to orchids. He has spoken on the subject over 100 times in recent years. He plans on demonstrating re potting, a hands-on experience for those into it, along with a slide show presentation where we will learn more. Come find out how to purchase a good orchid, how to keep it so it reblooms, what to watch for with moisture and weather.



Even if you are not a “plant person,” these easy to care for, non-messy, indoor plants bring life and beauty into your home during the winter months and beyond. The cost is \$5, and we request you sign up in advance in the Activities Book located in the Wall Street Room or online in the SV eBlast that went to residents. Please do not sign up in both places. Checks should be made out to SV HOA, memo Orchids.

Upcoming Social Hours will be hosted by Lifestyle members, with our new Chair hosting on **January 18**, along with new Lifestyle member Brenda Fellows. Jim and Kathryn Buckheit will host the **February 7** Social Hour. As we start the new year, we are seeking hosts for these twice monthly events, which set the baseline of social activity in Symphony Village. We strongly encourage residents to sign up for hosting future Social Hours in the Activities Book in the Wall Street Room. It is a great opportunity to meet your neighbors, and



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Lifestyle members will be available to help with hosting responsibilities, which include set-up, clean-up, and greeting attendees. Social Hours procedures mostly run on autopilot after many years, so the commitment is minimal, and the rewards great!

Super Bowl Sunday is on **February 2** and the Lifestyle Committee invites you to join your neighbors and friends at the Clubhouse for the game. The bar will be open with two TVs, as well as the Wall Street Room, the Card Room, and the big screens in the Concert Hall. Small snacks will be set out in bowls for you to take tableside. No sign-up is required, just come to the Clubhouse to cheer on your favorite team with your neighbors. A football pool will be



organized to keep things interesting.

As a community service, the Committee is researching formation of a "Patriots Anonymous" support group to help address post-traumatic stress among former New England residents of the community.

On **February 14**, the Lifestyle Committee will host the second annual **Palentine Party**. This Celebration of Pals is a Ladies Only event from **4 – 6 p.m.** We will rejoice in the friendships we have made that sustain us and energize us. We will serve prosecco, iced tea, and other goodies. For those who enjoy cooking, appetizers are welcome, but not required. Simply come and enjoy Ladies enjoying each other. Cost is \$5, payable at the door. You may also pay by check made out to SVHOA, memo Palentine, placed in the Wall Street Room check box. Please sign up in advance, either on upcoming SV eBlasts for the event or in the Wall Street Room, so we know how many to expect.



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PUBLICATIONS AND COMMUNICATIONS – CAROL HODGES, CHAIR

SCAVENGER HUNT FOR THE CLUBHOUSE

Emergency Equipment

In a previous article for the *Libretto*, John Olson reported that there are:

- AED Defibrillators (2): **Gym** - by the phone; **Card Room** - by the exterior exit door.
- Eye Wash Station (1): in the **Closet** along the hallway to the indoor pool; closet is so marked.

- Fire Extinguishers (4): **Gym** – next to the outside entrance door; **Card Room** – next to the outside entrance door; **Kitchen** – next to outside entrance door; **Concert Hall addition** - next to the rear outside entrance.
- First Aid Kits (2): **Gym** - on the counter in a large white box; **Indoor Pool** - in the Alcove in a large white box on the wall.
- Telephones (3): **Card Room** - on the wall between the Card Room and the Billiards Room; **Gym** - on the wall next to the AED and over the Dumbbell rack; **Indoor Pool** - in the Alcove near the phone.
- Backboard (1): **Indoor Pool** – in the Alcove near the phone and first aid kit.

Books, Games, etc.

For your reading entertainment, there is an honor system **hard back library** in the book case in the Card Room and a **paperback** one in the cabinets in the gym. For those who enjoy **jigsaw puzzles**, they can be found in the credenza in the Billiard Room and in the cabinet under the sink in the Arts and Crafts Room. Also in the Arts and Crafts Room, there are **three bulletin boards** displaying business cards and flyers with information about businesses that would be of interest to SV residents. Also, in the Card Room in the bottom of the book case are **playing cards and a few games**. In the closets where you hang your coats, you may find other things of interest.



SV MAGNETS AND FILE OF LIFE

Included in a previous mailing from the HOA was a Symphony Village Refrigerator Magnet with important SV contact information. If you were missed, ask the front office for one.

When you met with the Welcome Committee, you should have received a File of Life Case with a magnet to place on your refrigerator. It will help rescue workers quickly find important medical information when every second counts. The tri-fold file has space to fill in medical condition, medication, insurance information, emergency contacts, and more. If you didn't get one and would like one, contact Eileen Rowley at 703-946-1075 or John Olson at 443-262-8458.

SNEAKERS – LINDA FARRAR, PRESIDENT

After a very busy month of December with our book giveaways and our Santa Tree family holiday gifts, Sneakers is taking a break from our regular meetings and activities.

We encourage all who have some extra time and energy to consider volunteering at any of our schools. The elementary schools particularly appreciate any help we can give them.

By the way, if you see Carl or Chris Collins, ask them how it feels to have no HOA Payments for a whole year. Next year may be your turn.

Thank you again for all the support you have given Sneakers.

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CLUBS AND ACTIVITIES

SV 13TH ANNUAL NEW YEAR'S DAY CYCLING EVENT



Amy Landen, Karen Kram, Don Downey, Steve Quigley, Tom Taylor, George Drake, Bill Rowley, Jack Cohen, Tom Meringolo, Jay Landen, Randy Officer, Lloyd McAtee, Marcella Hilgartner

The 13th annual New Year's Day cycling event "I've ridden my bike every day this year" was held at the Clubhouse at 10 a.m., January 1. Thirteen riders made a circuit of SV and met back at the Clubhouse to partake of hot chocolate and cookies served by Loretta Quigley. After enjoying the goodies and conversation, some went out to get in some more laps. Come join the camaraderie on next New Year's Day. For more information on the Bicycle Club, contact Lloyd McAtee, at 410-758- 2443.



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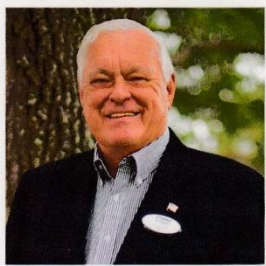
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BIRD CLUB – LINDA BLUME



The [5th Annual Winter Delmarva Birding Weekend](#) will be **January 24 – 26** at locations on Delmarva. Participants will see waterfowl, seabirds, shorebirds, raptors, and seals that are in the mid-Atlantic region during the winter months. Complete information on all the field trips and boat trips is on the website. Many of the popular trips sell out early, so plan early and register on the website.



The 23rd Annual [Great Backyard Bird Count](#) will be February **14 – 17**. You can sit in the comfort of your home or go out into the world to count birds that you see and enter the information at [Enter Sightings](#). Watch all day, each day or for as little as 15 minutes on one day. The GBBC is free, fun, easy, and for novices up to advanced birders. Each checklist submitted helps researchers at the Cornell Lab of

Ornithology and the National Audubon Society learn more about how birds are doing, and how to protect them and the environment we share. If you spot something “unusual,” let me know and we’ll let other residents know in a future *Libretto*.

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READING FOR FUN – DECEMBER 2019 REVIEW – JOE SIKES

The SV Book Club met on December 17 to review *The Roundhouse* by Louise Erdrich. Attendees included: Joe Sikes, Jan Withers, Kathryn & Jim Buckheit, Lidija & Ingo Kampa, Bob Nilsson, DeAnn Cheyne, Sue Canfield, Cathy Olson, JoAnn Walker, and Peggy Decker. Susan Goldberg stopped by as a special commentator for the post book club wrap up.



Joe Coutts is a 13-year-old boy living on the Ojibwe Indian reservation when his mother is the victim of a brutal attack. His life is turned upside down as his mother emotionally withdraws and he attempts to help his father, a tribal judge, seek justice for the attack. The story investigates many themes: solving the mystery of the crime; the interaction of an extended family; the confusing intersection of tribal, state, and federal legal jurisdiction; and a coming of age story with Joe and his friends.

I was drawn to the themes of the book and was excited that the protagonist was named after me! When I realized that he and his friends were Trekkies, I looked forward to references to Captain Picard, Worf, and Tasha Yar. Obviously, I was going to grade this book very highly. Much to my surprise that did not happen, and I found my interest waning as the book progressed. When the club started to discuss the book, a wide range of reactions emerged. Some members found it very interesting, and some could not finish it. But the reasons for like or dislike varied just as widely.

One of the lessons we have learned in the Book Club is that divergence of opinion regarding a particular book often facilitates a more interesting and lively discussion. *The Roundhouse* was such a book. Even those who didn't like the book found discussion of the various themes from different perspectives enlightening. I count myself in that category. While the story didn't come together for me as I had hoped, I am glad we had it as a selection for the club.

Ultimately *The Roundhouse* achieved a score of 6.78 on a 10-point scale, which is slightly below average for the club.

I keep an updated list of our scores and books in the Activities' Book in the Wall Street Room (under Book Club.) Upcoming Book Club meetings will be held at 7 p.m. in the Conference Room of the Clubhouse. Meeting dates and associated books we plan to review are listed below.

January 21 – *Drop City* by T.C. Boyle

February 18 – *The Rosie Project* by Graeme Simsion

March 16 – *A Spool of Blue Thread* by Anne Tyler

April 21 – *The Nightingale* by Kristin Hannah



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PICKLEBALL 2020 – SV STYLE GEORGE DRAKE

Hello SV Pickleball Players and Wannabees,

Have you noticed? The days are getting longer! So, it's time to start thinking and planning for Pickleball in the Village for 2020. We started from scratch last spring, and we now have two of the best pickleball courts in the area. From a base of zero players, we have grown to a dozen die-hards – get me on the court! – and, another half-dozen folks who play on occasion. At times, you will see your neighbors on the courts with their grown kids.



If you don't know, pickleball is one of the fastest growing sports in the country – some of our SVers have played on cruise ships, and snowbirds have learned here and returned to challenge folks in the south. New courts – indoor and outdoor - are popping up everywhere in QAC.

Pickleball is a sport combining parts of tennis, badminton, and table tennis. Previous tennis players love the sport because the court is ¼ the size of a tennis court (less running). A plastic ball similar to a whiffle ball is hit with a paddle a bit larger than a ping-pong paddle. Serves are *underhand* (mark that as no shoulder pain!).

Pickleball is a *social* game of players who come to play with friends or even folks they didn't know and come away with new friendships. You'll see players laughing and sharing the game with new players. And, at the same time, weight and blood pressure drop! Nice benefits!

Check out [this link](#) to get an idea of the game. Also, go to YouTube on your computer or TV and watch some games – check out many “how-to-play” and “how-to-get-better” YouTube videos. Finally, come on by in March when play begins and you hear the crack of a paddle on a ball. You will be invited to jump into a game to see what pickleball is all about – players will gladly loan you a paddle.

Is pickleball for everyone? I think it's one of those love/hate things. You play a few times and you will soon become a pickleball addict or, you are just finished. It's easy to get a start here in the Village. If you dig it, you can pick up a paddle at Dick's, other sporting goods stores, Amazon, eBay, or Google “pickleball equipment” to see online suppliers.

Finally, if you and nine others become interested in the game and want to learn about the game or upgrade your skills, we will again offer a clinic by a professional instructor or ambassador on our SV courts. Let me know if you are interested? 410-758-8266 or GeorgeRDrake@yahoo.com.

Current Players - We would like to put a Steering Group together to determine: when the nets come out in the spring; what days we will have open play; pickleball family events; how our family might help SV and/or the Centreville Community; tournaments; how to play better – clinics; should some open play sessions be by ability, etc. PLEASE advise me (email or phone) if you would like to be part of this Steering Group - we need YOU! Thank you!!

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NEIGHBORHOOD NEWS

AMERICAN LEGION RIDERS HONOR FALLEN VETERANS

The Jefferson Davis Post 18 American Legion Riders celebrated Wreaths Across America Day by laying wreaths on the graves of veterans at Chesterfield and Church Hill cemeteries on Saturday, December 14.

Among the fallen heroes was World War I private and namesake of Post 18, Jefferson Davis, whose grave also was adorned with a wreath. During the ceremony, a wreath was also placed in honor of each branch of military service and for soldiers considered POW and MIA.

Command Sgt. Maj. Diane May spoke about the cost of freedom and the need to remember those who currently serve and veterans that have passed on.

As families shared a moment with specific loved ones buried at the two cemeteries, they, too, recalled what May cited as, "the price of freedom buried in the ground."



Command Sgt. Major Diane May, Gaye and Command Sgt. Major, Retired Tom Baker.

MOW, MOW, MOW ... OR ... MEADOW – BETTY MCATEE, MASTER GARDENER



Green, lush, well-manicured turf is the landscape “norm” commonly provided homeowners and seen in open common areas of community developments and parks. Regular fertilization, herbicide/fungicide applications, irrigation, and frequent mowing amounts to time-consuming and sizable financial commitments.

Current trends in landscape design (especially in rural critical areas near waterways) offer the “meadow” as an alternative option. Especially on slopes, meadows will enhance rainwater infiltration, reducing runoff into streams and stormwater ponds. Meadows support a diversity of wildlife that seek them for shelter and nesting sites. A meadow of primarily native grasses provides a food supply (seeds) for wildlife (especially songbirds) along with herbaceous native flowering plants that act as hosts to caterpillars/butterflies, and is a beneficial pollinator habitat for insects (bees, etc.). Finally, a reduction in gas emissions and energy consumption by gas mowers is another plus for the environment.

Drought-resistant native meadow grasses, mowing only once a year, along with no need for fertilizer or herbicide applications, all add up to a significant reduction in landscape maintenance costs and an attraction for increased wildlife — birds and butterflies!



CENTREVILLE HAPPENINGS

AMERICAN LEGION JEFF DAVIS POST 18

FRIDAY NIGHT DINNERS

The public is always welcome to attend Friday Night Dinners at the American Legion, and the Post especially appreciates SV participation! Dinners are 5:30 – 7 p.m. or until sold out. At the time of this *Libretto* publication, the P&C Committee has not yet received the menus for 2020. Watch the billboard in front of the American Legion Post, and we'll include any information that we receive in Local Events on the SV Website Home Page and ECHOES, posted each Wednesday.



UPCOMING EVENTS AT THE CENTREVILLE BRANCH OF THE QAC LIBRARY

- **Saturday, January 18** 3 – 4 p.m. [Crime and a Cuppa](#) (Preregister on the website)
- **Wednesday, January 22** 6:45 – 7:30 p.m. [Card Making Class](#) (Preregister on the website)
- **Friday, January 24** 2 – 4:30 p.m. [Friday Movie](#) (Movie To Be Announced)
- **Monday, February 3** 10:30 – 11:30 a.m. [Monday Morning Makers](#) (Preregister on the website)

- **Friday, February 7** 2 – 4:30 p.m. [Friday Movie](#) (Movie To Be Announced)
- **Saturday, February 15** 3 – 4 p.m. [Crime and a Cuppa](#) (Preregister on the website)

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ALL-YOU-CAN-EAT BREAKFAST BUFFET



The Goodwill Fire Company in Centreville will host an All-You-Can-Eat Breakfast Buffet on **Sunday, January 19, 7:30 – 11 a.m.** Tickets are \$10 for adults, \$5 for children ages 6 – 12, and free for ages 5 and under.

9TH ANNUAL SMALL WORKS EXHIBIT



The [Queen Anne's County Arts Council](#) presents a Small Works Exhibit February 7 – March 14.

Local artists will donate art to be on display for five weeks at the Centre for the Arts (206 S. Commerce Street) in Centreville. The public will have chances to win their artworks; ticket prices are one chance for \$5, three chances for \$10. All media are expected – photography, painting, ceramics, woodwork, drawing, digital work, etc.

BIG EASY, 206 COFFEE HOUSE CONCERT



The [Queen Anne's County Arts Council](#) presents Phillip Dutton in concert on **Saturday, February 15, 7 p.m.**, at the Centre for the Arts (206 S. Commerce Street) in Centreville. Kick back with some New Orleans favorites and some gorgeous originals. Think Bald Cypress, good bourbon, King Cake, Praline, and warmer weather! The cost is \$15 per ticket (call 410-758-2520) and includes a signature cocktail and light fare.

To see a list of tourism and local attraction websites, click on “Event Source Links” on the [Sources](#) page on the SV Website.

MEMORY BEAR VOLUNTEERS NEEDED

The Compass Region Hospice volunteer-run memory bear program helps our patients' families turn their loved one's clothing items into a lasting keepsake. This flexible volunteer opportunity is perfect for those who enjoy sewing with a sewing machine and are able to follow a sewing pattern, and would love to support the Compass mission. If you would like to help us fill the growing demand for these cherished bears, contact Robyn Affron at 443-262-4112 or <mailto:raffron@compassregionalhospice.org>.



CASSEROLE BRUNCH CASSEROLE — SUSAN RAYNER



I served this Casserole for Christmas Brunch and again for New Year's Day Brunch, and everyone has been asking for the recipe. Personally, I enjoyed it so much I think I'll make it just for myself, a quick reheat for every morning enjoyment.

Make a day ahead

Prep Time is about 40 minutes

Cooking Time is 1 hour

Ingredients:

1 lb. bacon	½ tsp. ground pepper
2 onions chopped	4 eggs
8 oz. of sliced mushrooms	1 ½ c. of milk
4 c. of hash browns	1 pinch of dried parsley
1 tsp. salt	1 cup of shredded cheese
¼ tsp. garlic salt	

Directions:

- Cook the bacon. If using the microwave, collect some fat from the bacon and save,
- Add onions and mushrooms to a sauce pan with fat from bacon and if more is needed, use oil.
- Cook until the onions have softened and turned translucent and the mushrooms tender, 5 minutes
- Spray with Pam a 9"x13" casserole dish. Place potatoes in the bottom of the prepared dish. Sprinkle with salts and pepper. Top with crumbled bacon; add the onions and mushrooms.
- In a mixing bowl, beat the eggs with the milk and parsley. Pour the beaten eggs over the casserole and top with grated cheese. Cover and refrigerate overnight.
- Next day, preheat oven to 400° and bake for 1 hour or until eggs are set (50 minutes in my oven).

I'd like to fancy it up a bit with more exotic mushrooms and Gruyere Cheese.

This recipe is from **Allrecipes.com**.

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RESTAURANT REVIEW

AMALFI COAST – ITALIAN + WINE BAR IN STEVENSVILLE – BY JULIA DETCH



As part of our Christmas celebrations, we decided to try the Amalfi Coast – Italian + Wine Bar in Stevensville. We went on Monday, the 23rd, which was a very fortuitous day for us to go. They offer half-priced wine bottles on Mondays and Wednesdays; and if there is a need, your server will cork it for you.

As we entered the restaurant, we found the décor to be light, warm, and calming. In addition, the placement of the tables seemed to be different from the previous layout, but they were close. The diners did not seem to mind. That being said, we were very happy to have been seated in a booth.

The wait staff was very pleasant and knowledgeable about the menu and what was being offered that evening. Among the three of us, we had a Caesar Salad, Ravioli Con Astice (lobster ravioli), Risotto Di Manzo (filet mignon tips), Grilled Rib Eye and a shared slice of the Seasonal Cheesecake, which was chocolate-raspberry, along with some Espressos. Everything we ordered was presented beautifully and was absolutely delicious! The only exception was the side of mashed potatoes...the seasoning and texture were off.

For the wait staff, it was a very busy night, and you could see that they worked as a team, which helped with the efficiency of serving the many guests that evening. Overall it was a wonderful experience, and we will be going back...probably on a Monday or a Wednesday!

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