



ASCGWA December 2020

ASCGWA Board	2
Special Activities	3
Birthdays	4
Charitable Cause	5
Ways and Means	5
Internationals	6
Monthly Activities	7
Members in Action	8
Holiday Favorites	11
Knollwood	11

VIRTUAL LUNCHEON DATES*

2020
December 17

2021
January 21
February 18
March 18
April 15
May 20

*Luncheon dates are
tentative and subject to
change

Backchannels

Army Spouses' Club of the Greater Washington Area

PRESIDENT'S PEN



Dearest Members,

I hope you all had a delightful, safe Thanksgiving weekend. Whether spent with family or friends, in person or virtually, I truly hope you feel as blessed as I do. I am thankful for all of you and am especially grateful for those that have reached out with words of appreciation regarding the efforts of our ASCGWA board members this past year.

The Monuments by Moonlight Trolley and the New Army Museum tours were wildly successful; see photos in this issue as well as on our FB and website. We also have a new group—the Trivia Group—which will be meeting virtually. If you would like to participate, please email Special Activities. By the way, we are looking for a Special Activities Chairperson. We are also looking for Scholarship Committee members and a Chairperson. This is extremely important to our club and quite frankly, the reason we exist. Please consider the positive impact this group will have in the lives of others. If you are not personally able to serve in either capacity, I encourage you to spread the word by telling a friend about this critical need. If you are interested in any of the open positions, please email me or anyone on our board.

As you may or may not have heard, our Festival of the Firs had to be moved to an online virtual auction. We were excited to “see” some of our members in person at a very nice venue to host this coveted event, but on the flip side, since the Festival is now virtual, EVERYONE can easily participate!!! Our Fundraising Chairpersons, Viviana Scrivner and Catherine Melusen, are actively building the website to begin the Auction on the 4th of December at 12:00 pm EST. The Auction will end on the 8th of December at 8:00 pm EST. There will be 15 items up for auction. The other 11 wreaths, trees, and Hospitality baskets will be part of our Opportunity Drawing at the Virtual Holiday Hijinks Luncheon on the 17th of December! Please keep an eye out for separate emails that will contain the links to the Auction and the Flyer for the December Virtual Luncheon! In addition, we still plan to conduct a Juice and Jive Zoom event on the 18th of December at 8:00 pm EST with some fun give aways for those that participate.

As we round the corner to the last days of 2020, we cannot forget our Charitable Causes. This month’s “cause” is the Army Community Service (ACS). As you know, ACS, provides comprehensive, standardized, coordinated, and responsive services that support Soldiers, Department of Army Civilians, and Families, regardless of geographic location. We have donated toys and given monetary donations in the past; however, this year will be strictly monetary. If you wish to support this cause, please register for the event upon receipt of the email which will contain further details.

We all anticipate this Holiday Season will be a little different from what we are accustomed to. That said, I am very thankful that you and the rest of our members are remaining so patient as we navigate through this Jungle of a world we are currently living in. Once again, please stay safe out there, and thank you again for being as flexible as Gumbly!

Warmest wishes,



Launa!

Can you believe that we are getting ready to bid a fond adieu to 2020? And what a year it has been! The time flew by as we conducted our lives in a new manner, due to the COVID-19 pandemic. We did not let the pandemic defeat us. We, like many others, have found ourselves doing things differently, and we have persevered.

While many family holiday traditions will not happen as we celebrate the Holiday Season, I encourage you to discover unique ways to celebrate and make new traditions, creating lasting memories!

BACKCHANNELS SUBMISSIONS

All Backchannels submissions are due no later than the 3rd Friday of each month. Submit to:
newsletter@armypousesclub.org

Fondly,
Tanya Toussaint
 Editor

ASCGWA 2020-2021



Honorary Presidents	Maria McConville Alexandra Grinston
Honorary Vice President	Leann Martin
Advisor	Tracey Jones

EXECUTIVE BOARD

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Tours	Mary Alice Jakso Kelli Reynoldson	tours@armypousesclub.org
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Ways & Means	Amie Hovatter	waysandmeans@armypousesclub.org
Webmaster	Maddy Pederson	admin@armypousesclub.org

Join our tribe! We are looking for someone to serve in the positions of Special Activities Chair, and Scholarship Committee Chair. Please contact our Parliamentarian, Jennifer Stepetic, at parliamentarian@armypousesclub.org for additional information about the position.



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For permission, contact ASCGWA

SPECIAL ACTIVITIES

BIBLE STUDY

The Living Word Bible Study meets every Monday at 10 am at the Memorial Post Chapel on Fort Myer, across from the PX. Please contact Nancy Jackson at jacksonjn@verizon.net

FLICK CHICKS MOVIE GROUP

This group meets up to enjoy a movie together, as select movies that are of interest to club members are released. Please contact Ellen Pirog at Ellen.Pirog@verizon.net

GREAT DECISIONS

Do you enjoy talking about current events and exploring the rationale of our foreign policy decisions? Great Decisions is America's largest discussion program on world affairs. The program model involves reading the Great Decisions Briefing Book, watching a DVD, and meeting in a discussion group to discuss the most critical global issues facing America today. A National Opinion Ballot is compiled and presented to the Department of State, Congress, and White House at the end of the year

Please contact Jill at specialactivities@armyspousesclub.org if you are interested in leading this group (guidance on how to run this group can be provided).

HAPPY HOUR GROUP

Meet new friends and catch up with members at Happy Hour gatherings throughout the year in the DC/Northern Virginia area. Please contact Kim Farnsworth at jkfarns@comcast.net

TEA GROUP

This group meets to enjoy tea at various establishments in the area. Please contact Ellen Pirog at mcatmny@verizon.net

TOURS

Throughout the year, various group tours are scheduled. The Tours coordinators have scheduled some fabulous tours but act fast, so you don't miss out on the limited reservations. Our "tour guides" Mary Alice Jakso or Kelli Reynoldson may be reached at tours@armyspousesclub.org

WALK AROUND WASHINGTON GROUP

Each month a walk is organized in and around the Washington, DC area. Please contact Nina O'Shaughnessy at ninaspangos@gmail.com or Mary Pawlow at mlspawlow@aol.com

Many of our Special Activities are on hiatus because of restrictions in place due to COVID-19. Our groups will begin to meet again in the near future. Please check our website, Facebook page, and newsletter for the most recent information about our club's activities

***Wishing the happiest
of birthdays to our
members celebrating a
December birthday!***

3rd Evelyn Rodriguez
4th Casey Obringer
6th Edith Gunnels Klimow
8th Denise Oskvarek
9th Dawn Fenton
Lise Harvey
12th Claire Foley
Paula Gibbs
Lucille M. Griswold
Charlotte Tragakis
14th Alisa Kremenetska
15th Jacqueline McKenna
16th Sandra Christman
Elaine Freeman
Lisa Howard
17th Viviana W. Scrivner
18th Carol Phillips
Brenda Schultze
20th Jennifer Phillips
21st Holly Scherer
22nd Holli Aspland
Laura Badami
Judith Browne
Christine Hill
Kelli Reynoldson
23rd Patricia McMillan
Wanda Thomas
25th Margherita Monardo
26th Jennifer Bowen
Maureen Hickey
27th Cheryl Edenfield
Susan Sciarretta
28th Jacqueline Habel,
Tiffany Ward
29th Jeannie Leson
Schele Mongeon
30th Mary Doherty
31st Mee Herman

ZIP CODE GROUPS

ALEXANDRIA

Alecia Ritzma

ARLINGTON

Paige Kellogg
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CHANTILLY, CLIFTON, CENTERVILLE, & VICINITY

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FORT BELVOIR, LORTON

Coordinator position open

MARYLAND-MONTGOMERY & BEYOND

Coordinator position open

SPRINGFIELD

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ANNANDALE, FAIRFAX, & FAIRFAX STATION

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FALLS CHURCH, FORT MYER, & MCLEAN

Lori Borgna-Strong
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borgnalori@gmail.com

MARYLAND-HOWARD COUNTY & BEYOND

Coordinator position open

PRINCE WILLIAM COUNTY & BEYOND

Paula Ann Mancini
703-346-4468
pa.mancini@comcast.net

WASHINGTON DC

Coordinator position open

A few of our Zip Code Group coordinators have PCS'd or moved and we have positions open. If you are interested in volunteering to be your Zip Code Group's coordinator, please contact Jill at specialactivities@armypousesclub.org, for more information.



INTERNATIONAL CONNECTIONS

WOW! It's the last month in the year 2020. For many of us, this year has been the most challenging, due in no small part, to the global pandemic.

Despite that, Melissa and Kathy still find so much kindness and compassion in so many of you. And for that, we are grateful.

Although our December luncheon has been cancelled, we will still meet virtually and have the opportunity to win some fabulous wreaths and trees from our Festival of the Firs. Mark your calendars for December 17th.

Every month the United States celebrates holidays, fun days, and inspirational days. Here are some things you can celebrate in the month of December:

- December 1 Rosa Parks Day - she was an activist in the civil rights movement, sometimes called "the mother of the civil rights movement." Many know her as the woman who refused to give up her bus seat to a white man in Montgomery, Alabama in 1955.
- December 4 National Cookie Day
- December 6 St. Nicholas Day
- December 15 National Cupcake Day
- December 18 National Ugly Christmas Sweater Day
- December 25 Christmas
- December 26 Boxing Day - celebrated in the United Kingdom and other commonwealth countries such as Canada, New Zealand, Australia, and South Africa
- December 31 National Champagne Day

INTERNATIONAL SPOTLIGHT



Did You Know? - New Zealand

While we tend to celebrate Christmas in the cold and snow in the United States, those who live south of the Equator are experiencing their Summer Season. Our Kiwi Friends share many of the same traditions as we do, but when Santa Claus visits, it is more likely that he is wearing shorts. Paula shared this memory with us: When her children were small, she and her husband Dave would tell them stories about Santa. On Christmas eve, the children would sleep in the same room. Paula and Dave would sneak outside and stand near their bedroom window, ringing small bells and making tapping noise to imitate the sounds of reindeer hooves. And at some point, Santa informed them that he was no longer interested in milk and cookies; Santa needed just a little nip of something a wee bit stronger. So, as you share your family traditions or start new ones, feel free to adapt this trick from Paula and Dave. Thank you, Paula, for sharing that with us!

However, and wherever you may celebrate the holidays, we wish you all the best. We look forward to more adventures with you in the New Year.

Please be safe and take care of each other.

Kathy and Melissa

internationals@armypousesclub.org

December Events and Activities

Click here to access the Festival of the Firs Auction!

<https://ascgwa.betterworld.org/auctions/festival-firs-ascgwa>



Army Spouses' Club
of the Greater Washington Area

FESTIVAL OF THE FIRS ONLINE AUCTION

**BIDDING BEGINS
12:00 PM EST DECEMBER 4
BIDDING ENDS
8:00 PM EST DECEMBER 8**

ASCGWA members will receive an email with a link to view the auction. You will need to register with betterworld.org if you would like to place a bid. You may register prior to the start of the auction so you are ready to place your bids once it begins.

Visit our social media outlets for sneak peeks at the trees and wreaths.



Festival of the Firs Registration Information

You must register at betterworld.org to place a bid.

To create a free account:
Click the "Sign up for free" button at the lower left corner.

Create a personal account under the "I want to support a fundraiser" heading.

It's that easy! Once the link to the auction goes live you will be able to place bids.

The auction begins December 4 at 12:00 pm and ends on December 8 at 8:00 pm. Happy Bidding & Good Luck!



Army Spouses' Club of the Greater Washington Area

"Holiday Hijinks"

**Virtual Luncheon
December 17, 2020
10:30 am - 12:00 pm**



90 minutes of nonstop fun, laughter, and holiday cheer!
Christmas Trivia Contests - Most Festive Zoom Background
Best Holiday Face Mask - Best Homemade Ornament made this year

Prizes for each category plus drawings for trees/wreaths from the Festival of the Firs - options for tickets available at registration - items may be viewed on the ASCGWA website - all tickets proceeds will benefit our Scholarship fund

Please register by December 14 at armyspousesclub.org.



Army Spouses' Club
of the Greater Washington Area



Juice and Jive

**December 18, 2020
8:00 pm**

Everyone who attends will receive one ticket for a surprise drawing. Wear something to reflect your holiday mood.



MEMBERS IN ACTION

ARLINGTON
ZIPCODE FOR
NOVEMBER
CARLYLE
RESTAURANT
IN
ARLINGTON



L-R Lynne DeFrancisco, Kathy Fox, Paige Kellogg, Natalie Crockett, Brenda Schultze, Lorraine Klimowicz, Launa Klimowicz





EVENING JIVE



MUSEUM TOUR





Kathy Fox and Melissa Pederson, International CoChairs, hosted Thanksgiving Dinner with Members of the International Committee

HOLIDAY FAVORITES

Slow Cooker Creamy Leek and Potato Soup

Submitted by: Brenda Schultze

Ingredients:

- 3-4 leeks, thinly sliced
- 4 large baking potatoes, cut into ½ inch cubes
- 2 cans (14 ½ oz each) vegetable or chicken broth
- 1/3 cup butter or margarine
- ½ tsp salt
- ¼ tsp pepper
- 1 cup half-and-half
- Chopped fresh chives or green onions, if desired

Directions:

1. Mix all ingredients except half- and-half and chives in 3 ½ to 6-quart slow cooker.
2. Cover and cook on low heat setting 8-10 hours (or high for 4-5 hrs)
3. Pour vegetable mixture by batches into blender or food processor. Cover and blend on high until smooth; return to cooker. Stir in half- and-half. (Or blend everything in slow cooker with a handheld mixer or blender)
4. Cover and cook on low heat setting 20-30 minutes or until hot.
5. Serve, sprinkle with chives or whatever topping you prefer!

6-8 servings

Jalapeño Havarti, Date, and Candied Pecan Cheese Ball

- | | |
|---|--------------------------------|
| 1 ½ cup pecans | 1 to 2 Tb softened butter |
| 3 TB agave nectar or maple syrup | ½ – 1 teaspoon garlic powder |
| 1/8 teaspoon sea salt | ½ teaspoon sea salt |
| 8 oz of Jalapeño Havarti cheese (Boar's Head) | ½ cup chopped Medjool dates |
| 8 oz cream cheese | 1 jalapeño seeded, and chopped |

- Heat oven to 350F and line a baking sheet with parchment paper.
- Combine the pecans with the agave nectar and sprinkle with the sea salt. Pour onto prepared baking sheet and toast for 8 minutes. Remove from the oven and set aside until completely cooled.
- Cut the Jalapeño Havarti cheese into cubes. Place in food processor along with the cream cheese, garlic powder, butter, and salt. Pulse for a few seconds. Push the ingredients down and pulse again until combined and mostly smooth. Set aside.
- In a skillet add the chopped jalapeño and lightly spray with a vegetable spray. Cook over medium heat until the jalapeños are tender, about 5 minutes.
- Add ¼ cup of the candied pecans, chopped dates, and the cooked jalapeño to the cream cheese mixture and pulse again for only a few seconds, leaving some bits and pieces of jalapeño throughout the cheese ball.
- Form into a ball and cover with plastic wrap and refrigerate for about twenty minutes.
- In the meantime, chop the remaining candied pecans.
- When the cheese ball has firmed up, roll it around in the chopped candied pecans until mostly covered.
- Place on a plate and serve immediately with crackers ... or refrigerate until it is time to share with everyone! To ease your holiday cooking schedule, this can be made a day in advance.

Enjoy!

Submitted by PaulaAnn Mancini

Chocolate-Cherry Sugar-Crusted Shortbread

Submitted by Brenda Schultze
From Southern Living

Ingredients:

- 1 cup butter, softened
- ½ cup powdered sugar
- 2 ½ cups all-purpose flour
- 1/8 tsp salt
- ¼ cup semi-sweet chocolate mini-morsels
- ¼ cup finely chopped dried cherries
- 1 tsp vanilla extract
- 1 Tbsp granulated sugar
- ½ cup granulated sugar



Directions:

Beat butter at medium speed with an electric mixer until creamy; add powdered sugar, beating well.

Combine flour and salt; gradually add to butter mixture, beating until well blended. Stir in chocolate mini-morsels, cherries, and vanilla.

Line an 8" square pan with aluminum foil, allowing foil to extend over edges of the pan. Lightly grease foil and sprinkle with 1 Tbsp. granulated sugar. Press dough into pan.

Bake at 325° for 40 minutes or until golden. Cool 30 minutes or until slightly warm in pan. Use foil to gently lift shortbread from pan. Cut shortbread into 1" squares using a sharp knife. Roll shortbread in ½ cup granulated sugar.

Yield: 64 cookies

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Knollwood
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