



# Backchannels

Army Spouses' Club of the Greater Washington Area

## FEBRUARY 2022

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### **PRESIDENT'S PEN**



Love is in the air...Happy February!

While we were sad that we could not meet in person for our January luncheon, our virtual handmade chunky knit blanket class was such a wonderful time for all our members who participated! A huge *Thank You* to our very own Viviana Scrivner for putting this together, for teaching us all how to make our blankets, and for selflessly serving our club and our members! And how timely, as we battle these cold winter days! I'm already thinking of making another one (yes, it is addictive)!

The Joint Armed Forces of Washington Luncheon (JAFOWL) is coming up on March 8th, 2022. You do not want to miss this event, and we are honored to have a fantastic guest, Lt. Gen. Susan Helms, USAF (Ret.) to speak with all of our joint members attending. A veteran of five space flights, General Helms has logged 211 days in space, including a spacewalk of eight hours and 56 minutes, a WORLD RECORD! This will no doubt be an incredible event and the hard work by all those involved is certainly appreciated.

Another *must see* event is our upcoming February luncheon. Please join us at our Winter Olympics Bingo Luncheon for some games, sportsmanship, and simple *togetherness*. We are very excited to meet in person at Bronson Bierhall and have arranged to have the venue exclusively for our members to ensure everyone can enjoy and relax in a safe and positive manner. The Olympics provide something for everyone, and Bingo is a fan favorite, so come join us in your favorite Olympic sport or team attire - and let the games begin!

Lastly, there is still time to submit your nomination for next year's Executive Board. Our Parliamentarian, Jennifer Stepetic, will consolidate the names of all of those who are interested to be voted on at a future date. Please consider sharing your talents and energy with our club by serving on our board. Through you, our legacy of supporting our Families and our community will proudly continue. If you have any questions about any of the positions, please feel free to reach out to any of our current Executive Board members.

Hugs!

Ramona Smith

*Coming together is the beginning, staying together is progress, working together is success!*

### **2022**

**February 17  
March 24  
April 21  
May 19**

# January Virtual Handmade Chunky Knit Blanket Class



# Army Spouses' Club of the Greater Washington Area

Go for the Gold at our February luncheon!



February 17, 2022 - 10:30 A.M.

Bronson Bierhall

4100 Fairfax Drive-Arlington, VA 22203



*Additional details to follow.*

- \* Bronson Bierhall is a 6000 sq ft venue with indoor and outdoor seating. ASCGWA will have exclusive use of the building during our events.
- \* Metered street parking is available in front of the restaurant. Parking is also available a block and a half away at the Ballston Quarter Mall (3 hours for \$1). The Ballston Metro stop on the Orange and Silver lines is a block away.
- \* We will be practicing social distancing, wearing masks (masks may be removed while eating), and will have lots of hand sanitizer available.
- \* If you would like further information about our wonderful location, please visit [bronsonbierhall.com](http://bronsonbierhall.com).



The Army Wife Seal is a copyrighted property of the Army Spouses' Club of the Greater Washington Area. No one may reproduce it in any manner, or for any reason, without the express permission of ASCGWA. For permission, contact ASCGWA.



Is there someone that needs a little cheer, a get-well wish, a condolence, or a congratulations? If you know of a member in need, please let our secretary know.

Email the member's name, address, and the type of card that should be sent to Petra at:

[secretary@armyspousesclub.org](mailto:secretary@armyspousesclub.org)

## ASCGWA BOARD MEMBERS

Honorary Presidents Maria McConville and Alexandra Grinston  
Honorary Vice President/Advisor Leann Martin

### EXECUTIVE BOARD

President	Ramona Smith	president@armyspousesclub.org
1st Vice President	Becki Chambers	firstvp@armyspousesclub.org
2nd Vice President	Paula Ann Mancini	secondvp@armyspousesclub.org
Secretary	Diane Martinez	diane.martinez1@gmail.com
Treasurer	Petra Gould	secretary@armyspousesclub.org
Parliamentarian	Sandra Christman	treasurer@armyspousesclub.org
	Jennifer Stepetic	parliamentarian@armyspousesclub.org

### STANDING/SPECIAL COMMITTEES

Community Outreach Chair	Desiree Moore	charitablecauses@armyspousesclub.org
Fundraising and Vendors	Catherine Melusen	fundraising@armyspousesclub.org
Historian	Viviana Scrivner	vendors@armyspousesclub.org
Hospitality Chair	Joy Kovacevic	historian@armyspousesclub.org
International Relations Chair	Veronica Roberts	hospitality@armyspousesclub.org
JAFOWL Liaison	Kathy Fox	internationals@armyspousesclub.org
Membership Chair	Lori Borgna-Strong	internationals@armyspousesclub.org
Newsletter Chair	Connie Semonite	jafowl@armyspousesclub.org
Public Relations Chair	Jennifer Price	membership@armyspousesclub.org
Reservations	Vacant	newsletter@armyspousesclub.org
Scholarships Chair	Michelle Funkhouser	publicity@armyspousesclub.org
Special Activities Chair	Maggie Spencer	reservations@armyspousesclub.org
Tours Chair	Kelly Kreis	scholarships@armyspousesclub.org
Ways and Means Chair	Anke Starkey	specialactivities@armyspousesclub.org
Webmaster	Heyda Diaz	tours@armyspousesclub.org
	Sonserae Martinez	waysandmeans@armyspousesclub.org
	Rebecca Baldwin	admin@armyspousesclub.org
	Viviana Pazos	

## BACKCHANNEL SUBMISSIONS

If you would like to submit an article, information about an upcoming club or community activity, movie or book review, restaurant recommendation, recipe, or must-see travel destination please let me know! I would love to share your information with our members!

All Backchannels submissions are due no later than the second Friday of each month.

Pictures from the monthly luncheons are due the following day on the third Friday of each month

I can be reached at: [newsletter@armyspousesclub.org](mailto:newsletter@armyspousesclub.org).

Fondly,

*Ramona Smith*

**\*\* Editor's Note: Mask mandates were followed where required. Masks were removed only for the purpose of photos. \*\***

# SPECIAL ACTIVITIES



To join the Special Activities groups, log in to your profile at <https://www.armyspousesclub.org>. Hover the cursor over your name and click View Profile, then click Edit Profile. Scroll down through your personal information and check the box(es) in front of the Special Activities groups that you would like to join. You will then be added to the Evite invitations. If you are unable to log in to your profile on our website, send an email to [specialactivities@armyspousesclub.org](mailto:specialactivities@armyspousesclub.org) and let her know which activities you would like to join. She will add you to the invitation lists.

Questions? Send an email to [specialactivites@armyspousesclub.org](mailto:specialactivites@armyspousesclub.org). Hope to see you soon!

## **Bible Study**

The Living Word Bible Study meets every Monday on Zoom.

## **Cultural Bridges**

We will meet monthly to cultivate relationships between international and U.S. spouses as we share cultures, food and experiences through outings, activities, and events unique to the U.S., as well as the greater DMV area.

## **Flick Chicks Movie Group**

The Flick Chicks Movie Group will resume meeting monthly soon and periodically throughout the year whenever there is a movie that we think the members would like to see together.

## **Grub Club**

We meet once a month at a variety of casual restaurants and cafes. They may be off the beaten path so if you like to try new places, join us!

## **Happy Hour Group**

Meet new friends and catch up with other members at Happy Hour gatherings throughout the year in the DC/NOVA area.

## **Tea Group**

The Tea Group is currently on hold.

## **Trivia Group**

The Trivia Group is just getting started and will be virtual for now. Join us for a fun zoom trivia meeting. Everyone is welcome! More information coming soon.

## **Walk Around Washington Group**

Stay tuned for more information about future walks.

## **ZIP CODE GROUPS**

### **ALEXANDRIA**

Coordinator position open

### **ANNANDALE, FAIRFAX, & FAIRFAX STATION**

Mary Pawlow

703-764-9656

[mlspawlow@aol.com](mailto:mlspawlow@aol.com)

### **ARLINGTON & WASHINGTON DC**

Paige Kellogg

703-248-8313

[paigekell@aol.com](mailto:paigekell@aol.com)

### **BURKE**

Mary Anne Beagles

703-569-7415

[jmbe1@verizon.net](mailto:jmbe1@verizon.net)

### **CHANTILLY, CLIFTON, CENTERVILLE, & VICINITY**

Pat O'Neill

703-378-3624

[pponeill6@aol.com](mailto:pponeill6@aol.com)

### **FALLS CHURCH, FORT MYER, & MCLEAN**

Lori Borgna-Strong

706-799-9308

[borgnalori@gmail.com](mailto:borgnalori@gmail.com)

### **FORT BELVOIR & LORTON**

Frances Biggerstaff

973-997-8074

[bignlittlestaff@gmail.com](mailto:bignlittlestaff@gmail.com)

### **MARYLAND-HOWARD COUNTY & BEYOND**

Coordinator position open

### **MARYLAND-MONTGOMERY & BEYOND**

Coordinator position open

### **PRINCE WILLIAM COUNTY & BEYOND**

Paula Ann Mancini

703-346-4468

[Pa.mancini@comcast.net](mailto:Pa.mancini@comcast.net)

### **SPRINGFIELD**

Jennifer Stepetic

910-263-2063

[stepetic@yahoo.com](mailto:stepetic@yahoo.com)



## OUT AND ABOUT

One of the many benefits of living in this area is the plethora of activities the DMV has to offer. Each month we will highlight events and hope that you and your families will get out and enjoy the culture!

### Embassy Row Valentines Chocolate Tour

February 6th  
12:00 p.m.—2:00 p.m.  
Washington D.C.  
**\*Tickets Required**

### George Washington's Birthday @ Mt. Vernon

February 21st  
8:00 a.m.—6:00 p.m.  
Mt. Vernon, VA  
**\*Free Admission**

### Black History Month

February 1st - 28th  
Numerous events and cultural programs available  
**\*Search online for opportunities or visit <https://nmaahc.si.edu/>**

# WHAT'S HAPPENING!

## President Lincoln's Cottage tour



Tuesday, February 15, 2022  
11:00 a.m. (arrive by 10:45 a.m.)  
140 Rock Creek Church Rd NW - Washington, DC 20011  
**\$14**

Please register by February 10 at [armyspousesclub.org](http://armyspousesclub.org). This tour has a maximum of 18 - ASCGWA members only.

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President Lincoln's Cottage is on the grounds of the Armed Forces Retirement Home. Security for the Armed Forces Retirement Home requires visitors to show valid identification at the security gate in order to enter the property. Please be prepared to show your ID.

Visitors three years and older are required to wear face masks while on the grounds.

Parking is permitted in the designated lot only.

Washington D.C. Temple Open House  
**FRIDAY, MAY 13, 2022**

THE CHURCH OF JESUS CHRIST OF LATTER DAY SAINTS-9900 STONEYBROOK DRIVE-KENSINGTON, MD

# Happy Valentines Day

Whether you love Valentine's Day or hate it, one thing's clear: Valentine's Day history goes way back. And while Valentine's Day is now known for kissing, Valentine's Day gifts, and hard-to-get dinner reservations, the origins of the holiday are *far* less romantic.

First, a quick refresher: Valentine's Day *always* falls on February 14. Valentine's Day 2022 is Monday, February 14. Valentine's Day is a fixed day on the calendar that got lumped into a mid-February holiday on the ancient Roman calendar called Lupercalia—which some historians believe is what led to Valentine's Day being all about love. At the end of the 5th century, Pope Gelasius declared February 14 St. Valentine's Day, and since then, February 14th has been a day of celebration—though it was generally more religious or romantic.

Saint Valentine's Day was a feast day in the Catholic religion, added to the liturgical calendar around 500 AD. The day was commemorated for martyred saints named—you guessed it—Valentine. Differing legends celebrate three different saints called Valentine or Valentinus, but since very little was known about these men and there were conflicting reports of the Saint Valentine Day story, the feast day was removed from the Christian liturgical calendar in 1969.

But even though not much is known about the real history of the Saint Valentines on whom the holiday is based, the legend of Saint Valentine has several tellings. One legend says that Saint Valentine refused to convert to paganism and was executed by Roman Em-

peror Claudius II. Prior to his death, he was able to miraculously heal the daughter of his jailer, who then converted to Christianity along with his family. Another legend says a bishop called Saint Valentine of Terni is the true namesake of the holiday; this Saint Valentine was also executed.

But according to others—and this is how Saint Valentine became affiliated with a love-focused holiday—Saint Valentine was a Roman priest who performed weddings for soldiers forbidden to marry, because of a Roman emperor edict decreeing married soldiers did not make good warriors and thus young men could not marry. This Saint Valentine wore a ring with a Cupid on it—a symbol of love—that helped soldiers recognize him. And, in a precursor to greeting cards, he handed out paper hearts to remind Christians of their love for God.

Because of this legend, St. Valentine became known as the patron saint of love. The Saint Valentine prayer asks Saint Valentine to connect lovers together, so that two become one, and the couple remembers their devotion to God. This story set the groundwork for establishing the day as a holiday for romantic love.

Over the years (and centuries), Valentine's Day has been a religious celebration, an ancient ritual day, and a commercial holiday. All that change means the meaning of Valentine's Day is truly whatever you want it to be, so celebrate the day of love however you want, even if it's just through self-love.

## Happy Birthday wishes to all our fabulous spouses with February birthdays!

 February 1st: Ella Harvey, Jennifer McCarty	 February 2nd: Orn Punmmongkol
February 3rd: Marina McManus	 February 6th: Sharise Spellmon, Susan Wright
 February 7th: Lorna Malooley	 February 9th: Anne Borcherding
February 10th: Alice Swan, Tanya Toussaint	 February 13th: Kathleen Harrison
 February 19th: Mary Gauvin	February 21st: Amina Rahman, Jennifer Stepetic
February 22nd: Kelly Kreis, Jane Pafenberg	 February 23rd: Pamela Thibodeau
 February 25th: Urvi Avichal, Yen Ling Tan	
February 27th: Armine Graham, Maria del Pilar Rodriguez Garat, Michelle Zuniga	

We love recognizing our member's birthdays and would never intentionally leave out a celebration! Please make sure your member profile on the ASCGWA web page has your birthday listed. If not, you can add your birthday at any time by logging into the website and updating your profile.

# ASCGWA 2022 SCHOLARSHIP OPPORTUNITY APPLICATION WINDOW OPEN



Each year ASCGWA awards merit-based scholarships to high school graduating seniors, college students, and military spouses living in the National Capital Region.

The 2022 scholarship application period is open from now until March 15, 2022.

Scholarships are awarded in three categories: High School Senior, College Student, and Member/Spouse. Application forms and eligibility requirements can be found on our ASCGWA website: [www.armyspousesclub.org](http://www.armyspousesclub.org).

To learn more about the ASCGWA Scholarship Program, please contact Anke at [scholarships@armyspousesclub.org](mailto:scholarships@armyspousesclub.org).



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JAFOWL

presents

## Susan Helms Lieutenant General, USAF, Retired



Selected by NASA in January 1990, General Helms became an astronaut in July 1991. On January 13, 1993, then an Air Force major and a member of the space shuttle Endeavour crew, *she became the first U.S. military woman in space.*

A veteran of five space flights, General Helms has logged 211 days in space, including *a spacewalk of eight hours and 56 minutes, a world record.*

Lt Gen (ret) Susan Helms is the creator and owner of an independent consulting company, Orbital Visions LLC, in Colorado Springs CO.

TUESDAY MARCH 8, 2022

Army Navy Country Club, Arlington Virginia

Open to all 2021-2022 members of AFOSCDC, ASCGWA, CGSCDC, MOSCDC, NOSCDC

REGISTRATION OPENS AT 10 AM ON FEBRUARY 15, 2022. WATCH FOR A REGISTRATION LINK VIA EMAIL FROM YOUR MILITARY SPOUSE CLUB.

## *Joint Armed Forces of Washington Luncheon*

### Our Mission

*Since 1977, the Joint Armed Forces of Washington Luncheon (JAFOWL) has been connecting, inspiring, and empowering military spouses across all branches living in and around our nation's capital.*

### WHAT WE VALUE

- \* Camaraderie Amongst Spouses
- \* Inspiring Guest Speakers
- \* Branch Inclusiveness
- \* Washington, D.C. Culture and History
- \* DoD Esprit de Corps
- \* Teamwork Amongst Spouses' Clubs

## Bible Study Group



*The Bible Study Group  
got together to watch  
"Ain't Too Proud" at the  
Kennedy Center.*



LULAROE DAWN DAVIS

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[KnollwoodCommunity.org](http://KnollwoodCommunity.org)

## Arlington Zip Code Group

### December Gathering





## CALL FOR NOMINATIONS

THE ARMY SPOUSES' CLUB OF THE GREATER WASHINGTON AREA IS NOW SEEKING FUN, ENERGETIC, AND HARDWORKING VOLUNTEERS WHO WANT TO MAKE A DIFFERENCE IN THEIR COMMUNITY FOR THE 2022-2023 EXECUTIVE BOARD. NOMINEES WILL BE ANNOUNCED AT THE MARCH MEMBERSHIP LUNCHEON, VOTED ON AT THE APRIL MEMBERSHIP LUNCHEON, AND INSTALLED AT THE MAY MEMBERSHIP LUNCHEON.

Nominations and questions may be submitted to Jennifer Stepetic at: [parliamentarian@armyspousesclub.org](mailto:parliamentarian@armyspousesclub.org).

President • 1<sup>st</sup> Vice President • 2<sup>nd</sup> Vice President • Secretary • Treasurer

NAME: \_\_\_\_\_

POSITION: \_\_\_\_\_

EMAIL ADDRESS: \_\_\_\_\_

PHONE NUMBER: \_\_\_\_\_

SERVICE AFFILIATION: \_\_\_\_\_

Tell us a little about yourself and why you would like to serve on the Executive Board. List any experience, talents, or special skills you would like to share.

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SIGNATURE OF VOLUNTEER: \_\_\_\_\_

# NEWS FOR YOU

## Gladys' Irish Scones

*from the kitchen of Anke Starkey*

### Mix together

3 cups flour  
3/4 cups sugar  
1 tbsp baking powder  
1/4 tsp salt  
1/4 tsp baking soda

### Cut in

1/2 cup butter or shortening

### Stir in

1/2 cup raisins or craisins or cranberries or chocolate chips (whatever floats your boat)

### Add

1 cup milk  
1 egg

### Mix until combined.

Drop 2 tbsp onto greased baking pan with 2" between. Bake for 10-15 minutes.

Sprinkle with cinnamon.



## **Chickpea Salad (Serves 3)**

*from the kitchen of Anke Starkey*



### Ingredients

1 (15 oz./425 g) can chickpeas, drained and rinsed  
2 stalks celery, finely chopped  
3 green onions, thinly sliced  
1/4 cup finely chopped dill pickle  
1/4 cup finely chopped red bell pepper  
2-3 tbsp mayonnaise  
1 clove garlic, minced  
1 1/2 tsp yellow mustard  
2 tsp dill  
1 1/2 - 3 tsp fresh lemon juice, to taste  
1/4 tsp fine-grain sea salt or to taste  
Freshly ground pepper  
Toasted bread, crackers, tortillas or lettuce for serving.

### Directions

In large bowl mash chickpeas with potato masher until flaky in texture. Stir in the celery, green onions, pickles, bell peppers, mayonnaise, and garlic until combined.

Stir in the mustard and dill and season with lemon juice, salt, and black pepper. Adjust quantities to taste.

Serve with toasted bread, on crackers, in a tortilla or lettuce.



Army and Air Force Spouses' Clubs  
invite you to attend the

# Joint International Showcase

Monday, March 28, 2022

10:30 a.m.- 1:30 p.m.

**Stacy C. Sherwood Community Center**  
**3740 Old Lee Highway**  
**Fairfax, VA 22030**

**Cost \$12**

**Please register by March 21**

**ASCGWA members:** [armyspousesclub.org](http://armyspousesclub.org)  
**AFOSC members:** [afoscdc.com](http://afoscdc.com)



*Explore*

*Dream*

*Discover*

*Taste*



ASCGWA & AFOSC are private organizations and do not represent the DoD or the USA/USAF and have no government status.  
We will be following all applicable federal, state, local, and venue Covid guidelines.

## *Calling All Volunteers*

For more than 25 years, we have hosted an International Showcase for our fabulous members! This year we have joined with the Air Force Officers' Spouses' Club to host the first Joint International Showcase. On March 28th, we invite you to Explore, Dream, Discover, and Taste the wonders of 22 countries. We have an incredible group of international women in our membership, and they are excited to share a bit of their culture. Please sign up today to volunteer during the Joint International Showcase. Contact Petra at [secretary@armyspousesclub.org](mailto:secretary@armyspousesclub.org) if you are interested.

Thank you!

# International Connections



*With sad hearts we share the passing of our dear international sister, Alma Nurgaliyeva from Kazakhstan.*

*She recently returned to her homeland to visit family and friends during the Christmas holidays and had remained there to spend extra time with her daughter after her husband and their three sons returned to the USA. Unexpectedly, she had a heart attack in her sleep.*

*All who knew her will definitely miss her warm smile, kind personality and positivity. She arrived in the United States in August 2019 and joined our organization in 2021, as well as several others, in the area and eagerly participated as much as her schedule allowed.*



*Alma enjoyed many American activities especially sports and put her heart and soul into whatever she did. She was a caring daughter, loving mother, devoted wife, faithful servant, sincere friend, and a talented history teacher. Rest in peace dear Alma!!!!*



**SAMSON  
PROPERTIES**

**Paige Kellogg & Nancy Jackson, Realtors®  
4720 Lee Highway, Arlington, VA 22207**

**Paige - 703.598.2785 (C)  
Nancy - 571-213-3284 (C)  
Office - 571-677-2900**

*Would love to assist you in your home buying or selling!  
Referrals always welcome!*

# *Washington D.C. Monuments and Memorials Walking Tour*

A cold, blustery, yet fabulous day for a tour! Beginning at the Washington Monument, a central focal point and tribute to the first U.S. president, adorned on all sides by Old Glory. Moving to the WWII Memorial, a reflection of the vastness of war that spanned the entire globe. Following the path along the Vietnam Veterans Memorial Wall, a tribute to those men and women killed or missing in over 16 years of war. Overlooking it all, Honest Abe himself, a visionary of his time and trailblazer for others like Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., the latter himself standing on these very steps. The cold of this day, pale in comparison to the -40F temperatures felt by U.S. Soldiers during the harsh conditions of the Korean War. Next passing through a Mountain of Despair, towards a Stone of Hope, "the only thing we have to fear is fear itself." Our final stop, the Jefferson Memorial, a prelude to the warmer weather and beautiful cherry blossoms we eagerly await in the spring.





**The Army Spouses' Club  
of the Greater Washington Area**  
[www.armyspousesclub.org](http://www.armyspousesclub.org)

**Backchannels**

Post Office Box 1124  
Fort Myer, VA 22211



**February**