



Senior Corner

by Mary Lee Anderson

Alexandria Silver Service card connects seniors with local businesses

Seniors take note: There is a new program in Alexandria that will allow residents aged 60 and older to receive discounts at local businesses in the city.

The Silver Service card was launched earlier this year as part of the city commission on aging's commitment to promote Alexandria as an age-friendly community where senior residents can shop, dine and obtain services locally.

The outreach to local businesses began in the fall of 2015 in the Del Ray neighborhood. Pat Miller, a Del Ray resident and former business owner, joined the commission's economic development committee and led the charge to bring Del Ray shops and restaurants on board to provide discounts to Alexandria seniors.

Margaret and Laurent Janowsky of Del Ray Cafe and La Bergerie were the first local business owners to offer a discount to seniors dining in their restaurants.

"The concept of promoting Alexandria, and Del Ray in particular, as a senior-friendly community was easy to sign on to when the idea was presented to Laurent and me," Margaret Janowsky said. "We are excited to provide options to bring seniors to our neighborhood and to play a small part in this big idea."

Since last fall, 15 Del Ray business owners have signed up to be part of the pilot program, providing discounts when seniors present their Silver Service cards.

"The Del Ray Business Association has shown great support for seniors," Miller said.

"We are pleased with the reaction and are looking forward to taking the program to other parts of the city."

Each business decides what kind of discount they'd like to offer, with deals ranging from 10 to 20 percent off during off-peak hours.

The committee is now working to expand the program to the West End and Old Town, and is reaching out to neighborhood business associations to help spread the word about the program to their members. Their response has been very positive, and the goal is to have the Silver Service card accepted all over the Alexandria by this summer.

During the pilot program phase, cards were distributed by Senior Services of Alexandria and At Home in Alexandria to volunteers and members so that the commission could evaluate the success of the program before opening it up to the entire community. The Silver Service card program is proving to be a win-win for seniors and businesses, and we are very excited to now be able to offer it to all of Alexandria's senior community.

If you are an Alexandria resident aged 60 or older, you can get your Silver Service card by calling Senior Services of Alexandria at 703-836-4414, ext. 110 or At Home in Alexandria at 703-231-0824. A complete list of participating businesses may be found at www.seniorservicesalex.org/programs/silver-service-card/.



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