

# A Look Through the Camera

## Hunter creates video for Chamber of Commerce.

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**J**ason Hunter points his video camera at the gazebo across the lake at Ben Brenman Park. He levels the camera so the image looks straight, checks the exposure and lowers the tripod to change the perspective. “I’ll try to get a couple of zooms to show the gazebo in relation to the rest of the park.” He said he likes to use zooming in and out or panning left and right to have a lot of motion with the camera. He stands a moment. “I don’t like it. The gazebo isn’t working out the way I thought with the apartment complex behind and the dead tree in front.” Hunter decides to walk closer to the gazebo and get a different angle. “Now this is looking a little better.”

Hunter is a senior video specialist working on a project for Mind and Media, Inc. on N. Pitt Street in Alexandria to get footage of notable areas in the City of Alexandria for the Chamber of Commerce. He started shooting last week and will finish in a couple of weeks depending on the weather if they can shoot every 2-3 days. Hunter looks at the bridge and waits to see whether the mother strolling her child is going to walk his way. No luck with this one.

Hunter says before the shooting process began, he sat with the producer and talked about what would be a good fit for the video including historic as well as recent updates. He adds that the Cameron Station and Ben Brenman Park area is a mixture of residential and business in one of the newer areas. He says it is built on a reclaimed military base. Meagan Lane stands on the corner shooting down the rows of shops on both sides of the street and any trucks that roll by to capture any activity. She is a senior at The Madeira School in McLean and is spending five weeks with Hunter for her school co-curriculum program. She says “this is a perfect match for me. Someday I picture myself as a female Walt Disney.”

Meagan bends over to adjust the focus on her video camera and waits for some people to walk down the street and into her picture. “Not much happening here today.” Hunter and Meagan have split up a list of things they want to shoot for a couple of hours at this location and “whatever else catches her eye.” Plans to proceed to Van Dorn today were cut short by the need to return to help meet a deadline with another co-worker.



**Jason Hunter zooms in on the couple on a bench across the lake at 60-acre Ben Brenman Park at the east end of Cameron Station. He has filmed Old Town for his Alexandria video and will head to Del Ray and Mount Vernon later in the week.**



**Jason Hunter checks the Panasonic video for exposure as he focuses on the gazebo across the lake at Ben Brenman Park. Hunter is creating a video for the City of Alexandria Chamber of Commerce of notable areas.**

When today’s work is finished, Hunter will have Meagan take her footage back and watch it. “It’s a fantastic way to learn to review your own footage,” Hunter said. “And it’s best to do it right after you shoot it while you still have it in mind.” They were in Old Town on Friday and still have Del Ray and Mount Vernon on the list. “And the water taxi over to National Harbor. It’s a great thing to do; gives you a different perspective out on the water.”

Hunter explains when they are finished shooting the project he will organize it to see what they have and what is missing. “Sometimes you need to have a conversation with the client about their perspective on what you have produced.” Hunter slings his black bagful of extra batteries and fig bars over his shoulder and walks to the corner to catch up with Meagan. “So, tell me a little bit about your shots. Did you get the sign? OK, good.”

Hunter has been working at Mind and Media since 2001 where he came straight out of grad school from American University. He said when he started at Mind and Media he was running a second camera, setting up lights and equipment and watching the videotaping back to check for errors.

Now he is juggling several projects including preproduction phase on projects in Boston and Cincinnati for other clients. He remembers the most exciting and difficult filming he did was a documentary for the National Guard. “They still had to train but they weren’t going to stop for us. So we did it all, getting up early, live fire drills, running everywhere. It was hard to focus on lighting and composition and keep up the physical pace at the same time. They run everywhere.”



**Jason Hunter confers on the video with Meagan Lane, a high school senior at The Madeira School in McLean, who is spending five weeks with Hunter as part of her co-curriculum program.**

PHOTOS BY SHIRLEY RUHE/GAZETTE PACKET