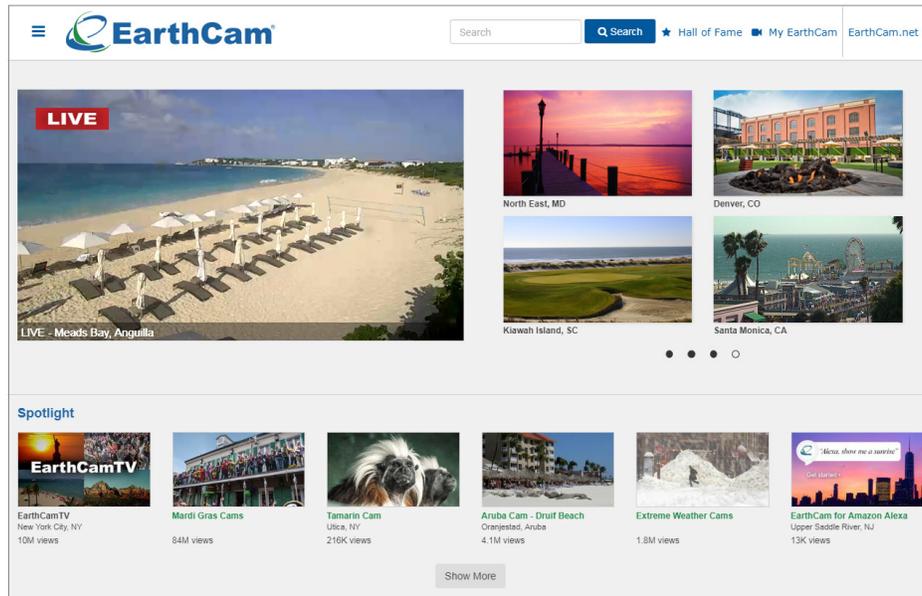


## The World's Longest Running Webcam Will Finally Go Offline

San Francisco's FogCam is getting shut down after 25 years of streaming.

By Daisy Hernandez • August 21, 2019



FogCam, the world's longest running webcam, will be shut off at the end of August its creators, Jeff Schwartz and Dan Wong, announced on Twitter. FogCam has been in "near-continuous operation" for the past 25 years, having been temporarily offline when it had to be moved around San Francisco State University's campus.

"The bottom line is that we no longer have a really good view or place to put the camera. The university tolerates us, but they don't really endorse us and so we have to find secure locations on our own," Schwartz told SFGate.

Originally, the duo came up with the idea to set up a livestream while they were taking computer science classes and learning the process of scripting. Schwartz also ran another webcam from his apartment that streamed his cats, Petunia and Web, so he could keep an eye on them while he attended classes.

"As far as I know, they were the first cats live on the Internet," said Schwartz. The Petunia and Web stream came a year after FogCam had been set up.

Schwartz was also a fan of the world's first webcam livestream, the University of Cambridge's Trojan Room Coffee Cam. Since the coffee pot was tucked away in the main computer lab and researchers were scattered throughout the building on various floors, it was a game of chance whether the pot was full or not when you got there.

Quentin Stafford-Fraser and fellow research scientist Paul Jardetzky's solution to the problem was to set up a camera aimed at the coffee pot so they could keep track of how much was available at any given time.

In November of 1993, the coffee cam went live online where it would be available for anyone with a connection to view until it was sold on eBay for just over \$4,000. The lucky new owner was German news magazine, Der Spiegel, who put the beloved relic back in action.

Schwartz and Wong's "little pet project" grew quickly and came to be loved by viewers, many of whom shared their disappointment.

Some viewers even offered to make donations to help keep the cam running.

Alas, Wong and Schwartz seem firm in their decision to shut the camera down but will leave the FogCam website up "for the sake of posterity."

If you're looking to mend your broken heart with a new livestream, here are some of our faves: explore.org's kitten cam, NASA's International Space Station Cam, the Willard Library ghost cam, [EarthCam's](#) Las Vegas stream, and the much loved Abbey Road Cam.