



Helping Alexandria's seniors who prefer to remain  
—independently—in their own homes

# AHA! NEWSLETTER DECEMBER 2013 VOL. 4 NO. 12

## **In Meetings and Votes, Board Cheers Financial Results, Names New Slate To Meet Challenges in Coming Year**

The Board of Directors of At Home in Alexandria voted at its Nov. 29 meeting to add new members to the Board, to strengthen its capability and focus. Chair Carol Downs, whose term ends Dec. 31, was named Chair Emeritus and joins the Advisory Council Jan. 1, the date the officer appointments take effect. The Board voted to move Barbara Rosenfeld up from Vice Chair to Chair and to name Jane King Vice Chair. Board Member “L” Liddle was named Secretary and Chriss Nielsen Treasurer. King is current Secretary and Winnie Hill is Treasurer.

The Board approved Alan Dinsmore and Dr. Dan Kulund as new directors and also approved a search for a few new members of the Advisory Council. **(See p. 2 for more on the new Board members.)**

Final figures showed the Oct. 20 Benefit and Auction met the goal for net revenue. They were a learning experience for the AHA staff and volunteers, who ran the event without the benefit of paid outside event professionals.

**(NOTE:** There are auction items that did not draw bids. If you know of anyone interested in buying the art and housewares items not sold at the auction, please contact Bill E. Clayton at 703-548-0958 or by email at [tblayton@verizon.net](mailto:tblayton@verizon.net) for a list of items.)

Directors and committee chairs will hold a retreat Dec. 9 to set objectives for 2014, including:

- Reviewing AHA’s Strategic Plan to gauge successes and needs
- Developing events and programs that boost attendance and reflect members’ interests
- Expanding financial sustainability
- Meeting the needs of AHA members
- Building the team of AHA volunteers, especially drivers
- Developing strategies that raise AHA’s visibility.



**T. J. Fannon**

### **T.J. Fannon Dies; Was AHA Honoree**

T.J. Fannon, veteran Alexandria business leader and civic activist, died Nov. 19 at the age of 83. AHA honored him with its 2013 Community Spirit Award at its Benefit on Oct. 20.

Proclaimed “Mister Alexandria” by Mayor Bill Euille, Fannon had a decades-long career with the family’s Thomas J. Fannon and Sons air-conditioning and heating business. He was the company’s third-generation president, the latest of several “T.J.’s” in company history.

Fannon was a steady supporter of many civic groups, including foster care, sports, arts and health-care organizations.



Alan Dinsmore



Dan Kulund

## Dinsmore and Kulund to Join AHA Board on Jan. 1

Alan Dinsmore, a frequent participant in AHA events, and Dr. Daniel Kulund, retired orthopedic surgeon and George Washington University adjunct professor, will join the AHA Board Jan. 1.

Kulund, who had a career as the Air Force’s leader of fitness and health, introduced AHA members to “robust walking”—adding elastic tension and other calisthenics to walking.

Dinsmore, formerly with the Defense Intelligence Agency and the Foundation for the Blind, has helped plan and organize AHA programs. He is active in SAGE (Services and Advocacy for GLBT Elders).



Carol Downs (in red jacket) hosted the gathering.

### Potluck Gathering

Chair Carol Downs hosted a potluck munch-and-chat at her home Nov. 9 for AHA villagers, who brought a substantial spread of hors d’oeuvres, wines and desserts.

The occasion gave the 34 villagers who attended a chance to visit informally and exchange ideas for AHA’s future.

## What’s Up With AHA Members, Friends and Volunteers?

By Nancy Berg

Executive Director Cele Garrett recently had a phone interview with a writer from *Virginia Living Magazine* (which covers the entire state), and they will be including AHA in a feature story about senior living in urban areas. It will appear in the February 2014 issue, with pictures.

This sports news just in: Steve Nelson and Bill Clayton have been trying a relatively new sport—pickleball. Steve has been playing for quite a while, and recently roped Bill into the game.

Pickleball is a shrunken version of tennis: low net, smaller court, plastic ball, big paddles like ping pong on steroids. Play is indoors on a court about one-third the size of a basketball court.

Betty Wanamaker, who broke an arm and a leg a few weeks ago, is getting around on a cane and attending AHA functions again.

Dr. Perry Kruger, son of the late AHA stalwart David Kruger, is recording a bit of Kruger family history, including mention of AHA.

“I am making a scrapbook for my father’s grandchildren,” Perry Kruger reports. Recalling that David attended many of the AHA events and constantly praised his friends in AHA, Perry asked for an AHA events calendar. He was pleased to receive the calendars for the months immediately preceding his father’s death.

David Kruger was consistently the largest individual contributor to At Home in Alexandria.

### AHA Villagers:

Tell us of your adventures, family news, honors, vital statistics— whatever. Submit the items to Nancy Berg

[elnberg@comcast.net](mailto:elnberg@comcast.net)

### Chuckles and Chortles

(These from police videos)

Cop to speeder: “Yeah, we have a quota. Two more tickets and my wife gets a toaster oven.”

To man resisting arrest: “If you run, you’ll just go to jail tired.”

(From teachers to parents)

“Your son sets low personal standards and then consistently fails to achieve them.”

“Your child has delusions of adequacy.”

## Snowden Leaks So Far Have Not Done Much Damage, Speaker Says

A longtime defense intelligence expert told an AHA audience he thinks “the worst is yet to come” of the security secrets leaked by Edward Snowden.

“At this point, I don’t think he has done a lot of damage,” Brian Long said in a “Conversation With” program Nov. 24 at the home of Vance and Julia Hall. Nineteen people attended and had many questions after Long’s presentation. He was introduced to the crowd by Alan Dinsmore, also formerly with the Defense Intelligence Agency and soon to be an AHA Board member.

Long said the hubbub over the surveillance work of the National Security Agency includes much “baloney.” More frightening, he said, is the large amount of electronic surveillance technology that is readily available publicly.

“That is scarier than the NSA,” he said, recalling a technology trade fair in Dubai that openly displayed a wide range of sophisticated electronic surveillance equipment.

“It bothers me,” he said, “that a lot of surveillance equipment is off-the-shelf technology.”

Recruiting agents in Afghanistan has been difficult, Long said. Because of the language and tribal diversity, “You can never buy an Afghani agent; you can only rent him,” he joked.

Long served as executive assistant to three directors of the Defense Intelligence Agency and, until retiring recently, was chief of the Human Intelligence (“HUMINT”) Global Operations Division of the DIA.



Left photo above: Brian Long talks of leaks, taps and intelligence. AHA Vice Chair Barbara Rosenfeld (foreground) and event hostess Julia Hall listen. Right:: Audience at the Nov. 24 program. Long and Alan Dinsmore are in the background

## Walking Club Calls it Quits For the Season

The AHA walkers shivered through a Nov.19 end-of-season walk along the Potomac. They will resume at Spring Thaw. Shown at right are Bill Clayton, Steve Nelson, Mary Nefedov and Barbara Rosenfeld.

The walkers invite all AHA villagers to join them. The strolls—you pick your own pace—go mostly along the Potomac River, starting near the T.C. Williams Boathouse at the foot of Madison Street. Occasionally, a special new venue is chosen. Call 703-231-0824 for details and the resumption schedule.



## **Two Informative Collaborations: Programs on Memory Loss and Financial Planning**

AHA worked with two other organizations to put on two educational programs in November.

Teaming with Mount Vernon at Home, AHA co-hosted a discussion Nov. 7 at Sherwood Hall Library entitled “Where Did I Put The Keys?” on the difference between memory loss and normal aging.

Christi Clark of the Alzheimer’s Family Day Center told how to recognize signs of dementia and early Alzheimer’s and the different stages of the disease. She encouraged caregivers to become familiar with the symptoms, to develop ways to cope with the disease, to the benefit both of the care receiver and caregiver.

For example, she said some symptoms can be alleviated with proper sleep and medication.

Clark offered many other practical tips for caring for a loved one who has dementia.

She will provide a follow-up session early next year,

AHA co-sponsored a Nov. 12 workshop with Speck-Caudron Investment Group of Wells Fargo Advisors. The “Investing and Planning for Seniors” event was held at Beth El Hebrew Congregation.

The speakers posed the question: Will your money hold out until you are 95?

Financial advisor David Speck, recently honored by the Chamber of Commerce, said seniors are living longer than ever and financial planners need to plan for an individual’s assets to last until the age of 90 or beyond.

“Don’t invest hoping you get lucky,” he advised. “Prepare for uncertainty in the market; invest for the decades.”

Laurie Blackburn, also of Speck-Caudron, said seniors wondering how much cash they need to hold should ask themselves two questions: Are there significant cash expenses coming up in the next two years and, how much cash do you need for peace of mind?

Those will determine how much is available for long-term growth, she said.

Both emphasized that seniors should avoid having many different accounts and investments in various places. That reduces difficulty for the investor as well as for heirs when the time comes.

The message was: “Be sure you have plans in place not only for your estate, but also in case you become incapacitated. Consider power of attorney, health-care power of attorney and other strategies.”

### **Take a Special Breather And Reduce Stress and Blood Pressure**

The *Mayo Clinic Health Letter* reports that deep-breathing exercises can help maximize oxygen exchange, bring relaxation and cut stress. The exercises “can act on the centers in your brain that lower blood pressure,” Mayo said.

The recommended exercises:

- Get comfortable, with loose clothing, lying on your back or sitting comfortably in a chair.
- Position – if lying, rest one hand on abdomen and one on chest. If sitting, rest feet flat on the floor, relax shoulders and put hands in lap.
- Breathing – inhale through nose and exhale through mouth, taking normal breaths for a few minutes.
- Inhale deeply for about four seconds, expanding your abdomen slightly.
- Exhale slowly, also to the count of four as your abdomen contracts; imagine the tension going away.
- Repeat – after a brief pause. Do the breather for a few minutes as you feel calm, but at any sign of lightheadedness, shorten the length and depth of your breathing.

**HAPPY HOLIDAYS TO ALL AHA VILLAGERS!**

## Whimsy and “Found” Art At Baltimore Museum

AHA members visited the most unusual, most whimsical American Museum of Visionary Art, in Baltimore, Nov. 20. In photo at right, Mary Nefedov, Marilyn Karoly and Tom Fitzgerald try out the life-size metal-sculpture chess set. The wall decorations for the museum’s café included animal sculptures covered in sequins.



**A bull’s head covered in sequins**

No photos were allowed in the main galleries. These photos were taken by Bill Clayton, in approved areas.

Described as “beautiful, bizarre, and innovative art,” the collections include a Pontiac sedan entirely cloaked with dark blue pharmaceutical vials. A large model of the ship Lusitania was made mostly of toothpicks and glue. A sculpture was made of piano keys.

The museum defines visionary art as art “produced by self-taught individuals, usually without formal training, whose works arise from an innate personal vision that revels foremost in the creative act itself.” The AHA visitors had some shorter definitions: “Fun.” “Crazy.” “Whimsical.”

The museum, spread into three separate buildings, is in the Inner Harbor area of Baltimore.



### Liddle Joints WAVE Board

Linus “L” Liddle, a member of the AHA Board, was elected Nov. 18 to the board of the Washington Area Village Exchange.

WAVE is an “umbrella” group, a forum through which villages in the District of Columbia metropolitan area discuss successes and problems, exchanging ideas and encouraging growth of the village idea in the region.

Liddle was chosen for a two-year term on the WAVE board. Eight others were chosen, including President Miriam Kelty of Bannockburn Neighbors Assisting Neighbors in Maryland.

WAVE meets quarterly.

#### Board of Directors

|                                  |                              |
|----------------------------------|------------------------------|
| Carol Downs, Chair               | Helen Desfosses              |
| Barbara Rosenfeld,<br>Vice Chair | Eleanor Engh<br>Linus Liddle |
| Winnie Hill, Treasurer           | Steve Nelson                 |
| Jane King, Secretary             | Bill Clayton, Editor         |

#### Executive Director

Cecile (Cele) Garrett

#### Advisory Council

|                  |                       |
|------------------|-----------------------|
| Carolyn Abshire  | H. Stewart Dunn       |
| MaryAnn Griffin  | Richard Hobson        |
| Judith Jones, MD | Ernie Lehmann         |
| Tim Lovain       | Temple C. Moore       |
| Richard Moose    | George Pera           |
| Patsy Ticer      | Marian Van LANDINGHAM |
| Vicki Vasques    |                       |

#### Office Co-Managers

Monica Estabrooke and Julie Gentry

#### AHA Members:

**Need holiday errands run?**

**Winter chores done?**

**Shipping help or advice?**

**Phone AHA and see the many ways we can be of service.**

**AHA is at 703-231-0824**

#### Contact Us

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