



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

# AHA! NEWSLETTER FEBRUARY 2014 VOL. 5 NO. 2

## **AHA Leaders Cheer “Banner Year” For Village, Set Aggressive Budget Goals And Pledge More Intensive Efforts in 2014**

Leaders of AHA exulted at “banner year” results for 2013, but confronted challenges ahead, in membership, recognition and financial support, recognizing that in many villages, member fees account for less than half the budget.

New Treasurer Chriss Nielsen cited increases in net assets, membership revenue and contributions. The Board of Directors intends new efforts for grants, special-event revenue and new revenue streams.

All in all, Nielsen reported, 2013 “was a banner year for At Home in Alexandria.” Although total revenue was 10 percent less than budgeted, “The executive director (Cele Garrett) and staff (Office Co-Managers Monica Estabrooke and Julie Gentry) did a great job controlling expenses.” Total expenses were also about 10 percent lower than budgeted. The combination meant that AHA finished 2013 with a net increase in assets of \$22,028, almost equal to what it had budgeted.

Nielsen said cash on hand is adequate for a budget for 2014 that includes a projected increase of 16 individual members, 5 households and 7 Friends of AHA. The staff and Board of Directors are determined to push for grants and to inaugurate a Corporate Associates Program. On the expense side, the budget lists new spending on advertising, equipment and recognition of volunteers and staff.

New Chair Barbara Rosenfeld said, “I am looking forward to a terrific year for AHA in 2014. (AHA has) a solid base to build on in the coming year.”

Rosenfeld said priorities, set at a recent retreat, include a membership expansion to 150 by the end of 2015, diversification of financial support, and boosts in publicity, active volunteers and community outreach.

Looking over the treasurer’s reports, former Chair (and now Development Chair) Carol Downs said the village succeeded substantially in reaching its goals for the annual Spring2Action, annual Gala and Benefit and year-end appeal. The committee is taking the lead in formulating details for an annual benefit.

Executive Director Garrett said the year-end donation appeal, enhanced by a personal note by Board Member Helen Desfosses, went out to 800 people and brought in \$10,000, twice the goal and far above AHA expectations. AHA expects to organize a major effort for the citywide April fund-raising effort called Spring2Action. All members of the Board of Directors and Advisory Council are urged to help.

**(See p. 2 for new members of the Board and Council.)**

## **New Advisors, Board Member To Help Chart Year Ahead**

The Board of Directors made these new appointments in its January meeting: **Don Ford** to the Board, and **Laurie Blackburn, Ken Labowitz** and **Mitch Opalski** to the Advisory Council.

Ford and his wife, Margaret, share the distinction of having first been members of the original “Village,” Beacon Hill in Boston. As transplants to Alexandria’s village scene, they are a good source of ideas and advice, and they have participated in many AHA events. Ford has a Master’s Degree from Harvard in physics and education, has done studies at Boston University in science and technology journalism, and has a resume that includes 25 years as science educator and writer and 17 years as editor and publisher of a technical trade magazine. He has done free-lance writing and editing since his publishing stint.

A Kansas native, Blackburn earned a Juris Doctor degree from the University of Kansas. After six years of law practice, she came to Alexandria in 1995 and moved into the financial services industry. She is vice president for investments in the Speck-Caudron Investment Group and has had 18 years’ experience in investment planning and retirement planning. She has been involved in several civic endeavors, including Volunteer Alexandria, the United Community Ministries, Leadership Alexandria, Washington Area Women’s Foundation and Ivy Hill Cemetery Historical Preservation Society.

Labowitz, a law graduate of Southern Methodist University, has practiced law in Alexandria since 1978. In 1993, he was appointed to be a legal guardian for the first time, and that work grew to a practice that since 2003 has been entirely devoted to guardianship and estate matters, with particular emphasis on end-of-life issues. He has taught at Georgetown University Law Center and the Columbus School of Law at Catholic University. He is proud to have been one of the first lawyers nationally to represent people with AIDS and HIV and to have filed the first case to restore a teacher with AIDS to his job.

Opalski, a native of the Washington, D.C. area, holds an accounting degree from Notre Dame. His career included work with Deloitte and Touche and Blue Cross/Blue Shield. He became finance director for the National Association of Home Care and Hospice, eventually moving up to chief operating officer. In 2007, Opalski opened a Synergy Home Care franchise in Northern Virginia, providing nonmedical home care. His civic involvements have included work with Habitat for Humanity, Senior Services of Alexandria, Mount Vernon At Home, and Alexandria Commission on Aging.



**Donald Ford**



**Laurie Blackburn**



**Kenneth Labowitz**



**Mitchell Opalski**

### **OOPS! Sorry, Monica Estabrooke**

In our January edition we tried to recognize all the “baking elves” who baked holiday breads and other goodies for AHA members who would not have nearby relatives to celebrate with them. Our list had one omission, for which we apologize to “elf” **Monica Estabrooke**.



### Ladies' Night Out

A waiter at Sheraton Suites Fin & Hoof bar waits on AHA members at Ladies' Night Out. The ladies welcomed a newcomer to the group, Betty Kirchner, above, in white, and at right. (Photo by Bill Clayton, allowed into the ladies' group just for the photo.)



Betty Kirchner

### Pickleball : A Fun Court Sport

By Ann Kaupp

Steve Nelson and I [pictured at right, in action] can't wait for Thursdays—when the Charles Houston Recreation Center offers pickleball for ages 55 and over, 9 a.m. to noon, and then Friday mornings. Other AHA pickleball players are Pam Nelson and Bill Clayton. Pickleball is played on a badminton-sized court, with paddles and a plastic ball. It's a fast game that offers a great workout but less stress on the body than most other court sports. Pickleball is also offered at the Lee Center; for details phone 703-746-5550.



AHA players on the pickleball court

### Making Aging in Place Easier

AHA and Senior Services of Alexandria will co-sponsor a program Feb. 12, from 9:30 a.m. to noon, on "Senior Housing: New and Innovative Solutions." The event will be held in Charles Beatley Central Library, 5005 Duke St.

Speakers will discuss programs and services that help meet the needs of people who want to stay in their homes as they age. Simple home modifications will be explained, as well as assisted living, continuing care and adult residential facilities in our area.

Light refreshments will be served and the event is free and open to all. Please RSVP at 703-836-4414, Ext. 10, or online at [www.seniorservicesalex.org](http://www.seniorservicesalex.org)

### AHA Events Popular With Members

Nancy Kincaid, chair, and Steve Nelson, new co-chair, of the Program Committee reported the 96 AHA events of 2013 drew 846 attendees. The Dine Around gatherings proved the most popular recurring events.

Occasional or onetime events that drew larger crowds included the fireworks viewing, potluck dinners, holiday get-together, anniversary party, and the party honoring AHA volunteers. The holiday party hosted by Chriss Nielsen and Tom Crowley drew a crowd of 48, tops for those social gatherings.

The bridge club at Alexandria House, involving both AHA and Alexandria House players, grew to two tables in January.

**What's Up With AHA  
Members, Friends  
And Volunteers?  
By Nancy Berg**

**Margaret French** and two grandchildren went to India in January – Dubai, Delhi-Agra, Ranthambore, Jaipur, Mumbai and Goa. They said they had wonderful personal guides at every turn, met beautiful people, had delicious food—not to mention fantastic shopping.

They took the train to the Taj Mahal and visited the cremation sites on the banks of the river beyond. Then, game viewing at Ranthambore National Park. They rode an elephant to Amber Fort and had tea with a local family in Jaipur. Margaret said the final stop at Goa was a tropical paradise not to be missed.

**Carol and Oliver Flint** were in the State of Bahia in Brazil Dec.19-Jan. 6, in the nature preserve Serra Bonita, in the Atlantic Forest, a paradise for bird-watchers (280 species registered, 66 endemic to this forest). Not to mention monkeys, marmosets, coatimundi, and plants such as heliconias, bromeliads, orchids on the trails we walked. A highlight was observing a giant lizard, *Tupinambis marianae*, a bright blue body with horizontal yellow stripes.

**Teddye and Bill Clayton** had a less-than-exotic but still historic outing, driving to Richmond for the Inaugural Ceremony. What made it menacing was that it was heavy rain and fog every minute of the drive to Richmond, during the drenched ceremony, and on the drive back, with 18-wheelers adding road-spray blindness to the drive.

**Observation Versus Being Admitted  
Wednesday, Feb. 19, 1–3 p.m., Beatley Library  
AHA's "Early Warning" Series**

Many Medicare patients spend time in the hospital for observation but are not officially admitted. When they leave the hospital, they may be responsible for items Medicare will not cover, such as nursing home coverage and medications for pre-existing problems.

Keith Lind, JD, MS, of the AARP Public Policy Institute discusses, in the next AHA "Early Warning" program, what you need to know when in the emergency department under "observation." Observation is becoming a substitute for inpatient admission and may be an unneeded financial burden on Medicare patients.

Program is free and open to the public. Registration or questions? Call AHA 703-231-0824.

**SPOTLIGHT ON...  
Nancy Kincaid**

When you think of a stalwart in At Home In Alexandria, you think of Nancy Kincaid.

She has long chaired the Program Committee for AHA and now has a co-chair in Steve Nelson. The committee is one of the most rewarding yet challenging posts in the village: It is in charge of the complicated task of planning social events for months ahead. They have to be interesting to seniors, they have to be (mostly) ground-floor and they have to be within the area.

With tenacity and a flair for organization, Nancy Kincaid has engineered a complex and demanding schedule, arranging dates, getting RSVPs, greeting people at the door, making sure of separate checks – all the complexities involved in getting a group of seniors in the door of a pleasant event.

She has to be first to arrive and last to leave. She has to recognize all the attendees. She has to meet any emergency (somebody doesn't like the food? Somebody doesn't like the restaurant? Somebody needs a ride home?) She has built a solid rapport with many restaurants and is admired in AHA for what she accomplishes .



**Nancy Kincaid**

## WELCOME to Members and Friends

At Home in Alexandria welcomes these new members or “Friends of AHA” who joined between July 2013 and the first of this year:

**MEMBERS – Sam Crutchfield, Jan Hussey, Rhoda Seligmann, Patricia Roland, William and Sylvia Lowe, Sue Capers, Irena Szkrybalo, Lynne Dearborn, Indie Cather, Nancy Macklin, Jessi Macleod, Sandra Blake, Elisabeth Davies, Betty Kirchner.**

**FRIENDS – Jane Morningstar, Mary Jayne Swanson, David Speck, Elisabeth Malcolm, Jean Paulus, Susan Davis, Joyce and Dick Bachman, Julie Gentry.**

## Committee Chairs and Co-Chairs

AHA Chair Barbara Rosenfeld named the following heads of committees:

- Executive Committee – Rosenfeld, as AHA chair.
- Governance – Co-Chairs Helen Desfosses and “L” Liddle.
- Membership – Jane King
- Development – Carol Downs
- Program – Co-Chairs Nancy Kincaid and Steve Nelson
- Volunteers – Penny Roberts
- Finance – Chriss Nielsen

**Does the work of any of these committees interest you? Contact the leaders through the AHA office and join in.**

### Board of Directors

Barbara Rosenfeld, Chair	Helen Desfosses
Jane King, Vice Chair	Alan Dinsmore
Chriss Nielsen, Treasurer	Eleanor Engh
Linus Liddle, Secretary	Don Ford
Bill Clayton, Editor	Daniel Kulund
	Steve Nelson

**Executive Director**  
Cecile (Cele) Garrett

### Advisory Council

Carolyn Abshire	Laurie Blackburn
Carol Downs	Stewart Dunn
MaryAnn Griffin	Richard Hobson
Judith Jones, MD	Ken Labowitz
Ernie Lehmann	Tim Lovain
Temple C. Moore	Richard Moose
Mitch Opalski	George Pera
Patsy Ticer	Marian Van Landingham
	Vicki Vasques

### Office Co-Managers

Monica Estabrooke and Julie Gentry

### Chuckles and Chortles

You know you’re getting old when you examine what looks like a really old penny and discover it has your birth year on it.

Aging hunter: “I shot my first turkey of the season yesterday. Scared everyone in the frozen food section.”

Do we get smarter as we age – or just run out of stupid things to do?

W.C. Fields: “I spent half my money on booze, women and gambling. The other half I wasted.”

### Contact Us

**At Home in Alexandria**  
**3139 Mount Vernon Ave.**  
**Alexandria, VA 22305**  
**703-231-0824**

**[AHA@athomeinalexandria.org](mailto:AHA@athomeinalexandria.org)**  
**Web [www.athomeinalexandria.org](http://www.athomeinalexandria.org)**