



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

# AHA! NEWSLETTER October 2014 VOL. 5 NO. 10

## Fawcett-Reeder House Tour A Success for AHA

AHA sponsorship of a Sept. 14 tour of the historic Fawcett-Reeder House, a colonial gem from the 1770s, proved a success, financially and in greater visibility of AHA.

Drawing from the crowds who strolled through the nearby arts festival along King Street, 24 AHA volunteers attracted 150 paid guests to the house tour, totaling \$778 in revenue.

Moreover, many visitors found out more about AHA, including four people who said they were interested in volunteering.



Village member Leonardo Contardo, whose idea it was to have a house tour to benefit AHA, said the tour greatly pleased the owner, Joe Reeder. Contardo had spent many hours preparing the house for the tour and even assembled signs for volunteers to carry into the nearby festival crowds inviting people to the tour.

Reeder greeted guests and answered their questions from his limitless store of anecdotes and recollections. Linda Langley of AHA organized the volunteer assignments and Barbara Ballentine, a historical preservationist, put together summaries of the highlights of each of the main rooms. The attractions ranged from the “three-holer” privies to the multiple fireplaces to the elegant living room with museum-quality art and artifacts.

**(See p. 2 for more photographs of the tour and guests.)**

The tour “was a big success,” AHA Executive Director Cele Garrett said. “We had great feedback from so many people.”

Contardo said, “It was an outstanding group of people who went through Joe’s house. Joe was elated about the quality of the people who came through. Everyone seemed to thoroughly enjoy it. Many had always wanted to go through that house.” Reeder suggested other collaborations in the future.

The house is so fascinating that, for example, Indie Cather arrived to take the tour and wound up as an enthusiastic docent, inviting visitors, “Do come into my dining room.”

## “Bella Italia” Beckons, and It Needs YOU

On Nov. 9, AHA will hold its major fundraising event of the year—the Annual Benefit and Silent Auction. AHA volunteers are hard at work wrapping mystery gifts, soliciting items for the silent auction and selling tickets: \$125 for public, \$75 for members.

We hope you will be there to celebrate “Bella Italia” with us at Laporta's Restaurant. There will be lively music, wonderful appetizers and pasta, intriguing auction items such as dinners and destinations to bid on, mystery gifts in decorated boxes, and more.

You will have fun while helping support the work of AHA. Membership fees cover only about half our annual expenses, so the benefit is essential to keeping AHA in strong financial shape.

Put on your party clothes and I'll see you there Nov. 9.

—Barbara Rosenfeld, Chair, AHA Board

### Benefit Sponsorships

**Tuscany Level \$1,500. Four tickets, program listing and full-page ad.**

**Veneto \$1,000. Four tickets, program listing and half-page ad.**

**Amalfi \$500. Two tickets, program listing, quarter-page ad.**

**Umbria \$350. Two tickets, program listing.**

**(All sponsorships listed in Website and are partly deductible)**

**Questions? 703-231-0824.**



## Scenes from the House Tour



Joe Reeder, owner of the Fawcett-Reeder House, at left above, takes a phone call on his front porch between chats with visitors to his historic home on “AHA Tour Day,” Sept. 14. Middle photo shows one of the seven fireplaces, and right photo shows a corner of a room decorated with several museum-quality pieces.



Above, AHA Executive Director Cele Garrett, member Leonardo Contardo (left) and house owner Joe Reeder (right) relax after the visitors have left. At right, the elegance of furnishings and drapery warms this colonial setting.



Photo at left shows a dining area. Note the plate collection on the wall, and another of the fireplaces.

Right photo shows volunteer Catha Pavloff, on left, conferring with Linda Langley, one of the main organizers of the tour and volunteer assignments.



## Leaders Pleased With Dialogue about Goodwin House At Home



A delegation from AHA had a productive and cordial meeting with Goodwin House staff to clarify areas of concern and cooperation in Goodwin House's new service programs.

The AHA group, headed by Chair Barbara Rosenfeld and Executive Director Cele Garrett, told the AHA Board the meeting developed several ideas for collaboration.

"We were pleased" with the meeting, Garrett said.

There had been concerns in AHA that Goodwin House's new programs would impinge on what AHA does. And there was some dismay that Goodwin House used the phrase "At Home" in its new program description. The AHA Board agreed without dissent to pursue cooperation on programs and possible joint mailings.

"The Goodwin House staff "seemed generally interested in working with AHA in the future," Garrett reported.

Rosenfeld said the group is contemplating "how we might work together for mutual benefit."

Garrett said, "We are happy to establish a new working relationship with them and have agreed to touch base in early October to further flesh out some collaborative possibilities."

## New Membership Category

At Home in Alexandria is launching an important new program and is announcing it first in this newsletter because current members or supporters may have friends or family members who qualify. To enable more Alexandrians to benefit from membership, AHA is introducing a pilot program designed to offer discounted memberships to those whose annual gross adjusted income is \$50,000 or less. To test the program, AHA will initially be accepting two applicants (either individual or household, where household means two individuals residing in the same house). The privacy of applicants will be protected, as only the executive director and membership committee chair will review applications, which will be kept confidential. Selected candidates will pay an annual fee of \$100, with the remaining "cost" of their membership covered by a separate AHA account. Funds for discounted memberships will be solicited specifically for that purpose.

For more details, please call the AHA office at 703-231-0824.

## Building a New Church In Devastated Haiti

Falls Church architect Tom Kerns told a fascinated AHA audience Sept. 21 about the effort to rebuild an Episcopal cathedral reduced to rubble by the January 2010 earthquake in Port-au-Prince, Haiti. The lecture was one of the AHA "Conversation With" series.

Kerns, founding principal of Kerns Group Architects, said the Haiti effort is a long-term fundraising commitment of Episcopal churches in the United States. His firm was chosen more than a year ago to design a cathedral to replace the lost Holy Trinity Cathedral in Port-au-Prince.



**Tom Kerns**

Sixteen people from AHA attended the presentation, hosted by member Lynne Dearborn.

The design process "was really an experience for me—designing the symbol of a nation," Kerns said. But it "is still a concept" awaiting financing through donations from U.S. churches. The new structure will be self-contained, with its own water supply and the capability of becoming an infirmary in view of Haiti's past disasters. (The cathedral has been destroyed repeatedly, and Kerns said the new design envisions an "earthquake-proof" structure.)

The design team works with Haitian architects and artists and will incorporate into the design the Haitian tradition of folk art, beautiful metal work and bits of rubble from the destroyed cathedral. The conch shell is a frequent motif in Haiti and will be part of the design of metal screens in the new cathedral, Kerns said. Parts of the old cathedral's murals (including one depicting the Last Supper) were saved and will be incorporated in the new building, he said.

"It is like a giant jigsaw puzzle," he said. Repair and rebuilding crews laid out the broken bits on the ground and went through the painstaking process of assembling something to be a part of the new cathedral.

It is a huge and hugely challenging work, Kerns said, "But we are going to get there."

## What's Up With AHA Members, Associates And Volunteers

**Maggie and Barry Stauffer** took a bicycle tour in northern Italy. The week-long pedaling took them from Verona to Venice.

**Teddy and Bill Clayton** visited a friend in his villa in Cuernavaca, Mexico, a metropolis near Mexico City billing itself as "The land of eternal spring."

**Jane King** and seven other female Duquesne graduates had their long-running autumnal gathering in a house in Bethany, Del., for a week at the beach. They have done this reunion for 45 years, traveling to Germany, France, Italy and Switzerland, in addition to Bethany.

**Helen Desfosses** took her first ikebana class last week in Alexandria, after 40 years of having this art of Japanese flower-arranging on her bucket list. Her first arrangement barely held together until she got home, but unlike her experience with golf lessons years ago, at least she was invited back for the next ikebana class.

**Penny Roberts** took a three-week tour of Mongolia with a high school buddy, **Laura Griswold**. They were in a group of 14 who visited the lake district, the desert and the capital, Ulan Bator. "I milked a yak," Roberts announced.

### "Decluttering" Your Home

AARP's magazine listed ways to clear clutter:

- Consider giving family heirlooms to your kids.
- Think about selling beyond garage sales. There are online sites buying electronics, dealers for books and outlets for clothing in good condition.
- Donations have many outlets such as the Salvation Army or Goodwill, or thrift shops.
- For things without sales appeal, just the trash may be the best solution. Check recycling services.

### Chuckles

A man orders a martini with olives and asks for a jar. He does this for second and third martinis, drinking the drinks and plopping the olives in the jar. The bartender asks why. "My wife sent me out for a jar of olives," the man says.

A guy in church complains to his pastor that somebody has stolen his coat from the vestibule. He asks the pastor to preach on the commandment "Thou Shalt Not Steal." The preacher decides to discuss all the Ten Commandments. But he notices the guy stands up and bolts out of the church in mid-sermon. Next week, the preacher asks why. Guy says, "Well, when you got to the part about adultery, I remembered where I left my coat."

## Things We Do



**We Plan**, as here the AHA Board discusses the annual benefit and the tour of the Fawcett-Reeder House.

**We Dine**, as here a waiter serves pasta dishes at Sapore d'Italia on Mount Vernon Avenue in Del Ray, on Sept. 15.



**We Take Pot Luck**, as here in the Drake Room of Alexandria House, Barbara Ballentine, Nancy Berg and Mary Nefedov tuck into the hummus, guacamole, cheese and crackers and wine. In the background: a cluster around the wine table.



**We Visit**, as here, Nancy Kincaid and Chair Barbara Rosenfeld explore the Newseum, with its artifacts of journalism and a stunning view along Pennsylvania Avenue with the Capitol in the background.



**We Spread The Word**: Bill and Teddy Clayton and Pam Nelson advertising the house tour.

## Reports from the Board of Directors

“Things are going very, very well,” Chair Barbara Rosenfeld reported to the Board Sept. 16. She applauded the work of Volunteer Chair Penny Roberts and Linda Langley and Barbara Ballentine, among many others, on the Fawcett-Reeder house tour. Langley organized the docents and Ballentine drafted briefings on each of the house’s main attractions.

Work on the Website continues, toward a goal of making it more “friendly” to use. Content will be funneled through Executive Director Garrett.

“Right now, we are in good shape,” Treasurer Chriss Nielsen reported, “and we continue to meet our membership goals.” AHA members at this writing total 128, but additional prospects were being contacted from events such as the house tour and City Hall Farmer’s Market. AHA will be on the Volunteer Alexandria site, which could generate both volunteers and new member possibilities.

AHA members who succeed in attracting a new member are eligible for a \$50 discount for their own payment to AHA.

Think about friends and family in Alexandria who may be interested. You may save yourself \$50.

## Spotlight on . . . Linda Langley

All of a sudden Linda Langley is everywhere. She attends AHA events, she helped stuff envelopes for the annual benefit, she helped plan the Fawcett-Reeder House tour. Wait, no, didn’t just help. She took over a major role in planning and carrying out the tour, which was a new and big effort for AHA. (See p. 1).

Langley came into that role naturally. As part of a long career in volunteering, she worked with “Christmas in St. Michael’s” annual home tour in Maryland. She has been a businesswoman, a substitute teacher, mother of three, active in her homeowners’ association and most recently, a teacher in the English as a Second Language program. “She is impressive,” Ernie Lehmann of AHA said.

Born an “Air Force brat” at Bolling air base in 1947, she was educated in Korea, the Philippines and Maryland. She and her husband, Edmund, sold their modular-home business in 2005. Ed died in 2012, and Lehmann encouraged Linda to volunteer with AHA. She has done so, and how!

Lehmann calls her “a doer.”



**Linda Langley**

### Board of Directors

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#### Office Co-Managers

Monica Estabrooke and Diane Atchinson

### Burger Benefits

Holy Cow, the burger joint in Del Ray, donates a quarter each to a long list of nonprofits for each hamburger order in their name.

AHA’s is No. 015. When you give your order to the cashier, just say, “Oh, one, five. At Home in Alexandria.”

That is just a drop in our bucket, but we have received \$36.25 since eearly 2013, and that represents 145 times somebody has said “Oh, one, five.”

### CONTACT US

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