



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

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Blizzard of 2016 Mobilizes AHA Troops

At Home in Alexandria swung into Emergency Mode when the area was hit with a major blizzard bringing record snowfall and gale-force winds at the end of January.

Executive Director Cele Garrett and Office Co-Managers Monica Estabrooke and Diane Atchinson and Volunteer Chair Penny Roberts mobilized volunteers to meet a rush of requests from members for help in and after the snow emergency. Before long the AHA office had more than a dozen requests for help and eight volunteers reporting in for duty, some of them with multiple assignments.

Neighborhoodly spirit helped. Barry Stauffer reported for snow removal and two of his neighbors helped. One house they cleared was that of Indie and Ed Cather – the storm having hit just two days after Ed's 80th birthday.

In a lull between Saturday's bands of snow, a happy call came on the Del Ray neighborhood Listserve—"St. Elmo's (a popular coffee house) is open."

One member eased the volunteers' burden by moving in with a relative for the duration of the storm, postponing the need to shovel her front walk.

Ernie Lehmann returned amid the Blizzard of 2016 from a trip to the northern part of Norway to see the *aurora borealis*, and reported Alexandria colder and more snowbound than the Arctic region. That gave Lehmann the excuse to call himself "Ernook of the North." (See p. 4 for details on his trip.)

AHA Chair Barbara Rosenfeld asks, "Am I devoted—or crazy?" We will let you decide. She turned down an invitation to change her return flight and stay by the ocean in Cabo San Lucas, Mexico. She returned Jan. 21 "just in time for the storm" and in time to prepare for a Board meeting.



Doug Fleming

Doug Fleming 1922-2016

Doug Fleming was multidimensional—a wry raconteur, gourmet, world traveler, a man of strong opinions strongly worded, with a rich store of jokes.

He died Jan. 21, just four days short of his 94th birthday. His health had been declining the past year, and he went home to Alexandria House Jan. 6 from the hospital and into hospice care. His wife, Nancy Kincaid, an original AHA Board member and longtime chair of the Program Committee, was at his side, as was his sister-in-law, Mary. Burial will be at Arlington National Cemetery at a date still to be set. He will be buried next to his first wife.

Douglas Riley Fleming was born Jan. 25, 1922 in Fairmont, W.Va. He grew up in the Lakewood suburb of Cleveland and joined the Navy as an aviator in World War II, hunting down German submarines. Several years after the war ended, he graduated from Georgetown University's School of Foreign Service.

Told he was too old for the Foreign Service, he stayed in the Navy. Fleming was assigned to NATO in Naples, Italy, and retired there. In Italy, he worked for DuPont, published the Rome Daily American and headed the American Studies Center in Naples.

He returned to the United States after the death of his first wife and bought a Virginia farm. He planted wine grapes. He and Nancy, who were married in 1992, entertained friends at the farm. He formed a wine cooperative and built Virginia Wine Cellars..

For the past 20 years, he and Nancy spent Octobers in San Querico d'Orcia, Italy. Fleming was a good cook and entertained his friends with his Lord Cholmondeley (pronounced Chumley) jokes in a British accent. He was a valued member of the Cogswell Society, whose popular motto was, "Temperance? I'll drink to that."

Fellow Cogswellian Mike Dunn said that after the 9/11 attack, Fleming told the Pentagon he wanted to re-enlist. The young officer told him that his age—the 80s at that time—classified him 14-F. Fleming asked what that meant. The young officer said "It means, sir, that when the enemy gets to 14th and F Streets, we will call you up."

Even close to the end, when Doug was ailing and friends asked "How ya doin'?" Doug said, "Hangin' in there."

Double Booking Throws Challenge at Potluck Planners —But Evening Goes Well Regardless

It was the event planners' worst nightmare: Pam and Steve Nelson, planners of the January Potluck gathering, found to their dismay that the usual venue, the Drake Room of Alexandria House, had been double-booked and was not available. It was 4 p.m. and the event was scheduled to start at 5.

With frantic consultation with Alexandria House staff (one receptionist was on her first day on the job) and after enlisting AHA helpers, they decided to hold the festive event in the lobby.

"We first called Helen Desfosses (a resident of Alexandria House), who called Mike Kenny, who fetched some tables and chairs after we took a deep breath and decided to party in the lobby," Steve Nelson reported later.

As people arrived and realized that there was a new venue, they pitched in to help. Tablecloths were spread, food was arrayed, chairs were put around, bottles were uncorked. Desfosses took a plate of "pigs in a blanket" furnished by Indie Cather up to her apartment to warm them in the oven and once Bill Clayton arrived with another plate of "pigs," he and Cather had a "*mano a mano*" comparing their dishes. Several other people brought food and wine and beer.

It turned out to be a most congenial group: the Nelsons, Desfosses, the Claytons, David Butler and Alan Dinsmore, Shelly and Dick Schwab, Mary Nefedov, May Adams, Nancy Berg and Birgitte Guttstadt. A baker's dozen of attendees.

Photos From the "Emergency Potluck"



Clockwise from Shelly Schwab (back to camera), Teddye Clayton, David Butler, Steve Nelson, Helen Desfosses and Bill Clayton try the foods.



Nancy Berg visits with Alan Dinsmore.



Indie Cather, May Adams, and Mary Nefedov were among those who attended.

Other AHA Gatherings



The AHA group at Ted's Montana Grill in Eisenhower Valley, a restaurant specializing in bison. Clockwise from left: May Adams, Indie Cather, Bill Landis, waitress, Lu Judge, mostly hidden Mary Nefedov, David Butler and Alan Dinsmore (partly hidden).



Ladies' TGIF clockwise from left: Shelly Schwab, Penny Roberts, Kit Leider, Pam Nelson, Helen Desfosses. Not shown: photographer and honorary lady Bill Clayton. The group meets at the Fin and Hoof bar in the Old Town Sheraton at 5 p.m. on the second Tuesday of every month.

AHA's Office Co-Managers Help Test Online Scheduling System

AHA's Office Co-Managers Monica Estabrooke and Diane Atchinson are working with a grant from Community Foundation for Northern Virginia to implement an online service, Village Scheduler. Currently the system is being used by Shepherd Centers in Northern Virginia. It has been adapted for villages.

The co-managers will validate the data exported to the program and will enlist volunteers to test the system with them. Implementation will involve volunteer training, and the hope is to have it online by the end of the first quarter.

When that is done, AHA volunteers will be able to sign on daily to accept assignments and enter their hours and miles. The system also can be adapted for entry of indirect hours for such things as board and committee meetings.



ED and Treasurer Call 2015 "Another Great Year"

The year 2015 was "another great year financially for AHA," Treasurer Chriss Nielsen reported.

Revenues were short of budget, but so were expenses, offsetting the lower revenue. Also, the next financial report will reflect year-end donations, Nielsen said.

Those proceeds exceeded \$9,000, Executive Director Cele Garrett said.

The special appeal at year's end is one of three annual AHA fundraisers, she pointed out. (The other two are Spring2ACTion in April and the fall benefit and auction.)

"It's important that we reach out to the community to seek their support of our village," Garrett said. "The health of our organization depends on community-wide support, especially since membership dues cover just under one-half of AHA's expenses.

"These campaigns reach out to folks who have been engaged with AHA in one way or another and remind them of our value to the Alexandria community. Each time we conduct one of our fundraisers, however, we are heartened and overwhelmed to find that our AHA members also are often our most generous supporters. We are pleased and proud that we can sustain our operations on the strength of our members and community supporters.

"We receive no local or federal funds, of course. Being funded by the community and by our members allows us the flexibility and the independence to tailor and adapt our services to meet the needs of our members," Garrett said.

Five-Year Anniversary Celebration Among AHA Highlights in 2016

Much is in the works for the new year at AHA, Chair Barbara Rosenfeld and Executive Director Cele Garrett reported.

"We will, of course, be celebrating AHA's first five years," Rosenfeld said. That will be the signal to take new directions and try new initiatives—such as having affinity groups manage more events and activities. Also, Rosenfeld is urging discussion of having the Board of Directors move into more of an overall policy and guidance role and less of a programmatic role.

Garrett announced that membership rose to 160 with new members Chet Avery, Danita McNeill, Annalise Smith and Shelly and Dick Schwab.

Three volunteers—Pete Crouch, Annie Stat and Les Carr—were the stars of three new videos telling what they do for AHA and how rewarding they found the experience to be.

Garrett also said Maggie Stauffer has offered to host a welcome coffee in the Stauffer home, on the fourth Thursday of each month, to welcome new members to the AHA village. At least two AHA members will be at each coffee to share their experiences.

Alan Dinsmore and Garrett have agreed to work out three workshops with Goodwin House at Home, on themes related to food and nutrition.

SSA Speaker Series Examines Memory Loss

Senior Services of Alexandria presents a program Wednesday, Feb. 10, on "Maintaining Memory and Coping With Its Loss." Part of SSA's speaker series, the program will be co-sponsored by Inova Alexandria Hospital, Arden Courts Memory Care and Insight Memory Care as well as the City's Division of Aging & Adult Services.

The event will take place from 10 a.m. to noon, with registration at 9:30 a.m., at the Beatley Central Library at 5005 Duke St. The program is free and open to the public but seating will be limited and attendees are asked to RSVP either online at www.seniorservicesalex.org or by phone (703) 836-4414 extension 110.

SSA said attendees will learn "how to stimulate your brain to keep it active and lessen memory loss," as well as techniques to help loved ones who suffer from dementia or other memory loss.

What's Up with AHA Members, Associates And Volunteers

Bob Eiffert, newest AHA Board member, retired Jan. 22 as Long Term Care Program manager for the Fairfax County Health Department. He will not be idle, however: He continues as vice chair of the Alexandria Commission on Aging and on the board of the Goodwin House Foundation.

Teddye and Bill Clayton report a very gracious Southern amenity in the Charlotte airport: big rocking chairs scattered through the concourses so that passengers can sit and rock and watch airplanes.

Linda Langley explained to her 5-year-old grandson that she had two knee replacements. "Are you turning into a robot?" the youngster asked.

Nancy Berg said she tried to sign up as an occasional customer of the ride service Uber. But she found out later that the application she filled out was as a driver, not a customer. And no, she is not embarking on a new career as a cabbie. She corrected the mistake.

Add **Pam Nelson** to AHA's pickleball players. Her husband, **Steve**, has played for a long time, and **Ann Kaupp** was also one of the first AHA players. When Pam retired, she tried out the sport, which is a little like tennis, a little like Ping-Pong, played on an indoor court one-third the size of a basketball court. Pickleball, anyone? Check with Steve.

Ernie Lehmann fulfilled a life-long desire to see the Northern Lights. Research showed that the best viewing site for these lights, the *aurora borealis*, was in mid-January in the Arctic region of Norway, above the Arctic Circle, Lehmann said. He and "**buddy Mel**" got berths on a Norwegian expeditionary cruise up to the top of Norway – the Nord Kapp of Norway, with the distinct possibility of observing the *aurora borealis*. On two separate occasions, the lights danced in the Arctic sky and Ernie's dream was fulfilled. **Ernie's wife, Montsie**, did not go: "Too cold."

Volunteer Corner

Music to our ears: **Montsie Lehmann** said she feels "so indebted to" AHA volunteers who have given her rides to exercise at the "Y" and back home. "What wonderful volunteers AHA has," she said, adding in her fluent Spanish, "*Mis gracias más sinceras*" (my sincerest thanks).

Volunteer Chair Penny Roberts takes turns as a volunteer, and one recent one was particularly interesting: When she picked up Indie Cather for a trip to the doctor, the doctor's office telephone had a recording saying it was closed. The two visited for a while, then it turned out the office was open after all. So an errand turned into a pleasant extended visit, including a look at the storm-emptied shelves of Trader Joe's, Roberts reported.

Betty Dodd is one of those volunteers who make themselves available for a variety of assignments. Born in 1940 in Alexandria, she knows the city thoroughly and for about three years has been a volunteer for AHA. She heard about AHA through **Julie Gentry**, once an AHA co-manager and still a valued volunteer. Dodd "has consistently jumped in at the last minute to take a last-minute call" to help a member, AHA Office **Co-Manager Monica Estabrooke** reports. "She delivers meals to a member several times a week (and) has a calm and reassuring manner."

Dodd comes naturally to taking things calmly. She was a "stay-at-home mother" while her son, now in Illinois, and daughter, now in Arkansas, were growing up. And taking members on grocery shopping visits is also right down her alley: she had a career with Shoppers Food Warehouse until her retirement in 2010.

AHA's office workers and volunteers filled nearly 1,000 member requests in 2015— "a huge increase over the previous year," Executive Director Cele Garrett reported.



Now Hear This: Our Success Is Our Challenge

Volunteer Chair Penny Roberts has a plea to all in the AHA village, members and volunteers alike:

Help find new prospects to do the gratifying work volunteers do for AHA.

Our village has made impressive gains in our membership in the last several months, Roberts said. "But with that growth comes an increase in the number of requests for our services. In order to meet these needs we need to increase our pool of volunteers.

"In last month's newsletter, we asked for volunteers to help with the Program Committee.

"**Now the Volunteer Committee needs your help recruiting volunteers.** Reach out to your neighbors, book club or church group for folks willing to help provide transportation a few times a month, or who can provide some minor repairs. If you have been thinking about volunteering yourself, now is the time. The Volunteer Committee needs your help. Or, just your suggestions or ideas about reaching groups of potential volunteers." Please contact Penny Roberts. She can be reached by email at: psroberts378@gmail.com, or by phone at 703-836-9644 (home) 571-319-3685 (cell).

Reasons to Wait Before Upgrading to Windows 10

By Steve Nelson

Windows 10 upgrades from Windows 7 and 8.1 are free until July 29, 2016. Here are a couple of reasons to wait. First, while the rollout of the new operating system has been extraordinarily smooth, there are always bugs to work out. The longer you wait, the more bugs will be squashed.

Second, older PCs are more likely to have driver problems. What are driver problems? Well, drivers are little bits of software that act as an interface between a general operating system (like Windows 8.1) and specific pieces of hardware, like a disc drive, monitor, or printer. If the hardware changes, then the driver probably needs upgrading, too. If the operating system changes (like upgrading to Windows 10), a new driver might be needed but won't exist for old hardware. So a brand new operating system and an old hunk of hardware might not have a way to talk to each other.

Bummer.

Finally, there's talk on the internet about Windows 10 privacy invasion. Microsoft seems to be able to produce surprising statistics about what we do online. Time (until about July 29th) will tell if this becomes a larger issue, and I'd like to wait and see.

I plan to upgrade a nonessential PC to Windows 10 just to get some familiarity with it, but if you don't have that luxury, there's no harm in waiting.

Walkers Resume in March

The AHA walking group resumes its weekly walks on Tuesday, March 22, on its customary route from the TC Williams boathouse along the Potomac River. All are invited to walk along: Contact the AHA office at 703-231-0824.



Walkers consult map on Roosevelt Island

Program Committee Meeting

AHA Chair Barbara Rosenfeld reminds villagers about the important Program Committee meeting Wednesday, Feb. 10, at 2 p.m., in the AHA office.

All those interested in participating in planning AHA programs should come to the meeting, Rosenfeld said: "Come and learn about affinity groups and how you can start one on something that interests you," such as films, current events, cooking, to name a few.

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Office Co-Managers

Monica Estabrooke and Diane Atchinson

Chuckles and Chortles

Abraham Lincoln was once called two-faced by an opponent. Lincoln replied, "If I were two-faced, do you think I would wear this one?"

Robert Benchley to a uniformed man: "My good man, get me a taxi." "Sir, I am an admiral in the United States Navy" "An admiral, eh? In that case, get me a battleship."

...And this hoary oldie from W.C. Fields: "It was a woman drove me to drink and I did not have the decency to thank her."

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