

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

AHA Villagers a Highlight of the Scottish Walk Parade

With banners and placards and a brand-new float, At Home in Alexandria members and volunteers marched and rode in the Dec. 3 Scottish Walk Parade.

The group who rode in the float wore bright red fleece AHA jackets and held placards that told of the services AHA does for its members—from transportation to home maintenance to regular Happy Hours and other social gatherings.

Two years ago, Susanne Adams and Penny Roberts kicked around the idea of building a float for the Scottish Walk Parade.

It seemed an ideal notion—giving a ride to those who wanted it, making a splashier appearance in the parade and focusing the crowd's attention on the things AHA does. Roberts agreed to oversee the parade effort.

The idea caught on and soon that dynamo Adams had an offer from Rob Estabrooke (operations co-manager Monica Estabrooke's son) to furnish a flatbed trailer and Adam Roca to supply a truck, Finn Construction for supplies and car-

penters and Chris Campagna for a parking place big enough for the float. Pete Crouch joined Susanne and Penny as a "lead volunteer" on the project (and helped dismantle it after the parade). In addition, many AHA members and volunteers helped with the float, carried the placards, gave out cards and waved to the crowds.

As the construction progressed, on the flatbed, bit by bit, there emerged a porch-on-wheels with seating for riders and surrounded by a balustrade that supported banners and garlands. The flatbed had some rails on the back that detracted from the float's festivity, so Ann Liddle, that indefatigable artist, fashioned two snowmen to hide them, and built an artificial Christmas tree of fabric and plastic snowflakes to attach to the railing.

The Parade Committee included Adams, Roberts, Liddle, Maggie

Stauffer and Mary Jayne Swanson. From Executive Director Cele Garrett, they got new AHA signs with the village's new logo. The pre-parade reception at Ann and L Liddle's home gave paradegoers a chance to socialize and warm up beforehand.

The parade had only a few floats, so AHA's caught the crowd's attention. Many spectators returned the AHA!



greeting with "AHA" shouts of their own. When the parade was over, the AHA volunteers dismantled it and stored it in Swanson's garage, ready for whatever parade next strikes AHA's fancy.

"The Christmas Scottish Walk demonstrated what great work can be

Susanne Adams, left, a major cog in the idea wheel that created the float, gazes at the crowd from a lofty perch.



Villagers on the Float at the Scottish Walk Parade



The float in action, its riders sporting the village's red scarves and jackets and white caps..

accomplished with tenacity and teamwork. This was indeed a team effort," Roberts said. Stauffer "provided a step-by-step guide to the process that we could follow, and pitched in wherever we needed guidance or an extra hand." Adams said, "There is no way it could have happened without all the volunteers." (See additional photos p. 2 and stories p. 4.)

More Parade



Scottish Walk Reviewing Stand VIPs
Wave for the AHA! Contingent



AHA's "Squad Car"
Owned and driven by Charles Ablard
With Former Mayor Patsy Ticer as Honored Guest



Glam Gams

HOLIDAY PARTY TIME

The Chris Nielsen-Tom Crowley party is a seasonal highlight.



Hostess Nielsen and AHA's Cele Garrett greeting guests



Susan Kellom in front of the huge Christmas tree

The Bar Scene with (L to R) Jesse Neal, Monica Estabrooke and David Butler



The efficient staff, Jerry and Katie

Dinner at A La Lucia

Like the Nielsen-Crowley party above, the yearly holiday dinner at A La Lucia, planned and managed by Nancy Kincaid, has become one of the best-attended and tastiest AHA events. In the left photo below, AHA Chair Barbara Rosenfeld greets Brigitte Guttstadt and Mary Nefedov at one of the five tables accommodating dozens of guests.

In the right photo, Joyce and Dick Bachman greet newcomers to their table.



Learn About Continuing-Care Retirement Living

Join your AHA friends in February to hear former AHA Treasurer Winnie Hill and AHA volunteer Ken Hill discuss their thorough research of the area's Continuing Care Retirement Communities.

When you decide that you **may want** to move from your **current** residence, Continuing Care Retirement Communities may be worth considering.

The AHA program will be Feb. 6 at 2 p.m. in the Portner's Landing program room, 621 North St. Asaph.

CCRCs, as they are called, typically offer a variety of services in one community, including guaranteed housing, social activities and increased levels of care as your health needs change. There are many factors, some very complicated, that should be considered before deciding whether this choice is right for you.

The Hills started looking into CCRCs by accumulating brochures and by personal visits to the facilities. They got so much information that they were persuaded to make an AHA program of their data.

They visited 12 facilities within a 50-mile radius of Alexandria. They lunched or dined at the sites, visiting with staff and residents. They asked for copies of their financial structure and data sheets.

The program will cover, among other topics:

- What are CCRCs and what do they offer?
- How much do they cost?
- **The need** to consider location, your lifestyle, age and family medical history.
- How to assess the stability and quality of individual CCRCs.
- Differing contracts and what they mean to you.
- Health insurance and how it may/may not cover medical needs while living in a CCRC.

This program is meant to inform you about an important option that you may want to consider.

Sin and Evil in Northern Virginia?

Author-journalist Michael Lee Pope regaled an AHA audience Dec. 11 with a tale of, as his "Shotgun Justice" book subtitle says, "One prosecutor's crusade against crime and corruption in Alexandria and Arlington."

In the early days of the 20th Century, Crandall Mackey, "an urban crusader," won the job of Commonwealth Attorney for Alexandria County. He quickly built a reputation as crusader, reformer and outcast. Pope said Mackey's task was not easy: "Gambling had deep roots in Virginia." Money to create the Virginia colony came from a lottery; George Washington bought and sold lottery tickets; lottery money built Alexandria wharves.

With his shotgun raids, Mackey "faced down two-bit gamblers ... closed saloons ... got into fistfights with railroad

AHA Helps With Wreaths Across America

Some AHA villagers helped plan and participated in Wreaths Across America, a wreath-laying recognition of World War II veterans, in Alexandria National Cemetery.

The AHA effort, coordinated by Barry Stauffer, contacted several WWII veterans or spouses of veterans in the AHA roster. But a freezing rain and hazardous conditions reduced greatly the AHA participation.

Some cited the weather but a few, like Max Stolper, said he was a veteran but "never thought it was a big deal" and thus declined.

Donors and volunteers furnished the wreaths and placed them at the graves in Alexandria National Cemetery. The photo below shows the scene at the Alexandria National Cemetery. Note the gray skies and icy ground.



Barry Stauffer kneels to steady a wreath on one of the Alexandria National Cemetery graves. Note icy ground from an early-morning freezing rain.

At left, AHA volunteer Pete Crouch placing a wreath with the help of a Boy Scout



lawyers . . . fought the (political) machine" and shut down dens of iniquity, Pope said.

And then the ultimate mystery in Mackey's life: suddenly he abandoned his campaign for re-election in 1915. It is not clear whether he was threatened or tired or forced out.



Michael Pope speaking to AHA group

What's Up With AHA Members, Associates and Volunteers

Some people, through family or friendship, are not official volunteers for AHA, but they do much to support and help the village in various endeavors.

You will see these “unsung helpers” mentioned on Page One, but here are some details:

Such a one was **Adam Roca**. He is the son of Susanne Adams’s dentist. Susanne latched onto him to drive the truck that towed the float.

And **Rob Estabrooke, Monica Estabrooke’s** son, whom she shanghai into parade duty every year.

Others of the unsung are **Cole Garrett, Cele Garrett’s son**, who helped the hosts with the **Nielsen-Crowley** party, and a friend of Cole’s, **Marcel Janowsky**, who, along with Cole, helped at the November gala.

The AHA Board of Directors elected six of their number to another term on the Board.

Re-elected Dec. 13 without dissent were **Charles Ablard, Brenda Bloch-Young, Helen Desfosses, Linda Langley, Penny Roberts and Mary Jayne Swanson**.

The remaining Board members are in terms that run through Dec. 31, 2017: **Chair Barbara Rosenfeld, Vice Chair Jane King, Treasurer Chriss Nielsen, Secretary L Liddle, Bob Eiffert, Steve Nelson, Alan Dinsmore and Bill Clayton**.

Liddle and Desfosses, of the Governance Committee, prepared materials for the election.

The Board is authorized to add a 15th member.

Nancy Berg’s family, with several AHA members as co-conspirators, put together a “This Is Your Life” type of film of Nancy’s life.

The clips included comments and tidbits from AHA groups at which Nancy is a frequent attendee—lectures, bridge games, GIFs, and the like.

It also included clips from family members.

The family surprised Nancy with the film on Christmas Day.

The film lasted approximately a half-hour, daughter **Sarah Berg** said.

The idea for the surprise movie came from grandchildren **Sarah and Isabel Berg**, who accumulated the footage (with some help from others), edited the film, and added subtitles.

Goings and comings:

A new member is **John Sipple**, who does *pro bono* work with Afghan refugees.

In committee news, **Mary Jayne Swanson** has agreed to chair the Volunteer Committee, a substantial job for which her predecessor, **Penny Roberts**, deserves thanks and praise.

VOLUNTEER CORNER

Ken Hill, AHA volunteer *extraordinaire*, returned to “the ‘Stans” recently as an election observer in Uzbekistan.

It was his seventh mission as part of the U.S. team for the Organization for Security & Cooperation in Europe (OSCE). The election on Dec. 4 selected a new president to replace recently deceased President Karimov. As an OSCE associate member state, Uzbekistan had requested observation, ostensibly to perfect its election procedures. A team of nearly 200 observers from 26 OSCE member states made up the observation team, including 27 members from the United States.

Uzbekistan, a former federal state of the Soviet Union, was led by President Karimov for 26 years. It is a Turkic nation surrounded by Kazakhstan, Turkmenistan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan and a brief common border with Afghanistan. Ken Hill’s interest in Uzbekistan stems from his interest in Turkic cultures; he was a Peace Corps volunteer in Turkey in the 60s and still speaks Turkish. Both Hills were in Eastern Russia for 2½ years in the mid-90’s, when Ken was the Peace Corps director.

“Uzbekistan was a welcoming host,” Ken said, “and the people I met were truly honored to have us there. My ‘site’ was in the heart of the Fergana Valley in Eastern Uzbekistan, an area surrounded by mountains.”

He said the observers’ day on Election Day started at 5 a.m. at their assigned precincts, to see the official opening of the precinct at 6 a.m. Observers visited several precincts and wound up at a precinct “closing” to observe the vote count and certification. Then they followed the precinct entourage to the district headquarters where the precinct vote is officially registered. They observed the turnover of the numbers and the ballots and confirmed that the vote tally of the precinct was recorded exactly at the regional office.

“Typically, this makes for a 21- or 22-hour day. A couple days later it’s back home. Flying to and from Tashkent is no picnic, he reports: “The Turkish Airlines flight to Tashkent consumes 22 hours.”



Ken (at right) on an earlier OSCE assignment in Kazakhstan with the precinct chair (center) and observation partner from Germany.

An Excellent Year, But Time for Another Strategic Plan

Chair Barbara Rosenfeld declared 2016 “an excellent year,” with award-winning work, a fifth anniversary celebration and good progress in AHA services.

“Now is the time to turn our eyes to the future,” she told the Board of Directors, setting as a goal getting a new strategic planning effort under way in the next few months.

With the challenge of membership retention and expansion, AHA must decide how much to grow. “What do we want to look like?” she asked. “How do we expand our leadership pool and transition to the next generation of AHA leaders?”

Board Member Bob Eiffert agreed to do the preliminary planning, and he asked members to give him their thoughts about topics for the strategic session.

Rosenfeld praised the year-end fundraising letter Susan Kellom wrote (mailed to 680 people) with the theme that life can catch any of us by surprise. When Susan and Ben Kellom both faced particular challenges, “AHA was a lifesaver,” Susan wrote.

“Thanks to all of you who helped make these things happen,” Rosenfeld said.

“And special thanks, as always, to Cele Garrett plus her trusty lieutenants, Monica Estabrooke and Diane Atchinson for all the hard work they put into making so much get done during the year.”

Board of Directors

Barbara Rosenfeld, Chair	Helen Desfosses
Jane King, Vice Chair	Alan Dinsmore
Chriss Nielsen, Treasurer	Bob Eiffert
Linus Liddle, Secretary	Linda Langley
Bill Clayton, Editor	Steve Nelson
Charles Ablard	Penny Roberts
Brenda Bloch-Young	Mary Jayne Swanson

Executive Director

Cecile (Cele) Garrett

Advisory Council

Charles Ablard, Liaison

Laurie Blackburn	Peter Crouch
Carol Downs	MaryAnn Griffin
Richard Hobson	Judith Jones, MD
Louise Kenny	Jessica LeFevre
Ernie Lehmann	Tim Lovain
Temple C. Moore	Mitch Opalski
Jan Pomerantz	Patsy Ticer
Vicki Vasques	

Operations Co-Managers

Monica Estabrooke and Diane Atchinson

AHA Expanding Horizons?

Executive Director Cele Garrett began a dialogue with the Board of Directors about possibly expanding the AHA boundaries.

Her idea was to expand westward to take in the neighborhoods of Seminary Valley, Cameron Station and some high-rise buildings along Holmes Run, near the Beatley Library.

AHA has received some requests for service in those areas “and it would be great not to have to turn them down,” she said in her monthly report.

A second idea about boundaries, Garrett said, is to “grandfather” the members who move to Goodwin House Alexandria who want to stay full members of AHA. That would enable AHA members to continue their membership when they move to Goodwin House.

The series of “this is your life” type of photo shoots of members has been completed, Garrett reported. She and the photographer will confer about which images to use on AHA’s web site.

Treasurer Chriss Nielsen, Chair Barbara Rosenfeld and Garrett all felt that AHA is on solid financial ground but with a big challenge to retain and build on membership.

The financial picture highlight was the net revenue from the annual Gala of \$23,125. Those who attended thought the venue worked well for the Gala.

CALENDAR ALERT
CHECK OUT THE AHA CALENDARS
FOR JANUARY AND FEBRUARY.
TEMPORARY VENUE FOR HAPPY HOUR
IS OLD TOWN SPORT AND HEALTH
DURING DRAKE ROOM RENOVATION

Health Tips

Belly fat is “underdetected and deadly,” the Mayo Clinic Health Letter reported. Despite jolly old Saint Nick, fat that accumulates in the belly area is the type of fat most dangerous to health and longevity, Mayo said.

Belly fat can affect the internal organs, possibly leading to high blood sugar, high blood pressure, unsafe cholesterol levels, a fatty liver and general inflammation.

The main solution is a healthy diet, Mayo says—portion control, plant foods that are minimally processed, cutting down high-calorie drinks. Exercise and physical activity appear to be of particular help, the report said.

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