

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



New members of the Board of Directors are Pam Nelson, Babs Waters and Susanne Adams.

In her final report as chair, Rosenfeld said, “We are a solid organization—our membership continues to grow, our finances are in good shape, we have an outstanding staff and wonderful volunteers and participants in all our activities.”



Incoming Chair Jane King toasts outgoing Chair Barbara Rosenfeld at Board meeting.

Changing of the Guard at AHA

The Board of Directors of AHA added three new members Dec. 19, toasted retiring Chair Barbara Rosenfeld with champagne, and welcomed new Chair Jane King (formerly vice chair) and new Vice Chair Bob Eiffert.

The changes, effective Jan. 1, bring the Board to its full strength of 15 members. Board members also gave unanimous approval to a new Strategic Plan whose goal is to “ensure that AHA is a vibrant, thriving organization.”

New Board members are Pam Nelson, Barbara “Babs” Waters and Susanne Adams.

Pam Nelson’s husband, Steve, retired from the Board and was honored with a Certificate of Appreciation for his work in Information Technology, in managing the annual wine raffle, and in various volunteer roles. Steve, recovering from knee surgery, could not be at the Dec. 19 meeting. Pam accepted the plaque for him.

Chris Nielsen will continue as treasurer in 2018-19 and Helen Desfosses will serve as secretary. Incumbent Board members Rosenfeld, Eiffert, Alan Dinsmore and Bill Clayton were re-elected for new two-year terms.

Board members whose terms continue through 2018 are Desfosses, Charles Ablard, Brenda Bloch-Young, Linda Langley, Penny Roberts and Mary Jayne Swanson.

The Board applauded Rosenfeld for her four years as chair and raised toasts to her with champagne. She brought chocolates and passed them around to the group.



Vice Chair Jane King was promoted to Chair, Board Member Bob Eiffert voted Vice Chair.

Executive Director Cele Garrett reported AHA membership at 172 with some gains and some losses. New members included Susan Morrison, Mary Margaret McGrail, Nancy and John Veldhuis, Lucille Hambley and Janet Watkins. Moving from associate to full member are Steve and Pam Nelson, Gloria Sikora and Julie and Vance Hall.

Carol Downs, Alan Dinsmore and Garrett have been discussing with Goodwin

House at Home possible workshop ideas for the spring. Previous workshops have been well attended.

Treasurer Nielsen reported: “November revenues were below budget, but AHA continues to be in a strong financial position with eight months in reserve.”

Program Committee Chair Penny Roberts outlined an ambitious list of objectives, from emphasizing some new social programs, to encouraging new ideas for interest groups, to having members invite newcomers to events.

The new interest group, the Mystery Book Club, has been successful and has led to discussions of yet other book groups.

Roberts emphasized the need to continue planning joint programs with Goodwin House and the Beatley Library.

AHA Plans for Its Future

By Bob Eiffert, Vice Chair

Organizational planning is a key task for the AHA Board of Directors. Accordingly, the AHA board and its committees spent the last year planning ahead for how AHA can continue to prosper and grow the services and supports we provide to our members. The result is a “planning matrix” that outlines specific steps and tasks that the board and committees will undertake for the next 3 years to enhance the organization and what it provides.

The document has been made available on our web site: www.athomeinalexandria.org

The plan, adopted by the board at its Dec. 19 meeting, includes the areas of programs, services, members, volunteers, communication, finance and governance. It ambitiously proposes the overall membership to grow to 200 from a base of 160 (the current membership is already up to 172). To accommodate that growth, the plan also envisions maintaining and adding programs and services to be sure members continue to enjoy the benefits of the organization.

We view this strategic plan as a framework and a foundation. It's meant to be a "living" document that guides us in our work over the next three years, continually being enhanced and adjusted (with board oversight) to respond to the needs of our members, our organizational capacity, and any changes in our community.

The key to any successful village is the participation and satisfaction of its members.

YOU can make a difference in the lives of members by volunteering your time and suggesting ways we can better serve you. If you have suggestions for new programs or services, please let the office know. The board would love to know what you think and how we are doing. In addition, we always need more drivers, and new leaders for interest groups. Free space for events and meetings is also a need as we plan ahead. Please join us in this expanding vision for a vibrant organization that serves YOU!



AHA's planning document is available online.



The Nielsen-Crowley Party

The Chriss Nielsen-Tom Crowley holiday party lived up to its reputation as a social highlight of AHA's year.

The picture above shows the gingerbread train, about the only edible thing the crowd of around 65 left alone. With hostess Nielsen greeting people at her front door and host Crowley manning the upstairs poolroom-bar, guests circulated happily from food tables to bar to Christmas tree room.

Chef Beth Hamed of caterer A Thyme and Place orchestrated the food offerings and her father, Jerry, staffed the kitchen, keeping cutlery and plates neat and food flowing.

AHA's new vice chair, Bob Eiffert, burdened with a strict new diet (“no alcohol, no gluten, no lactose”), was still able to feast on the bounty at hand.

Channeling part of “The Twelve Days of Christmas,” he said he had “four deviled eggs, three lamb chops, two sliced cukes, and a non-alcoholic bev-rage.”



Information technology and social media

Bring Your Tech Problems to “Tech Tuesday Drop-in” at AHA

On Jan. 23, from 10:30 a.m. to noon, bring your laptop or phone with your questions about social media, apps, photo management, device setup, etc., and we'll have staff and other knowledgeable helpers on hand to help you navigate your technology.

RSVP to the office (703-231-0824) to help us prepare for your needs, or just drop in.

Thanks. We look forward to seeing you—Jennifer (Jen) Heinz, marketing manager.



Riders on AHA’s float in the Scottish Walk Parade hold signs advertising the various services AHA provides.

Float an Attention-Getter at the Parade

AHA’s float could not be missed in the annual Scottish Walk parade. The photo above (by Maria Maciotti) shows some AHA marchers, some riders and some holding signs proclaiming what the village can do for its members: “Socializing,” “Tech Support,” “Transportation,” “Fun and Learning.”

The float, in its second year of livening the parade, was the idea of Susanne Adams and was reassembled for this year in the driveway of Mary Jayne Swanson. Workers who pounded it together—installing and adjusting the panels—included Adams, Swanson, Peter Crouch, Penny Roberts and Bill Clayton.

AHA folks enjoyed a pre-parade reception at the Liddles’. Some in the crowd of thousands picked up the cry of “AHA!” as the float and AHA marchers moved by. Marchers sported red AHA jackets or scarves, with red-and-white “gimme caps.”

Program Chair Roberts said a “special thanks to Rob Estabrooke, who again generously lent us his flatbed; to Ann and L Liddle (hosts of the pre-parade reception) for sharing their home; and to Mary Jayne Swanson for the use of her driveway and garage.”

Roberts also extended thanks to other helpers—Sandy Heistad, Mercedes Kremenetzky and Pam Nelson. The crew who re-assembled the float marveled that Crouch was able, driving a rented pickup truck and towing a flatbed trailer for the float, was able to back the rig into Swanson’s driveway off a narrow Del Ray street.



The float was assembled by Penny Roberts, Susanne Adams, Peter Crouch and Bill Clayton.



The holiday dinner at A La Lucia is an AHA tradition.

Alla Salute: Dinner at A La Lucia

The annual AHA holiday dinner at A La Lucia Restaurant proved once again to be one of the top attractions of the holiday season.

Tables laden with food and festive good will filled the room. At one table, there were two women named Penny and two men named Bill. Those were not all the coincidences: there was a lot of talk about bridge.

The evening is a tribute to the organizing skills of Nancy Kincaid, who is a friend of the owners.

What's Up With AHA Members, Associates and Volunteers

Alexandria's annual Boat Parade on the Potomac drew 29 villagers to Alexandria House balconies for a viewing and some refreshments.

The hostess was **Nancy Kincaid**, who counted 29 visitors. The viewers noted that the boats were more flashily decorated this year than in the recent past.

Ruth Arnold, AHA's standout walker (a few to several miles daily) is scolding herself for a fall that injured her kneecap. She is recovering and will be on the walking trail soon, she says.

The **"What's In The News"** group had a lively session with 13 participants, who discussed some pressing issues of the day—from the tax legislation to the Obamacare mandate to Brexit. Inevitably, the session brought up the investigations of President Trump's administration with the question, Who will be the next indictment, if any?

The room hushed when somebody pointed out that Michael Flynn, Trump advisor who pleaded guilty to lying to the FBI, was right then in the restaurant.

Two upcoming Conversation With programs will be heavily into current politics and elections.

The speaker **Jan. 28 will be Lesley Israel**, whose long résumé includes posts in several election campaigns and assignments as election observer in several countries. She will discuss those elections with emphasis on "how critical citizen involvement is." The program will be in the Alexandria House home of Marianne Ginsburg.

The Feb. 25 Conversation will have a co-sponsor, the Porto Vecchio Community Affairs Committee, in order to use the media room of Porto Vecchio. **The speaker will be Don Peterson**, retired from the Senior Intelligence Service, who will discuss the 2016 election.

AHA sponsored a **coffee gathering in Cameron Station** to spread the story of AHA in that area, which was newly added to the AHA perimeter. **AHA Executive Director Cele Garrett, then-Vice Chair Jane King and Marketing Manager Jen Heinz** answered questions and provided materials about AHA.



Attendees at the coffee gathering in Cameron Station.

Meet the New Board Members



Pam Nelson

Pam Nelson succeeds her husband, Steve, on the Board. She planned and managed the very successful annual Gala and Auction.

The Nelsons put on the Wine Raffle at the Gala and they have been major players in the setup and cleanup of the monthly Happy Hour in Alexandria House.

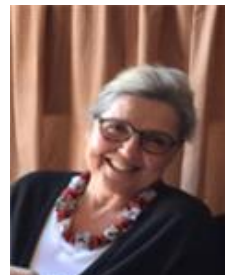
Pam serves on the Governance Committee.



Babs Waters

Barbara "Babs" Waters, a relative newcomer to AHA, has attracted the village to the attention of many in Cameron Station, an area of high potential for new members.

She has been a coach in the Matter of Balance classes.



Susanne Adams

Susanne Adams serves on the Membership Services Committee.

She is better known for coming up with the idea of a float for AHA participation in the annual Scottish Walk parade. She is a mainstay of the group of volunteers who store and reassemble the float

(See Page 3 for the parade story and photo.)

A Family Tradition

Every holiday season, friends on Bill Clayton's holiday card list receive one of four designs drawn years ago by his father, an El Paso district attorney who cartooned for relaxation. Bill hand-painted the cards every year until recently, when he had some printed in color.

The snowman at right is one of the four designs. He wishes everyone a happy and healthy 2018.



Chuckles

- A woman got new energy-efficient windows. The store called much later to say she had not paid for them. Her reply: “The salesman said they were so good they would pay for themselves in no time. So, they are paid for.” There was silence at the other end of the line, so she hung up.
- They say the universe is expanding. That should be good for traffic problems.
- Will Rogers once said traffic problems would be solved with a law requiring that only paid-for vehicles be allowed on the roads.
- A committee is a body that keeps minutes but wastes hours.
- An egotist is somebody me-deep in conversation.
- A raisin is just a grape with a sunburn.
- Tomorrow? That’s one of the greatest labor-saving devices of today.
- A toothache is the pain that drives you to extraction.
- One person’s wrinkles are another person’s character lines.
- A yawn is an honest opinion openly expressed.
- Dust is mud with the juice squeezed out.
- A mosquito is an insect that makes you like flies better.



The first (light) snow of winter, making a Beverley Hills neighborhood lovely with a light dusting.

Snow Buddies Are Standing By

MEMBERS: Snow Buddies are standing by if you need help clearing snow this season.

Call AHA 703-231-0824.

VOLUNTEERS: If you want to help, sign up now with the AHA office to be a Snow Buddy to help members. Call AHA 703-231-0824. (We dodged the bullet last year, when only a light snow fell—But who knows...?)

Board of Directors

Jane King, Chair	Brenda Bloch-Young
Bob Eiffert, Vice Chair	Susanne Adams
Helen Desfosses	Alan Dinsmore
Chriss Nielsen, Treasurer	Linda Langley
Bill Clayton, Editor	Pamela Nelson
Barbara Rosenfeld	Penny Roberts
Barbara “Babs” Waters	Charles Ablard
Mary Jayne Swanson	

Executive Director

Cecile (Cele) Garrett

Marketing Manager

Jen Heinz

Advisory Council

Charles Ablard, Liaison

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

Operations Co-Managers

Monica Estabrooke, Bernice Courtenay
and Dara Surratt

RSVPs Needed

It is more than “*s’il vous plaît*,” as the phrase says; it is essential that hosts and hostesses of AHA’s social gatherings get a firm idea of the response.

One hostess says 11 people showed up beyond the number of RSVPs. Sometimes, surprise attendees require a rearrangement of seating at the last minute.

The monthly calendars have a column listing the dates by which a yes-or-no response is needed.

Along with the date, the name and contact information of the host or arranger are listed.

Please, *répondez vous. Merci beaucoup.*

CONTACT US

At Home in Alexandria
3139 Mt. Vernon Avenue
Alexandria, VA 22305
703-231-0824

aha@athomeinalexandria.org
www.athomeinalexandria.org



— AT HOME IN —
ALEXANDRIA

3139 Mt. Vernon Avenue
Alexandria, VA 22305

IN THIS ISSUE

- P. 1—Changing of the Guard*
- P. 2—Plan for the Future*
- P. 2—Nielsen-Crowley Party*
- P. 3—Scottish Walk Parade*
- P. 3—Holiday Dinner*
- P. 4 – What’s Up*
- P. 4—Sketches of new Board Members*
- P. 5—Snow Buddy Alert*
- P. 5 – Chuckles*