

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

A GARDEN PARTY NOT TO BE MISSED

By Executive Director Cele Garrett

Four years ago, Joe Reeder kindly opened his residence, the historic Murray-Dick-Fawcett Home, to AHA members and friends for a tour.

It was a beautiful September day and our crowd enjoyed ourselves immensely.

During that afternoon, Reeder suggested we consider an AHA fundraiser in his garden sometime.

The germ of an idea took hold!



Since AHA's board of directors had made the decision to forgo our gala this year, the time seemed right to revisit the garden party idea.

With Reeder's blessing, AHA chose the date of Sunday, Sept. 23. The AHA staff is busy putting together a wonderful event and we hope you'll join us from 4 to 7p.m. that evening at 517 Prince St. in the heart of Old Town Alexandria.

Enjoy a summer buffet dinner, beverages, musical entertainment and a special opportunity to tour this historic property.

Individual tickets are \$75 each and can be purchased online (www.athomeinalexandria.org/donate), by phone (703-231-0824), or by mail (3139 Mt Vernon Ave., Alexandria VA 22305).

Sponsorship opportunities are available. To learn more, call or email AHA's Cele Garrett (703-231-0824 or cele@athomeinalexandria.org). A raffle and a few special silent-auction items will be part of the plan, too. Space is limited so don't miss out on the fun!

The Murray-Dick-Fawcett House is one of the earliest homes in the city, and possibly the least altered 18th Century home in Northern Virginia, the City said.

The 1/3-acre lot, which contains the 244-year-old timber frame and brick dwelling and a small garden, was one of the few buildings in existence in the area during the American Revolution.



An interior view of the Murray-Dick-Fawcett House



An exterior view of the 244-year old house

A Fine Occasion to Sample Italian Wines

AHA joined forces with Courtier Enterprises, Ltd., to create a most enjoyable wine-tasting event on the evening of July 29.

In recent years, Courtier Enterprises owners Rick and Barbara Raunswinder have supported AHA in several ways.

The wine event was the latest collaboration.

Formaggio and *vino* and *fiesta*, oh, my. Courtier Enterprises provided 12 interesting wines in different price ranges. AHA gathered 45 willing members and supporters who proved they were up for the challenge.

The wines were sampled at three tasting stations, featuring Marche, Piedmont and Tuscany regions of Italy. Some examples were Barbera d'Alba, Verdicchio Dei Castelli Di Jesi and Brunello Di Montalcino.

Accompanying the wines were Italian cheeses, assorted charcuterie and a variety of other *aperitivi*.

Chriss Nielsen and Tom Crowley opened their lovely home to lend the perfect setting. Not only was it fun but also, proceeds from the event raised \$1,300 for AHA. Many thanks to all who took part.

AHA Executive Director Cele Garrett and Pam Nelson had an early planning session with the Raunswinders and coordinated the event. Chriss Nielsen hosted and shared in the acquisition of the food. The Raunswinders and Rick's sister Sharon helped register guests and answer questions about wine orders.



Guests crowded around the upstairs wine and food station



Pam Nelson and Cele Garrett



Greeting guests: Annie and Bill Stat, Cele Garrett.



Dale Gibb and Rick Raunswinder



Checking out the wines at one of the three tasting sites.

Preparing for a Scheduled Hospital Stay

AHA Members Services Committee

Editor's Note: The article that follows is the second of a series by the AHA Member Services Committee, chaired by Susan Pettey. The first was in the August newsletter. The October newsletter will feature **Preparing to Come Home (from a hospital stay)** and **After Coming Home**. The November article will be **Planning for Medical Emergencies**. The final article, **Resources for Advance Planning for Health Care Decisions**, will be published in December. All the articles are on the AHA Website under "Resources."

Each hospital, doctor or insurance company has its own procedure before a planned hospital stay. Read it over and make sure you understand thoroughly any material or instructions by your doctor in advance of your stay. It's a good idea to go over these with another person. Any concerns? Visit or phone your doctor.

Pay careful attention to your doctor's instructions about stopping medications and supplements and changes in diet. You could write these on your calendar. Sometimes you must start these preparations a week or more in advance. Find out when you should resume your usual routine. **GET ALL INSTRUCTIONS IN WRITING.**

Schedule and complete all pre-operative testing as directed—this might be done in an MD office or clinic, or at the hospital. This is typically done close to the time of your procedure.

Check to see if you need to alert your insurance company and follow through with its processes for authorization. Complete any hospital pre-registration processes or medical forms as directed.

Notify your primary-care physician of your planned hospitalization. If you don't have one, consider getting/seeing one before you go into the hospital.

Be sure to bring your insurance information or cards with you. Arrange for someone to go with you to the hospital, visit regularly and act as an advocate if the need arises. You may usually have someone with you

until you go into the operating room for a procedure.

If you are comfortable with it, give your friend, loved one or advocate a key to your home so he or she can retrieve forgotten or needed items.

Update your list of medications (including eye drops, supplements, vitamins, herbals, over-the-counter medications) and bring a copy with you to the hospital. It is also a good idea to keep a list in your purse or wallet. Be sure to date the list each time you update it.

Set up your bathroom, bedroom and kitchen to make things easier for you when you get home. Keep commonly needed items within easy reach (for instance, keep a plate, bowl, glass, cup, silverware on the counter or a low shelf. Keep your cell phone handy.) Remove any trip hazards. Set up any adaptive devices you may need after your surgery.

Clear your home voicemail and your cell phone so there is room for people to leave messages.

Consider making and freezing single-serving meals that you can easily microwave.

Let AHA know of your planned hospital stay and arrange for any extra help that may be needed from AHA.

AHA can also provide a special volunteer Buddy to assist with some post-hospitalization errands or assistance. Have a plan for someone to be present at discharge and provide transportation home, and to obtain any new meds or supplies as needed. AHA can also provide some assistance with transportation or errands. Make arrangements for pet and plant care.



What Should You Take to the Hospital?

You'll need a photo identification, such as a driver's license or passport; insurance information; allergy information.

Also take information about medication, including dosage and reasons you are taking it. Include eye drops, minerals and vitamins, any herbal supplements and over-the-counter medications including creams and ointments as well as all your prescription medications.

Be sure to include your Living Will or other legal documents such as Power of Attorney for Healthcare.

You'll also need a list of contacts (friends and family, your physicians, as well as AHA) and how to reach them.

And, of course, your cell phone, toiletries, something light to read, and easy activities.

What's Up With AHA Members, Associates and Volunteers

From Program Chair Penny Roberts: Some important date changes/confirmations:

- Because of a sudden conflict, we have had to postpone the **Rock Painting session to Thursday, Sept. 20, at the AHA office from 10:30 to noon.**
- The **September Conversation With** by Penny Roberts has been changed to Sept. 30, in the Porto Vecchio home of **Virginia Martin**, Unit 717, 3 to 5 p.m. The subject: A visit to Antarctica.
- The September **current events discussion**, "How to improve election participation," will take place Friday, Sept. 28 from 10:30 to noon at the Safeway conference room, located off the parking garage, 3526 King St. in the Bradlee Shopping Center. **Julie Gentry** will lead the discussion.

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Board member **Charles Ablard** reports that it is "hard to keep AHA folks apart even when they are vacationing in July in Maine. **Bob and Joan Chase, Lynne Dearborn, Cynthia Boyer and Dodo and Charles Ablard** managed several meals and visits in Small Point, Bath, Boothbay Harbor and Castine over several weeks.

"AHA members need to stay in touch!"

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The Aug. 20 Dine Around could have been called "Richards' Night Out." The group at Atlantis Restaurant included **Dick Schwab, Dick Bachman and Richard Klimoski**. The other AHA diners were not Richards.

Susanne Adams reports from a recent visit: "Switzerland is cooking through its hottest summer since 1921." Air-conditioning is not widespread.



What's in the News

The "What's in the News" group meets monthly to kick around current topics. Discussion at a recent meeting ranged from Trump to the media to the economy to immigration to Manafort to NATO to Helsinki. But the group agreed on a subtext in this tumultuous election year:

VOTE! VOTE! VOTE!

AHA Partnership With Alexandria Symphony Includes Ticket Discounts

At Home in Alexandria and the Alexandria Symphony Orchestra collaborate once again this year to help our organizations gain visibility with our fan base.

It's an exciting year for our local symphony, celebrating its 75th season and welcoming its new music director, James Ross.

ASO will kick off the season with a special outdoor concert on the grounds of Virginia Theological Seminary on Saturday, Sept. 15 at 4 p.m. The special concert will feature selections from The Sound of Music, Swan Lake, and light classical music.

Throughout this symphony season, ASO will feature an ad for AHA in its program. And, ASO has graciously offered a discounted ticket price to AHA members.

If you're not already a season subscriber to the symphony and would like to learn more about discounted tickets, email or call the AHA office to learn more.

Or, contact the ASO, 703-548-0885.



ASO Conductor James Ross

Our Chuckles: Their Source Revealed

Most of the chuckles in the newsletter have come from Leonardo Contardo. Here are some for today.

When insults had class:

"He has all the virtues I dislike and none of the vices I admire."—Winston Churchill.

"He loves Nature in spite of what it did to him." — Forrest Tucker.

"He is a self-made man and he worships his creator." — John Bright.



Blazing Saddles in Europe

AHA's Blazing Saddles leaders, Barry (left) and Maggie Stauffer (yellow cap), took a 155-mile bike tour of Germany, Austria and Switzerland. Other bikers pictured are from Northern Virginia. The Stauffers' plans for the AHA outings in Alexandria will be more modest.

Dollhouses Tell a Story At Black History Museum

AHA folks are invited to a special tour of the Black History Museum exhibit “Alexandria: African-American Dollhouses.”

Two life-long Alexandria residents, Sharon J. Frazier and Linwood M. Smith, have worked together over the years to create a marvelous collection of 26 completely furnished miniature buildings reflecting the life and culture of African-American citizens in Alexandria.

One focus is the Parker-Grey district that the artists remember growing up.

This is the third time the Black History Museum has hosted the popular exhibit.

This time, in addition to such buildings as the Robert Robinson Library (now the Black History Museum), the exhibit includes Linwood Smith’s boyhood home as well as Tops of Old Town Hat Shop and the Baltimore Radio Repair Shop.

The tour, on Sept 12, starts at 1:30; a \$2 contribution is encouraged. The museum is located at 902 Wythe St., across from Charles Houston Rec Center. Parking is available in the neighborhood.

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Fall Prevention Checklist For Older Americans

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) estimates that each day on average, 7,500 people in the United States over age 65 are treated in emergency departments because of falls.

Often, CDC says, falls are caused by hazards that are “easy to fix.”

FLOORS: Ask someone to move furniture that interferes with your path through a room. Remove or secure throw rugs. Keep floors clear of such things as papers, magazines, shoes, towels, etc. Coil or tape cords such as lamp cords to keep them near the wall so they cannot trip a person.

STEPS/STAIRS. Keep objects off stairs. Fix uneven or loose steps and make sure the stairway is well lighted. Have switches for stairway lights at top and bottom. Make sure carpeting is secure and that handrails are firmly in place.

KITCHEN. Keep things you use often on lower shelves. Have a step stool, one with a bar to hold onto.

BATHROOMS. Make sure floors are not slippery; use a nonslip mat or strips for shower floor and bathtub bottom. Install grab bars for the tub and near the toilet.

BEDROOMS. Have your bedside lamp easy to reach. Have a night light along your way if you have to move around in the dark. Or a flashlight at bedside.

The CDC says there are other things you can do to prevent falls:

- Exercise to build leg strength and improve balance.
- Have your doctor or pharmacist review the list of your medications. Some can make you sleepy or dizzy.
- Have your eyes checked and glasses updated.
- Rise slowly from chair or bed.
- Avoid going barefoot or wearing slippers.
- Improve the lighting in your home. Fluorescent lighting is bright and less costly.
- Add lighting to a room’s dark areas.
- Paint a contrasting color on the top edge of all stairs. Example: A light color paint on dark wood.

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