



— AT HOME IN —
ALEXANDRIA

NEWSLETTER

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

Be the Best Glitzed at the Gala

By Cele Garrett, Executive Director

By now, we hope you've received your "save the date" postcard for our Nov. 13 gala. In last month's newsletter, we told you about the venue and the theme "Puttin' on the Glitz."

The time is 5 p.m.-8:30 p.m. Nov. 13 at the Carlyle Club, 2050 Ballenger Ave. The emcee will be Pete Crouch, an AHA volunteer *extraordinaire*.

We welcome you to come out dressed in your favorite jazz club attire. (Rumor has it that there may be a prize given to the "best glitzed.")

For our annual silent auction, we welcome your donations of vacation stays, services, restaurant gift cards, tours, outings and other hospitality and service experiences. A wildly popular type of item is a catered dinner for a group of six or eight. It's just the thing that our social AHA members enjoy.

If you have connections with businesses or individuals who could offer a small private class, tour or a dinner, we'd be delighted to talk with you. Call the AHA office at 703-231-0824 or contact Bill Clayton at tbclayton@comcast.net, who is overseeing the silent auction.

As items are finalized, AHA will begin to promote them on our web site, so stay tuned.

A well-received event from last year's gala will be repeated under the guidance of Steve Nelson: the Wine Raffle. The star of the 2015 show was a bottle of *Chateau Haut-Brion*, auctioned off separately. The wine raffle consisted of sets of two or three wines from a donated total of about two cases, grouped in roughly equivalent value and raffled. There were no leftovers. Want to donate? Give a wine or two of at least \$20 value.



New Look for Newsletter

The AHA Newsletter is getting a new look. It's a work in progress. With this edition, we are trying a masthead that incorporates the new logo and the use of a new typeface for the title.

The October edition will have still more changes in format and appearance. We are trying to improve readability and aiming for a cleaner look.

Let us know your ideas.

The content will not change:

We welcome ideas for articles and your input—your travel, honors, family news, unusual and humorous things involving or interesting to the AHA village. Photos help, too.

Thank you.

—The Editor

Gala Co-Chairs are Linda Langley and Pam Nelson. Others in the planning group to date are Crouch, AHS Chair Barbara Rosenfeld and Vice Chair Jane King, Ann Stat (whose husband, Bill, is in the combo that will provide the music), Steve Nelson, Maggie Stauffer, Clayton and of course Executive Director Cele Garrett and Operations Co-Managers Monica Estabrooke and Diane Atchinson. Cynthia Boyer will join the planning in September.

The Carlyle Club's Art Deco ambiance fits well with the glitzy theme and the club is fully accessible to all.

The space has room to seat all guests and also standing room for those who want to circulate and chat.

There is parking in the building, but carpooling is encouraged.





Clutter Getting to You? AHA Volunteers Will Help

Several volunteers in AHA have become very good at helping members “declutter” their homes. If you feel crowded by clutter, give AHA a call at 703-231-0824. Clutter—unopened mail, kitchen litter, scattered books, piles of newspapers, old paperwork—can be more than unsightly; it can be hazardous. Mail on steps is a slip/fall hazard. Piles of stuff hinder movement. Kitchen debris can be unhealthy. Newspapers and magazines are a fire hazard.

Julie Gentry, who has done much decluttering for AHA villagers, divides the task in two categories—preparing for downsizing, and when a person cannot find things that are needed. She has done both for several people.

She advises having a preliminary meeting for the volunteer to learn what the needs are and how quickly the work needs to be done. A date is set for subsequent meeting(s) to do the work. Gentry suggests a two-hour limit for each decluttering session. Any longer could get emotionally or physically wearing on the member, she said.

Pete Crouch has devised a “sticky notes” approach to sorting things out. He has bought little colored strips of paper with a sticky surface and labels them Keep, Family, Sell, Donate, Trash. Depending on the size of the job, boxes with such labels work well. As might accordion folders. The volunteer and member look at each item and decide what color sticker it gets—for later giving, trashing or selling.

Another category is “Curb.” In some neighborhoods, people put unwanted things at the curb—toys, furniture, etc. It is amazing how quickly things get picked up. A note of caution: Make sure the volunteers know what goes and what stays .

Aside from the obvious charities for donations, some are a surprise: When AHA volunteers cleared out the house of a deceased member, a church happily accepted an artificial Christmas tree, ornaments and figurines.

As for the “don’t know” category in early decisions, Gentry says, “It is hard for most people to make decisions on the spot, so we will keep things for a while and then go back through them at a later date.”

At times, decluttering takes two phases—just reducing hazards in the home, and the more thorough one: preparing to move or downsize.

Gentry, Crouch, Steve Nelson, Executive Director Cele Garrett and Bill Clayton all had a hand in one project that started out just decluttering and later became helping prepare a home for sale. That one involved considerable yard work.

Some decluttering involves just filing things away. Gentry said the volunteer can get a sense of what filing system works for the member—by subject or by date, for example.

Crouch said one filing/decluttering technique is to take photos of some objects that are sentimental but add to clutter. The photos can be kept and filed—and thus the memory kept—and the objects can be donated or discarded.

Whatever the decisions, Crouch advised: “At the end of each two- or three-hour session, put away the ‘Keepers’ and take out the trash.”

Capture Your Life Story on Video By Rainmaker Video

AHA members have a lifetime of stories—about family, profession, military service, travels and countless other notable events.

Have you captured and preserved your stories? Do you have family history that is likely to be forgotten if you don’t document it for your friends, children or grandchildren? There is great joy in knowing the stories today, but also think about those who will be curious many years from now.

AHA has arranged a unique opportunity on Sept. 15 for you to share and preserve your memories on video in a one- or two-hour session. AHA is partnering with Rainmaker Video, and their professional team will help prepare and guide you through every step of the process.

After your interview, Rainmaker will produce a lightly edited film that you can share with your loved ones. If you want to add more to the video later, Rainmaker can do that.

Filming will take place at Portner’s Landing Community Room (621 N. St. Asaph St.). The cost for a one-hour session and finished video is \$275. A two-hour session will be \$495 total. The filming will be in a comfortable, quiet and private setting. To learn more or sign up, call the AHA office at 703-231-0824.

Learn more about Rainmaker Video here: <https://rainmakervideo.com/services/video-memoirs/>

What We Do



We tour gardens, as here (above) at the home of Carol and Oliver Flint. Clockwise: Carol Flint, a friend, Nancy Berg, Oliver Flint, Teddye Clayton, Mary Nefedov, Nancy Kincaid.



We Dine Around, here (above) at Lena's Restaurant, a new pizza place near Braddock and Mount Vernon. Shown are, clockwise from left: Shelly Schwab, Howard Johnson, Jeanie McGillan, Diane Atchinson (raising a toast), Mary Nefedov, Indie Cather, Nancy Kincaid and Dick Schwab. The highlight of the evening was a roaring rainstorm.



We Lunch Around, as here (above) at the newly remodeled Majestic, an Alexandria institution. Shown are, clockwise from left, Mary Nefedov, Nancy Kincaid, Penny Roberts and Ruth Arnold.



We celebrate our volunteers at Josefa Gibson's hugely popular party. Above, Chair Barbara Rosenfeld (gesturing), flanked by Volunteer Chair Penny Roberts and Executive Director Cele Garrett, welcomes the crowd. Below, gathering around to sip and munch the goodies.



We plan the Gala. Left to Right: Gala Co-Chairs Pam Nelson and Linda Langley, AHA Vice Chair Jane King, Ann Stat. See story, p. 1.



Save the Date: Celebrating Local Brewing History

This month's AHA Conversation With will be a talk about history—brewery history, to be precise. Catherine and Margaret Portner will trace their ancestor's opening of the eponymous Robert Portner Brewery in Alexandria in 1869. The great-great-granddaughters will discuss their new venture—the Portner Brewhouse.

The AHA program will be at 4 p.m. Sept. 25 in the Club Room of Porto Vecchio.

What's Up With AHA Members, Associates and Volunteers

Virginia Martin spent two weeks in England visiting English friends and enjoying museums, country houses and gardens. A personal high point was watching her son **Mike** sail to first place in the 505 World Championships, races of the fast sailboat that is the choice of many former college All-American and Olympic sailors who want good competition for amateur racing. Mike, who won with his sailing mate, **Adam Lowry**, is the only 505 sailor to have won first place both as crew and as skipper.



Mike Martin and Adam Lowry

Milestones: Executive Director Cele Garrett took her daughter, **Holly**, to college: James Madison University, in Harrisonburg, Va.

Teddye and Bill Clayton joined friends for a scenic drive and train ride through the Great Smokies and the Nantahala Gorge. Only thing was: The gorge was gorged on kudzu, the invasive vine trying to smother the South.

Montsie and Ernie Lehmann vacationed in California, where the emotional highlight was a meeting with a 103-year-old friend of Ernie's mother who had held Ernie as an infant shortly after Ernie and his mother were released from a Gestapo prison.

Volunteer Corner

AHA Chair **Barbara Rosenfeld** reports: "I am grateful for the team of AHA friends and others who helped me as I recovered from surgery and got used to my new knee.

"**Brenda Bloch-Young, Nancy Kincaid, Marianne Ginsburg, Shelli Ross, Helen Desfosses, Penny Roberts, Maggie Moose** and the 'office chicks' (**Cele Garrett, Monica Estabrooke and Diane Atchinson**) all offered food, assistance, errands and cheery companionship. I also thank many other AHA pals for their good wishes and support."

Volunteer Chair Penny Roberts exults in her "graduation" from post-operative therapy on her knee. Both Roberts and Rosenfeld are getting around nicely, as shown in the photos on page 3.

As with AHA Chair **Barbara Rosenfeld**, **Penny** said "lots of AHA folks" checked on her, brought meals, gave her rides and checked on her at every turn. She mentioned **Andy Unger, Kelley Miller, Mercedes Kremenetzky and Sandy Carpenter** as chauffeurs, but said others helped in other ways.

A team of volunteers completed their work in emptying the house of a member who had died. The belongings of many decades had to be cleared and sorted and donated or discarded. **Volunteers Ken Hill, Stan Maciak, Ed Pingley and Bill Clayton** worked several days on the project. Realtor Gordon Wood helped to prepare the house for sale..

Virginia Martin or Victoria Martin? Mystery no more. Virginia Martin, who chairs the popular Conversation With programs, sometimes comes up "Victoria Martin" for people trying to email her. She was asked, What gives?

"Google renamed me and I can't get them to correct it." she said. She planned a technical correction. But, you can keep calling her Virginia.

Village Growth Nationwide

Village to Village Network, the umbrella group for villages nationwide, reported recently that there are 205 villages now operating in the United States and 150 others in development.

Eighteen villages, both operating and planned, are in Virginia.

The nationwide total breaks down to 34 percent urban villages, 38 percent suburban, 22 percent rural and 6 percent whose data were not available.

A delegation from AHA will attend the VtoV annual conference Oct.17-19 in Columbus, Ohio.

AHA Vice Chair Jane King will lead a "breakout" session on "Exploring State Advocacy to Support Family Caregivers and Community Engagement Opportunities" at the conference.

AHA members and volunteers: If you are asked about village locations in Virginia and elsewhere, you can go online to www.vtvnetwork.org That search will bring you a national map showing the locations of all the villages. You can call up a state or a specific location and see what stage it is in and who its leaders are.

Keeping Records: Which and How Long?

The Internal Revenue Service says, “Generally, you must keep your records that support an item of income, deduction or credit shown on your tax return until the period of limitation for that tax return runs out.”

The periods vary according to circumstances, but: **Keep records** for three years from the date you filed your original return or two years from the date you paid the **tax**, whichever is later, if you file a claim for credit or refund after you file your return. **Keep records** for seven years if you file a claim for a loss from worthless securities or bad debt deduction.



But **NOTE: Keep copies of the tax returns you filed.** Even if there is no question or audit, they help in preparing future tax returns and in making computations if you file an amended return.

To be more confident about keeping files, **talk with your tax return preparer or IRS** about what you should keep and what is clear to discard.

What about nontax files and paperwork? The IRS says, “When your records are no longer needed for tax purposes, do not discard them until you check to see if you have to keep them longer for other purposes. For example, your insurance company or creditors may require you to keep them longer than the IRS does.”

And for instance, your home and contents insurance may require you to keep up-to-date appraisals of items.

You can go online for a wealth of material on “Tax records to keep,” “Keeping paperwork: How Long?” “Keeping Medical Records.” And other broad topics.

Your attorney, tax advisor or investments advisor can help with details.

Interest Group Tidbits

The Blazing Saddles cycling group will travel the Mt. Vernon Trail to National Harbor, Thursday, Sept. 22. Meet at 1 p.m. at T.C. Williams boathouse in Old Town.

RSVP: Maggie or Barry Stauffer, 703-629-5476 or maggie.stauffer@comcast.net.

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Chuckles and Chortles

- Victor Borge said: “Santa Claus has the right idea: Visit people only once a year.”
- From George Burns: “A good sermon should have a good beginning and a good ending—as close together as possible.”
- “Be careful of reading health books; you may die of a misprint”—Mark Twain.
- Groucho Marx: “I was married by a judge, but I should have asked for a jury.”
- Alex Levine reminds us that Irish coffee provides the essential food groups: alcohol, caffeine, sugar and fat.
- Joe Namath said that until he was 13, he thought his name was “Shut up.”

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