

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

## Countdown to the Fall Fundraiser

by Executive Director Cele Garrett

The deadline is upon us for reserving a ticket to the AHA fundraiser on Sunday, Oct 6. If you'd still like to join us, please call the office right away to purchase a ticket. We won't be selling tickets at the door.

Belle Haven Country Club's Living Room and Gold Room will provide a beautiful and comfortable place to casually mingle with friends while sampling the culinary offerings. Acoustic guitarist Christopher Wyton will help set the tone with background music from his impressive repertoire. Everyone enjoyed Christopher so much at last year's garden party and we are pleased he can join us once again.

The party will feature some special silent auction items—some “experiences” back by popular demand and others are new this year. These offerings are provided by AHA board member Linda Langley, AHA volunteer Pete Crouch, ACC*family* Home Care, Laurent and Margaret Janowsky (owners of Del Ray Cafe), Goodwin House at Home, Old Dominion Home Care and Synergy Home Care.

Let the fun begin! Hope to see you there.

## Notes from the Village to Village Network Conference

By Executive Director Cele Garrett

Last week, I was fortunate to spend a very packed 48 hours at the national conference hosted by the Village to Village Network. This was the 11th National Village Conference, and my sixth, and it's gratifying to see how much the village movement continues to expand. This year 230 different villages from 42 states were represented with 325 attendees. We heard a report from one of the three “hubs” in Australia, where the momentum is really picking up.

The official theme of the conference was “Connecting Generations” and, indeed, there are many wonderful intergenerational partnerships springing up in communities across the country. Encore.org President, Marc Freedman, author of the book “How to Live Forever: The Enduring Power of Connecting the Generations”, gave many such examples. He studied a burgeoning foster grandparent program in Maine; he spoke of two women who volunteer in a pediatric cancer ward of a local hospital, spending time with children whose parents have to return home regularly to keep their jobs; he described a program that gives students in Masters in Fine Arts Music programs the chance to live free in assisted-living facilities in exchange for spending time with the residents and providing regular concerts. As you might imagine, friendships have formed in all these programs, proving Freedman's deep belief that “the old and the young are built for one another.”

If there was one common thread throughout the topics addressed at the conference—both in the keynote addresses and in the smaller group discussions—it was the epidemic problem of social isolation and loneliness. This came as no surprise to those of us in the audience; we already know this is a great societal concern. What's new is that the government and the medical industry finally realize what these problems are costing in real dollars: \$6.7 billion. This figure encompasses the costs from many outcomes of loneliness, such as longer recovery times after an injury or hospital stay; greater numbers of those addicted to alcohol or drugs; high blood pressure and the medications associated with it; higher levels of stress hormones and inflammation, which can increase the risk of heart disease, arthritis, Type 2 diabetes, and other chronic diseases.

Collectively, throughout our organizations, we have built a powerful network of individuals who are part of a caring community eager to turn around this troubling trend. Villages cannot do this work alone, but we are becoming a bigger part of the solution. It's exciting to be part of this effort and I hope you feel as proud as I do of what our own village, At Home in Alexandria, has built to support members and to advocate for older neighbors across our city.

## Tech Talk Tips – Smart Home Devices

by Jen Heinz

Voice-activated lighting, stove devices that monitor movement and shut off if left unattended too long, pill dispensers that remind you to take your medication, and video door bells that allow you to “answer” your door from miles away are just a few of the “smart devices” that some of us may be using already to make our lives safer or more convenient. Or maybe it’s all just too, too much to deal with? This was the topic of discussion at the Sept 17 Tuesday Tech Talk at the AHA office.

There was agreement that “smart devices” can make life a bit easier – for instance when you can just ask “Alexa” to play music or to turn on the light before you enter a dark room. But there was a bit less agreement about whether the convenience is worth the sometimes-steep learning curve one might encounter before the device is useful to you.

With more than 10 billion (yes, billion) devices now connected as part of the “IoT” (Internet of Things), you are probably going to encounter these devices whether you want to or not. This is where our tech volunteers can come in handy for AHA members. They can help you install and decipher new devices – and you may just find out it’s not so bad once you get the hang of it. That is, until Artificial Intelligence and robots take over the world.

The October Tech Talk will be “Printing and Sharing Your Digital Images.” We’ll discuss options for transferring and printing images from cell phone or camera, as well as creating photo books and printing onto paper, canvas and metal. Group size is limited to eight, so please RSVP by Oct 14.

The handouts for all Tech Talks are available on the AHA website and AHA Hub for download. Contact Jen Heinz in the AHA office if you have any questions.

### “Walks for Good Causes” Coming Up

The Walk to End Alzheimer’s steps out in the District of Columbia – at Madison and the Mall, Oct 12, with registration at 8 a.m. and a brief program. The walk starts at 10 a.m. Held annually in more than 600 communities nationwide, the Alzheimer’s Association Walk to End Alzheimer’s® is the world’s largest event to raise awareness and funds for Alzheimer’s care, support and research. Google Walk to End Alzheimer’s for details.

Also, on Oct 12, registering at 8:20 a.m., the Kidney Walk assembles at Freedom Plaza, 1455 Pennsylvania Ave. The sponsor, the National Kidney Foundation, says the event is “dedicated to the awareness, prevention and treatment of kidney disease for hundreds of thousands of healthcare professionals, millions of patients and their families, and tens of millions of Americans who are at risk.”

## AHA has Medical Equipment Available to Borrow

by the Member Services Committee

Thanks to donations by members, we have a small selection of medical equipment, such as straight canes, transport chairs (a kind of small wheelchair), and crutches available to borrow from the office.

There is a full list of equipment in the storage area. Some of the items are specialized—for instance, a Rollator and a potty chair for a larger person. Even if you need something out of the ordinary, we might have it.

If you have the need for an item for short or long-term use, let the office know and staff there will help answer your questions and make necessary arrangements for you. Laura Noble, a retired occupational therapist, is available to help as well.

Although the equipment has been cleaned thoroughly, it has been in storage and should be cleaned again before use. Effective cleaning supplies are available in the storage room; gloves are recommended, and a stash is in the closet. We may not have what you need but you may want to check first before buying new equipment. Call the AHA office or Laura Noble to check for you. Laura Noble can be reached by phone or text at 703-862-4936 or by email at [LENobes@gmail.com](mailto:LENobes@gmail.com)

## Blazing Saddles Hidden Monuments Tour by Maggie Stauffer

A wickedly hot day did not deter the Blazing Saddles Cycling group from heading over to the Georgetown waterfront area. Following mostly trails along the Potomac River, the group crossed the 14<sup>th</sup> Street Bridge, after which they experienced Barry Stauffer’s “Hidden Monuments” tour and had a chance to make several stops to learn about little-known monuments in the area. A final stop for iced coffee in Georgetown was welcomed by all before heading home.

On Oct 10, the group will experience fall at its best as they cycle over to lovely Hains Point, an easy, 16-mile round-trip ride with a stop at the Hains Point Golf Course Café. Due to cooler morning temperatures, this will be an afternoon ride departing from Madison and Fairfax Streets near the bike path at 1:00 p.m. This will be the last ride of the season as the cycling group takes a break until next spring.



## Helen Desfosses Talks About Politics

by Penny Roberts

Helen Desfosses, AHA member, Board member, and well-known political guru, has agreed to add her expertise to a new AHA program: “Politics is not a four-letter word.” We are looking forward, excitedly, to hearing Helen’s always engaging take on the wider world of politics, so please mark your calendars for Friday, Oct 11, at 1:30 p.m. in The View, 23rd floor of Alexandria House, 400 Madison Street. Please RSVP by Oct 9. You will need to sign in upon arrival.

### Reminder

When we turn our clocks back on November 3, we should also change the batteries in our smoke detectors. If you have long life batteries, check that they are functioning. **DO NOT CLIMB UP ON THAT RICKETY CHAIR,** member. Call AHA for a volunteer to help.



## Vote November 5

Election Day in Virginia is coming up on Nov 5.

- The deadline to register to vote, or update an existing registration, is Tuesday, Oct 15, 2019.
- Deadline to request an *absentee ballot to be mailed to you* is Tuesday, Oct 29, 2019. Your request must be received by your Registrar by 5:00 p.m.
- In-person absentee voting started in Alexandria on Friday, Sept 20, and continues until Nov 2.
- Absentee voting can be done at the Office of Voter Registration & Elections, 132 North Royal Street, Suite 100, starting on Sept 20.
- Absentee voting starts at the Beatley Central Library on Oct 26.
- If you need a ride, call the AHA office.
- If you drive, take a neighbor or friend with you.



## Memoir Writing Group Off to Great Start

Kay Cowan opened the introductory meeting of the memoir writing effort sharing one of her own memories. The group of 12 plus a guest of Mary Peet, learned that having a deadline to finish a small writing project provides the goal we all need to get the fond memory or funny, or sad, story down on paper.

The focus is on remembering and then writing about an experience rather than just writing a biography. The members present gave a brief introduction of themselves and what they hoped to accomplish: start on a memoir or finish one; get ideas on how to proceed; what tools to use to jog the memory – a photo, a poem, travel, etc.

If you were not able to attend, please contact the office about the next session on Oct 8. Participants should bring four copies of three to five paragraphs about a memory to share and discuss with the group.

### Conversation With... Bernard Enright “Dished” on Patriots

Bernard Enright highlighted the roles of the women in the lives of George Washington and Thomas Jefferson in the latest Conversation With on Sept 22. It seems neither Washington nor Jefferson got along with his mother or made an effort to maintain a relationship with her as they became adults and moved into their subsequent roles in society and politics. Washington described his mother as a “tough old bird.”

Sally Fairfax, although married, seemed to carry on a flirtatious relationship with Washington and kept a letter that he wrote to her even after he was married to Martha.

Martha Washington was not a fan of Thomas Jefferson and never thought highly of him.

To many people, Jefferson has a more interesting history. His wife, also Martha, was a “centering force” in his life, but she died after giving birth to six children. She asked Jefferson not to marry again and to this he kept his word. This, perhaps, led to his eventual relationship with enslaved Sally Hemings. Sally had four children for whom she negotiated emancipation as a term of remaining enslaved at Monticello.



On the AHA side, we learned that Bernard Enright, father of Jen Heinz, left center, derives from the same county in Ireland as AHA member James Enright, pictured with Lydia Enright.



## What's Up With AHA Members, Associates and Volunteers

When **Bill Clayton** received a doctor's report on his latest tests, one page told of the translation services available on request – 17 languages from Amharic to Yoruba, Arabic to Urdu. Guess which one he chose!

The **Dine Around group** met at the Warehouse recently. Here they are chatting and awaiting their orders. October's dinner will be at Columbia Firehouse, 109 S. St Asaph Street. See the Calendar for details.



**Ann and L Liddle** had a special guest for the recent Dine Around at the Warehouse Restaurant: **Sylvia Saborio**. A native of Costa Rica with a long international career, the affable and sharp Sylvia fit right in with the group – and helped **Bill Clayton** practice his Spanish. After early education in Costa Rica, Sylvia finished high school in Minnesota. With graduate work in the United States and Netherlands, she earned a Ph.D. in economics. After a stint with the United Nations International Development Bank, she spent time in various duty stations around the world. After retirement she purchased a unit at Porto Vecchio and began to seriously work on a career as an artist. She serves on Costa Rica's equivalent of our Federal Reserve Board.

Chair **Jane King** went down memory lane, as it were, with a reunion she and her classmates have celebrated for 46 years. Here's Jane's report:

"Eight of us, all classmates at Duquesne University in Pittsburgh, gather each September for a week. This was our 46th year to do so. When we were mothers of young children, they, of course, came with us (in the summer months rather than September), though husbands were not included and were not unhappy about this! Our children all became friends and remain so to this day. We share so much and know so well our families, children, and grandchildren. We are fortunate, given the current environment, to have the same political views. When we are together, we talk and laugh constantly. We have traveled in Europe and taken cruises together. And, of course, we are aging together."

The next meeting of the **Monday Book Group** is October 14. **Linda Langley** reports that the selection is "A History of the World in 6 Glasses" by Tom Standage. It sounds like it will be fun. This book "presents an original, well-documented vision of world history, telling the story of humanity from the Stone Age to the Twenty-First Century through the lens of beer, wine, spirits, coffee, tea, and cola." The group meets at Portner's Landing; call the AHA office to RSVP.

**Men's Night Out** had a (temporary) new venue: in the lovely, newly remodeled home of Vice Chair **Bob Eiffert** (center rear at window) and **Michael Curry** (standing next to Eiffert).



Left to right: James Enright, Steve Nelson, Curry, Eiffert, Jack Powers, Alan Dinsmore, David Butler. Not shown (arriving after photo): Elliott Waters. Photo by Bill Clayton, who claims he should have let Powers, a professional photographer, do the picture-taking.

Attendees of the Dine Around gathering on September 16 raised a toast to **Shelly and Dick Schwab** and **Teddy and Bill Clayton** on their 58<sup>th</sup> wedding anniversaries. Neither Teddy nor the Schwabs could be at the event – so Bill Clayton soaked up the best wishes – and a Kir Royal given him by **Dick Klimoski**.

AHA's former treasurer, **Christena Nielsen**, sends the happy family news: a twosome of grandsons: "I'm delighted to share our news. Ryan Michael Murray was born on Aug 16, weighing in at 9 lbs. He is our second grandson. Our third grandson, Jacob Dunnagan Crowley, was born on Aug 25, weighing in at 7 lbs., 4.5 oz. Both moms (and dads) and babies are doing well."

**ERRATUM:** In the September issue of the newsletter, a photo identified Lucille Hamblen as Louise Gooden. Apologies to both. -editor

## Sounding the Alarm: Shingles!

by Jane King

I had not given a thought to shingles, even though I am not eligible for the new live vaccine. But several weeks ago, I got a horrible pain on a one-inch strip across half my back and chest. On a Friday I went to the doctor to try to find out what was causing the pain. She asked if I had a rash and I did not. First thing Monday morning I see the rash and return to the doctor. The diagnosis was clear: shingles.

I think I had an especially bad case, as the initial pain was intense, and I spent the full five weeks in the four stages of shingles before recovery. The first stage is burning, or tingling pain, numbness and itching are possible. Within one to five days, the shingles rash will appear at the same site; in a few days, the third phase, fluid-filled blisters will develop and about ten days later, the blisters will scab over.

Shingles vary in their intensity, but very serious dangers lurk. The nerve pain can last far beyond the time when the blisters have healed, in some cases for a lifetime. Shingles around the eyes can cause blindness, in ears loss of hearing. Older women are especially vulnerable to shingles and a lengthy period of pain.

If you have had chicken pox, please accept this warning—get the shingles vaccine—Shingrix—now! And learn more about shingles at <https://www.cdc.gov/shingles/about/index.html>

## Joy is Better

by Alan Dinsmore

“Good genes are nice, but joy is better” -- the most recent finding of the nearly 80-year-old Harvard Study of Adult Development. The study started tracking Harvard men in 1938 during the Great Depression. In later decades, Boston inner-city residents and women were added to the study, making this one of the world’s longest studies of adaptation over lifetimes.

Close social links, friendships, marriage, partnerships are the best predictors, more than money or good health alone, of people’s level of satisfaction with their age. In fact, several elements of the study find that their relationships at age 50 were a better predictor of physical health than their cholesterol levels were.

Dr. Robert Waldinger, the study director, recently stated that those who kept warm personal relationships got to live longer and happier than the loners who often died earlier. “Loneliness kills,” he said. “It’s as powerful as smoking or alcoholism.”

Study details along with Dr. Waldinger’s televised lectures are available at [www.adultdevelopmentalstudy.org](http://www.adultdevelopmentalstudy.org).

## Conversation With Noted Cancer Researcher, Dr. Julie Djeu by Penny Roberts

Dr. Djeu earned her B.A. in Biology at Barnard College and her Ph.D. in Medical Microbiology from George Washington University. She then joined the National Cancer Institute and built the Cytokine Biology Sections of the Food and Drug Administration in Bethesda. While there she began her lifelong work in unlocking some of the secrets of the body’s immune system. In 1992, she was named the first research scientist at the Moffett Cancer Institute in Tampa where she continued her work on using the body’s immune system to kill cancer cells.

Join us Sunday, Oct 20, at 3 p.m. in the home of Marianne Ginsburg , Apt.1303, Alexandria House, 400 Madison Street. Space is limited. RSVP by October 16.

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