

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

## Another Successful Village Conference

By Cele Garrett

The Village to Village Network's annual three-day conference wrapped up on October 20. Held virtually for the first time, the conference had nearly 500 attendees. Several AHA staff and board members attended, thanks to no travel expenses and a significantly lowered registration fee.

Loneliness and social isolation among many seniors were big challenges before COVID and, collectively, villages are working hard to find new ways to engage members and provide opportunities to connect with one another safely. A big part of this effort is getting people more familiar and comfortable with the technology needed to take part in virtual events. AHA, like most villages, is committed to helping our members find the right technology solution that will allow them to take part in an educational talk or a lively informal discussion. Just as important as the social connection is the ability to have a telemedicine appointment with your doctor if an in-person appointment is not possible.

There were detailed discussions about village funding and sustainability in the era of COVID. Many villages canceled large in-person fundraisers or are seeing less revenue from the corporate communities that are having business challenges of their own, a big source for shorter-term funding.

The issue of diversity and inclusion also is top of mind for many villages. We learned from villages that are making great inroads toward a goal of having a more diverse population among their membership.

We learned about legislation that affects older adults, including new provisions of the Older Americans Act, including a malnutrition screening, a greater focus on social isolation, and an emphasis on chronic disease self-management and falls prevention.



For-profit companies that serve the senior population shared their technologies and their new products with us. We see great promise for villages to form partnerships with companies whose various technologies can enhance safety and communication for our older neighbors. We all agree that 2020 has been a tough year for everyone but it was inspiring and promising to learn about the different ways villages are moving into the future.

## November 2020 Zoom Calendar

Please call or email the AHA office to register for these programs or register online through the AHA Hub at least 2 days before the program date. The programs in the table below are all scheduled to take place using Zoom on your computer or device. The AHA office will provide you with the meeting link after you have registered for the program.

| Date                                   | Program   | Time         |
|--|---|--------------|
| Nov. 8, Sun.                           | Conversation with Virginia Delegate Charmiele Herring. Howard Weiss is the interviewer.   | 3-4.30 pm    |
| Nov. 9, Mon.                           | Art Talk with Lee Ann Lawch: "Japanese-American Artists in the First Half of the 20th Cent., Part 2"  | 10-11.15 am  |
| Nov. 9, Mon.                           | "Shifting Dynamics in the Middle East, Israel and its Neighbors" with Dr. Michael Sharnoff  | 1-2.30 pm    |
| Nov. 10, Tues.                         | "What's in the News" Discussion   | 10-11.30 am  |
| Nov. 12, Thurs.                        | Ladies Night "In"   | 5-7 pm       |
| Nov. 13, Fri.                          | The Politics Forum: Helen Desfosses on "The 2020 Presidential Election: What Happened?"   | 1.30-3.00 pm |
| Nov. 16, Mon.                          | The Monday Book Club, "My Brilliant Friend" by Elena Ferrante   | 1-2:30 pm    |
| Nov. 17, Tues.                         | AHA Board Meeting   | 2-4 pm       |
| Nov. 18, Wed.                          | Armchair Travels: Switzerland with Susanne Adams  | 4.30-5.30 pm |
| Nov. 19, Thurs.                        | Coffee & Conversation: your favorite holiday food (recipes optional)  | 10-11.30 am  |
| Nov. 19, Thurs.                        | Men's Night "In"  | 5-6 pm       |
| Nov. 20, Fri.                          | Roundtable Current Affairs: Topic: "Dementia-Friendly Alexandria Information Session."  | 10-11.30 am  |
| Nov. 23, Mon.                          | Readers Theatre Group   | 2-3.30 pm    |
| Nov. 24, Tues                          | "What's in the News" Discussion   | 10-11.30 am  |
| Nov. 26, Thurs.<br><i>Thanksgiving</i> | Dinner at a local restaurant. For information, please contact Kathie Fricke, 571-527-0376 or <a href="mailto:kathie.fricke@gmail.com">kathie.fricke@gmail.com</a> | TBD          |
| Nov. 27, Fri.                          | Happy Hour  | 5-7 pm       |

## November Program Highlights

**Sunday, November 8** Join Howard Weiss for a *Conversation With* Charmiele Herring, who has served in the Virginia House of Delegates since 2009. She represents the 46th district, made up of portions of the city of Alexandria and Fairfax County.

**Monday, November 9** Once again Lee Ann Lawch, docent from the Smithsonian American Art Museum, presents an informative art talk.

**Monday, November 9** Go to [www.littlefallsvillage.org/sharnoff](http://www.littlefallsvillage.org/sharnoff) village to register for this talk by Dr Michael Sharnoff.

**Friday, November 13** (ooh, Friday the 13th.) Don't miss Helen Desfosses' analysis of the election and its aftermath.

**Wednesday, November 18** Armchair Travels, join Susanne Adams as she explores her native Switzerland, its history and beautiful scenery.

**Thursday, November 19** Coffee and Conversation - What's your favorite holiday food? -or recipe?

**Monday, November 23** Join Steve Nelson and AHA members to read and take part in short plays and old-time radio scripts. Lots of fun!

**Friday, November 27** Join other AHA members and friends to snack on leftovers and raise a glass to cheer on the holiday season.

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### ***Kids Say the Darndest Things...***

**Q: Name the four seasons.**

A: Salt, pepper, mustard and vinegar

**Q: How can you delay milk turning sour?**

A: Keep it in the cow.

**O: What are steroids?**

A: Things for keeping carpets still on the stairs.

**O: What happens to a boy when he reaches nuberty?**

A: He says good-bye to his boyhood and looks forward to his adultery.

**O: Name a major disease associated with cigarettes.**

A: Premature death.

## AHA to Introduce Dementia Friends November 20

by Cele Garrett

If you have visited our web site lately, you may notice that at the bottom of our home page, we have a group of logos that rotate on the screen. Those represent partner groups AHA is aligned with. One of these partnerships we are proud to be part of is the Dementia Friendly Alexandria initiative.

Dementia Friendly Alexandria (DFA) is a volunteer initiative to prepare the Alexandria community to support those with dementia and their caregivers—and ensure their ability to engage in city life more fully. DFA is led by Goodwin House Alexandria and the City of Alexandria’s Commission on Aging in close collaboration with the DFA action team. AHA is in good company with local government officials, nonprofits, home care providers, faith-based organizations, and other community members.

The core element of this effort is a one-hour Dementia Friends information session to citizens across the city. The sessions now have gone virtual and AHA is pleased to offer this to AHA members, volunteers, and staff at 10 a.m. on Friday, Nov. 20 as the feature of the monthly AHA Roundtable. Whether someone in your life has dementia or whether you encounter someone in public who seems to be struggling a bit, this talk will provide practical tips and guidance on how best to interact with a person living with dementia. Members and volunteers may RSVP through AHA Hub or by calling the AHA office at 703-231- 0824. This event is open to the public. And, please check out [www.dementiafriendlyalexva.org](http://www.dementiafriendlyalexva.org).

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Cele Garrett, left, and member Pat Clopper enjoying a fall day shopping at a local nursery.

## Age Friendly Alexandria Focuses on Specific Goals

by Jane King

The October issue of the Newsletter covered the steps the City took to be designated an Age Friendly Community by AARP and the World Health Organization (WHO). The title is awarded only after the chief elected leader of a community assures a comprehensive planning process will be undertaken. Alison Silberberg, Alexandria’s mayor at the time, sent a letter of agreement to AARP. The Alexandria Commission on Aging started the process in 2016.

The key to developing a strong plan includes a thorough assessment of a community’s assets and liabilities related to the livelihood of older adults. WHO has identified the assets or essential characteristics as eight “domains” of an age friendly community. The domains are: Outdoor Spaces and Buildings; Transportation; Housing; Social Participation; Respect and Social Inclusion; Civic Engagement and Employment; Communication and Information; Community Support and Health Services.

The Commission recognized Alexandria’s many strengths. However, through intensive demographic research, an AARP survey of 500 residents, AARP’s Livability Index and meetings with many older residents, partners and city staff, the Commission identified the domains for which additional resources were essential for serving the needs of the city’s older residents.

The only domain that was not selected for inclusion in the Age Friendly Plan, 2019 to 2021, was Outdoor Spaces and Buildings, as the city’s Department of Recreation, Parks and Cultural Activities was already engaged in ongoing, extensive planning processes for the city’s parks. The Commission chose instead to focus intently on the domains that would address the city’s populations that can be harder to reach - immigrants and minorities.

It was not the intent of the Commission, however, to overlook the concerns of all older residents. It created as its first goal, in Social Participation, Respect and Social Inclusion: “People of diverse culture, race, color, nationality, gender, age, sexual orientation, gender identity, and persons with disabilities in Alexandria have information about and access to the range of services and programs available in the city, and engage in civic life.”

The December issue will cover the actions and outcomes delineated in the Plan for this goal and a related goal, “Create inclusive services for LGBTQ older adults.”

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



**Kathie Fricke, Sandy Heistad** (pictured here) and **Mary Ann Bier** enjoyed an afternoon at Hillwood Museum to see the gem and mineral exhibit. The visit included lunch from the snack bar in the outdoor patio, a walk through the gardens and greenhouse and a visit to the house.

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It was mostly talk about Donald Trump at AHA's latest "What's in the News" on Oct. 13. Twenty people "attended" the virtual program, moderated as usual by **Brenda Bloch-Young**.

Brenda said people talk in election years about the "October surprise" that campaigns often dream up. "Haven't we had enough surprises already?" Brenda asked, ticking off the debates, the President's illness with COVID-19, the nation's increasing death rates, the impasse in Congress and other events. Someone in the group suggested the first presidential debate should be called "the debacle."

**Carmen Raventos-Suarez**, an epidemiologist, said the president's doctors are "blocking" Trump's virus with their use of the Regeneron "cocktail" of drugs. She posed the question: Does that make him immune? "I don't think so," she said. "They are faking his recovery" and the public is not getting detailed enough information to judge his recovery or possible immunity.

Brenda praised Carmen for her "contribution to our understanding of the COVID drugs. Every session, she helps us understand what we are reading. Her participation has been very helpful over the last six months."

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Such is our mindset in this angry political season: **Bill Clayton** THOUGHT he was reading a Washington Post headline that said, "Concern about risks as president goes back on trial."

Well, duh. The actual headline was "Concern about risks as president goes back on trail," meaning the campaign trail.

## Conversation With Welcomes Councilman John Chapman

In the latest of AHA's **Conversation With** programs, City Councilman John Chapman said a task force is working on a plan to solve flooding problems in the Taylor Run neighborhood.



The possible approaches to the problem range from mediating and finding resolution to neighbor disputes, to city and neighborhood-wide initiatives such as better drainage systems, sewerage systems, and related fixes.

Chapman applauds the city's having banned chokeholds by police. A police review board is being debated in Alexandria that could ensure that the policy on chokeholds works to limit or eliminate this tactic. He acknowledged the debate over wearing masks to stave off COVID-19. As for requiring masks in public, he said, "Unfortunately, it looks like we don't have enough support to do that." The current ordinance "does not have teeth." The City Council turned down an enforceable system of fines, in favor of encouraging their use and mask giveaways by non-police officials.

In this Zoom session, moderated by Howard Weiss and attended by 18 people, the subjects ranged from fiber optics to police to the Dillon Rule to flooding to coronavirus, among others.

Chapman said his current passion is the business he established, Manumission Tours, offering walking tours of Black areas of historic interest in Alexandria. The weekly tours concentrate in Old Town and the King Street corridor and have attracted interest from church and school groups as well as the general public.

## Life in times of COVID...



# NOTARY PUBLIC



## AHA to Offer Notary Services

AHA is pleased to add a new item to our services for full members: free doorstep notary services. In our current environment, offering a notary who comes to your front door can make things one step simpler for members who need a document notarized. AHA Treasurer extraordinaire Kathie Fricke has been sworn in as a notary, so this service is up and running now. Simply call the AHA office, **703-231-0824**, to put in your request.

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**Teacher:** What is the chemical formula for water?

**Student:** H I J K L M N O.

**Teacher:** What are you talking about?

**Student:** Yesterday you said it's H to O.

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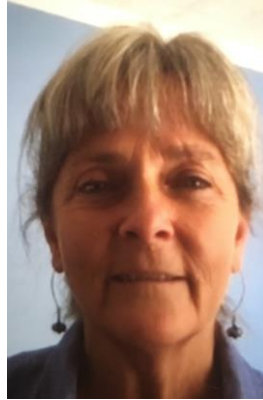
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## Ivy Hill Cemetery Featured in AHA Zoom Talk



An AHA Zoom audience learned about the historic Alexandria Ivy Hill Cemetery on Oct. 5. Lucy Goddin (shown here), Ivy Hill executive director, reported that the cemetery was started on 22 acres of land donated by Charles Smith in 1856. Goddin noted that four generations of her family are buried here.

Ivy Hill is a privately owned cemetery that includes not only the burial areas but also many acres of woodland with trails around the grounds.

The Ivy Hill Historical Preservation Society, a nonprofit, was created in 2006 to preserve, protect and promote Ivy Hill Cemetery's monuments, history, flora, and fauna. During non-COVID times, the Society raises awareness and funds through tours, events, programs, and volunteer opportunities. The Society also assists visitors and researchers with genealogy searches.

Goddin says currently there are Eagle Scouts working to remove invasive species and plant new native trees in the wooded areas. There is concern about the City of Alexandria's Taylor Run restoration project which may remove some of the older, mature trees along the creek.

As for the future, there are still many years of burial space available. The grounds are open every day. Goddin says she is "greatly appreciative of the history of the cemetery and the families who come to visit." Learn more at [www.ivyhillcemetery.net](http://www.ivyhillcemetery.net).



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