

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

Plante Shares Views on Today's Media

by Cele Garrett, Executive Director

AHA, Mount Vernon at Home and Arlington Neighborhood Village teamed up for a most enjoyable presentation from retired CBS journalist Bill Plante. He walked us through some history of the national press and its relationship with politicians through the decades. This presentation attracted 93 members from our three villages, and he entertained many questions. He noted that discerning the news is becoming much more difficult in this era of clickbait and deep fakes. He posited, "Truth can be discovered - incrementally. But should the burden be placed on you?" He acknowledged that "Only by making a personal effort, will we get to the truth."

Plante spent 32 years covering the White House, so he came to know several presidents personally. He reminded us that "Each is an individual, a real person" and he appreciated his front-row view to what each president brought to the job. If you missed his presentation, the recording can be found at <https://youtu.be/dGwq81RqY-w>.

A Deputy City Manager Visits AHA

by Jane King



Though her name may not be familiar to many Alexandrians, AHA members had a chance during a recent Zoom meeting to hear about her many responsibilities in city government. Deputy City Manager Emily Baker oversees a range of city programs that influence our daily lives.

Emily Baker is a licensed professional engineer in Virginia and Maryland and holds bachelor's and master's degrees in civil engineering. She has worked for the city for 22 years, many in leadership positions in Transportation and Environmental Services.

As deputy city manager, she oversees and facilitates land use planning, environmental protection, transportation, historic preservation, code administration, affordable housing, cultural activities and museum functions. Julie Gentry and Jane King led the Zoom meeting, encouraging participants to ask questions. Baker said that she has many opportunities to discuss her work with City Council members and leaders of city departments. She also reported that she hears the concerns of residents at City Council and community meetings.

The many issues that were raised by AHA members during the meeting included affordable assisted living; other types of housing appropriate for older residents; the safety of pedestrians on our sidewalks, to include regulations on biking, scooters, and brick sidewalks; the service provided by Alexandria's bus company, DASH; and the city's rationale for changes to and the method for projecting the future needs of the city. And though it is not part of her mandate, Baker explained the staff's rationale for the Taylor Run Stream Restoration and its impact on many trees.

For the AHA audience, Baker presented an impressive command of the areas under her watch, providing a better understanding of our city operations.

March 2021 Zoom Calendar

<p>The programs in the table below are all scheduled to take place using the Zoom app on your computer or device. The AHA office will provide you with the meeting link <u>after you have registered for the program.</u></p>		
Mar. 4, Thurs.	Ladies' Night In	5-6:30 pm
Mar. 8, Mon.	Monday Book Club: <i>My Antonia</i> by Willa Cather	1-3 pm
Mar. 8, Mon.	Art Talk with Lee Ann Lawch, <i>Forces of Nature: Renwick Invitational 2020</i>	10-11:30 am
Mar. 9, Mon.	What's in the News	10-11.30 am
Mar.12, Fri.	Politics Forum, Helen Desfosses will discuss: Did the Assault on the U.S.Capitol Mark the End of American Exceptionalism?	1:30-3 pm
Mar.15, Mon.	Jamie Raskin: "How We're Going to Rebuild America in the New Congress and Administration"	2-3 pm
Mar.16, Tue.	Board Meeting	2-4 pm
Mar.17, Wed.	Armchair Travels: Joby Dupuis, will talk about her travels to Spain	1:30-2:30 pm
Mar.18, Thurs.	Men's Night In	5-6 pm
Mar.19, Fri.	Roundtable Discussion: Virginia Diamond will talk about removing the Virginia Right to Work Laws:	10-11 am
Mar. 21, Sun.	Conversation with Councilman Mo Seifeldein	3-4 pm
Mar. 22, Mon.	Readers Theatre Group	2-3.30 pm
Mar. 23, Tue.	What's in the News	10-11.30 am
Mar. 23, Tue.	Birthday Celebration for all members with March Birthdays	5-6 pm
Mar. 24, Wed.	Coffee and Conversation	5-7 pm
Mar. 25, Thurs.	Social and Racial Equity book discussion: <i>Caste</i> , by Isabel Wilkerson	10-11.30 am
Mar. 26, Fri.	Container Gardening for Spring, TBA	10:30am

Program Highlights for March

Monday, March 8 **Art Talk: Forces of Nature: Renwick Invitational 2020**

The exhibition *"Forces of Nature: Renwick Invitational 2020,"* at the Smithsonian American Art Museum's Renwick Gallery, turns to nature for inspiration to help explain what it means to be human in a world that is increasingly chaotic and detached from the physical landscape. The exhibition presents works inextricably entangled in how art and nature relate to one another. Docent Lee Ann Lawch examines the artwork featured in this exhibit, illustrating how nature and art have the power to reframe perspectives and offer moments of release during times of uncertainty.

Tuesday, March 15 **Jamie Raskin: "How We're Going to Rebuild America in the New Congress and Administration"**

Congressman Raskin was re-elected to his third term representing Maryland's 8th District in the U.S. House of Representatives. He serves on the House Judiciary Rules, Oversight and Administration Committees and the Select Subcommittee on the Coronavirus. He played a lead role in the recent impeachment proceedings. Thanks to Greater Stonegate Village for hosting this villages-wide shared event. Registration is required by March 11. The Zoom link will be provided the day prior to the event.

Wednesday, March 17 **Armchair Travels**

welcomes Joby Dupuis, who will share some of her insights on the fascinating country of Spain, including out-of-the-way places to visit, combining Spain with Portugal and some things Americans need to prepare before visiting.

Sunday, March 21 **A Conversation with Councilman Mo Seifeldein**

Councilman Mohamad Seifeldein is in his first term as an Alexandria City Council member. **Note:** This is rescheduled from a postponed event in January.

Friday, March 26 AHA, Senior Services of Alexandria and the Alexandria Library are collaborating on an event about container gardening. Exact title and details will be provided soon.

Safe Volunteer Driving During COVID

by Susan Pettey, Member Services Committee

AHA is extremely grateful for the hours and miles our volunteers donate to help with transportation services. Some AHA volunteers continue to drive members during the pandemic, taking a few simple precautions to reduce their risk.

We ask volunteers to wear a mask while the member is in the car. (AHA can provide a mask if needed.) This will be door-to-door service. Members should be waiting outside their front door so there is no need for the volunteer to go indoors. Set the air handler to take in fresh air and drive with slightly open windows to promote air circulation. Seat the member in the back seat, as far from you as possible. Do not enter the waiting room of a doctor's office, but rather wait outside the building during the appointment or close by so that you can get there quickly when the member calls to say the appointment is complete. Wipe down all door handles and any area in the car that members come into contact with - both before they get into the car and when they are dropped off at their home again. Of course, we ask that if you have a fever or any other worrisome symptom, please cancel the ride and let the office know.

Transportation services are among those AHA members value most. Many of us are sticking close to home now, but AHA anticipates an increase in ride requests as vaccinated members feel more comfortable with going out. We welcome anyone who would like to join our wonderful transportation volunteers. Please contact the AHA office if you would like to help.



Vaccine Volunteers Among Us

Not surprisingly, some of our AHA members and volunteers are helping with the COVID vaccination effort, including **Christine Boltz, Roberta MacGregor, and Laura Noble**. AHA would love to hear from others who are helping with this enormous effort. Call or contact the office.

Services for Older Adults in Alexandria

by Robert Eiffert

A range of programs and services for residents aged 60 and over is provided or contracted through local area agencies on aging (AAAs). There is a local AAA for every geographic area of the nation. In Alexandria, the local AAA is the city's Division of Aging and Adult Services in the Department of Community and Human Services.

AAAs provide a wide variety of services. Most services are free of charge, although donations are requested.

- Congregate Nutrition, which are weekday lunches at a senior center. Alexandria has two senior centers that provide weekday meals in a congregate setting.
- Home Delivered Meals, commonly known as Meals on Wheels, which in Alexandria are provided by the nonprofit Senior Services of Alexandria (SSA).
- Transportation provides a fleet of three buses to the two senior centers, for shopping trips, for senior center participants and for residents of senior congregate housing facilities.
- Information and Assistance is a core service of every AAA. Searching the internet or contacting the National Eldercare Locator (a federally funded program) can identify aging services and supports in any area of the nation through the local AAA.
- The Northern Virginia Long-Term Care Ombudsman Program investigates complaints from residents of long-term care facilities, both nursing care and assisted living. Trained volunteer ombudsmen work in every LTC facility in the area.
- Medicare insurance counseling and assistance is available through the local VICAP (Virginia Insurance Counseling and Assistance Program). Staff and volunteers can assist with problems with Medicare, and in choosing Medicare Part D drug plans.

More information is available during regular business hours by calling 703-746-5999 or via e-mail at DAAS@alexandriava.gov

What's Up With AHA Members, Associates and Volunteers

The mariachi band plays on in **Bill and Teddye Clayton's** back yard, through rain and snow and gloom of night.



Amelia Air Animal Rescue, founded by Dean Heistad, son of AHA member **Sandy Heistad**, recently got a boost on *The Ellen DeGeneres Show*. Actress Allison Janney, a guest on the show, spoke proudly about her niece Petra Janney and the nonprofit, Amelia Air. Petra is Dean's business partner and fellow pilot. They fly dogs and cats from kill shelters to safe shelters in other parts of the country. Dean was a recent guest at AHA's Coffee and Conversation. See photos and videos at www.ameliaair.org.

Maggie and Barry Stauffer have been spending the winter in Florida, where they completed the 22-mile Legacy Trail in Sarasota. Wish we were there!



One of the many ironies in coronavirus times: When the **Bill Claytons** received their order of the well-regarded KN95 masks, they discovered each mask had stamped on it: Made in China. If that distresses people, they can meet a current advisory to double up on masks. If you have a Made in China mask, put on a second – say, the AHA mask – to hide the China connection.

Inflammation and Illness by Bill Clayton

The Harvard Health Letter reports there is “one hidden cause” behind a list of hard-to-treat illness, and the cause is inflammation.

“From asthma to rheumatoid arthritis to cancer and Alzheimer’s disease, these chronic conditions all have one thing in common – inflammation,” the publication reported in an article by its chief medical editor, Dr. Howard Lewine.

Taber's Medical Dictionary devotes more than a page to inflammation, terming it “tissue reaction to injury.” From the puffiness when you hit your elbow on something to the inflammation resulting from chemicals, heat, surgery or any of several other causes, the term for most cases of inflammation end with the suffix *itis* – such as *dermatitis* or *colitis* or *hepatitis*.

Inflammation is the body’s “essential survival mechanism,” helping the body “fight off hostile microbes and repair damaged tissue,” the Health Letter says. Chronic inflammation can harm health and lead to dozens of diseases. In some cases, reducing stress can help allergic reactions. Fighting obesity may reduce inflammation by reducing fat tissue. As usual, consulting with one’s physician can determine cause and correction for disorders related to inflammation. Some commonplace suggestions for conditions of inflammation are “gentle exercise,” getting more sleep and “powerful foods” such as fruits, nuts, leafy greens, tomatoes, fatty fish and olive oil. Harvard publishes a guide entitled “Fight off Inflammation” that discusses the signs, causes and corrections for disorders related to inflammation.

The Power of Punctuation.

When Teddye Clayton checked out at the grocery store, the clerk “carded” her, asking for proof that she was of drinking age.

Teddye, of course, presented an i.d. card that showed she was, indeed, over 21. Then, she saw the label on the small bottle of maple syrup. It said,

BOURBON
BARREL AGED

Had it read “Bourbon-barrel aged,” that would have cleared the air.



A Puzzle for Today
submitted by Brenda Bloch-Young

What same three letters fit into the following blanks in the same order to form five words?

1. E _ _ _ P
2. _ _ _ C K
3. S _ _ _ SH
4. L I _ _ _ D
5. T E _ _ _ L A

See if you can guess and I will send you the answer.
-- Brenda

So long, February –



Vaccination Frustration

I heard that we can get shots now.
I heard the slots are filled.
I heard that we aren't charged at all.
I heard we can be billed.

I heard that there's a third type and
I heard that we can pick.
I heard we have no choice. What's more,
I heard it makes you sick.

I heard a CVS shot's
near impossible to get.
I heard Rite Aid and Walmart might
Have shots, but just not yet.

I heard we'll have to stand outside
For hours in a line.
I heard that we'll be in and out
In 20 minutes' time.

I heard vaccine's in short supply
in our community.
So should we change the spelling now
To "heard" immunity?

(author unknown, but submitted by
Brenda Bloch-Young)

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Welcome Spring –



CONTACT US

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

aha@athomeinalexandria.org
www.athomeinalexandria.org