

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

## Spring2ACTion is Almost Here

by Cele Garrett

Once a year, Alexandria nonprofits all come together for Spring2ACTion, an online “giving day” hosted by ACT for Alexandria, Alexandria’s community foundation. This year the big day is Wednesday, April 28.

As in previous years, you can contribute to the campaign in the two weeks leading up to the big day. The online portal will “go live” on April 14. If you prefer to contribute by check instead of doing so online, your gift will count toward our total if it is received in our office by April 28.

Last year’s Spring2ACTion campaign lacked the fanfare of previous years since it took place during the early days of the pandemic, so we did not have our usual in-person gathering at Del Ray Café on campaign day. We likely will forgo such a gathering this year, too - but we will carry on with the same spirit as always. Throughout this fundraiser, some generous AHA donors will offer a matching gift so that your online contribution will be doubled. If you would like to offer a matching gift to entice others to donate, we would gratefully welcome it.

Spring2ACTion is a highly effective and cost-efficient campaign for AHA. Watch your email inbox for further updates and videos.

## Happy Birthday to **AHA!**

By Cele Garrett

On April 15, AHA officially will mark its 10-year anniversary. We have grown as an organization and learned so much along the way. I would be remiss not to mention some of the great leaders who got us on our feet: Our three “official” founders were the late Richard Moose, Ernie Lehmann and the late Dr. Judith Jones. Of course, there are so many more AHA leaders who helped to make AHA a reality, many of whom still are part of our AHA community: L and Ann Liddle, Penny Roberts, Maggie and Barry Stauffer, Bill and Teddye Clayton, Julie

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## AHA's New Statement of Diversity and Inclusion

by Victoria Almquist

Earlier this year, the AHA Board determined that we needed to craft a statement reflecting AHA’s commitment to diversity and inclusion that went beyond the non-discrimination language on the website. We wanted the statement to reflect the core values of our organization.

A committee was formed composed of Adam Perry, Cele Garrett, Jane King, Marie Cataffo, Marjorie Connor, Penelope Jane Guyton, Sandy Heistad and Susan Pettey and coordinated by me. We examined statements from other nonprofits and had in-depth discussions about how we envisioned our statement to reflect what the organization currently is and what it strives to be. The committee believes the following statement reflects that commitment and vision:

AHA denounces discrimination based on race, ethnic origin, ability or disability, gender, gender identity, or sexual orientation because it undermines the well-being and vitality of our community.

AHA takes the broadest possible view of diversity. We strive to cultivate equity as a value and a practice, and endeavor to fully express those values in our organizational culture.

AHA strives to become a more culturally competent organization by welcoming the unique perspectives and experiences that each person brings.

Join us in embracing diversity, equity, and inclusion for seniors in Alexandria.

## April 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 the meeting link <u>after you have registered for the program</u>.</p>		
April 1, Thurs.	Ladies' Night In	5-6:30 pm
April 5, Mon.	Art Talk: !Printing the Revolution! The Rise and Impact of Chicano Graphics: 1965 to Now	10-11:30 am
April 9, Fri.	Cherry Blossom Diplomacy and the Festival of Spring, by Dr. Kathleen Bashian. Sponsored by Arlington Neighborhood Village.	10-11 am
April 9, Fri.	Politics Forum: The Leadership Record and Future of Vice President Kamala Harris, with Dr. Helen Desfosses	1:30-3 pm
April 11, Sun.	Conversation with Councilwoman Amy Jackson	3-4 pm
April 12, Mon.	Monday Book Club: <i>The Lowland</i> by Jhumpa Lahiri	1-3 pm
April 13, Tue.	What's in the News	10-11 am
April 13, Tue.	An Update on the Political Landscape with Journalist Steve Roberts	11-noon
April 13, Tue.	Birthday Celebration for All Members with April Birthdays	5-6 pm
April 14, Wed.	Climate Change: What Are the Challenges Facing Us? with Mike Tidwell of the Chesapeake Climate Action Network	3-4:15 pm
April 15, Thurs.	Men's Night In	5-6 pm
April 16, Fri.	Roundtable: Stacey Swartz Discusses the Opioid Crisis & Current Factors Affecting It	3-4 pm
April 20, Tue.	Board Meeting	2-4 pm
April 21, Wed.	Armchair Travels: A View of Sweden with Nancy Clayton Ault	10-11:30 am
April 22, Thurs.	The Golden Era at the Washington Post with former Post columnist Bob Levey	1-2 pm
April 26, Mon.	Readers Theatre Group	2-3:30 pm
April 27, Tue.	What's in the News	10-11:30 am
April 28, Wed.	Spring2ACTion	all day
April 29, Thurs.	Social and Racial Equity group will continue discussion of <i>Caste</i> by Isabel Wilkerson and the issues raised in the March discussion.	10-11:30 am

## Program Highlights for April

**Friday, April 9 Cherry Blossom Diplomacy and the Festival of Spring.** Dr. Kathleen Bashian, Certified Master Guide in Washington DC, will present a slide program about the cherry blossoms in Washington, DC. Do you know what to look for if you walk about the Tidal Basin with trees in bloom? How do we choose the Cherry Blossom Queen and what are her responsibilities?

**Tuesday, April 13 Birthday Celebrations.** It only happens once a year - the day you get to celebrate your birthday. We will be toasting our oldest member and celebrating all our April birthday folks with a fun-filled virtual birthday party. Festive attire encouraged and humor welcomed. RSVP to the AHA office.

**Wednesday, April 13 An Update on the Political Landscape.** More than two months after the Inauguration, journalist Steve Roberts will help us take stock of where the new administration and the new Congress are heading. Roberts will discuss the surprises so far and the challenges ahead.

**Wednesday, April 14 Climate Change: What Are the Challenges Facing Us?** Hear from Mike Tidwell, a nationally recognized expert, about how climate change will affect water, energy, transportation, wildlife, agriculture, ecosystems and human health in the DMV.

**Friday, April 16 Roundtable: Stacey Swartz Discusses the Opioid Crisis & Current Factors Affecting It.** Stacey Swartz is the co-owner and Pharmacist in Charge for the Neighborhood Pharmacy of Del Ray, an independent pharmacy in Alexandria, VA. Has the pandemic affected the opioid crisis? What other factors are contributing to the increase in usage and overdoses?

**Wednesday, April 21 Armchair Travels *Hej!*** Join us for the next program as we explore the land of the "Midnight Sun" – Sweden. Nancy Ault has had the opportunity to travel to Sweden numerous times and looks forward to sharing her love of this country's natural beauty and its many unique attributes.

## Boy, What a Year!

by Cele Garrett

What a strange twelve months we have all experienced. Though times are still a bit uncertain, there is a positive vibe in the air. Nearly all our AHA members have received their vaccinations and soon, many of our volunteers will have too.

Our members have been so resilient this past year, though I know the pandemic has taken a toll on everyone. The AHA staff is so grateful to our members for being good-natured and understanding as we have navigated through these uncertain months. We enjoy working with you each day.

I would like to thank our volunteers for their work this past year. Though some of our volunteers had to step away temporarily from serving as an AHA driver during the pandemic, I am proud that AHA never stopped providing rides to important medical appointments. For a time, our volunteers were shopping and delivering groceries instead of taking our members to the stores themselves. Soon enough, though, we were back to full transportation services.

The biggest change came with having to move our social events online. We never imagined this arrangement would last more than a year. Yet again, our members were troupers. We have enjoyed some wonderful gatherings together with special guests. In fact, villages in our area began to share programs with one another - so we had even more fun events to choose from. Our partnership with Vitality Society has been a welcome addition for many of our members who were eager for health and fitness instruction geared to folks over the age of 65.

We have begun to talk about when and how to return to some in-person events again. We will be looking at events on a case-by-case basis in the coming months. We are eager to hear from you on this topic. Enjoy the spring weather and hopefully we really will be able to “see you soon”!

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### *AHA's Ten-Year Anniversary, Cont'd from Page 1*

Gentry, Pam and Steve Nelson, Chriss Nielsen and Tom Crowley, Nancy Kincaid and Barbara Rosenfeld. Each of them contributed so much energy to getting AHA up and running. Charter members who signed on with AHA before we opened our doors include Megan Evans, Brigitte Guttstadt, Charles and DoDo Ablard, Jean Antone, Nancy Berg, Suzanne Brock and Marianne Weitz. All of them remain AHA members today. We are planning a “delayed” anniversary celebration in September, so stay tuned.

## New Alzheimer's Drugs

by Bill Clayton

There is hope for a drug to slow the decline in mental processes from Alzheimer's disease, the AARP Bulletin reports.

A new study by the drug company Eli Lilly shows that the drug “may significantly slow cognitive decline in people with Alzheimer's disease.” The drug is called donanemab and it is still experimental and in early-stage trials.

The study followed 272 people whose brain scans showed Alzheimer's. The study found that patients who took donanemab “had a 32 percent lower rate of (cognitive) decline than those who received a placebo.” Dr. Lon Schneider of the Keck School of Medicine at the University of Southern California said the early finding “is very encouraging because this is the first time a drug of its kind has had positive results in early-stage trials.”

The drug works by “targeting the hard plaque in the brain made from amyloid, a protein associated with Alzheimer's,” the AARP article reported. In the trial, the drug “cleared a significant amount of the amyloid from users.”

The study continues and researchers promise updates as the study goes on. Dr. Marwan Sabbagh, director of the Lou Ruvo Center for Brain Health in Las Vegas, said there are several drugs in development that “promise to really change the playing field for treatment of Alzheimer's disease.”

## Congressman Raskin Speaks to Zoom Audience



Several AHA members enjoyed the recent conversation with Congressman Jamie Raskin a few weeks ago, hosted by Greater Stonegate Village of Montgomery County, Maryland. Raskin discussed

his role in the recent impeachment hearing, as well as other issues facing Congress.

Watch for more shared village programs on our calendar.

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



AHA member **Carol Siegel** was caught by surprise when the staff at the Chinquapin pool greeted her with a bouquet of flowers to welcome her back after five months of recovery from ankle surgery as seen in the photo here. Carol has been a regular swimmer at Chinquapin

since it opened in 1985. Carol tells us, "I couldn't have gotten through those difficult weeks after surgery without AHA's help." She sends a special thank-you to AHA volunteers **Susan Bray** and **Eileen O'Brien** for the rides to the doctor's office.

**Nancy Berg** says, "One bright spot for me in the unending confinement of the COVID epidemic is that my daughter has been able to stay with me for some four months . . . the longest period at home since she went off to college. It has been delightful: laughing at funny or absurd television fare; dining on gourmet dinners she has prepared; accomplishing some refurbishments to the house; and, most importantly, helping me with computer problems. I have gained from it all."



**Teddy Clayton's** cymbidium orchid is in full bloom. A cheerful sight during winter's gray days and a harbinger of spring flowers to come.

"Retirement never fails to satisfy."  
A personal mantra from **Jane Cohen**.

## Shapes of Nature By Ann Liddle

I recently showed some art I've made since 2012, including some brand-new pieces, at the McLean Textile Gallery in McLean, Virginia. My art has been an avocation – I studied math in college. My parents drew and painted and regularly took us to art galleries. Their art adorned our walls, and I grew up making art.

Fiber art is my preferred category. I started out making my clothes and then designing and making garments for sale (which I still do). From that, I moved into sculpture and wall pieces. Dimensional work is my favorite – I love designing them and figuring out how to make them work – particularly pedestal pieces which must stand up. It is often the engineering aspects that appeal to me. I work out of my home and at the Workhouse Arts Center in Lorton, Virginia.

I work in many different fiber mediums and techniques. For sculpture, I have used paper mache, crochet, knitting, wire frames, stuffed canvas, metal, pussy willow, and more.

People always ask, "Where do you get your ideas?" I look at a lot of art – in magazines and in person or driving down the road! Everything looks like art to me. Sometimes I give myself a problem to solve – like with the Stripes Series. I have filled nearly 70 numbered sketchbooks with pencil sketches of ideas for art. Ideas are never-ending. At least I hope so.

You can see all the art and me talking about the pieces on a YouTube video at <https://m.youtube.com/watch?v=709y2iblcVU>.



AHA members recently visited the McLean Textile Gallery. From left, Sandy Heistad, Kathie Fricke, artist Ann Liddle and Pam Nelson. Photo by Mary Ann Bier.

## AHA Medical Equipment Closet

by Susan Pettey

Did you know AHA has some medical equipment available to borrow? Thanks to donations by members, we have a small selection of medical equipment, such as transport chairs, walkers, a kneeling scooter, toilet risers, and canes, available to borrow from the office.

All equipment has been thoroughly cleaned and is ready for a new user. We may not have what you need, but you may want to call the AHA office to check before buying new equipment.

AHA will also assist any members who have equipment that they would be willing to loan out but would like to retain for future use. AHA will keep a record of what you have available that may be of assistance to someone in need.

Many thanks to retired occupational therapist Laura Noble for organizing our equipment loans, and to AHA staff for keeping tabs on what is available.



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## Politics Forum Attracts Discussion

*Politics Forum* host and founder Helen Desfosses made a major presentation on March 12 to AHA members and many guests on the topic, "Did the January 6, 2021 Mob Assault on the U.S. Capitol Mark the End of American Exceptionalism?" Many members and guests took part in the lively discussion.

Several AHA members have led, or will soon lead, Friday afternoon *Politics Forum* discussions. This group includes Martin Tolchin, who spoke about his latest book, "Politics, Journalism, and the Way Things Were." AHA Board Chair Robert Eiffert addressed the issue of "Legislative Priorities in Aging and Long-Term Care in Virginia." Allison Silberberg, writer and former mayor of Alexandria, will lead a Zoom *Politics Forum* on May 14 focusing on "Political Leadership in an Era of Crises."

## Armchair Travels - Searching for Your Roots

by Susanne O'Neill

Have you ever wondered if you were descended from royalty or from whom you inherited that funny cowlick? Were your ancestors pillaging Vikings or Russian czars? Do you find yourself watching TV shows like "Find Your Roots"? Many of us are curious about our ancestors and have taken trips to foreign countries in pursuit of a Great-Great Grandpa. Why not share your adventures - funny or fascinating? Contact me at [oneillsn@msn.com](mailto:oneillsn@msn.com).



### CONTACT US

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

[aha@athomeinalexandria.org](mailto:aha@athomeinalexandria.org)  
[www.athomeinalexandria.org](http://www.athomeinalexandria.org)

