

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

Spring2ACTion Results Are In!

by Cele Garrett

At midnight on April 28, we finished our annual Spring2ACTion fundraising campaign, reaching \$36,460 against our goal of \$35,000. AHA members, volunteers and community friends stepped up with such generosity and we are so very grateful. Our goal was to reach 175 donors and we had 172 supporters who contributed to make this a great success. Many of our donors are far too young to be AHA members but their support during Spring2ACTion demonstrates that they, too, care that our older neighbors have a safety net and the support they need.

Once again, the Mason Hirst Foundation provided us with a \$4,000 matching grant to kick off our campaign. We would not have achieved our goal without their help so I cannot overestimate how important their long-standing support has been. I would like to thank our generous matching gift donors:

Susanne Adams

Bill and Teddye Clayton

Bob Eiffert and Michael Curry

Louise and Mike Kenny

Nancy Kincaid

Carol Siegel

Loretta Darst, Cele Garrett, Megan McIntyre and Dara Surratt (a.k.a. Office Divas)

Linda Langley, Penny Roberts and Mary Jayne Swanson (a.k.a. Two Whites and a Rose)

Pam and Steve Nelson

Christena Nielsen and Tom Crowley

The RMP Foundation

Barbara Rosenfeld

Shelli Ross

We are grateful to every person who took the time and thought to contribute. We send our heartfelt thanks to you.

AHA Art Series News

by Cele Garrett

Since last summer, AHA members have been treated to a special art discussion each month led by Smithsonian American Art Museum docent LeeAnn Lawch. The topics have been numerous, including *Young America*, *The Civil War and its Impact on American Artists*, *Japanese American Artists in the First Half of the 20th Century*, *Alexander von Humboldt and the United States: Art, Nature and Culture*, and *Forces of Nature: Renwick Invitational 2020*. LeeAnn is taking a break from her art talks to help plan her daughter's wedding, get to know her first newborn grandchild, head out of the country for several months, and attend to a few other "minor" things. We thank her for the wonderful discussions and beautiful works of art she has shared with us this past year.

As it happens, AHA volunteer Donna Fowler also is a SAAM docent and she has agreed to lead some art discussions for AHA beginning in July. Thank you, Donna! And, AHA has been working with members of three other area villages to put together a special three-part series about Black artists. Look for those events on our May and June calendars.

May 2021 Calendar of Events

The programs in the table below are scheduled to take place using the Zoom app on your computer or device. The AHA office will provide you the meeting link after you have registered for the program.

| Date | Program | Time |
|---|---|-------------|
| May 6, Thurs. | Early 20th Century and the Harlem Renaissance with Jacqueline Small, MFA, Hirshhorn Tour Guide | 3-4 pm |
| May 10, Mon. | Monday Book Club: "The Story of More" by Hope Jahren | 1-3 pm |
| May 11, Tue. | What's in the News | 10-11:30 am |
| May 11, Tue. | Ladies' Night In | 5-6:30 pm |
| May 13, Thurs. | Tour the YMCA gardens with Bob Faden, Research Botanist Emeritus, Museum of Natural History. Space is limited.* | 10-11 am |
| May 13, Thurs. | Birthday celebration for all members with May birthdays | 5-6 pm |
| May 14, Fri. | Politics Forum: Dr. Helen Desfosses will speak on 'Domestic Terrorism: America's Growing National Security Threat' | 1:30-3 pm |
| May 18, Tue. | Board Meeting | 2-4 pm |
| May 19, Wed. | Armchair Travels: Join our first travel program hosted live from Hong Kong by Matthew O'Neill showing us the sights. | 10-11:30 am |
| May 20, Thurs. | Men's Night In | 5-6:30 pm |
| May 21, Fri. | Roundtable: How agriculture and food choices could play a role in minimizing climate change with Erik Olson, NRDC | 10-11am |
| May 21, Fri. | Is a Medical Alert System Right for Me? | 11-Noon |
| May 21, Fri. | The Long Sixties: Washington Paintings in the Watkins and Corcoran Legacy Collections with Jack Rasmussen | 3-4 pm |
| May 24, Mon. | Readers Theater Group | 2-3:30 pm |
| May 26, Wed. | Coffee and Conversation | 10-11:30 am |
| May 26, Wed. | Biden's Foreign Policy in the Middle East and North Africa, Recipes for Success or Failure with Mr. Jean AbiNader. Sponsored by Little Falls Village. | 1-2:30 pm |
| May 27, Thurs. | Social and Racial Equity Book Discussion: <i>Interior Chinatown</i> by Charles Yu | 10-11:30 am |
| *Space is limited to 10 people. Masks and social distancing are required. Rain date will be Friday May 14 at 10 am. A second tour will be organized if more than 10 signs up. | | |

May Program Highlights

Thursday, May 6 Early 20th Century and The Harlem Renaissance. Black art struggled for recognition in the early 20th Century with artists such as Henry Ossawa Tanner and Horace Pippin, and came into its own with Jacob Lawrence, Aaron Douglas and other artists. Join Jacqueline Small, MFA, Hirshhorn Tour Guide and Dial-a-Docent Founding Member for this program.

Thursday, May 13 May Birthday Celebrations. What is special about having a May birthday? Turns out a lot, especially for the 16 AHA members who happen to be born in what is widely considered to be the luckiest month of the year. Come join the fun on Zoom. Enjoy fortune telling, prizes and laughs. Wear a festive hat and attire. To participate, register with the AHA office.

Wednesday, May 19 Armchair Travels. *Nei bou!* Our first international speaker brings you a unique and personal perspective as an American living in Hong Kong. From 12 hours away, Matthew (Susanne O'Neill's son) will present the program from Hong Kong. From hikes to temples to unique cuisine to the most densely populated area on the planet, Hong Kong has something to offer for every (even a virtual) traveler. Even if you have been to Hong Kong, you are going to learn something new.

Friday, May 21 Is a Medical Alert System Right for Me? If you live alone or have a chronic medical condition, you may worry about your ability to summon help in an emergency. Learn about basic features of medical alert systems and some new advances, such as fall detection and mobile access when away from home. Speakers are Kate Chutuape and Blanca Cali from Virginia Hospital Center.

Friday, May 21 The Long Sixties: Washington Paintings in the Watkins and Corcoran Legacy Collections (1957 – 1982). The work of Black artists was not often collected or even represented in museum collections. Learn the reason for Washington's determined avoidance of controversy and the corporate preference for "safe art" produced by the Washington Color School. Featured speaker is Jack Rasmussen, Director and Curator of the American University Museum at the Katzen Arts Center.

Council Member Amy Jackson Visits

AHA

by Bill Clayton

Being a mother and a City Council member is often a balancing act, Amy Jackson told an AHA audience in a Zoom session: The pros and cons of touchy issues, the duties of mother and councilwoman in the COVID era, balancing the city needs for pandemic protection and the anti-vaccine hesitance of many.



“Even some of my friends may be a little hesitant,” about the coronavirus vaccine, Jackson said, because of the emergence of variants of the disease and possible side effects of the vaccines. Of the reticence of some people, “I would hope

we are over that,” Jackson said. “You need to be loud and proud and get it (vaccine).”

The decisions on many issues “are never right or wrong – you find a compromise,” she said.

Jackson, mother of children ages 7 and 9, said of reopening of schools, “I know of all the juggling it takes. I love my children, but it is time to go back to school.”

Working on the Council, “You cannot make everybody happy,” Jackson said.

Among the questions she fielded was one about “overbuilding” in Alexandria. Jackson said the city should not “have to take every opportunity to build.”

Some Alexandrians propose a commission to study the behavior of police. Jackson said that if such a board is formed, it should have “teeth” and subpoena power to be effective and accepted.

Celebrating Spring2ACTion at Del Ray Café



Left: Bob Eiffert and Michael Curry
Lower left: Sandra Heistad, Mary Ann Bier, Kathie Fricke and Penelope Roberts
Lower right: Paul and Vikki Cooper



Obituaries

by Bill Clayton

Georg Morduch, longtime member of At Home in Alexandria, died of a heart attack March 27, his 87th birthday. Morduch was a native of Helsinki, Finland. His family moved in the 1950s to England, where he earned a doctorate in mathematics at Imperial College of Science, of the University of London.

While in college, he met his wife, Ruth, to whom he was married 62 years, and who survives him. He also leaves three children and eight grandchildren.

Georg Morduch worked as a mathematician in the United States in the 1960s on the Polaris missile system. Polaris was the U.S. Navy’s first submarine-launched missile which, because of its accuracy, was adopted by the United Kingdom as well. Later, Georg Morduch worked in the space field and helped develop early voice-mail systems and phone systems for the deaf. He developed skills in gardening, woodworking, photography and



birdwatching and found time to organize the annual Bird Count for the Hollin Hills area. Morduch also enjoyed travel – and is shown here on a camel in India.

David Craig Peters, husband of former AHA Chair Jane King, died March 31. He was 80. Born in Wilkes-Barre, Pa., Sept. 3, 1940, he was graduated from Elmer Myers High School in 1958 and from Wilkes University in 1962.

Peters was an intelligence analyst at the Defense Intelligence Agency 1967-2006. He was on active duty in the U.S. Army, for a time stationed at Stuttgart, Germany, and later spent 20 years in the Army Reserves. Dave and Jane shared a love for their children and grandchildren, the five dogs they had during their marriage, for following many political ups and downs and for streaming mysteries.

Survivors, in addition to his wife of 29 years, Jane King, include three sons, two brothers, one sister, a stepdaughter and several grandchildren.



What's Up With AHA Members, Associates and Volunteers



At the latest Men's Night In, **Steve Nelson** told a hometown story of the Seattle Totem Pole. The original totem pole was carved in 1790 and raised in the Tlingit village on Tongass Island, Alaska, and later donated to the city of Seattle. A replica replaced the original fire-damaged pole in the 1930s where it still stands. It was carved to honor Chief-of-All-Women, a Tlingit woman who tragically drowned. It is one of the few totem poles ever dedicated to a woman.

For anyone who has seen an unfinished work of art and has thought: "I have a great idea for finishing it," AHA volunteer and artist **Eileen O'Brien** had an answer in a display she curated at Del Ray Artisans' location, entitled "Unfinished/Finished." The display opened in early April and closed on May 1. It showed an array of unfinished works by various artists, and the ideas of other artists for finishing the works in their own way. The idea is, O'Brien said, to explore "how a 'start' might inspire a 'finish.'" Dozens of artists were paired, sometimes with artists they did not know. Some "finishers" just added a few brushstrokes, others completely reimagining the work. See a video tour at <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=BnmK-5fhRXY>

AHA member **Louise Kenny** saw the powerful display in the District of Columbia commemorating those Americans lost to COVID-19 and was inspired to do the same thing for Alexandrians similarly mourned. She petitioned the City Council and got approval for a display of small, white flags arranged in Rivergate Park. (See photo below). The commemoration will last until June 21 and will be adjusted as, sadly, the list of those lost increases.

Kenny said she drew inspiration from D.C. artist Suzanne Firstenberg. "Alexandria is such a vibrant, caring community, I knew we had to remember and honor our friends and neighbors here whose lives were cut short by COVID," Kenny said.



Botanists Among Us

by Bill Clayton

How many of us can say that plants have been named for us? Well, **Audrey and Robert Faden**, longtime AHA members and nature tour guides, can claim that distinction.

Around 20 plants have been named for botanist Faden, mostly from his plant collections in his years with the Peace Corps in Kenya, where he was joined in his plant collections by his wife, Audrey. She shared in the naming honors, including one plant that is hers alone: the *Murdannia audreyae*.

One intriguing story is about the *Kalanchoe fadeniorum*, (literally, "The Fadens' Kalanchoe"). Bob Faden was doing field work for Chicago's Field Museum and – long story short – wound up doing an extended study time in Kenya, aided by his Kenya-born wife, Audrey. As Robert tells it, "On one of our trips within Kenya we were returning from the coast and made a stop along the main road from the coastal city Mombasa to the capital, Nairobi.... The vegetation along the road looked natural and undisturbed, with low trees and bushes and conspicuous succulents growing on sand. Among the latter were several species of Kalanchoe." They numbered a small, spreading example collection number 77/777, to denote the 777th collection that Faden had made in 1977.

The Fadens took their collections to one of the natural museums of Kenya for processing, and there met German botanists. One, Dr. Edith Raadts, was a specialist in the plant family that includes kalanchoe. She took some living material from the Faden collections home to Berlin and was able to grow it and get it recognized in 1979 as an undescribed species, now named *Kalanchoe fadeniorum*. When the Fadens moved from Chicago to Washington, D.C., in 1980, they took the eponymous kalanchoe with them.

The *fadeniorum* and other Smithsonian staff members' office plants were moved during the pandemic to research greenhouses in Maryland. Robert Faden says he has given seedlings and cuttings to various recipients but does not know whether there has been further distribution. He has put a seedling in a "clean room" safe from insects, and the plant has thrived, he reports.

Faden has "one final point" about *Kalanchoe fadeniorum* – it "has been looked for in Kenya by botanists ever since it was described in 1979, (but) it has never been found again."

Are You a Family Caregiver?

Do you need help understanding dementia, managing problem behaviors, handling stress or finding time for you? **Senior Services of Alexandria, Valley Program for Aging Services (VPAS) and the Rosalynn Carter Institute for Caregiving** will present a “Dealing With Dementia” workshop on May 15, 1:00-5:00 p.m. via Zoom.

Register by May 10 to reserve a spot at 540-615-5341 or at vpas.info/events. Spaces are limited.

From the Editor

This is your newsletter. What would you like to see here? More AHA news? More member stories – or puzzles, games, jokes? Send your comments, suggestions or questions to the AHA office at phone number or email address shown below.

- Mary Ann Bier

Getting old is like climbing a mountain; you get a little out of breath, but the view is much better!

- Ingrid Bergman

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A Book for All of Us (Like it or Not!)

By Laura Noble

A Beginners Guide to the End: Practical Advice for Living Life and Facing Death, is a handbook about the end of life. The authors, Dr. B.J. Biller and Shoshana Berger, have put together just about everything you want (and need) to know, whether you are healthy and maybe thinking about your will and other documents, have gotten bad news about your own health, or if you are a caregiver.

Always honest and straightforward, not morbid or flowery, the authors simply tell it like it is, and use their years of experience to help the beginner get a handle on a great variety of topics related to death and dying. The book starts with “Do not Leave a Mess.” This chapter talks about what to do about STUFF, both the emotional kind and the things you have collected over a lifetime. Other chapters deal with finances, hospital “hacks,” treatment decisions and relationships with your medical and care team, hospice and palliative care, coping, even love, sex and relationships.

There is guidance on talking to kids and breaking news to family and friends, and how to write a eulogy and obituary. And there is more. I listened to the audiobook but am thinking about buying the book to have as a reference - some of the content is useful now, but down the road, I know it will be good to have on hand. For many of us, more information brings calm; I was left feeling I had so much better understanding of what to expect and what to do about it. What a gift!

Another Puzzle from Brenda Bloch-Young

This one will either take you 30 seconds or 30 days.

What common English word has the letters "WSP" in that order, without any letters between?

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At the latest Men's Night In, Steve Nelson told a hometown story of the Seattle Totem Pole. The original totem pole was carved in 1790 and raised in the Tlingit village on [Tongass Island](#), Alaska. The totem pole was later stolen by Seattle businessmen on an expedition to Alaska and subsequently given to the City of Seattle in 1899, where it was raised in Pioneer Square and became a source of civic pride." A replica replaced the original fire-damaged pole in the 1930's where it still stands. It was carved to honor Chief-of-All-Women, a [Tlingit](#) woman who tragically drowned. It is one of the few totem poles ever dedicated to a woman. The men of Men's Night In honored her memory. The Seattle businessmen? Not so much.