



AT HOME IN
ALEXANDRIA

NEWSLETTER

Volume 12, Number 8

August 2021

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

Getting Out and Meeting in Person



Ladies' Night Out drew a large crowd at Bella Napoli restaurant in Del Ray on July 13. Everyone enjoyed Italian specialties and beverages, and, of course, getting out after 16 months meeting on Zoom. The drinks and food taste better this way.



The first in-person Men's Night Out on July 15 was a success. L Liddle graciously hosted the group at his home in Old Town. Standing, L Liddle, Michael Curry in the mirror taking the photo, and Steve Nelson; seated, David Butler, Alan Dinsmore and Bob Eiffert.



Nancy Kincaid hosted a group of AHA members on July 11 for the Alexandria City fireworks. Shown here are Montsie Lehmann, Tina Raventos (Carmen's niece), Pat Roland, Carmen Raventos-Suarez and Ernie Lehmann gathering before the fireworks show.



Another very happy hour at the home of Bob Eiffert (not shown) and Michael Curry (far right). From left, Sally Ann Greer, Alan Dinsmore, Pam Nelson, L Liddle, Cele Garrett, Linda Langley and Ann Liddle.

August 2021 Calendar

Please note the programs in the table below are scheduled either in person or via ZOOM.

For Zoom programs, the AHA office will provide you with the meeting link after you have registered for the program.

For in-person programs, you must be fully vaccinated. Documentation is NOT required.

Aug 10 Tue.	Ladies' Night Out, Cafe 44, 44 Canal Center Plaza, Unit 41. Look for floor signs.	5-7 pm
Aug 14 Sat.	Summer pool party and August birthday celebration; Old Town Village clubhouse, 343 South Fayette Street; bring an appetizer and a beverage.	6-8 pm
Aug 19 Thurs.	Improving your Crossword Puzzle Skills with guru Adrienne Cadik, expert in the art for 60 years; via Zoom	10-11:30 am
Aug 26 Thurs.	Social and Radical Equity Book Discussion: <i>The Night Watchman</i> by Louise Erdrich; via Zoom	10-11:30 am

Saturday, August 14 Dig out those old Hawaiian shirts and get ready for some fun as we celebrate a special summer happy hour. Gather on the pool side patio of Old Town Village community clubhouse located at 343 South Fayette Street. Please bring a beverage and a dish to share. Dessert will be provided.

This event will also include the celebration of August birthday babies. More details to come. Parking is available on Wilkes, Fayette and South Payne Streets. There is no parking available within the Old Town Village community. Look for balloons at the entrance to the clubhouse. Hosted by Maggie & Barry Stauffer.

Thursday, August 19 Welcome to an inside look at the art of solving crossword puzzles. As the most popular indoor sport in the country, solvers require no special equipment, planning, or cost. Speaker Adrienne Cadik has been solving crossword puzzles for nearly 60 years, is writing a book on the subject and has competed in numerous crossword tournaments. The class will include an overview of topics and issues about crossword puzzles and a close look at one legendary puzzle.



Celebrate AHA's 10th Anniversary

by Executive Director Cele Garrett

While we continue to monitor the latest safety news regarding the new COVID variant, we are forging ahead with our plan to hold an in-person celebration of AHA's first 10 years in operation. Mark your calendar for Wednesday, Sept. 8 from 2 to 4 p.m. at the Cameron Station Community Center, 200 Cameron Station Blvd.

In recent years, we have put a theme to our celebration. This year's theme is "Travel and Adventure." Well, why not? Though we have had to set aside many of our travel plans this past year, our members and volunteers are beginning to make plans again. We need your help: If you have got some fun travel photos—either foreign or domestic—that you are willing to lend us (in either digital or hard copy form), we'd like to include them in our slide show, or our table displays. Have you put together a photo album from a recent trip? Even better. Likewise, if you embarked on a special project during COVID, we'd like to share your activities in our "Year in Review." Contact Loretta at 703-231-0824 or Loretta@AtHomeInAlexandria.org if you have something to share.

Learn more about Memory Cafés

Have you heard of a "memory café"? This can be a great resource for individuals with any form of dementia or brain disorder. The café concept utilizes a variety of structured activities to promote social interaction, engagement, cognition and reminiscing. It is designed to include a care partner too—and it's a way for a caregiver and partner to have a shared experience that is a break from their normal routine. AHA is well networked with companies that are offering helpful services to older adults in our community at no charge. Here is some information about two such groups: Old Dominion Home Care's Rachel Gilbert leads a memory café in partnership with Silverado Memory Care and Dementia Care Connections. The event is held on the second Wednesday of each month from 10-11 a.m. Contact Rachel at rgilbert@olddominionhomecare.com, if you are interested.

Senior Helpers Home Care, in connection with Joan Sutton of Connections for Seniors, LLC, also leads a memory café the first Friday of each month. To learn more, contact Bella Desai: bdesai@seniorhelpers.com. Both events are virtual for at least the next few months.

Remembering Richard Simmons

by Executive Director Cele Garrett

AHA member Richard Simmons passed away in late June from cancer at age 86. Dick was not a regular at AHA social events, but he sure was a great advocate for our organization and recruited some of our current members. He was always happy to hear from me when I checked in with him. And, if you prodded him a bit, you could get a funny story out of him. (I feel fortunate to have received a few of his lovely handwritten notes.)

Dick enjoyed a long and successful career, which includes his position as Chief Financial Officer of the *Washington Post* during the Katharine Graham years. For brevity's sake, I won't recount here his accomplishments but offer the following links to those who'd like to read more at [Jack Limbert's Blog](#) or at [Washington Post Obit](#). He was preceded in death by his wife and his son. In recent years, he had remarried.

I never succeeded at persuading Dick to give a talk to AHA members about his storied days at the Post. He seemed content to maintain a low profile in his later years, but his elegant Old Town home played host to many friends passing through as they traveled up and down the East Coast.



Photo from the *Washington Post*. Richard Simmons on the right with Donald Graham and Katharine Graham in 1991.



AHA Tackles Social and Racial Equity

by Jane King

One of my favorite activities as an AHA member has been leading the social and racial equity program each month. The interest of AHA members in enhancing their understanding of the varied origins and cultures of residents of this country, and especially Alexandria, is not a surprise. The remarkable diversity of the city's population appeals to many of us.

During this monthly program, we explore the kinds of experiences relevant to our minority residents through novels, non-fiction and local experts. These have engendered great discussions about our hopefully increased understanding of the lives of Blacks and Latinos/Latinas and Asians, here in Alexandria and as reported in the books we read. *The Night Watchman*, a novel by Louise Erdrich that focuses on Native Americans, is our next selection.

I am reminded each month of how impressed I am with my fellow AHA members. Our conversations (via Zoom so far) are both lively and insightful—and often reflect acute observations about the books or the perspectives of the speakers.

Jaqueline Tucker, the Social and Racial Equity Officer for the city, spoke to the group about her role. She was very honest about her views on the city's history, which has been marred by discrimination. But she has established a robust agenda that encourages community-wide participation and the strong support of city leaders to promote equity for all in the city. City Councilor Canek Aguirre, whose parents are first generation immigrants from Mexico, discussed his commitment to Latino residents of Alexandria. He has been particularly concerned about the high incidence of Covid among them and has worked to assure that health and other city services are available to them.

The novels we have read for the social and racial equity program have included *The Bluest Eye* by Toni Morrison, Colson Whitehead's *The Nickel Boys*, *The Vanishing Half* by Brit Bennett and *Interior Chinatown* by Charles Yu. We very recently met to talk about *Four Hundred Souls, a Community History of African America, 1619 to 2019*, edited by Ibram X. Kendi and Keisha N. Blain.

A desire to “do something about” the difficulties our minority populations face has resulted from our reading, hearing our speakers and our discussions. You will hear more about this soon. And if you are interested in these social and racial equity meetings, please sign up at the AHA website.

What's Up With AHA Members, Associates and Volunteers



Julie Gentry shares how she spent her summer vacation. “I flew to Islip, New York, to spend a week with my brother and sister-in-law (shown in photo above) in Wading River, on the North Shore of Long Island. One day, we ventured out to the New York Botanical Garden to see an exhibit by Kusama.

“Since my brother is the only person I know who would drive 45 minutes each way for coffee, we went to Aldo’s Coffee Co. in Greenport to get freshly roasted beans. Another day, we explored the Parrish Museum in Water Mill, close to the Hamptons, on the South Shore. There we were treated to the exhibition “Affinities for Abstraction—Women Artists on Eastern Long Island 1950-2020.”

“You can’t vacation unless you have a special food treat. We went to Greenport again to have a lobster roll at Crabby Jerry’s. On my last night of vacation, we had a ‘take away’ picnic at the very rustic Wading River Beach and Tennis Club on the Long Island Sound.”

Bob Eiffert reported **L Liddle**, in addition to providing food, beverage and fun conversation for Men’s Night Out, also led a tour of the home’s beautiful art works, including some of **Ann Liddle’s** sculpture. Ann, L, and her father completely rebuilt the house in the 1970’s from a near shell to a showplace. You can see Ann Liddle’s work at the Lorton Workhouse Art Center.

Dine Around had a lively group of 13 members meeting in-person on July 20. **Penelope Roberts** reported it was good to see so many for this event since the beginning of the pandemic. The group met at the Bastille Brasserie and Bar on North Fayette Street.

Have You Checked Out Vitality Society™ Yet?

by Executive Director Cele Garrett

Last summer, AHA teamed up with Vitality Society™, an online health and fitness program founded by Meredith Oppenheim. The program allows you to take an unlimited number of virtual classes ranging from yoga, Zumba, Pilates, Tai Chi/Qigong, barefoot therapy, barre, mixed media art studio, balance training and many others.

The program has evolved this past year. For starters, Vitality Society™ began recording select classes for members to view whenever they wish at a later time. That’s been a wonderful benefit for those of us whose schedules do not always allow us to participate live. Many new facets have been added like Vitality University, where members lead presentations on a variety of topics. (AHA member and retired scientist Carmen Raventos-Suarez, led a presentation on virology and vaccines several months ago.) Other offerings include the recent four-part Plant-Based Eating and Entertaining series and the All-Body Strengthening series.

The monthly fee is \$30; AHA members pay \$20. Right now, you can try the service for free for 14 days. Contact the AHA office if you’re interested in trying Vitality Society™.



Vitality Society™ enthusiasts Joanne Broderick, Susanne O’Neill, Cele Garrett, Ruth Arnold and founder Meredith Oppenheim.

Redevelopment at the Old “Mirant Plant”

The redevelopment of the old “Mirant plant” coal-fired, electrical generating plant into a mixed-use site including housing, retail and office space could take up to 10 years, a development company that bought the site estimates. Most progress depends on the time it takes to clean up the coal-fired site.

Hilco Redevelopment Partners bought the site, one of Alexandria’s largest industrial sites, and plans to build mixed use with views of a large swath of the Potomac River. The plant, officially named Potomac River Generating Station, a 71-year-old coal-fired power plant, was decommissioned in 2012 and Hilco then bought the site. PEPCO will continue to own part of the site for an electrical substation.

Hilco said it will be guided by Alexandria’s Old Town North Small Area Plan. The future development will include some affordable housing as well as dining and public open space along the Potomac. Hilco quoted Alexandria Mayor Justin Wilson as saying, “Everyone’s pretty excited to see the (coal plant) go away.”

(This information is from Ernie Lehman in collaboration with Bill Clayton.)

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Catch These Latest Virtual Events

by Executive Director Cele Garrett

We are all getting out of our homes and traveling more—and AHA is beginning to hold in-person gatherings more frequently again. Meanwhile, we will continue to look for opportunities to collaborate with area villages on virtual events. AHA generally does not record our virtual events, but on occasion, our partners sometimes will do so. Here are some recent AHA presentations that were recorded if you would like to view them. (If you are reading the printed version of this newsletter, go to your email box and click on the electronic version of this newsletter to grab the link.)

Downsize or “Staysize”: Helping you Clear your Spaces AHA was pleased to team up with Mount Vernon at Home and with Pro-Aging Network to offer a panel of experts we work with regularly: Pete Crouch of Crouch Realty Group; Karen Gardiner, a professional organizer and president of Simplify for Life; Shannon Hildreth with Ararity Auctions; and Maria Spetalnik of Conquer the Clutter. [Click here](#) for the recording.

Is a Medical Alert System Right For Me? AHA collaborated with Arlington Neighborhood Village, Mount Vernon at Home and Virginia Hospital Center to offer this informative talk about the features of a medical alert system. You can find the recording [here](#).

Two Star Chefs Who are Making a Difference. We thank Foggy Bottom West End Village for inviting our AHA members to a wonderful talk featuring celebrity chefs Jose Andres and Ris Lacoste in June. You can [watch the talk at your leisure](#) at Foggy Bottom West End’s YouTube channel.

Going on a Plastic Diet – How to reduce our use. Thanks go to the Silver Spring Village for introducing Jeanne Lenehan, who described her journey to reduce the use of plastics in her life. With statistics and graphics, the story is a wake-up call to all of us to identify where we can reduce recycling of plastics that are cluttering our planet. The slide show is available from the AHA office.

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