

A community of members ages 55+ helping one another to live safe, active and connected lives

## AHA Adjusts to New COVID Trends

by Executive Director Cele Garrett

Recently, we made the decision to cancel our in-person AHA social events for September, including our 10-year anniversary celebration. We hope to schedule the anniversary event at a later time when the current COVID surge is behind us.

We are still driving members and still doing in-home services. As an added precaution, members and volunteers should wear masks when riding in the car together and when in a member's home together.

The third dose of the Moderna and Pfizer-BioNTech vaccines are available for moderately or severely immunocompromised individuals. AHA remains in touch with the Alexandria Health Department and will keep our members apprised on local news regarding COVID. For questions regarding eligibility, visit <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/vaccines/recommendations/immuno.html>. The emailed version of this newsletter will have a hyperlink to the page. As always, the AHA office is available to help you make an online appointment if you do not use a computer regularly—and our volunteers can drive you to your appointment.

### Emergency Plans

As folks got out and about this spring and summer, there were more chances for falls and injuries. AHA assists our members with many types of non-medical care but we cannot respond to medical emergencies. If you are having a medical emergency, call 911.

If you should happen to be admitted to the hospital, you can rely on AHA for short-term help with collecting mail, bringing items to your hospital room, running errands, short-term plant watering and other logistical support. If it has been several years since you joined AHA and your local emergency contact information has changed, kindly contact our office so we can update your file. This information is kept confidential and used only in cases of emergency.

### Remembering Two Former AHA Members

by Cele Garrett

At the beginning of the summer, our former AHA member and Advisory Council member **Richard Hobson** passed away. Richard was a longtime resident of Alexandria, where he was active in many local causes, practiced law and was a devoted servant in local and state politics. He served two terms in Virginia's House of Delegates.

**Jack Sulser**, husband of AHA member Sally Ann Greer, passed away at his home at Goodwin House recently. Jack, a former AHA member, served in WWII. While serving in the Battle of the Bulge campaign, he was taken prisoner. Ultimately, he received many distinguished medals for his military service. When he returned stateside, Jack began a long career as a U.S. Foreign Service officer, then served part-time with the Department of State.

## September 2021 Calendar

The programs in this calendar are scheduled via Zoom. The AHA office will send you the Zoom link after you have registered for a program. The link will allow you to attend via computer or phone.

Sept. 10, Fri	Politics Forum: "America's Gripping Foreign Policy Challenges" discussion led by Dr. Helen Desfosses	1:30-3 pm
Sept. 14, Tue.	What's in the News	10-11:30 am
Sept. 14, Tue.	Ladies' Night In	5-7 pm
Sept. 17, Fri.	Roundtable Discussion with Carolyn Griffin, producing artistic director for Metro Stage. She will discuss the role that Metro Stage will play as the anchor of the new Arts and Cultural District in North Old Town.	10-11:30 am
Sept. 21, Tue.	Board Meeting	2-4 pm
Sept. 23, Thurs.	Social and Racial Equity Book Discussion: <i>Memorial Drive</i> , by Natasha Trethewey	10-11:30 am
Sept. 23, Thurs.	Men's Night In	5-6:30 pm
Sept. 27, Mon.	Readers' Theater	2-3 pm
Sept. 28, Tue.	What's in the News	10-11:30 am
Sept. 29, Wed.	Coffee and Conversation	10-11:30 am

***ZOOM – we love you!***

## September Program Highlights

**Tuesday, Sept. 14 and 28** AHA member Brenda Bloch-Young leads the group in a discussion of current events. She sends a list of topics, from international to local, to the group in advance of the program.

**Thursday, Sept. 23** Pulitzer Prize-winning poet and former U.S. Poet Laureate, Natasha Trethewey has first-hand knowledge of the devastating impact of violence in the home. She was 19 when her former stepfather murdered her mother; that excruciating pain is the subject of her new book *Memorial Drive: A Daughter's Memoir*. She also writes about growing up in the '60s in the Deep South as a mixed-race child.

**Monday, Sept. 27** Reader's Theater Group allows AHA members to participate in reading short plays or radio scripts coordinated by impresario Steve Nelson. It's always fun. Contact Steve Nelson at [sbnelson@gmail.com](mailto:sbnelson@gmail.com) to join as a reader or as part of the audience or sign up with AHA.

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### Catch the Next Alexandria TEDx Talk Event

Some AHA members will be attending the second annual Alexandria TED Talk that began in 2019 called The TEDx Oronoco Bay Park. (Last year's event was cancelled due to COVID.) TEDx Talks are the local independently organized events that follow the same format as the popular TED (technology, entertainment, design) Talks. Check out this year's speakers at [tedxoronocobaypark.com](http://tedxoronocobaypark.com). Tickets are now on sale.

### Words of Wisdom

AHA member Ruth Arnold was recently quoted in the *Washington Post's* John Kelly's *Washington* column. Asked for rare advice from readers, Ruth responded with advice from her father: "When in danger or in doubt, run in circles, scream or shout." And, "Time spent in reconnaissance is seldom wasted."

## Crossword Guru Shares Tips on Solving Puzzles

A few weeks ago, AHA hosted crossword whiz Adrienne Cadik, who presented a wealth of tips on how to better solve those puzzles that so many of us are addicted to. For those of the Zoom audience who are already experts, many of the tips were familiar to them. But the organized presentation along with examples and background hints and stories made it an educational exercise.

Crossword puzzles make us smarter. We learn new stuff, they are accessible and fun, we develop mental skills and are very satisfied when we finish them.



In 1913, Arthur Wynne created the first published crossword puzzle for the *New York World*, thus becoming the inventor of the first mobile game. The first *New York Times* puzzle appeared in 1942 as an opportunity to provide at-home entertainment during the bleak black-out evening hours of World War II. It is now the gold standard of puzzles.

Some of Cadik's basic rules are

- go easy on yourself
- keep lists or cheat sheets of odd answers
- practice, practice, practice
- look it up – use Google to learn new words or contemporary names
- start wherever you want
- learn frequent usages, abbreviations, tools, etc.

All puzzles should be solvable and educational but not punitive; there should be a good mix of words, special knowledge and wordplay, and they should appeal to a variety of groups and interest themes.

To solve the puzzles, keep an open mind; clues may have duplicate meanings; trust your skills in English patterns; pay attention to grammar and so many other wonderful tips were offered by Adrienne Cadik.

## And Speaking about Words

Former editor of this newsletter, Bill Clayton, has been pondering the evolution of words and language as it affects the English lexicon. Perplexed, Bill recently shared some of his thoughts about words and phrases seen more commonly in current speech and in written material. Thus, in Bill's words:

I tell you, sometimes the celebrated flexibility of the English (American English) language is puzzling. I ran across 'cosplay' in the newspaper. Online dictionaries called the word a portmanteau. Cosplay seems to mean dressing up in costume to play or portray a character. Portmanteau means word combination. The definitions mentioned anime, which I had to look up: Animation. Also, manga, a Japanese form of cartoon or comics.

Long ago, I struggled with "frenemies" and "romcom" and other made-up words sneaking into accepted speech, if only in some newspapers wanting to be hip or cool. Wait: Is "hip" or "cool" accepted speech?

These are words I would absolutely ban from accepted speaking or writing:

"Tasked" – why not assigned or ordered or requested or asked or required or commanded?

"Targeted" – why not picked or highlighted or affected or chosen or aimed at or selected?"

I tell ya' (sic), the English language is difficult. I have been studying it for 85 years and thought I knew everything. Today, I tried to learn a few terms in current English, prompted by my uncertainty about "maskless." I am now convinced that the (hyphenless?) maskless is accepted in ordinary English. I learned what 'critical race theory' is. (Don't ask me for a one-sentence definition).

Thanks to that eminent (hah!) Anglophile, James Carville, I was moved to learn the meaning of "wokeness" and "woke." As I understand it, wokeness roughly means awareness, but with a special meaning in current discussions of racism and inequity.

I have had to tackle the family of words ending in '-ize.' Chiefly, currently, "monetize" and "weaponize."

Years in devotion to the Queen's English, Bill Clayton.



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



**Bob Eiffert and Mike Curry** traveled to the Finger Lakes area of New York. Bob reported, “We spent several days wine tasting after our trip to our cottage in northern Wisconsin. While in Wisconsin, we drove down to Spring Green to tour architect Frank Lloyd Wright’s Taliesin, his studio and school. We also visited the President Gerald Ford Museum in Grand Rapids, Michigan. The drive was over 3,000 miles because of all the site seeing.”

At left, Bob Eiffert and Mike Curry in front of She-Qua-Ga Falls, meaning “tumbling waters,” in Montour Falls, New York.

**Brenda Bloch-Young** made a long-wished-for trip to the United Kingdom to visit her daughter who had rented a home in a small village on the Cornwall and Devon border. Brenda reported, “Since I hadn’t seen my daughter since November 2019, I was determined to visit her this summer after being vaccinated. While I had a wonderful trip, international travel is very challenging now.

“We visited many castles and abbeys from the 1300-1600s that are now managed by the National Trust. My favorite was Cotehele, a three-mile hike from a village along the River Tamar. The Tate Museum in St. Ives on the Northern coast is a lovely setting overlooking the sea. Port Isaac is the village where the PBS series *Doc Martin* is filmed; it is more charming in person!

“Cornwall has several celebrity chefs and Michelin starred restaurants that we sampled. One highlight was an eight-course dinner in a 14th Century stone barn on an estate that was awarded a Green Michelin Star for sustainability.”



At far left, Brenda Bloch-Young at the site in Plymouth where the Mayflower sailed for Massachusetts.

Left, Brenda in front of the *Doc Martin* house in Port Isaac in Cornwall.

**Sandy Heistad** and family were part of the “huge audience at Wolf Trap to see Renee Fleming, (at right) in August,” Sandy reported. “She encouraged us to join her in the second verse of *I Could Have Danced All Night* and we all did. It was a lovely program and the NSO seemed to be thrilled to have her and a full house.”

The huge audience shown on the far right.



# Don't Need the RMD Assets?

by Brenda Bloch-Young

Advice from Vanguard on Required Minimum Distributions: RMDs are designed to spread out your retirement savings and related taxes over your lifetime. If you don't depend on the money to satisfy your spending needs, you may want to consider these options.

1. Reinvesting your distributions in a taxable account to take advantage of continued growth. You can then add beneficiaries to that account without passing along future RMDs requirements to them.
2. Qualified charitable distributions, or QCDs, aren't subject to ordinary federal income taxes. As a result, they're excluded from your taxable income. Individuals can donate up to \$100,000 annually to qualified charities.

As always, we recommend that you consult with your financial advisor or tax provider for guidance.



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# Replacing Vaccination Cards

Alexandria, along with the rest of the country, has transitioned to a standard card issued by the CDC. If you would like to replace your old vaccination card with an updated card from the CDC, or if you have since lost your vaccination card, please call the Alexandria COVID-19 Hotline at 703-746-4988.

Please note that the Alexandria Health Department (AHD) will process these requests on a first-come, first-served basis and may require up to three weeks to complete a request. Additionally, AHD is only able to provide replacement CDC cards to individuals who received their vaccinations through AHD clinics. If you received your vaccine from another provider and need a record of your vaccination, please visit [vaccinate.virginia.gov](http://vaccinate.virginia.gov).

## For those whose level of maturity qualifies them to relate to it...

1966: Long hair  
2021: Longing for hair

1966: KEG  
2021: EKG

1966: Acid rock  
2021: Acid reflux

1966: Moving to California because it's cool  
2021: Moving to Arizona because it's warm

1966: Seeds and stems  
2021: Roughage

1966: Hoping for a BMW  
2021: Hoping for a BM

1966: Going to a new, hip joint  
2021: Receiving a new hip joint

1966: Rolling Stones  
2021: Kidney Stones

(snipped from the Beverley Hills, Alexandria, listserv)

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## IN THIS ISSUE

- P. 1 Executive Director's notes*
- P. 2 Calendar*
- P. 2 September Programs*
- P. 3 Crosswords*
- P. 3 Words*
- P. 4 What's Up*
- P. 5 RMD's*
- P.5 Vaccination Cards*
- P.5 Chuckles*