

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

In Your Mailbox...

By Executive Director Cele Garrett

We will soon turn the corner on an eventful year. Before we ring in 2022, I hope you will take the time to open an important envelope: It contains a letter from our outgoing board chair Bob Eiffert asking you to consider a contribution to AHA. Our organization is privately funded by individuals who believe in the services that AHA provides to our older neighbors. AHA is an independent nonprofit and we receive no local government funding—yet we do have expenses like any professional operation. Member dues represent 45% of our annual budget and we raise funds for the remainder.

We have an involved and caring board of directors, a core group of volunteers with great skills and compassion, and a small but mighty staff who care deeply about our members. Mary Ann Bier volunteers her time as our newsletter editor, Kathie Fricke gives hours each month managing our finances, Penelope Roberts has overseen more AHA events than I can count, and the list goes on.

Your contribution to AHA honors the work they do to keep this operation going. More important, it keeps our organization strong for the future. We work hard to be good stewards of our funds.

Over 600 people receive this monthly newsletter: members, volunteers, friends and community partners. Each one of you has been connected to AHA in one way or another. Thank you for considering a year-end gift to AHA. And thank you for cheering us on and supporting our members during another challenging year.



Changes to AHA Board of Directors

By Bob Eiffert, Board Chair

Susanne Adams will be leaving the board after two terms of service. Susanne is a very active volunteer with AHA who serves as a “buddy” for several of our members. She is a retired nurse, so she has been invaluable as we meet with prospective members. She serves as a volunteer driver and has been active on the Member Services Committee. She will continue with all these volunteer activities, including her invaluable work with AHA’s participation in the Scottish Walk. With this extensive background of service to AHA members, she brought a very helpful perspective to the board. She always evaluated issues through the lens of how they would impact members. She was especially insightful as we dealt with how AHA would respond to the pandemic. We will miss her on the board but we are thrilled that she will continue to serve our members so well. Thank you, Susanne!



To fill this and two other current vacancies, the Governance Committee identified three excellent candidates who were elected to the Board on Nov. 16 to begin serving in January 2022: **Ruth Arnold, Gretchen Klimoski and John Veldhuis**. We will introduce these new directors and new officers in more detail in the January 2022 issue of this newsletter.

December 2021 Calendar

The programs in this calendar are scheduled via Zoom unless otherwise noted. 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.

Dec. 4, Sat.	Scottish Walk - join the parade with us. Meet at the corner of Pitt and Wilkes.	10-12 noon
Dec. 4, Sat.	Alexandria Holiday Boat Parade viewing at the home of Nancy Kincaid, Alexandria House, 400 Madison St. Apt. 1408. Limited to 15 vaccinated AHA members and volunteers. Bring a drink of your choice. Snacks will be provided by Nancy,	5-7 pm
Dec. 9, Thurs.	Holiday Party at home of Christena Nielsen and Tom Crowley, 214 N. Royal Street. This first shift limited to 45 fully vaccinated guests.	5-6 pm
Dec. 9, Thurs.	Holiday Party at home of Christena Nielsen and Tom Crowley, 214 N. Royal Street. This second shift limited to 45 fully vaccinated guests.	6:30-7:30 pm
Dec. 13, Mon.	Holiday Dinner at A La Lucia, 315 Madison St. Use the private dining room entry on North Royal St. Three-course menu, \$38, does not include taxes, gratuities or drinks.	6:30-9 pm
Dec. 14, Tue.	What's in the News via Zoom	10-11:30 am
Dec. 14, Tue.	Board Meeting via Zoom	2-4 pm
Dec. 15, Wed.	Ladies' Night In via Zoom	5-6:30 pm
Dec. 16, Thurs.	Social and Racial Equity - continuing discussion of <i>Why are All the Black Kids Sitting Together in the Cafeteria?</i> , by Beverly Daniel Tatum via Zoom	10-11:00 am
Dec. 16, Thurs.	Men's Night In via Zoom	5-6:30 pm
Dec. 29, Wed.	Coffee and Conversation via Zoom	10-11:30 am

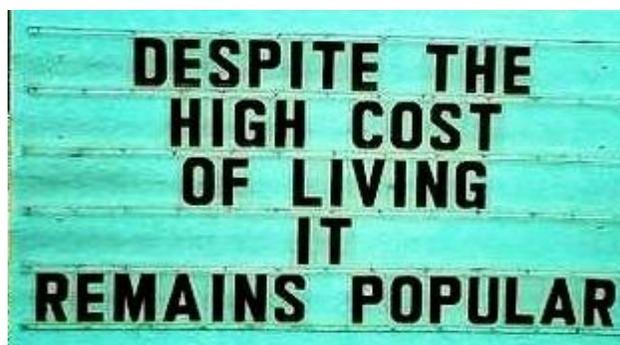
Holiday Events Information

To make the holiday parties safe and fun for everyone, please find further information on the AHA Hub at aha.clubexpress.com or contact the office for specific details for each event.



StrongerMemory™ a New AHA Offering in 2022 by Cele Garrett

Earlier this year, Goodwin House launched a new initiative to help stabilize or prevent cognitive decline. The program involves a curriculum that has been designed to stimulate the brain's prefrontal cortex (which governs our ability to retrieve memories). AHA has been considering this program for several months and, recently, made the decision to add this program to our offerings. We are pleased to announce that AHA volunteer Roberta McGregor will serve as facilitator of the first 12-week series. We will have an informational session about StrongerMemory™ in January and then will begin the weekly sessions in late January. AHA members can take part in the program at no charge.



Seen on a sign in Colorado

Meet an AHA Corporate Donor

By Cele Garrett

Back in 2016, AHA tackled two big projects: overhauling our web site and designing a new logo. We searched for a design firm that was top caliber and had deep experience in the nonprofit sector—and sticking to our limited budget was important. It was our great fortune to begin a working relationship with Ben Roberts and his team at the Alexandria design firm Six Half Dozen—and we continue to work with them to this day.

Ben has provided me with great advice and he has offered some creative tips to get our social media up to the next level. Admittedly, some of those ideas got put on hold when COVID began and AHA needed to turn our attention to some urgent matters. Make no mistake: Ben's ideas are still on my "wish list" and in 2022 we will create new member testimonial videos and enhance our marketing materials. I appreciate Six Half Dozen for helping us to do this affordably.

At the beginning of 2021, Ben quietly began contributing generously to AHA each month through the recurring donations feature on our web site. The firm doesn't make a big splash about its philanthropy, but I wanted to take a moment here to thank Ben and his team for the support they give to us, creatively *and* financially. Soon AHA will add a new page on our web site that recognizes our corporate donors; Six Half Dozen will have its rightful place there.

AHA Member Survey Coming Soon

By Cele Garrett

AHA's purpose is to provide social, practical and emotional support for our members. It is important to give each and every member a chance to provide feedback on your experiences with AHA. Knowing which aspects of AHA services you value the most helps our future planning—and it lets us know which areas may need improvement or enhancements.

Our last member survey was in 2019 so we chose early 2022 to get your thoughts about how well AHA is meeting your needs. We are pleased to be working with a professional firm that is generously providing services to AHA on a *pro bono* basis. Customer Care Measurement & Consulting (CCMC) is headed by President and Co-Founder Scott Broetzmann, a longtime resident of Alexandria. Though the firm is located here, it provides services for clients across the country like AARP, SHEA and Squire Patton Boggs. Scott and his colleague Loydis Cummings have helped us to design this survey and, most important, will provide important third-party analysis of the information you share with us.

Members will be able to complete the survey online. Those who prefer to complete the survey on paper will have the chance to do that.

Thank you in advance for taking part in the survey and look for more information in January.



Making Health Care Choices

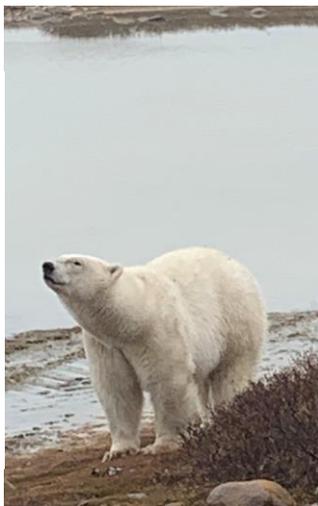
At the Nov. 19 Roundtable discussion group, featured speakers Colleen Duewel and Jane Euler, from Lionheart Eldercare & Consulting, explained the many facets of successful care in aging and illness. Once again, we were reminded to have our legal documents in place: wills, trusts, powers of attorney for financial and health care specifying an agent or proxy to speak for us and a medical directive that specifies our end-of-life medical wishes. Virginia offers a medical directive form, known as POLST or POST. Discuss this with your doctor and your family.

The speakers explained the differences in home care (private) versus home health care (covered by Medicare), hospice versus palliative care, and how to have the conversation with family or friends whom you choose to carry out your wishes. Using the Five Wishes outline (FiveWishes.org) is a good starting point, as is The Conversation Project (TheConversationProject.org).

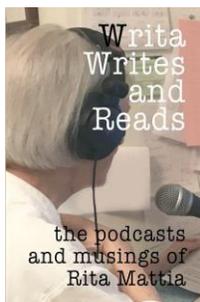
Jane Euler explained how an elder care doula, or guide, can provide the emotional, logistical and physical help in an end-of-life scenario or when facing a serious condition. A doula can work with hospice care.

What's Up With AHA Members, Associates and Volunteers

Penny Roberts, an inveterate adventure traveler, meets a local resident in Churchill, Canada. Stay tuned for the next Armchair Travels where Penny will share more photos of her recent trip to the far north.



On Oct.11, Canadian Thanksgiving Day, **Nancy and John Veldhuis** were once again enjoying a day in and around Niagara Falls, Ontario. They passed through this popular site to visit with their Canadian offspring and attend their granddaughter's wedding near Toronto.



AHA member, author and podcaster **Rita Mattia** has written a second book— *Writa Writes and Reads*— which is currently available online at Barnes & Noble.

Rita says, “We've gathered up fifty-five stories from my (recently ended) podcast, added dozens of rarely seen vintage images, and have created a beautiful book that's every bit as good a read as the first.”

Go to www.BarnesandNoble.com and search for the author or book title to purchase the book.

Prepare for a Winter Emergency

by Alan Dinsmore

In our winter thoughts the snow is glistening in the lane. Beautiful to anticipate except when the power goes out. Power outages do happen even in our usually placid seasons. Life is better when you plan for this. What to do?

CREATE A PLAN - with family, friends and neighbors to make sure that it is responsive to your needs.

- Make a list of your contact information available to family and friends. You should let these contacts know when you leave and where you plan to reside until you can return.
- If you are living in a retirement or assisted living community, determine the procedures for evacuation and emergencies like power outages. Ask if the facility has a backup generator.
- Make a list of your medications. This list should also note the medications requiring refrigeration. You can protect these with small cold packs available at most drug stores.
- Make sure you have extra batteries. Don't forget special batteries for hearing aids.
- Do you have any assistive devices requiring electric power? Some have battery backup, and you may need some special batteries to run them in an emergency. Portable backup battery power sources are available.

WHEN YOU MUST EVACUATE -

If you need to leave your home, make sure you have a carrying case for your medications, back up batteries and – most importantly – copies of medical insurance cards, photo ID, and your durable power of attorney and/or medical power of attorney. Don't forget your doctors' names and the pharmacy you use.

WHEN YOU CAN STAY HOME -

Sign up for SMART911 and any registry that will help first responders identify you and your needs.

Don't forget that meal, grocery delivery and pharmacy deliveries may be subject to temporary disruptions. Do you have a battery-powered portable radio? How old fashioned, right? Get one. Make sure that your cell phone is fully charged, and you have a portable charger.

All that done, sit back and enjoy the snowfall.



The Five Languages of Love

by Bob Eiffert

The Five Languages of Love is the title of a book by therapist Gary Chapman, Ph.D., a presenter at the annual Northern Virginia Caregivers Conference on Nov. 9. He developed his love language theory over years of couples counseling, where he very often heard that two individuals in a relationship did not experience love from each other, although they were often in very long-term relationships. He learned that each person has his or her own way of experiencing love, and that seldom do two people have the same way to express it. The two people need not be married or in a partnership; it could be a parent and child, a brother and sister, or just two friends.

His major premise is that we all need to love and feel loved. Over his years of providing therapy, he identified five different “languages” of love. Individuals need to determine which of the five patterns identifies the way that they experience love, and the other person in the relationship needs to do the same thing. By learning each other’s style, they can communicate love much more effectively and feel loved themselves. His five languages of love are (in no particular order):

- Words of Affirmation – This person experiences love through words of affirmation, which can be as simple as, “you look very nice today.”
- Acts of Service – This person experiences love through the actions of the other, such as performing tasks that make their lives better or smoother. This could be as simple as washing dishes or doing laundry.
- Gift Giving and Receiving – This person experiences love through gifts. The gifts need not be elaborate or expensive; it could be as simple as picking and presenting a flower.
- Quality Time – This person experiences love through spending quality time with the other. This means being fully present with the other and listening and sharing about what is important to them, without outside distractions.
- Physical Touch – This person experiences love through touch, which could be as simple as holding hands or touching a shoulder tenderly.

Dr. Chapman posits that we each have a primary love language that defines how we receive and feel love. No one language is better than another. Once we understand our own and the other person’s love language, we can much more effectively communicate love with each other and strengthen the relationship.

Dr. Chapman and his partners have created a website with a free “quiz” to determine your own language of love. It is available at www.5LoveLanguages.com. Both the website and the book are excellent resources for enhanced communications and relationships.

Board of Directors

Bob Eiffert, Chair	Pamela Nelson, Vice Chair
Victoria Almquist, Sec’y	Kathie Fricke, Treasurer
Susanne Adams	Sherry de Vries
Sandy Heistad	Barbara “Babs” Waters
Marjorie Connor	Adam Perry
Susan Pettey	Susanne O’Neill

Executive Director
Cecile (Cele) Garrett

Editor: Mary Ann Bier

Marketing Manager
Loretta Darst

Advisory Council

Laurie Blackburn	Peter Crouch
Louise Kenny	Jessica LeFevre
Ernie Lehmann	Mitch Opalski
Jan Pomerantz	Vicki Vasques

Operations Co-Managers
Dara Surratt and Megan McIntyre



CONTACT US

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

AHA@AtHomeInAlexandria.org
www.AtHomeInAlexandria.org



— AT HOME IN —
ALEXANDRIA

3139 Mt. Vernon Avenue
Alexandria, VA 22305

IN THIS ISSUE

- P. 1 Holiday giving*
- P. 1 Board notes*
- P. 2 Calendar*
- P. 2 New program*
- P. 3 Corporate thanks*
- P. 3 Member survey*
- P. 3 Roundtable summary*
- P. 4 What's Up*
- P. 4 Prepare for Winter*
- P. 5 Expressing love*