

The AHA Member Satisfaction Survey Results Are In

The results of a recent member satisfaction survey show AHA members enjoy a strong and solid experience. The independent study – conducted pro bono by Alexandria-based Customer Care Measurement & Consulting (CCMC) – reveals that 83% of AHA’s members are very satisfied overall, and 89% would recommend AHA. Collectively, the survey findings confirm the invaluable role that AHA serves in supporting seniors in the Alexandria community. According to Scott M. Broetzmann, CCMC President, CEO and principal consultant for AHA’s survey, “AHA member satisfaction and loyalty are clearly at a world class level.”

Commissioned by AHA’s Board of Director’s, the survey was sent electronically to AHA’s 200 full and associate members. One hundred and five members (53%) responded to the survey sharing their membership experience. This provides AHA’s board with a robust and reliable perspective of member satisfaction as well as indicating opportunities for strengthening the AHA experience.

AHA’s professional staff and it’s volunteer community were the most highly rated aspect of the member experience:

- 94% of AHA full members and 91% of associate members are Very Satisfied with AHA’s professional staff.
- On average, more than 95% of all members are Very Satisfied with the professionalism, courtesy and helpfulness of AHA staff.

Members were equally impressed with AHA’s volunteer community:

- On average, 88% of members are Very Satisfied with AHA volunteers overall.
- Over 90% of members are Very Satisfied with volunteer professionalism/courtesy (91%), helpfulness (91%) and follow-through on promises to fulfill member requests (90%).

Despite the overwhelmingly favorable feedback shared by AHA members, the survey findings also revealed three key opportunities for strengthening the member experience: In particular, the survey suggests that members would value:

- An AHA website and portal that are easier to use (for example., finding your way around and registering for events).
- A continued effort to expand and diversify AHA’s event programming.
- More emphasis on welcoming and engaging associate members.

Using the survey results, AHA’s Board of Directors has established a working leadership team under the guidance of board member Gretchen Klimoski to support a strategic planning process (see page 3) that will address these and other considerations for sustained excellence that AHA members have come to expect.

October 2022 Calendar

<p>Some events in this calendar may take place in person or on 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.</p> <p>All scheduled in-person events are open to those who are fully vaccinated.</p>		
Saturday, Oct. 8	AHA Happy Hour at the Alexandria House, 23 rd floor, 400 Madison Street. Bring a beverage and snack to share.	5-7pm
Tuesday, Oct. 11	What's in the News – via Zoom.	10-11:30am
Tuesday, Oct. 11	Ladies' Night Out at Vaso's Kitchen located at 1225 Powhatan Street. – Limit 10.	5-7pm
Wednesday, Oct. 12	Politics Forum: Topic to be determined. Check calendar on AHA Hub after Oct. 5.	1-2:30pm
Thursday, Oct. 13	Movie Group – discussion of <i>Mr. Jones</i> and <i>North by Northwest</i> . – via Zoom.	2:30-3:30pm
Wednesday, Oct. 19	Balance, Flexibility and Strength, Oh My! Sponsored by Bethesda Area Metro Village – via Zoom.	1-2:30pm
Wednesday, Oct. 19	"What I Wish I Knew" with Jim Zalewski from Everly Wheatley Funeral Home – In-person event at Mount Vernon Unitarian Church, 1909 Windmill Lane, Alexandria, VA 22307. Sponsored by Mt. Vernon at Home. Registration not required.	1:30-3pm
Thursday, Oct. 20	Men's Night Out at Elo's Italian restaurant at 1603 Commonwealth Ave.	5-6:30pm
Friday, Oct. 21	Roundtable: "Password Security" with Brenda Bloch-Young – via Zoom.	10-11am
Monday, Oct. 24	Readers Theater – via Zoom.	2-3:30pm
Tuesday, Oct. 25	Coffee and Conversation at Royal Restaurant located at 730 North Saint Asaph Street. Free parking lot and street parking available. – Limit of 12.	10-11:30am
Tuesday, Oct. 25	Dine Around at Old House Cosmopolitan Grill, located at 1024 Cameron Street. – Limit of 10.	6-8pm
Thursday, Oct. 27	Social & Racial Equity Group – Topic to be determined. Check calendar on AHA Hub after Oct. 5.	10-11am
Thursday, Oct. 27	Lunch Around at Del Ray Cafe, located at 205 East Howell Avenue. – Limit of 10.	Noon



October Program Notes

October 13: Movie Group. Join the group to discuss *Mr. Jones* and *North by Northwest*. *Mr. Jones* is a film based on real people and real events. The central character is Gareth Jones, a young Welsh journalist who travels to the Soviet Union in the early 1930's hoping to interview Stalin. Instead, he ends up uncovering the dictator's big secret, the Ukrainian famine.

North by Northwest is the classic suspense film directed by Alfred Hitchcock that finds advertising executive Roger Thornton pursued by ruthless spy Phillip Vandamm after Thornhill is mistaken for a government agent. Hunted relentlessly by Vandamm's associates, Thornhill ends up on a cross-country journey, meeting the mysterious Eve Kendall resulting in a number of iconic action sequences.

October 21: Roundtable. Password Security. We have all been warned many times that strong passwords are critical for our security online. As a society, we actually do this poorly. Why don't we take this seriously if we are genuinely concerned about security and hacking? AHA member Brenda Bloch-Young will present the best practice advice from experts and explain what people actually do.

Would you like to walk in the woods while still in Alexandria? Try the Winkler Botanical Preserve at 5400 Roanoke Avenue, recently acquired by the Northern Virginia Regional Parks Authority (NOVA Parks).

The Preserve features streams, a pond, a waterfall, and trails. It was created in 1979 as a charity by Catherine Winkler Herman, aiming to protect natural space in rapidly urbanizing Alexandria. The property includes a unique log cabin lodge available for use by appointment. Parking is available; hours are 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. daily.

Strategic Planning Process to Begin

By Gretchen Klimoski

On behalf of the AHA Board of Directors, let me thank the members who took the time to respond to the member satisfaction survey last March. Your responses are most encouraging, but we believe there is always room for improvement. To this end we will begin a strategic planning process this month.

While the survey clearly identified strengths and weaknesses from a member perspective, the core planning committee made up of board members and staff will also be seeking input from volunteers, members of standing committees and relevant community organizations to identify a more comprehensive list of the needs and issues which AHA's leadership needs to consider.

Once this list is compiled the work of selecting three to four key issues will begin. Subcommittees will be formed to develop and recommend approaches to addressing each need or issue. Each subcommittee will be comprised of a board member, AHA volunteers and members. With this in mind, some of you may be asked to give AHA three or four hours of your time to participate in these deliberations.

By spring of 2023 an action plan will be put forth and work will begin to further strengthen AHA.

Did you know that AHA offers...

...free notary services. AHA treasurer and volunteer extraordinaire Kathie Fricke is a notary public, and she can provide this service at no charge to AHA members. Kathie offers "curb service" and will come to you. It doesn't get any easier than that! Call AHA if you need the services of a notary.

Chuckle of the week from Bill Clayton:

We have so many doctors, both of us, that the inevitable happened: Today, a woman phoned saying, "Mr. Clayton, your checkup is due with Dr. R (name abbreviated for privacy). I stammered and then asked, "What is this about?" "Your appointment tomorrow with your oncologist." More stammers, and then the caller said, "Oh, I checked the file, and this is for your wife." (A confusion with Teddye's name, Theodora.)

Once upon a time, she came close to being drafted into the army. She, Theodora, had a roommate first-named Fleetwood. Both got notices from the Selective Service. They proved they were women and avoided the draft.

Get Ready to **VOTE**

Early voting began on Sept. 23 for the Nov. 8 General Election in the City of Alexandria and in all districts in Virginia. In Alexandria, the ballot consists only of a contest for United States House of Representatives. Although a simple ballot this time, your vote is still important.

All registered voters in Virginia are eligible to vote by mail or in person.

The deadline to vote early is Saturday, Nov. 5, at 5 p.m. You may vote at the election office at 132 North Royal Street, Monday through Saturday, and Sunday, Oct. 30. Free parking is available. Early voting will also be available at Charles E. Beatley, Jr. Central Library, 5005 Duke Street from Oct. 28 through Nov. 5 during library hours.

Applications to request a mail-in ballot must be received in the Office of Voter Registration and Elections by 5 p.m., Friday, Oct. 28. Access an application in one of the following ways:

- By visiting vote.elections.virginia.gov to submit an application online.
- By downloading the application available on www.alexandriava.gov/elections.
- By calling the Office of Voter Registration and Elections at 703-746-4050 to request that an application be mailed to you

Ballot drop boxes will be available at all polling places on Nov. 8, from 6 a.m. to 7 p.m. A secure outdoor drop box, under video surveillance, is available in front of the Office of Voter Registration and Elections, 24 hours a day, through Nov. 8 at 7 p.m. Additionally, a ballot drop box will be available at the same dates and times listed for in-person voting at Beatley Library.

The deadline to register to vote for the Nov. 8 General Election is Oct. 17.

For more information, and for reasonable disability accommodation, contact the Office of Voter Registration and Elections by email at voters@alexandriava.gov or call 703-746-4050.



What's Up With AHA Members, Associates and Volunteers



AHA members and guests enjoyed the first indoor happy hour at The View at Alexandria House condominium since the beginning of the pandemic. **Steve Nelson** behind the drinks table took the photo. There were 24 members in attendance including new members, **Antonio Frato** and **Pamela Johnson**, at right above.



Brenda Bloch-Young and **Barbara Rosenfeld** walking along the Mad River Trail in Vermont on Sept. 1. Fall is in the air as the leaves were beginning to turn.



New members, **Jayne and Walt Owiesny**, joined the Lunch Around group for a delightful lunch at Ada's in Old Town. Besides all the great eateries, they especially enjoy the walkability of Old Town.



On August 30th **Bob and Audrey Faden**, at left, participated in an art show at Brightview Woodburn Senior Living, a facility in Annandale, VA, where Audrey now resides. Audrey was born in Kenya to British parents. She has been interested in natural history all her life, and her paintings reflect that. She has always painted in watercolors but in the 1970s she added oils and acrylics to her repertoire.

From 1979 to 1989, Audrey led photographic safaris to Kenya, Tanzania and Seychelles and most of her paintings of African animals and birds were made during that period. She continued to paint flowers and other natural objects whenever she had the time. For many years she used to send birthday cards with original paintings to her mother in Australia. She also made line drawings for booklets and scientific

Green Street Going Green

By Nancy Berg

After hearing a talk on climate change on an AHA zoom program this spring, I decided to install solar panels on my Green Street house. I thought it would be a glamorous adventure, but it was a routine, if somewhat expensive, venture.

The company that did the work - Solar Energy World - was professional and efficient; the main problem was getting permission from the Board of Architectural Review, which meant accessing the city's ALEX311 system. Once that was done, and the panels finally arrived from China, the installation occurred with dispatch, see photo below. Two trucks rolled up the second week in August, filled with equipment and a large team of workers. I now have a website that connects my house with Dominion Energy and shows how much electricity is being generated by the panels.



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Consider Your QCD for Your RMD

By Brenda Bloch-Young

Many of us are feeling less prosperous this year as a result of financial markets performance. Higher interest rates impact the value of bonds in our portfolios and higher inflation often impacts retirees on fixed incomes. We need to accept less than stellar performance after many years of strong appreciation of our investments in retirement accounts.

Note that 2022 RMDs (Required Minimum Distributions) are based on the balance in the account as of Dec. 31, 2021. Most of us will be faced with record high withdrawals this year based on previous investment performance. Now is a good time to evaluate your 2022 income and consider using the Qualified Charitable Distribution (QCD) for year-end giving.

A QCD meets the RMD requirement without being included in your current year taxable income. It is an excellent planning strategy to comply with the withdrawal requirements and reduce taxable income as well as the potential increase in Medicare Part B and Part D premiums.

Many of us are familiar with Income-Related Monthly Adjusted Amount (IRMAA) brackets. Your annual income impacts your contribution to your Medicare coverage. For higher income retirees, there is often a surcharge. There are published income brackets based on our filing status and our modified adjusted gross income. Income in a specific year will impact your contributions two years later. You can check your bracket at

<https://secure.ssa.gov/poms.nsf/lnx/0601101020>

This may be the ideal year to use the QCD for all or a portion of your RMD. Check with your tax or financial advisor if you have questions.

AHA member Brenda Bloch-Young is a retired CPA who currently is one of the moderators of the Investment Forum for George Mason University's Osber Lifelong Learning Institute (OLLI).

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ALEXANDRIA

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SPECIAL DAYS IN OCTOBER

OCT 4 YOM KIPPUR

OCT 10 INDIGENOUS PEOPLE DAY

OCT 31 HALLOWEEN

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