

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

## In your mailbox...

By Cele Garrett

By now you may have received a letter in your mailbox from outgoing AHA board member Susan Pettey, asking you to consider a contribution here at year's end. As you likely know, we are a nonprofit organization privately funded by individuals who believe in the importance of our work. We receive no local government funding. Our wonderful members—both associate members and those who receive our full range of services—pay a yearly fee. Those member dues represent 45% of our annual budget and we raise funds for the remainder needed to run the operations. Twice each year, we actively invite our friends and neighbors to support AHA. Our year-end campaign is one of those times. (The other is when we join other Alexandria nonprofits for the Spring2ACTion campaign.) Thank you for considering this.

If you did not receive a letter in the mail, we gratefully welcome your contribution via our secure web site: [www.AtHomeInAlexandria.org/donate](http://www.AtHomeInAlexandria.org/donate). Nearly 700 people receive this monthly newsletter: members, volunteers, friends and community partners. Each of you has been connected to AHA in one way or another. Thank you for cheering us on and believing in the work we do to make the lives of our older neighbors safer and more enriching.

Sending our warmest wishes for a safe and peaceful holiday.



## A Tribute to Susan Pettey

By Bob Eiffert

AHA salutes outgoing board member Susan Pettey and thanks her for her service. Susan has been the long-time chair of the Member Services Committee and has led the committee through the process of establishing the Buddy Program, which matches our most vulnerable members with a “buddy” who checks on the member regularly. Committee members, including Susan, meet with every prospective new full member in a home visit. Susan helps the committee explore possible new services, such as medical note-taking for members. She has hosted events in her home. Susan regularly reports to the board on the committee's monthly meetings.



An attorney, Susan has reviewed a variety of legal documents for AHA. She is serving on the planning team that is preparing for a strategic look at AHA's programs and services and will recommend what areas to study further, based on the results of the recent member survey. She has been steadfast and wholly reliable in everything she undertakes. We will miss her warmth and commitment on the board but are pleased she will continue to be involved with AHA.

## December 2022

## Program Notes for December

Please note that the programs in this calendar may be scheduled via Zoom or in person. 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.

If the program is in person, it is limited to those who are fully vaccinated

Saturday, Dec. 3	<b>AHA Participates in the Alexandria Scottish Christmas Walk</b> – check AHA Hub for details on where to meet.	11am
Saturday, Dec. 3	<b>Viewing of 22nd Annual Alexandria Holiday Boat Parade of Lights</b> – at Nancy Kincaid’s home in the Alexandria House, at 400 Madison Street. Nancy will provide light snacks. Registration is limited to 12 guests. All guests must be fully vaccinated.	5-7pm
Tuesday, Dec. 6	<b>Ring in the Holidays with a Brass Quintet Concert</b> – sponsored by Goodwin Living at Home. - via Zoom.	1pm
Thursday, Dec. 8	<b>The Avalon Theatre: Then &amp; Now</b> - sponsored by Northwest Neighbors Village (NNV). - via Zoom.	2-3pm
Tuesday, Dec. 13	<b>What’s in the News</b> - via Zoom.	10-11:30am
Wednesday, Dec. 14	<b>Movie Group</b> – discussion of “Mrs. Harris Goes to Paris” and “The Lives of Others” - via Zoom.	4-5pm
Thursday, Dec. 15	<b>Men’s Night Out</b> at Elo’s Italian, located at 1603 Commonwealth Avenue. Limit of 8.	5-6:30pm
Friday, Dec. 16	<b>Dine Around</b> – at Clyde’s, 1700 North Beauregard Street, Limit of 8.	6pm
Monday, Dec. 19	<b>Ring in the Holidays with a Clarinet Ensemble Concert</b> – sponsored by Goodwin Living at Home. - via Zoom.	2pm
Monday, Dec. 19	<b>AHA Holiday Dinner at A La Lucia</b> – located at 315 Madison St., Limit of 25.	6pm
Tuesday, Dec. 20	<b>AHA Board Meeting</b> - via Zoom.	2-4pm
Sunday, Dec. 25	<b>AHA Christmas Lunch</b> – Mia’s Italian, located at 500 King Street., Limit of 8.	1pm
Tuesday, Dec. 27	<b>Coffee and Conversation</b> at The Royal Restaurant, located at 730 North St. Asaph Street.	10-11:30am

**Tuesday, Dec. 6 Brass Quintet Concert.** Goodwin Living at Home is celebrating the holiday season with a brass quintet concert featuring musicians from a premier military band. Mark your calendar and save the date.

**Thursday, Dec. 8 The Avalon Theatre: Then & Now.** The Avalon Theatre is the oldest operating movie theater in Washington, D.C. and the city’s only nonprofit cinema house. Over the years it has remained a highly valued institution in the Chevy Chase neighborhood and the entire metropolitan area. As the theater approaches its centennial year, there are many fascinating stories to be told about its history and its architecture. Director of Development at the Avalon Theatre Sarah Pokempner is the guest speaker.

**Wednesday, Dec. 14 Movie Group:** Join the discussion of “Mrs. Harris Goes to Paris.” A widowed cleaning lady in 1950s London falls madly in love with a couture Dior dress and decides that she must have one of her own. Also, watch “The Lives of Others,” a film about the monitoring of East Berlin residents by agents of the Stasi, East Germany’s secret police. The film’s authenticity was considered praiseworthy given that the director grew up outside East Germany and was 16 when the Berlin Wall fell.

**Monday, Dec. 19 AHA Holiday Dinner at A La Lucia.** Join Nancy Kincaid and friends for AHA’s holiday dinner celebration at A La Lucia. This will be the last year for our long-standing December tradition, as the restaurant is closing for good this spring. Reservations are limited to 25; register on AHA Hub or to the AHA office.

**To register for all programs, call the AHA office at 703-231-0824, email [AHA@AtHomeInAlexandria.org](mailto:AHA@AtHomeInAlexandria.org) or go to the AHA Hub at [AHA.ClubExpress.com](http://AHA.ClubExpress.com).**

Saturday, Dec. 31

*Happy  
New  
Year*

## Thank You, AHA Volunteers!

What a very busy year AHA has had! Covid remained a disrupter in all our lives, though our members continued to press on and get back out into the world as safely as possible. Member requests ramped up as people began to take care of things they had put on hold for a while. Our volunteers, as always, answered the call. We cannot count how many times one of us in the office would say, “I don’t know what we would do without...” The last part of the sentence would be the name of yet another volunteer who once again helped us out in a pinch. We are beyond grateful to each of you.

We would be remiss not to mention the leadership volunteers who take on big projects for AHA: Mary Ann Bier serves as our fantastic newsletter editor. Penelope Roberts has had a genius hand in every area of our operations and has overseen more AHA events than we could count. Susan Pettey has led our member services committee in superb fashion for many years. Kathie Fricke has given selfless time and energy as our volunteer treasurer for the past three years. And there are so many others in our group who give so generously of their time to make our AHA the special community that it is.

Thank you from the bottom of our hearts!

Cele, Loretta, Dara and Tegan

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## Remembering Diane de Guzman



AHA member Diane de Guzman died on November 22 of pancreatic cancer. Her extraordinary life includes working at the Saratoga Race Course, Belmont Park and at Churchill Downs as a young adult. Diane earned a JD in International Law and Law Studies at George Washington University, where she discovered her passion for humanitarian work. She spent more than 30 years working in Kenya, South Sudan, Somalia and Ethiopia, where she worked for international humanitarian organizations like Save the Children, Bread for the World and the UN. A lover of cultural experiences, history, jazz and many other pursuits, Diane made numerous friends wherever she went.

## Decluttering to Downsizing

**Keep, Gift, Sell, Donate, Trash** – AHA corporate supporter and real estate specialist Peter Crouch uses these tips to guide clients in downsizing their possessions when it’s time to consider moving to smaller quarters. Certified organizer Karen Gardiner of Simplify for Life uses the acronym **SPACE – Sort, Purge, Assign, Containerize and Edit** – to help clients organize their homes and possessions whether they plan to move or not.

Both Crouch and Gardiner presented their ideas on how to make the next moves in our lives easier and more efficient, at a recent program at the Beatley Library. This does not mean it may not be painful, but having a plan gives structure to the effort and relieves a lot of stress, they said.

Whether you decide to move to a smaller home or condominium, or to a life-care community, and if the move is not urgent, it is best to find the next residence first, Crouch and Gardiner said. Using floorplans to guide your downsizing and decluttering will help you determine what can stay and what needs to go. If you plan to stay in your home but need to make it more accessible and safer for your current lifestyle and health needs, then decluttering is essential in the planning process for any home remodeling. Gardiner suggests, “Act like you are moving, going one room at a time” to liberate your possessions. It will create “calm, comfort and contentment,” Gardiner says.

There were audience questions and comments that provided real-life scenarios that many of us are struggling with as we seek the next stage in our lives. Both Pete and Karen can be reached for further consultation: [pete@crouchrealtygroup.com](mailto:pete@crouchrealtygroup.com); [karen@simplifyforlife.com](mailto:karen@simplifyforlife.com)



Peter Crouch and Karen Gardiner at the downsizing/decluttering program.



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

November Happy Hour at the home of **Bob Eiffert** and **Mike Curry** and co-hosted by **Pam and Steve Nelson**.



**Richard Merritt, Jim Woolwine, Sandy Heistad and Mary Lou Collins** enjoying the buffet.



Volunteer **Peggy Heidel** with new members **Richard Merritt** and **Mary Lou Collins** enjoy AHA Happy Hour.



AHA members volunteering at the Alexandria Rotary Club, Taste for Giving. Standing, **Loretta Darst** and **Mary Ann Bier**. Seated, **Ann Ewers**, friend of **Susanne O'Neill** (center), and **Barb Reed**.

## AHA at The National Capital Radio and Television Museum

AHA members **Steve Nelson** and **Alan Dinsmore**, with memories of the early days of radio and television tucked into their rain slickers, trekked off on Friday Nov.11 to this museum located in Bowie, Maryland.

The museum explores broadcast history from the early days of wireless telegraph to the development of television through seven galleries filled with historic items. The collection of broadcast memorabilia and equipment includes Depression era “cathedral” radios, named for their shape, early crystal sets, transistor radios, and even sound effects from Washington’s legendary **Ed Walker**, on **WAMU-FM**, **Willard Scott** on both radio and television, and the **Harden and Weaver** shows on **WMAL-AM**. Almost all the displays are “hands on.” **Nelson** and **Dinsmore** were able to “tune in” an early crystal set and watch the earliest form of television picture transmission via electro-mechanical disc.

The museum is open Friday 9a.m-4p.m. and Saturday and Sunday 12p.m-4p.m. One caution: the museum is not wheelchair accessible and the two floors are not elevator accessible. Further information is available at [www.ncrtv.org](http://www.ncrtv.org). Entrance is free. Donations are welcome.



**Steve Nelson, RCA dog Nipper, and Alan Dinsmore** at the National Capital Radio & Television Museum in Bowie, Maryland.

## AHA Programs Need You!

By Susanne O'Neill

AHA is lucky to have such knowledgeable, creative, and energetic program facilitators, but **WE NEED YOUR HELP.**

Several facilitators would like co-chairs, and several need **new** facilitators. These wonderful programs we all enjoy will change or no longer be available without support from the members. Please contact the facilitators and find out how you can support the continuation of these programs.

Ladies' Night Out	Penelope Roberts	Needs new facilitator
Armchair Travels	Susanne O'Neill	Needs speakers
Roundtable	Julie Gentry	Taking a winter break until February 2023 but wants help
Readers' Theater	Steve Nelson	Taking a winter break for December and possibly January 2023
Lunch Around	Kathie Fricke	Needs a new facilitator
Movie Club	Barbara Brennan	Needs an assistant

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## Why do women have more eye issues than men?

By Bill Clayton

The Macular Degeneration Association newsletter answers that question in an article by Dr. Pamela Weber.

Women are at a higher risk for eye diseases such as glaucoma, cataracts and macular degeneration, the article says, examining just a few of the major factors.

A big factor is hormones: "Menstruation, pregnancy and menopause are all driven by hormones, so they are a big factor, Dr. Weber writes.

"Recent studies have shown that fluctuations in estrogen and progesterone can affect vision and contribute to dry-eye syndrome and glaucoma, especially after menopause," she writes.

Migraines are another factor. Fourteen percent of the adult population suffers from migraine, and the incidence in women is more than twice that for men.

"Hormones and structural differences in the brain combine for women having longer attacks, increased occurrence, greater disability and longer recovery times," Dr. Weber says.

In the "health journey" of pregnancy, a woman's body undergoes dramatic changes that are "a stress test for future health," Dr. Weber writes, "including her eye health."

Women are more likely to develop thyroid disorders or diseases after pregnancy and menopause, the article points out, citing the American Thyroid Association. For example, thyroid eye disease (known as TED), an autoimmune inflammatory condition that affects the eye, is found in women approximately five times more often than in men.

Other factors include the fact that women often use cosmetics that affect the eye. And women generally live longer than men.

For people who are uninsured or poor, obtaining high-quality eye care can be difficult.

The Macular Degeneration Association lists some steps to maintain eye health:

- \* Know your family history because some eye diseases can be inherited
- \* Get your eyes checked
- \* Eat healthy foods
- \* Don't smoke
- \* Wear sunglasses.



— AT HOME IN —  
**ALEXANDRIA**

3139 Mt. Vernon Avenue  
Alexandria, VA 22305

## SPECIAL DAYS IN DECEMBER

*DEC. 3 SCOTTISH WALK IN OLD TOWN*

*DEC. 7 PEARL HARBOR REMEMBRANCE  
DAY*

*DEC. 18 HANNUKAH BEGINS*

*DEC. 21 WINTER SOLSTICE*

*DEC. 25 CHRISTMAS DAY*

*DEC. 26 KWANZAA BEGINS*

*DEC. 31 NEW YEAR'S EVE*

## IN THIS ISSUE

*P. 1 Year End Giving*

*P. 1 Susan Pettey Tribute*

*P. 2 Calendar*

*P. 2 Program Notes*

*P. 3 Thank You, Volunteers!*

*P. 3 Remembrance*

*P. 3 Downsizing*

*P. 4 What's Up*

*P. 4 Broadcast Museum*

*P. 5 Programs need you!*

*P. 5 Eye Health*

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