

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

Welcome to New AHA Board Members

Virginia Kress Virginia Kress, at right, worked at U.S. Bank and Wells Fargo as a loan administrator in their commercial real estate divisions prior to retiring in 2018. She served as the loan administrator for the McLean office of U.S. Bank.

Virginia currently volunteers as a docent at Anderson House, the home of the Society of the Cincinnati, in Washington, D.C. and, until the pandemic, volunteered in their library as well. For several years, she has been a volunteer with the furniture committee at ALIVE as a warehouse coordinator. Virginia is also a member of the Alexandria branch of the AAUW (American Association of University Women) and is currently their public policy coordinator.

In addition to participating in and enjoying the social activities of AHA as an associate member, Virginia plays with several tennis groups, most recently with the Golden Racquets.



Rochelle (Shelly) Schwab Shelly and Dick Schwab moved to Alexandria in 1962. Two months before his death last year they celebrated 60 years of marriage. Shelly is from New York City and has a Bachelor of Arts degree from Antioch College in Yellow Springs, Ohio, and a Master of Arts from Howard University – both in sociology.

After working in that field for a few years, she started writing instead. At one time she wrote an advertising column for the Alexandria Gazette (Walking Through Historic Old Town with Shelly) and feature articles about the North Ridge neighborhood happenings. It is said that writers never retire, so she's now struggling with two novels. (She has four in print, one of which AHA chose for a book club several years ago.)

In the past she has been active in PFLAG (Parents, Families and Friends of Lesbians and Gays), and served on the board of its metropolitan Washington, D.C. chapter for several years. Shelly has been a member of AHA for about nine years, since shortly before moving to North Old Town.



January 2023 Calendar

Please note 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 only those who are fully vaccinated.

Tuesday, Jan. 10	Ladies' Night Out at Elo's Italian, located in Del Ray at 1603 Commonwealth Avenue. Limit of 8.	5-7 pm
Wednesday, Jan. 11	Movie Group – discussion of "Fire in the Mountains" and "At Eternity's Gate" via Zoom.	4-5 pm
Saturday, Jan. 14	Met Opera Live: "Fedora," at Hoffman Center located at 206 Hoffman Street. Parking garage available.	12:55-4 pm
Saturday, Jan. 14	AHA Happy Hour at The View located in the Alexandria House, 400 Madison Street.	5-7 pm
Tuesday, Jan. 17	AHA Board Meeting - via Zoom.	2-4 pm
Thursday, Jan. 19	Paris: Secret Gardens, Hidden Places, and Stories of the City of Light - sponsored by Bethesda Metro Area Village (BMAV). Via Zoom.	2-3 pm
Thursday, Jan. 19	Men's Night Out at Aldo's Italian Kitchen , 2850 Eisenhower Avenue. No limit.	5-7 pm
Monday, Jan. 23	Readers' Theater - via Zoom.	2-3:30 pm
Tuesday, Jan. 24	Coffee and Conversation at Royal Restaurant in Old Town. Limit of 10.	10-11:30 am
Tuesday, Jan. 24	Dine Around at Royal Nepal , 3807 Mt. Vernon Avenue. Limit of 10.	6 pm
Thursday, Jan. 26	Lunch Around at Chadwicks , 203 Strand Street. Limit of 10.	12:00 noon
Monday, Jan. 30	Military History for the Modern Strategist: America's Major Wars Since 1861 - sponsored by Bethesda Metro Area Village (BMAV). Via Zoom.	3-4 pm

January Program Notes

Wednesday, Jan. 11 Movie Group will discuss two films that members watch at home before the meeting. The first film is "Fire in the Mountains" about a mother who toils to build a road in a mountainous Himalayan village to take her son to physiotherapy. Yet her husband, who believes that a shamanic ritual is the remedy, stands in her way. The film is presented in Hindi with subtitles.

The second film, "At Eternity's Gate" is inspired by true events. Famed but tormented artist Vincent van Gogh spends his final years in Arles, France, painting masterworks of the natural world that surrounds him. Both films are available on Amazon Prime Video for a small fee.

Saturday, Jan. 14 Met Opera Live: "Fedora." Join Penny Roberts at the AMC Hoffman theater for the new production of Umberto Giordano's "Fedora," part of the Metropolitan Opera's award-winning Live in HD series. A senior ticket is \$25.50 and can be purchased online or at the box office when you arrive. You must pick your seat at the time of your purchase. If you wish to sit with the group, choose a seat in the fifth (5th) row from the front close to the left aisle. Garage parking is available.

Fedora, a Russian princess, is determined to track down the murderer of her fiancé and, when she finds him, falls in love with him and then reports him to the police. She regrets this after learning he killed her fiancé because he was having an affair with his wife.

Thursday, Jan 19 Paris: Secret Gardens, Hidden Places: Mary McAuliffe's multilayered exploration of Paris weaves a narrative that takes the reader into secret and hidden places, even in the midst of the most well-known Paris destinations.

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AHA Seeks Your Favorite Referrals

By Executive Director Cele Garrett

Since AHA began in 2011, we have been building and maintaining a database of local service providers. The database only includes companies that have come personally recommended by our members, volunteers or staffers. This database has served us well, but we believe it is time to refresh our listings. (In recent years, some business owners have been bought by bigger companies or the owners have retired.) If there are trusted service providers who have done work for you recently (say, in the past year or two) that you feel you can enthusiastically and confidently recommend, we welcome your input.



Please email that information to Loretta Darst at Loretta@AtHomeInAlexandria.org or call her at the AHA office. Examples include (but are not limited to) landscaping companies, painters, plumbers, electricians, “handyman”-type help, cleaning services, and carpet cleaning companies. Professional services like tax preparers and specialized attorney services are sought after regularly also. Note: AHA does not wish to recommend contractors that do substantive work (such as roofing, building ramps, home additions, etc.) since those are more complicated and specialized trades. AHA as an organization does not directly “vet” or endorse companies but we are happy to be the repository of these valuable peer-to-peer recommendations—and we often pass along your recommendations to other members.

AHA Directory in your inbox

AHA used to provide a printed member directory to each member household twice a year. Four years ago, toward our goal of reducing paper use and postage costs, we began providing the directory online through AHA Hub instead. We realize some members would prefer to have a printed directory—and that our online directory defaults to a small font size that is difficult to read if you simply hit “print.” Beginning this month, we will provide a formatted and easy-to-read member directory **by email with a direct link** so that you can print the directory at home—or just keep it in your email inbox for referral. We will send this in early January and in early July each year.

A Salute to Change Agent -

Kathie Fricke

By Bob Eiffert

Kathie Fricke has been the treasurer of AHA since January 2019, when she first joined the AHA Board of Directors. One of her first acts was to change the accounting method from the accrual basis to a cash basis, a move that simplified the accounting process.

With the pandemic shutdown in 2020, Kathie – along with Cele Garrett – handled the complicated process of applying for Payroll Protection Plan (PPP) funds to help sustain AHA during that time. The application was successful, and Kathie monitored the expenditures and filed the necessary reports to have the loan completely forgiven.

Kathie sought a new bookkeeping firm to better handle the finances and monthly reporting. On the advice of AHA finance committee, which she chairs, she reinvested AHA’s assets in a series of Certificates of Deposit (CD) that mature at staggered dates, allowing more flexibility in accessing the funds without penalty, if needed. Most recently, she worked to find a better banking relationship that provides more convenient services and now allows for automatic deposit of checks into AHA’s account. The net result of these changes has been to streamline and simplify all the financial processes. Since October, she has worked to train her successor, John Veldhuis, to assure a smooth transition when her term ends at the end of December. Fortunately, she will continue to serve on the AHA board and its finance committee. The board and staff thank her for her extraordinary service and accomplishments.



What's Up With AHA Members, Associates and Volunteers

AHA at the Scottish Walk Parade in Old Town.



Bill Clayton got a chuckle out of carrying the 'HAPPY HOUR' placard just behind the bearers of the banner. Many, many spectators called out, "Where is the Happy Hour?" "When is it Happy Hour?" "Yay, Happy Hour" etc. His marching buddy was Pam Nelson, who held a "Tech Support" placard that got zero calls from the crowd. (He may be banished from AHA by showing off in front of Pam.) In the photo above: **Richard Klimoski, Pam Nelson and Bill Clayton.**



Shirley Rettig and John Veldhuis in his vintage Mustang.



Left: **Shirley Rettig and Loretta Darst**; Right: **Mary Ann Bier and Barb Rosenfeld** at Nancy Kincaid's Boat Parade party on Dec. 3.

Enjoying a Dine Around dinner at Clyde's Restaurant are, left to right, **Martha Brown, John and Nancy Veldhuis, Mary Margaret McGrail, Babs & Elliott Waters, Ann Liddle, Nancy Kincaid, Jack and Janet Powers.**



Mary Ann Bier, Susanne O'Neill and Virginia Kress at Winterthur Museum in Wilmington, Delaware. The Smithsonian Associates trip included a visit to the Longwood Gardens evening lights and conservatory exhibit. Definitely a beautiful day trip experience.



Sandy Heistad, Penny Roberts, Ruth Arnold and Kathie Fricke at Hillwood Estate's exhibit "Grace of Monaco in Dior" dresses, gowns and jewelry. The group also viewed the Christmas trees and decorations in the mansion.

Important: COVID-19 Test Kits

You may have heard that each U.S. household now can receive four COVID-19 test kits at no charge. As with previous offers, the kits will be shipped straight to your door. If you have not already done so, visit [COVID.gov](https://www.covid.gov). On the home page, under the blue header **Testing**, click the link to order your tests.

The expiration dates for many at-home OTC (over the counter) kits have been extended. The Food and Drug Administration has provided a table of the most common brands of test kits, where you can check the manufacturer and test name shown on the box label of your test. **AHA's January 1 eBlast will contain the direct link to the FDA.gov page.** (The link is so long that including it in this printed newsletter would not be helpful.) Or you can type "at-home OTC Covid 19 test" in your search engine and scroll down past the Ad-supported links. One of the first links you find should be the FDA.gov page (At-Home OTC COVID-19 Diagnostic Tests – FDA).

Once you get to the table, you'll find the row that matches the manufacturer of the tests you are looking for. The FDA will update this table as shelf-life extensions are authorized. To see complete information on smaller screens, select the blue plus (+) button beside the test name.

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New Year's Resolutions?

Some Unusual New Year's Resolutions

- Get your photo taken in five interesting places.
- Learn a decent party trick.
- Break a record.
- Make a new friend a month.
- Develop a good relationship with your body.
- Learn something you never learned as a child.
- Try a new food each week.
- Make the usual unusual.

Some of these may be a bit difficult for those of us at a certain age; however, most can be modified to suit our mature lifestyle. For example, rather than learn a party trick, how about play a new game.

"Make a new friend" may lead you to call a new AHA member and say "Welcome." Or join an AHA event, in person or on Zoom. Ask for help to do it, if necessary.

And, of course, the usual tasks like de-cluttering can become unusual if you produce a bag or box of something to donate or dispose of, at least once a week, to make your life lighter and brighter in 2023.

Worry less, smile more!

Happy New Year!

Welcome New Members

The following joined AHA in November and December:

Ellen Holland
Colby Hostetler
Catherine Hughes
Bruce Stevens
Susan Tracy
Marian Wilk

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SPECIAL DAYS IN JANUARY

JAN. 1 – NEW YEAR’S DAY
JAN. 2 – NATIONAL SCIENCE FICTION DAY
JAN. 16 – MARTIN LUTHER KING JR DAY
JAN. 22 – LUNAR NEW YEAR
JAN. 29 – NATIONAL PUZZLE DAY

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