



— AT HOME IN —
ALEXANDRIA

NEWSLETTER

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June 2023

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

AHA Celebrates 12 Years of Service

Over 40 AHA members, staff and volunteers gathered for a lively celebration of AHA’s 12th anniversary on May 25. The occasion brought out many folks who enjoyed the opportunity to visit with one another in a casual setting at red-check-covered tables with nibbles, cheese and crackers, hummus and veggies.

Annie Stats did an outstanding job monitoring the kitchen and tables at the Cameron Station Clubhouse. Elliott and Babs Waters organized the rental of the space as residents of the community and Bob Eiffert and Mike Curry manned the drinks table. Penelope “Penny” Roberts greeted members with name tags. A slide show of AHA members enjoying programs and activities played on the big screen.

Executive Director Cele Garrett welcomed the crowd along with Membership Manager Loretta Darst, with a video of the original AHA founders – Dick Moose, Judith Jones and Ernie Lehmann. This was followed by a video of Mabel Sisk sharing her grateful words about AHA’s friendships and support. Special recognition for many years of service went to Penny Roberts, who is leaving Alexandria and AHA to move to West Virginia closer to family. Shirley Rettig was highlighted for reaching her 96th birthday.

The festivities ended with a champagne toast and cupcakes – a fit ending to AHA’s 12th year.



June 2023 Calendar

<p>Please note the programs in this calendar may be scheduled via Zoom or in person. The AHA office or hosting village will send you the Zoom link after you have registered for a program. In-person events are open to those who are fully vaccinated.</p>		
Sunday June 4	LGBTQ+ Pride Author Talk: "Through the Door of Life: A Jewish Journey Between Genders" by Joy Ladin , hosted by Silver Spring Village – via Zoom.	1-3pm
Monday June 5	Social Security: Thrive or Survive , with Bob Blancato and Brenda Bloch-Young – via Zoom. See page 3 for more details.	3-5pm
Tuesday June 6	Interview with Vice Mayor Amy Jackson – via Zoom. See page 3 for details.	11am - 12 noon
Saturday June 10	AHA Happy Hour at The View in the Alexandria House, 400 Madison Street.	5-7pm
Tuesday June 13	Interview with Kris Brown, president of Brady , with Howard Weiss. – via Zoom. See page 3 for details.	10am
Tuesday June 13	Ladies' Night Out at Matt and Tony's All Day Kitchen + Bar, 1501 Mount Vernon Avenue. Limit of 8.	5pm
Wednesday June 14	Politics Forum: "Is Patriotism Passé? How are Americans Feeling about the USA"? with Helen Desfosses. – via Zoom.	1-2:30pm
Wednesday June 14	Movie Group – discussion of <i>Luzzu</i> and <i>Sound of Metal</i> . Both movies are available on Amazon Prime. – via Zoom.	4-5pm
Thursday June 15	Men's Night Out at Aldo's Italian Kitchen, 2850 Eisenhower Ave. No limit.	5pm
Thursday June 22	Lunch Around at Faccia Luna, 823 South Washington Street. Limit of 12.	12:00 noon
Tuesday June 27	Coffee and Conversation at Royal Restaurant in Old Town. No Limit.	10-11:30am
Tuesday June 27	Dine Around at Mount Vernon Inn Restaurant, 3200 Mt. Vernon Memorial Highway. Limit of 8.	6pm

PLEASE NOTE: Readers Theater will be taking a summer hiatus and will resume in September.

Program & Community Notes

Sunday, June 4 LGBTQ Pride Author Talk: Professor Jay Ladin made headlines around the world when, after years of teaching literature at Yeshiva University, he returned to the Orthodox Jewish campus as a woman—Joy Ladin. In *Through the Door of Life*, Joy Ladin takes readers inside her transition as she changed genders and, in the process, created a new self. Register on AHA Hub or call the office at 703-231-0824.

Wednesday, June 14 Movie Group discusses the following two movies: *Luzzu* is a 2021 Maltese drama film about a hardworking Maltese fisherman, who is faced with an agonizing choice. He can repair his leaky luzzu -- a traditional, multicolored wooden fishing boat. Or he can cast his lot with a sinister black-market operation that is decimating the Mediterranean fish population. In Maltese with subtitles. *Sound of Metal* is a 2020 Amazon Prime Video production. A heavy metal drummer's life is turned upside down when he begins to lose his hearing and he must confront a future filled with silence. The movie was nominated for six Academy Awards in 2021, winning Best Sound and Best Achievement in Film Editing.

AHA celebrates Alexandria Pride

AHA will have a table at the Sixth Annual LGBTQ+ Pride Fair at City Hall and Market Square, 301 King Street, **June 3, 2 to 5p.m.** If you are interested in volunteering at the table, please contact Jenifer Eoff, Volunteer Manager, at jenifer@AtHomeInAlexandria.org or call the office at 703-231-0824.

Fixit Clinic

The Barrett Branch Library in Old Town invites you to their Fixit Clinic Saturday, June 10, 11a.m.- 2p.m. at the Kate Waller Barrett Branch Library, 717 Queen Street.

You are welcome to bring broken items, such as computers, small appliances, bikes, mending, shoe polishing and more, to the library where volunteers will try to get them working or looking good again. Here is the link to the event page for more information.

<https://AlexLibraryVA.org/event/8375511>.

Bereavement Support Group

By Roberta McGregor, AHA Volunteer



All of us will likely experience the sadness, pain, and helplessness of losing a loved one at some point in our lives. The hopeful news is that you do not have to go through the grief associated with this loss alone. There are others who are going through the same process but may be at different places in their emotional healing.

We all know that this is a journey that may take weeks, months, or years. AHA is interested in knowing how many people would be interested in participating in a bereavement group and receiving support from others who have also lost a loved one. This will be an informal and in-person opportunity for members to share anything they feel comfortable sharing about their loss. The dates, times, and location will be determined by the participants.

Please contact Roberta McGregor at rmcgregor13@comcast.net if you are interested in participating in such a group. I will then be back in touch with you with further details about our first meeting. If you have suggestions related to the venue, time, frequency, and format, please let me know that as well.

These sessions will be facilitated by AHA volunteers, not trained bereavement specialists. Our intent is for the group to be a non-threatening opportunity to share your experiences and hopefully gain insight and support from each other.

“What’s in the News” Hosts Brady President Kris Brown

Since the tragedy in Uvalde, Texas a year ago, at least 600 additional mass shootings have taken place across the country. Join AHA for a special presentation featuring Brady president Kris Brown. Interviewed by Howard Weiss, she will address the comprehensive work that Brady is doing on the national and state level -in Congress, the courts, classrooms and communities - to combat gun violence. Kris will explain specifics of the organization's current work, along with the research and data that shapes its strategy. Topics will include expanding background checks, closing gaps in current gun laws, ending gun industry immunity, banning assault weapons and much more. Question-and-answer time will follow. Join this compelling conversation to better understand the direct ways to approach this immense challenge facing our country. Register on the AHA Hub or call At Home in Alexandria at 703-231-0824.

A Conversation on Social Security -

Thrive or Survive?

By Brenda Bloch-Young

In March, the Social Security Board issued a dire report forecasting the need to cut benefits by 23 percent in 2033 if revisions are not made. There does not appear to be the political will to strengthen the program in the current environment. Social Security is broken, but there are options for fixing and those changes should be enacted soon.

Luckily, AHA has a new volunteer with years of experience to help us understand the issues and options. Robert “Bob” Blancato is the National Coordinator of the bipartisan 3,000-member Elder Justice Coalition. He is also president of Matz, Blancato and Associates, executive director of the National Association of Nutrition and Aging Services Programs, and the national coordinator of the Defeat Malnutrition Today coalition.

Bob has long been recognized as a national advocate with policy expertise on behalf of older adults. As a volunteer, he currently serves on the national board of AARP and the board of the National Hispanic Council on Aging.

Join us on Zoom June 5 at 3p.m. for a conversation on Social Security. Register on AHA Hub or to the AHA office at 703.231.0824.

Conversation with Vice Mayor Amy Jackson

On June 6, at 11:00a.m., Howard Weiss will interview Amy Jackson, vice mayor of the City of Alexandria, via Zoom. Ms. Jackson is a lifelong resident of Alexandria and a teacher, coach, mentor, administrator and educator. She has contributed her time and energy to numerous local and regional civic and community organizations and institutions. She is an activist and a leader who has connected with residents throughout the city. Currently serving her second three-year term on the City Council, she was first elected in November 2018. The vice mayor will answer questions focusing on affordable housing, the budget, schools, crime and policing, traffic and parking, mass transit, environmental issues, and other related issues. A question-and-answer period will follow the interview.



What's Up with AHA Members



Brenda Bloch-Young and her children celebrated her 75th birthday in Santa Fe, New Mexico. Brenda says, “We spent a week visiting museums, galleries, Bandelier National Monument, and Taos. It is a fascinating place. I have wanted to visit ever since I read Willa Cather's *Death Comes for the Archbishop*.”

New members since May 1

- **Susan & Charlie Davis** - Full members - Old Town North
 - **Frances Schafer** - Associate - Beverley Hills neighborhood
- *****

Local Memory Care Resources

Alzheimer's and dementia can take a big toll on families and caregivers, especially when it comes to socializing. Here are some local resources that might be helpful:

Memory Café Several years ago, local home care agency Senior Helpers began offering its monthly memory café on the first Friday of each month. When Covid hit, the memory café moved to a Zoom format. This gathering is an opportunity to interact and build friendships in a safe, interactive space. Here's how Bella Desai, owner of Senior Helpers, describes it: “Memory café s allow individuals living with memory loss, mild cognitive impairment or dementia to participate in a variety of structured activities to encourage cognition and reminiscing.” The gatherings have remained on Zoom. To reserve a spot, call 571-457-4894 or email Bella at bdesai@seniorhelpers.com.

Reconnections Old Town: This program, offered by Insight Memory Care, is now up and running in Alexandria. This program is ideal for those living with mild cognitive impairment or in the early stages of memory impairment. Along with professional staff, small groups participate in discussions, recreational therapies and learning experiences. The gatherings take place at Sunrise of Old Town. Call 703-204-4664 or visit www.insightmcc.org to learn more.

The Volunteer Corner By Jenifer Eoff, Volunteer Manager

AHA Volunteers Make an Impact

In 2022, AHA volunteers provided a total of 5,627 hours helping members. That time has a value of approximately \$183,400, but it means even more to our members who received the help. This includes 2,685 hours of specific services such as rides to medical appointments, events, and other locations, making deliveries or running errands, and providing tech-related support. There were 2,942 hours of indirect time spent checking in with members by phone, meeting a member over coffee, serving on AHA's Board or a committee, or planning events.



Tech Coaching Update

Since we started the tech coaching program in May, we have trained five new tech coaches. The goal of this program is to help our members feel more confident in their use of technology. If they have a specific goal (upgrading their computer system, learning to blog, getting comfortable with the functions of their new Apple watch, setting up television streaming services, etc.), we will pair them with a coach.

If you are interested in being paired with a coach or need help with technology, please contact Jenifer Eoff, Volunteer Manager, at jenifer@AtHomeInAlexandria.org or call the office at 703-231-0824.

Meet New Volunteer Robert “Bob” Blancato

As a new volunteer, Bob Blancato will present a program on “Social Security, Thrive or Survive?” See Brenda Bloch-Young's article about it on page 3.



Senior Law Day 2023

Join **Senior Services of Alexandria and the Alexandria Bar Association** for this informative workshop to prepare for times when life throws you a curveball.

Experts will map out strategies for topics such as: estate planning, late-life marriages and divorces, planning for disabled adult children as well as adult children still living at home, and aging at home versus in an assisted-living community.

Organizations presenting:

- * Alexandria Bar Association elder-care attorneys
- * Alexandria City's Department of Community and Human Services
- * Caring Considerations
- * Signature Estate & Investment Advisors

Senior Law Day will be held June 3 at First Baptist Church, 2932 King Street. The day begins at 9 a.m. with registration beginning at 8:30 a.m.

Senior Law Day is free and open to the public. Please call 703.836.4414 ext.110 or go to seniorservicesalex.org to register and for further information.

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A Few Words from Peyton

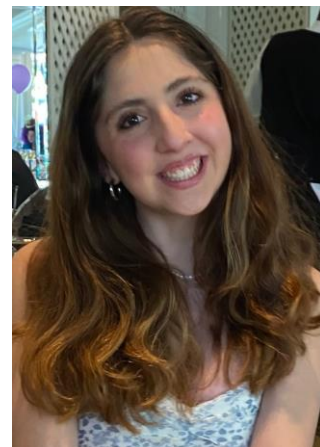
AHA was happy to have Alexandria City High School senior Peyton Marcy work with them for the past two weeks. This was part of the high school's Senior Experience short-term internship program. Peyton will attend the University of Virginia this fall.

From Peyton: For the past two weeks, I had the opportunity to intern with At Home in Alexandria and shadow the ladies in the office.

Some of the tasks I took on during this time included digitizing a log of past AHA members, addressing thank you notes to donors and creating a slideshow to be shown at the 12-year anniversary celebration. I was also able to ride along with a volunteer as they brought a member to a doctor's appointment.

This experience taught me a lot about working in an office environment and with a non-profit organization. I really enjoyed getting to know the staff as they were so welcoming and friendly. It was also fun getting to meet some AHA members and see everything come together at the anniversary party because it showed me the true mission and goals of the organization.

I'm very thankful for this opportunity and glad I got to work with such amazing people!



Peyton Marcy

CONTACT US

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SPECIAL DAYS IN JUNE

JUNE 6 D-DAY
JUNE 18 FATHER'S DAY
JUNE 19 JUNETEENTH
JUNE 21 SUMMER SOLSTICE

IN THIS ISSUE

- P. 1 Anniversary Party*
- P. 2 Program Calendar*
- P. 2 Program & Community Notes*
- P. 3 Bereavement Support Group*
- P. 3 What's in the News*
- P. 3 Social Security Program*
- P. 3 Conversation with Vice Mayor*
- P. 4 What's Up*
- P. 5 Senior Law Day*
- P. 5 Intern Peyton*