

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

AHA and SSA Co-Host Saving Claire Screening on February 21

By Cele Garrett, Executive Director

The Northern Virginia Falls Prevention Alliance, based at Marymount University, is in a partnership of several organizations that began several years ago to improve the quality of life of older adults by reducing falls and fall-related injuries. AHA and Senior Services of Alexandria have been part of this initiative since its inception.

Our three organizations are teaming up for the screening of *Saving Claire*, a documentary that explores the complex nature of aging, resistance to change, and all the relatable patterns that increase fall risk. The program begins at 1pm and will be held at the Beatley Central Library at 5005 Duke Street.

Following the film, we will host a discussion with a panel of guests—a care manager, an INOVA emergency room representative, a manager of a prominent rehabilitation community, a home modification expert, and a fitness trainer—to answer audience questions and weigh in on ways to avoid falls. We will explore some upcoming falls prevention classes in the area.

The event is free and open to the public. SSA is handling reservations for this event: Events@SeniorServicesAlex or 703-836-4414.



Aging is a Team Sport!

By Cele Garrett, Executive Director

At Home in Alexandria has had a long partnership with Goodwin Living at Home (GLAH), which provides care coordination for individuals who prefer to live in their home environment as long as possible. GLAH is hosting a resource fair and panel discussion on February 7. A group of expert professionals will be on hand to help address questions about getting the support system in place as you age. AHA will participate with the event.

The discussion will be led by aging expert Steve Gurney, the founder of Positive Aging Community. Many members will recognize Steve from the free online webinars Positive Aging Community offers on a multitude of aging topics. The schedule is as follows:

Resource Fair: 12noon-1pm and 2:30-3:30pm

Presentation and Panel discussion: 1-2:30pm

The event is free but space is limited.

Reserve: AtHome@GoodwinLiving.org;
571-205-0338.



Goodwin Living
At Home

Welcome New AHA Members

Sumitra Ganguly – Full – Old Town

Kim Keleher – Associate – Old Town

Melissa Harris and Terence Noonan – Full – Old Town

Suzanne and Dick Willett – Associates – Old Town

Edmund Willis – Full – Old Town

February 2024 Calendar

Program Notes

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.

In-person events are open to those who are fully vaccinated.

Saturday, Feb. 10	AHA Happy Hour at The View in the Alexandria House, 400 Madison Street.	5-7pm
Monday, Feb. 12	Grief Support: A Journey of Many Roads , at AHA office, 3139 Mt. Vernon Avenue.	3pm
Tuesday, Feb. 13	Interview with Councilwoman Sarah Bagley with Howard Weiss. – via Zoom.	3pm
Tuesday, Feb. 13	Ladies' Night Out at Cheesetique, 2411 Mt. Vernon Avenue. Limit of 10.	5pm
Wednesday, Feb. 14	Movie Group – discussion of <i>Of Mice and Men</i> and <i>Vice</i> . – via Zoom.	4-5pm
Thursday, Feb. 15	Tech Thursday: "Comcast versus Streaming" , at AHA office conference room, 3139 Mt. Vernon Avenue. Limit of 10.	1-2pm
Thursday, Feb. 15	Men's Night Out at Aldo's Italian Kitchen, 2850 Eisenhower Avenue. No limit.	5-6:30pm
Friday, Feb. 16	Finishing Strong: "Manage the Hospital Stay" , at Portner's Landing, 621 North St. Asaph Street, second floor meeting room.	2-4pm
Wednesday, Feb. 21	Falls Prevention Program and Screening of <i>Saving Claire</i> with Senior Services of Alexandria and the No. VA Falls Prevention Alliance, at Beatley Library, 5005 Duke St. See details on page 1.	1-3pm
Wednesday, Feb. 21	Dine Around at Royal Nepal, located at 3807 Mt. Vernon Avenue. Limit 8.	6pm
Thursday, Feb. 22	Lunch Around at Ruthie's All Day, located at 3411 5th Street South in Arlington. Limit 15.	12 noon
Friday, February 23	Amelia Air Animal Rescue , with Dean Heistad. What happens when an animal shelter has more animals than it can care for? – Amelia Air to the rescue! – via Zoom.	10am
Monday, Feb. 26	Readers Theater with Steve Nelson. – via Zoom.	2pm
Tuesday, Feb. 27	Coffee and Conversation at Table Talk Restaurant, 1623 Duke Street. Limit of 12.	10-11:30 am

Tuesday, Feb. 13 Conversation with Councilmembers: Howard Weiss will interview Councilwoman Sarah Bagley on Zoom. The interview will focus on key City issues such as taxes, housing and development, affordable housing, crime, education and schools and environmental concerns. A particular focus will be on topical controversies, such as the proposed Potomac Yard arena project, the rezoning initiative and the street renaming project recently approved by City Council. Ten to fifteen minutes will be set aside for audience questions after the conclusion of the interview.

Wednesday, Feb. 14 Movie Group will discuss two films: *Of Mice and Men* – Starring John Malcovich and Gary Sinise. The plot centers on George and the intellectually disabled Lennie, two farm workers who travel together and dream of one day owning their own land. The film explores discrimination, loneliness, and the American Dream. See it on Amazon Prime.

Vice - starring Christian Bale as Dick Cheney. Governor George W Bush of Texas picks Dick Cheney to be his Republican running mate in the 2000 presidential election. When Bush wins by a narrow margin, Cheney begins to use his newfound power to help reshape the country and the world. Available on Netflix.

Friday, Feb. 16 Finishing Strong: Manage the Hospital Stay: Colleen Duetel of Lionheart Elder Care will discuss how to develop our self-advocacy skills when we or a loved one are in the hospital. We will start with emergency room admissions, what to know and ask for during the admission process, the stay itself, and key things to understand during the discharge procedure. The discussion will touch on “what if that person is you” and how to be an effective self-advocate. Moderated by AHA Board Member Alan Dinsmore.

Friday, Feb. 23 Amelia Air Animal Rescue. This nonprofit, founded by Dean Heistad (son of AHA Board member Sandy Heistad), was launched during the pandemic and saves hundreds of animals each year by flying them off death row to rescue shelters who place them with loving forever families. Hear how this “mission of mercy” with volunteer pilots operates to save animals.



Remembering AHA Members

By Cele Garrett, Executive Director



Cynthia Rau Boyer passed away on January 5. Cynthia and her husband Al joined as AHA members just months after AHA began operations in 2011. The Boyers opened their home for several AHA events and Cynthia was wonderful in helping to plan AHA's previously held annual fundraising gala.

Cynthia graduated from Sarah Lawrence College with a Bachelor in Fine Arts in Studio Arts. She was a well-known fiber artist, known for her superbly crafted felt jackets. She was a strong proponent of the arts and maintained a studio at the Torpedo Factory for many years. Recently she was honored for her lifetime advocacy of the Textile Museum in Washington, DC. She spent summers at the family's second home in Castine, Maine. Cynthia is survived by two sons, five grandsons and two great-grandsons. A memorial service will be held at St. Paul's Episcopal Church on Feb. 10 at 11a.m. In lieu of flowers, the family requests that donations be made to the Cynthia and Alton Boyer Fund for Education at the Textile Museum of Washington.



AHA member Antonio Michael Frato passed away suddenly at the age of 85 at his home on January 7. Antonio was an active AHA member, often participating in Readers Theater, Men's Night Out and other events.

Antonio earned his M.A. in Psychology from Kent State University. He found his niche as a psychotherapist, where he helped clients who were struggling with depression, anger, anxiety, PTSD and other issues. He published *A Family Conflict Between Conventional and Unconventional Treatments*, examining traditional and holistic medicines in the context of his mother's death in 1979. In 2019, Antonio married Pamela Johnson; they enjoyed attending dances and concerts as well as taking walks around nearby Lake Accotink. A virtual funeral service will be scheduled soon. AHA will provide further details as we learn them.



Noreen Lopez died at the age of 79 after a battle with pancreatic cancer. Noreen hailed from the Chicago area, where she received her bachelor's degree from Mundelein College and her master's degree from Loyola University. She spent her career in adult education, holding a leadership role for Illinois' Department of Education. Noreen and her husband Jim Kirkland moved to Alexandria when she accepted a position with the Public Broadcasting System. She then worked for the U.S. Department of Education before retiring.

Noreen sang for many years with Blessed Sacrament Catholic Church's folk choir and with the senior chorus Encore. She served as president of the local chapter of the Philanthropic Education Organization (PEO). She is survived by her husband Jim, two stepchildren and two grandchildren. A memorial mass will be held at a later date. In lieu of flowers, donations may be made to the PEO-Chapter G.

Alexandria History Interest Group

Join Alan Dinsmore, the history geek, on February 3, 2024, 11:00a.m. to 2:00p.m., for *African American Emancipation in an Occupied City*, a program at the Alexandria Lyceum, 201 South Washington Street. Please note that parking is limited.

This is a presentation by Audrey Davis, the author of the book with the title of this program.

NOTE: This is an AHA interest group, not an official AHA program function. So, please do not ask the office or Alan to register you. You can do that yourself at alexandriava.gov/shop.

Alan, as the leader of this interest group will post events of note for the newsletter. Contact Alan, at WingsoftheMorning@comcast.net, if you see upcoming events of possible interest to the group.

What's Up with AHA Members



A group of AHA members explored the Library of Congress with AHA member and docent **Louise Kenny** (at right, above), who described the library as “the most beautiful building in Washington.” **Ruth Arnold** says, “Louise was full of interesting little bits of history, which made the tour really special. Thank you, Louise, for a memorable afternoon.” Several members reported that they had never been to the library. A special treat was a brief stroll through the main reading room with its beautiful dome ceiling.

On January 9, Alexandria's City Council, during its regular meeting, saluted mentors and mentees from across the city as part of National Mentor Month. Mentors and mentees surrounded the Council members and described how their lives and relationships are enhanced by the mentoring experience. **Howard Weiss**, a Wright to Read mentor and Cameron Berry, his mentee, accompanied by the latter's family, made presentations.

The Volunteer Corner

By Jenifer Eoff

Thank you, Volunteers, for a wonderful 2023! Because of dedicated volunteers, AHA was able to fulfill over 1,300 requests. We know we couldn't do this work without volunteers – we are forever grateful.

We have several new and exciting volunteer opportunities to offer in 2024. **If you are interested in any of the following, please email Jenifer Eoff at jenifer@AtHomeInAlexandria.org.**

Special Programs Leaders - Do you have an interest or hobby you would like to share with others? AHA is looking for volunteers who would be interested in creating and leading special programs for our members. These programs could be recurring or one-time special events, in person or online - all ideas are welcome.

Medical Notetaking Training – COMING SOON IN FEBRUARY OR MARCH
Medical notetaking is a crucial skill that aids in accurate record-keeping and ensures that individuals receive the best possible care. This training will equip you with the knowledge and techniques needed to document medical information efficiently and compassionately, fostering better communication between healthcare professionals and our AHA members.

Thank You

VOLUNTEER NEEDED: AHA Newsletter Editor

AHA is seeking a new volunteer Newsletter editor. The position is available immediately. The newsletter is currently printed and mailed to members, as well as distributed electronically to AHA volunteers, supporters and friends. Content includes input from the executive director, the board chair, volunteer manager, and program leaders; current news from AHA members and other community sources; and photos from members. In addition, the editor may write an article on a regular basis or report on an event of interest. The newsletter also includes the calendar of events for the month ahead with event details. The newsletter currently is produced in Microsoft Word, but the new editor may use any product of their choice. The time commitment may be 12-18 hours a month with a deadline that allows time for commercial printing and with labeling and mailing done by volunteers. If you enjoy writing or simply editing, or working with document software, this is a way for you to support AHA.

Interested in learning more? Please contact our current editor Mary Ann Bier at marybier@comcast.net.

Are you ready for tax filing season?

By Brenda Bloch-Young

Based on published data, it appears that our demographic does a poor job of determining whether the Standard Deduction or itemized deductions are the best option on our returns. You may remember that the Tax Cuts and Jobs Act of 2017 eliminated the personal exemption and raised the Standard Deduction substantially. As a result, many of us do not take the time to collect the data or do the analysis to determine if we have sufficient, qualifying itemized deductions.

Why not use one of these bitterly cold or snowy days to gather the data? While tax deductions are limited to \$10,000 annually (generally real estate tax, state income tax, and personal property tax,) we need to add our medical expenses and charitable contributions. The medical insurance premiums often are overlooked. There is a limitation on medical expenses, but you won't know if you have enough unless you spend the time gathering the data.

This is the best time to determine if you are receiving a tax benefit from your charitable contributions. If you find that the Standard Deduction is the better option, then you should be using the Qualified Charitable Deduction (QCD) to reduce the taxable portion of your Required Minimum Distribution (RMD.) As always, check with your tax advisor for clarification and guidance.

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StrongerMemory™ Starts back Soon



Strengthening Your Brain for Optimal Recall

Consider the following....

- You or someone you know has been forgetting to go to regularly scheduled dental appointments.
- You or someone you know has been losing their reading glasses for the third time in a month.
- You or someone you know has been unable to remember the name of a friend they ran into at the grocery store.
- You or someone you know has been getting lost going to church.

If any of these ring true to you, or you are just interested in preventing some of these memory lapses, consider joining us at an innovative and popular program called **StrongerMemory™**. For just one-half hour a day, you can work on strengthening the part of your brain that is responsible for memory. The process has been tested and outcomes have been impressive, demonstrating improvement in memory. Your daily commitment will involve 10 minutes of completing simple math problems, 10 minutes of handwriting from prompts, and 10 minutes of reading out loud from a favorite book, magazine, or newspaper.

Bring a friend and join us for our kickoff session on March 6 at 3:00pm, and then every Wednesday from 3:00-4:00pm for 12 weeks. The last session will be May 22. We will meet over Zoom.

The facilitator for the program is Roberta McGregor. Roberta is a Registered Nurse with over 30 years of experience in acute care education and academia.

To register, please contact the AHA office, or with questions, contact Roberta McGregor directly at rmcgregor13@comcast.net or (703) 598-1390 (either text or phone). We will need at least 10 people registered to run the program. **The deadline to register is March 4.**

CONTACT US

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— AT HOME IN —
ALEXANDRIA

3139 Mt. Vernon Avenue
Alexandria, VA 22305

SPECIAL DAYS IN FEBRUARY

- 2. GROUNDHOG DAY
- 10. LUNAR NEW YEAR
- 13. MARDI GRAS
- 14. ASH WEDNESDAY
- 14. VALENTINE'S DAY
- 19. PRESIDENT'S DAY
(GW PARADE IN OLD TOWN)
- 29. LEAP DAY

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