

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

A Fond Farewell to Loretta...and a Warm Welcome to Veronica

By Executive Director Cele Garrett

Loretta Darst, AHA’s membership and marketing manager since the beginning of 2021, has decided to retire. Loretta started her position with AHA smack in the middle of COVID—at a time when we were not even working in the office together. (In fact, we didn’t even meet in person until more than two months after she joined us.) She had to dive in quickly.

Loretta has been the one to oversee our calendar of events, interact with all new members to answer their questions, set up our “get acquainted” visits with full members, coordinate multiple events, write our AHA eBlast communications, oversee the distribution of our monthly newsletter, manage our social media, and so much more. She has been my “right hand” for all this time, and I will really miss her. Her last day was May 31. (Her AHA email account is still active if you’d like to send her a farewell note.) Loretta assures us she will still volunteer with AHA (once she takes a well-deserved break for a few months) so we will still see her around.



Loretta Darst

I feel so fortunate to have found a new, immensely talented team member to step into Loretta’s position: Veronica Ferris. She has worked for several nonprofits including Reading Partners, Iona Senior Services, and WoMena. Prior to that, Veronica spent two years with the Peace Corps in Namibia. Veronica is a graduate of the College of William & Mary (B.A., Economics, Environmental Science) and American University (MA, International Development). Her contact is veronica@AtHomeInAlexandria.org. Welcome, Veronica!



Veronica Ferris takes on the position of Marketing and Membership Manager



June 2024 Calendar

Program Notes

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.

PLEASE NOTE: Tech Thursday will not meet in June. AHA Happy Hour and AHA Movie Group will be taking a Summer hiatus and will not meet June, July and August.

Tuesday, June 4	Weekly Chair Yoga Resumes at Alexandria House, 400 Madison St. The class has four registration slots open.	10-11am
Tuesday, June 4	The Gratitude Advantage: Elevating Your Growth Mindset , hosted by Northwest Neighbors Village – via Zoom.	11am-12pm
Thursday, June 6	Oh Hell! Let's Play Cards , at AHA office, 3139 Mt. Vernon Avenue. Limit of 10.	3-4pm
Tuesday, June 11	Composing Color: Paintings by Alma Thomas , hosted by Northwest Neighbors Village – via Zoom.	11am-12pm
Tuesday, June 11	Ladies' Night Out at Piece Out Del Ray, 2419 Mt. Vernon Avenue. Limit of 8.	5pm
Wednesday, June 12	AHA Lunch Group at Del Ray Cafe, located at 205 East Howell Avenue. Limit of 12.	12 noon
Wednesday, June 12	Dine Around at T.H.A.I. in Shirlington, 4029 Campbell Avenue. Limit of 10.	6pm
Monday, June 17	Interview with Alexandria's Commonwealth's Attorney Bryan Porter – via Zoom.	10am
Tuesday, June 18	Financial Literacy: "What if" Kit presented by Kay Bransford of the MemoryBanc – via Zoom. More details on page 3.	10am-12pm
Thursday, June 20	Men's Night Out at Aldo's Italian Kitchen, 2850 Eisenhower Avenue. No limit.	5-6:30pm
Tuesday, June 25	Coffee and Conversation at Royal Restaurant, 730 North St. Asaph Street. Limit of 12.	10-11:30 am
Thursday, June 27	Lunch Around at Mason Social, 728 North Henry Street. Limit of 12.	12 noon

Tuesday, June 4 - Weekly Chair Yoga Resumes. This class focuses on flexibility, balance, core strength, and well-being. Using a chair and other props, students will challenge themselves with yoga flow in the chair, as well as standing poses beside a chair. The teacher will offer modifications for students to individualize their practice based on their personal abilities. The instructor is Virginia Kalish, MD, retired geriatrician/family medicine doctor and certified yoga instructor. Register on AHA Hub or contact the AHA office at aha@AtHomeInAlexandria.org or call 703-231-0824.

Tuesday, June 4 - The Gratitude Advantage: Elevating your Growth Mindset. Blair Hayes, author of *Grace, Growth, and Gratitude*, will delve into the profound connection between gratitude and personal, as well as professional, growth. Blair will share insights, strategies, and real-life anecdotes that highlight the immense power of gratitude. Register on AHA Hub or contact the AHA office at aha@AtHomeInAlexandria.org or call 703-231-0824.

Thursday, June 6 - Oh Hell! Let's Play Cards meets for the second session of a card game at the AHA office. The game is fun and Mark Edelman is an excellent and patient teacher. Learn a new game with fellow AHA members. Register to come!

Tuesday, June 11 - Composing Color: Paintings by Alma Thomas. Join curator Melissa Ho for an introduction to the exhibition *Composing Color: Paintings by Alma Thomas* at the Smithsonian American Art Museum. Melissa Ho is the Smithsonian American Art Museum's curator of 20th-century art and is responsible for research, acquisitions and exhibitions related to the museum's collections focusing on art since 1945. Register on AHA Hub or contact the AHA office at aha@AtHomeInAlexandria.org or call 703-231-0824.

Monday, June 17 - Interview with Alexandria's Commonwealth's Attorney Bryan Porter. Join Howard Weiss and AHA members for a conversation with Commonwealth Attorney Bryan Porter. Mr. Porter has held the elected position of Commonwealth Attorney for the City of Alexandria since 2014. He is an Alexandria native and is committed to making Alexandria a safer place to live and work.



Financial Literacy and Estate Planning

By AHA Member Brenda Bloch-Young

The June session of our Financial Literacy series will feature a special guest, Kay Bransford. After living as an adult-child caregiver for her parents, Kay transitioned from a corporate career to serve as a professional financial advocate. Kay founded MemoryBanc in 2012 and received an “Older-Adult Focused Innovation” award from AARP Foundation, wrote *MemoryBanc: Your Workbook for Organizing Life* that was named a “Book of the Year” by *Today’s Caregiver*, and serves as Power of Attorney and Trustee. She has seen the 200 things that can go right and wrong when it comes to estate planning and navigating daily personal finances. Kay has whittled down the basic information every adult should document in the hopes that people will record it so their loved ones can help when needed.

Given that seven out of ten adults over 65 will need three or more years of long-term care services, having your daily personal finances documented and organized is a blessing to those who will step in to help you. This isn’t just something that older adults should do; it is something EVERY adult should have done. Online access and electronic billing make it difficult for others to step in and manage bill pay, if only temporarily. In the hope that people will at least document the basics, Kay wrote the *What If Kit* and gives it away.

Please register to join us via Zoom on June 18, 10:00am to noon to learn more.

Senior Services of Alexandria Presents Senior Law Day

Save the date for the 12th annual **Senior Law Day** on Saturday, June 8 from 8:30a.m.-2:30p.m. The theme is “**Protecting Ourselves as We Age: Essential Personal and Financial Strategies.**” Join SSA and the Alexandria Bar Association for this free and informative seminar to make sure you are protected from scams and learn about strategies for aging well in Alexandria. The free event will be held at the First Baptist Church, 2932 King Street, Alexandria.

Register by emailing events@seniorservicesalex.org or call 703-836-4414, ext. 110.

Welcome New Members

Laurie Cammisa - Old Town
Teresa Lustig - Potomac Yard

Paris As a Spectator Sport

By AHA Member Diane Dippold MacIntosh

“Get your hot dogs here! Peanuts, cracker jacks, beer!” I never dreamed that Paris—prepping to host the Summer Olympics--would remind me of hawkers with their trays, zigzagging through bleachers at a baseball stadium.

But while visiting an American couple recently who also own a Paris flat, I found bleachers and scaffolding going up everywhere, from the sacred Notre Dame Cathedral, to the profane Place de la Concorde.

After the upcoming unique aquatic Opening Ceremony on July 26 of 160 boats floating down the Seine, 10,500 athletes and dignitaries will land to continue the parade past the city’s landmarks. Concorde will become “Le Concorde Urban Park” with four different urban sports and cultural arenas all in one location. Construction on the stands is massive; these stands will remain for the entire Games period.

On a smaller scale Notre Dame Cathedral, where on April 15, 2019, fire destroyed its wooden roof and iconic spire, has mercifully erected stadium bleachers for tourists to get a better view of the front western façade. Children scamper among the benches, adults take selfies, elders snooze in the sun. All have made their pilgrimage here like Chaucer’s ragtag pilgrims wending their way to Canterbury Cathedral.

Though scaffolding was removed in February 2024 to unveil the new spire, Notre Dame remains a jumble of cranes and scaffolding. Initially, President Macron promised a public reopening by the Olympics, now moved to December 2024.

On a nearby knoll on the grounds stands a statue of Our Lady holding the infant, patiently and passively, a silent sentinel awaiting the structure’s completion.



Above, Diane Dippold MacIntosh is visiting the famed Paris literary café, Les Deau Magots, where she polished off their signature “real chocolate” sundae. Yummm!

What's Up with AHA Members



Jane Starkey (second from left) and her four siblings (and a spouse) gathered in San Antonio, Texas in April for a family reunion. They dined on the River Walk, took a trip through the Texas Hill Country, and celebrated two birthdays.



Alan Dinsmore, left in photo, was recognized at an awards ceremony hosted April 30 by Seabury Resources for Aging, the Episcopal Diocese of Washington and the Potomac Association of United Churches of Christ in recognition of aging services within each congregation. Alan was recommended by senior

ministers and rectors of each church at the Washington National Cathedral. Alan is with John Kellogg, Rector of his church, Christ Church - Washington parish.

A large, happy group, including three new members, recently joined the **AHA Lunch Group** at a new restaurant in Old Town, the MacMillan Spirit House. Nancy says, "It's an interesting restaurant, and reasonably priced, but they are new and still getting the kinks out."



AHA Celebrates Our 13th Anniversary

By Cele Garrett

Though the forecast called for rain, we got lucky—and were joined by about 50 AHA members and volunteers at the beautiful AlexRenew facility on May 15. We thank Pam Nelson, Julie Gentry, Michael Curry, Loretta Darst, Veronica Ferris and many other volunteers for their wonderful work in putting together a fun gathering. See some photos below.



June Primary in Alexandria

By AHA Member Julie Gentry

The **June 18 primary** is called a “dual” primary. The **Democratic ballot** will list the Democratic candidates for Mayor and City Council. The other offices (U.S. Senate and House of Representatives) do not have a primary because there are no candidates challenging Senator Tim Kaine or Representative Don Beyer. The **Republican ballot** will list the candidates for U.S. Senate only.

There are 11 candidates running for City Council and three candidates vying for Mayor. Voters must select which of the two ballots they wish to receive. To review the ballots, go to www.AlexandriaVA.gov/elections. Early in-person voting can be done at the Elections Office at 132 N. Royal Street. For dates and times, please go to www.AlexandriaVA.gov/elections.



Laurie Cammisa Signs on as New AHA Newsletter Editor

As a new member, Laurie Cammisa has generously stepped forward to become the new AHA Newsletter editor, replacing Mary Ann Bier, editor these last five years.

Laurie is currently the founder and Binder Boss at The Red Binder©™, helping clients organize their personal, family, financial, and digital information in one place for use in case of emergencies. Previously, Laurie held leadership positions in the health care industry, serving as chief of staff to the president of the Catholic Health Association, chief of staff to the Regional President of Kaiser Permanente in the Mid-Atlantic region, and as vice president for child advocacy at Boston Children's Hospital. Laurie began her career as a legislative assistant to U.S. Representative Dan Rostenkowski (D-I). A graduate of Tufts University and Boston College Law School, Laurie was selected as an Eisenhower Fellow in 2000. A resident of Alexandria, VA, Laurie is a member of the 1999 class of Henry Crown Fellows and the Aspen Global Leadership Network at the Aspen Institute.

Mary Ann is very grateful for Laurie volunteering for this position and sends many thanks to all who have supported her in filling every issue with your news and photos. Laurie will start this new role with the July issue.



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Medicare Rules to Help Family Caregivers

By AHA Member Alan Dinsmore

President Biden signed an executive order on April 18, 2024 that includes several proposals to change Medicare rules to help family caregivers with training and resources.

During the May 21 AARP-sponsored briefing at VHC Arlington Hospital Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services, administrator Chiquita Brooks-LaSure and a panel that included a family caregiver and a certified adult gerontology nurse practitioner described the features of this order and discussed its important assistance to family caregivers.

Here are the key provisions:

- Providers get paid to train family caregivers. Under a rule that went into effect on January 1, doctors, clinical psychologists, nurse practitioners, physical therapists and other Medicare providers can bill Medicare for time spent training family caregivers.
- Patients with serious conditions get extra education. This rule allows Medicare to pay for what it calls principal illness navigation services to help patients and their family caregivers with high-risk illnesses like cancer, dementia and HIV/AIDs to understand their diagnosis and decide on health care options. On discharge, families and caregivers are usually asked what they need to know but they have no idea of where to turn.
- The order further outlines the current pilot project called Guiding an Improved Dementia Experience and includes 24/7 access to a support line, care coordination, caregiver training, and at-home or adult day care respite services. This program is currently not accepting additional applicants; however, it can be expanded with proved success and could be expanded to other conditions.

These are important steps providing a more inclusive and caregiver centered health system.

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SPECIAL DAYS IN JUNE

June 1 Say Something Nice Day
June 16 Father's Day
June 18 Virginia Primary Vote Day
June 19 Juneteenth
June 20 Summer begins

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