

A Community of Support, Enrichment & Fun for our Alexandria Neighbors Ages 55+

## A RECORD-BREAKING SPRING2ACTION THANK YOU!

by Jamie Ciesla, AHA Executive Director

I am thrilled to share that 2026 marked At Home in Alexandria’s most successful Spring2Action campaign to date—and it’s all thanks to you.

Spring2Action is Alexandria’s annual day of giving, led by ACT for Alexandria, bringing together thousands of donors to support local nonprofits across the city. This year’s event, held on April 22, raised \$3.4 million for 198 nonprofits through more than 7,000 donors.

AHA’s supporters raised **100% of our ambitious \$60,000 goal**. 134 unique donors came forward to support our mission of helping older adults age safely and independently in the homes and community they love. Every click, share, and gift made a meaningful difference.

This was my first Spring2Action as AHA’s Executive Director, and I am especially grateful for the outpouring of support from our members, volunteers, staff, corporate sponsors, and the broader Alexandria community. It was incredible to see so many individuals come together to champion our mission.

I also want to recognize our corporate sponsors— ACCfamily Home Care, Assisting Hands Home Care, Del Ray Cafe, Goodwin Living At Home, Six Half Dozen, and Synergy Home Care—for their continued commitment to AHA and their support for our Spring2Action campaign.

Spring2Action is more than a day of giving. It’s a celebration of community. Thank you for being part of ours!



## May 2026 Calendar

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 join Zoom. Movie Group is looking for a new facilitator, contact the office if you are interested.

**NOTE: The Solo AHAer Group's next meeting will be announced in the coming weeks.**

Sunday, May 3	<b>Achieving a Good Death, book discussion with Chris Palmer</b> at The Oronoco meeting room, 601 N Fairfax St.	2-3pm
Tuesdays, May 5, 12, 19, and 26	<b>AHA Yoga</b> at The View in Alexandria House. Spaces may be limited. *Mat Yoga 9:30-10:30; Chair Yoga 11am-12 noon. NOTE: Chair yoga is FULL at this time.	9:30am - 12pm*
Tuesdays, May 5, 12, 19	<b>Weekly Scrabble</b> at the home of Jeff and Donna Gathers. Limit of 3.	1:30pm
Saturday, May 9	<b>Happy Hour</b> at Nancy Kincaid's. Limit of 20	5-7pm
Tuesday, May 12	<b>Ladies' Night Out</b> at Aldo's Italian Kitchen, 2850 Eisenhower Ave. Limit of 10.	5-7pm
Wednesday, May 13	<b>Dine Around</b> at Makeda Ethiopian Restaurant, 516 A Van Dorn Street. Limit of 8.	6-8pm
Monday, May 18	<b>Lively Arts Discussion</b> at Marie Cataffo's home. Limit of 10.	10am
Wednesday, May 20	<b>Morning Brew</b> at Woodstock Cafe, Shirlington Gateway, 2800 Shirlington Rd. No limit.	10am
Wednesday, May 20	<b>Third Wednesday Book Club</b> on Zoom. "Mona's Eyes" by Thomas Schlessler.	7pm
Thursday, May 21	<b>Tech Thursday: MyChart</b> Learn how to access MyChart and discuss common problems. AHA office, limit of 10.	1pm
Thursday, May 21	<b>Men's Night Out</b> at Aldo's Italian Kitchen, 2850 Eisenhower Ave. No limit.	5-6:30pm
Thursday, May 28	<b>Lunch Around</b> at Founding Farmers, 461 Swann Ave. Limit of 10.	12:30pm
Thursday, May 28	<b>Downsizing Seminar</b> with Pete and Katie Crouch, Montebello condos: 5905 Mt Eagle Dr.	2pm

## FAREWELL, VERONICA

by Jamie Ciesla, AHA Executive Director

On May 8<sup>th</sup>, we are saying a fond farewell to our colleague Veronica, who is leaving At Home in Alexandria after two impactful years of service to join the Capitol Hill Village.

During her time at AHA, Veronica brought thoughtfulness, warmth, and care to everything she did. She led our membership and volunteer onboarding work, strengthened our communications, and helped shape many of our community events. Her contributions have left a lasting mark on how we welcome and engage our members and volunteers.

Alan Dinsmore, our Board Chair, thanked her for “her invaluable contributions to so many AHA activities.”

On a personal note, I want to express my deep gratitude for the four months we worked closely together. In that short time, I learned so much from her approach, her steadiness, and her commitment to doing things well and with heart.

We are grateful for all she has given to AHA and wish her every success. She will be missed, but this is not goodbye. Veronica and Matt will continue to volunteer with AHA, and we look forward to staying connected (and perhaps even welcoming her back one day).

## CELE GARRETT BEING HONORED

Former AHA Executive Director Cele Garrett is being honored with The Annie B. Rose Lifetime Achievement Award presented by the Alexandria Commission on Aging (COA). The award honors an individual who has dedicated at least 10 years to serving seniors and improving the community through advocacy, social justice, and service, honoring the legacy of Alexandria community leader Annie B. Rose. We can think of no one more deserving of this award than our own Cele!

Cele will receive her award from Alexandria Mayor Alyia Gaskins at the COA annual Excellence in Aging Awards Program on May 12 at 5 pm. at The Del Pepper Community Resource Center at 4850 Mark Center Drive.



Veronica Ferris (left) and Cele Garrett

## DO YOU HAVE OLD COMPUTER EQUIPMENT TO DONATE?

Computer CORE, a local organization that prepares underserved adults to realize career aspirations with foundational digital and professional skills, is hosting a Donation Day on Saturday, June 20 from 10 am to noon at the Fairlington Presbyterian Church, 3846 King Street.

Computer CORE is accepting laptops, desktops, monitors, keyboards, mice, or cords. If they are deemed unusable, responsible e-cycling is available onsite.

If you are unable to attend in person, AHA can help coordinate pick-up of your donation at your home for delivery to the event. Let us know by contacting the AHA office at 703-231-0824 or [AHA@AtHomeinAlexandria.org](mailto:AHA@AtHomeinAlexandria.org)



### Welcome New Members

Carol Anderson and Dick Christenson

### Welcome New Volunteers

Aleisha Ruiz, Emily Williams, Kim Smeltzer, Lou Caceres, Lowell Myrick, Xiaohe Shang, and Caitlin Betz

# AHA IS GROWING! WE NOW SERVE ALL OF THE CITY OF ALEXANDRIA!

by Jamie Ciesla, AHA Executive Director

We're excited to share that At Home in Alexandria now serves the entire City of Alexandria, including West Alexandria. This expansion, approved by the AHA Board of Directors on April 21, 2026, marks an important milestone in our mission to support older adults across our entire community.

Outreach efforts in West Alexandria have been supported through grant funding from the Ada L. and Albert M. Wibel Foundation and Cloudbreak Foundation. Most recently the Virginia Villages Collective (VVC) and the Washington Area Villages Exchange (WAVE) have also provided funding.

We look forward to welcoming new members and volunteers from every part of Alexandria as our community continues to grow. If you have a friend or neighbor in West Alexandria who has been waiting to join AHA—now is the perfect time to get connected!

## DID YOU GET AN EMAIL FROM COMCAST? IT MAY BE A SCAM

AHA tech volunteer, Chris Miller, is offering his help to members who are being asked to transition their **@Comcast.net** email addresses. Comcast is transitioning to Yahoo - a company with a long history of providing email services. You'll keep the same email address, but you will have to make a few changes on your smartphone, tablet or laptop as part of the change.

While this will be a benefit to Comcast members, many spammers are sending fake email messages to Comcast customers that claim to be about the transition. Using these messages, the spammers are trying to gain unauthorized access to your email account.

Chris is offering his help if you get an email that claims to be from Comcast (or Xfinity) about the change to Yahoo. "Please send a copy to me at [chris@techintandem.com](mailto:chris@techintandem.com). I can let you know if the email is real or fake - before you take any action. I want to protect you from the scammers! If the message is real, I'll be happy to help you follow the steps necessary to move your email to Yahoo." We have always known that our Chris is a treasure . . . and he continues to give us more reasons to love him!

## VISIT OUR REFRESHED WEBSITE!

With deep gratitude to SixHalfDozen for their design work, AHA has rolled out its refreshed website and a new logo designed for our 15-year anniversary. Keep your eyes peeled for upcoming information about our upcoming 15<sup>th</sup> anniversary party!



## UPCOMING AHA EVENTS:

### Book Discussion: Achieving A Good Death

AHA Member Teddy McBay is hosting a book discussion with Chris Palmer, author of [Achieving a Good Death: A Practical Guide to the End of Life](#). Chris will share insights on dying well as well as tips to reduce discomfort and fear around the topics of death and dying. Chris is an author, speaker, trained hospice volunteer, and end-of-life activist. For more info [www.ChrisPalmerOnline.com](http://www.ChrisPalmerOnline.com). The event will be Sunday, May 3 from 2 – 3 pm. To register, contact the AHA office at 703-231-0824 or [AHA@AtHomeInAlexandria.org](mailto:AHA@AtHomeInAlexandria.org).

### Are You Thinking About Downsizing?

AHA is sponsoring a downsizing event with Mount Vernon at Home on Thursday, May 28 from 2 – 3 pm. This presentation by Pete and Katie Crouch, Senior Real Estate Specialists, will focus on home safety, downsizing and when to know when it's time to sell your home. The event will take place at the Montebello Condominiums at 5905 Mt Eagle Dr. Register on the AHA Hub or by contacting the AHA office at [AHA@AtHomeInAlexandria.org](mailto:AHA@AtHomeInAlexandria.org) or 703-231-0824.

### Interested in Walking with AHA Friends?

AHA Board Member, Jim Larocco, is starting an AHA walking group. If interested, please email him directly at [rocca-rocco@usa.net](mailto:rocca-rocco@usa.net). Please let Jim know the types of walks you are interested in (distance and location) and when you're generally free.

## CONTACT US

### At Home in Alexandria

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Alexandria, VA 22305  
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[AHA@AtHomeInAlexandria.org](mailto:AHA@AtHomeInAlexandria.org)  
[www.AtHomeInAlexandria.org](http://www.AtHomeInAlexandria.org)

## GARDENING ADVICE REQUESTED

From AHA Member Sylvia McDonough: I am in the midst of redoing parts of my garden and, thanks to the winter weather, the project is a little more extensive than I had planned. I am looking for advice, opinions, and sympathy from gardeners, former gardeners, armchair gardeners, and people with good color sense.

## IN MEMORIAM

In April, AHA lost three of our community members:

**Walter Owiesny**, husband of Jayne Owiesny joined AHA when they relocated to Alexandria. Walt enjoyed the social aspect of AHA, especially the lunch and dinner outings.

**Susan Kellom**, a longtime Alexandria resident, Army veteran, and devoted civic leader, is remembered for her decades of service that helped shape the city's political and community landscape.

**Jeanne Solak**, widow of Thomas Solak and Old Town resident, led an adventurous life, traveling frequently and catching Navy football games whenever she could. Jeanne frequently attended AHA lunches, dinners, and tech Thursdays.

## Board of Directors

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— AT HOME IN —  
**ALEXANDRIA**

3139 Mt. Vernon Avenue  
Alexandria, VA 22305

### ***Special Days in May***

<i>May 1</i>	<i>May Day</i>
<i>May 2</i>	<i>Kentucky Derby Day</i>
<i>May 5</i>	<i>Cinco de Mayo</i>
<i>May 10</i>	<i>Mother's Day</i>
<i>May 25</i>	<i>Memorial Day</i>

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