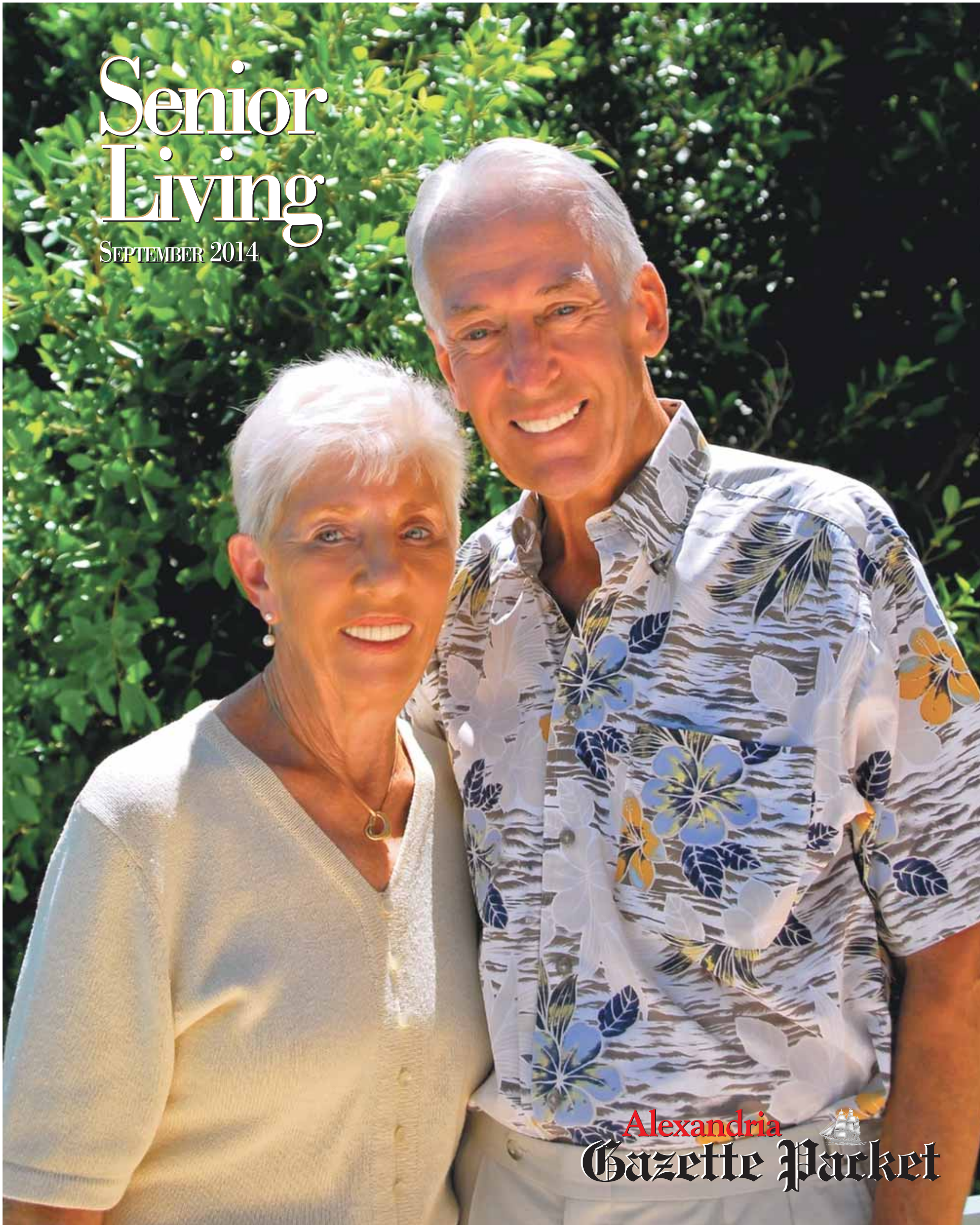


Senior Living

SEPTEMBER 2014



Alexandria
Gazette Packet

Senior Living

PUBLIC INPUT

The City of Alexandria is seeking community input on existing walking and bicycle issues and needs, and ideas for improving the environment for walking and biking. An online survey and interactive map can be accessed from the project webpage www.alexandriava.gov/pedbikeplan. Visit alexandriava.gov/PedBikePlan for more on the Pedestrian and Bicycle Master Plan.

NEW ALEXANDRIA LIBRARY APP

The Alexandria Library introduced a new mobile app via Apple iOS and Google Android devices so customers can access the library and their accounts. Library users can place holds, renew library materials, browse databases and search online catalog content from this app. Contact Linda Wesson at 703-746-1727.

GARDEN SEASON

Make a Reservation. The Department of Recreation, Parks and Cultural Activities announces procedures for the 2014 Community Garden season. Visit www.alexandriava.gov/uploadedFiles/recreation/parks/CommunityGardenRegulations2014.pdf for the terms and conditions for the reservation of 194 community garden plots located in Chinguapin Park, 3210 King St., and Holmes Run Parkway. Community plots are available as follows: full-size community garden plot (15 feet by 20 feet): \$55/resident and \$75/nonresident; half-size plot (10 feet by 15 feet): \$28/resident and \$35/nonresident. Individuals interested in receiving information to apply for a garden plot contact John Walsh, Horticulturalist, at 703-746-4654 or john.walsh@alexandriava.gov.

Soil Testing. Virginia Cooperative Extension is offering soil testing services to analyze soil and determine what is needed to condition soil for plantings. Recommendations generated usually within three working days of receipt. Pick up soil sampling box at the Virginia Cooperative Extension Alexandria office, 1108 Jefferson St., 8 a.m.-5 p.m. Monday-Friday. Send filled soil sample box with form and fee to the Virginia Tech Lab for analysis. Fees vary, visit www.soiltest.vt.edu/Files/testing-process-and-fees.html.

THURSDAY/SEPT. 11

Resource Allocation and Cost Recovery Policy Sorting Workshop. 7-8:30 p.m. at Patrick Henry Recreation Center, 4643 Taney Ave. Policy will be explained and categories of service will be sorted according to the amount of community benefit they provide. Space limited, RSVP to Bryan Williams at bryan.williams@alexandriava.gov or 703-746-5557.

Prevention of Blindness Society Meeting. 1:30-3 p.m. at Charles E. Beatley, Jr. Library, 5005 Duke St. Learn how houses and apartments can be designed with greater safety, comfort and convenience. Call 703-746-1762..

WEDNESDAY/OCT. 15

Nomination Deadline. Living Legends of Alexandria is looking for nominees who have contributed at least one tangible improvement to the quality of the City's life that would likely be missing without this person's vision and energy. Those currently running for or holding political office are not eligible for consideration. Visit www.alexandrialegends.com/nominationform.htm. Email nominations to info@alexandrialegends.com.

The Groveton High School class of 1964 is looking for contact information for as many classmates as possible. The planning for the 50th reunion is underway, however only a small number of people have been contacted. Groveton graduates of '64 interested in attending September's reunion should email contact information to GHS64@verizon.net.
Be Heard at the City's monthly Public Hearings. A schedule of the meetings can be found at www.alexandriava.gov. Voice opinions, speak about something on the docket or just speak about something you are concerned about. Sign up in advance to speak through the city's website. Anyone is welcome at any of the public hearings.

Alexandria Gazette Packet

Senior Living

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Johns Hopkins University Study

Type of Hearing Loss	Dementia Risk Increase
Mild • Difficulty understanding conversation in a busy restaurant • Complaints that you have the TV too loud	Two Times
Moderate • Loved ones may become frustrated with you "You Listening" • Constantly saying "What?"	Three Times
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Senior Living

Time to Downsize?

BY MARILYN CAMPBELL
THE GAZETTE PACKET

When Beverly Quinn's fourth child, a daughter, got married, she decided it was time to downsize. The 69-year-old widow moved out of the 4,000-square-foot home in Vienna, Va., where she and her husband raised their children and into a 1,300-square-foot townhouse in North Potomac, Md., which meets her new needs perfectly.

"It's a big change," she said. "But I guess that is part of downsizing."

One of the most difficult parts of Quinn's transition was boxing up more than 30 years of memories, and deciding which items to move into her new home, which to give to her children and deciding which to donate or discard. It's a familiar conundrum for many seniors: organizing, decluttering and resisting the desire to take more than their new, smaller homes can accommodate.

"We see it all the time with our members," said Barbara Sullivan, executive director of Mount Vernon At Home, a nonprofit that helps senior citizens age in their own homes. "Our volunteers help with downsizing by reorganizing, cleaning out closets, and decluttering."

Downsizing is also emotional: "Moving from a 4,000-square-foot home into a retirement community or small 800- to 1,200-square-foot apartment can be difficult," said Daniel Sanders, president and CEO of Four Sales LTD, a professional estate sales, auctions and personal property appraisals company. "There is often a conflict between what Mom and Dad want them to take with them and what they can actually accom-



PHOTO COURTESY OF FOUR SALES LTD

Daniel Sanders, president and CEO of Four Sales LTD, a professional estate sales, auctions and personal property appraisals company, helps clear out a garage. Such services make it easier for seniors down move from a large home into a smaller house.

modate."

When tackling the downsizing process, Sanders suggests a few guidelines: "We strongly recommend using an emotional yard stick to determine whether to keep or not keep something," he said. "Look for things that have a memory associated with them. Like, 'Remember when Mom and

Dad went to Rehoboth [Beach] and bought this Murano glass bird? It was one of the best days of their lives.'"

"A personal space is like an autobiography. People are complex so it is often difficult to find just one style that fits every impulse."

— Susan Hergenrath, Ph.D., professor of interior design, Marymount University

Those mementos go on a list of items to consider keeping, said Sanders. He recommends waiting 24 hours and then trying to cut the list in half. "Depending on the age of the parent, it's good to work in two to

Suggestions for seniors looking for homes to fit the next phase of their lives.

three hour shifts, take a break and do another two to three hour shift.

"We want to build mild frustration because you begin to make decisive decisions that are more precise," he said. "And you are less likely to rethink and over-think."

When cleaning a larger home in preparation for a downsize, Sanders suggests that families go through each room of the house in a systematic fashion, collecting family photos; family records like birth, death and marriage certificates; and financial records.

"You'd be surprised by how much you accumulate over the years," said Quinn. "The process is draining, both physically and mentally. The only bright spot was that I was going to be living closer to my children and grandchildren and I liked my new town house."

Once seniors have pared down their belongings and begun the moving process, some, like Quinn, begin to look forward to starting anew and designing their new homes to reflect their new styles and needs. However, it's not only important to arrange furniture and accessories tastefully, but in a way that takes issues like safety hazards and new lifestyle issues into consideration.

"The best advice is understanding that personal style is rooted in your past, places that you love, the present, what you love today, and the future," said Susan Hergenrath, Ph.D. associate professor of interior design at Marymount University in Arlington, Va. "A personal space is like an autobiography. People are complex, so it is often difficult to find just one style that fits every impulse."

When it comes to creating a comfortable

SEE DOWNSIZE. PAGE 5

Quilting Studio Adds to Dream Home

At 72, Wanda Rogers engages in an early American craft she first learned from her grandmother.

BY JOHN BYRD
THE GAZETTE PACKET

Quilting takes patience; ditto the steps entailed in setting up a quilting studio all of one's own.

Such are the reflections of Wanda Rogers, 72, who is now tapering off a 51-year professional career, and increasing precious hours spent in the pursuit of a mountain-state handicraft she learned from her mother and grandmother.

"We were all quilters where I grew up in West Virginia," Rogers recalls. "My mother, my grandmother, my aunt. The originality of a quilt's pattern is the larger artistic goal,

but it takes a lot of concentrated quiet time to achieve it. Between raising children, moving frequently and then working, there just weren't a lot hours for quilting before now, much as I love it."

The particularly hectic phase of Rogers' young married life included setting up 18 different households in places where husband Ted, an Air Force pilot, was stationed. In the early 1980s, the family finally settled into a 2,533-square-foot ranch house on two acres near Springfield.

Three years ago, when Ted retired, the couple collaborated with remodeler David

SEE QUILTING STUDIO. PAGE 4



PHOTO COURTESY OF HOME FRONTS NEWS

Wanda and her daughter Janyce preparing fabrics at the studio's work table. The marble counter surface also has a role in the studio's kitchenette.

Quilting Studio Adds to Dream Home

FROM PAGE 3

Foster in transforming the ranch into a substantially enlarged and upgraded “dream house,” complete with a two-car garage topped by a future quilting studio.

“I knew my plans were getting closer to reality when we added drywall to the attic room above the garage,” Rogers says. “Once the space was shelled-in, I began to see how the studio would look and function.”

For the next three years, however, Rogers kept up her a daily work schedule with a healthcare consulting firm, a job that required frequent out-of-town meetings.

“We had installed temperature controls in the studio when we remodeled the house,” Rogers says. “Everything was well-insulated and bright, so I moved-in an easy chair and started thinking about what I wanted to do.”

Last year, Ted presented Wanda with a professional quality Bernina Sewing Machine, and the studio makeover got underway in earnest.

“We designed the suite specifically to support Wanda’s creative process,” says Foster, who has operated Foster Remodeling Solutions for more than 35 years. “We had to allocate enough floor space in the middle of the room so she could completely lay out a quilt in progress. Her process also requires a way to keep carefully catalogued materials within easy reach.”

AT 400 SQUARE FEET, with large windows on both the eastern- and western-facing walls, the studio is flooded with natural light during the day, an effect Wanda finds inspiring. The hickory wood flooring, apart from its lovely aesthetics, is entirely functional as a surface for cutting and assembling fabrics. Built-ins on either side of the assembly area have been custom-designed to hold specific fabrics and other



Three generations (from left): Janyce Rogers, Wanda Rogers and Julia Walker display recent handiwork.

PHOTOS COURTESY OF HOME FRONTS NEWS

essentials. Rogers says some of the fabrics date back to the 1930s and were passed down from her grandmother.

“All the women in the family were active in quilting bees” Rogers recalls. “One of my aunts’ designs was featured over the cover of a national magazine. We were also active in the National Quilting Symposium”.

But for all its delicacy of color and pattern, a quilt must also be functional as a bed cover. To assure the end-product is well-made, Rogers employs a Bernina “surger” which stitches finished overlock seams on the side of the quilt opposite from the display pattern. Since Rogers likes to regularly consider fabrics in a variety of colors, shades and textures, the studio offers some 64 cubic feet of additional storage space behind each wall.

Like most dedicated artisans, Rogers insisted on a self-sufficient studio that would

allow her to stick with a developing vision without interruption. Hence, the kitchenette, the full bath with walk-in shower. Also, the Advantium oven; two-burner cooktop; the WiFi hook-up, the laptop.

“I don’t have to run back to the house for lunch, or a cup of tea,” Rogers says. “The amenities simply allow me to concentrate on the project at hand. That’s what it takes to do this kind of work well.”

While the full bath and refined finishwork will also allow the attic to double as a guest room when needed, Rogers says the studio is fundamentally designed for quilting. By inserting a specially designed cutting board

over the sink, for instance, the L-shaped kitchenette surface converts to a work table. There’s even an unseen custom niche to hold the ironing board Rogers uses to flatten fabric.

“I see the studio as an integral part to my life ahead,” says Rogers, adding that that her 10-year old granddaughter now wants to learn quilting from her. “This kind of fulfillment isn’t just good luck; it’s something you have to plan.”

On a related note, David Foster observes that the studio is consistent with the kind broader-scale retirement home upgrades his firm has been seeing in the recent past. Seventy-five percent of his current clients are now over 55; as of last year, 44 percent had come back to him for a second project.

“We’re seeing a lot more interest in a phased development approach to retrofitting the family house for retirement,” Foster says. “To save money on future projects,

a remodeling client sometimes asks us to insulate and dry-wall a part of the house they don’t plan to actually use for a while. This is a simple way of thinking ahead that adds value and usually doesn’t appreciably increase the existing remodeling budget. There’s a kind of generational search for more enduring housing solutions that’s now underway, and it’s evolving rapidly.”

Foster Remodeling Solutions periodically offers workshops on home remodeling topics. Call 703-550-1371 or visit www.fosterremodeling.com for more. John Byrd (byrdmatx@gmail.com) has been writing about home improvement topics for 30 years.



Pattern originality is one of quilting’s primary artistic goals, Rogers says, adding: “it’s a process that can’t be rushed.”



Situated above the family’s two car garage, the new quilting studio provides the privacy Wanda Rogers was seeking when she decided to resume the craft she learned from her grandmother more than 60 years ago.



Wanda Rogers, 71, displays some of her quilts.

Tips for Right-sizing the Next Phase

FROM PAGE 3

but elegant living space, Hergenrather says, “First, think about the work the space needs to do.”

WAITING TOO LONG before making the decision to downsize can complicate the process. “It’s always better for someone to downsize to a smaller home before they are in a crisis situation, [for example] suddenly, they can no longer climb a lot of stairs and must move to a single-level dwelling, but often a person will put off that decision until it’s nearly too late,” said Cele Garrett, Executive Director of At Home in Alexandria. “We have some members facing that decision right now and they’ll often admit they should have done it sooner.”

For many seniors, a living space needs to keep them safe. “You might need to add grab bars,” said Sullivan. “Also watch for trip hazards like throw rugs and clutter. Check for furniture that needs to be moved back to make the house more accessible for moving around. Relocate plates, cups and saucers so that they are in easy reach for seniors.”

Sullivan’s organization has volunteers who can help with enlarging bathrooms and widening doorways to accommodate wheelchairs and walkers.

When designing a new, smaller space,

Sanders recommends interior design magnetic floor planning kits, which help determine a person’s furniture needs and placement before they actually move. “The starting point for every good move is the floor plan at the receiving location,” he said.

When moving out of a familiar environment and into new surroundings, there are a few factors that can be overlooked when striving to maintain one’s quality of life.

“Personal style is rooted in your past, places that you love, the present, what you love today, and the future.”

— Susan Hergenrather, Ph.D., professor of interior design, Marymount University

If a senior chooses to live alone, there are several issues that should be monitored, advises Maura Barillaro, a registered nurse with Home Care Assistance in Bethesda, McLean and Fairfax. “Basically, there are so many needs that we see in the elderly, including boredom, frailty, loneliness, mobility issues, progressing illnesses,” she said.

“We would all like to maintain cognitive functioning throughout our lives and this is especially important late in life,” said Pam

Greenwood, Ph.D., associate professor of psychology, George Mason University in Fairfax, Va. So when looking for a new place to live, make sure there are opportunities for physical exercise, mental stimulation and social stimulation.

“The strongest evidence concerns aerobic exercise – there are real benefits for mind and brain of moving physically daily,”

said Greenwood.

“There is also growing evidence of the benefits of cognitive training for everyday functioning – perhaps the strongest evidence is perception training – visual and auditory perception. Several studies, including our own, have shown broad transfer of benefits from perception training to everyday functioning.”



When remodeling this bathroom, Glickman Design Build added a bench to this shower. Such features can help seniors to downsize and live alone safely.

PHOTOS COURTESY OF GLICKMAN DESIGN BUILD



PHOTO COURTESY OF MOUNT VERNON AT HOME

A volunteer helps change a light bulb for a Mount Vernon at Home member.



PHOTOS COURTESY OF ALEXANDRIA AT HOME

An Alexandria at Home volunteer hangs a painting for one of the organization’s seniors who chose to downsize and live alone.



Alexandria at Home volunteers helps a member with yard work. Such services allow seniors to downsize and live alone more easily.

Engaging over the New Yorker

Members enjoy intellectual stimulation, camaraderie over long term.

BY MARILYN CAMPBELL
THE GAZETTE PACKET

There was a time when 83-year-old Bob Kanchuger spent most Friday mornings on a 30-mile bike ride with friends. The group of retirees would pedal toward a local destination – Bethesda, Md., to Old Town Alexandria, Va., was a favorite trek — where they would have coffee and spirited debates on everything from foreign policy to economic inequality before making the return trip.

“One of the things that kept people coming together is that we would have a defined day of riding and we would make sure we had an interesting place to stop and have coffee and discussions,” said Kanchuger, a resident of Potomac, Md., and an attorney who retired from the World Bank Group.

While outdoor exercise was a definite benefit, it wasn’t the best part for all of the group members. “The most enjoyable part was the discussion at our mid-way point,” said Dr. Elliot C. Wilner, a retired neurologist who lives in Bethesda.

Kanchuger wanted to preserve the stimulating discussions even after the bike rides were no longer possible. “It was likely that biking would come to an end because of our age and physical health,” said Kanchuger. “Several of us subscribed to the New Yorker and enjoyed discussing the articles, and that was an activity that would meet some of our social needs of retirement.”

So Kanchuger approached Wilner with the idea of forming a New Yorker magazine discussion group. They invited a few like-minded friends from the biking group. The men meet on the first Wednesday afternoon



PHOTO COURTESY OF DAWN LANDSMAN

Before the New Yorker Group, spirited discussions took place as part of the Friday morning bicycling group. Here, Tony Abrams, Dawn Landsman, Mark Zweig, Elliot Wilner, Ian McDonald and Bob Kanchuger pictured in 2009.

of each month for two hours of insightful conversation. Group members choose three to four stories from the magazine to read and analyze. Each article discussion is led by a group member who prepares ideas for analysis ahead of time and emails them to the group.

“I’ve gained and reinvigorated friendships,” said Wilner. “I enjoy the intellectually stimulating discussions with bright, educated, well-informed people.”

FOR THE SEPTEMBER MEETING, Wilner suggested two of James Surowiecki’s

columns. “Because they present both sides of an important issue,” Wilner said. “Corporate America has, over the past 40 years or so, evolved a business model that has been almost totally devoted to the personal enrichment of executives and shareholders, with very little concern for the welfare of workers or the nation; and yet there is another, more socially conscious business model that has been shown to be successful but is not widely emulated,” said Wilner.

The men are united, in part, by their affinity for mental rigor. “We all enjoy the intellectual stimulation, but the camaraderie is one of the best aspects,” said Peter

Kimm of Potomac, a retired foreign aid official who was for 30-years Director of Housing and Urban Programs at the U.S. Agency for International Development. “We like each other. We’re a diverse group of people – retired doctors, lawyers, engineers ... with a wide range of interests. Everybody in the group is successful.”

Light snacks, coffee and spirited debates characterize most of the meetings.

“We don’t agree on everything,” said 80-year-old Victor Kimm, Peter Kimm’s brother, of McLean, Va., an engineer and retired senior executive for the Environmental Protection Agency. “We’ve seen people who’ve had very different views, but there is a mutual respect. We have different ways of looking at an issue and moving on. I think it has something to do with the age of the group members.”

Victor Kimm, who is also the executive director of SHARE, a non-profit organization in McLean that helps meet the emergency needs of those with limited financial resources, says the men have explored articles ranging from the growing inequity of income in the United States to stories about the group of Chilean miners trapped underground for more than two months.

“There is a certain rigor or discipline in having a monthly meeting where you read and prepare in advance,” he said. “You have to stick with it.”

The bond between the men, however, extends beyond erudition.

“We all greatly value the friendships of this group,” said Ian MacDonald, a resident of Chevy Chase, Md., a former journalist who retired from the International Monetary Fund and who grew up in Great Britain and graduated from the University of Oxford. “And we’ve been there for each other during difficult times.”



PHOTO COURTESY OF ELLIOT WILNER

Elliot Wilner reads to his granddaughter, Yael Fritschie, who is not yet a member of either the New Yorker or bicycle group.



Peter Kimm

Senior Living

Feedback Wanted. The City of Alexandria's Department of Recreation, Parks and Cultural Activities is looking for feedback to determine the best method to modify/expand their pool facilities at the existing Chinqapin Center. Visit <http://studentvoice.com/p/?uuid=750b3323364547e9b16b319dc3494a37> to take the survey.

Information Technology Services. Open through Aug. 30. ITS is looking for feedback on its new online system of interactive maps. Visit <http://www.alexandriava.gov/gis/info/default.aspx?id=76912> to leave feedback.

Public Space Recycling. Alexandria has placed more than 80 bright blue recycling containers next to public trash cans in the commercial districts along Mount Vernon Avenue and King Street, as well as other public spaces, including parks, recreation fields, and other high-traffic pedestrian areas. Visit alexandriava.gov/Recycling.

Composting & Food Waste. Alexandria now has Resource Recovery Stations, located at the City's Farmers' Markets (Old Town, Del Ray) to collect food waste. More than 270 people have participated in the food waste program over the last several months. Participants drop off items weekly, over eight tons of waste has been collected, to be composted to make a natural fertilizer. To learn more about composting visit alexandriava.gov/YardWaste.

English as a Second Language Class. Charles E. Beatley, Jr. Central Library, 5005 Duke St. Tuesdays and Thursdays, all levels 10 a.m.-noon, intermediate workshop 3-5 p.m. All classes free. Call the information desk, 703-746-1702, ext. 3.

The Talking Book Service at Alexandria Library will now operate Monday through Friday, 10 a.m. to 3 p.m. or by appointment. Patrons may also reach the service at 703-746-1760 or talkingbooks@alexandria.lib.va.us.

Amazon.com supporting Alexandria Libraries. The city of Alexandria can now support its local library when purchasing from Amazon.com through the Alexandria Library website. Alexandria Library introduces the "Buy

It Now" feature, allowing anyone to purchase any item—not just books—through its website with a simple click of a button, and a portion of the proceeds will be donated back to the library.

Foreclosure Prevention Clinics. At the Office of Housing, 421 King Street, Suite 200. The clinics will be held weekly, and will offer both group and individual counseling sessions to assist homeowners with financial difficulties. Call 202-667-7006.

Digital Magazines. Patrons of Alexandria Library will have unlimited access to read digital magazines, which can be viewed on most Internet-enabled devices inside or outside of the library. Accessible through www.rbdigital.com/alexandriava/zinio.

Eligible low income households can now use their SNAP benefits to buy local foods at the **Old Town Farmers' Market.** SNAP customers are able to use their electronic benefits transfer cards to purchase fresh fruits, vegetables and other eligible food products at the market. The Old Town Farmer's Market is located on King Street between N. Royal and N. Fairfax Streets, and is open on Saturdays, year round from 7 a.m. to noon.

The **Military Officers Association of America's** scholarship fund gives out loans and grants to children of military families. To learn more, apply or donate visit www.moaa.org/scholarshipfund.

The Parkinson's Disease Support Group of Alexandria meets the 1st Wednesday of each month at 2 p.m. At the Hollin Hall Senior Center, Room 109, 1500 Shenandoah Road. All Parkinson's patients and caregivers are welcome.

Training Courses. The American Red Cross in the National Capital Region will host training courses in CPR, First Aid, and AED in the Alexandria and Fort Belvoir offices. These classes offer a two-year certification. Classes

range from \$70-\$110 and will be held on Tuesdays, Wednesdays, Thursdays, or Saturdays, dependent upon the participant's choice. Advance registration is required. To register for a class or find another class in your area, call 1-800-RED-CROSS or visit redcross.org/takeaclass.

Plant Clinics. 10 a.m.-1 p.m. Thursdays at Alexandria Lee Center, 1108 Jefferson St. From late-April to late-October, the Master Gardeners of Northern Virginia will be holding a plant clinic for the community. Gardeners also staff the Horticulture Help Desk, 9 a.m.-noon weekdays year-round at the VCE office in the Fairlington Community Center, 3308 S. Stafford St. Contact 703-228-6414, mgarlalex@gmail.com or www.ext.vt.edu.

At Home in Alexandria! Those interested in becoming AHA! Friends should call AHA! at 703-231-0824 or download the application form from the AHA! website at www.athomeinalexandria.org. AHA! supports Alexandrians ages 55+ who prefer to remain independent in their own homes.

VOLUNTEERS NEEDED

Alexandria's Juvenile Court Services and Seaport Foundation seek **adult male mentors** for the new SOHO (Space of His Own) creative mentorship program. Seaport SOHO will meet throughout the school year on Wednesday evenings, from 5:30-8 p.m., at the Alexandria Seaport Foundation, 2 Duke St. Seaport SOHO will provide boys from fragile and fragmented homes with yearlong one-to-one mentoring through engagement in carpentry, fishing and sports activities. No mentoring or carpentry experience is required; SOHO is looking for enthusiastic and innovative men to serve as mentors. Email ashley.snyder@alexandriava.gov.

The Mount Vernon Adult Day Health Care Center is looking for social companions for participants on Fridays from 3-5 p.m. and front desk volunteers on Tuesdays and Wednesdays from 11 a.m.-noon and 3:30-4:30 p.m. Located at 8350 Richmond Highway. For these and other volunteer opportunities call 703-324-5406 or visit www.fairfaxcounty.gov/olderadults.

Do you have a family member or a neighbor who could use some help to make daily life a little easier?

At Home in Alexandria (AHA) is a grassroots, not-for-profit organization of caring neighbors and volunteers helping people in Alexandria ages 55+ remain independent and living in their own homes. We provide valuable help in a variety of ways: transportation to medical appointments, social events, technology support, modest yard work, prescription pick-up and so much more.

The annual membership fee covers an unlimited number of your requests for assistance.

Volunteer or join AHA and become part of a nationwide "village" movement!



www.athomeinalexandria.org

aha@athomeinalexandria.org

703.231.0824

At Home in Alexandria!

SPECIAL CONNECTIONS CALENDAR

Advertising Deadlines are the previous Thursday unless noted.

SEPTEMBER

HomeLifeStyle.....9/10/14
A+ Camps & Schools.....9/17/14
Fall Fun & Arts Preview.....9/24/14

OCTOBER

Wellbeing.....10/1/14
HomeLifeStyle PULLOUT:
Deadline is 9/25/14.....10/8/14
A+ Camps & Schools.....10/15/14
Election Preview I.....10/22/14
Election Preview II.....10/29/14



NOVEMBER

Election Day is Tuesday,
November 4.
Wellbeing.....11/5/14

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Publishing Dates

HomeLifeStyle.....11/12/14
Holiday Entertainment &
Gift Guide I.....11/19/14

A+11/25/14
Thanksgiving is November 27.

DECEMBER

Wellbeing.....12/3/14
HomeLifeStyle: Home for the
Holidays.....12/10/14
Hanukkah begins December 16.
Holiday Entertainment &
Gift Guide II.....12/16/14
A+ Camps & Schools.....12/16/14
CHILDREN'S CONNECTION.....12/24/14

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After The Fall

BY ANN EMMONS
PETRI

It started off like any other February day with our usual trip to the fitness club for morning exercises. What made this day different was that Bill, my 93-year-old husband, slipped and fell on some ice on our driveway, striking the back of his head. He said it didn't hurt.

But the next day he complained of feeling tired and each day after that he felt a little worse. Still, we didn't see any connection to his fall. By the fourth day, however, he was so weak he couldn't even get out of his chair for lunch. It finally dawned on me that something was seriously wrong and I needed to call 911.

It turned out I was four days too late. All this time, because he was on a blood thinner for his high blood pressure, he had been bleeding in his brain. The neurologist at the hospital where the ambulance took him later told me that it was one of the worst cerebral hemorrhages she had ever seen.

IN MY OWN WORDS

The symptoms are similar to those of a stroke and by then he was unable to talk coherently, remember things, or walk. This was a man, who, before he retired, had been a successful United States Government chemical and aeronautical engineer, someone who had his own chem lab in the basement next to a beautiful woodworking shop furnished with tools handed down from his craftsman father. A man who could fix anything.

After the first week in Intensive Care he was moved to a floor which specialized in stroke victims where he spent the next month. Little by little he began to show improvement. His next stop after six weeks in the regular hospital would be a rehabilitation facility where he could receive the daily intensive speech, physical, and occupational therapy he needed. There he would have to relearn the simplest tasks like how to speak, how to feed himself, how to get out of a bed and into a wheelchair, and how to care for himself in general.

A rehab hospital very close to our home in McLean, Virginia was found which had a bed available and he was transferred there by ambulance. Here, he was kept busy most of the day with one kind of therapy or another. After several weeks he graduated from using a wheelchair to a walker and when he wasn't occupied with therapy we



PHOTO BY WILLIAM ARTHUR PETRI, JR.

Ann and Bill Petri

practiced using his walker in the halls and some days we even had time to take in a movie in the rehab center's small theater! There was also a Happy Hour on Tuesdays that I especially liked with wine, snacks, and lively conversation!

As I look back during all this time, probably the most positive factor in his long slow recovery has been his attitude. He never stops trying, no matter how discouraging his progress must seem. His attitude is simply amazing. He is always upbeat.

Another positive aspect is that we are the parents of three doctors (and one lawyer) which kind of made us celebrities in a medical setting. One or the other of them was often visiting and conferring with the rehab staff on their father's care even though their specialties (rheumatology, infectious diseases, and oncology) were far afield.

After several months, it was decided that Bill could continue his recovery at home. And so, on May 8, 2014, exactly three months after the initial injury he returned home.

While he was in the rehabilitation hospital I had taken the opportunity to prepare our two story home for his return with grab bars in the bathrooms and shower, and a stair lift so that he could sleep in his own bed.

So, now, here we are, six months later, settled in our own house, with Bill dependent on me for almost everything, including something I was not expecting: making all the decisions by myself. I won't say it's been easy. It hasn't. I have to say, though, that after 61 years of being the dependent one, I am getting pretty good at being the boss!

Senior Living Calendar

A sampling of calendar items from around the region.

SUNDAY-SATURDAY/SEPT. 7-13

The Magic of Music. At Spring Hills Mount Vernon, 3709 Shannons Green Way, Alexandria. A flurry of musical activities will bring a broad spectrum of entertaining and educational musical events to Spring Hills Mount Vernon Assisted Living Community. The highlight of the week is the "Spring Hills Got Talent Show," featuring performances by residents, staff and community members on Sunday, September 7 at 6 p.m. The public is welcome. Call 703-780-7100 or visit www.springhillsmountvernon.com.

SATURDAY-WEDNESDAY/SEPT. 13-24

Northern Virginia Senior Olympics. Online registration open. Various venues around Northern Virginia. Events include badminton, volleyball, cycling, a 5k road race, and many more. \$12 per person to register, free to spectators. Visit www.nvso.us for more.

MONDAY/SEPT. 15

Adult Resource Fair. 10 a.m.-2 p.m. or 6-8:30 p.m. at Gum Springs Community Center, 8100 Fordson Road. Get information on training programs, employment, academic resources and more. Call 703-324-4600 or 703-360-6088.

FRIDAY/SEPT. 26

"Fall-Risk" Assessment. 1-4 p.m. at Carlin Springs Health Pavilion, 601 S. Carlin Springs Road, Arlington. Virginia Hospital Center and Marymount University will provide comprehensive examinations measuring your risk for falling down. The appointment includes a one-on-one medication review, blood pressure check, vision screening, and six physical therapy tests to assess balance and risk for a fall. A physical therapist will review results and give a personalized evaluation, recommendations on how to reduce or eliminate those risks, and provide education about successful independent living. To schedule an appointment, call 703-558-6861.

SUNDAY/SEPT. 28

Walk to End Alzheimer's. 3 p.m. Reston Town Center, 11900 Market St., Reston. Walk and fundraise to further the care, support and research efforts of the Alzheimer's Association. Visit <http://act.alz.org>.

FRIDAY/OCT. 24

Healthy Aging Lecture Series. 11 a.m.-noon at 601 S. Carlin Springs Road, Arlington. 2014-2015 Medicare Update with John Glowacki of Arlington County ADSD. Every year there are changes made with the Medicare coverage. It is always advised to stay up to date with these changes to avoid any medical billing mishaps. Free. Call 703-558-6859 to RSVP.

THURSDAY/NOV. 13

Memory Screening. 9 a.m.-noon at Langston Brown Senior Center, 2121 N Culpeper St., Arlington. Virginia Hospital Center and Care Options will be sponsoring free, confidential memory screenings to promote detection of memory problems and provide education about successful aging. The one-to-one, noninvasive screening takes only about five to 10 minutes administered by a qualified healthcare professional. For more information or to schedule an appointment, call 703-237-9048.

ONGOING

Yoga for Everybody. Wednesdays, 7-8:30 p.m.; Saturdays, 10-11:30 a.m. This traditional approach to yoga reduces stress and increases strength and flexibility. Classes begin Wednesday, July 9 and Saturday, July 12. \$66. Health Pavilion, 601 S. Carlin Springs Road, Arlington. Call 703-558-6859.

Adaptive/Seated Yoga. Tuesdays, 11:15 a.m.-12:15 p.m.; Sundays, 3-4 p.m. For older or physically challenged adults with limited mobility, chronic pain or neuropathy. Adaptive yoga emphasizes breathing, gentle stretching and going at your own pace. Classes begin Sunday, July 13. \$66. Health Pavilion, 601 S. Carlin Springs Road, Arlington. Call 703-558-6859.

Alzheimer's Association Support Group has meetings on the third Wednesday at 10:30 a.m. at Carlin Springs Health Pavilion,

601 S. Carlin Springs Road, Arlington and also the first and third Thursday at 10 a.m. at St. Andrew's Episcopal Church, 4000 Lorcom Lane, Arlington. They are open to people with Alzheimer's, their caregivers, family members and friends. Free. Call the Alzheimer's Association 24/7 Helpline at 703-359-4440 or 800-272-3900 before attending a group for the first time to verify meeting information, obtain directions or other information about the group. A complete list of all groups in the National Capital Area region can be found at www.alz.org/nca.

Instruments Wanted. Instruments of any type or size — from a piano to a piccolo, in response to school's needs. Donations are tax exempt. Contact Miriam Miller, Opera NOVA for pick up. 703-536-7557; mcdm1@verizon.net; www.operaguildnova.org.

The Talking Book Service at Alexandria Library will now operate Monday through Friday, 10 a.m.-3 p.m. or by appointment. Patrons may also reach the service at 703-746-1760 or talkingbooks@alexandria.lib.va.us.

Free **Medicare counseling** is available for City of Alexandria residents through the Virginia Insurance Counseling and Assistance Program (VICAP) to help individuals understand and navigate Medicare insurance programs. VICAP Medicare counselors will be available on Thursdays from 1-5 p.m., by appointment only, at the Alexandria Department of Community and Human Services, located at 2525 Mount Vernon Ave. Speakers are also available to present information on Medicare Basic to community groups. Call 703-228-1726.

The Parkinson's Disease Support Group of Alexandria meets the 1st Wednesday of each month at 2 p.m. At the Hollin Hall Senior Center, Room 109, 1500 Shenandoah Road. All Parkinson's patients and caregivers are welcome.

Training Courses. The American Red Cross in the National Capital Region will host training courses in CPR, First Aid, and AED in the Alexandria and Fort Belvoir offices. These classes offer a two-year certification. Classes range from \$70-\$110 and will be held on Tuesdays, Wednesdays, Thursdays, or Saturdays, dependent upon the participant's choice. Advance registration is required. To register for a class or find another class in your area, call 1-800-RED-CROSS or visit redcross.org/takeaclass.

At Home in Alexandria! Those interested in becoming AHA! Friends should call AHA! at 703-231-0824 or download the application form from the AHA! website at www.athomeinalexandria.org. AHA! supports Alexandrians ages 55+ who prefer to remain independent in their own homes.

Band musicians are invited to join the **Mount Vernon Community Band**. Rehearsals are Tuesday 7:30-9:30 p.m. in the Mount Vernon High School band room, 8515 Old Mount Vernon Road. There are no auditions. The Mount Vernon Community Band is a nonprofit community service organization that has performed in the Mount Vernon area since 1978. 703-768-4172 or www.mvbands.com.

Alzheimer's Association support groups provide a place for people with Alzheimer's, their caregivers, family members, and/or friends to share valuable information, caregiving tips and concerns throughout the Alzheimer's journey. Groups are facilitated by trained group leaders and are ongoing, free and open to the community. There is a meeting on the second Thursday of the month at 7:30 p.m. at Good Shepherd Catholic Church, 8710 Mount Vernon Highway, Mount Vernon. Call the Alzheimer's Association 24/7 Helpline at 703-359-4440 or 800-272-3900 before attending a group for the first time to verify meeting information, obtain directions or other information about the group. A complete list of all groups in the National Capital Area region can be viewed at www.alz.org/nca.

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