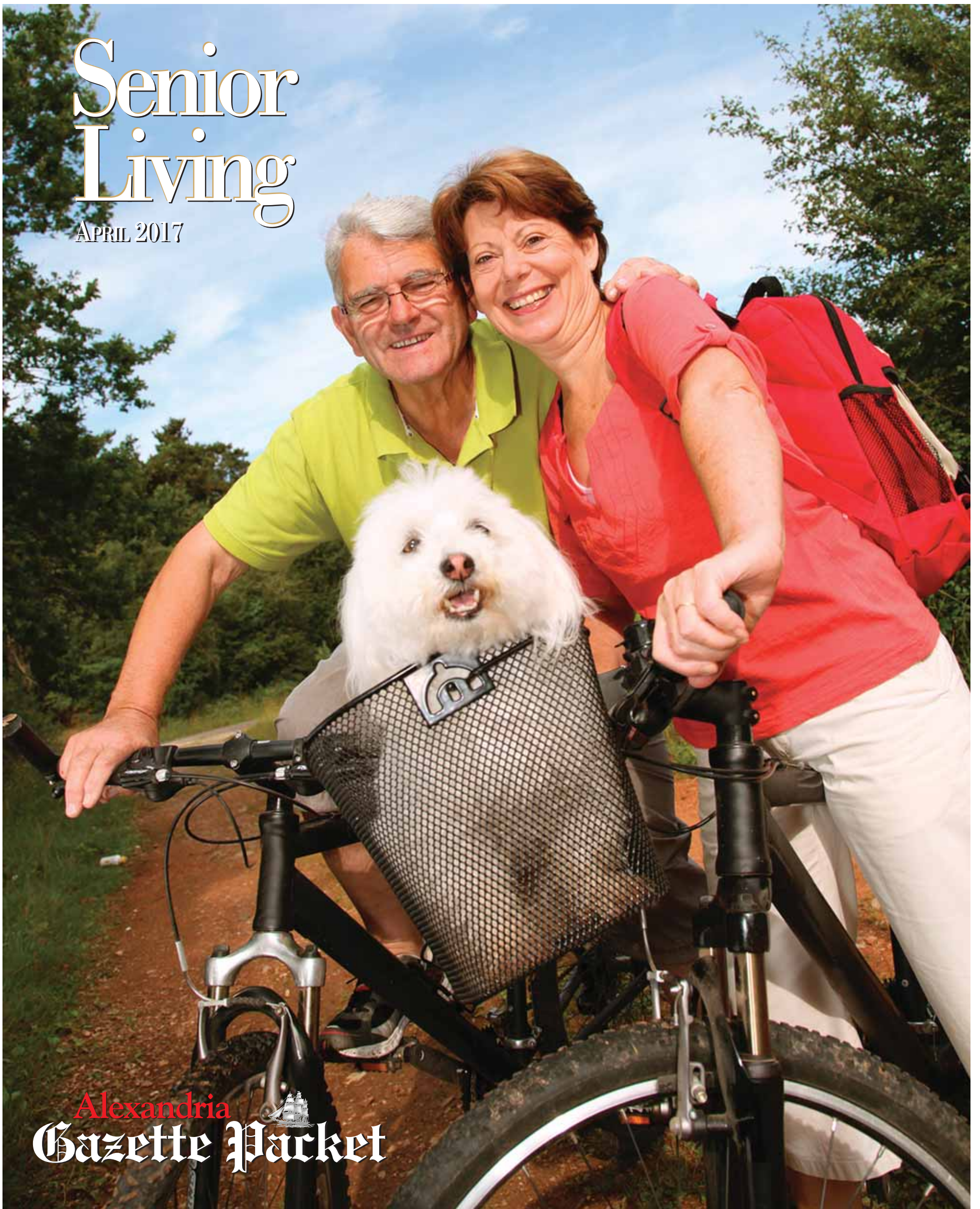


# Senior Living

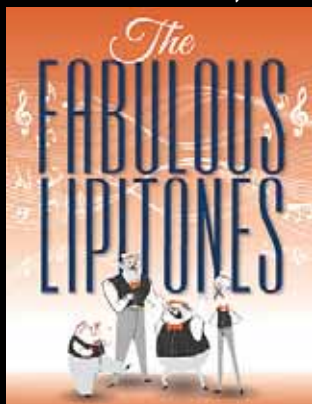
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# How to Save a Life

BY EDEN BROWN  
THE CONNECTION

Mike Oliver says he retired in 2000; he and his wife, Linda, spend 364 days a year doing good things. They work with ALIVE (Alexandrians Involved Ecumenically) and St. Clement's Church, and in November and December, Mike takes advantage of his naturally twinkly eyes to bring joy to children in the area embodying Santa Claus. But on the 365th day, he says, they do something really amazing: they save lives. They spend six hours filling small sandwich baggies with rehydration salts and sugars at the Temple Beth El Synagogue, along with other volunteers, many of them over 55.

Bobbi Gershman, who oversees the project, says she got less of a turnout this year than last. They will only be able to package about 15,000 sachets of rehydration salts. She likes it better when the room is overflowing and she gets numbers like 20,000 sachets; but every little bit helps, she says. For Gershman, it's almost a full time job to run the event, and every year when she starts out, she feels it is too much work for her. But within weeks she is energized by the thought of what a difference they are making somewhere in the world, and by the time the day comes, and she puts in a really long day from about 7 a.m. to 6 p.m., she is motivated to do it again another year.

Flo Broussard, 88, who lived in Arlington from 1960 until four years ago when she moved to Goodwin House, said she is a life-long volunteer. She has volunteered for WETA, The White House, Alexandria Hospital, and several other organizations before she "retired" to Goodwin House, where she volunteers, both doing plantings and making crafts for sale to benefit local charities, but also doing things like this rehydration project.

Gershman said she hopes she gets more volunteers next year: she will have to return a lot of salt. Sponsors for the event were Beth El Brotherhoods, Beth El Religious School Children, Immanuel Church on the Hill, Rabbi's Good Deed Fund, and Harris Teeter.

To volunteer next April, check the Temple Beth El Alexandria website, or join ALIVE, [www.ALIVE.org](http://www.ALIVE.org).

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# Senior Living

## Mid-Century Classic for Artful One-level Living

In 1950s, Hollin Hills was a mecca for cutting-edge housing design; 60 years later, mid-century modern is a resurgent style ripe for nuanced improvements.

BY JOHN BYRD

PHOTOS BY GREG HADLEY

Two years ago, Jeff and Jenny Herre, both retired, were living in a five-level townhouse in Old Town Alexandria with a view of the river. Long-term residents, they were satisfied with all the house had to offer. They collected art and fine furniture and their periodic renovations over several years had extended all the way to the attic.

As they approached their 70s, however, they questioned how much effort they wanted to expend getting from room to room.

“We were wondering aloud whether we’d still want to be climbing five flights of stairs in 10 years,” Jeff Herre said. “That’s when we began thinking about downsizing, and ways we might concentrate our primary living needs on one level.”

As the research got under way, Jeff Herre saw that cost would inevitably play a role in their choices. One-level structures in and around Old Town were appreciably beyond the family budget. Looking further out of town, the options boiled down to: a) purchase a ready-to-occupy home which would come at a higher price; or b) find an older home with renovation potential that could be shaped into a place brimming with personal style.

The latter course would entail finding a



**At slightly over 900 square feet, the primary living area the Herres’ remodeled home in Hollin Hills is comparatively small. But designer Jon Benson’s wall elevations employ texture and color that make the space feel expansive.**

creative design/build team with whom one could collaborate closely.

After assessing available northern Virginia properties for several months, a Realtor introduced the Herres to a home in Hollin Hills, a community of some 450 houses in Hybla Valley. Hollin Hills is renowned in architectural circles — even listed in the historic record as one of the first communities in the U.S. to feature modern architecture exclusively, mid-century modern in particular.

“In the 1950s, most progressive modern homes were owner-commissioned,” said Roger Lataille, a design consultant at Sun Design Remodeling. “But Hollin Hills was an entire development focused on the advanced architectural concepts that emerged after World War II.”

Part of the enduring appeal was that architect Charles Goodman and landscape architect Dan Kiley had sited each Hollin Hills residence to maximize privacy. Even though lots are seldom more than one acre, it’s difficult for your neighbor to see you from their house, and vice versa.

“We loved the wooded setting right away,” said Jeff Herre. “The problem was, the house itself didn’t look like anything we’d

want to live in.”

For starters, there were the obstructed sight lines starting from the front entrance. Walking in, one looked left at interior dry-wall that defined the parameters of a 10-foot-by-10-foot galley kitchen. To the immediate right, a floor-to-ceiling exposed brick hearth with a masonry niche designed for firewood. To the left, a floor-to-ceiling bookcase and an odd chandelier. Straight ahead, an open stairwell descending to ground level.

Further back, a door leading to the master suite, which included the original 70-square-foot tile-clad bathroom. Two closets less than two feet deep provided the only wardrobe accommodation.

While floor-to-ceiling windows dominating the eastern and western wall elevations boasted a dramatic view of surrounding woodland, the Herres also soon learned that much of the glazing was single pane.

Herre’s question for Lataille from the start was right to the point: “Can you make the changes we want within our budget?”

Topping Herre’s wish-list: an open plan with places for art display that will work well for entertaining; design that allows the

SEE HOLLIN HILLS, PAGE 5

**The cook top island and dining counter of the new open kitchen plan. Light maple Shaker-style cabinets combined with quartz Caesar-stone counter surfaces reinforce the ambience of a room surrounded by windows.**







## The Kensington Falls Church Presents Energized Fitness for Parkinson's

Announcing an Introductory Orientation  
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Angela Onyekanne, DPT, GCS, CEEAA  
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**T**he Kensington Falls Church is pleased to announce its collaboration with the Parkinson Foundation of The National Capital Area (PFNCA) and Genesis Rehab Services to offer Energized Fitness for Parkinson's. The program provides a high-energy fitness experience geared toward improving mobility and strength while participants share time with others facing Parkinson's.

Energized Fitness will be introduced by Dr. Laxman Bahroo, a neurologist who focuses on movement disorders, and Angela Onyekanne, a therapist who is trained in LSVT BIG (a therapy that involves large amplitude, exaggerated movements that lead to smoother, larger, safer movements). Dr. Bahroo and Angela are our allies in striving to maximize health and optimize independence for people with Parkinson's. Please RSVP to join us.



**Dr. Laxman Bahroo** is an assistant professor and co-director of the Neurology Residency Program at MedStar Georgetown University Hospital. He is a board certified neurologist and member of the Movement Disorders program. Primary areas of focus in movement disorders include the medical and surgical management of Parkinson's disease and essential tremor.



**Angela Onyekanne, DPT, GCS, CEEAA** has ten years of experience working exclusively with geriatric clients in a variety of settings. She is APTA Board-Certified in Geriatric PT and LSVT BIG certified for individuals with Parkinson's disease.

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PHOTO CONTRIBUTED

**This garden at 607 Cameron Street is one stop on Old Town's Garden Tour, starting April 22, 10 a.m.-4 p.m. at the Alexandria Visitors Center, 221 King St. The members of the Garden Club of Alexandria and The Hunting Creek Garden Club are sponsoring tour of five homes in Old Town. \$45 in advance, \$55 day of tour. Visit [www.vagardenweek.org](http://www.vagardenweek.org) for more.**

### TUESDAY/APRIL 11

**Garden Experts Answer Questions.** 11 a.m.-noon in Simpson Park Demonstration Gardens, 420 E. Monroe St. Stop by and chat with the VCE Master Gardeners who maintain the Simpson Park Demonstration Gardens and see what is springing to life. Visit [mgnv.org](http://mgnv.org) for more.

### SATURDAY/APRIL 15

**Country-Western Dance.** 6-9:30 p.m. at the at Lincolnia Senior Center, 4710 North Chambliss St. A DJ provides music. Couples and singles welcome. \$10; non-members \$12. Visit [www.nvcwda.org](http://www.nvcwda.org) or call 703-860-4941 for more.

### TUESDAY/APRIL 18

**Lions Club.** 6:30 p.m. at Pema's restaurant, 8430 Richmond Highway. The Mount Vernon Evening Lions dinner meeting speaker will give tips on using Uber. Call Andrea Corsillo 703-960-4973

### WEDNESDAY/APRIL 19

**Antiques Club.** 7 p.m. at Hollin Hall Senior Center, 1500 Shenandoah Road. Free, public invited. The Alexandria/Mount Vernon Antiques Club will feature Mary B. Gallagher, the author of "My Life with Jackie Kennedy," for whom she worked as her secretary for a number of years. Call 703-360-4979 for more.

### FRI, APRIL 21

**Third Friday Dance.** 7:30-9:30 p.m., Room 112 at Hollin Hall Senior Center, 1500 Shenandoah Road. The performers are with the Mount Vernon Swing Band under the leadership of Owen Hammett. \$4. Visit [www.hollinhallseniorcenter.org](http://www.hollinhallseniorcenter.org) or call 703-765-4645 for more.

### SATURDAY/APRIL 22

**Garden Tour.** 10 a.m.-4 p.m. at the Alexandria Visitors Center, 221 King St. The members of the Garden Club of Alexandria and The Hunting Creek Garden Club are sponsoring a tour of five homes in Old Town. \$45 in advance, \$55 day of tour. Visit [www.vagardenweek.org](http://www.vagardenweek.org) for more.

### SUNDAY/APRIL 30

**Ballet Performance: "Cinderella."** Three seatings: noon, 3 p.m., and 6 p.m. George Washington Masonic National Memorial, 101 Callahan Drive. \$12. Visit [metropolitanarts.org/](http://metropolitanarts.org/) for more.



## Senior Living

### Hollin Hills

FROM PAGE 3

couple to mainly live on one level; a master bath with a walk-in shower and a new powder room; additional storage; a visually compelling interior design; replacement of single pane windows with insulated double-ply thermal glass.

"There have been significant developments in open floor plan design in recent years," Lataille said. "Part of this is driven by demand: more people want spaces that allow for both privacy and easy interaction. Part are options made possible by improving technologies. For instance, a reverse downdraft vent incorporated into a cook top works well for homeowners who want to keep the kitchen open, unobstructed by a hood hanging from the ceiling."

This is one factor that has made a kitchen-centric floorplan a popular option for a home's primary living space, and offered a practical solution for amateur chef Jenny Herre, who enjoys regaling guests with her original dishes while otherwise fully engaging in the party all around her.

"We thought an open kitchen would really work in this house," Jeff Herre said, "but we needed to see well-developed ideas before moving forward with the purchase."

Enter Jon Benson, Sun Design's lead designer, and a master craftsman with several published books on woodworking to his credit.

"When you're removing kitchen walls, the goal is to develop a space plan that meets all functional requirements, yet really supports the room aesthetically," Benson said. "That's why it's important to design elevations that present an appropriate combination of color, texture and tone. When this is done correctly, walls tends to be less necessary — and an open plan can work well."

On this score, Benson designed a cook top island and dining counter perfectly positioned between the dining room and the seating area around the fireplace.

Light maple Shaker-style cabinet facings combined with quartz Caesarstone counter surfaces present clean lines and reinforce the light, accessible ambiance of a room surrounded by windows.

Nearby, Benson's re-designed hearth features America Palisades ceramic tile. Dark

**"We were wondering aloud whether we'd still want to be climbing five flights of stairs in 10 years. That's when we began thinking about ... ways we might concentrate our primary living needs on one level."**

— Jeff Herre

gray, the floor-to-ceiling vertical cladding presents an offsetting visual anchor in a composition otherwise comprised of light pastels.

The dining room table, in easy reach of the new island, is a stylized mid-century design.

To complement the play of light throughout the house, frosted glass doors are employed throughout the first level, including to the entrance to the lower level which is now enclosed.

A larger walk-in shower and double-vanity have replaced the existing former bath and there are walk-in closets adjoining the bedroom.

Collectibles from India, Lebanon and Brazil are now on view in Benson-designed display spaces.

"This really feels like our home now," said Jeff Herre. "We've made the transition we wanted, and are pleased with it."

*Sun Design Remodeling frequently sponsors design and remodeling seminars as well as tours of recently remodeled homes. Sun Design will be sponsoring an open house in a recently remodeled home on April 29 and 30 from 11 a.m. to 5 p.m. daily. For more information: [www.SunDesignInc.com](http://www.SunDesignInc.com)*

*John Byrd has been writing about home improvement for 30 years.  
(byrdmatx@gmail.com)*

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## Senior Living



Duplicate bridge players concentrate on their next move at the regular ACBL-sanctioned games held Friday mornings at Madison Senior Center.

## Bridge Sharpens Skills

BY SHIRLEY RUHE  
THE CONNECTION

Dark clouds and heavy rain didn't deter the 9 1/2 tables of duplicate bridge players from showing up at Madison Senior Center in Arlington on Friday, March 31. Complete silence envelops the room as furrowed brows concentrate on the cards in their hands. An occasional "both of the kings are off" or "I knew I should have stayed home" penetrates the silence.

Mike Zane, coordinator of the group and an American Contract Bridge League (ACBL) certified director said, "we've been going ... well, it's got to be at least 10 years." Zane said that bridge was big in the 1930s-60s. "If you watch any old film, even a war film, you'd see a bridge game. Even Ian Fleming played the Earl of Sandwich in a James Bond film. But,"

he continued, "it's lost its flavor." Zane said it used to be that in the military academies the two required extracurricular classes were ballroom dancing and bridge, two important social skills.

Zane looks around the room and pulls out a long computer sheet of names. He explains each player has 13 cards and you play with a partner against the other two players at your table. The highest card wins. Each table will rotate and play the same set of cards. The object is 24 hands or 24 problems to solve. "It's the easiest game in the world," Zane says he started playing bridge because his mother, father, and sister played. "Bridge takes four people."

Zane said European high schools require every student to take bridge. "I am interested in getting bridge into schools in America. That's the only way it will survive."

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# Senior Living

## Fit for the Golden Years

**For More** Learn more about Go4Life at [go4life.nia.nih.gov](http://go4life.nia.nih.gov).

Exercises for strength, endurance, balance and aerobics are key.

BY MARILYN CAMPBELL  
THE CONNECTION

**A**t 7 a.m. each weekday, a group of Del Ray seniors meet at Starbucks to embark on a brisk, 45-minute walk. The women return to their starting point for coffee and conversation. Their goal is to stay active and socially engaged.

"Even those of us who've never exercised and aren't necessarily fit enjoy our walks," said Joyce Herrington, one of the group members. "It's mostly social and we enjoy it. The fact that we're getting some exercise is a bonus."

Late last month, representatives from Go4Life, a program created by the National Institute on Aging (NIA), held a pilot workshop in Potomac, Md., that was designed to test methods for motivating older adults to increase their physical activity. Workshop participants were from Potomac Community Village, one of several Go4Life partner organizations of seniors who are helping to design strategies to engage seniors in exercise programs.

Sheila Moldover, Potomac Community Village Communications Chair believes that local seniors can benefit from Go4Life.

"We're going to include some easy and simple flexibility, balance and strength exercises at each of our Potomac Community Village meetings, and distribute Go4Life materials to our members, including to those who are already exercising," she said. "We want to encourage everyone to pay attention to their balance, flexibility and strength as well as to endurance. We see that as enabling us to age in place, to thrive in place, and be healthy and active."

Go4Life, an exercise and physical activity campaign from the National Institute on Aging (NIA) at the National Institutes of Health (NIH), is designed to help those who are over 50 incorporate exercise and physical activity into their daily lives.

"We want people to know that it's never too late to start an exercise program, and we focus on four types of exercise: strength, endurance balance and flexibility," said



PHOTO BY SHEILA MOLDOVER

**Members of a Community Village attend a workshop on the Go4Life program, which was designed to help those who are over 50 incorporate exercise and physical activity into their daily lives.**

your old age. Exercise is not only for your physical health, but also your cognitive health."

A well-rounded exercise program should include exercises that focus on aerobic exercise, flexibility, muscular strength and muscular endurance, and balance, says Susan P Thompson, Ph.D., assistant dean, Health Physical Education at Northern Virginia Community College.

"Cardiovascular exercises should be done most days of the week for a minimum of 20-30 minutes," she said. "Walking, swimming, cycling, dancing, hiking and any activity that uses your large muscles in a continuous movement will increase your heart rate and improve circulation."

Stretching and moving your joints through their range of motion will keep the joints lubricated and less stiff. "Stretching will also help decrease pain and stiffness in the back, neck, hip and feet," said Thompson. "For the sportsman it will increase your power and ability to improve your follow through motion. For the hiker, it will let you lift your arms and legs higher. You can stretch daily. Yoga and dance are activities which focus on stretching."

Improved muscular strength and endurance will allow you to do everyday tasks with less energy with less chance of injury, advises Thompson. "Leg strength will enable you to walk faster, get up and down from chairs with more ease," she said. "For resistance, [you can use] hand weights, resistance bands, weight machines, water walking and exercise or your own body weight. Resistance training should be done two-three times a week working the major muscles."

**"The most important thing is to find an exercise or activity that you enjoy. If you enjoy what you are doing, you will be more likely to continue."**

— Susan P Thompson, Ph.D., Northern Virginia Community College.

Stephanie Dailey of the Go4Life program at the NIA. "It's important that they're doing all four components. Older adults can gain a lot from exercising. In fact, people have a lot more to lose by not exercising than by starting exercising."

**WHEN BEGINNING** an exercise program, Dailey recommends guidelines established by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.

"About 150 minutes per week of moderate activity is recommended for adults," she said. "If you are going to start a fitness program, see your doctor first."

For older adults exercise is important for maintaining function, physical strength and fitness, managing and preventing diseases, improving your mood and giving you more energy.

In spite of a popular misconception, older adults can gain strength and improve their

muscles with these exercises, says personal trainer Christian Elliot, CEO, Founder TRUE Health and Wholeness in Arlington, Va. "I work with people who are in their 60s, 70s, 80s and 90s and I've never met a person who couldn't improve their fitness," he said. "We're not going to stop aging, but you can certainly slow it."

Elliot recalls a client who was in her late 50s who didn't have a history of physical fitness, but wanted to get in shape. "She has hit some of the most phenomenal milestones, like being able to hold a 12-minute plank, do 50 push-ups and five push-ups on one arm," he said.

For those who are new to fitness, there is good news. "There's a lot of evidence that middle age is a great time to get fit," said Julie Ries, Ph.D., professor of physical therapy at Marymount University. "You want to be active and healthy in your middle age so that will keep dementia at bay in

## Women in Retirement? Busier than Ever

BY EDEN BROWN  
THE CONNECTION

**M**ore than a half-dozen local women recently answered the question: What can you say about retirement? Jamie Usrey, who was a teacher in the Arlington County Public School system for 20 years, is hardly letting a lot of grass grow under her feet.

She said, "I feel a little embarrassed when I say I am retired when I look at people who are still working hard ... like Hillary Clinton. I am enjoying being able to be outside more — biking, playing tennis, working in the yard, going for walks with friends and tak-

ing more trips to see national parks where we can hike through the beauty of nature. I have more time to exercise ... love those zumba classes ... and read. ... I do want to find a way to be more helpful in making our government work better ... next week."

Jan Heininger says she is "happier than ever with even more travel, near daily long bike rides, daily mile swims in the summer, and far more time for reading ... I also get to spend far more time at our beach house where I can more easily avoid politics."

Ruth Neikirk said: "Retire? I never did retire. I stay busy. It's good to stay busy."

Karen Smagala said: "I'm busier than I ever have been since retirement, and I'm enjoying life so much more. My blood pres-

sure went down when I stopped working. I do the Master Gardener program and I work at the library in the tool shed."

Sheridan Collins said: "Busier than ever! Docenting at the Textile Museum provides continuing education for the brain, tennis and gym keep me fit, and this year more time on politicking helps maintain a healthy attitude. And then there's grandmothering requiring lots of travel. All good!"

Mary Lanaras said: "Retirement is like: everyday is a snow day!" Lanaras worked to home school her children until middle school and helped her husband, Charles, with his real estate business.

Joanna Cameron said: "Retirement is just a word signifying that your priorities have

shifted to ones that are all about enjoying what you love, getting outside more and relishing the things that make you happy. Staying in motion above all."

And then there are people like Flo Broussard, 88, an Arlington resident from 1960 until she moved to Goodwin House a few years ago: she responded by saying: "Retirement? I'm a lifelong volunteer. I have volunteered for WETA, The White House, Alexandria Hospital, and several other organizations. Then when I 'retired' to Goodwin House, I still volunteer, doing plantings and making crafts for sale to benefit local charities."

And there she was on April 2 at the Rehydration Salts project at Temple Beth El.