



### Message from Paula Lettice

*President*

The summer has flown by, despite the changes we have seen due to Covid-19. Hopefully our weather will become more moderate with less heat and humidity, and without any tropical storms. We can just hope!

We had a good summer at Mount Vernon At Home! Normally the summer months see a hiatus for some of our events but this year we not only continued Conversations, Timely Topics, and Cheers! Happy Hour throughout the summer but also added 2<sup>nd</sup> Cup Coffee

Chat and the Book Club. These were suggestions made by our members and we then rolled them out. It's great to have a Program Committee where new ideas surface and there is a regular assessment of other programs and events. We have begun keeping attendance statistics on events for historical purposes. I would again like to acknowledge our Program Committee Co-Chairs Cher Terry and Franki Roberts, their enthusiastic committee members, and our team Jan Buchanan and Dave Prescott for making all of this happen. We hope you are all enjoying their efforts and I sincerely invite others to "tune in" when they can. If you need help with Zoom, please just ask!

The clock is ticking down to our September 13<sup>th</sup> gala, *Celebrate! 2020: Into a New Decade!* For those of you who have yet to RSVP, there is still time but please hurry – we need to confirm our participant numbers. As a reminder, we are featuring a three-course meal with wine from Cedar Knoll delivered to your homes before the event begins at 5:00 pm. There will be a Zoom program and a live auction. We will miss seeing all of you in person but hope many members and volunteers will join us in celebrating our Village.

In the meantime, please be well ... and let us know how we can help you as an integral part of our Village! ~ *Paula*



### Director's Corner

**Jan Buchanan**, *Executive Director*

What does this Village mean to us now? We are now nearly 6 months into this pandemic that has rocked our world on every level. It has been the great equalizer, with no regard for nationality, race, religion, age or economic station. We have *all* been affected on some level. Having come on board April 1<sup>st</sup>, I have spent these past few months making quick decisions to ensure the stability of our operations, move us virtually and maintain the functions of this Village. It has not been easy. But we have persevered. Many members

have told me what our Village means to them. Here are a just a few ways they count on us: "To keep us informed on the pandemic and changes in regulations." "To help us get groceries and medications." "To keep our community together with the zoom meetings and activities." "To be able to help with little fixes to our homes and our computers." "To provide competent referrals for the bigger home projects."

The pandemic has shifted our focus as a Village to look even more critically at helping our members sustain and maintain their lives. Our goal is to provide you with resources during these challenging times and beyond – to help you learn new strategies, particularly with online technologies both for enjoyment and for our health as telehealth is here to stay. Mount Vernon At Home will continue to make changes necessary to adapt to our new normal. And we will continue to fulfill our promise to help you age in place with comprehensive programs and solutions to ensure your safety, security and enjoyment in these days and beyond. We have a wonderful community of caring people! ~ *Jan*

## Meet Your Board of Directors!

The Mount Vernon At Home Board of Directors plays an important role in steering the course of our organization. We want you to get to know them! To this end, our next several newsletters will each spotlight two Board members and include their brief bios. This month meet Bob Kuletz and Barbara Hughes Sullivan.

### Mount Vernon At Home

#### TO REACH US

703-303-4060 (M-F, 10:00 am– 4:00 pm)  
info@mountvernonathome.org  
https://www.mountvernonathome.org

#### MAILING ADDRESS

Mount Vernon At Home  
PO Box 7493  
Alexandria, VA 22307

#### OFFICE ADDRESS

Sherwood Regional Library  
2501 Sherwood Hall Lane, 2nd Floor  
Alexandria, VA 22306

To become a *member*, go to [www.mountvernonathome.org](http://www.mountvernonathome.org) and click on "Membership". Dues can be paid online (via PayPal), or by calling our office at 703-303-4060.

To become a *volunteer*, go to [www.mountvernonathome.org](http://www.mountvernonathome.org) and click on "Get Involved" or by calling our office at 703-303-4060.

To *support* our Village, go to [www.mountvernonathome.org](http://www.mountvernonathome.org) and click on "Donate." Mount Vernon At Home is a 501 (c)(3) charitable organization. Your tax-deductible gifts are welcome!

#### MOUNT VERNON AT HOME LEADERS

Jan Buchanan, *Executive Director*,  
director@mountvernonathome.org  
Dave Prescott, *Office Manager*,  
info@mountvernonathome.org  
Betsy Clagett, *Bookkeeper/ Newsletter*

#### BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Paula Lettice, Board President  
Priscilla Bornmann, Vice President  
Barbara Brennan, Treasurer  
Sarah Drexler  
Bob Kuletz  
Jim Lindsay  
Deborah Matthews  
Susan Reardon, Secretary  
Hugh Schwartz  
Elaine Serlin  
Barbara Sullivan  
Lee Wampler



### Bob Kuletz - Board Member

*Professional Background:* I was born in Dover, NJ, grew up in Virginia, and attended Virginia Tech. I am currently a Commercial & Residential realtor, licensed in Virginia, the District of Columbia and Maryland. My prior experience was an Architect, Construction Project Manager working on the Fort

McHenry Tunnel, lead based paint abatement of bridges along the Dulles Access Corridor, Exterior Building Restoration and Residential & Commercial Fire, Water and Disaster Restoration throughout the DMV area. I have also conducted Building Condition Assessments, ADA architectural reviews, and assisted in Environmental Site Assessments, nationally, to assist bankers and investors when financing commercial property.

*Family:* I have been married to Maureen Maguire Kuletz (soon to be 40 years in September) and we have a daughter with twin granddaughters and a son.

*Interests:* My two granddaughters, of course, are primary interests as are raising oysters, playing golf, and enjoying time with family and friends.

*Why are you involved with MVAH?* I have served on several nonprofit boards, been a community volunteer for years, and a believer in "paying it forward". When Paula Lettice, the current Board President, with whom I served on another board, said, I really think your experience can help MVAH move forward. Will you help me? I had to say YES! This is a great organization and I'm looking forward to working with the other Board members in helping MVAH move to the next level.

### Barbara Hughes Sullivan - Board Member

*Professional Background:* I was born and raised in Ocean City, NJ, a sleepy shore town in Cape May County. In 1978 my mother made me go to college - I just wanted to be a beach bum. With my father serving in Congress in D.C., I headed south to Mount Vernon College in D.C, (later to become George Washington University) where I earned a BA in Political Science and Business. Right after graduation I worked on



(cont'd on page 3)

## Sullivan (cont'd)

Capitol Hill (interned for Joe Biden) and met the love of my life, Barry Sullivan. Politics played an important part of our lives and careers. We moved to Alexandria in 1985 where we raised our three boys. In 2001, I started working at Paul Spring Retirement Community to head the marketing/business development team. Focusing on senior issues, I continued my education in the area of eldercare and obtained my license for the Virginia Board of Long Term Administrators certification. I then served as the Executive Director of Mount Vernon At Home from 2010-2018.

In 2018, with an eye to the future, we decided to move closer to my parents (who were failing in health), our children, and now grandchildren. At the same time, I was approached to lead Village to Village Network. My work with the village movement continues now with 350 villages throughout our country. It includes advocacy in housing, caregiving, prescription drugs and scaling the village model in all communities.

*Family:* We moved to Ventnor, NJ in May 2018. I loved our 42 years in the VA/DC area - what a blessing with cherished memories and great friends. Our family has expanded in the last two years. We are blessed with three wonderful sons, Barry (wife Maura) twin granddaughters Madison and Olivia, son Brendan (wife Allyson) grandson Brooks, and son Bryan (wife Christine) who is expecting their first child this month.

*Interests:* I have always loved cooking, gardening, traveling, reading, sewing and bike riding. It's been a joy to pick up - and expand these interests with some extra pandemic time at home. I concentrated on my garden, expanded my reading and began sewing baby quilts for my newest grandbabies. Life is good.

*Why are you involved with MVAH?* In 2007, a group of Hollin Hill residents came to me to talk about the 'village movement'. The rest is history. I became an advisor in the growing village movement in our community and realized that I wanted to help seniors age in place and community. In my early years at MVAH I served on the Board of Directors before becoming Executive Director in August 2010. It was a move that reinforced my commitment to seniors and health.



### Incredible Healing Power of the Breath!

The list of health benefits of changing our breathing patterns reads like a miracle cure: decrease anxiety and depression, increase energy levels, increase body relaxation, decrease stress and feeling overwhelmed, increase immune system function and increase mental concentration! We have the power to do all this just by simple breathing exercises. There are many types of breathing exercises. Here's one that allows us to deeply breathe and focus on expanding our diaphragm encouraging full oxygen exchange - that is, the beneficial trade of incoming oxygen for outgoing carbon dioxide. Not surprisingly, this type of breathing slows the heartbeat and can lower or stabilize blood pressure.

#### Here's how to do it:

- Lie on your back on a flat surface (or in bed) with your knees bent. You can use a pillow under your head and your knees for support, if that's more comfortable.
- Place one hand on your upper chest and the other on your belly, just below your rib cage.
- Breathe in slowly through your nose, letting the air in deeply, towards your lower belly. The hand on your chest should remain still, while the one on your belly should rise.
- Tighten your abdominal muscles and let them fall inward as you exhale through pursed lips. The hand on your belly should move down to its original position.

You can also practice this sitting in a chair, with your knees bent and your shoulders, head, and neck relaxed. Practice for five to ten minutes, several times a day if possible.

## Member Corner

### Happy September Birthdays!

Happy, happy birthday to each of our members celebrating September birthdays!

9/2 - Julie Curtis  
9/5 - Inderjit Singh  
9/12 - Christa Hellberg-Cook  
9/18 - Susan Hart  
9/20 - Greg Lukens  
9/22 - Patricia Wessel  
9/23 - Marge Rusnak  
9/25 - Lilliba Kloster  
9/27 - Elizabeth Murawski  
9/28 - Helen Lewis

### Welcome Newest Member

Doug Wagoner - Collingwood

## Cucumber Bisque Recipe from Member Paula Lettice



### Ingredients

1 T margarine or butter  
3/4 c. finely chopped onion  
1 T flour  
3 large cucumbers (not English), peeled and chopped  
3 1/2 c. chicken stock  
1 1/2 c. yogurt  
2 small cucumbers, peeled and diced finely  
salt and pepper to taste  
1/2 c. finely chopped parsley (garnish)

In 2 1/2 qt saucepan, melt margarine/butter and sauté the onion, without browning. Stir in flour and add chopped cucumbers. Blend well and when hot, add chicken stock. Bring to a boil, cover, and simmer over low heat for about 45 minutes. Cool slightly, then puree in a blender or use an immersion blender in the pot. Cool and chill. When cold, stir in yogurt with whisk and add remaining cucumber, salt/pepper to taste and parsley. Rechill and serve icy cold. *Serves 4-6.*

## Be Counted in This Year's Election!

This year's presidential election is like no other in recent history, reshaped by the coronavirus pandemic and colored with uncertainty. We want to ensure that each of our members is able to exercise their right to vote in this year's election! Governor Northam has proposed a host of policy changes, including allowing localities to install drop-off boxes for mail-in ballots around the state. He has also declared Election Day a state holiday. We not only want to provide you with the latest updates and information, but also want to help you physically get to the polls or to the drop off stations! We are building a comprehensive step-by-step guide to be placed on our website that will be updated frequently.

"No Excuse" Early Voting begins Sept 18. You can vote early at a designated voter satellite location without a reason or an application to do so. You will need an acceptable form of ID or sign an ID Confirmation Sheet.

Acceptable IDs include:

- Voter ID card
- Virginia Driver's License or ID card
- Valid U.S. Passport
- Any ID card issued by the U.S. or Virginia government
- Utility bill or bank statement with your name and address

Our nearest satellite location is the Mount Vernon Governmental Center, 2511 Parkers Lane, Alexandria 22306. This location is currently proposed to be open weekdays from 1:00 to 7:00 pm, and Saturdays from 9:00 am to 5:00 pm.

## **CELEBRATE! 2020: INTO A NEW DECADE!**

We do hope you will join us, and tell friends and neighbors too, for our online gala on September 13<sup>th</sup> from 5:00 pm to 7:00 pm.

We have much to celebrate with Mount Vernon At Home, especially now as this incredible Village supports our members during the pandemic. An enjoyable evening of food, fun and surprises awaits! The deadline for ticket purchase is September 7<sup>th</sup>.

A big thank you to our sponsors!

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**SILVER (\$500)**

Anonymous (2)

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## **Virtual Book Club**

Our Book Club is unique in that we don't focus on one book, but allow members to share what they are currently reading or a favorite book they recommend.

This month's Book Club will meet via Zoom on Thursday, September 10 at 3:00 pm. To join this discussion, please contact Book Club moderator Barbara Brennan by email at [barbarabbrennan@gmail.com](mailto:barbarabbrennan@gmail.com) or by phone at 703-209-9651. She'd be happy to send you member reviews of last month's books below.

### **Last Month's Book Picks!**

~ Betsy Stephens: *Ecology of a Cracker Childhood* by Janisse Ray, 1999

~ Carol Mattaino: *American Dirt* by Jeanine Cummins, 2020; *Mud Bound* by Hillary Jordan, 2008; *The Good Shepherd* by C.S. Forester, 1955

~ Cher Terry: *The World of Yesterday* by Stefan Zweig, 1964; *The Spy Wore Red* by Aline Griffith, 2001

~ Sarah Tatum: *We Are Charleston* by Bernard Edward Powers, Herb Grazi-er, and Marjory Wentworth, 2016

~ Anne Mitchell: *Bel Canto* by Ann Patchett, 2001

~ Norma Brodsky: anything by author Tayari Jones. Her most recent is *An American Marriage*, 2018

~ Louise and Bob McLean: *Made in America* by Bill Bryson, 1994

~ Barbara Brennan: *The Invention of Wings* by Sue Monk Kidd, 2014

## September Calendar of Events

### September Events

This month we are hosting our Cheers! Happy Hour in person on September 24. Please see the Calendar details below. All our other monthly events are online. We so want you to explore the online world of activities with us! Whether we like it or not, online gatherings are part of our future from social activities to healthcare provider virtual visits. Let us help you get connected! Many members simply phone in and enjoy hearing these events. You don't even need a computer! Be brave, come on in, we're having fun and we want you to enjoy too!

To RSVP, call our office at 703-303-4060, or send an email to [info@mountvernonathome.org](mailto:info@mountvernonathome.org). Zoom links are emailed to everyone the day before the event. The phone and meeting IDs are provided below for those who dial-in only. The Mount Vernon At Home September Calendar of Events is posted online at <http://www.mountvernonathome.org/calendar-newsletter/>.

### September Highlights

*Russia and the United States, A Complicated Affair.* Join us on Sunday, September 27 at 3:00 pm (via Zoom) for a fascinating talk by a renowned expert on Russia and the Ukraine, Dr. Bill Gleason. Dr. Gleason will provide a brief history of Russia-U.S. relations as context for a discussion of the current news of the day affecting the two countries. Dr. Gleason has his doctorate in Russian history and has written two books and numerous articles on Russia. He has lived in the Soviet Union and Russia and once taught Russian history at St. Petersburg University by invitation of the University. Dr. Gleason is also a specialist on Ukraine and lived in Kyiv for 5 years in the 1990s and, from 2002-2016 was the Director of the Ukrainian-American Fulbright program.

*Art Talk - How Artists Were Affected by the World Wars and Depression.* Monday, September 14, 10:00 am - 11:15 am. This Zoom event is brought to us from our sister village, Alexandria at Home (AHA). The program will be led by Lee Ann Lawch, a volunteer docent with the Smithsonian American Art Museum. Register by September 12 by calling (703-231-0824) or emailing ([aha@athomeinalexandria.org](mailto:aha@athomeinalexandria.org)) AHA offices directly.

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**2<sup>nd</sup> Cup:** Saturday, 9/5 at 11am - 12pm. Let's talk about all things foodie! Favorite foods, restaurants, recipes and more! Hosted by Morrie Hoven and Don Peterson. Dial in: 301 715 8592, Meeting ID: 889 7425 7011

**Meditation Monday:** No session on 9/7.

**Book Club:** Thursday, 9/10, 3:00 - 4:00 pm. Hosted by Barbara Brennan. Favorite book? Love to read? Want to hear what others are reading? Share your current read? Attend our unique reading group! Dial in: 301 715 8592, Meeting ID: 810 5818 7748

**Timely Topics:** Saturday, 9/12 at 11:00 am. We will explore the topic of higher education. What will higher education look like in the future? Hosted by Holly Hoven and Virginia Hodgkinson. Dial in: 301 715 8592, Meeting ID: 861 4347 5784

**MVAH Celebrate! Gala:** Sunday, 9/13, 5pm - 7pm. Tickets required for entry to this event, deadline for dinner orders 9/7. Please call the office to reserve your place!

**Monday Meditation:** Monday, 9/14 at 9:30 am - 10:00 am. No experience necessary! Guided meditation relaxes the mind and body. Hosted by Jan

Buchanan. Dial in: 301 715 8592, Meeting ID: 823 1086 9101, Password: 130574

**Program Committee Meeting:** Monday, 9/14, 2pm - 3pm. Chairpersons Cher Terry and Franki Roberts invite all to bring ideas and inspiration for October activities and events. Dial in: 301 715 8592, Meeting ID: 893 5313 8083

**2<sup>nd</sup> Cup:** Saturday, 9/19, 11am - 12pm. With hosts Morrie Hoven and Don Peterson. Topic TBD. Dial in: 301 715 8592, Meeting ID: 884 7004 9374

**Cheers! IN PERSON!** Thursday, 9/24, 5pm - 6pm. We will be gathering safely at the home of Franki Roberts. We will safely sit outside with proper social distancing. Limited to 10 people. RSVP to our offices to reserve your place!

**Meditation Monday:** No session on 9/21.

**Conversations:** Sunday, 9/27, 3:00 pm - 4:00 pm. Russian-US Relations with Dr. Bill Gleason. Dial in: 301 715 8592, Meeting ID: 810 8848 0052

**Meditation Monday:** Monday, 9/28, 9:30am - 10am. Hosted by Jan Buchanan. Dial in: 301 715 8592, Meeting ID: 823 1086 9101, Password: 130574