



### Message from Paula Lettice

*President*

I hope all of you are staying cool and hydrated during this prolonged heat wave. Summer is always a challenge here in the D.C. area, but the presence of COVID-19 further complicates this summer. It's been well over 4 months since we began remote operations and using telephone and electronic means to stay in touch. We have shifted to virtual programming for Conversations and Cheers!, and have added other events such as Second Cup and Meditation Mondays. I feel that our sense of community is still strong

and we are all doing our best to manage, remain positive, and look out for each other. I thank Jan and Dave Prescott for their dedicated work on a daily basis and sincere concern for and care about our members.

Please mark your calendars for our September 13 gala, *CELEBRATE! 2020 Into a New Decade*. Invitations were mailed on July 23<sup>rd</sup> and should have reached your mailbox already. Planning is well underway for the event. We will be featuring a three-course meal with wine from Cedar Knoll delivered to your homes accompanied by a Zoom program and a live auction. Check out the details on page 3. We will miss seeing all of you in person but hope that a good number of our 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*

Transitions -- Well, looks like I will be heading into our office in the Sherwood Library in the coming month to begin another transition from working from home since I began my journey with you in April to commuting to the office. I will probably be working there intermittently as the library hours are limited as is its policy for admitting people. Patrons will have 30 minutes maximum time to be in the library and they will be limiting the

number of people allowed. I look forward to beginning this next journey to transitioning to our office and to hopefully meeting you in person. My virtual door is always open to you and I so enjoy your emails and phone calls.

We all have been making lots of transitions in these past few months - adapting to new living circumstances and safety measures and learning each day how to get by in this new environment. Life is one big transition! Sometimes I start to worry about the next step and pretty soon I'm not in the present moment at all. In our Meditation Mondays group, I've been focusing on being present and using our breath to bring us into the moment, right here, right now. We all tend to get caught up in thoughts of the future, thoughts of the past, plans, and to-do lists! Change, upheaval and transition can bring us all out of balance if we let it. So, I'm taking moments each day to breathe, be present. Transitions and change are constant, breathing and staying in the moment keeps me here, right now. ~ 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 turn the spotlight on two Board members by including their brief bios. This month meet Deborah Matthews and Elaine Serlin.



### **Deborah Matthews - Board Member**

*Professional Background:* I started my undergraduate work at Michigan State (go green!) and graduated from Georgia State University's College of Urban Life with a degree in Communications. While still in college, I was one of the "originals" who put CNN on the air, later moved to local television news and then *The Atlanta Journal Constitution*. After marrying a fellow reporter who was transferred to the D.C. Bureau, I went to the Hill, working as a press secretary for a Congressman and a U.S. Senator. I then served as the communications director for Senator John Heinz, the ranking minority member on the U.S. Senate Committee on Aging, until his most tragic death. I was the Deputy Director of a Congressional Caucus until I left the Hill to go to law school. After graduating from Catholic University, I joined a law firm in Bethesda. (If you are keeping track, this is my third career.) I was delighted to move my estate planning and trusts and estates practice to Old Town, Alexandria.

*Family:* A Midwesterner, I was born in Detroit. We immediately moved to Milwaukee and after my sister was born, we went to Alpena, Michigan. After I started junior high, we headed south to Lansing, MI. My darling daughter is the caretaker and a permanent substitute teacher at Burgundy Farm Country Day School where she attended K-8. She lives on campus and cares for the pig, goat, sheep, chickens, ducks, turkeys, and mini horses. Generally, each summer my sister's family and mine pick a place, often rather randomly, for vacation. As with all of you, this summer those plans are on hold.

*Interests:* This year as I miss watching my Nats, I have been much more active in my yard - and it shows. While I also miss going to live theater at the Kennedy Center, Signature, and 1<sup>st</sup> Stage, I am enjoying cooking all sorts of things - the electricians certainly enjoyed the scratch carrot cake I made, as did the sweet widow who lives across from me. And I try to take my dog, Jack, for a walk every day.

*Why are you involved with MVAH?* Helping others in many different ways has always been a priority for me. I have been in my home off Sherwood Hall Lane for more than three decades and I plan to stay. Being a Mount Vernon At Home Board member is a great way to be involved in and support the local community.

### **Elaine Serlin - Board Member**



*Professional Background:* I graduated from the University of Buffalo (UB), with a major in Biology and Chemistry. My first job was in research at the UB Medical School. I soon decided that was not a good fit, and moved into laboratory medicine, where I spent most of my career, also getting a Master's in Business Management. I worked in several laboratories, and my last position in this field was as the Administrative Manager of the laboratory at Mount Vernon Hospital. When I retired from Mount Vernon Hospital, I became a consultant for KPMG Peat Marwick, reviewing medical laboratory efficiency (or not) at various VA facilities around the country. I then decided to try something different, so went back to school to take some additional accounting courses and became an accountant for two different non-profits in Fairfax County. Then I really retired!

*Family:* My first husband (later divorced) accepted a job with the government, and we relocated from Buffalo with our two children, moving to Hollin Hills. I stayed in Hollin Hills as a single parent for 12 years. Mike Serlin and I were married in 1984 after all the children had graduated from high school and we moved to Mason Hill

*(cont'd on page 5)*

# *Celebrate!*

**2020 Into a New Decade**

**You're Invited**

**Sunday, September 13, 2020, 5:00 pm to 7:00 pm**

**Virtual Gala, via Zoom**

We hope you have received your formal invitation in the mail to our Fall Gala and we hope even more that you will participate! This is going to be a unique experience! Perhaps your children and grandchildren want to celebrate with you as the event is being held on Grandparents Day. The event will feature a gourmet 3-course dinner delivered to your home with wine, swag bags, a virtual auction, and more.

Your evening will begin with a catered dinner and wine delivered to your door, prepared by **Cedar Knoll** restaurant known for its farm-fresh foods and delicious crab cakes (see their Bearnaise recipe in this issue). You'll hear from our members, our volunteers and some surprise guests. The evening will cap off with a select variety of enticing auction items. Door prize giveaways too. **Take a positive step for our community. Enjoy a lovely evening "in" with a catered, dinner, live auction and lots of fun!**

Call us if you have any questions or wish us to send information to friends and family. Dinner delivery is within our membership geography. Our website also has details and registration information.

**Cedar Knoll restaurant catered dinner delivered to your door!  
3 Course Dinner Menu**

HORS D'OEUVRES

Chef's Selection of Cheese Plate

IN THE BEGINNING

Late Summer Salad

*Watermelon, Cherry Tomatoes, Goat Cheese, Balsamic Reduction, Arugula*

THE SHOWCASE

Scallopini of Chicken and Jumbo Lump Crab Cake

*Herbed Mashed Potatoes & Wilted Kale*

DESSERT

Lemon Ginger Semolina Cake

*Extra Virgin Olive Oil, Semolina Flour, Lemon Buttercream & Blueberries*

BAR

Half Bottles of Wine for singles

Full Sized Bottle of Wine for couples



## Member Corner

### In Memorium Carl Behrens

Carl Behrens Jr., 87, an energy policy analyst with the Library of Congress's Congressional Research Service from 1975 to 2014, died March 19 at a hospital in Arlington, VA. The cause was kidney failure, said a daughter, Lira Gallagher.

Mr. Behrens, who lived in Alexandria was born in Regina, Saskatchewan. He moved to Washington in 1946 and was an editor for several publications before joining the Congressional Research Service. Carl and his wife, Linda, became Mount Vernon At Home members last year.

### Happy August Birthdays!

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

8/2 Robert Klapouchy  
8/8 Betsy Stephens  
8/12 Catherine Read  
8/13 Elizabeth Mueller  
8/16 Arnold Edelman  
8/19 Russell Flint and Suzanne Jacoby  
8/26 Bonnie Maust  
8/28 Norma Cook  
8/28 Al Glazier  
8/31 Mary Flaherty

### Welcome Newest Member

Mary Sabulsky (Associate Member) - Montebello

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### Welcome Newest Volunteers

**Cindy Ksenics** – Cindy grew up in California and moved to this area over 33 years ago where she raised her family. She stayed at home with her children in their early years, but when her youngest was in the eighth grade, she decided to head back into the workforce. For five years, Cindy taught English at Mount Vernon High School. She retired in 2012. Cindy is excited to be involved with Mount Vernon At Home because she loves working with seniors and is so happy to be able to give back to our community. Cindy is ready to help with transportation.

**Sally Hazard** – Sally is a real Mount Vernon native! She went to Waynewood Elementary and graduated from Fort Hunt High School. She now lives close to Mount Vernon High School. In her words, Sally spent half her career as a computer programmer and the other half as a math teacher. She's not yet retired, and enjoys staying busy with some interesting side jobs including being a blackjack dealer and a real estate assistant. Sally has always enjoyed helping others and knows how much it means for people to be able to age in place. She has already been helping Mount Vernon At Home and is ready to drive, do little fixes and help members with their computers!

### Fall Prevention

Did you know that the one thing most likely to keep people from enjoying life after 65 is a fall? Falls are the leading cause of both fatal and nonfatal injuries to older Americans. Every 11 seconds, an older adult goes to an emergency department to treat an injury from a fall, according to the National Council on Aging. These are rather gloomy statistics but your fall risk could be reduced with some proactive actions on your part.

*(cont'd on page 6)*

## 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, August 13 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 the August books below.

### August Book Picks!

~ Cher Terry: *The Last Days of the Romanovs – Tragedy at Ekaterinburg* by Helen Rappaport

~ Louise McLean: *Private Life* by Jane Smiley and *Lucky You* by Carl Hiaasen

~ Bob McLean: *Where the Crawdads Sing* by Delia Owens

~ Sarah Tatum: *Radioactive: Marie & Pierre Curie: A Tale of Love and Fallout* by artist Laura Redniss

~ Franki Roberts: *Illuminator* by Brenda Rickman Vantrease

~ Betsy Stephens: *We Band of Angels* by Elizabeth M. Norman

~ Norma Brodsky: *The Shell Seekers* by Rosamunde Pilcher

~ Barbara Brennan: *Say Nothing* by Patrick Redden Keefe

## Serlin (cont'd from page 2)

so we would have enough room for everyone. Mike also had two children, and combining two families with different styles of interacting was an interesting experience. My daughter, who is my traveling companion, lives in Springfield and my son in Santa Monica works in the film industry. I have six step grandchildren.

*Interests:* My interests include theater, the Washington Nationals, birding, gardening, and trying to keep up with family members. I also love traveling, and my goal was to get to all the continents. I didn't make Africa, but if anyone wants some adventure, I can recommend going through the Drake Passage in one of their infamous storms. I like the outdoors and have been a volunteer at Huntley Meadows Park for more than 25 years.

*Why are you involved with Mount Vernon At Home?* I am a MVAH charter member! When I heard about the formation of this group, it sounded like a great way to involve people in the neighborhood in a more meaningful way. I knew many of those MVAH organizers and now know so many people that have enriched my life. There have been many activities that I have enjoyed and hope some of the volunteering I've done has helped MVAH grow. This has been a real community for me.

## Bearnaise Sauce Recipe

*From Chef Andrew Holden of Cedar Knoll*

Our July "Conversations" Zoom event went live to Cedar Knoll restaurant. We toured the beautiful historic building and went to the kitchen where Chef Andrew Holden demonstrated making an easy, adaptable Bearnaise sauce. Here's his recipe!

### Ingredients

1/2 lb butter melted and still warm/hot	1/4 cup white wine
3 whole eggs	juice from one lemon
1/8 cup fresh tarragon leaves	salt and black pepper to taste
1 clove garlic chopped	few dashes Tabasco to taste
1 T chopped red onion or shallots	

Reduce wine with garlic and shallots until wine volume is cut in half. In a blender, blend reduced wine, garlic, and shallots with eggs, lemon juice, tarragon, Tabasco, on high speed. Through the hole in the blender top, slowly pour the warm to hot melted butter into the egg mixture until it thickens. Should take all of the butter. Add salt and pepper to taste. Place in a warm spot in the kitchen.

The sauce can be refrigerated and brought back to life at room temperature or in a warm spot. The sauce can't be heated in the microwave or stove top or it will separate!

## August Calendar of Events

All events are on Zoom and you can either join with video or by phone. To RSVP, please call our office at 703-303-4060, or send an email to 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.

**“Musings of a Veteran Travel Agent”** - Our Conversations this month features travel veteran Mary Peters, President of Friendly Travel, whose 50-year career in the travel industry has spanned presidents, wars, economic recessions and more! Come hear Mary’s view on the industry, some of her memorable client stories (good and bad!) and best and worst destinations. What will travel look like in a post pandemic world? How will some of the specific industries, such as cruise lines, survive? What are the advantages of using a travel agent versus online sites? Find out all this and more at Conversations, Sunday, August 16 from 3:00 pm to 4:00 pm.

Here's the August schedule of events - you can also find it on our website.

**2nd Cup:** Saturday, August 1 at 11:00 am, hosted by Morrie Hoven and Don Peterson. The topic: Your favorite vacation or destination. Dial in: 301 715 8592, Meeting ID: 835 1811 0314

**Meditation Monday with Jan Buchanan:** Monday, August 3 at 9:30 am. Dial in: 301 715 8592, Meeting ID: 823 1086 9101, Password: 130574

**Timely Topics:** Saturday, August 8 at 11:00 am. Continuing the conversation on Black Lives matter – What will society do to ensure equality for all American Citizens? Hosted by Virginia Hodgkinson and Holly Hoven. Dial in: 301 715 8592, Meeting ID: 812 7923 3712

**Meditation Monday with Jan:** Monday, August 10 at 9:30 am. Dial in: 301 715 8592, Meeting ID: 823 1086 9101, Password: 130574

**Program Committee Meeting:** Monday, August 10 at 2:00 pm. Chaired by Cher Terry. Dial-in: 301 715 8592, Meeting ID: 811 2656 6555

**Book Club:** Thursday, August 13 at 3:00 pm. Hosted by Barbara Brennan. Dial-in: 301 715 8592, Meeting ID: 867 9741 6492

**Conversations:** “Musings of a Veteran Travel Agent” on Sunday, August 16 at 3:00 pm. Dial in: 301 715 8592, Meeting ID: 872 6062 7681

**Meditation Monday with Jan:** Monday, August 17 at 9:30 am. Dial in: 301 715 8592, Meeting ID: 823 1086 9101, Password: 130574

**Cheers:** Thursday, August 20 at 5:00 pm, hosted by Franki Roberts. Dial in 301 715 8592, Meeting ID: 835 9449 7536

**2nd Cup:** Saturday, August 22 at 11:00 am, hosted by Morrie Hoven and Don Peterson. Dial-in: 301 715 8592, Meeting ID: 843 1464 8759

**Meditation Monday with Jan:** Monday, August 24 at 9:30 am. Dial in: 301 715 8592, Meeting ID: 823 1086 9101, Password: 130574

**Meditation Monday with Jan:** Monday, August 31 at 9:30 am. Dial in: 301 715 8592, Meeting ID: 823 1086 9101, Password: 130574

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### Fall Prevention *(cont'd from page 4)*

AARP addresses these issues in an informative article in December 2019 entitled *Striking a Balance to Avoid Dangerous Falls* by Catherine Alicia Georges, National Volunteer President, AARP. The article can be found at <https://www.aarp.org/politics-society/advocacy/info-2019/tips-preventing-falls.html>.

So, what’s the best way to prevent a fall? Finding the correct balance – with our minds as well as our bodies.

We need to steer a course between, on the one hand, never thinking we might fall and taking no preventive steps, and, on the other hand, being so fearful of falling that we stop moving and, ironically, make ourselves less agile and therefore more likely to fall.

Check out this article for specific suggestions to reduce your fall risk!