



# VILLAGE VOICE

AUGUST 2024

CHEERS TO 15 YEARS

## MESSAGE FROM PRESIDENT MICHELE CALHOUN

You may not control all the events  
that happen to you, but you can decide  
not to be reduced by them.

- Maya Angelou

We're only in the middle of the summer and the scorching heat has us making small or significant changes to our daily routine. World and US news is stressful. Experiencing the loss of family or friends or hearing about ill MVAH members is stressful besides sorrowful. What makes you stressed? When thinking about this question, many people may jump to big stressors. However, those aren't the only things that can cause us stress — and we may not realize how much little things compile to impact us.

Microstressors are the small things that happen over time, which pile up to contribute to larger stressors.

A day full of microstressors may include spilling your coffee, the newspaper being delivered in a puddle of water, unexpected traffic on your way to an appointment, not getting an important return phone call etc., etc., etc. On their own, a single one of these microstressors may not have a significant impact on your day. However, together, they can truly lead to an overwhelming feeling.

A few ways you can manage microstressors include: take a break; do deep breathing exercises; listen to music; spend time on a hobby you love; journal; pray; walk; sit with your pet; talk to a friend. Find what calms you and makes you happy. MVAH offers events for you to meet other members, either in person or on Zoom. Find something you enjoy, participate, and make new friends. We have a Caring Committee that if you are feeling overwhelmed, sad, or just need

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## MVAH CELEBRATES OUR 15TH ANNIVERSARY!

### HAIL AND FAREWELL

#### Birthday Greetings to MVAH Members

8/2 - Robert Klapouchy  
8/13 - Jill Crispino  
8/20 - Alice Outerbridge  
8/20 - Willie Wright  
8/26 - Bonnie Maust  
(will be 101 years old)  
8/28 - Susan Hindman  
8/31 - Barbara Bieger  
8/31 - Mary Flaherty  
8/31 - Lorraine Johnson

WELCOME

#### Welcome New Members

Karen Justesen  
Herb Riggs

#### Welcome New Volunteers

Michael Kane  
Anne Richard  
Pam Unger

## Mount Vernon at Home

### TO REACH US

Phone: 703-303-4060

Office hours: M-F, 10:00 am–4:00 pm  
info@mountvernonathome.org  
<https://www.mountvernonathome.org>

### MAILING ADDRESS

Mount Vernon at Home  
P.O. 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 call 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  
call 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

Kathy Dismukes, *Executive Director*  
Dave Prescott, *Volunteer Coordinator*

### BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Michele Calhoun, Board President  
Kathi Hanrahan, Vice President  
Tim Wagner, Treasurer  
Brendan Power, Secretary

Maribeth Bersani  
MaryAnne Beatty  
Jane Earley  
Evan Kaufman  
Robert Kuletz  
Paula Lettice (Past President)  
Greg Lukens  
Barbara Mann  
Deborah Matthews  
Herb Riggs  
Kamla Rodriguez  
Karen Corbett Sanders  
Susan Wuchinich

## Message from Executive Director, Kathy Dismukes



Welcome to the August edition of the *Village Voice*. This issue is full of articles about people, programs, and well-being. Michele Calhoun’s column on microstressors and MaryAnne Beatty’s on the importance of hydration inform and provide guidance and solutions to help our members and volunteers take care of themselves, especially during this record heat wave. As Michele says, we are here for our members, volunteers, friends, and family, and we hope you will check on each other and check in with us. You can rely on Mount Vernon at Home.

There are several spotlight features in this issue. Roy Rhodes is applauded in our Volunteer Spotlight. Roy has spent more than 10 years bringing his special skills as a handyman and project manager to members who live at Montebello. Board member Susan Wuchinich is featured in our Board Member Spotlight. Susan’s list of her work experiences is something to behold, and we all benefit because of it.

There is much happening in August, including more than a dozen programs. A fun new one is Card & Game night on August 13. Last but certainly not least, we welcome our new members and volunteers.

All the best,

Kathy

## President’s Message (*cont’d*)

someone to talk to, let us know. Our Board Members reach out to our members. Maybe you didn’t need or want to talk to them previously but if you do now, return that call now. The important thing to know is you can help yourself minimize your stressors in life. They don’t get eliminated but you can help control the impact on your well being.

Reference: Neuropsychologist Nicole Byers

Please note that ALL requests for volunteer services  
must go through the MVAH office.

Please be sure to use this contact information  
when making any requests:

[info@mountvernonathome.org](mailto:info@mountvernonathome.org)

Phone: 703-303-4060

## MEET VOLUNTEER ROY RHODES



Is it Sam Rhodes or Roy Rhodes? It is Roy Sam Rhodes. He is known by family and very close friends as Sam

and everyone else as Roy. He is originally from WV but moved to VA over 50 years ago. Roy, and his wife, Mary, raised two sons here but one now lives in Denver and the other is raising his family in Charlotte. Roy was an avid basketball player and was a volunteer coach for many years. After retiring from HUD's Inspector General's Office, Roy was looking to give back.

A friend suggested MVAH as a volunteer activity over 10 years ago. Roy liked the mission of our organization and has been with us ever since. Strangely, that friend who suggested MVAH is not a member or a volunteer. She is a secret admirer of ours though! We thank her for sending Roy our way.

I first met Roy when we worked together to assemble an electric lift chair for a member. Besides doing many driving requests through the years, he has done so many handyman projects for our members like painting, light

bulb replacements etc. But he also took on a huge job once. The member was a long-time good friend so Roy went above and beyond and replaced an AC/heating vent system in their apartment. He also found a contractor to replace an oven door; a contractor to remove mold from a member's home; and even one willing to work overnight to install safety bars in a member's bathroom so she could be released from rehab. Roy's joy in volunteering is knowing his help is making it possible for members to remain in their homes and that they are safe and healthy.

Most of us have probably experienced frustrations finding and working with contractors so I am sure the members who had Roy take on that challenge for them were very grateful. Every time they see a house project managed or done by Roy, they are reminded about the value of MVAH's volunteer force. Roy is a wonderful example of all the different things our volunteers do for our members. Roy will be receiving a gift card in appreciation for his ten years and many hours of service to MVAH.

A big shout out of "Thanks" to Roy and all our other unsung heroes!

- by Michele Calhoun



## JOYOUS MOMENTS

### Happy Birthday Bonnie Maust!

I met Bonnie Maust because at the start of COVID Dave Prescott asked if I would try to trim Bonnie's hair because the Montebello Hair Salon was closed. How lucky for me that he asked, and Bonnie graciously never complained about my poor hair-styling skills. Bonnie will be celebrating her 101st birthday this month. It is always an enjoyable visit to sit and talk to her and call her friend.

- Michele Calhoun

## Streamlining the Transportation Request Process by Michele Calhoun

In an effort to serve both MVAH members and volunteer drivers in the best possible way, we are streamlining the process members follow for submitting a Transportation or Service Request. We need to ensure that the MVAH office is aware of and manages all member requests for volunteer assistance. Many of you now call our Volunteer Coordinator, Dave Prescott, directly and, in many cases, he knows exactly which doctor and location you mean when you just tell him you have to see your doctor. With more than 10 years of talking to members and taking these requests, Dave is like a human information directory! Below are the new procedures for members and volunteers.



1) Members will call our office at 703-303-4060 to submit a transportation or service request. You can provide the information to anyone who is working in the office, and they will record the request in the office log. If you get the answering system, please, leave a detailed message. The automated answering system creates a written email of your voice mail, and that email is sent to multiple addressees: the Executive Director, an Information extension, and the Volunteer Coordinator.

2) When you call or leave a message, let us know your name, pickup location, date and time of your appointment request and the contact name (quite often a doctor) and address of your destination. Mention if you have been there before. Let us know what time is best for you for the pick-up if you know the normal drive time. Some requests are flexible on when they can be fulfilled, and if this is the case for you, please, advise the office during your phone call or on the message you leave. The office will call you if they have any questions about your request. *(continued on p. 8)*



## Wanted! Office Manager for MVAH



We are searching for an Office Manager for the MVAH office and would love to have your candidate recommendations. Please spread the word and ask interested applicants to call Kathy Dismukes at 703-303-4060 or email her at [director@mountvernonathome.org](mailto:director@mountvernonathome.org). Thank you for your help in filling this position that will be a tremendous boost for the organization!

Below is a short post for you to send by email and talk about. You can also print it out to post on bulletin boards. If you like, we can send you a pdf of the announcement so you can post on social media.

## Office Manager for a Small Nonprofit Wanted

Mount Vernon at Home (MVAH) is a nonprofit organization that provides support, enrichment programs, and social opportunities for our Mount Vernon neighbors ages 55+ who are aging in place. We seek an experienced Office Manager (part-time, 20 to 30 hours/week) who can perform a variety of duties related to member, volunteer, and program support, data entry, administrative coordination, and newsletters. The MVAH Office is located in Sherwood Regional Library (2501 Sherwood Hall Lane, Alexandria, VA). The workday begins at 10:00 am when the library opens. The hourly rate is \$22 to start. There are no other benefits. Please email your qualifications and resume to [director@mountvernonathome.org](mailto:director@mountvernonathome.org).





## **The Importance of Hydration** by Maryanne Beatty

### *Why Are Seniors at Risk for Dehydration?*

Summer heat results in fluid loss especially in older adults. As we age, our urge to drink tends to diminish.

Changes in the water and sodium balance naturally occur and some medications can increase dehydration. It's important for seniors to prioritize hydration.

### *What are Symptoms of Dehydration?*

Symptoms of dehydration include fatigue, dry skin and lips, thirst, dark-yellow urine and not urinating as often. Other signs include muscle cramps, dizziness, headache, confusion, moodiness or unsteadiness.

### *How Much Water Do You Need to Stay Hydrated?*

The National Academy of Medicine suggests an adequate intake of daily fluids of about 13 cups for men and 9 cups for women 51 and older. Higher amounts may be needed for those who are physically active or exposed to very warm climates. This is a general guide. Talk to your doctor to determine how much water you should drink daily.

### *Tips on Staying Hydrated*

- Drinking water is a fast way to stay hydrated. Make drinking water a habit by setting reminders on your phone during the day.
- Monitor your caffeine and alcohol intake, opt for decaffeinated beverages, and limit your alcohol intake.
- Fruits and vegetables are great sources of water. Vegetables include cucumbers, spinach, celery, broccoli, and brussels sprouts. Fruits include citrus fruits, berries, tomatoes, peaches, nectarines, pears, apples, pineapple and melons. Low-sodium soups and broths are also good sources of water.

### *Prevention during Exercise and Illness*

You can become more dehydrated due to fever, exercise, exposure to extreme temperatures, and excessive loss of body fluids (such as with vomiting or

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## **MEET BOARD DIRECTOR SUSAN WUCHINICH**



In my life, I have worn many different hats: working with a hospital as a “candy striper”, sales clerk at a beloved book and stationary store, insect raiser/lab technician at a national plant research institute,

Volunteer in Service to America (VISTA), elected VISTA Leader, Volunteer Director of a Women’s Resource Center in La Junta, Colorado, Paralegal, US Department of Labor’s Wage and Hour Investigator, Union Steward for AFGE, Secretary/treasurer of our Local Union in AFGE, Judicial Law Clerk, Attorney for the US Department of Veterans Affairs, Chairperson of the Federal Bar Association’s Federal Career Services Division and Chairperson of Belleview Condominium’s Covenants Committee and a Belleview Board Member.

Following my retirement from the Federal Government after 32 years, I returned to part-time work with AARP’s Legal Counsel for the Elderly and then to being a pro bono Attorney for Northern Virginia Legal Services for many years where I was honored with the Chief Justice Harry L. Carrico Pro Bono Award (2015).

My educational background is as varied as my work experience. I attended Goddard, an experimental College, in Plainfield Vermont. Graduated from Columbia University with a BA in Liberal Arts. Studied Law part-time at Temple University School of Law in Philadelphia, PA, where I graduated with honors and later, earned a Master of Law (with honors) at the George Washington University Law School in Litigation and Dispute Resolution.

Throughout my career, I have focused on transparency, fairness and ethics.

In all of my occupations and services, I would have to say that overall, my accomplishments in volunteering gave me the greatest satisfaction. I would like to put my experience and skills to work for Mount Vernon at Home.

## The Importance of Hydration (cont'd)

diarrhea). As your body loses fluids, it also loses electrolytes which impact how your muscles and nerves work. When you lose electrolytes, you need to replace them. There are over-the-counter products including unflavored coconut water and orange juice.



## PROGRAM SPOTLIGHT

### Paul Spring Lunch & Movie

For more than 10 years, Paul Spring Independent Living, Assisted Living and Memory Care Community on Fort Hunt Road has been hosting a free Lunch & Movie program for MVAH members. Members love the delicious lunch and enjoy current hit movies like *The Boys in the Boat* and comedy classics like *My Cousin Vinny*. Join the friendly Paul Spring staff on August 21 for the movie *The Sting*. Board member Brendan Power, who attended the July event says: "It has always been pleasant experience talking to the program coordinator, Matilda Gyamfuaa, and to meet her in person was a treat." Our sincere thanks, Paul Spring!



### Card & Game Night



Members had lots of fun at the second Card & Game night in July. The host, Michele Calhoun, served delicious, cute mini burgers and other snacks. The group played Rummikub, which is like Gin Rummy but played with tiles. Everyone left a winner after a few hours of relaxed playing and good conversation. If you like cards and games, put August 13th, 4:00 - 7:00 pm on your calendar. Please RSVP to the office by phone at 703-303-4060 or by email to [info@mountvernonathome.org](mailto:info@mountvernonathome.org). Michele will host again. Wonder what fun snacks she will come up with!



### August Movie Group

**Viewers Choice** - In August, participants will watch one or two movies of their choosing and share their synopsis and review of each movie, recommending it (or not) to the group. Suggestions include any of the movies from the 15 Best Classic Movies list from Rotten Tomatoes. These include *Singing in the Rain*, *12 Angry Men*, and *It Happened One Night*, among others. We will recap reviews of the movies watched and share them with the Mount Vernon at Home community in a future newsletter. We'll resume the regular format in September. Enjoy your summer!

## AUGUST UPCOMING PROGRAMS

Note that for all Zoom events, reminders and Zoom links will be sent out before the event. All RSVPs should be directed to the office at 703-303-4060 or [info@mountvernonathome.org](mailto:info@mountvernonathome.org). Please carpool when possible.

*Please note that Cheers and Conversations will take a break in the summer months and resume in September.*



**Friday, August 2: Walking Group.** Meet at 9:30 am at Fort Hunt Park Picnic/Parking Lot A. Weather permitting.

**Tuesday, August 6: Movie Group.** Hosted by Kathi Hanrahan by Zoom at 3:00 pm. Viewer's Choice - no assigned movies this month. Watch and critique 1-2 movies.

**Friday, August 9: Walking Group.** Meet at Fort Hunt Park at 9:30 am, Picnic/Parking Area A. Weather permitting.

**Monday, August 12: Program Committee Meeting.** Hosted by Kathi Hanrahan by Zoom at 2:00 pm.

**Tuesday, August 13: Group Lunch.** Meet at Via Veneto at 11:30 am. RSVP to the office.



## 2024 Olympics

A whopping 592 athletes will compete for Team USA. More than a dozen are from the DC area, including:

*Noah Lyles (Alexandria)* – World-famous phenom sprinter who is No. 1 in the 200-meter and No. 2 in the 100-meter

*Phoebe Bacon (Chevy Chase)* - Women's 200 backstroke

*Kevin Durant (Oxon Hill)* - Highest-scoring player in men's Olympic basketball history

*Emily Fox (Ashburn)* - Women's soccer

*Jahmal Harvey (Oxon Hill)* – Boxing



**Tuesday, August 13: Card & Game Night.** 4:00 pm - 7:00 pm. Hosted by Michele Calhoun. RSVP to the MVAH office.

**Friday, August 16: Walking Group.** Meet at 9:30 am at Fort Hunt Park Picnic/Parking Lot A. Weather permitting.

**Wednesday, August 21: Lunch & Movie.** At Paul Spring Retirement Community. Lunch begins at 12:00 noon, followed by the movie *The Sting*. RSVP to the MVAH office.

**Friday, August 23: Walking Group.** Meet at 9:30 am at Fort Hunt Park Picnic/Parking Lot A. Weather permitting.

**Tuesday, August 27: Book Group.** Hosted by Laurie Tracy by Zoom at 3:00 pm. RSVP to [tracylauri@aol.com](mailto:tracylauri@aol.com).

**Wednesday, August 28: Timely Topics.** 4:00 pm by Zoom. Virginia Hodgkinson is the current events discussion facilitator and Paula Lettice is the Zoom host.

**Friday, August 30: Walking Group.** New location for the last Friday of the month: Huntley Meadows Park, Cedar Trail. Meet at 9:30 am in the parking lot at the Lockheed Blvd. entrance. Weather permitting.

**Happy Labor Day!** Our office will be closed on Monday, September 2 for the Labor Day holiday.



### In Memoriam

Mount Vernon at Home  
notes with much sadness the  
recent passing of members:

*Jane Barnes*

*Eleanor Dyer*

*Al Glazier, MVAH Founding Member*



### **Streamlining the Transportation Request Process *(cont'd)***

- 3) You should submit your request no later than five days before the appointment. We understand that there are emergency appointments, and these may result in requests less than five days out. In all cases, the Volunteer Coordinator will try to find a volunteer driver to meet the request. As always, we can't guarantee a driver will be available for emergency appointments, but will do our best to find one.
- 4) Office staff will enter the request in our rides management system, NVRRides, the same day, if possible, or the next working day.
- 5) If you have already reached out to a volunteer driver about a request, please call that driver again and tell them you submitted the transportation request. The volunteer will monitor NVRRides, and when it is posted as an Available Request, they will "Accept" the request. The office will not assign a volunteer driver.
- 6) Drivers receive an email asking them to call you as soon as possible when they accept your request. We encourage the drivers to reconfirm the request 48 hours prior to the pick-up by Friday the week before a Monday pick-up since the office is closed weekends.
- 7) If you haven't received a call from a driver within 24 hours of your appointment, you can and should call the office to confirm if the request is still pending or if a volunteer has accepted it.
- 8) Dave Prescott constantly monitors NVRRides and proactively reaches out to drivers for unfilled requests that are 24-48 hours out.

We all need to be patient and understanding with each other as we use this new process. Dave's role as the Volunteer Coordinator has a broader scope as he takes on new and additional responsibilities. Feel free to call Dave and keep in touch with him on a personal level, but please don't circumvent the MVAH office role and responsibilities and process described here. Remember, all MVAH drivers are volunteers who care about you deeply. Collectively they give thousands of hours a year to get you to where you need to go.

