

NEWSLETTER



MARCH-MAY 2021

Meeting Place: ZOOM

MEETING TIME: 1:00 -2:30 p.m.

This is the spring edition of our ARTA newsletter, even though it's wintry outside at present. Spring does begin later in March, and daylight savings time will be resuming the first Sunday in March, but the week in February that I'm writing this is producing the worst weather of our winter! We don't have to worry, though, about whether winter weather will cancel a meeting since none are in person, anyway. Meeting on Zoom does have its advantages in no travel for us or for our program presenters who can now come from afar! Two of the three programs described in this issue are indeed from as far away as Florida and Manitoba, Canada, people we could not otherwise have engaged except for the magic of Zoom!

Announced below and on the next page are the **March 10, April 14, and May 12 second Wednesday** programs and also the annual **joint March meeting** with Alexandria on the **third Monday** in March, **March 15**. Hope to see many of you on the participants' list and Zoom screen. Note also about reminders of other things coming up since this is our final newsletter of the 2020-21 year.

UPCOMING MEETINGS

March 10, 2021 1: 00- 2:30 p.m. **ROBERT P. WATSON, PH. D: 100 YEARS OF WOMEN IN POLITICS**
Via
ZOOM



Dr. Watson, historian, author, professor, political commentator, and community leader, will be engaging us on *The Nineteenth Amendment and 100 Years of Women in Politics*, especially to the present day. Dr. Watson is an award-winning author who has published over 40 books and roughly 200 scholarly articles and chapters on topics in history and politics, as well as two multi-edition encyclopedia sets on the Presidents and First Ladies. He holds the title of Distinguished Professor of American History and Director of Project *Civitas* at Lynn University in Boca Raton, Florida. A frequent media commentator, Dr. Watson has been interviewed thousands of times by news outlets around the world including CNN, MSNBC, *USA Today*, *The New York Times*, NPR, and the BBC. He has appeared on *Hardball* with Chris Matthews, *The Daily Show* with Jon Stewart, and C-SPAN's *American History TV* and *The Washington Journal*.

Dr. Watson is in great demand as a visiting scholar and guest speaker. His wonderful sense of humor, charisma, and extraordinary knowledge will make us laugh and learn a lot. We look forward to having you join us from the comfort of your home as ARTA honors Women's Month. As Susan B. Anthony once said, "There will never be complete equality until women themselves help to make the laws and elect the lawmakers."

March 15, 2021 ANNUAL MEETING WITH ALEXANDRIA: Via ZOOM**1:00 p.m.**

Our tradition is to meet once a year with Alexandria, but we don't yet have details of their program. We'll send details by email closer to the meeting date.

**April 14, 2021
1:00 – 2:30 p.m.**

**Via
Zoom**

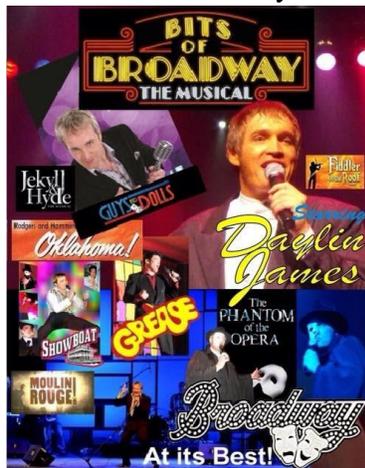


**TENTATIVE SPEAKER: DR. FRANCISCO DURAN, ARLINGTON
SUPERINTENDENT OF SCHOOLS**

As with much else that is still tentative about the school system during the pandemic, we do not have a firm commitment yet on our hope to meet Dr. Durán and get an update on how things are progressing. If things go as planned, those students choosing to do so will have returned to school by March 16, so we will know more after that. Meanwhile, a few facts: On June 1, 2020, Dr. Durán joined APS from Fairfax County Public Schools where he served as Chief Academic and Equity Officer since 2015. He has a diverse background in education spanning 26 years, including top-level leadership and superintendent experience in a variety of large urban school divisions with culturally diverse populations, and has served in various roles as a teacher, director, principal, administrator and superintendent. Dr. Durán has a bachelor's degree in education from the University of New Mexico, a master's degree in educational administration from San Francisco State University, and a master's degree and doctorate in organization and leadership from Columbia University. In 2018 he was appointed to the VA State Board of Education, playing a key role in the development of the new Standards of Quality.

May 12, 2021 MUSICAL ARTIST DAYLIN JAMES: "BITS OF BROADWAY"
1:00-2:30 p.m.

**Via
ZOOM**



We will again not be having a luncheon this May, but through Zoom, we will give ARTA members a rare chance for international entertainment!

For years I've written about the visiting back and forth between the U.S. and

Canada that daughter Melanie and I have done with our dear friend, international performer, tribute artist, actor, producer, songwriter **Daylin James**, who currently lives in Roblin, Manitoba, and this is now your chance to see him perform one of my favorites of his shows, "Bits of Broadway." The graphic to the left depicts some of the Broadway shows from which he will do selections, using enough costuming to appear in character. [See him age in an instant into old man Tevye from "Fiddler on the Roof"!] This show has always been a big hit on the "Sailin' with Daylin" cruises we've been on. [Will we ever dare that again??]

A native of Canada, Daylin sang Elvis songs as a boy because his mother loved Elvis, but she died when he was only 21 and he gave up that genre for the music of the 80's – and then gave up music in general when he got married. A chance performance at a birthday party took him back to the world of Elvis and in 1997, Daylin was named **Canadian National and International Elvis Tribute Artist Grand Champion** by Elvis's former backup singers The Jordanaires, his drummer D.J. Fontana, and his cousin Donna Presley Early. He also was named the **2011 Canadian National Elvis and International GOSPEL Tribute artist Grand Champion**. Daylin has traveled throughout the USA, Europe, Japan, and Canada, performing for seven years with Las Vegas's **Legends in Concert** and various other world renowned Tribute Artists productions, but he prefers to sing as himself, not Elvis, and with a four-octave voice range, he can do any kind of music, even opera. Be sure to tune in to our program on **May 12** to hear his amazing voice and be charmed by his charismatic personality as he performs well-known hits from popular Broadway shows – direct from his studio in Roblin, Manitoba!



FROM THE DESK OF PRESIDENT NANCY:

Dear ARTA Members,

Recently, each of you should have received the annual letter from **Cathy Eckbreth** inviting contributions to ARTA's Future Educators Scholarship Fund administered for us by the Arlington Community Foundation (ACF). I have heard that 300 students have applied for ACF college scholarships. One candidate with a plan to pursue education will be chosen by ACF to receive the Future Educators Scholarship, \$2,500 for up to five years. Please be as generous as you have been in the past, and make those donations easily online or by check made out to Arlington Community Foundation in the envelope included in Cathy's letter. Be sure to write "Future Educators Scholarship" on the memo line of your check so that the correct fund can be credited with your donation. ACF will send you a receipt for your records.

The Future Educators Scholarship fund has grown to \$34,710 from \$15,000, thanks to your donations and ACF's wise investments. In addition, our ARTA Scholarship Fund's original \$200K has grown to \$232,595. Presently, our ARTA scholarships are supporting four students for up to five years each.

I recently received a letter from Divina Alston, Executive Director of the Mary Marshall Residence, thanking us for our holiday donation of \$500. It will be used for "various life enrichment events and activities for the residents throughout the upcoming year." Because of our much-reduced meeting costs, the Board voted more generous support for other groups in our community that work to serve the needs of Arlington's students and their families. We recently sent donations to the following groups:

- The **Arlington Outdoor Education Association's Outdoor Education Lab** in Fauquier County. which yearly hosts third, fifth and seventh graders and high school groups, enriching their science and outdoor learning experiences (\$500);
- **Reading is Fundamental of Northern Virginia**, a volunteer nonprofit that each school year provides free books to 21,000 students at 37 school and program sites throughout NoVa., including 3,600 Arlington students at 11 school and program sites (\$350);
- **The Dr. Marjorie Hughes Fund**, established upon our much-missed member Marjorie's retirement as the APS doctor to support the health needs of the county's underserved students (\$350);
- The **Arlington Free Clinic**, which provides free high-quality healthcare to low-income, uninsured Arlington County adults through the generosity of donors and volunteers (\$350); and.
- The **Arlington Food Assistance Center (AFAC)** whose mission is "to feed neighbors in need by providing dignified access to nutritious supplemental groceries" (\$350).

Our treasurer Randy McKnight has carried out his role with skill and care, working cooperatively to keep our financial and membership records up-to-date. Randy will not be continuing in that role next year, so we are looking for a new treasurer. The job is an exciting and most necessary one. If you are interested, contact me and/or Randy to get an idea of the tasks involved.

Best always,
Nancy



LOOKING BACK: DECEMBER-FEBRUARY

Our **December 9, 2020**, holiday program over Zoom, featuring singer/songwriter/entertainer **Chris Urquiaga**, now using the stage name of **JChris**, had exactly the same number of attendees as last year's in person show = good that Chris had the same-sized audience, but we ARTA leaders were disappointed that more of you didn't join in when you didn't have to get dressed or travel anywhere! Chris performed a program of mostly holiday songs, among them

“It’s Beginning to Look a Lot Like Christmas,” “Silver Bells,” “Little Drummer Boy,” “Last Christmas,” “This Christmas,” “The Christmas Song,” “Winter Wonderland,” “Have Yourself a Merry Little Christmas,” plus a breakup song in Spanish. He paid tribute to educators as being “essential workers,” as no one was more essential in his view, and he is always happy to perform for us former educators. He later was asked questions about writing in Spanish – or did he write in English and translate to Spanish? [Chris was born in this area of both Spanish and Portuguese ancestry, and speaks both of those languages fluently in addition to his native English. In previous years, he had sung to us in Portuguese, too.] He said he gets the beat in his head first, in that case a 1-2-3 syncopated beat, and the Spanish words to fit it, so in switching to English, the words don’t always fit the rhythm. After his performance, Chris answered our questions very thoughtfully, especially Mary Ann Penning’s question about how he thought the arts would be different after the pandemic is controlled. More sanitation in theaters and clubs would be necessary, he thought. Nancy asked about his activities to both stay busy and have income during the pandemic. He performs virtually for groups like ours, is musical director for the Congressional Chorus, also virtually, is recording songs for Spotify and YouTube, and has more chance to focus on writing, which he is now doing with a creative partner. Since he’s now living in New York, traveling back and forth, usually on the train, is also a time consumer.

The **ARTA Board meeting** in January is a usual event of the winter, but normally it’s held at Goodwin House before the informal luncheon there. This time it was at 10:00 a.m. **January 13, 2021**, on Zoom – with no yummy lunch for us when the meeting ended about 12:15!!



Meet Your ARTA Board! Top: Sandi Green [taking the screen shot], Nancy King, Cathy Eckbreth. Middle: Michel Milden, Ellen Bartlett [in bright sunshine], Randy McKnight. Bottom: Lynne Lilly and Lynn Juhl. The actual business conducted at the Board meeting is reflected in several of the articles included herein.

Our first regular ARTA meeting of **2021, February 10**, brought from Utah through Zoom a “hometown boy,” **Loki Mulholland**, Wakefield graduate and son of our own Joan Mulholland, to talk about his latest documentary, “After Selma.” A documentary filmmaker, Loki is also Founder and Executive Director of the **Joan Trumpauer Mulholland Foundation**, which is dedicated to educating youth about the Civil Rights Movement and how to make a difference in their communities and works to provide learning materials for schools. Program chair Lynne Lilly introduced Loki, mentioning some of his achievements and awards [as earlier mentioned in our advertising of the program, and then the program with Loki was in question and answer format, based on the audience of ARTA members having seen the film online in advance. The description

of the film says, “When John Lewis and others marched across the Edmund Pettus Bridge [in Selma, Alabama] on Bloody Sunday it became the catalyst for voting rights in America. Now, everyone could vote. What has happened to those rights since 1965? The fight for the right to vote continues.” The main questions/answers summarized here.

“How did the “After Selma” idea come to be?” The film was made as Loki’s protest against the reelection of Trump, to show the voter suppression that was engineered to make such reelection possible. Loki first met Joanne Bland, the local Black lady he featured in the film, when he was doing interviews in the area, but she mistrusted his motives until he showed her the picture of his mom and then Joanne was willing to be interviewed. He had read author/professor Carol Anderson’s book and heard her on NPR, giving him the impetus for the film, and she was willing to be a participant when he contacted her. He had wanted to get Stacey Abrams [candidate for governor of Georgia], but she was too busy, so he narrated it himself. The majority of his research came from Carol Anderson’s books: *White Rage: The Unspoken Truth of the Racial Divide*, and *One Person, No Vote: How Voter Suppression Is Destroying Our Democracy*.

“What is the basis of voter suppression?” White supremacy -- maintaining the status quo. Whites in the South in general haven’t voted for a Democrat since Lyndon B. Johnson.

“Have you ever been threatened?” Yes, hate mail, intimidation – even “the Klan” showed up when he was filming the cemetery scene with Joanne Bland. Another time in Mississippi, he was followed down a lonely back road by a car with guns sticking out the window and was signaled to pull over. When his 6’4” cameraman got out first and asked what they wanted, they were intimidated and drove away! Loki and his crew did learn to be out of the Delta area by 6 pm.

“How does gerrymandering happen?” Voting districts are drawn by the political party in power = thus Republican in the South, and some of them are egregious. The film showed maps, and North Carolina was especially squiggly, drawing lines to find all the places to exclude black votes as much as possible. **So how will Virginia’s new anti-gerrymandering commission affect Virginia?** Since Loki lives in Utah, he isn’t up on Virginia but understands that both parties will be involved in the effort to make the effort bipartisan.

Lynn Juhl references Shakespeare’s lines “It’s not in your stars, it’s in yourself” to ask **“How deeply ingrained is White supremacy?”** Survival skills are biological, seeing someone else as a threat and taking action to counteract the threat, but we have to put on our thinking caps in how we see others, what influences us, and then reprogram ourselves. **“How?”** “Watch movies like mine! -- and read books like Carol’s.”

“What about suppression of other votes – poor white, Hispanic, homeless – is it an economic thing?” Yes, it’s always “follow the money,” the have and the have nots. Some poor people actually object to instituting a \$15 minimum wage because “If you can get \$15 an hour for flipping burgers, teachers will come take my job away.” [Obviously having little understanding of teacher pay but believing the work to be harder than flipping burgers.]

“How dangerous are far-right hate groups to democracy?” As dangerous as Reconstruction – very much so. They are terrorists and while they can have freedom of speech, they must not be allowed freedom of destruction. Most people see them as dangerous but words like “There are good people on both sides” and “I love you all” have allowed their risk to be obscured.

For follow-up on Loki Mulholland, Filmmaker, Author, Activist: www.lokimulholland.com
Podcast: *The Uncomfortable Truth* streaming on Amazon and other podcast hosts, ongoing with his mother Joan Trumpauer Mulholland

New book in editing: *Get Back to the Counter*, Freedom Rider principles for modern day Civil Rights action

Two films releasing soon on Amazon: *Medgar Evans* and *End of Slavery in Utah, Amendment C*

Films in the works: *Bear River Massacre* and *Emmet Till*

With Heartfelt
IN MEMORIAM *Sympathy*

It is always sad to announce the death of our valued ARTA members, and we extend our sympathy to the families of those listed below.

FRANK D. BATISTONI, warehouse retiree, died on **August 18, 2020**, at age 90. Born March 9, 1930, in Bound Brook, NJ, Frank served in the Navy from 1951 to 1954, then worked for Colonia Airlines, and finally moved to Alexandria in the early 1960's and began his long career with Arlington County Schools. The family held a service for him on September 1 and will later take his ashes back to Bound Brook, NJ.

MERLE WILLIAMS, Abingdon Elementary retiree and an ARTA Life Member, died peacefully in her sleep on Sunday morning, **November 22, 2020**. She had Parkinson's disease. She was cremated, and her daughter wrote, "We will have a repass/celebration in VA sometime in her birthday month of August of 2021. I will not send her off with a Covid burial, she will be honored in the way she lived; celebrated and surrounded by loved ones! I will send a notice once I get the location handled. If you feel the need to send something, mom loved flowers."

SYLVIA W. GEER, 87, a resident of Williamsburg since 2004 and member of Williamsburg Presbyterian Church, died of natural causes on **December 21, 2020**, at Brookdale Chambrel Williamsburg. Sylvia grew up in Colorado and attended Grinnell College, where she met her husband, Lucien Geer, a long-time teacher and coach at Berkshire School in Massachusetts and Episcopal High School in Alexandria, VA. She later earned a master's degree in education from George Mason University, and for over two decades taught special-education and English at Washington and Lee High School in Arlington, VA. In Williamsburg, she was active in her church and volunteered with hospice and literacy programs. When Sally Bassler sent the news of Sylvia's death, she said of her, "Sylvia was an outstanding teacher, colleague and friend to many. She always made time for all her students, their parents and her colleagues. She was very involved in county, school and department committees. To know her was to love her, and I know others will want to know this information that her son Will has shared." Sylvia's memorial service was held at Williamsburg Presbyterian Church on **January 23, 2021**, with most participants doing so remotely.



We extended ARTA sympathy to our dear **Mary Hof**, whose husband **Bill** died on December 23, 2020, after a long illness. Funeral services were held at Columbia Gardens Cemetery in Arlington on January 12, 2021, conducted in accordance with Covid regulations.

APS-Related Death: **Dr. Ethel Newman**, the wife of Thomas Newman, formerly APS Director of Transportation [and former Wakefield Asst. Principal], died in January. Dr. Newman was herself a former educator in DC. Her funeral was held in Florida on **January 15, 2021**. For further details, you can contact Thomas Newman by email at wesort@earthlink.net and by telephone at (321) 848-2088.

LEGISLATIVE UPDATE



Since the Virginia General Assembly is now still meeting, it's too early to summarize their work, so our Legislative Chair, Jeanne Trabulsi, will send a report after it ends. One thing just reported is legislation backed by Governor Ralph Northam that would require teachers to complete cultural competency training to keep their license is to become law. House Bill 1904 and Senate Bill 1196 require all teacher, principal and superintendent evaluations to consider cultural competency. The

legislation charges the Virginia Board of Education with creating minimum standards for what competency would entail. Additionally, any history teacher seeking a license must have an endorsement in teaching African American history. Today's *Washington Post*, in reporting on Virginia identifying a \$730 million in unexpected tax revenue as the General Assembly works on the state's two-year spending plan, said "The new revenue could help smooth out areas where the two plans [House, Senate] disagree. The Senate, for instance, backed a Northam proposal to spend more than \$500 million to support school systems that have been harmed by pandemic-related shutdowns, while the House proposed a little more than \$400 million. The Senate proposed a 3 percent raise for teachers and the house 5 percent." Jeanne said the big thing to happen thus far in the General Assembly is abolishment of the death penalty in Virginia!

HEALTH INSURANCE NOTES



We are happy that those of us with Medicare and United Healthcare as supplementary are continuing in 2021 with a bonus eighth year with the same company, no changes in coverage, and just a small rate increase this year and we hope that there will continue to be no changes in the UHC contract during this pandemic.

Reminder about health insurance signup: Because the Biden administration reopened applications to the health exchanges, a lot of companies reinstated marketing calls and mailings. Remember, you will NOT receive a call from our UnitedHealth Care plan unless they have initiated the call first. The Arlington Public Schools contract with UHC covers the current calendar year of 2021 and you would lose your Arlington insurance if you sign up for anything else that you see advertised as "saving you money." **HANG UP** on any call you receive from UnitedHealthCare saying it can save you money, etc.; it is a marketing call from a call center that knows nothing about you or the insurance we already have.

On the other hand, official word by mail came from UnitedHealthCare recently that they have dropped Silver Sneakers, replacing it with "Renew Active" – inviting us to "exercise the ability to stay active at the gym or from home" with "Renew Active." **So if you're a Silver Sneakers fan, be sure to look at the info about its replacement!**

A related issue: The VRS Health Insurance Credit: Make sure that you are still getting the full health insurance credit you're due, which comes through your VRS monthly pension. APS personnel sent in to VRS all the updated amounts for UnitedHealthcare [and most of us are probably getting the maximum credit, anyway] so check to see that you are getting the correct amount. You can call the VRS Customer Contact Center: **1-888-VARETIR (1-888-827-3847) if you want to be sure!** [The credit is \$4 per month times years taught if you had at least 15.]

And another reminder: if you are not yet 65 but will be that age soon, you must apply for Medicare, and then take your new card to **Ann Irby** at the Ed Center to be transferred into the appropriate APS health insurance plan, either UnitedHealthcare or Kaiser Medicare.

****REQUESTS/REMINDERS/ANNOUNCEMENTS****

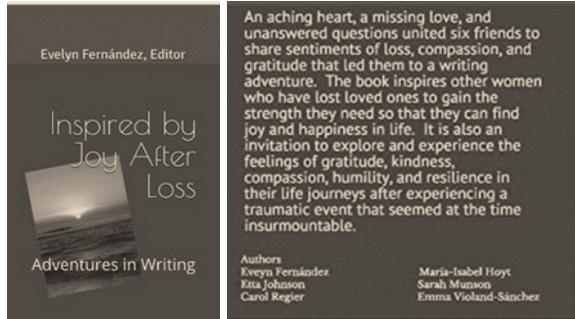
A reminder that if you learn of a member's **death** to please immediately notify **our president, Nancy King (703-978-8017/703-408-9369 or nw_king@yahoo.com)** so that she can then notify Telephone Chair **Bonnie Fowler** to call those who don't have email. Bonnie now calls just those members associated with the school(s) at which the deceased taught as everyone with email is notified by Ellen Bartlett through that method, and you can also notify Ellen of a death.

Cathy Eckbreth is still our "Concerns" chair so be sure to notify her of any occasion for which she should send a card. Call her at **703-534-4402** or **email** her at cwe5409@verizon.net. This is especially true for anyone's illness or death, but happy occasions warrant cards, too!

Since this newsletter covers through May, it will be your last for the current year. As you become able to resume a more active life, be sending me any interesting newsletter items for the first 2021-22 edition in the summer! **Email me at ellenbartlett@verizon.net; mail to me at 908 North Daniel Street, Arlington, VA 22201; or call 703-524-3312.**

☺ ☺ ☺ **BITS AND PIECES** ☺ ☺ ☺

Sue Rafferty is still in New Jersey and very lonely since her sister's death, though she is doing well. They are selling her sister's house and she is not sure how much longer she will be there, but would love to hear from her APS friends: **93 Rumson Rd, Little Silver, NJ 07739-1349.**



From Evelyn Fernandez: “I would like to share our book *Inspired by Joy after Loss* with ARTA members. Etta Johnson, Emma Violand-Sánchez, Carol Regier, Maria Isabel Hoyt, Sarah Munson, and I shared our feelings of loss and have supported each other through difficult times. We decided to publish this little book to share with others who have lost their loved ones. It is available on Amazon for \$10.99.” [The back cover reads,

“*An aching heart, a missing love, and unanswered questions united six friends to share sentiments of loss, compassion, and gratitude that led them to a writing adventure. The book inspires other women who have lost loved ones to gain the strength they need so that they can find joy and happiness in life. It is also an invitation to explore and experience the feelings of gratitude, kindness, compassion, humility, and resilience in their life journeys after experiencing a traumatic event that seemed at the time insurmountable.*”]

From Etta Johnson: “Because I firmly believe that focusing on gratitude results in a positive attitude, outweighing the negativity of this time, I created and had published ***Graphic Gratitude Guides for a Practice of Gratitude***. Having written many ESOL/HILT curriculum guides in the past, I developed specific gratitude guides for parent & child, kid & family, English learners, young adults, adults and elders. Kindness, natural gratitude, growing hope, thankful for the USA and a moral compass are also included. This book is now available from Amazon and Barnes & Noble.” Description: “*Graphic Gratitude Guides for a Practice of Gratitude is a response to a critical need for hope at this unprecedented time in our nation's history. This simple book provides activities for being mindful of your gratitude. You can find where you fit among the six guides: parent and young child, kids and families, English learners, young adult, adult and elders. A moral compass, gratitude for kindness, growing hope and thankfulness for the USA are also included. Just for you-a guide to help you "view the world with gratitude for a positive attitude"-a logo, a mantra, a mindful lifestyle.*”

From Nancy King: I have been reading more than ever! I really enjoyed: *Anxious People* by Fredrick Blackman; Brit Bennett's *The Vanishing Half*; Elena Ferrante's *The Lying Life*; *Dear Edward* by Ann Napolitano; Louise Penny's newest *All the Devils Are Here*; and *The Law of Innocence* by Michael Connelly. I try and read all of Michael Connelly, as his mysteries take place in the LA neighborhoods I knew in my youth! My very favorite book was *Valentine* by new author Elizabeth Wetmore, as her prose was excellent. I also have continued to listen to audio books in the car or as I walk. I will only listen to the Cormoran Strike series by Robert Galbraith (JK Rowling), as the reader Robert Glenister is a master storyteller. He did not fail in the latest, *Troubled Blood*. I am currently listening to the late John Le Carré read his *Agent Running in the Field*, so far a great tale by a spy mystery master!

From Nancy Rowe: “John still serves as a Webmaster in our community, but no longer bowls, or plays golf three times a week. We have lost several friends to the virus and are incredibly grateful that six close family members have survived it. . . .Nancy continues her four-year commitment to co-lead her leadership group including hundreds of volunteers. The work to support our Democracy and Republic continues. . . We follow the scientists, doctors, and nurses as they help to protect all of us. Remember to keep distance and Mask Up because you are important to us!!”

From Terry Bratt: A group of about 20 retired Arlington teachers and school administrators collectively known as *Las Abuelitas* have been tutoring APS English learners since June. Most of the students are from Barrett and Key Elementary schools and are currently in grades 1-3. Twice a week over the summer and now once a week since school reopened in September, the tutors meet with students using WhatsApp to build oral language skills. The tutors meet twice a month via Zoom to share ideas. Most of our students do not have access to reliable hi-speed internet. They do have iPads and Comcast Essentials thanks to APS and Arlington County but that only allows them to follow APS distance learning. Their households cannot job search or have tele-medicine appointments with that system. We meet with our students on WhatsApp using the family's cell phone.

Using WhatsApp has brought home to the tutors the need for low-cost high-speed internet access, so some of the tutors are now working with ArlFiber to improve broadband access for all Arlington residents. ArlFiber is an advocacy group in Arlington working to inform our community of the advantages of treating a broadband authority as a public utility like electricity and water so that we can all have cheaper and better access to the internet. Check out arlfiber.org for more information. If you think you might like to join our tutor group, email Terry Bratt at theresabratt@gmail.com for more information.

Mae Chianese has been transferred to a lovely assisted living facility after several weeks of hospitalization for double pneumonia, among other health problems. Note the new local address for her, and also for **Eileen Delany** in Florida.

Finally, congratulations to **Bill Cogswell and his wife Barbara**, celebrating their **62nd** anniversary on **January 31!**

**REMINDER: IMPORTANT CONTACTS TO HAVE AVAILABLE IN YOUR RECORDS
(Compiled by Cathy Eckbreth)**

One of the best things we retirees can do for our families is to have a list of contact information for them to use in the event of our death. I've had members ask me to help them with these contacts so decided to send them to all members. You may be better organized than many of us but you also may find this helpful.

- A. **Virginia Retirement System** - 1200 E. Main Street, Richmond, VA 23219. Mailing address: Virginia Retirement System, P.O. Box 2500, Richmond, VA 23218-2500. Phone: 1-888-827-3847; Website: www.varetire.org. You can also use this site to check the value of your life insurance policy that was received upon our retirement. This policy is held with **Minnesota Life**, P.O. Box 11931, Richmond, VA 23218-1193. Phone: 1-800-441-2258.
- B. **Arlington County Retirement Office** - (Supplementary benefit for pre-1981 hires) Phone: 703-228-3900 or 1-800-296-9510. There is no survivor benefit.
- C. **Social Security Administration** – Phone: 1-800-772-1213, have the Social Security number of the deceased ready to report.

HEALTH BENEFITS PHONE NUMBERS TO KEEP

UNITEDHEALTHCARE (for billing or other questions): **1-800-851-3802**

CIGNA for those under **65**: Any questions should go through **Ann Irby** – see below.

APS Ann Irby: 703-228-6105; email: ann.irby@apsva.usc