

# THE Villager

◦ NEIGHBORS HELPING NEIGHBORS ◦

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## President's Message

Walt Cooper

**G**REETINGS from your Village president! Many things I'd like to pass along...

### Election of Officers.

After the recent election of Directors, the following officers were selected to serve for 2024–2025: Walt Cooper – President; Nazir Bhagat – Vice President; Ross Kory – Treasurer; and Cathy Williams – Secretary. We look forward to serving the Village as we go forward.

### Falls Prevention

Several Villagers have experienced falls in recent months. The March Quarterly Meeting featured a talk on the prevention of falls, and many found the talk helpful. You'll find the slides on our website: [www.LakeBarcroftVillage.org](http://www.LakeBarcroftVillage.org), there you'll also find the slides we used for our business meeting. Also please see the article recapping the information shared.

### Upcoming Quarterly Meetings

The March Quarterly Meeting presentation was the first in a series of talks we'll offer on topics specifically of interest to Villagers. At our June 27 Quarterly Meeting, Jodi Smith of the Fairfax County Area Agency on Aging, who is the coordinator for volunteer solutions, will describe the work of the Agency and the issues that they address to help seniors in Fairfax County. We have also asked her to speak about issues pertaining



Family photo

to Elder Law, such as receivership, guardianship, and advanced directives. Other possible subjects include congregate living, transportation, health, and volunteer opportunities in Fairfax. Please mark this event on your calendars and plan to attend.

### Wine Tasting Fundraiser

Mark your calendars for our wine tasting fundraiser on June 2nd at Beach 5. Invite as many friends and family members as you'd like! Ed Addiss and Barbara Selig have very generously offered to provide the wine at no charge to the Village. This would be an excellent opportunity to tell prospective members about our village.

### Volunteering

We need you to make our Village successful! Could you volunteer a

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## Writing Memoirs

Shirley Timashev, alumna member of Lake Barcroft Village

After five years of working on memoirs I'm having a difficult time "finishing" them. The task before me will involve pruning stories that are admittedly of minor interest and assessing how well other tales are told. At the same time I'm looking forward to accomplishing tasks yet undone. The major goal before me is to demonstrate to my adult children that life in elder years can be joyful, productive, and seasoned with wisdom to deal as well as possible with the troubles that inevitably accumulate in a long life.

I might note that my world has gotten smaller, and I expect it to get smaller still as my abilities decline. That's okay. In earlier years I had large projects, which included bringing an understanding of grassroots democracy to Russia, and getting the Equal Rights Amendment passed in the United States, or at least in Florida. (Neither of those goals was achieved.) I also wanted to improve the communication skills of engineering students, and

make it possible for salt-water pompano to be a fish that could be commercially raised by mariculture (There was partial progress on the former goal). More successfully I helped make it possible for talented tour guides to share their expertise with each other in Washington, DC.

It's time for me to sit on the sidelines of big events. I'll cheer for my team on the field and provide coaching only if asked. In new situations I'll refrain from asserting what should be done and will recognize that empathy is what unsure leaders need from me.

As my world gets smaller I have to take care that I preserve

what is essential, and discard the rest. What I value will not be disguised, because choices will have to be made. What items will I most want to keep near me? And how will I spend the most precious commodity we all have, that is, time?

I still have questions that need answers. I look forward to delving into them.

Aging: Eventually you will reach a point when you stop lying about your age and start bragging about it.

Some people try to turn back their "odometers." Not me.

I want people to know why I look this way.

I've traveled a long way and a lot of the roads were not paved. Ah! Being young is beautiful but being old is comfortable. ■

### President's Message

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few times each month to drive another Villager to a doctor's appointment? Are you able to assist with fundraising activity like our Village wine-tasting or our sponsor outreach program? If you can help and contribute to the success of the Village in this way, please contact Cindy Waters at [lbvcoord@gmail.com](mailto:lbvcoord@gmail.com).

It's a real honor for me to serve as your president. Working with our Board of Directors, I aim to help you stay in your homes as long as you'd like—comfortably, safely, and independently with peace of mind—by providing effective services and plenty of social support. ■

Walt Cooper, *President*

## THE Villager

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## SAVE THE DATE!

### Wine Tasting Fundraiser

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## In Memoriam:

### Vic Utgoff

Village member Vic Utgoff passed away on Thursday, February 29, as the result of a fall. Vic and his wife Kathy were early members of the Village and Vic served on the Village's Board of Directors. A celebration of Victor's life was held on Saturday, May 4. In lieu of flowers, please honor Victor with a contribution to Feeding America.

### Nimrod Raphaeli

Village member Nimrod Raphaeli passed away on Tuesday, April 16. He had been battling lung cancer for several months and had been admitted to the hospital a few days earlier with pneumonia and Covid. His wife, Ellen, and daughter, Tamar, were with him and he had been able Monday evening to say goodbye to his son, Mike, who lives in China, via Skype.

### Waltraut Nelson

Former Village member Waltraut Nelson passed away Thursday, April 25, as a result of complications from a series of strokes. Waltraut and her late husband Frank were among the first members of the Village, joining in January 2013. News about a memorial service will be shared when available.

■



## Book Review: **HORSE** by Geraldine Brooks

Alice Edmondson

**I**N THIS WONDERFUL BOOK, Pulitzer Prize-winning author Geraldine Brooks weaves together several stories from three different eras, all centered on and connected by a magnificent horse. The book draws from the true story of Lexington, a record-breaking thoroughbred racehorse from the Civil War era. Although Lexington suffered a premature genetically caused blindness which shortened his racing career, he went on in retirement to sire more racing champions than any horse in history.

The book's central story depicts the magical relationship between the highly spirited Lexington and his caregiver and trainer, a young slave named Jarrett. The two spend hours together every day, and Jarrett's confident, patient, and quiet demeanor calms the horse's natural fears and makes him eager to learn.

Under Jarrett's tutelage, Lexington becomes a racing sensation, known throughout the country and even in Europe. And Lexington makes life much better for Jarrett, as well. Although the young slave is sold twice, separated from his father, and denied ownership of the horse after it is promised him by his first owner, Jarrett is able to spend much of his time with Lexington rather than toiling in the fields with the other slaves. And his undeniable skill at training is obvious whenever Lexington races, presenting Jarrett with opportunities to make a good living once he is finally freed. Most significantly,

Jarrett's and Lexington's steadfast devotion to one another gives them both a sense of security and confidence that things will turn out ok.

Geraldine Brooks deftly depicts the seamy side of the horseracing industry, the trials of slavery, and the extreme tensions in the country in the years leading up to and during the Civil War. But Jarrett and Lexington's story is mostly one of devotion, hope and promise.

Artist Thomas Scott's story, woven throughout the book in the form of a diary, is also centered on Lexington. Scott has a particular interest and expertise in horse anatomy and came to Kentucky pre-Civil War to paint the racehorses of the wealthy. It happens that a very young Lexington is his first subject and the slave Jarrett assists in his work by preparing the horse and keeping him calm as Scott paints. Hailing from the North, Scott is anti-slavery but must show courtesy and respect to his wealthy southern clients. The portrayal through his eyes of the relationship with Jarrett and the simmering tensions between abolitionists and slave-owners gives the book rich historical context.

Lexington's long reach and the recurring themes of art and racial tension touch the more modern era stories of Geraldine Brooks' other key characters, including:

- Martha Jackson, a 1950's art dealer asked to appraise a

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## Book Review

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painting of a horse that captures her artistic interest and brings back a flood of childhood memories,

- Jess, the director of the Smithsonian Vertebrate Osteology lab, who (in 2019) is given the skeleton of a famous Civil-War era racehorse to articulate (reconstruct), and
- Theo, an art history PhD candidate who finds an intriguing picture of a horse in his recently widowed neighbor's junk pile.

Even for readers who don't love horses, the storylines in this novel are compelling and the literature is rich with beautiful character and event descriptions. The book is hard to put down. ■



## Books we liked

### March Favorites

- Brooks, Geraldine, *Caleb's Crossing* (Walt)  
Crombie, Deborah, series of Inspector Kincaid/Gemma James mysteries (Cathy)  
Hannah, Kristin, *The Women* (Sunny, Walt, Dottie)  
Myeong-Kwon, Cheon, *Whale* (Priscilla)  
Seligman, Scott, *Murder in Manchuria* (Priscilla)  
Van Pelt, Shelby, *Remarkably Bright Creatures* (Jane)  
Virgil (translated by Robert Fagles), *The Aeneid* (Walt)

## HAIR: Rehearsals at Signature

Dottie Bennett

**A**NYONE who knows me understands that theater nourishes my soul. Over the years I have had the opportunity to attend rehearsals for several plays that Signature Theatre has produced. Attending a rehearsal has its own choreography. You have a stated place you sit and have the script. You are silent no matter what. You are there to observe.

I just completed seeing four different rehearsals of HAIR. What was so interesting was watching the director teach the cast about the times in which HAIR exists. Not a one of them was alive during Vietnam. The play was first produced in 1967. It was so important for the cast to understand the times in which this play was written with its frank descriptions of drug use, nudity, sexuality and gleeful use of obscene language!

The choreographer works tirelessly with the cast, sometimes doing the same part over and over again until it "clicks."

Changes occur constantly. The cast can suggest changes and they are always considered. During rehearsal for HAIR only a pianist and drummer were present. In the case of HAIR, there is an orchestra of ten and they are brought in only near dress rehearsal time to save on expenses.

Watching a play "get its legs" is a privilege and a treat. Seeing the vision of the director come together is mesmerizing. There are many pieces to the puzzle that is HAIR. Watching rehearsals over a three-week period allowed me to see and learn how perfectly each piece fits. ■



**Just a reminder**  
about the Volunteer Appreciation Barbecue and monthly Happy Hour scheduled for Saturday, May 18, beginning at 5:00pm at the home of **George and Cindy Waters** (6328 Lakeview Drive). Rain date May 19

Our volunteers are so important to the success of the Village and the members who utilize volunteer services are most grateful.

Please join us for this celebration.  
RSVPs are welcomed!



# Interview: Natalie Gluck, New-ish Member of the Lake Barcroft Village

Marcia Grabowski

interviewed Natalie on the back deck of her home, overlooking an expanse of beautiful oaks, tulip poplars and sycamores, a ravine below, and a spectacular long row of pink, white and fuchsia azaleas. The lot borders on Congressional School, and occasionally horses can be seen roaming the adjacent woods.



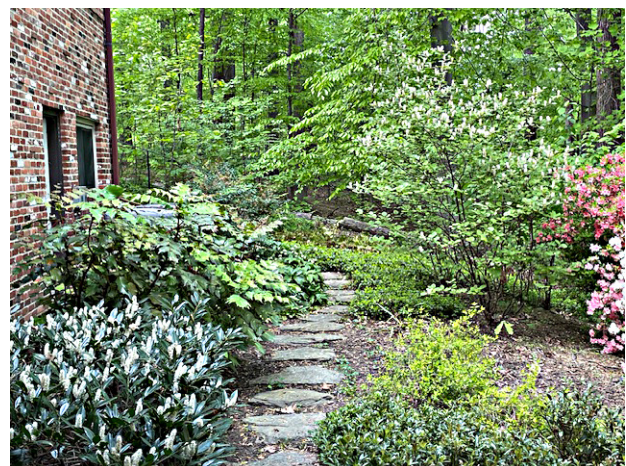
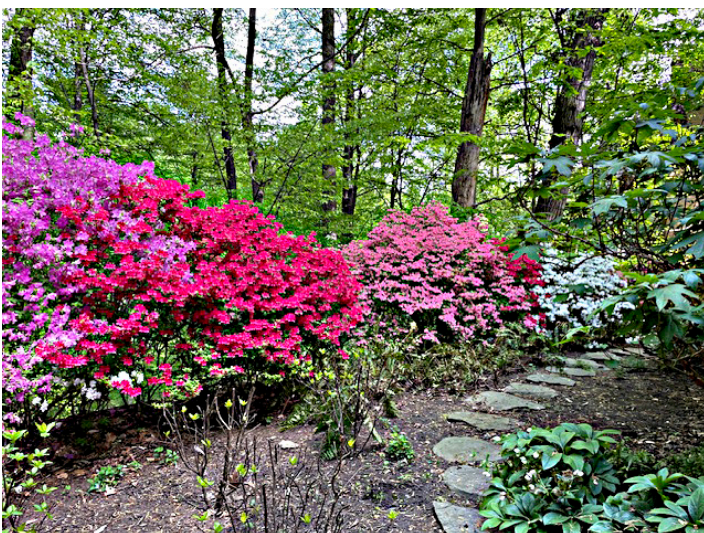
Natalie and her husband, Mark Rosker, moved to Lake Barcroft from southern California approximately 20 years ago, after Mark landed his dream job at DARPA, and Natalie got a position with opportunity for more advancement. The entire Gluck/Rosker family is in science and technology (S&T) oriented fields: in the first of her only two jobs after college, Natalie worked as a Staff Scientist for Rockwell, specializing in thin-film physics and optics. For her second job, she set up the DoD's largest academic grant program. Mark is currently working for a start-up. Daughter Eva, who lives in Los Angeles, works as a Staff Scientist for Northrop Grumman. Son Julian, who lives in Austin, is also employed in S&T. To com-

plete the family are two impressive, curious and well-behaved cockatoos, Cosmo, a 34-year-old Umbrella Cockatoo, and Bamboo, a 41-year-old Lesser Sulphur Crested Cockatoo.

Their home is at the end of a cul-de-sac, and Natalie swims in the lake, sometimes with another member of the Village, which she joined about two years ago. She is quite pleased with the activities and the group's members. She attends the Coffee and Conversations and appreciates the level of conversation and friendship offered by this group of highly educated and curious neighbors. She remarked on how wonderful it is to have the time, now that she is retired, for many easily accessible and casual gatherings.

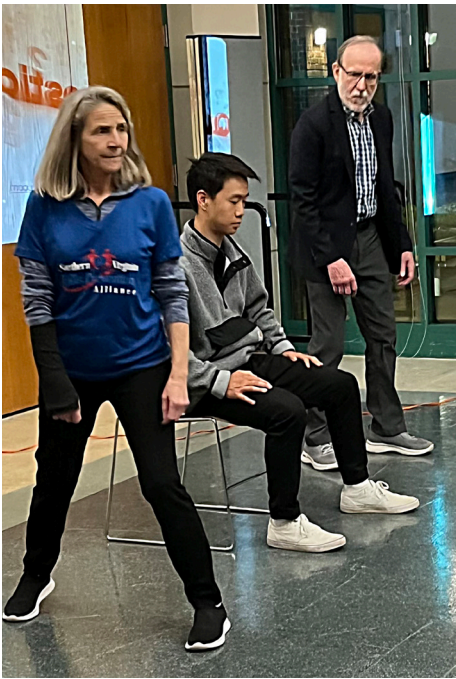
Natalie has volunteered to run various errands for the Village, but finds that others often beat her to these activities. That says a lot for our Villagers! In her spare time, she is studying French and hanging out more with Cosmo and Bamboo, both of whom require much affection and attention. Both she and her husband appreciate the Shakespeare and Folger Theaters, and Natalie also enjoys Medieval music. Up to a few years ago, she was a student of the cello.

Most of this interview, by the way, was conducted to a background of lovely bird songs and calls, most predominantly the Tufted Titmouse, completing a perfect spring day.



All photos by Marcia Grabowski





## Falls Prevention Alliance Offers Program at Lake Barcroft Village Quarterly Meeting

Jane Guttman

**L**EEANNE KANIUK, Regional Training Director of the Northern Virginia Falls Prevention Alliance, based at Marymount University, spoke at the Lake Barcroft Village Quarterly Meeting on March 27, 2024, and provided a demonstration of strengthening exercises that are part of their program. Ms. Kaniuk mentioned some startling statistics: in 2020 36,000 older adults died as a result of a fall. There are 800,000 hospitalizations each year due to falls. The total number of falls per year is 14 million. The most serious of these are head and hip injuries. There are intrinsic and extrinsic risks of falling. Intrinsic risks include: age, having fallen previously, lower body weakness, gait and balance, poor or reduced vision/hearing, fear of falling, postural hypertension (getting up too fast), decreased sensation in the feet, and vertigo.

The extrinsic factors are: lack of railings on stairs, lack of bathroom grab bars, poor lighting, clutter, trip hazards (uneven

sidewalk), slippery surfaces, shoe choice, throw rugs, small pets and toddlers.

For example, a fall can happen when one is getting out of bed at night. It's dark (extrinsic); the individual is not fully awake (intrinsic); the individual gets up quickly (intrinsic); there is no clear pathway (extrinsic).

The brain uses all sorts of sensory input to avoid falls—from the eyes, the inner ear, joints and feet. The brain's ability to interpret all these signals slows down with age. What prevents a person from reacting quickly? Muscle weakness, slowed reflexes, poor endurance, dual task complexity, low functioning of vision, vestibular issues, proprioception, cognitive impairments, lack of sleep.

To take care of oneself one should have an annual physical, an eye exam, a hearing exam, gait and balance assessment, and a medication review. Exercise is very important. Ms. Kaniuk said exercise must be “planned, structured and repetitive.” That means

taking a walk is not considered exercise. Her motto is “exercise, exercise, exercise.” The Alliance's classes in person meet two to three times a week for 55 minutes. There is also a virtual class Tuesdays and Fridays from 1 p.m. to 2 p.m.

If you fall, Ms. Kaniuk advises that you not let people help you up immediately. First, assess your situation—“stay on the ground.” Start at the top of the head: “Can I feel my head? Can I turn my neck?” If something hurts, have people call 911.

After the presentation, Ms. Kaniuk led a demonstration exercise class. The meeting attendees enthusiastically joined in.

The Alliance's website is: <https://www.novafallsprevention.com/>

The quarterly meeting concluded with a review of finances and the number of participants in various activities. President Walt Cooper presented Sam Rothman, former President and past President, with a certificate honoring his service to the Village. ■



All photos by Jan Barrettr



# The Villagers and Their Hobbies

## STAMP COLLECTING

It is my opinion that postage stamp collecting is one of the more useful, interesting hobbies available to people of all ages. If one is willing to investigate the objects/people depicted on the stamps, one can learn a lot about history and geography. Most stamps are cheap and colorful. They depict rulers, famous people, historical events, scenery and maps. One quickly learns the location of issuing countries, their rulers and their currencies. Especially with the advent of the Internet, it has become easier to learn about the people and events featured on the stamps.



Collecting stamps as a hobby is fairly old, dating back to the idea of creating a unique piece of paper to certify the payment of fees for delivering a written document from a sender to a recipient. By 1837, Rowland Hill, an Englishman, was suggesting the government could issue a label which could be affixed to a letter showing that the delivery fee had been paid. Prior to that time, most letters were sent to a recipient who would have to pay the deliverer or postman for the delivery. A letter might have a



Photos by Don Christian

secret code on the envelope. The recipient could read the code and get the information being transmitted then refuse to accept the letter and not pay for its delivery. In 1840, Britain accepted Hill's idea and issued a one penny stamp which paid for most deliveries. No more trying to get the recipient to pay. The one penny stamp showed that the fees had been paid by the sender. The entire process of mail delivery was simplified. Soon most countries were copying the British. Originally, the stamps usually depicted either the current ruler or simply a digit showing the amount the sender had paid.

By the end of the nineteenth century post offices were realizing there were other subjects which could be shown on stamps and that there were people who

would buy the stamps and save them rather than use them for their intended purpose—delivering mail. Every stamp saved and not used was extra money in the government's pocket. By the late nineteenth century, governments were issuing colorful stamps depicting multiple subjects. These commemorative stamps were intriguing, being bought by postal patrons as well as saved by collectors.



Some countries chose to place a surcharge on certain stamps referred to as a semi-postals. For instance, a couple of cents designated for, say the Red Cross or a disaster relief, could be added to the actual franking cost. The person mailing the letter donated to the charity in addition to paying to send a letter. The cost



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## Stamp Collecting

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to each individual sender was pennies but the sale of thousands of semi-postals added up to a significant donation. Again, collectors loved them, bought them, and saved them.



So much for postal history. I was introduced to stamp collecting around the age of five and the interest it generated has never deserted me. The stamps were colorful and given to me by friends or cheaply obtained in packets of stamps containing one or two dozen stamps and costing only 10 or 25 cents. Printed albums made organizing and saving the stamps easy. The printed albums also enticed me to search out more and more stamps to fill the empty spaces in the albums. I was getting a firm grounding of geography and a tweaked interest in the history depicted on the stamps. Although the number of stamps was limited since postage stamps had to be issued by a governmental agency, the number was still vast and growing exponentially.



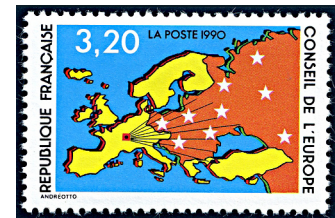
My choice as a collector was to specialize. First I decided to limit my collection to just stamps issued prior to 1940, i.e. the first hundred years of postage stamp history. This worked for a while but I realized that the number of stamps falling within those constraints was still too vast for my budget. I had acquired a couple

of fine, somewhat rare stamps at a street market during a visit to France in my college days. Logic said: specialize in French stamps. French stamps were beautifully engraved in those days, well documented and affordable. I soon had acquired copies of most issues and was looking for ways to broaden my collection.



Because most useful information about these stamps was written in French, I had to start learning French. Specialized French stamp catalogs showed me that there was a lot more to the subject of French stamps than just the issues meant for standard letter delivery. There were special stamps to pay for airmail delivery, stamps to pay for delivery of parcels, stamps for use by governmental agencies, stamps added to letters for which the sender had underpaid—postage due, stamps used by some organizations which could presort their mail and save the post office time and money—pre-cancels and, in France, stamps to purchase time on public telephones and telegraph, stamps to mail printed matter such as newspapers and stamps showing payment of a governmental tax on radios.

Whoa, there's more. France is home to many international



agencies such as offices of the United Nations. They have their own special postage stamps. And finally there are historical periods when existing stocks of stamps were overprinted such as when Germany occupied France during the First and Second World Wars. There were stamps with secret marks used by the French resistance during World War Two. And finally, Liberation! Many cities overprinted French stamps issued during the German occupation with local versions of the Cross of Lorraine and/or slogans such as “France Libre” or “RF” to celebrate the city’s liberation by the allies after D-Day.



The list goes on and on. I haven't even mentioned letters sent from Paris by manned balloons during the siege of Paris, 1870–71, when the Prussians had the city encircled and completely cut off from the rest of France. Or, letters sent into Paris during the same war sealed in metal balls which were supposed to float or roll along the Seine's river bed under the watchful eyes of the besiegers. Or, carrier pigeons carrying photo-reduced missives attached to their legs—a great idea if the pigeons were not shot down by starving peasants. Do you re-

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member the pneumatic tubes that used to be used in department stores to transfer cash and charge slips to the billing department? The French even experimented with pneumatic tubes to send letters between several sub-post offices within the city of Paris.

Now, I'm into collecting what I call fly specks—subtle variations in each stamp according to its position on a full sheet of stamps as it comes off the presses. Don't get me started on this subject. And let's not forget slight variations in paper and color—common in early issues. At least very few French postage stamps are watermarked—that's a relief. That's one variation I don't have to deal with. I haven't started collecting preprinted envelopes and postcards or stamps issued in small booklets. There still is a limit to my budget and, again, shelf space for the eight or more albums containing my present French collection. Interesting, first I kept trying to limit my collection and now I find I'm expanding it. Oh well, it's fun, educational and a great way to spend a rainy day.

*Don Christian*

## Senior Health: Update on Dementia Medicines

Nazir Bhagat

**T**HE THREAT of suffering from dementia as we age is a worry that many seniors in our community, including me, face. Or we know someone with mild cognitive impairment. The earlier dementia is detected and treated, the greater the chances that the new drugs will help arrest or slow its progression. Hence, I share this news reported by FiercePharma that both Labcorp and Quest Diagnostics have each, in the past week, made available new blood tests for Alzheimer's, which you may wish to discuss with your physician. Labcorp's GFAP immunoassay helps track early progression of diseases such as Alzheimer's, multiple sclerosis, and traumatic brain injuries. And its neurology catalog includes

for Alzheimer's hallmark proteins of beta amyloid and tau. Quest Diagnostics has added a blood test for a specific Alzheimer's protein. Other tests may be approved next year.

The newest drug, Leqembi, has been shown to slow the progression of the disease, though it does not stop it. Recent research, in a limited sample of humans, has found that stimulation with sound and light at 40 Hz frequency for an hour a day seems to improve cognition in mild cases, and it is being tested in a larger sample. The above tests, combined with others, including cognitive tests, will help diagnose and treat the disease earlier. They will also help speed up the research in this fast-evolving field. ■



REPUB FRANC



REPUB FRANC



EMPIRE FRANC

### A POSTAL HISTORY OF A SHORT EMPIRE

Roughly stated, France deposed its monarchy during the year of revolutions in Europe—1848. A republic was formed—the Second Republic. Charles-Louis Napoléon Bonaparte, later Napoléon III, the nephew of Napoléon I ran for president of the republic and was overwhelmingly elected. He had his image placed on French stamps (Republic). When his term of office expired, to stay in power, he declared himself emperor. The stamps now said Empire. He was successful in a number of wars and had himself later depicted with a laurel wreath. He fought the Prussians in 1870, lost the Battle of Sedan and was deposed. End of Second Empire and beginning of the Third French Republic.



EMPIRE FRANC



REPUB FRANC

## Dispatch from Ho Chi Minh City, formerly Saigon:

Marcia Grabowski

... We spent four hours outside today with a heat index of 114°. Took the on/off bus around the city to get the layout, then went to the War Remnants Museum. Lots and lots of interesting displays – you could spend several days in there – but since it was not air-conditioned, we left and hopped in a cab to get back to

the hotel. We hope to get to the history of Vietnam Museum and the Fine Arts Museum. Not doing the tunnels. Also want to take a boat ride through the Mekong Delta. Love the people and the food here. For entertainment, there's a baby grand just off the hotel lobby, which I, Marcia, played for about an hour and a

half yesterday. No one heckled so I might do it again. As in many big cities, there's a real juxtaposition of wealth and poverty here, but we've only seen one person on the street begging so far. One thing I'm happy we are not seeing is any homeless cats and dogs. When you cross the street here, they tell you to just get out, stick your arm out where the traffic is coming from and just go. Do not stop because the motorcycles and cars know how to get around people, so if you stop that confuses them. Rick and I have just done this twice, but not in a place where there was much traffic. Our hotel, by the way, is the Hotel Majestic in the center of Ho Chi Minh City. It became Ho Chi Minh City when Saigon fell to the north, and north and south reunified.



Photo by Marcia Grabowski