



The Bolton Hill Bulletin

September 2014

Vol. XLIV N^o9

Published by the Mount Royal Improvement Association

The next meeting of the MRIA Board will be on Tuesday, September 2 at 8 p.m. in the Upper Parish Hall of Memorial Church, corner of Bolton and Lanvale. Enter from Lanvale. All neighbors are invited and encouraged to attend. Refreshments.

News from MRIA

New City Council Member to replace Cole Bill Cole, our neighborhood city council representative since 2007 recently resigned to become the CEO of the Baltimore Development Corporation. He was appointed by Mayor Stephanie Rawlings-Blake in the middle of his second term as Councilman for District 11, which includes Bolton Hill and much of downtown Baltimore. John Kyle, two-time president of MRIA praised Cole's commitment to Bolton Hill: "Councilman Cole has been a fierce advocate for our neighborhood, our district, and our city. He will be missed. However, he is sure to provide positive results for all of us from his new work at the Baltimore Development Corporation (BDC)". According to the Baltimore Sun, "a new city law on filling a council vacancy will be tested for the first time. City Council President Bernard C. "Jack" Young has the task of creating a committee with at least 13 members—mostly from community groups—to nominate a finalist for Cole's seat." The committee will hold a public hearing to hear those interested in the seat, then within 30 days of the hearing, send a nomination to the Council. The names of the nominating committee are posted on the City Council website.

New Sponsor for Festival on the Hill Oct. 11 Bolton Hill Nursery is BEYOND excited to announce its inaugural sponsorship of Festival On The Hill! Please come out and celebrate with us October 11 from 11 to 5. We will be hanging with our friends Mambo Combo and other musical groups, on the 1300 block of Bolton Street. Don't forget to visit our updated kid zone area, in front of our new building, where you can find gently used kid items as your child plays in our bounce house. Volunteers needed for setting up tables and chairs and booths and for taking them down again! Contact **FestivalOnTheHill@gmail.com** or **Meredith Dombroski@gmail.com** to volunteer.

Upcoming Events

Community review for North Ave. Visioning project Sept 4, 7-9 p.m., John Eager Howard School

After receiving input from neighbors around its western corridor, the North Avenue streetscape visioning project is well underway. Professional volunteers affiliated with the Neighborhood Design Center are in the process of translating that input into visual renderings of the streetscape. They are examining traffic patterns and walkways in an effort to better accommodate bicyclists and improve lighting for pedestrians while incorporating beau-

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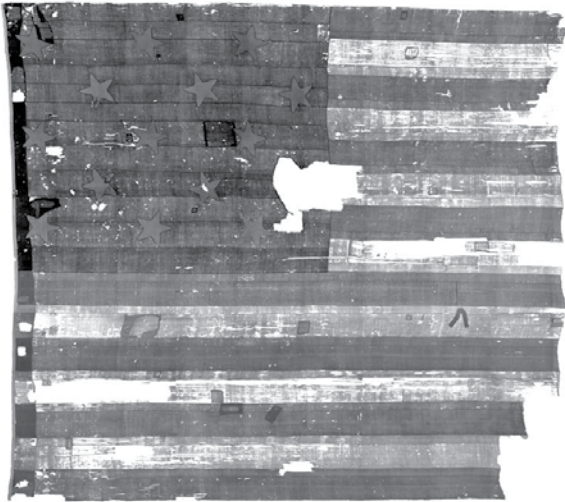
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tification ideas. Their preliminary work will be showcased for a round of community reaction at the Community Review Meeting at the John Eager Howard Recreation Center in Reservoir Hill on Thursday, September 4, 7 to 9 p.m. Eventually, the drawings by the professional volunteers based on community input will be used by the Baltimore City Department of Transportation when it is time to refresh the North Avenue streetscape.

Celebrate the 200th Anniversary of our National Anthem, O Say Can You See! Sept. 10-16 Fort McHenry and around the Baltimore harbor



Tall ships, Navy ships and the Blue Angels will come to Baltimore's famed Inner Harbor to celebrate "The Star-Spangled Banner". Landside festivals include living history demonstrations, a family fun zone, live musical performances, and Chesapeake food and beverage. Events crescendo on September 13 with two star-studded patriotic concerts and extraordinary fireworks display over Fort McHenry and the Baltimore harbor, which will broadcast live on PBS' *Great Performances*. Lots of info at starspangled200.com

Neighborhood News

Tree Wells work! Bigger tree wells around our city trees are designed to retain rain water and reduce the run-off into the gutters and bay. Judith McFadden saw that in action on August 12—during the all-day downpour. Water rolled off the sidewalks into the wells just like it was supposed to! A bit less went down the sidewalks into the corner gutter. Hooray for tree wells!

City public school classes have started. The first day of school for city public schools, including Midtown Academy, Eutw-Marshburn, and Mt. Royal Elementary, was August 25, so be aware of children walking to school as you drive in the neighborhood. Watch for cross walks and stop completely at intersections. Although there are activities at Bolton Hill Nursery during the last week of August, the first day for all programs is September 2—a new year in a new building

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The Bolton Hill Bulletin is published for members monthly by the Mt. Royal Improvement Association

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Tom Hasler keeps father's legacy alive. After making a well-received documentary about his father, *The Immortal Balladeer of Prague*, Tom Hasler hopes to make a feature movie with Matej Minac a Czech film director, about his famous father who was executed by the Nazis for his anti-Nazi songs. Karel Hasler, Tom's father, whom he never met, was very well-known in Czechoslovakia between the World Wars, as an actor, singer, song writer, and director, but is now known mostly for his songs of Old Prague. In fact, his most famous song, "Our Czech Song" became the unofficial Czech anthem after the Nazis banned the national anthem when they took over Czechoslovakia. Strongly nationalistic, Karel had a political side, and his songs mocked the Nazis, the Bolsheviks, and Czech politicians. Karel was executed soon after Tom was born, so Tom never met his father. He and his mother Charlotte stayed in German-occupied Prague until the Communists took over and then escaped, emigrating to Australia, where Tom "forgot" his Czech, learned English, and tried to assimilate. Mother and son moved to the US in 1958, where Tom went to college and graduate school, studying journalism. After two years at an English language newspaper in Beirut, where he met and married his wife, Bonnie, a New Yorker, Tom sought work at a major daily newspaper. And he and Bonnie moved to Baltimore where Tom worked at the *Evening Sun*, covering "downtown" while William Donald Schafer was mayor. Bonnie worked for the state of Maryland in human services and later as a consultant in Washington. After a few years in Baltimore, they bought a house and moved to Bolton Hill, even though they had heard the neighborhood was "stuck-up." But after joining the pool to test the BH reputation, they found a welcoming, friendly

neighborhood and Tom has been here ever since, serving twice on the MRIA board and once on the swim club board. In the 1980s, encouraged by Bonnie, who sadly died in 1995, Tom left journalism, wanting to try new things, and he has done so. He now considers himself semi-retired with a special interest in new uses of technology, currently aquaponics and online games and, of course, his interest in the documentary and possible film about his father. The love story of Tom's mother and father began at Karel's 60th birthday party at a nightclub in Prague, during the Nazi occupation of Czechoslovakia. Even with a great age and cultural difference, she was 29 and German, they became a couple. They tried to marry, but it was not allowed. Even though he had been banned from public performing, Karel continued to write and privately perform anti-Nazi songs. Inevitably, The Gestapo arrested him; he died at the Mauthausen concentration camp a month after Tom was born. Tom "met" his father for the first time on a moving picture screen in Manhattan in 1990, the first time he'd seen his father move or show emotion. With the fall of Communism in the early 90s Tom started re-connecting with his Czech background. In 2006 he traveled to Prague to make the documentary *The Immortal Balladeer of Prague*, at the suggestion of the late Arnost Lustig, a Holocaust survivor and the author of many books about the Holocaust. The documentary has been shown not only in Czechoslovakia, but in Baltimore, Washington, and New York; it will be shown by the Czechoslovak Society of Arts and Sciences in New York on Sept. 12. As Arnost Lustig said of Karel Hasler, "He may be dead, but he's also very much alive." If you want a free copy of *The Immortal Balladeer of Prague*, contact thasler@comcast.com

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