

Bolton Hill

Community Association

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Bolton Hill Notes

<https://boltonhillmd.org/bulletin/bolton-hill-notes-2212/>



BHCA January and February meetings are virtual

The BHCA board and community meetings on Tuesday, Jan. 3, and Tuesday, Feb. 7 will be held on Zoom, given the early seasonal darkness and cold weather. Any member or new resident is welcome to attend. Sign-in information will be posted on the website and the BHCA Facebook page a few days before each meeting date.

Time for a holiday review of BHCA's giving guide

Looking for a worthy cause (and perhaps a tax deduction)?

[BHCA's guide to charitable giving](#) is a great place to begin your research. Compiled and updated by the association's Social Action Task Force, it focuses on local non-profit organizations serving the 21217 ZIP Code that always welcome contributions and volunteer support. You'll find neighborhood churches synagogues, schools and youth programs and community organizations working to lift up those who need help. All are not-for-profit, with a focus on our nearby neighbors.

Greek Orthodox church wants to tear down rowhouses, but others object

Recently the Greek Orthodox Cathedral of the Annunciation just south of the neighborhood announced that it is seeking to demolish five adjacent rowhouses on Preston Street in the Mount Vernon neighborhood across the street from the church. They plan to create a prayer garden on the site.

According to Johns W. Hopkins, who directs Baltimore Heritage, the rowhouses (number 35-43 West Preston Street) are architecturally and historically special. Baltimore Heritage is teaming with the Mt. Vernon Belvedere Association and several Bolton Hill residents in calling on the church to be a good neighbor and work to find a solution that preserves the buildings. You can find more information [here](#).

Greening Committee establishes seven goals for neighborhood parks in 2023

BHCA's Greening Committee has established a 2023 activity program that focuses on seven key goals. The committee is made up of 41 stewards who support and maintain green spaces in Bolton Hill and two

neighboring communities, Madison Park and Marble Hill. The goals are:

- Complete planting around the Francis Scott Key monument on Eutaw Place.
- Create a plan to improve the Sumpter Park playground on Laurens Street.
- Develop a plan for repairs at Rutters Mill Park on Rutter Street.
- Build and restore additional tree wells in the neighborhood.
- Develop a plan for the Park Avenue medians.
- Work with Madison Park and Marble Hill associations on increasing green spaces.

For further information or to volunteer, contact greening@boltonhillmd.org

Midtown expands services

[Midtown Benefits](#), which serves Bolton Hill and three other nearby neighborhoods, will expand its street cleaning and maintenance services to a seven-day schedule, starting in January. The additional day of service includes deployment of mechanized equipment to remove litter and loose trash in gutter lines and on sidewalks.

The use of this new equipment expands the efficiency and service area coverage of Midtown teams, while enabling one staff member to accomplish the same amount of work as three staff members providing broom and dustpan service on foot. Midtown also will augment servicing the 187-trash cans in its footprint.

Midtown also announced that as of Dec. 1, it had removed over 247.75 cubic yards of leaves which have been delivered to nearby farms for green recycling. If leaf removal is your obsession, follow their weekly progress updates on social media using the **#MidtownLeafRemoval** hashtag.

About the Bulletin . . .

The Bulletin is designed by Elizabeth Peters. We invite others to help write, edit, provide photos or work the business side. Send suggestions and comments to bulletin@boltonhillmd.org. Thanks to Kimberly Canale, Kevin Cross, Tom Hasler, Paula Jackson, David Nyweide, Amy Sheridan and Lee Tawney among others, for advice and contributions. Errors and omissions are the responsibility of the editor, Bill Hamilton.

Festival of the Hill grosses nearly \$29K. Planning begins for 2023

<https://boltonhillmd.org/bulletin/festival-on-the-hill-review-2022/>



The 2022 Festival on the Hill generated \$17,776 in revenue (which included \$4,400 in donations). In addition, the community groups with their own booth operations were able to raise another \$11,068.

In 2018, before pandemic interruptions, cash donations reached \$10,000; planners are hoping to reach that goal again in 2023.

Expenses this year came to \$17,884, which included an investment in tents and exhibition equipment that can be used in future festivals. BHCA made \$500 contributions to both the Samaritan Community and No Boundaries Coalition from festival proceeds.

Planning for the 2023 Festival on the Hill is underway with a working committee, made up so far, of Nathan Arnold, Jake Boone, Yoni Doron, Alexa Eckley, Doug Kelso, Chris Kingsley, Avendui Lacovara, Kristine Smets, Yulia Suslova, Lee Tawney, and Louie Wilder.

More than just an annual opportunity to generate funds, the annual Festival on the Hill provides a vehicle to celebrate the greater neighborhood. If you have an idea, want to volunteer, donate or become a sponsor contact festival@boltonhillmd.org.

Winter wonderland! Snow glistening! And a \$50 or \$100 fine.

<https://boltonhillmd.org/bulletin/winter-wonderland-fines/>



In a Grinch-like holiday reminder, the city's Department of Housing and Community Development sent out this notice for property owners and building managers:

All snow and ice should be removed from public sidewalks creating at least a two-foot-wide passage in both residential and business areas. Clearing snow and ice from sidewalks demonstrates courtesy toward all those who need to use the public walkways. There is an ordinance regarding snow removal that identifies residents' responsibilities in removing snow from sidewalks, resulting in fines of \$50 for residential properties and \$100 for commercial properties.

All snow and ice, which has accumulated on the adjacent public sidewalk, must be removed within three hours after the end of a snow or ice event unless the snowfall stops between 3 pm and 6 am, in which case snow must be removed by 11 am.

Should you rat out your neighbor, or offer to help?

The city advises any resident who has concerns regarding sidewalk snow removal, within 24 to 48 hours after the end of an accumulation, to call 311. Residents may also call 311 to report locations that may be in violation of the snow removal ordinance.

Bolton Hill Nursery aims to raise \$30,000

<https://boltonhillmd.org/bulletin/nursery-fundraising-2022/>



Bolton Hill Nursery School has kicked off a \$30,000 year-end fundraising program. A portion of the proceeds are expected to underwrite repairs and improvements at the old mansion which is the West Lanvale Street campus.

“We are very proud of our building. It serves our children and staff well, providing safe and comfortable indoor play and learning facilities, and a wonderful outdoor playground area,” said Francine Marchese, a new Bolton Hill resident who became the nursery school’s executive director earlier this year. “But it is an old building, and as Bolton Hill homeowners certainly can appreciate, maintaining older buildings is an ongoing and expensive process.”

The non-profit nursery school, which has roots stretching back to the 1950s and Brown Memorial church origins, acquired the facility a decade ago. They moved in after the extensive renovation that was needed to make it conform to state and local building and safety requirements.

Originally a private residence constructed in the 1840s, more recently it had served as offices for Family and Child Services of Central Maryland.

John Timson, a retired marketing executive and Bolton Hill resident, chairs the school’s board of directors. The school serves approximately 70 children between the ages of 2 and 5 years. About half the children live or have parents who work in the neighborhood.

– *Bill Hamilton*

COVID is lurking in Bolton Hill. Time for a vaccine booster?

<https://boltonhillmd.org/bulletin/booster-time/>



Photo courtesy of Davidson College

In case you haven't heard, COVID is still around. Several people in the neighborhood, all of them vaxxed and boosted, have had a brush with it.

"I gave a party the night before, with 15 people in my small living room. The next morning, I woke up with my nose and throat on fire," said BHCA President Amy Sheridan, who missed the December association in-person meeting "When I took the test it was like an alarm lighting up." But, she said, the worst of it didn't last.

"Because I am over 65, I was able to get Paxlovid, through my doctor's office. It was a mild case. I never lost my sense of taste or smell," she said. But for about two weeks she suffered sniffles and lost her voice "and I was very low energy." During that period, she re-tested, once negative, once positive. "I have no idea where I got it," but none of her house guests had tested positive as of mid-December.

Dr. Leana Wen, the former Baltimore city health officer who now writes for the *Washington Post*, says that while COVID vaccines and boosters are helpful in preventing and mitigating the impact of recent COVID strains, they are not airtight preventions. She cited recent studies that showed the vaccine and boosters to have about 60 percent effectiveness against the omicron subvariants for three months, declining thereafter.

"Nearly 9 of 10 deaths today from COVID are among those 65 or older, yet only about a third of people in this age group have received the updated booster," Wen wrote. Public health agencies need to boost their promotion of the updated booster, she said, when holiday celebrations are increasing travel and indoor gatherings.

Maryland's Health Department has a [COVID resource online](#) and has the State Center vaccine center at 300 W. Preston St., which is quite convenient for Bolton Hill residents. Both testing and vaccinations are available there. There is also an online questionnaire that helps define the need – when did you last have a vaccination or booster, with the key indicator of 2 months, and your age. Vaccinations are available there Tuesday, Thursday and Saturday between 8-11 am. The State Center facility recommends making an appointment.

[The Walgreens pharmacy](#) on McMechen Street, near Sav-a-Lot, has a similar questionnaire online with the key question as to whether you've had a vaccination or booster with the last 2 months, and your age. The same goes for CVS which also has stores close by in Mount Vernon and Charles Village.

At the [Safeway pharmacy](#) in Charles Village, walk-in testing and shots are generally available. As an inducement, the store provides those whom in vaccinates with a coupon good for 10 percent off grocery shopping.

– Tom Hasler and Bill Hamilton

A Bolton Hill carjacking disrupts neighborhood's newspaper deliveries

<https://boltonhillmd.org/bulletin/carjacking-reginald-scott/>



Four carjackings in six months that victimized newspaper carriers in the city is forcing a rethinking, going forward, of how the *Baltimore Sun* and other print news products will be delivered.

Reginald Scott, 48, has for years delivered the *Sun*, *New York Times*, *Washington Post* and other print publications in Bolton Hill early each morning. On Dec. 7, he was attacked by two armed young men who robbed him and stole his silver Jeep SUV, which was filled with undelivered newspapers. The attack took place in the 1500 block of Bolton Street at 5:48 a.m.

“I’m OK. I’m just waiting to see if they find my truck,” he said three days later. He resumed deliveries in a borrowed vehicle the next day. Scott’s dog, Bruno, who accompanies him most days on his work tour, was in the vehicle but the robbers apparently pushed him out, unharmed. [Scott was profiled in The Bulletin](#) last February.

Scott is contracted by AKA Enterprise LLC, which is under contract to deliver newspapers to five city ZIP codes. An AKA Enterprise supervisor said a similar carjacking recently involved another delivery person near Reservoir Hill, while a single carrier was robbed of his car and belongings in the Park Heights area twice – all since mid-summer.

As a result, the company announced on Dec. 11 it would discontinue pre-dawn deliveries and stop on-porch and mail slot deliveries that require the carriers to get out of their vehicles. Scott was taking papers to a Bolton Street residence porch when he was accosted.

Subscribers or neighbors who wish to send Scott a card or otherwise thank him for his efforts can mail to his residence at 1111 Ashburton St., Baltimore 21216, in west Baltimore, where he lives with his young

son. Scott has an additional job as a cook at a Cracker Barrel restaurant near BWI airport.

New neighbors bring retail to Bolton Street: The Margaret Cleveland shop

<https://boltonhillmd.org/bulletin/new-neighbors-margaret-cleveland-shop/>



Chris and Ryan Sirois Heller (L); Winter Stag in the Margaret Cleveland shop (R) - KT Pozzi

It was clear for several weeks that something new was happening at the corner of Bolton and Mosher streets. Big boxes moved into the garages that face Mosher. Workmen on the outside were building shelving and opening crates. New paint, awnings and planters were installed on the Bolton-facing retail space that most recently housed an accountant's offices.

And now it is public. Chris and Ryan Sirois Heller are a full-fledged professional presence in the neighborhood, and they brought with them to 1500 Bolton Street the first new retail outlet in Bolton Hill for a generation. The Margaret Cleveland is an elegant shop offering an array of personally collected art, furniture, ceramics and artifacts to be shown, ogled and sold on a leisurely schedule as a sidebar to the Hellers' primary business.

They operate [Helium Creative](#), a boutique Ft. Lauderdale (and now Baltimore) branding and marketing agency whose clients are resort developers, real estate entrepreneurs, and consumer products firms, among others.

"It all starts with a story," as branding gurus like to say. Margaret Cleveland was Chris' grandmother, a distant relative of President Grover Cleveland. She moved back to her birthplace Kensington, MD, after separating from her husband. Chris Heller grew up in Lancaster and visited Bolton Hill as an adolescent often, staying with his grandfather on Park Avenue. He intermingled with artists and art students at MICA (where, as it turned out, Ryan's mother had enrolled. She lived on Bolton Street then.).

Chris studied at the Art Institute of Philadelphia and did creative design work with agencies in Philly and South Florida. In 2004, a client opportunity came along, and Chris struck out on his own, creating what became Helium. Ryan, a creative with his own portfolio, was Helium's first hire. They married in 2015 shortly after the Supreme Court *Obergefell* decision made it possible in Florida.

“We’d always said we’d come back north,” Chris said. They have 5-½-year-old twins, a girl and boy. They explored mid-Atlantic options from Philadelphia to Lancaster to DC, eventually taking a place in north Baltimore’s. “We like south Florida, but we didn’t want to raise kids there. We wanted them to know seasons, and the holidays and traditions that go with them.”

Friends found Baltimore a troubling choice, “but we were inspired. ‘Have you seen what is going on?’ we told them.” They mentioned Port Covington’s massive new development (AKA Baltimore Peninsula) and other things they saw and loved. They travel often back to Florida and elsewhere for work. On weekends they explore, often on bikes, and that was how they stumbled upon 1500 Bolton Street, where Joe Palumbo had offices. They connected and struck a deal to buy the space that now serves as their Helium local studio and The Margaret Cleveland store.

“My mother had me when she was young. Margie, my grandmother helped raise me,” Chris said. “I worked retail in college and over time, as I’ve traveled, I’ve enjoyed picking up things I love—things that are interesting and show creativity.” The Helium studio at the beach in Ft. Lauderdale housed many of these same objects and functioned like a little store, he said.

Margaret Cleveland, the store, is for now only open on selected weekends. Weekdays are for the core business. When the weather is warmer there may be Friday evening wine drop-ins, perhaps creating some sort of informal symmetry with Cookhouse across the street. They currently are doing events and classes listed on the website.

Their shop once housed a small grocery, with the owner raising poultry above the carriage houses. Later it was, for a while, a high-end antique shop. “Now it’s a passion project, my vision,” Chris said.

– *Bill Hamilton*

Traffic issues in Bolton Hill moving toward solutions (perhaps)

<https://boltonhillmd.org/bulletin/traffic-issues-solutions/>



Traffic-calming requests abound, within Bolton Hill and throughout Baltimore generally. In June of this year, after the Baltimore City Department of Transportation had received 40+ individual requests for traffic calming in Bolton Hill, city council member Eric Costello's staff asked the Bolton Hill Community Association to identify two top priorities for DOT. Liaising with DOT through the Councilperson's office has proved successful in the past, as it allows communications to be efficiently made with a consistent voice.

After consulting with the BHCA Executive Committee, the Traffic Committee identified Lafayette Ave., from Mt. Royal Ave. to Eutaw Pl., and Laurens St., from Park Ave. to Eutaw Pl., as priority areas for traffic calming. Possible improvements could include more visible new crosswalks, speed humps, or speed tables.

Some time ago, [a petition](#) was created for traffic calming on Lafayette Ave., and it has around 200 signatures in support.

More recently [a similar petition](#) was created for Laurens Street around Arnold Sumpter Park and it is already nearing 50 signatures. These two efforts are cooperative, rather than competitive; addressing both streets at the same time could allow DOT to begin to improve the neighborhood's interdependent traffic flow as a whole, rather than piecemeal.

It is not too late to sign these petitions if you live in or near the affected areas.

In November, Costello's office discussed around 30 traffic-calming requests with DOT throughout his District 11. We are expecting an update from the councilman's office as to the status of our requests at the BHCA meeting on January 3, which will be held by Zoom.

After these priorities were outlined at the December BHCA meeting, several neighbors expressed concern about speeding traffic on Mt. Royal Ave. The speed limit there is greater than that on North Ave. and on Howard St.—30 mph versus 25 mph. While speed humps may not work ideally for a thoroughfare like Mt. Royal, it's been suggested that a combination of a lower speed limit along with speed cameras might

help. Preliminary discussions with MICA staff indicate they would support traffic calming there, too. For now, however, the priorities are Lafayette and Laurens.

– *Kevin Cross*

December Delights: Photos of the Season

<https://boltonhillmd.org/bulletin/december-delights-photos-of-the-season/>



Christmas house in Bolton Hill - Zhee Chapmon

Bolton Hill

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