

Bolton Hill

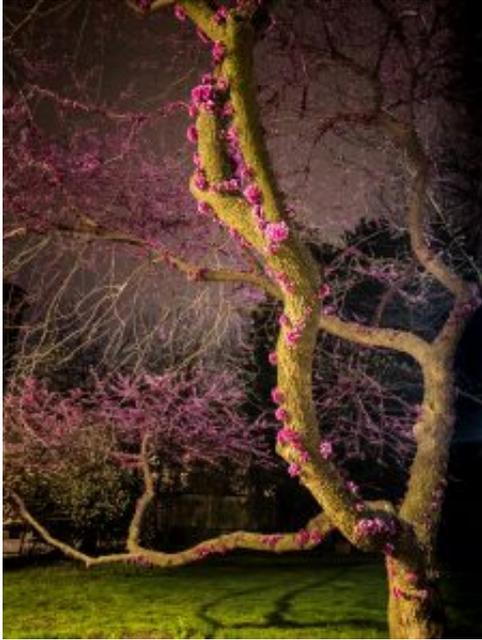
Community Association

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Walking Dream - KT Tozzi

<https://boltonhillmd.org/bulletin/walking-dream-kt-tozzi/>



Walking Dream - KT Tozzi

Redbud trees blooming in Fitzgerald Park

Members elect new BHCA leadership team

<https://boltonhillmd.org/bulletin/members-elect-new-leadership2023/>

BHCA elected new leadership and heard from State Sen. Antonio Hayes at its 2023 annual meeting, held at Baltimore's Unity Hall on May 2.

Four of the five officers remain the same: **Amy Sheridan**, president; **Steve Howard** and **Yulia Suslova**, vice-presidents; **Chris Kingsley**, treasurer. **Linda Stirling** is the new secretary. The slate was put forward by a nominating committee made up of **Robert Bunch**, **David Nyweide**, **John McLucas**, **Linda Stirling**, **China Boak Terrell** and **Flo Gutierrez**.

New board members are **Chevel Bess**, **Luke Chen**, **Margaret DeArcangelis**, **Ben Meiselman** and **Lee Tawney**.

Sheridan spoke of the diversity of Bolton Hill. "We are roughly 4500 renters, homeowners, businesses, seniors, children and students – and dogs!" she said. She saluted our neighbors in Madison Park, Marble Hill, Reservoir Hill, Charles Village and Mt. Vernon-Belvedere. Citing census data, she said Bolton Hill is 52 percent white, 37 percent black; 60 percent single-family households; more than 60 percent renters, 20 percent retirees and has a \$54,000 median income.

She saluted BHCA sponsors and urged members to patronize them. They include Bolton Hill Nursery, Boone Miller realtors, The Brass Tap, Brown Memorial Church, The Margaret Cleveland home and garden shop, Cookhouse restaurant, Kristin Smelts genealogy and history works, MICA Open Studies, Charm City Landscapes, Corpus Christi Church, Jessica Dailey real estate, Window Masters installation and repair, Tax Consultants Fred Shoken and Donna Beth Joy Shapiro, Zhee Chatmon Photography, Fox Pest Control and Linden Park Senior Apartments.

For presidential recognition and rewards Sheridan singled out Lee Tawney and Louie Wilder and the vast BHCA Greening Committee for its work in the parks and making Festival on The Hill and Arts in the Park successes; J.R. Kellog for coordinating meeting refreshments, Linda Stirling and Thecla Meyer for planning the annual meeting, Executive Committee members Yulia Suslova, Steve Howard, Chris Kingsley, and Bill Hamilton for general leadership, Tawney for multiple other leadership roles and a *Sina Quo Non* award to former BHCA President David Nyweide.

About 65 members attended, along with guests from nearby neighborhood associations. Photos from the event (credit: Zhee Chatmon)

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Sen. Hayes reports on legislative output

<https://boltonhillmd.org/bulletin/sen-hayes-legislative-output/>



Credit: Zhee Chatmon

Sen. Antonio Hayes (D-40) told BHCA’s annual meeting on May 2 that he considered the just-ended 445th Maryland General Assembly “particularly historic” and productive.

“We made historic investments in public education, created a path to economic prosperity by accelerating the state’s \$15 an hour minimum wage, protected abortion rights in Maryland and passed laws to limit guns in our communities,” he said.

Hayes said he had 17 of the 20 bills he introduced become law. He highlighted efforts around homeowner tax breaks, funding to plan for the future of the closing of State Center, and additional funding and authority for the West North Avenue Development Authority which stretches from Coppin State University to Bolton Hill. He asked BHCA to support and publicize those efforts.

The new homeowners property tax law alters application requirements to make it easier for retirees to get into the program. To qualify a homeowner’s gross income must come only from a pension or Social Security.

Hayes said another of his bills increased funding for the state’s family and medical leave insurance program to make it more affordable for employers and employees.

Additional information on Hayes’ legislation can be found [here](#).

When home is Russia, going home can be complicated. Ask Yulia Suslova.

<https://boltonhillmd.org/bulletin/yulia-visits-russia/>



Yulia (R) with her mother.

For the more than 20-years she has lived in the U.S., Yulia Suslova has made a point to try to go home every year or so to visit her mother and older sister and stay in touch with friends in her hometown, not far from the Finnish border.

Lately, it has been difficult.

“There used to be direct flights from Dulles Airport to Moscow, but since Russia invaded Ukraine that all stopped,” she said. Direct flights and those through western Europe were halted by the sanctions against Russia. A trip late that year was disrupted by passport issues, but she finally got home to Petrozavodsk, a lakeshore city in northwest Russia, by flying to Finland and finding a driver to cross the border and take her there – a much longer trip than in the past.

“Snow, wind, and slush when I arrived at the end of March, and then the sun, blue sky, and smiling faces for the rest of my short visit,” she said, after returning mid-April to her home on Laurens Street and her teaching job in south Baltimore. Petrozavodsk is a state capital, a city of some 300,000 and the home of Petrozavodsk University, where as a student Yulia developed a passion for American history and culture that would eventually land her in Baltimore.

No one talks about Putin or his invasion except in private, she said. “You never know who might hear you.” They do talk about how prices have risen dramatically, presumably in part because of western sanctions. And they lament the new reality in which American products are for the most part no longer available, “although some are – probably smuggled in, somehow.” Mostly she met apathy, people just going on with their lives.

“Everyone is out and about, but they cannot travel to many places – not to most of Europe or the West,” she said.

The name of the city is a combination of words Peter (for [Peter the Great](#)) and *zavod* (meaning factory). Archeological discoveries in the urban area indicate the presence of a settlement as far back as 7000 years ago. It has at times been under Swedish and Finnish rule, and was Russian led after the formation of the Soviet Union, which collapsed in 1988 when Yulia was in her mid-teens. The city is known for its neoclassical architecture.

While home this time, she read a book about the city and region during and after the first world war, written a century ago by an Irish adventurer who fought against the Bolsheviks and later against the Nazis. “He was sort of a Lawrence of Arabia sort of guy, regarded as something of a local hero in Petrozavodsk.” She also came across and read letters that her mother’s brother had written while serving in the Red Army in 1944-45. He died in the battles to liberate Poland from the Nazis. She began delving into her family’s history, interviewing her 83-year-old mother, Galina.

Yulia learned English in an elite public high school, then focused on colonial American history at the university, where she earned a master’s degree. In the worker state, everyone worked – her mother at a pharmacy and her late father in a factory. During a happier period of US – Russian relations she was able to participate in a student exchange program, traveling to Danbury, CT to attend Western Connecticut State University.

When an opportunity to become a counselor at a Minnesota language summer camp developed, she took it. There she met a headhunter looking for language instructors for Baltimore city schools. She was hired in 2002 to teach English as a second language to elementary and intermediate school students. Along the way she lived in Mt. Vernon and became a U.S. citizen, though she carries two passports.

Apart from work these days, her passions are history and old things – vintage clothing and antiques. She sleeps in a vintage bed with Star Wars sheets in the old home she bought a decade ago. She leads a Vintagista movement that has a Facebook page and occasional dress-up social events. During the pandemic she formed an informal *Bolton Hill Girls Squad* to revive social life in the neighborhood stalled by COVID. She is a vice-president of BHCA.

“I really appreciate Baltimore and I feel very much at home in Bolton Hill,” she said. “I’ve always been a city girl.”

--*Bill Hamilton*

Artscape, for better or worse, is coming Sept. 22-24

<https://boltonhillmd.org/bulletin/artscape-is-back/>



Artscape, it appears, is really back.

After years of back and forth and political backbiting about where and when and whether it was ever coming back, the city's Baltimore Office of Promotion and the Arts wants you to know that this time it's really for real. It is scheduled for Friday Sept. 22 through Sunday Sept. 24, more or less where it always has been held, with the same performance venues and roughly the same hours.

And there is a [high-quality video](#) and website produced by BOPA that emphasizes what its BOPA choreographers want everyone to understand: it's about promoting Baltimore as a stellar art scene. While performers and artists from elsewhere are welcome to pay the fees and promote their work, the spotlight will be on artists, performers, and vendors from the Greater Baltimore area.

This will be the 38th Artscape and the first since a mediocre version (food trucks outnumbered serious art and artists) was held on a sultry August weekend in 2019, before anyone had heard about the coming pandemic. The old footprint has been preserved and stretched a little. It runs from Mt. Royal Avenue in Bolton Hill east to Charles Street, stretches from a bit south of Mt. Royal around the Lyric Theater and University of Baltimore, and extends north through the Station North Arts District to include the Ynot Lot and a block or two north of North Avenue.

For Bolton Hill that almost certainly means complications for parking in the neighborhood, with unpermitted visitors taking space, and probable road closures. But it also means lots of free entertainment within walking distance.

If you are an artist, crafts person, performer, clothing designer or food diva thinking of participating, go to www.Artscape.org for details on how to apply. Early-bird applications are accepted until mid-June and presumably carry some advantages in terms of booth siting and fees. Decisions on who among those early applicants will be accepted will be made in July. Vendors may not sell items that were acquired. They must be "made" or creatively produced. Final applications are due in August.

In the past, Artscape featured more than 200 artists and performers on stages at MICA, U-Baltimore, the Lyric, Meyerhoff Symphony Hall and on outdoor stages and street corners. At a BOPA briefing on May

3, staff promised the coming event will include visual art exhibitions, main stage music performances, culinary delights, community gathering spaces, immersive family and youth experiences, an artist marketplace, and more.

For Artscape 2023, art is broadly defined to include dance, theater, visual art and sculpture of all kinds, crafted products, culinary creativity, and fashion clothing “of runway-ready quality,” the sponsors said. They also are looking for what they called participation in “kidscape, teenscape and gamescape” programs. In addition to live musical performers of all types, DJ music will be allowed.

It appears, however, that the Lyric and Meyerhoff halls will have their own, independent performances not formally connected to Artscape as in the past. On Sunday, Sept. 24, new Baltimore Symphony Orchestra conductor Jonathon Heyward will lead the orchestra in a free community concert. It’s unclear what the Lyric is planning. Its calendar shows regular paid evening entertainment the nights of Artscape.

The city has promoted Artscape as both a way to focus on the city’s artistic strengths and as a revenue raiser since the 1980s, claiming that 350,000 people routinely attend. Under Mayors Jack Young and more recently Brandon Scott there has been far more city energy devoted to AFRAM, the African American celebration which the city funds and directs, than to Artscape, hosted by the public-private BOPA.

At one point Scott promised a re-opening of Artscape in 2022, but BOPA CEO Donna Drew Sawyer demurred and prevailed, claiming they did not have the resources to carry it off. City Council member Eric Costello crossed swords with Sawyer last year because city funds allocated for Artscape had not been used for it, and Sawyer had proposed moving Artscape out of Bolton Hill and Mt. Vernon, both in his district. The council reduced BOPA funding.

Earlier this year Scott and Sawyer had a miscommunication – evidently the fault lay in the mayor’s office – and Scott awkwardly but successfully pressured Sawyer to resign. By then BOPA had announced that an expanded Artscape would last five days, instead of three. The days that were announced conflicted with Jewish holy days and were modified and the event shortened.

--Bill Hamilton

Madison Park-BHCA team hopes to modify renovation of Pedestal Gardens

<https://boltonhillmd.org/bulletin/pedestal-gardens-plan-modification/>



Representatives from Madison Park and Bolton Hill have met with City Council member Eric Costello and are enlisting Sen. Antonio Hayes (D-40th district), in their shared effort to re-connect with the Boston-based developers TCB. TCB is behind the redevelopment of Pedestal Gardens apartments.

Madison Park took the lead with arranging a meeting with Costello this month. Antoinette Peele and Nicholas Cohen from Madison Park Improvement Association set it in motion and BHCA president Amy Sheridan and representatives Lee Tawney and David Nyweide attended. Costello agreed to re-connect with TCB on behalf of neighborhood interests.

“One of the key points is that TCB’s communication with the community ended about a year ago. My impression is that communication with the community up to that point became so diffuse, from trying to include people from all the neighborhoods directly or indirectly affected by Pedestal Gardens, that TCB didn’t know who to work with when its plans solidified,” Nyweide said. TCB also had a leadership shakeup.

Pedestal Gardens is a collection of five properties, built in the mid-sixties, that house low-income families in the Madison Park and Marble Hill neighborhoods to the west of Eutaw Place, as well as apartments on Bolton Hill’s western border at Eutaw Place on McMechen Street near the Sav-a-Lot grocery. In 2016 The Community Builders (TCB), a national non-profit developer and owner of some 14,000 units of affordable housing, acquired the properties and announced plans for a major do-over.

TCB is well along in the first-phase redevelopment of the units known as Marshall Gardens, involving 60 new or renovated townhouses and 27 apartments. But in February, without notice to neighborhood groups, TCB submitted designs to the city planning department’s Urban Design and Architecture Advisory Panel (UDAAP) for the large property at 1512 Eutaw Place, without seeking neighborhood review and comments. UDAAP does not have much authority, but it criticized the submitted plans as uninspired. UDAAP has agreed to meet again with TCB.

The plans provided for modernizing but showed no improvements likely to appeal to tenants able to afford market or workplace housing rental rates. Madison Park leadership, supported by BHCA, wants a consistent mix of market-rate townhouses suitable for resident ownership, in addition to rental-regulated apartments and HUD Section 8 units for low-income residents.

At BHCA's May annual meeting member Charlie Duff, himself a housing developer, asked the senator to take notice and engage, since the properties are in his district. Duff has suggested ways that TCB might expand the number of townhouses and create additional green space without significantly reducing units set aside for low-income residents.

Ultimately the planning department and the city zoning agency must approve the designs, and the developers are hoping for city and state funds to pay for some of the construction and infrastructure renovation. TCB got similar support when in 2020 they redeveloped and re-opened Monument East, a building serving 170 elderly and disabled residents in partnership with the city housing authority. That project won awards from the Baltimore Business Journal and the Urban Land Institute.

Garden Club grants \$7,500 for neighborhood greening projects

<https://boltonhillmd.org/bulletin/garden-club-grants/>



Ornamental gazebo in the 1700 block of Linden

Avenue. Credit: Baltimore Heritage

The Bolton Hill Garden Club last month approved a record \$7,500 in grants to create and improve publicly accessible green spaces to beautify the community. A total of eight projects will be funded throughout the neighborhood, including:

- Landscape improvement and native plant installation (already underway) in the 1600/1700 blocks of the Park Avenue Median (\$2,300)
- Enlargement of five tree wells and related planting on the 1700 block of Linden Avenue (\$1,500)
- Shrub removal, soil amendment and planting of 400 native plants in gardens surrounding the Francis Scott Key Monument, 1300 Eutaw Place (\$500)
- Planting of perennials and ivy removal in the southern quadrant of Rutter Mill Park (\$1,300)
- Restoration and replanting of the John Street Park, 1300 John Street, damaged by BGE work (\$1,000).
- Lawn reseeding in F. Scott Fitzgerald Park at Bolton and Robert streets. (\$200)
- Refurbishment of Pollinator Teaching Garden at Mt. Royal Elementary/Middle School (\$300)
- Refresh of Maple Leaf Park, including removing invasive plants and planting natives and groundcover (\$400)

This \$7,500 was matched by \$10,000 in other funding, including over \$5,000 contributed by the BHCA and its Greening Committee. Thanks to Greening Grant Committee members for their hard work in reviewing the greening grant proposals: Bonnie Legro, Lisa Johnson, Avendui Lacovara, Lee Tawney, Fritz Meyer, Natalie Ford, and Steve Oliner.

Funding greening projects is a core function of the Bolton Hill Garden Club, supported by membership dues and fundraising during sponsored plant sales and events throughout the year.

Take a turn at restoring an urn

<https://boltonhillmd.org/bulletin/urn-restoration/>



Volunteer Carrie Gaut's painting makes a big difference

What a difference a coat of paint can make!

In the next few weeks all eight monumental urns on the Park Avenue medians will be repainted by neighborhood and garden club volunteers.

The urns are Victorian originals and were manufactured by the J.L. Mott Iron Works Company in New Jersey. It is believed they were created around 1876.

The 50' high by 48' wide Centennial Fountain, also known as The Children's Fountain, used to grace the Eutaw Place median until it was irreparably damaged by an ice storm in 1945. It, was created by the same company and was exhibited at the Philadelphia Centennial Exposition in 1876. Since the J.L. Mott Iron Works Company created both the fountain and the monumental urns, the urns may have been brought to Bolton Hill with the fountain or close to the same time. See:

[https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/J. L. Mott Iron Works](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/J._L._Mott_Iron_Works) .

Want to help paint urns or freshen the median gardens? Volunteers are needed in teams of 2 or 3 for Saturday, May 20 at 8 a.m. Meet at the intersection of Park Avenue and McMechen Street. Tools, water and snacks provided. To sign up or for more information contact Lisa Johnson, flora.bhgc@gmail.com.

Bolton Hill Notes

<https://boltonhillmd.org/bulletin/bolton-hill-notes-may23/>



Final BHCA board meeting before recess set for

Tuesday, June 6.

BHCA's new board will hold its first meeting on Tuesday, June 6 at 8 p.m. at Memorial Episcopal Church's Farnham Hall. All neighborhood residents are welcome to attend. The board does not meet during the summer months, although the BHCA executive committee will meet monthly. The next board meeting will be held in September.

It's open enrollment time for the Bolton Hill Gray Panthers

A couple of years ago, BHCA created a task force to examine things that could be done to make it easier for older residents of Bolton Hill to stay in the neighborhood and to age in place, rather than moving away.

More than 50 residents aged 60 to 85 (and a couple who were younger) showed up and concluded that making information about programs and support for senior residents was important. So [a page on the BHCA website](#) was created and will be updated from time to time. It lists premiums available to older residents, such as discounted taxi rides, free and discounted tickets to entertainment events and information about nearby places to gather or exercise.

With that done, the group dropped the awkward task force designation and re-branded as Gray Panthers: older activists who live in and care about Bolton Hill.

If you fit that description and are over 60 (or love being in the company of those who are), the time to enroll is now. Just email your contacts and a sentence or two about yourself (yourselves, if you are a couple) to graypanthers@boltonhillmd.org. It's free.

Plans for a couple of meetings/social events are in the works. In the past, speakers have included representatives of the city government agency on aging, a director from Keswick's Community for Life program and, most recently, the dean of UMBC's School of Aging Studies. We're exploring a possible program on cannabis, now that its use is becoming legal and easily available. Stay tuned.

Brew at the Zoo on Memorial Day weekend.

Experience one of Baltimore's biggest beer festivals Memorial Day weekend, May 27 and 28 from 1 to 7 p.m. Enjoy unlimited beer, wine, seltzer, and cider sampling, live music, local vendors, and all-day admission to the Zoo. More than 80 beers will be available, according to organizers. Three bands will perform each day.

Bolton Hill Symphony night is Friday, May 19

BHCA has reserved a group of seats in the Grand Tier (1st balcony) at the Baltimore Symphony Orchestra for the concert Friday May 19, 2023. Tickets are \$40 for BHCA members. Come join your friends and neighbors for a wonderful evening. Drinks will be available for purchase before the concert and at intermission.

Llamas Corner is open, serving exotic coffees

Crowds are back at what, in pre-pandemic times, was the Park Café on McMechen Street. The new Llamas Corner café is open and busy.

It offers what it calls a unique menu of classic and specialty espresso beverages, breakfast items, and lunch options, seven days a week from 7 a.m. to 3 p.m. weekdays and 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. on weekends. It's a comfortable place to meet a neighbor or sit and sip alone.

Orchkids celebrating 15th anniversary

Orchkids, the Baltimore Symphony Orchestra program that promotes music for Baltimore public school students, will offer a free 15th Anniversary Concert at the Meyerhoff symphony hall on Wednesday, May 17, at 5:30 p.m. More information [here](#).

About the Bulletin. . . .

The bulletin is published 10 times a year. It is designed by Elizabeth Peters. Photos are by Zhee Chatmon and KT Tozzi. We invite others to help write, edit, provide photos or work on the business side. Send suggestions and comments to bulletin@boltonhillmd.org. Thanks to Paula Jackson, Lisa Johnson, Amy Sheridan, Linda Stirling and David Nyweide, among others, for advice and contributions this month. Errors and omissions are the responsibility of the editor, Bill Hamilton.

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