

Bolton Hill

Community Association

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Streets Market grocery to open on North Avenue next to Reservoir Square

<https://boltonhillmd.org/bulletin/streets-market-north-avenue/>



In a ceremony akin to those that used to announce the circus coming to town, every elected official from near and far showed up on April 28 at a long-vacant property located across from Bolton Hill's northeastern boundary. All came to announce the arrival, someday on this space, of a new 12,000 square-foot full-service grocery store – Streets Market.

“This is a Great Day!,” declared state Sen. Antonio Hayes, who reminisced about his boyhood when there were two groceries “right here on North Avenue,” about a mile apart.

Congressman Kweisi Mfume called Streets’ arrival “the end of another food desert in Baltimore,” unaware, perhaps, of an improved Sav-A-Lot market (250 McMechen St.), a Bolton Hill Grocery (1111 Park Ave.), and a Safeway (2401 N. Charles St.), all within walking distance or a short ride of the new grocery location.

To be sure, Streets Market is likely to be popular with Bolton Hill residents. It will anchor a 20,000-square-foot retail strip, “The Shoppes of Reservoir Square,” and will be the regional chain’s fourth Baltimore store; there are eight in D.C.

The nearest Streets currently in operation is at Charles Center, 222 N. Charles Street. It has a decent fresh meat, seafood and produce selection, and is popular with those who live in the high-rise apartments stretching above it. Mayor Brandon Scott assured the crowd that he sometimes shops at Streets. It’s not Whole Foods or Wegman’s, but in this writer’s view it is a step up from today’s Sav-a-Lot

“This is going to be a community-driven full-service store,” said a Streets representative, with off-street parking for 75 vehicles and adjacent retail – perhaps including a coffee shop or café. The lot once held a day care center, now an abandoned, graffiti-splashed structure on North Avenue’s north side between

Park Avenue and the I-83 on-ramp.

Construction “began” as TV cameras filmed Mayor Scott wheeling a vehicle that began deconstructing a westside wall. When the cameras finished, so did the demolition. Nothing much has happened since, but there is a new sign.

The grocery store, when it arrives, will represent a promise kept by MCB Real Estate partner David Bramble, who lives in nearby Madison Park. Appearing before BHCA long before the COVID pandemic, Bramble announced plans to build what he then called Madison Park North – an amalgam of townhouses, apartments, offices and retail, including a grocery store. He had been given the land which formerly held a troubled apartment complex and ragged shopping center often called “Murder Mall.”

Construction began in 2022. Today the retail and office building plans may have vanished or relocated, replaced by a sweet lease deal with the city to relocate the Mayor’s Office of Workforce Development into a single 63,000 square foot building to be completed next year. About 120 townhouses by Ryan Homes are complete or underway, with about 50 already sold at market-rate prices of \$390,000 and up, according to MCB. The state-supported West North Avenue Development Authority (WNADA) has designated the property as a key anchor along the North Avenue corridor and invested state funds.

MCB partnered with [Blank Slate Development](#), founded by Alex Aaron, and moved the grocery off the main development site to the adjacent lot acquired by Blank Slate. In its entirety the development is a \$170 million enterprise.

--*Bill Hamilton*

Midtown restoration process nears end with leadership departures

<https://boltonhillmd.org/bulletin/midtown-restoration-departures/>



Midtown's director has resigned.

The city's Board of Estimates will meet and presumably approve the reinstatement of Midtown Community Business District on Tuesday, June 20, the last step in rectifying a screwup by the city council last year that cast a legal cloud over the special district's legitimacy.

Voters in Bolton Hill and three other midtown neighborhoods – Madison Park, Charles North and Mt. Vernon – voted overwhelmingly in March to keep the special district and its special property tax surcharge in place. In April Eric Souza, the president of Midtown since 2022, announced his resignation.

The Midtown district includes 4,000 properties that house some 17,400 residents who pay a special tax for public services that city government has failed to deliver. The district was created by the state in 1996 to make the neighborhoods “green, clean, and safe” after a referendum among property owners approved a special tax. The state law requires Baltimore's city council to recertify the special district every four years, which it failed to do last year, forcing a new referendum at considerable expense of time and effort to Midtown.

Bolton Hill has three representatives on Midtown's interim governing board: BHCA President Lee Tawney serves as secretary; Oge Olkoli represents BHCA, and Fritz Meyer, who lives on Eutaw Place, is an at-large member. Nicolas Cohen of Madison Park, Midtown's incumbent board chair, also has said he will step down.

Last month Midtown leaders said it collected valuable feedback shared throughout the authorization process and promised in the months ahead to host community listening sessions in each of its neighborhoods. “These gatherings are your chance to tell us what's working, what's not, and where

there's room for improvement. Midtown is committed to making this next chapter responsive, inclusive, and informed by your voice," the organization said.

Leopoldo Cuspinera Madrigal: from Mexico to Bolton Hill

<https://boltonhillmd.org/bulletin/leopoldo-cuspinera-madrigal/>



Madrigal at his studio.

Imagine being in a space where you can feel the warmth of the sun, the breeze through a field, and the stillness of glaziers, all around you. This is one way to experience the art in the parlor room of Leopoldo Cuspinera Madrigal's newly renovated workplace in Lauraville. Part gallery, part studio, part elegant home, this has been Cuspinera's most recent project, and his paintings grace the walls and hallways of the first and second floor.

Cuspinera's unique technique is a subtle collage, incorporating handmade paper with paint, providing texture and depth to each piece. This way of working has connections to the beginning of his architectural career, as Cuspinera, 54, is not only a painter, he also is an architect. The materials overlap and he describes the affinity, "I remember the physicality of the paper and graphite from my early days as an architect, and now I work with paper and pigments." The quality of materials is very important to Cuspinera. His pigments, for example, are specially made in his birthplace of Mexico, and he transports them here on his frequent trips home to visit family. From these pigments he creates a radiant palette, colors that are vibrant yet delicate for his quasi-monochromatic works.

The gallery rooms in Cuspinera's location are expertly curated to display his luminous pieces that reflect elements of earth, land and water. Many pieces include the presence of the tree, where paper comes from, also a symbol of divinity, connecting earth and sky. Cuspinera reminisces about the places that inspired the work, these expansive landscapes that document his experiences around the world. He tells of his life that has revolved around art, architecture, and the places he has lived, worked and studied – from Mexico, abroad to Italy, France, Switzerland and Germany, then to the United States, Michigan, New Mexico and now, Baltimore.

When Cuspinera leaves his studio, you may see him here in Bolton Hill, where he has lived on Rutter

Street for the past three years. What he says he loves most about his Baltimore home is its proximity to old world charm, along with a view of Corpus Christi Church. Coming from a Mexican-Catholic tradition, he says, “Baltimore is where I want to stay, mainly because I haven’t even been in half of its beautiful churches yet.” Besides its churches, the city’s history, its ports and its ubiquitous building material, brick, are what he finds captivating.

For a scholar with background and studies in conservation of historical architecture and art and architecture for the liturgy, it is no wonder then that Bolton Hill became the place he settled. About Rutter Street, Madrigal says, “The history of these houses, built for workers in the middle of the 19th century, they are now housing artists and art galleries. We are continuing the history of the place.”

Highlights of Cuspinera's work can be seen on BHCA’s Facebook and Instagram pages and on his website at <https://www.leopoldocuspinera.com/>, where you can view his art and access his contact page. He is represented by galleries in Mexico City and Munich, but he also participated in a recent show at Memorial Episcopal Church. Baltimore art aficionados and collectors may arrange a visit to his studio, an exceptionally worthwhile experience. Here’s his website: <https://www.leopoldocuspinera.com/>

--*Francine Marchese*

Brown Memorial hosts free PRIDE events, Christian drag artist

<https://boltonhillmd.org/bulletin/brown-memorial-flamy-grant/>



Flamy Grant appeared on The Today Show recently

In honor of Pride Month and the 50th year Baltimore *Shades of Pride* celebration, Brown Memorial Presbyterian Church is hosting and supporting a range of free events, including a Queer and Christian book tour and a performance by a Christian drag queen.

On **June 14**, members and friends of the church will take part in the Baltimore Pride March on Charles Street stretching from 21st through 33rd streets. (*More information at <https://www.baltimorepride.org/>*)

On **June 15**, the Pride Festival is at Druid Hill Park.

On **June 18**, at 7 p.m., the church will host the Rev. Brandon Robertson for the “Queer & Christian” book tour and panel discussion exploring LGBTQ+ identity and Christian faith.

Brown Memorial is participating in the Interfaith Pride service on **June 25**, at 7 p.m., at Cathedral of the Incarnation, 4 E. University Parkway.

On Monday, **June 30** at 7 p.m., the Billboard magazine-rated drag queen artist Flamy Grant will perform at the church with what Brown describes as “a therapeutic and theatrical blend of captivating storytelling” and Christian music.

For more information and to register for events, visit *Pride 2025 at Brown*.

Longtime Bolton Hill resident June Carr remembered

<https://boltonhillmd.org/bulletin/june-carr-remembered/>



June Carr (credit Baltimore Sun)

A memorial service was held this month for June Carr, a longtime Bolton Hill resident and neighborhood advocate, who died in January at the age of 96. She was a native of England who first came to America as a child during the German blitz attacks on Britain.

“She was always very, very British and she was deeply interested in the affairs of the queen,” said Lynn Cripps, who knew her as an ardent tennis player and an early member of the Bolton Hill Swim and Tennis Club.

“A proper English lady; she was self-effacing and very sweet,” recalled Merry Rogers, who knew Carr and her husband, Lou Carr. They married in 1964 and settled into a house on Bolton Street. Lou Carr died in 2012. [The Baltimore Sun ran an extensive obituary](#) on May. 11.

Historic Bolton Hill: In search of the lost Mt, Royal Pumping Station...

<https://boltonhillmd.org/bulletin/history-mt-royal-pumping-station/>



1929 photo of the Mount Royal Pumping Station, from the Baltimore Museum of Industry.

At an April get-together, a neighbor mentioned historic artifacts hiding in plain sight on a curb near the northeastern edge of the neighborhood.

According to the preservation agency CHAP, the east side of Mt. Royal Avenue isn't considered part of Bolton Hill; I don't know what other neighborhood it would belong to. According to the official *Live Baltimore* neighborhoods [map](#), it's in-bounds, Bolton Hill proper. I went to investigate.

Behind MICA's bookstore at 1501 Mt. Royal Ave. runs what might be the shortest street called an avenue in the city: Malster Avenue, just one block of it. Along the sidewalk there is evidence of an earlier streetscape. Near the entrance to the parking area east of Malster, hiding under shrubs, one can see a rounded low structure which could have marked a corner of property:



North of that, heading toward McMechen Street, one finds a pair of these low structures, possibly



marking the entrance to a path:

Then back up at the corner of McMechen and Malster, there still stands a squat column, not in pristine



condition but still standing:

These old elements marked the entrance to the Mt. Royal Pumping Station, which once supplied water to much of Baltimore.

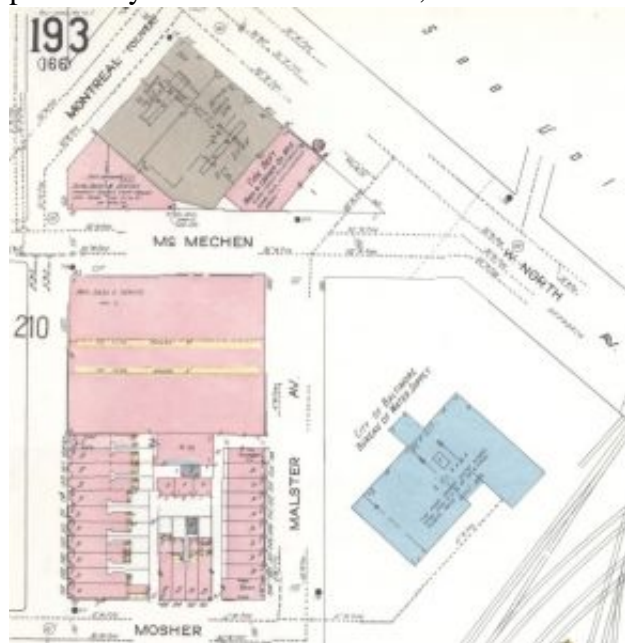
The remaining column marked one side of the driveway to the port cochere at the front of the building. A July 1899 article in the *Baltimore Sun* said the pumping station “would draw its water supply by gravity from Lakes Montebello and Clifton, which are supplied by the Gunpowder (River), and will force it into the western high-service reservoir in Druid Hill Park.” The building was designed by Baltimore architect Henry Brauns. The architectural style of the station is French renaissance, done in Beaver Dam marble, rock faced and backed by hard burnt arch brick.

Another *Sun* article in November 1899 described the festivities accompanying the opening of the pumping station: *The building was ablaze with electricity and a platform, heavily draped with bunting and surrounded by palms, set off one end of the big room. An immense American flag formed a background to the stand, and Farson’s Orchestra discoursed music through the evening....*

Samuel T. Addison, president of the water board (who resided at 1610 Linden Ave., now Save A Lot’s

parking lot), presented the building to the Republican Mayor, William T. Malster. Among the attendees was Pierre Otis [Keilholtz](#), an engineer who designed the mechanical aspects of the [power plant](#) buildings down at the Inner Harbor, and who lived on W. Lanvale Street.

Malster was mayor from 1897 to 1899, when mayoral terms were just two years, and Malster Avenue, previously known as Elm Street, was named for him. It's unclear when.



1914 Sanborn map showing the location of the pumping station on Malster Avenue, available on the website of the [Library of Congress](#).

The life of the pumping station was not trouble free. A July 25, 1930, *Sun* article reported that “in the midst of the greatest drought ... in 30 years, the main pump of the Mount Royal pumping station broke down. . . creating an emergency.” At least five deaths were attributed to the heat.

Earlier, in September 1907, The *Sun* reported:

A human skull with a remarkably well-preserved set of teeth was found under the foundation of one of the walls of the Mount Royal Pumping Station yesterday by one of the workmen employed by Building Inspector Preston in digging about the foundations to make way for the concrete that is to strengthen them.

The article concluded, If one sees a white-haired man with glasses walking along the street with his fingers crossed, there need be no mistake about the man or his thought. It is Mr. Preston, and he is trying to get rid of the ‘hoodoo’ of that skull.

The Mt. Royal Pumping Station was razed between 1954 and 1957, to make way for the Jones Falls



Expressway, as can be seen in this Google Maps satellite view.

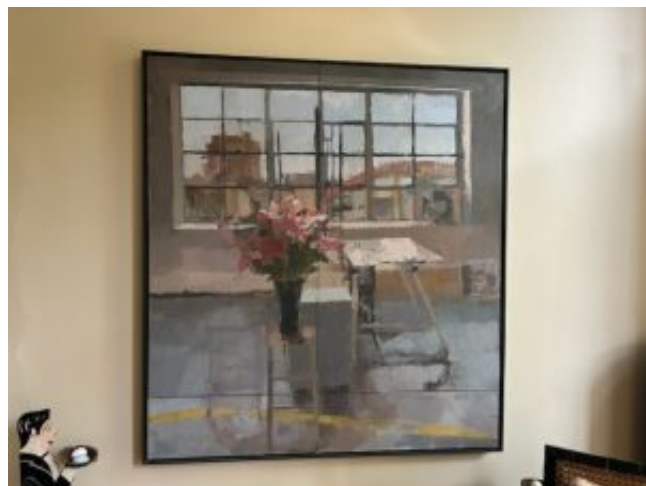
So next time you're zipping along I-83 or caught in the "frenetic standstill" of a traffic jam nearby, remember the architect Henry Brauns and his marble-clad pumping station; water board President Addison of Linden Avenue, who presented the station to Mayor Malster; and recall Pierre Keilholtz of W. Lanvale St., who attended, as well.

And don't forget that skull.

--Kevin Cross

Run, don't Walk to MICA's ArtWalk!

<https://boltonhillmd.org/bulletin/run-dont-walk-to-micas-artwalk/>



The author bought this painting at ArtWalk

One of the things I love about Bolton Hill is having the Maryland Institute College of Art (MICA) in our midst. The energy and creativity of our student neighbors, as well as the many opportunities to participate in MICA programs and events, add to the vitality of our neighborhood.

And my absolute favorite event is ArtWalk, held every year the weekend before commencement exercises. *The dates for this year's ArtWalk are Friday, May 16 through Monday, May 19. (Commencement is May 19.)*

Giselle Pique from MICA's Office of Advancement describes ArtWalk as a vibrant, campus-wide celebration of MICA's graduating undergraduate class and their incredible achievements. To me, ArtWalk is an amazing transformation of nearly every MICA building into individual gallery spaces for graduating students to showcase their work, to interact with the public, and to offer their work for sale. For many Bolton Hill neighbors, it's a great opportunity to buy artwork. A large painting in my living room, which I love, was purchased at one of the first ArtWalk events.

ArtWalk is an opportunity to see the breadth of artistic talent at MICA. Ms. Pique states that there will be over 2,400 original works on display from nearly 400 emerging artists, whose works range from fine art and animation to design and illustration. You will find artists who specialize in photography, painting, sculpture, fabric design, textiles, ceramics, animation and illustration; the range of work is remarkable!

I am intrigued by seeing firsthand the future of creative practices and new art trends. MICA graduates, such as Amy Sberald, who currently has a solo show at the Whitney Museum of American Art in New York City, are leading figures in the art world. Who knows? You might discover the next Amy Sberald at ArtWalk!

"This is one of Baltimore's largest visual art showcases. We are especially excited to welcome everyone to the opening reception in front of the Brown Center on Friday, May 16, from 5:30 p.m. to 8:30 p.m.," said Ms. Pique. The event is free and open to the public. Attendees will be able to sample fare from

Baltimore's top food trucks.

Make sure to wear your walking shoes! There is so much art to see, and it's spread out over all the MICA buildings along Mt Royal Avenue. If you miss the opening on Friday or want to see more art at your leisure, the event details are shown below. All events are open to the public.

ArtWalk opening reception: Friday, May 16, 5:30 – 8:30 p.m.

ArtWalk exhibition: Friday, May 16, 10 a.m. to 9 p.m.; Saturday, May 17 to Monday, May 19, 10 a.m. to 5 p.m.

Senior Animation BFA screening, Brown Center's Falvey Hall: Sunday May 18, 1 p.m. Senior Film and Video BFAs screening, Brown Center's Falvey Hall: Sunday, May 18, 4 p.m.

There's more information at <https://www.mica.edu/annual-events-series/artwalk/>

--*Sallye Perrin*

Neighborhood volunteers give Contee-Parago Park a facelift

<https://boltonhillmd.org/bulletin/contee-parago-park-facelift/>



One of Bolton Hills' older parks has undergone a new freshening, thanks to neighborhood volunteers. At the southern end of the neighborhood sits Contee-Parago Park. This small but beautiful park provides a cool oasis in the summer and a quiet space for contemplation year-round. Its history also exemplifies the can-do attitude of Bolton Hill residents.

The area now occupied by the park was cleared as part of "urban renewal" in the 1960s. Rather than see the site developed, in 1969 a group of Bolton Hill neighbors created the 1200 Block Bolton Street Improvement Association to spearhead the creation of a park bounded by Dolphin Lane, Bolton Street and Dolphin Street.

In May 1971, the park was dedicated to Mr. William Gailles Contee and Mr. Edward William Parago, two of Bolton Hill's oldest residents. Mr. Contee was born in 1888, 23 years after the Civil War, and bought his house at 232 Dolphin Lane in 1930. Mr. Parago bought his house at 234 Dolphin Lane in 1908. His grandson, Reece Culbreath, lived in his grandfather's house until his recent passing. Contee-Parago Park was very likely the first city park to be named after Black Baltimoreans.

Over the years, however, Contee-Parago Park deteriorated. The magnificent willow oaks that ring the park sent their roots into the pavement and under the surrounding brick walls, raising safety concerns. The park walls also provided cover for drug use and other illicit activities, deterring many people from visiting the park. Time for Bolton Hill neighbors to take action!

Former Bolton Hill resident Jean Lee Cole led a multi-year effort to secure funding and in-kind assistance to renovate the park. With grants from BHCA, the Bolton Hill Garden Club, and several other non-profits, Jean and a team of volunteers were able to renovate the park, removing the brick walls, redesigning the flower beds, and planting hundreds of mostly native plants.

It takes a lot of time and effort to maintain an urban park. Currently, John Murphy and Stephen Oliner serve as the stewards for Contee-Parago Park. This spring they organized a group of neighbors to plant over 100 new plants and to do a spring cleaning of the park. Over the summer, the Contee-Parago watering team will take turns watering to make sure its beautiful flowers, shrubs and trees survive another Baltimore summer. If you haven't already done so, stroll down to this jewel among Bolton Hill's parks and take a moment to enjoy this beautiful space.

--Joyce Oliner

Bolton Hill Notes

<https://boltonhillmd.org/bulletin/bolton-hill-notes-may25/>



Summer is coming. Here are some dates to save on your calendar:

JUNE 7 – Bolton Hill Garden Walk, 2 to 5 p.m. beginning in the John Street Park (1300 John Street). Ten gardens will be open to visits, as will Brown Memorial church for a peek at its Tiffany windows. Tickets are \$10, free to garden club members.

JULY 10 – Jazz Artist Todd Marcus and his quartet kick off the fifth annual Arts in the Parks concerts, at Sumpter Park. This is the first of 10 weekly free Thursday concerts, each beginning at 6:30 p.m. A full schedule will be released next month. Donations are needed: <https://boltonhillmd.org/donate/>

AUG. 20 – The BHCA Crab Feast and Picnic, that honors first responders who help make our neighborhood a safer and cleaner place to live, will be from 5:30 to 7:30 p.m. at Bolton Hill Swim and Tennis Club. Volunteers are needed. Email christinedelise@yahoo.com

‘Problem properties’ list shrinks with BHCA committee’s nudging

Bolton Hill is a neighborhood recognized for its stately and well-maintained homes. That said, as with virtually any urban neighborhood there are always a few properties that because of absentee ownership, poor management or other financial reasons become abandoned or derelict.

While this problem is relatively minor for the neighborhood overall, if you happen to live near a neglected or mismanaged property it becomes a real issue. To address such problem properties, last summer BCHA convened concerned residents and engaged a seasoned a community consultant, Peter Duvall, to help monitor “problem properties”, advise BHCA, and advocate for code enforcement and other legal actions by Baltimore City Department of Housing and Community Development.

Since last summer we have identified 26 properties of concern in the neighborhood. That number has subsequently dropped to 22 as four properties (1625 Bolton, 247 Lafayette, 1812 & 1814 Eutaw) have been brought into code compliance. Currently the Department of Housing and Community Development has four properties in legal process of receivership which will either force ownership change and/or the property being brought into compliance (1700 & 1702 Eutaw, 1532 Mount Royal, and 1622 Park).

Similarly, additional properties have been forced into proper permitting, registration or licensure. BHCA's Committee on Neglected and Mismanaged Properties also continues to bring pressure on the remaining problem properties through additional citations and code violation notices (a total of 24 that have been issued in 2024 and 2025). These actions have been prioritized by our consultant through semiannual meetings and other regular communication with the HCD legal team.

If you are concerned about a neighborhood property not on this list, please document the problems you believe need attention and bring them to the attention of the Committee, by email

BHEN@boltonhillmd.org

Ana Marie's garden project advances but funding is needed

The first phase of the restoration of Ana Marie's Garden at Mosher and Mason streets is complete, and the transformation is already bringing new life to this cherished memorial space. In this phase, volunteers and partners worked to remove invasive wire grass and weeds that had spread through the sitting area, carefully redefining the garden beds. To better highlight the garden's original design, custom bluestone edging was manufactured and installed, beautifully matching the existing bluestone gravel and enhancing the overall serenity of the park.

Ongoing maintenance is scheduled throughout the year with the help of volunteers and contracted support, ensuring the garden remains a welcoming retreat for all. We are excited to move forward with Phase 2, which will bring even more enhancements to space.

Fundraising efforts are still underway to help complete the next steps, and we are about \$1,500 shy of our goal. We warmly invite those who cherish Ana Marie's Garden to contribute and to help bring this beautiful memorial garden fully back to life. Contribute at <https://boltonhillmd.org/donate/> and designate "Ana's Garden."

Bolton Hill Garden Club to choose new officers

Bolton Hill's garden club will elect new officers on Tuesday, May 20, at 7 pm at Farnham Hall in Memorial Episcopal Church. Members must be present to vote.

Garden Club officers will serve a one or two-year term, starting in June. The slate of nominees selected by the Club's Nominating Committee is: President (2 years) Chris Mirkovich; first vice-president (1 year) Stacey Fatica; second VP (2 years) Louie Wilder; Treasurer (no term limit) Patrice Mobley; Corresponding Secretary (1 year) Hannah Eley; and Recording Secretary (1 year) Mackenzie Pratt.

Unity Hall offers free Sunday morning yoga classes

Free "Sunday Slowdown" beginner friendly yoga, open to all, kicks off every Sunday at 11 a.m. through Aug. 31. Mats and face masks are available.

Classes are led by Chomi and "infused with the extra magic of Black elder and ancestral wisdom, guidance, and teachings."

About The Bulletin. . .

The *Bolton Hill Bulletin* is published monthly, except for July and August. It is designed by Elizabeth Peters. Paula Jackson is our proofreader. We invite others to help with writing, editing, or to provide photos or work on the business side. Contributors this month were, among others, Angie Alt, Lynn Cripps, Francine Marchese, Fritz Meyer, Chris Mirkovich ,Joyce Oliner, Sallye Perrin, Merry Rogers, Lisa Summers, Lee Tawney and Jeff Thompson. Errors, omissions and comments should be reported to the editor, Bill Hamilton, at bulletin@boltonhillmd.org.

Bolton Hill

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