

BETHESDA METRO AREA VILLAGE

Your home Your neighborhood Your future

From the desk of Lynn Barclay

Editor, BMAV Newsletter



Hello, all. I've been pleased to be your BMAV newsletter editor since the time BMAV was still on the drawing board. Our goal always has been to provide our members and other readers with information on what the village is doing, its programs and events, how we can help members, spotlight members in interviews, and include "news you can use" items. I encourage you to forward this issue to your friends and neighbors to help us spread the word about the village.

I also write and edit *Neighborhood News* for the county's Bethesda-Chevy Chase Regional Services Center, which includes both local and county-wide news. [You can [subscribe here](#).] For both the village and the county newsletters, I try to include what I believe readers would want to know.

As a pioneer member of Bethesda Metro Area Village, I value all that it offers, particularly the opportunities to meet new and interesting people, make new friends and the sense of community that gives me. Like many village members, I volunteer, not only on this newsletter and other communications documents, but also to check on homes of travelling members. I encourage you – whether you're a member or not -- to consider how you can contribute to our community. You'll find a list of ways you can get involved [here](#).

Thank you to all BMAV volunteers

Thank you to the 42 members and neighbors who serve as volunteer service providers, helping neighbors by delivering groceries, running errands and answering technology questions over the phone. When it's safe again, they will resume providing rides, in-person visits and in-home help.

Thank you, too, to the many other volunteers who help lead or speak at our programs, host shared interest groups and serve on our board and committees. A special thank you to programs committee member Jane Boynton and programs chair Elyse Jacob, who have set up

so many virtual events for the village. If you have an idea for a program or event, you can contact Elyse [here](#) or Executive Director Elizabeth Haile at director@bmavillage.org.



Your BMAV Board meeting on Zoom in August. Board members: Jane Boynton, Gail Shearer, Naomi Collins, Alice Padwe, Bruce Coolidge, Hanne Caraher, Barbara Wiss, Jeanne Parker, Bob Metzler, Tom Henteleff, Elyse Jacob, and Executive Director Elizabeth Haile

The value of BMAV membership

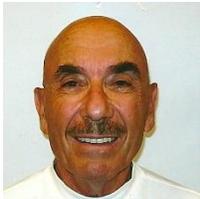
After the quarantine began, BMAV members Maureen and Frank Valcour moved in with their daughter and her family in San Antonio, thinking it would be for a couple of weeks. It turned into a long stay. They worried about their house here, but because they have full BMAV membership, they requested and got a volunteer to help out. Mike Benson was that volunteer (see below). He checked on the Valcours' house twice a week to be sure nothing was amiss and watered their plants, much to Maureen's and Frank's relief.

Of village membership, Maureen says, "It has been so wonderful to keep up with the village no matter where we are and to stay in touch with friends and neighbors through a robust series of the village's programs on Zoom. In fact, we've gotten to know everyone so much better over coffee talks, happy hour, etc. I even started learning Spanish through the village." They especially like Chris Palmer's monthly meetings on aging for the difficult, thought-provoking questions he poses and are enlightened by participants' answers.

Have you considered the benefits of making a non-profit a beneficiary of a small portion (say 1%) of your IRA or 401(k)? Normally, neither you and your heirs, nor your estate, will pay income taxes on this contribution.

BMAV would be grateful if you consider naming BMAV as a beneficiary. Naming beneficiaries can be done easily by many financial institutions. Please consult your tax advisor for full details.

Spotlight on volunteer Mike Benson



Mike has been a volunteer for the village for almost two years. He's lived in Bethesda for a long time and thought volunteering for BMAV would be a good match with his other volunteering activities. He's volunteered at major tennis competitions, and as a veteran, has spent many hours visiting with veterans at Holy Cross Hospital and helping out at Sibley and Suburban hospitals. Covid-19 has made volunteering at the hospitals impossible, so he is glad he can volunteer for us. Most of the time, giving is more rewarding than receiving, he says.

In our new world of Zoom

We're thrilled that the village's pivot to Zoom to keep members socially connected during a period of enforced physical isolation has been so successful. Since our quarantine started, BMAV has held 300 virtual events that garnered over 2000 participants from the village and surrounding community. Even for members who travel to a second home or stay with family across the country, our Zoom programming allows continued participation and connection with the village. We've heard from several members how thankful they are to BMAV for keeping them connected virtually.

For all its wonders, Zoom is different from in-person meetings. We may at times feel as if we're not just chatting, but performing or that we're not just responding, but "on the spot," as all eyes focus on us when we're asked a direct question. Or we may be distracted by noise or odd visuals from the homes of others. With that in mind, BMAV has gathered a list of best practices that may enhance your Zoom experiences. And since our members are a diverse group of different ethnic, racial, and religious backgrounds and may hold a range of political opinions, we also want to keep in mind when discussions of current events arise at BMAV Zooms that other members might have different views. Following some best practices will give all of us a chance to express our views comfortably and enjoy events together.



Other good practices include:

- Mute yourself (the microphone icon at the bottom of the Zoom screen) in case there is any background noise in your location. Noise is easily picked up and makes it difficult for others to hear the speaker. Note that muting yourself is different from changing the volume of your microphone or speaker on the computer itself.
- If the host mutes participants, stay muted until you have a question or are directed to unmute. To get the attention of the host or speaker, use the Raise Hand button or Chat box at the bottom of the screen.
- It's no fun to speak to a black screen. When possible, keep your video on so that the speaker can interact with you and get that visual feedback. If it's distracting or tiring for you to view yourself while watching the event, you can hide your video from your own display while keeping your video on for others to still see you. Just right-click on your picture and choose Hide Display.
- Turn off your video if you are doing something else while on the call, including adjusting or carrying your device from room to room. Rest assured, turning off your video on Zoom does not disconnect you from the call; you can still see and hear everyone else on your screen.
- It's helpful to have your name listed below your face; it's like a name tag, allowing the host and other participants to welcome and remember you. Right-click on your picture to (re)name yourself.
- Don't sign on with two different devices in the room. It causes feedback noise for others in the meeting.
- Take turns and share the floor by allowing for pauses before starting to speak. When two people speak at the same time, none of the others can hear what was said. Hosts can help by calling on participants to speak one at a time.
- At the beginning of a Zoom session, the host can welcome members as they join in to make them feel part of the meeting.

Note that BMAV does not record any Zoom events for security reasons.

We look forward to renewing in-person gatherings when it's safe. Until then, we will make the most of Zoom to keep us connected and cheered.

Speaking of Zooming...

Some of our talented members who knit clearly can multi-task. Below are items they knitted while participating in BMAV Zoom sessions.



Hats by Eugenia Covarrubias and Sandi Ross for chemo patients at Walter Reed and the homeless at Bethesda Cares



Coiled scarves by Jane Boynton

Interview with members Barbara Brown and Bob Berish

Barbara Brown, a native Washingtonian and an attorney with a law firm in DC, and Bob Berish, a retired anesthesiologist, have lived in Bethesda since 1988. The third member of the household is their dog Brady, who rules the roost, they say.

When they first learned that Bethesda Metro Area Village was starting up, they were unsure about joining. When they did, they found it gives them everything they like: events (now virtual, of course), meeting new people, and a sense of community, much like Barbara's mother found when she moved into Fox Hill on Burdette Road. They join village events several times a week. Bob particularly likes the men's luncheon and Barbara loves the Spanish class she's taking.

A few years after earning her law degree at Yale, Barbara clerked for a federal judge and worked as a public defender in Philadelphia. Then she and several other former law students started the Women's Law Project, which still focuses on reproductive rights and other women's issues. It was during that period that she met Ruth Bader Ginsburg, through a network of women lawyers working on women's issues.

Some years later, Barbara moved back to Washington and joined the law firm where she spent the next thirty years. She's winding down her professional career but doesn't have an end date in mind. She says she'll know when she's ready. In the meantime, she has no trouble filling her non-work hours with other activities she loves, first and foremost teaching English as a second



language. She started last fall at the Washington English Center with a small group of students, made up primarily of immigrants from several countries. With the advent of the coronavirus, her in-person teaching changed to virtual sessions. The advantage of virtual sessions, she found, is that both the students and the teachers can be anywhere in the world. One of her virtual students is a retired Russian physician who's back in Russia after spending a year here.

Barbara just finished her term as president of the Jewish Foundation for Group Homes and recently joined the board of the Phillips Collection. She also plays golf, usually with ever-patient Bob.

Bob is a native of coal-country Pennsylvania. His father was a coal miner, and Bob worked alongside him in the mines one summer. He and his father also built a stone house together for the family, which still stands and serves as the home of the Cambria County Medical Society in Johnstown, PA.

When he was in high school, Bob considered a variety of career choices. That changed when his 10th-grade science teacher told him he was the student best suited to become a doctor. Bob listened. He got a medical degree from Temple University and spent much of his career at INOVA in Northern Virginia, from which he retired.

Bob likes to try unusual things. He played the violin when he was younger and more recently has taken up the mandolin. He and Barbara love modern art, so he decided to give it a try. He took classes at the Smithsonian and Glen Echo Park and may again when they reopen. When asked whether any of his abstracts are hanging in the house, he said not yet. They're still in the basement, where he paints. Bob is intensely interested in the environment. He had geothermal heating and cooling installed in their house when it was renovated 20 years ago. He loves gardening and landscaping, as their backyard demonstrates. He's also taught chess to BMAV members.

Bob and Barbara met at a dinner party. When they decided to marry, Justice Ginsburg was the officiant at their wedding. They've always enjoyed travel and will resume if that becomes possible – and safe – again. In the meantime, they visit their son in his Rockville backyard. Bob is an avid fly fisherman, and a day trip to Pennsylvania is their next outing. Most recently, they took a day trip to a state park in West Virginia, where they picnicked and Bob drew. "It was a great day," Barbara said.

Breaking out of our homes

Many of us are itching to break to out of our pandemic-restricted lives but are reluctant to go much beyond our neighborhoods or a little farther for errands and medical appointments. Some of us have arrived at a satisfying compromise - a staycation - enjoying the outdoors or visiting museums and gardens in the DC area. One member has been biking on the Capital Crescent trail, kayaking on the Potomac from Chain Bridge to Key Bridge, fishing at Fletcher's Cove, and enjoying the monuments on the mall without all the tourists and sounds of the tour buses.



Other members have taken road trips, including by RV!

Highlights from recent events

Tea time talks

Over the summer, members who pre-pandemic met monthly at Chris Palmer's house to discuss aging and related issues, now meet virtually on Zoom for "tea time talks" to focus on some big and interesting questions. As always, the topics are thought-provoking and engender a lot of ideas, comments and participation. They have resulted in very readable compendiums now on our website at the links below.

- [What are the best ways to age successfully?](#)
- [What advice would you give the next generation for when they become old?](#)
- [What are the silver linings for older people in this pandemic?](#)

The next "tea time talks" for BMAV members will be on September 13 and October 18 at 4 pm. The question for discussion in September will be: What is the most important lesson you learned from your grandparents or parents?

As Chris has been doing since the pandemic began in March, he continues to create and send out a weekly email to the Aging SIG containing observations and insights about aging from scientists, activists, and poets, as well as humorous material to help take readers' minds off the news. If you'd like to receive his weekly emails, please let Chris know.

Virtual ladies' lunch

At the August ladies' Zoom lunch, the topic was our pets, present and past. Participants shared stories about their furry and funny friends and, of course, showed some photos...



Nala



Zoomer



Duncan

Armchair travelers

Our members have traveled the world. At July's virtual armchair travelers gathering, Lynn Barclay talked about her experiences on her trip to Tibet, Nepal and Bhutan. In August, Barbara Wiss described her time in Rwanda with the local people and at least one silverback gorilla



Upcoming BMAV events on Zoom

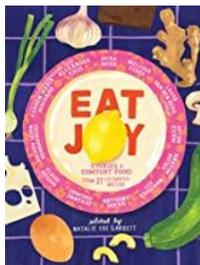
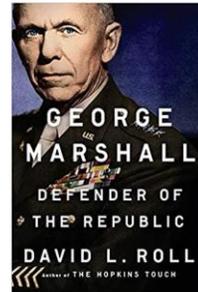
[Author and historian Mary McAuliffe](#), Tuesday, September 8, 10 am. McAuliffe will discuss her most recent book, *Paris, City of Dreams: Napoleon III, Baron Haussmann, and the Creation of Paris*. McAuliffe's past works include *Dawn of the Belle Epoque*, *Twilight of the Belle Epoque*, *When Paris Sizzled*, *Paris on the Brink*, *Clash of Crowns*, and *Paris Discovered*. Open to the public. [RSVP](#) by the day before the program for Zoom link.

NEW! BMAV members, join us the second Tuesday of every month at 2 pm for **Tech Tuesdays**. Open to Full and Social members. Our first session will be September 8.

BMAV volunteer Tony Mastria will answer questions about computers, smartphones, or anything tech-related. Drop in to as many sessions as you'd like.

[Adapting your coping skills](#), Wednesday, September 16, 2 pm. The senior stage of life often requires new or not often-used coping skills to deal with challenges such as retirement; chronic and/or episodic health issues, generational conflict in families; significant loss; financial changes; downsizing; caregiving; and now, the risks of Covid-19. Frederika Granger, LCSW-C, will help us develop a revised tool kit of coping skills. Open to the public. [RSVP](#) by the day before the program for Zoom link.

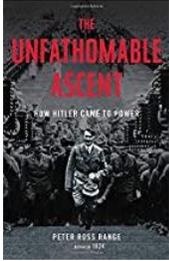
[Author David Roll](#), Monday, September 21, 4 pm. Roll will speak about his latest work, *George Marshall: Defender of the Republic*. General David Petraeus' review of the book noted it is, "A hugely significant book...David Roll provides a portrait of Marshall that is far more penetrating and nuanced than past biographies." Co-hosted with Connie Morella Library on Zoom. Open to the public. Zoom [link](#) or dial in: 301-715-8592, Meeting ID: 991 2280 1651. Note that the library will close the meeting to latecomers at 4:05 pm, so be sure to log in early.



[Eat Joy: Stories and Comfort Food from 31 Celebrated Writers](#), Tuesday, September 29, 4 pm. Natalie Garrett is an artist, writer, and the editor of *Eat Joy*, a collection of personal stories with recipes that explore how comfort food helps us cope in dark times, be it the loss of a parent, the loneliness of a move, or the pain of heartache. BMAV members join us for this virtual book club. Note the new time.

[The urgency of representation: A conversation with the National Women's History Museum](#), Monday, October 5, 4 pm. Jennifer Herrera, vice president of external affairs for the National

Women's History Museum, will discuss what the 100th anniversary of the ratification of the 19th Amendment means for women's representation and how the museum is working to ensure that women's stories are included and shared in historical and contemporary narratives. Co-hosted with Connie Morella Library. Free and open to the public. Zoom [link](#), Meeting ID 930 0339 6154. Note that the library will close the meeting to latecomers at 4:05 pm, so be sure to log in early.



[Author and journalist Peter Ross Range](#), Tuesday, October 20, 3 pm. Range will discuss his latest book, *The Unfathomable Ascent*, that details Hitler's rise to power and follows his book *1924 -- The Year that Made Hitler*. Both books explore Hitler's early years, his close calls, and his year in prison for treason, when he read extensively and wrote *Mein Kampf*. Open to the public. [RSVP](#) by the day before the program for Zoom link.

[Building and sustaining a community jewel](#): Bethesda Big Train Baseball at Shirley Povich Field, Tuesday, October 27, 1 pm. Bruce Adams, BMAV member, Bethesda community baseball club founder, and president, reflects on the history of the Bethesda Big Train summer college baseball team, from the inspiration and construction of Shirley Povich Field to creating the Big Train brand, winning a national championship, making improvements to youth fields from Germantown to Anacostia, transferring the program to BCC Baseball and retaking stewardship in the middle of a global health pandemic. Open to the public. [RSVP](#) by the day before the program for Zoom link.



Check BMAV weekly email reminders for Zoom login links for all our events. You can connect using a computer with a webcam, a tablet, smartphone or even via regular phone without video.

If you have not tried Zoom yet or have any questions, one of our volunteers can walk you through it. Many of us are using Zoom for the first time and found it is easy once you know how. We would love to see all our members at our events, so please call if you need help, 240-630-2628

Shared interest groups for BMAV members

Aging, dying and death: [Chris Palmer](#) sends a weekly e-mail to keep this group connected and hosts Tea Time Talks once a month on Zoom. Upcoming dates are September 13 and October 18 at 4pm. September's discussion topic will be: What is the most important lesson you learned

from your grandparents or parents? If possible, write your thoughts down and send them to Chris Palmer ahead of the meeting so we can all learn from each other.

Armchair travelers: Travel virtually via Zoom with BMAV friends. On September 9 at 4 pm Gil and Jean Jackson will be sharing their collection of tribal art collected in Africa. On October 14, Jane Boynton will present "A Taste of the Land of Enchantment: Albuquerque and Acoma Pueblo." Do you have photos from an interesting travel experience? Contact group lead [Diane Goldman](#) to share your trip photos at a future meeting of our newest Shared Interest Group. No experience required! Diane is available to help with the technology.

Birding: Leader [David Moulton](#) hosted birdwatching sessions online and sends email updates with photos and descriptions of birds to keep a lookout for. Contact him to be added to his list.

Book club: Meets weekly on Tuesday mornings to discuss favorite works in any genre. About every other week an author joins the Zoom event to discuss his or her book. Hosted by [Jane Boynton](#).

Bridge: Meets daily for afternoon games via computer program. If you would like to join, contact lead [Marilyn Kerst](#).

Coffee talk: Members gather weekly on Wednesday mornings by Zoom with coffee mugs in hand to share tips, activities, and inspiration. Hosted by [Ann Labriola](#) and [Naomi Collins](#).

Film fans: [Diana Kitt](#)'s film group shares by email names of recommended films and holds monthly Zoom meetups to review films together. Contact Diana to get on her email list.

Gardening: [Ann Labriola](#) hosts a monthly discussion group to share gardening tips, questions and answers. The monthly meetups are on hiatus until spring but garden-related sessions will be scheduled this winter.

Happy hour: BMAV members meet online for lively conversation and good cheer every Friday afternoon at 4 pm. Bring your own drinks. Hosted by [Susan Gorman](#).

Hardy hikers: Walking together is on hiatus but contact [Ann Bennet](#) to be added to her email list and get information on future meetups.

Knitting, needlework and friends: Meets the first and third Friday on Zoom to share what we are working on. Contact [Sandi Ross](#) for login info.

Ladies lunch: Ladies lunch has been meeting monthly for themed discussions. Contact [Lynn Barclay](#) to join.

Men's lunch: A dozen or more men join [Bob Metzler](#) for lunch and discussion every Thursday at 1 pm. Contact Bob to be added to his list.

Spanish conversation group: A wonderful volunteer leads this small group session in Spanish lessons every Tuesday. Full.

Events from neighboring villages

[Who will be the next president?](#) Tuesday, September 15, 11 am. Northwest Neighbors Village presents Alan Lichtman, distinguished professor of history at American University and author of *Predicting the Next President: The Keys to the White House*. The Keys system predicted the outcome of every presidential election from 1984 to 2016 and has been discussed in hundreds of media stories worldwide. Registration required and space is limited. Click [here](#) for instructions.

[Three billion birds lost: The disappearance of North American birds and what we can do about it.](#) Wednesday, September 23, 1 pm. Little Falls Village presents. More than one in four birds in the U.S. and Canada has disappeared within your lifetime if you were alive in 1970. Join Dr. Peter Marra, director of the Georgetown Environmental Initiative, for an engaging discussion as he reviews the first-ever comprehensive assessment of net population changes in the U.S. and Canada, revealing across-the-board declines that scientists call “staggering.” Registration required [here](#).

[Who's going to win and why.](#) Tuesday, October 6, 1 pm. Little Falls Village and Friendship Heights Neighbors Network present Steve Roberts, the veteran political analyst covering his 14th presidential election. Roberts will do his utmost to explain the 2020 presidential campaign including his analysis of the underlying campaign themes and political trends that will influence the voting in November. Registration required [here](#).



Voting in the 2020 general election

It is so important to vote in the upcoming general election and there is so much to know on how to do that. It's very clear that the safest method is voting by mail, but because of concerns these

days about mail delivery, you may decide not to. Other options include voting in person at a voting center or taking your ballot to any of 40 drop boxes that will be placed around the county at public high schools and elsewhere.

Voting by mail

The county mailed out ballot applications August 24-28. If you didn't get one, request one [online](#) NOW. Indicate that you want your ballot sent to you by regular mail, not email. Your ballot request must be received by October 20. Be sure to fill in your name the way it is on your voter registration application (you can look that up [here](#)) and sign the oath on the envelope.

You can mail your completed ballot, which must be postmarked by November 3 and received by November 13, but to be on the safe side, you can put it in a State Board of Elections drop box by 8 pm on November 3. The county will install more drop boxes, but for now, the one nearest to us is outside Rockville City Hall at 111 Maryland Avenue in Rockville.

Voting early

Early voting runs October 26 through November 2, from 7 am to 8 pm at voting centers around the state. The one nearest us is at the Jane E. Lawton Community Recreation Center on Willow Lane in Chevy Chase. Go when you think lines to will be shorter. Be sure to wear your mask and stand 6 feet apart. There's more information on early voting [here](#).

There is much more voting information available online. These three sites may be helpful to you: [Montgomery County Board of Elections](#); [Maryland State Board of Elections](#); [Maryland Legislative Coalition guide](#).

The hazard of 9-volt batteries

Most of us never give a thought to 9-volt batteries being hazardous. In fact, they can be when stored improperly. If the positive and negative posts are very close together and a metal object touches them, it can cause a short circuit and make enough heat to start a fire. That's what happened to a Colorado resident whose house burned down. Weak batteries also may have enough charge to pose a fire hazard. [Watch the video](#).

Texting 911

Did you know that in Maryland now you can text 911 for help in an emergency? This new service went into effect August 13, 2020. It's meant primarily for people who are deaf, hard-of-hearing or have a speech disability; are in a situation making it unsafe for a voice call to 911; or when someone is experiencing a medical emergency and unable to speak. In other words, call 911 if you can, text if you can't.

Here's how to text 911. Enter 911 in the "To" line of a new text message. Keep your message short, just the location of the emergency and the type of help needed – police, fire or ambulance. Don't use slang or abbreviations and don't send pictures or videos; they won't be received at the other end. You'll find more tips and information [here](#) from the Montgomery County Police Department.

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240-630-2628

info@bmavillage.org