

BETHESDA METRO AREA VILLAGE

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Special interest group spotlight

Afghan family refugee assistance

Last fall, a group of BMAV members explored the idea of helping an Afghan refugee family settle in Bethesda. Thus was BMAV's Afghan refugee family special interest group born. As "Bethesda Ad Hoc Assistance Group," members applied to the main federal resettlement agency for Maryland, Lutheran Social Services of the National Capital Area (LSSNCA), to become a Good Neighbor Partner sponsor for a refugee family for a year. The application was accepted.



In late November, LSSNCA assigned a young family of four (soon to be five) for settlement in Bethesda. The family arrived the very next day and stayed in temporary housing until the apartment found for them was ready. More than 20 of BMAV's newest special interest group rounded up just about everything needed to furnish the bare-bones apartment in less than 10 days: beds and other furniture, dishes, glasses, silverware, linens, kitchen gizmos, basic foodstuffs, toys and books for the children, art for the walls, and more. When the family moved in on December 13, everything was in place. A few SIG members welcomed them with hot homemade Afghan dishes for the family's first meal in their new apartment.

Since then, the group's focus has been on introducing the family to Bethesda, including the closest supermarket, pharmacy, the library, and nearby parks; finding the best place for the husband and wife to take English classes; identifying good pre-K options for the older child; and trying to find a network of area Afghans to reduce the family's sense of isolation.

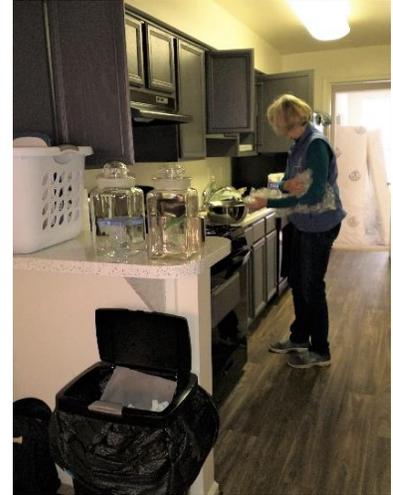
This will continue to be a terrific team effort. If you are interested in learning more, email info@bmvillage.org.



"New" furniture for the apartment



Setting up the bed frame



Setting up the kitchen

Aging Well

Why does BMAV have a shared interest group focused on aging well? Five years ago, BMAV member Chris Palmer started a shared interest group named "Aging, Dying, and Death." In recognition that those explicit words didn't seem welcoming to new members, the group changed the name to "Aging Well."

The Aging Well shared interest group is as much about community and connecting as it is about aging, death and dying. By coming together to discuss matters important to each of us, we make genuine connections and build relationships, as well as a sense of togetherness, community, and belonging to something bigger than ourselves. BMAV members agree: the Aging Well meetings are the most popular events the village offers. The group meets (via Zoom during the pandemic) on Sundays at 4 pm. The next meeting is January 23 and will feature author Steve Petrow. All members are encouraged to attend this very popular group. All are welcome. Contact [Chris Palmer](#) for more information or to be added to his email list.

Film Fans

Throughout the pandemic, this shared interest group has met each month via Zoom to discuss a wide range of movies, from personal favorites, to historical dramas, comedies, murder mysteries and onward to musicals. Members don't always agree on the merit of a movie, but they have fun arguing about it!



The format is casual, with an emphasis on simple fun and engagement. The discussions often lead to other TV- or movie-related topics, what they enjoyed recently and in the distant past, and what they

should watch in the future. Contact [Diana Kitt](#) if you would like to be added to her email list or just tune in to the next meeting January 20.

Knitting, Needlework and Friends

Knitting, Needlework and Friends works on charity projects every year. Last year the group knitted 33 hats, 14 headbands, and two scarves for donation to Bethesda Cares. We have been meeting over Zoom (and occasionally in-person) throughout the pandemic, sharing tips, patterns and socializing. This year we hope to gather in person when it is safe to do so to work on a child's blanket for donation. Contact [Sandi Ross](#) for more information. We welcome all skill levels.



Interview with members Stephanie and Steve Sutton

Stephanie and Steve Sutton, both Illinois natives, met while students at the University of Illinois Urbana-Champaign campus. They clicked immediately and married a year and a half later. After she earned her undergraduate degree in mathematics and Steve an MS in engineering, they came to the DC area for new jobs, Steve at the Naval Research Lab and Stephanie as a high school math teacher in Charles County. After a year, Stephanie switched careers to work as a mathematician at the Center for Naval Analyses in Rosslyn, then at the Naval Ship Engineering Center. During the six years they lived here, Steve got an MS in computer science from the University of Maryland.



A job for Steve drew them back to Urbana-Champaign, where they lived for 40 years in the same house. They started and ran a computer security software development company for many years. In retirement they began ballroom dancing and competed at the national level for 10 years. They loved it for the dance itself, the great exercise (think practicing two hours a day, five days a week), the camaraderie among the dancers, and the many interesting places they danced.



In early 2019, they ventured to Bethesda for six months of intensive ballroom dance training, a chance to experience life in a big city, and to be closer to their two daughters. Due to Covid and failing knees, they stopped competing. When they moved back to Illinois, they realized they loved Bethesda and made it their new home in 2020. They chose it because of its walkability, vibrancy, flavor of a city without a big city’s disadvantages, easy access to Metro and free buses, and a feeling of safety. Selling their house and nearly all of its furnishings was liberating. They now live in an apartment and love the flexibility of renting.

In retirement, Stephanie and Steve are anything but retiring. They’ve taken up backpacking, golf, pottery, camped at Denali National Park and the Grand Canyon, and participated in a dinosaur dig in Montana. After they moved here last year, Stephanie started piano lessons at the Levine School of Music at Strathmore. She and their daughter in Arlington play duets when they’re together. Steve is taking lessons via Zoom in classical guitar.

They’d heard about an age-in-place village from their Illinois neighborhood community, liked the concept and when looking online for one here, found Bethesda Metro Area Village and joined. They appreciate that BMAV’s members are “wonderfully welcoming.” They are active bikers and recently started the village’s new biking special interest group. They participate in other BMAV activities and events, and volunteer to help village members. In addition, Stephanie recently became a member of the BMAV board. They are so happy to be in Bethesda and members of BMAV.

Our last outdoor happy hour for 2021, in member Jerry Hage’s backyard



Holiday social

On December 5, 25 fully vaccinated village members and guests (prospective members, we hope) celebrated the season and enjoyed each other's company at a holiday social at Lynn Barclay's house. As often happens at these big gatherings, most guests crowded into the kitchen, with spillover in the dining room, where the food was.



The interplay of art and science in botanical form

In her presentation to BMAV members via Zoom on December 8, member and professional photographer Amy Lamb shared some of her botanical photographic prints, including the ones below. She explained that she finds the spirals of emerging fern fronds, layers of petals in blossoms, branched veins in leaves, and the radial and bilateral symmetries of daisies and orchids structurally significant and aesthetically intriguing. It was that which prompted her to study photography and cultivate plants.

Some of Amy's prints are in public and private collections. Three are currently on display at Dumbarton Oaks Museum.



White Calla l ©2003 Amy Lamb, all rights reserved



Columbine ©2000 Amy Lamb, all rights reserved



Milkweed Seedpod ©1999 Amy Lamb, all rights reserved

Hardy Hikers, hardy bikers

On November 15, BMAV Hardy Hikers were out on a trail, and so were a number of BMAV bikers, from the start of the Capital Crescent Trail to Fletcher's Cove and back. Contact [Ann Bennet](#) if you would like to be on the Hardy Hikers special interest group email list. Contact [Elyse Jacob](#) for more information about the BMAV bikers special interest group.



Symbol of appreciation for our volunteers lives on

In spring 2020, the pandemic was very much with us and we couldn't have our annual in-person volunteer appreciation luncheon. Instead, a member of the BMAV board delivered plants to our dedicated volunteers to thank them. One of those volunteers sent us this photo of the chrysanthemum she received and planted in her garden. As you can see, it's thriving.



Upcoming events

Registration by members for virtual events is not required. A Zoom link is sent to members by email for each event. For BMAV events that are open to the public, registration instructions for non-members are noted below.

[Beginners' chess club](#), Sundays, 4-5 pm

BMAV members and volunteers are invited to free online chess classes, taught by a high school chess expert and tutor, Uday. This is part two of BMAV's beginning chess series. Uday will have students pair off and play practice games live on screen while he gives direction. He also will delve deeper into chess theory and explain openings. All are welcome even if you did not attend beginning chess this past summer. Plan to attend multiple classes. Owning a chess board is not required. [RSVP](#) for more information.

[Stronger memory group](#), Wednesdays, beginning January 5, 2-2:30 pm, for 12 weeks

BMAV is participating in a Village to Village-sponsored program that encourages seniors to practice short assignments at home in an effort to improve memory or focus. A small group will meet on Zoom once a week for 30-45 minutes to check in with each other and chat. In between, participants work on short math problems or write or journal for 10-20 minutes a day. If you are interested in kicking off the new year by practicing some self-care like this, contact [Elizabeth Haile](#) for more information or come to the first Zoom meeting on January 5. A workbook is provided.

[Trivia night](#), Wednesday, January 5, 4-5 pm

BMAV members, join us for an hour of trivia on Zoom. Participants come with three or four trivia questions (and answers) they think may stump other guests. If you can't think of questions, come anyway! Host Chris Palmer will have extra questions in his back pocket. Also have paper to write your answers on and a drink if you'd like. We'll keep score and declare a winner for the night. It's a lot of fun.

[Tech Tuesday](#), Tuesday, January 11, February 8, 2-3 pm

Join us the second Tuesday of every month to talk tech via Zoom with BMAV volunteer Tony Mastria. He can answer your questions about computers, smartphones, anything tech-related. Open to full and social members. You can drop in on as many sessions as you like, but [email](#) your question(s) by the day before with to give Tony time to prepare. Open to BMAV members only.

[Thailand, Cambodia, and China](#), Tuesday, January 11, 4-5 pm

Friend Ralph Blessing will take us on tours of Cambodia, China and Thailand, trips that originated from his wife's Peace Corps service in Thailand in the late 1970s. We will view photos from two trips Ralph has made to the region, the first in 2001 with his wife and their two children so she could visit her old haunts. The second trip, more than 10 years later and also connected to Peace Corps, was to join in celebrating the 50th anniversary of Peace Corps' presence in Thailand, providing the family the opportunity to tour China and visit Cambodia.



[TED Talk Thursday](#), January 13 and February 10, 4-5:15 pm

Join hosts Paul Thorn and Barbara Reese for our new series, TED Talk Thursday. Together BMAV members will watch master TED talks on Zoom on "What makes a good life?" by Robert Waldinger and the "3 secrets of resilient people" by Lucy Hone. In February we will hear Brene Brown in "The Power of Vulnerability," who delivers a poignant, funny talk on her study of human connection -- our ability to empathize, belong and love. Then we will discuss our reactions and the most important takeaways. Come for what is sure to be an enriching conversation with other BMAV members.

["In America" by Suzanne Brennan Firstenberg](#), Tuesday, January 18, 2-3 pm

Suzanne Brennan Firstenberg, a visual artist who has demonstrated the power of art to touch hundreds of thousands of lives, will talk about her "In America" art installations, which make visible COVID-19 pandemic's cost in American lives.

In September 2021, she re-created her art installation, newly named "In America: Remember," on the National Mall. For seventeen days, over 650,000 white flags fluttered near the Washington Monument.



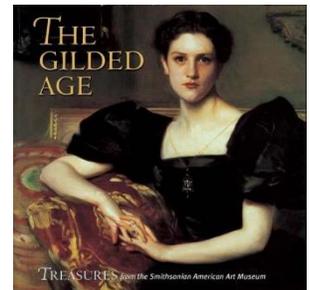
Co-sponsored with Connie Morella library. Join on Zoom [here](#) or dial 301 715 8592; meeting ID: 839 6650 2920.

[Author Steven Petrow for the Aging Well shared interest group](#), Sunday, January 23, 4-5 pm

Steven Petrow is an award-winning journalist and columnist for the Washington Post and USA Today and a regular contributor to the *New York Times*. His essays on aging and health often appear on "most read" lists, and you've likely heard him on NPR and seen him on TV. His latest book, *Stupid Things I Won't Do When I Get Old*, is a highly judgmental, unapologetically honest accounting of all the things elders are doing wrong! BMAV members are invited to come and enjoy what will be a fascinating talk and discussion on Zoom. Open to friends and neighbors. RSVP to director@bmavillage.org.

[Social change reflected in art](#), Monday, January 24, 4-5 pm

Smithsonian volunteer docent Bob Ferguson returns to take BMAV members on a virtual tour of how American artists responded to moments of significant social change across the history of our country. They will view pieces from the American Art Museum and discuss Manifest Destiny and the westward migration, the Industrial Revolution, slavery and Jim Crow, the Gilded Age, the Progressive Era, the 2008 recession and Hispanic immigrants and a divided nation.

[The current political scene with Dan Balz](#), RESCHEDULED, Tuesday, January 25, 3-4 pm

Dan Balz is chief correspondent for *The Washington Post* and covers national politics, the presidency, and Congress. He will discuss the first year of the Biden presidency from ongoing threats to democracy and divisions among Democrats, all foreshadowing the crucial midterm elections in 2022. Co-sponsored with the Connie Morella Library and open to the public. Join by Zoom [here](#) or dial 301 715 8592; Meeting ID: 869 2480 3071.

[Ask Pete!](#) Monday, January 31, 2-3 pm

Our guest speaker via Zoom is Pete Fosselman, new director of the [Bethesda-Chevy Chase Regional Services Center](#), who is County Executive Marc Elrich's representative in our area. Pete strives to connect the residential, commercial, non-profit and local government communities to each other. In his presentation, he will talk about current county initiatives. Have a question? Now's your chance. Just ask Pete. Open to area village members, friends, and neighbors. RSVP to director@bmavillage.org.

The Bethesda-Chevy Chase Regional Services Center is designed to bring county services closer to the community members of Bethesda, Cabin John, Chevy Chase, Friendship Heights, Garrett Park, Glen Echo, North Bethesda, Potomac, and Rockville. The center puts out a newsletter that is emailed to subscribers twice a week. You can [subscribe here](#).

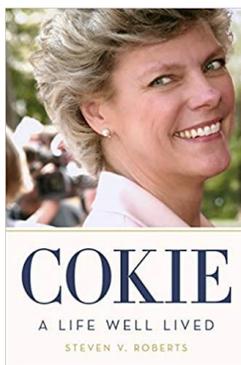
[Armchair Travelers visits Paris and Normandy](#), Tuesday, February 8, 4-5 pm



Jane Boynton will talk about her trip to Paris and Normandy and share some of her photos.



[Cokie: A life well lived, with Steve Roberts](#), Monday, February 14, 2-4 pm, Battery Park Clubhouse, 7806 Glenbrook Rd, Bethesda



In this loving tribute, author Steve Roberts, Cokie Robert's husband of 53 years and bestselling-co-author, reflects on Cokie's many accomplishments and how she lived each day with a devotion to helping others. For Steve, Cokie's private life was as significant and inspirational as her public one. BMAV members and neighbors are welcome to join us for this presentation and for refreshments afterwards. Attendance will be limited. [RSVP](#), masks and vaccinations are required

[The Theodore Roosevelt White House: America's first modern First Family](#), Tuesday, February 15, 3-4 pm

Dr. Matthew Costello, vice president of the White House Historical Association, will discuss President Theodore Roosevelt, Edith Roosevelt, their children, and their influence on the White House.



During their occupancy, the Roosevelts transformed the Executive Mansion with a major renovation and household restructuring. The family's need for private space led to the construction of the West Wing. Media interest in the Roosevelts set a new standard for future relationships between the first family and the American people. Co-sponsored with the Connie Morella Library. Join [here](#) or dial 301 715 8592; Meeting ID: 857 2198 2580

[Art across cultures](#), Monday, February 21, 2-3 pm

The creation of art is a universal human endeavor, but what connects artworks across cultures, and what sets them apart? The Smithsonian's National Museum of Asian Art is home to more than 44,000 objects, with strengths in arts of the Islamic world; the ancient Near East; South, East, and Southeast Asia; and the United States. On this virtual tour of museum highlights, BMAV members will enjoy selections from diverse regions and time periods, exploring commonalities and differences in cultures, aesthetics, and ideas.

[Save the bees! but which bees?](#), Thursday, February 24, 3-4 pm



BMAV member Maureen Jais-Mick will introduce some of the 200 native bees that live among us and explain how to keep them healthy, which also keeps our environment and neighborhood healthy.

Honey bees, which pollinate many commercial crops, live together in colonies of tens of thousands of individual bees. Managed by humans, honey bees work together to store food, raise young, and pollinate. But what about our native bees? Most live solitary lives, often in the ground. Collectively they pollinate the majority of trees, flowers, good, and plants in our world. They live in our yards, so unbeknownst to us, we are all beekeepers. They are the most endangered bees. BMAV members tune in for this Zoom presentation.

[How to write an ethical will](#), Sunday, February 27, 4-5 pm

Chris Palmer will lead BMAV members in a discussion on how to write an ethical will. An ethical will is a personal message or letter created for loved ones that transmit *intangible* wealth -- feelings, intentions, values, perspectives, and thoughts about life -- to succeeding generations, whereas a will and estate planning documents pass on *tangible* wealth.

Shared interest groups for members

Aging Well. Each session focuses on an interesting question or topic. Written summaries of members' contributions from these meetings are on the BMAV website in the [Forums](#) section (accessible to members only). The group meets via Zoom monthly on Sundays at 4 pm. The next meeting is January 23 and will feature author Steve Petrow. Hosted by [Chris Palmer](#).

Armchair travelers. Do you have photos from trips you've taken? Armchair Travelers would love to hear about your travels. [Diane Goldman](#) can help with the presentation if you don't know how to screen share; you just send her digital photos ahead of time. Please contact her if you're interested. Join us on February 8, when Jane Boynton will share her photos from a trip to Paris and Normandy.

Biking. BMAV's newest shared interest group is led by [Steve](#) and [Stephanie Sutton](#) and [Elyse Jacob](#). All riding levels are welcome. Interested, but don't have a bike? Bikes can be rented from Griffin Cycle. Contact Elyse with questions.

Birding. [David Moulton](#) hosts 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 monthly on Zoom on Tuesdays at 7 pm to discuss favorite works in any genre. Authors also join the Zoom events to discuss their books. Hosted by [Jane Boynton](#).

Bridge. Meets daily for afternoon games via computer program or in person. If you'd like to join, contact lead [Marilyn Kerst](#) for more information.

Coffee talk. Members meet on the second and fourth Thursday morning by Zoom or in-person to share tips, activities, and inspiration. Hosted by [Ann Labriola](#) and [Naomi Collins](#).

Film Fans. [Diana Kitt](#)'s film group shares names of recommended films and holds monthly Zoom meetups to review films together. Our next meeting is January 20 where we will be reviewing *Music Man* and *West Side Story*. All are welcome.

Gardening. [Ann Labriola](#) hosts a group that meets to share gardening tours, tips, questions and answers. Contact her to be added to the email list.

Happy hour. BMAV members meet online or in person for lively conversation and good cheer the first and third Friday afternoons. All topics welcome. Coordinated by Stephanie Sutton, [Susan Gorman](#) and [Barbara Brown](#).

Hardy Hikers. [Ann Bennet](#) leads the BMAV hiking club on monthly weekday morning hikes at locations throughout the metro area. Our next hike is January 17 on the Cabin John Stream Valley Trail. Contact Ann for more information.

Knitting, Needlework and Friends

Meetings have been over Zoom (and occasionally in-person) throughout the pandemic to share tips, patterns and socialize. Contact [Sandi Ross](#) for more information. All skill levels welcome.

Ladies' lunch. Members meet monthly at noon for lunch, conversation and camaraderie. Hosted by [Lynn Barclay](#). Our next get-together via Zoom will be on Monday, January 28.

Men's lunch. Bob Metzler and Reid Detchon lead this group in on Zoom each month. In-person meetups are on hiatus for now. Themed discussions are held the first half of the lunch and the second half is for catching up. Our next meeting is January 20.

Board of Directors' changing of the guard

Congratulations and thank you to our new incoming board members, Stephanie Sutton and Barry Gorman. Both Stephanie and Barry (and their spouses, Steve Sutton and Susan Gorman) jumped right into BMAV activities upon joining. Barry serves on the program and membership committees and participates in the Aging Well special interest group, happy hours and art tours. Stephanie serves on the program committee, hosts Zoom events and participates in Aging Well, ladies' lunch and other socials, and is co-chair of our new biking special interest group.

Stephanie and Barry join our continuing board members: President Jeanne Parker, Vice President Jane Boynton, Treasurer Bruce Coolidge, Hanne Caraher, Naomi Collins, Elyse Jacob, Hal Rogoff, Gail Shearer, and Barbara Wiss.

We are grateful to departing board members Alice Padwe and Tom Henteleff for their years of service. Tom served as president and made invaluable contributions to the development, membership and programs committees. Alice assisted with numerous communications, programs and membership initiatives, as well as serving as secretary her last term. Both will continue as active members of the village. Please join us in thanking them for their service.

How you can help BMAV

We encourage all BMAV members to get involved in the village. Serving on the board of directors is one way, and it's a great opportunity to get to know village leaders. Other leadership positions to consider include starting or leading a shared interest group, planning or running a program, or serving on a standing committee: finance, membership, volunteers/services, programs, communications, and development.

If you have not yet joined BMAV, consider becoming a [member](#) or a [volunteer](#) service provider. Volunteer service providers help their neighbors with occasional rides, home repair or technology tasks, or visits at home. You choose when and how to volunteer. If you would like to help advance our village in these or other ways, please reach out to [Jeanne Parker](#) or [Elizabeth Haile](#), executive director.

Help build our community and make connections with your neighbors. [Click here](#) to learn more, or give us a call with any questions, 240-630-2628. We'd love to have you join us.

Membership renewal

Thank you to all our members who recently have renewed or will be renewing soon. When your membership is due for renewal, you will receive an automated email with a link taking you to our website for payment. Or you can mail in a renewal form with a check to the address noted. [Contact our office](#) with any questions.

The village movement

The year 2022 marks 20 years since the launch of [Beacon Hill Village](#) and the nationwide village movement. Over the years since, the village movement has grown to become a vibrant network of over 300 villages, each serving older adults so they can remain at home and connected to their communities. In recognition of the tremendous, positive, impact villages are having on the experience of aging, Tuesday, February 15, will be celebrated as National Village Day.

There are 25 active villages in Montgomery County, half of them in our general area. Our Bethesda Metro Area Village, which launched in November 2016, will celebrate its fifth anniversary all year long.



Information you can use

AARP's HomeFit Guide

AARP provides free [Homefit Guide](#) checklists and templates that includes smart ways to make a home comfortable, safe and a great fit for older adults. There are small to large fixes that can be made by homeowners or contractors. You can download the checklists and templates [here](#).

19 amazing things your smartphone can do

Smartphones have become the Swiss Army knives of technology, going way beyond making and receiving calls while you're on the go. Did you know that your iPhone or Android can replace your GPS, battery-test your remote controls, scan documents, translate text, voice or conversation, be a metal detector, and stream on-the-air stations from around the world or special online-only stations?

These and other features are either baked into your phone or available as [free downloads](#) from Apple's App Store or the Google Play store for Android. See the [AARP article](#) for the complete list of things you may not know your smartphone can do.

Our 2021 fundraising campaign

Thank you to all who gave during our 2021 fundraising campaign. If you have not donated, it's not too late. [Click here](#) to give online or mail your donation to BMAV, PO Box 30525, Bethesda, MD 20824.

Thank you to our generous corporate supporters

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Do you have an idea for an article or a comment about the newsletter? Please email newsletter editor [Lynn Barclay](#).

BMAV contact information

www.bmavillage.org

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