

BETHESDA METRO AREA VILLAGE
Your home Your neighborhood Your future

The Village Movement

The Village Movement started in 2002. The goal was (and is) to help older adults live independently as long as possible with the help of nonprofit membership organizations which, in turn, created networks of volunteers. Volunteers provide services and support to help older adults remain in their homes and thrive physically, intellectually and emotionally. Today there are more than 300 villages nationwide. Montgomery County alone has 27, including our own Bethesda Metro Area Village (BMAV).



The Village Movement promotes independence, empowerment and volunteerism, values that are cherished, especially by older adults. Villages create communities of neighbors helping neighbors and they enrich the lives of everyone, regardless of age. People join villages for a variety of reasons: Some want to participate in programs and meet new people; some need the services; and some want to help out. Volunteers can be members or non-members.

Villages are usually organized around neighborhoods or parts of towns, cities, counties or even regions. Many operate independently, and some have both volunteer and paid staff to oversee their services. The services vary from village to village but usually include help with transportation, light housekeeping, and social visits. Most villages also provide social and cultural programs for their members and volunteers.

Our village's mission is to create a community where neighbors help neighbors 50 and older through social connectedness, cultural enrichment and support in daily living. Bethesda Metro Area Village has been providing services and support since November 2016 and has sponsored social programs and cultural events from the beginning.

Although the cost of operating villages is not excessive, villages must rely on membership dues, donations, and in BMAV's case, minimal funding by Montgomery County to cover expenses.

If you're not a member of BMAV and would like to find out more about us and how to join, [visit our website](#) or contact Executive Director Elizabeth Haile at info@bmavillage.org or 240-630-2628.

BMAV during and emerging from the pandemic

Many of our members have told us how much they have appreciated BMAV's programs via Zoom during the past 16 months of the COVID-19 pandemic. Our quick pivot to frequent and varied Zoom events actually increased member participation and even attracted new members. See, for example, what the daughter of a new member wrote about her dad's participation in BMAV programs:

"My dad said he had the best time in months at the men's virtual lunch yesterday. He felt he finally had a community to interact with and was excited for the next Zoom lunch. He really enjoyed trivia night and the happy hour events last night. I can't thank you enough for your village and welcoming him into a community. He is excited to engage in other programs you offer.... Thank you from the bottom of my heart for sparking joy and companionship in my dad."

We know that Zoom events work better for many of you. BMAV is committed to continue to hold Zoom events, although they won't be as numerous as in the past. We are transitioning to a new-normal, re-introducing outdoor and indoor in-person events for those who look forward to once again sharing the company of friends and neighbors. Be sure to take a look at our July and August [calendar](#) for upcoming events, some via Zoom and, for those who are interested, some in-person events.

Several BMAV shared interest groups have added in-person meetups, such as for outdoor walks and trips to museums. These events require an RSVP ahead of time, being fully vaccinated for COVID-19, and agreement to a set of safety protocols. BMAV helped many of our members get vaccinated for COVID-19, and everyone has had the opportunity to do so. Please contact our office with any questions.

After over six years as the founding BMAV program committee chair, Elyse Jacob has stepped down. She remains a member of the committee and on the Board of Directors. BMAV is so grateful to her for her years working to launch the village and then to shape and expand our broad and creative program offerings, especially over these past 15 months. Thanks to the efforts of Elyse and other members of the committee, our programs and shared interest groups continue to run smoothly. We look forward to adding even more members to help plan and carry out activities. Please reach out to Executive Director [Elizabeth Haile](#) with any questions or to learn how you can help.

Welcoming new members

BMAV is looking to add additional members to our “Welcoming Team.” Team members are matched with new members a few times a year to reach out and say hello, check in with them and be a welcoming face at an event. This is a great way to meet new people and to help strengthen our village. Contact Executive Director [Elizabeth Haile](#) for more details.

Interview with member Melissa Clark

Melissa Clark’s roots are in the South. She grew up in Decatur, Georgia, and went to a small women’s college nearby. After two years, she transferred to Williams College in Massachusetts. She loved her time there not only because it was coed, but also because it offered her a wider view of the world. She returned to the South to get a law degree, from Vanderbilt, clerked a year for a federal judge in Atlanta, came to Washington, D.C., to work for Covington & Burling, and then moved to the Department of Justice Civil Division, where she did primarily appellate work. After five years at DOJ, Melissa took a long break from legal work to be a stay-at-home mom for her two sons.



Instead of resuming her legal career, Melissa decided to try something quite different: She got a degree in landscape design from George Washington University. Within a couple of years, she joined a landscape firm, where she worked until she retired in 2013. She designed gardens, supervised landscaping projects and wrote content for the firm’s newsletter. Along the way, she got interested in photography, which became the basis of her third career, photographing gardens for clients.

Melissa’s clients are landscape designers and architects who want professional photos of their garden projects for their websites and social media. Other clients are garden owners who want professional photos of their gardens through the seasons, which she then makes into photo books. She has shared photos of gardens she has designed in our area at BMAV Zoom events.

Melissa also put what she learned about landscape design to good use in the yard around her house in Chevy Chase, where she lived 30 years. Eventually the time came for her to downsize, and she now lives in a Bethesda condo. Alas, no yard for outdoor gardening, but she has several thriving indoor plants and plans to try container gardening on her balcony.

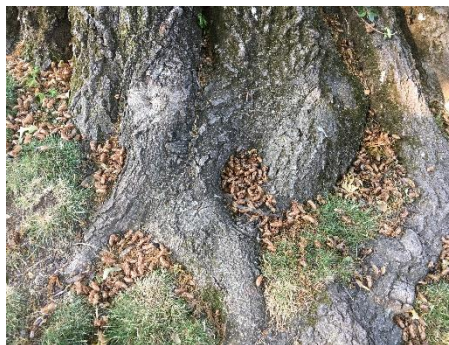
Foreign travel is something Melissa greatly enjoys. She always takes photos that capture the spirit and atmosphere of the country she’s in and its people. Earlier this year she shared some

photos from her trip to Myanmar with BMAV members in a monthly “Armchair Travelers” Zoom get-together. She looks forward to traveling internationally again when she feels it’s safe to do so. In the meantime, all her trips are likely to be back and forth to Chicago, where one of her sons and his family (including Melissa’s only grandchild, now 3) are moving.

In 2017, Melissa became a docent at the Smithsonian’s Museum of American Art. In pre-pandemic times, she gave in-person tours in the galleries at both the main museum and the Renwick. She’s counting the days until she can return to giving tours in person. In the meantime, she conducts virtual tours of the museum’s collection for groups upon request.

Melissa first learned of Bethesda Metro Area Village through an event arranged by BMAV that was open to the public. She went online to find out more about us, was impressed by all the activities our village offers, and promptly sent in a check to become a member.

Signs of the times



As interesting as the once-every-seventeen-year cicada phenomenon was, we’re glad the invasion and the din of billions of Brood X cicadas is all but over, with the hulls they shed after emerging from the ground left behind as reminders.

Recent events of interest

Seeing Differently exhibit at the Phillips Collection

On June 12, twelve village members enjoyed a special tour of a unique exhibit at the Phillips Collection, now celebrating its hundredth birthday. The exhibit, *The Phillips Collects for a New Century*, highlighted over 200 works by artists from the 19th century to the present



that explore the complexities of our ever-changing world through themes of identity, history, place and the senses.

Thank you to member Barbara Brown for setting this up for us. If other members would like to set up docent-led tours at other locations, contact Elizabeth Haile.



Virtual tour of social change through art

On June 14, volunteer docent Bob Ferguson from the Smithsonian Museum of American Art took BMAV members on a virtual tour of art through centuries of social change. He will lead our next virtual art tour on August 2.

Café," by William H. Johnson

Outdoor, in-person coffee hour

After weekly (later bi-weekly) coffee hours via Zoom for well over a year, several village members recently gathered face-to-face outdoors for coffee and conversation, some for the first time since the pandemic was declared in March 2020. It was so pleasurable being with each other, and the beautiful day made it even more special.



A joyful in-person happy hour

On June 25, some 20 BMAV members gathered in the backyard of Barbara Brown and Bob Berish for over an hour, without masks, drink in hand, catching up with each other's lives. It was a delight.



Learning about Bethesda history on foot

On June 26, several BMAV members joined a walking history tour of Bethesda, led by Hank Levine of the Bethesda Historical Society. Even for those in the group who grew up here or have lived for decades in Bethesda, there were surprises. One was that between 1918 and 1930, local employers needed cheap labor and recruited Blacks from North Carolina to work at Mahoney Concrete (remember that?), the Frito plant (where the Apple store is today), and the local coal yard. They lived in shacks on what now is Bethesda Lane.

Another surprise was that a major reason Bethesda become a successful retail center was that the developer of residential neighborhoods along Connecticut Avenue, from Chevy Chase Circle northward, banned commercial development. Nearby Bethesda welcomed it with open arms.



Bethesda Avenue, 1951



Hiser Theater, 1940s



Homes of Black workers in Bethesda

Upcoming events

Registration by members for virtual events is not required. The 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.

[The new normal?](#) Friday, July 2, 10-11:30 am. Montgomery County DHHS and villages present this Zoom session on how we respond to our "new normal." Panelists will discuss the psychological impact of COVID-19 and post-COVID reality. They will address social isolation, continued or heightened anxiety, depression, red flags, and how villages can help. No RSVP required. Open to the public. Join the Zoom meeting [here](#) or join via phone: 301-715-8592, meeting ID 817 5825 9106.

[Beginning chess](#), Sundays, July 11 and 18, 2-3 pm. BMAV members can join these free online chess classes taught by a high school chess expert. Attendees view the class on Zoom and then join [chess.com](#) to practice. Having a chess board is not required.

[Tech tutors: BMAV website orientation](#), Monday, July 12, 2-3 pm. Executive Director Elizabeth Haile will go over how to use the BMAV website and access the member directory, access the Forum, enjoy photos, find events, use the event calendar, and RSVP for events. We can also do a short refresher on Zoom, such as how to rename yourself or use the chat function. There will be an opportunity for Q&A on any other BMAV-related questions. Both new and longtime members are welcome. Via Zoom.

[Tech Tuesday](#), Tuesday, July 13, 2-3 pm. Join us the second Tuesday of every month to talk tech with BMAV volunteer Tony Mastria via Zoom. He can answer your questions about computers, smartphones, anything tech-related. Open to all BMAV members. You can drop in to as many sessions as you'd like, but an RSVP by the day before with your question will be most helpful, to give Tony time to prepare.

[Ending homelessness during the pandemic](#), Monday, July 19, 4-5 pm. Presentation by John Mendez, executive director of Bethesda Cares, founded in 1988. In 2020, Bethesda Cares set a new county record for achieving street-to-home housing placement on behalf of individuals experiencing chronic street homelessness. Mendez will talk about the challenges and vulnerabilities for persons who are street-homeless and what it takes to provide solutions to the most difficult cases.

Co-sponsored by BMAV and the Connie Morella Library. Free and open to the public. Join [here](#) or dial in: 301-715-8592; meeting ID 975 8172 1755.

[Trivia night](#), Tuesday, July 20, 7:30-8:30 pm. Trivia Night is back! BMAV members, join us for an hour of trivia on Zoom. Everyone comes with 3-4 trivia questions (and answers) they think may stump other guests. There are ideas for questions online in the world of sports, history, anything that interests you. If you can't think of questions, come anyway! Bring 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.

[Planet Word visit](#), Thursday, July 29, 11 am. 925 13th St NW, DC. Up to eight BMAV members and volunteers are invited to tour the wonderful new Planet Word museum, "the museum where language comes to life." Planet Word is an immersive language experience, voice-activated museum located in the historic Franklin School. Free.

RSVP required. Masks are required on the premises. Street or paid garage parking is available. The museum is a few blocks from the Metro Center station.

[Social change reflected in art](#), Monday, August 2, 4-5:30 pm. Volunteer docent Bob Ferguson returns to take BMAV members on a virtual tour of how American artists responded to moments of significant social change. He will show and discuss pieces from the Smithsonian

American Art Museum on Manifest Destiny and the westward migration, Emancipation and Reconstruction, the Industrial Revolution, the Gilded Age and its demise, the evolving life of formerly enslaved people in the deep south, and the lives of immigrant workers in the U.S. Via Zoom.

[Glenstone Museum visit](#), Thursday, August 5, 10:30 am. BMAV has reserved a block of five tickets to Glenstone museum for members and volunteers. The indoor and outdoor pavilions are now open, as is outdoor dining. The Gallery is showing a traveling exhibition of works by Faith Ringgold. The Pavilions feature installations by Glenn Ligon and Tacita Dean. RSVP required. Free.

[Memory loss and effective communication](#), Tuesday, August 17, 2-3:30 pm. Village volunteers and members are invited to register for a free training program led by the Alzheimer's Association National Capital Area Chapter. The program will cover both communication and behavior difficulties experienced by those diagnosed with Alzheimer's disease or other dementia and how their caregivers and families can manage these situations more effectively. RSVP to BMAV for the Zoom link.

[New member social](#), Saturday, August 28, 5-7 pm. Some of our newer members have yet to meet other members in-person! If you're one of them, please come to a social hosted in your honor at BMAV member Tim French's home (indoors or outdoors, weather permitting). Up to 30 new and longtime members can attend for refreshments, socializing and catching up with each other at the end of summer. RSVPs and waivers required.

Save the date!

[Design your life for success](#), Tuesdays, September 14-28, 6:30-8 pm. BMAV is delighted to offer an encore of Chris Palmer's three workshops on how to improve your life. The workshops explore the goals, strategies, and tactics necessary to live a successful, fulfilled, and productive life. Check out the BMAV website for more details and how to register. Co-sponsored by Connie Morella Library. Free and open to the public, but registration is required

Shared interest groups for members

Aging Well. This group meets monthly (currently on summer hiatus). Each session focuses on an interesting question. Written summaries of members' contributions from these meetings are on the BMAV website in the [Forums](#) section (accessible to members only). Hosted by [Chris Palmer](#).

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 Tuesday evenings to discuss their favorite works in any genre. Authors also join the Zoom events to discuss his or her books. Hosted by [Jane Boynton](#).

Bridge. Meets daily for afternoon games via computer program and 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, mugs in hand, 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. All members welcome.

Gardening. [Ann Labriola](#) hosts a group that meets to share gardening tours, tips, questions and answers.

Happy hour. BMAV members meet online and in person for lively conversation and good cheer every Friday afternoon. Bring your own drinks. All topics welcome. Hosted by [Susan Gorman](#) and [Barbara Brown](#).

Hardy Hikers. [Ann Bennet](#) leads the BMAV hiking club on a monthly weekday morning hikes at locations throughout the metro area. Contact Ann for more information.

Knitting, needlework and friends. Members meet the first and third Fridays in a member's home to share what they are working on. Contact [Sandi Ross](#) for information.

Ladies' lunch. Members meet monthly for lunch, conversation and camaraderie. Hosted by [Lynn Barclay](#).

Men's lunch. A dozen or more men join [Bob Berish](#) for lunch and discussion on Zoom every other Thursday at 1 pm.

News you can use

Trading in your old SmarTrip cards; using your cell to pay fares

If you haven't already done so, it's time to replace your old Metrorail SmartTrip cards. Metro has begun phasing out older SmarTrip cards and installing new faregates, because the two are not compatible. If your card has serial number 0167 at the bottom, you're good to go; you don't need to do anything. But if you have a card without 0167 at the bottom, you need to replace it, sooner rather than later. [The Gallery Place/Chinatown station already has new faregates, and

they don't accept old SmarTrip cards.] Metro offers several options to replace or transfer a balance from an old card to a new card, plastic or electronic: by [mail-in](#), [online](#), phone (1-888-762-7874) or in person at Metro Center sales office inside the Metro Center station. [Click here for specifics](#) on replacing your card.

Electronic SmarTrip cards have been available to iPhone users to pay for bus and train fares on Metro rail, Metro bus, and Ride On for eleven months. Now Android users can do the same, anywhere SmarTrip payments are accepted, with Metro's new [SmarTrip app for Androids](#), available at Google Play. It allows the convenience of tap-and-go with an Android at faregates and on buses that are Android-compatible. The app also allows you to reload funds on your card. Even better, Metro will waive the \$2 SmarTrip card fee for all Android users purchasing a virtual SmarTrip card during the first six months of the app's launch.

If you're 65 or older but don't have a [Senior SmarTrip card](#) yet, you can get one at the Connie Morella Library. The senior card gives you a discount of 50% off peak fare on Metro rail, \$1 off Metrobus, and 50% off regular peak fare on Ride On. [Note: Ride On is free for everyone during the pandemic. In non-pandemic times, Ride On is free for riders with Senior SmartTrip cards from 9:30 am-3 pm, Monday through Friday, and 8:30 am-4 pm on Saturday.]

Volunteer opportunity

Manna Food Center is looking for virtual call center volunteers who work from home to answer calls and schedule participants to pick up food. Volunteers should be able to commit to a weekly schedule for six months to a year. Training is virtual, but volunteers must pick up equipment at the Silver Spring office. Questions? Email the volunteer manager at katie@mannafood.org.

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Suggestion box

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

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