



BETHESDA METRO AREA VILLAGE
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BMAV special interest groups take off

One of the biggest predictors of a healthy and happy long life is social connection, according to gerontologist Dr. Kerry Burnite. [See the [article](#).] Almost from the beginning, it became clear that BMAV members have a lot of interests, which is reflected in the variety of special interest groups they have created. In addition to sharing those interests, the group gatherings also provide great opportunities for members to socialize and make connections with neighbors, some of whom they don't know well...yet.

Our special interest groups include the new arts club, birding, bridge, hiking, knitting, men's lunch out, ladies lunch out, neighborhood architectural walks and aging, dying and death. If you're a BMAV member, we encourage you sign up for a special interest group. If you don't see one that piques your curiosity and have a particular interest that you think others might share, contact [Elizabeth Haile](#) or Programs Chair [Elyse Jacob](#), who will help get you started.

Here are a few snapshots of our members enjoying themselves in special interest group activities:



Men's lunch out



Knitting and Friends



Architectural walk in Greenwich Forest



Inaugural Ladies lunch out

Good news!

Funding

BMAV is the recipient of a community grant from Montgomery County for fiscal year 2019. [We also received one in FY 2018 and FY 2017.] We are fortunate to receive this funding, thanks in no small part to the hard work of Executive Director Elizabeth Haile.

Like other villages, our funding sources also include membership fees and individual donations. We continue to try to diversify and strengthen other funding sources, including matching donations. If you're interested in providing funds for a matching donation, please contact [Elizabeth](#).

Membership

BMAV continues to have strong growth; we now have 87 members. That said, we hope to expand our membership, so please help spread the word to your friends and neighbors. Our office has brochures and flyers, so if you'd like to have some on hand to give to friends or hand out at a community event, call us at 240-630-2628 or send an [email](#).

Members, check your email in September for an updated membership directory.

Services

We're fortunate to have a 1:1 volunteer-to-member ratio, which exceeds the average for many villages. We have the capacity to take on more service requests from full service members (whose membership includes access to our volunteer services). If you're a full member and need assistance, such as a ride to the doctor's office (as this issue's interviewee did; see next article), small household repairs, or help with tech troubleshooting, let us know. Requesting a service is easy, as is volunteering to help a village number: contact Elizabeth Haile by [email](#) or call 240-630-2628 and she'll follow up.

New Board members

The board of BMAV welcomed four new members this year: Bob Metzler, Alice Padwe, Jane Boynton and Tom Henteleff. The board also thanked Sylvia Winik, who is stepping down as Vice Chair, for her committed service to the village in several areas of endeavors.

Interview with BMAV member Marj Stoller

Art has threaded through Marj Stoller's life and now is a major focus in her retirement. Her watercolors have been in many juried art shows and are sought by private collectors. Some of her works were recently on exhibit at the Connie Morella (Bethesda) library. You can see more of her paintings on her [website](#).



As a student at Smith College, Marj was an art history major, minoring in studio art and architecture. In the years after college, she studied calligraphy, serigraphy, photography, scientific illustration and architectural drafting. In one way or another, each came into play in her career, first in her job with Jack L. Larsen Textile Design and Herman Miller Furniture Company and then in project management in New York City for Raymond Loewy Industrial Design.

The final 20 years of her career were at the Smithsonian Natural History Museum. She was director of temporary and special exhibits for her last ten years. It was during her earlier years there that she tried her hand at scientific illustration, which is very exacting. She found she didn't have the patience for it.

When she retired, Marj knew she wanted to take up art for pleasure. She tried acrylics, oil and pastels but decided she liked watercolors best. She said she especially likes the immediacy of watercolors, the way they flow around the paper and the unexpected effects one can get. If she doesn't like the results, she can throw it away and start over.

Marj's inspiration for her art has several sources. Two primary ones are plants -- the wonderful and varied green perennials growing in her gardens and ones she sees elsewhere, and her travels. She recently returned from a trip to Costa Rica with a painting group that spent time in the rain forest, where they saw amazing foliage, flowers and clouds. She did some on-site painting and has done a few since her return, working from memory and her photographs.

She typically paints a couple of hours a day and takes regular painting classes at the Yellow Barn in Glen Echo Park. She also cuts her own mats, does her own framing and maintains her website.

Marj is smitten with Italy. She first went years ago with her husband on his business trips. They liked it so much that they returned just about every year to the Tuscany-Umbria border area. Because of her love for Italy, she took up Italian and is now reasonably fluent. She's part of an Italian reading and conversation group that has read over 80 novels in Italian. They read 40-60 pages a week and discuss what they've read afterward -- in Italian, of course.

Asked why she joined BMAV, Marj said simply, "It's an absolutely wonderful idea." Having been in her Edgemoor house for 52 years, it's clear she wants to age in place. She has first-hand experience with the benefits of the village's services to full members. Last year she broke her

kneecap playing tennis and needed help getting to doctors' appointments. She put in a service request, and presto, BMAV members who were neighbors but whom she didn't know at all volunteered and drove her to and fro. That's what BMAV is about: neighbors helping neighbors.

Recent BMAV events of interest

Men's lunch out. Eight men braved 90 degree heat and a thunderstorm to attend the June Men's Lunch Out at their usual eating place. They enjoyed learning about fly fishing from Bob Berish but stayed away from current affairs, much to the chagrin of Fred Phillips. They concluded by talking about their designated topic, travel, and enjoyed hearing about Tom Parker's trip to Egypt and Israel, some experiences in Sante Fe, New Mexico, and guidance about traveling to Cuba.

At the July men's lunch out, County Cable Montgomery came to film and interview some of the attendees for an upcoming [Did You Know](#) episode that will feature villages. It's expected to air in September.

Ladies lunch out. On a perfect June day, seven women enjoyed lunch and conversation at BMAV's inaugural ladies lunch out on Praline's rooftop restaurant. The second and third ladies lunch out events were at different restaurants – Passion Fish in downtown Bethesda and the Irish Inn at Glen Echo. We'll alternate in upcoming months between in-town restaurants and those a bit further away that offer free parking. The [next ladies lunch out](#), on September 13, will be at Persimmon on Wisconsin Avenue. Join us!

Inaugural hike by new special interest group. On a steamy July 11, five hardy hikers hiked the River Trail north from Great Falls, Virginia, for about two hours out. The trail, which, parallels the Potomac, was beautiful, deliciously shady and flat with few roots. The hikers enjoyed the camaraderie and the exercise very much and look forward to their next outing on September 5.



Happy hour potluck. Seventeen members gathered at Lynn Barclay's house on July 22 for good conversation and good food brought by the participants. All look forward to the next one, whenever it may be. If you'd like to host a potluck or other social gathering, contact [Elizabeth Haile](#).



Upcoming events

September 5, 8:30 am. [BMAV Hiking Club](#) is meeting for a shady hike to the river at Cabin John Local Park. Meet at the parking lot at 7401 MacArthur Boulevard. This hike includes some steps and up and down trails. Walking sticks or poles would be handy. [RSVP](#) if you'd like to meet up or to be added to the list for future outings.

September 13. [Ladies Lunch Out](#), noon, at Persimmon Restaurant, 7003 Wisconsin Ave. [RSVP](#) so we can make reservations. There's ample parking in the county lot behind the restaurant.

September 13. [BMAV happy hour](#) at Mon Ami Gabi, 4:30-6:30 pm. No need to RSVP.

September 16. [Speaker series: 50 After 50: Reframing the Next Chapter of Your Life](#). Author Maria Olson will talk about her crusade, at age 50, to make the most of whatever time she had left by doing 50 new things that were significant to her. Discussion and refreshments will follow. [Arranged by the BMAV aging, dying and death interest group.] Battery Park Community Clubhouse, 4-5:30 pm. Space is limited. BMAV members and guests, please [RSVP](#) by September 2.

September 18. Men's Lunch Out at Cesco Osteria (7401 Woodmont Avenue), noon-1:30 pm.

September 19. [BMAV Tech Tutors](#): one-on-one help with your devices. 1 pm. Bring in your cellphone, smartphone, iPad, Kindle or laptop and get your questions answered on most any tech question from trained and tech-savvy high school students. Free. Bethesda-Chevy Chase Regional Services Center, 4805 Edgemoor, 2nd floor. BMAV members only. [RSVP](#) by September 14 so we can match you up with a student.

September 20. [Visit to the Freer Gallery of Art's](#) Peacock Room with BMAV's arts interest group, noon-2 pm. Lunch afterward in the Castle café for those who are interested. Open to BMAV members and friends. [Registration](#) recommended.

September 22. Join us at a [wine and cheese social](#), to reconnect with friends and socialize at the home of Jim and Naomi Collins, 5-7 pm. Members, friends and potential members welcome. [RSVP](#) required.

October 4. [America's Musical Journey](#), a 3-D movie celebrating the unique diversity of cultures and the creative risk-taking that characterize America, as told through its music. A discussion, led by BMAV member Chris Palmer, co-founder of the foundation that produced the movie, will follow. National Museum of American History theater, 12:30-2:30 pm. Members and friends welcome. Tickets are \$8 in the museum lobby. [RSVP](#) here.

October 5. [Free tour of Hillwood Museum](#). Arrive at 10:30am to tour "Faberge Rediscovered" individually and then partake in an 11:30 am docent-led tour of the mansion. Members have generously donated ten free passes (admission for additional guests is \$18) first-come-first-served for BMAV members or guests/potential members. [RSVP](#) as soon as possible and no later than October 1 to reserve your spot.

October 9. [Free tickets to the Newseum](#) and "1968: Civil Rights at 50." Members have generously donated eight free passes for BMAV members only (admission for additional guests is \$20 and up) on a first-come basis; five are still available. [RSVP](#) as soon as possible and no later than October 5. Attendees will carpool to the museum's parking garage, leaving by 10 am, and tour the museum at their own pace.

October 20. [Speaker series](#). David Stewart, author of *Impeached: the Trial of Andrew Johnson*, will describe this difficult period of our history and the fight for President Lincoln's legacy. Open to BMAV members and friends, 3:30-5:30 pm, at Battery Park Community Clubhouse (7908 Glenbrook Road). Space is limited; please [register](#) by October 2.

October 22. [Tech Tutors: Consumer Reports and Washington Checkbook](#) online. Get the most out of your library card by learning how to use two of the most sought-after databases our libraries offer. At the Connie Morella (Bethesda) library in the large meeting room, 2-3 pm. [Registration required](#).

Prospective outing. BMAV's arts interest group is trying to arrange a date in October to tour to [Glenstone Museum](#) in Potomac, which will reopen on October 4 after significantly expanding its exhibition space and landscaped grounds. Free admission. We expect to hear just after Labor Day when we can bring a group. Please [RSVP](#) if you think you'd like to go so we can gauge how many members might be interested.

Be sure to check our [calendar of events](#) for recent additions, including non-BMAV community events. And full service members, remember that you can ask for a ride to any event by calling or emailing the office (240-630-2628 or directorbmavillage@gmail.com).

Shared interest groups

Art club. The club's next meetup will be on September 20 at the Freer Gallery of Art, noon-2 pm. If you're interested in meeting up to take a class or paint together and visit galleries or museums, contact [Sylvia Winik](#).

Aging, dying and death. The group usually meets monthly, 4-5:30 pm, at the home of Chris Palmer. The next meeting is Sunday, September 16. For more information, contact [Chris Palmer](#).

Birding. [David Moulton](#), leads early morning neighborhood bird walks about twice a month. Contact him for more information or to be added to the group's list of walkers.

Bridge. We have one foursome playing regularly. If you would like to learn more or form another group, please contact [Elizabeth Haile](#). Beginners welcome.

Hiking club. Neighbor [Ann Bennet](#) has started a hiking club with BMAV for leisurely strolls or more advanced hikes. The [next outing](#) is on the Cabin John River Trail. [RSVP](#) if you'd like to join this hike or to be added to the list for future outings.

Knitting and Friends. The knitting and conversation group meets every 2–3 weeks in a relaxed and fun atmosphere in a member’s home. All levels of expertise are welcome. Contact [Hanne Caraher](#) for the date and location of the next gathering.

News you can use

County resources for seniors

Montgomery County’s website has a section called [Senior Site](#) that has a wealth of information about county resources for seniors behind each of its major topics: consumer issues, employment and volunteering, health, recreation, safety, senior housing (including villages), caregiving support (see below), tax and finance, and transportation. There’s also a calendar of activities and events, the county’s annual digitized resource guide and links to [Seniors Today](#) on County Cable Montgomery.

Caregiver support

If you’re caring for a loved one or if you or someone you know is contemplating getting caregiver support, the [specialized sub-section](#) of the county’s Senior Site website (see above) can help. It has much helpful information on what in-community and in-home local caregiver support resources are available, whom you can talk to about caregiving, taking care of yourself, caring for someone with Alzheimer’s, how to access short-term care for a loved one, and how to assure that your loved one is cared for when you’re away from home.

MC311 customer service

Here’s another county service that you should know about: MC311 customer service. It’s designed as an easy way for residents to get answers to questions about the county and to request services, either by dialing 311 or going online.

If you call 311, you’ll talk to a real person. If she or he can’t answer your question, you’ll be connected or directed to the county office that can. And if you have a service request, such as getting a pothole fixed, she/he will take it down and refer it to the appropriate office. You can call back or go online to check on the status of your service request.

If you go online (www.montgomerycountymd.gov/mc311/), you’ll find the top 10 requested services, such as how to get a bulk trash or scrap metal pickup. If that doesn’t address your issue, you can enter a search term or click on “Browse all services,” where you’ll find a list of county departments and offices that will take you a clickable list of the services and responsibilities of each. It’s there you can make a service request.

In your editor's experience, service requests are handled very promptly, sometimes even the same day, such as a pothole repair. No guarantees, but you're likely to be pleased with how quickly you get a substantive response. Our tax dollars at work.

Free security freeze on your credit files coming soon

A new federal law that goes into effect on September 21, 2018, will enable you to place and remove a security freeze on your credit files at no cost. A credit freeze blocks lenders from pulling your credit reports, a powerful tool to thwart identity thieves from using your financial information to open credit cards or take out loans.

With a freeze, a credit bureau can't release any information without your permission.

Currently, fraud alerts last 90 days. Starting next month, an initial fraud alert will last for one year. It will still be free and identity theft victims can still get an extended fraud alert for seven years.

For more information, see the [FTC consumer blog](#) and a recent *Washington Post* article.

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