



BETHESDA METRO AREA VILLAGE

Your home Your neighborhood Your future

"I think BMAV is wonderful.... YOU and the committed BMAV members are what makes this group so congenial and effective in building a community within our larger community. The Village brings retired residents together in much the same way that the elementary school parent groups unite families in that stage of life." – BMAV member

Our community volunteers

Andrea and Michael Witt are long-time volunteers in the community and recently took up volunteering for Bethesda Metro Area Village.

Andrea learned of the village from member Hanne Caraher, who lived on their street, BMAV yard signs she saw in the neighborhood, BMAV's website, and other sources. She signed up to volunteer about a year before the pandemic was declared. So far, she has driven BMAV members to medical appointments and elsewhere, brought in members' trash and recycle containers from the curb, and the like.



Andrea has been a volunteer court-appointed special advocate for several years, advocating for the best interests of children referred by Montgomery County Juvenile Court. Pre-pandemic, she also volunteered in the administrative office at Pyle Middle school.

Michael, a new BMAV volunteer, looks forward to meeting with male BMAV members for "friendly conversation" and providing services to other BMAV full-service members. He sold his company, which reported on energy and environmental issues, to *Politico* two years ago. As a volunteer, he's coached girls' JV basketball at Whitman High School for eight years and also mentored students.

Michael sees volunteering for BMAV as a way to meet people in “the older community” because, he says, there is so much to learn from them. More broadly, he is interested in how neighborhoods can support seniors. As part of his “next act,” he wants to build something that focuses on senior issues and that demonstrates that “we (seniors) do have something to contribute.”

Thank you, Andrea, Michael and all our volunteers!

What are service requests and how do they work?

Full service BMAV members can get rides, deliveries, help at home with tech support or light handyman tasks, help lifting or moving items, moving garbage cans, emergency snow removal, and friendly visits and calls. Social members who would like these services can change to full-service membership status when returning from the hospital, or the like. All services are provided by vetted and trained volunteers – BMAV members themselves or neighbors in Bethesda, such as the Witts, featured above. Volunteers undergo a mandatory background check and take appropriate covid safety precautions.

“I volunteered to provide a ride for a member, and it was so rewarding. It was fun to talk with her and I remembered how I always enjoy doing it.” – BMAV member

When a service request comes in by phone or email, Elizabeth finds out the relevant information and emails a confidential request to volunteers who may be able to provide the requested service. She matches the available volunteer with the requesting member and makes sure the volunteer can perform the service, such as stowing a walker or navigating a parking garage. This information is kept confidential in BMAV’s database.

Our current volume of requests averages about two a week. BMAV fills almost all its service requests, but if one cannot be filled, Elizabeth will work with the member to find alternative help. BMAV keeps track of time spent on requests for grant reports.

If you are interested in volunteering for BMAV, becoming a full-service member to be eligible to receive services, or want more information, contact Executive Director Elizabeth Haile or Volunteer Services Committee Chair Bruce Coolidge at info@bmavillage.org. They would love to talk with you.

Support Bethesda Metro Area Village

Everyone's enthusiasm, energy and creative ideas and expertise are needed to sustain and grow our village. But as is the case with most age-in-place villages, membership fees cover only a portion of BMAV's operating budget. This month we launch our annual fundraising campaign to close that gap as we plan for the future of BMAV. If you would like to help the village continue to provide programs and connections in our community, you can donate online (www.bmavillage.org/donate). If you prefer, you can call the office 240-630-2628 to make a payment over the phone or have a form mailed to you.

If you are required to take a required minimum distribution this year, consider making a qualified charitable distribution (QCD) to BMAV, which is a qualified 501(c)(3) charitable organization. See a simplified explanation of QCD in the March-April 2021 newsletter, page 11, on the [BMAV website](http://www.bmavillage.org).



BMAV's nominating committee

Each fall a BMAV nominating committee seeks nominations for potential board members and officers and determines a slate for terms starting in January. For more information, contact committee members Gail Shearer, Elyse Jacob or Stephanie Sutton. Our village is so grateful for their work and the work of the entire Board.

Interview with members Patti Steckler and Phiroz Bhagat

After living decades in New Jersey, Patti Steckler and Phiroz Bhagat recently moved to Bethesda to be near their daughter in Rockville. Patti says they "hit the jackpot" with the relocation. They love Bethesda's convenience, restaurants, and diversity. They are equally enthusiastic about BMAV. They find our village very welcoming and a wonderful way to meet interesting people of varied backgrounds and make new friends.



Patti grew up in New Rochelle, NY. In high school, she loved theater and French and developed an interest in psychology from one of her classes. She realized neither theater nor French were likely to lead to a career but psychology could. From then on, she knew that would be her professional field. It was. She went to Brandeis for an undergraduate degree and Case Western Reserve for a Ph.D. She was a clinical psychologist for 40 years, retiring shortly before their move here.

Throughout her career, Patti stayed involved in developments in her field and served in leadership positions: as the youngest president of the New Jersey Psychological Association and president of the New Jersey Association Women Therapists.

Patti got “a little restless” the last few years of her career and looked for a new interest. She found one: writing. In 2016, she began taking courses through Johns Hopkins University in creative non-scientific fiction writing. She received a master’s degree in 2019 and now regularly contributes articles and other pieces to at least two publications. She’s currently taking a class at The Writer’s Center in Bethesda.

Phiroz grew up in Bombay, India. His father was a renowned doctor, and the assumption was that Phiroz would follow in his footsteps. Phiroz had other ideas. He was fascinated with cars and wanted a more technical education. He was accepted at the highly competitive Indian Institute of Technology, where he earned a degree in mechanical engineering. He attended the University of Michigan for a Ph.D. in thermodynamics, followed by two years at Harvard as a postdoc. He then joined the faculty at Columbia University.

Phiroz and Patti met at a dinner party when he was on the faculty and she was a psychology intern. They clicked and married a year and a half later.

During Phiroz’s third year at Columbia, he consulted for Exxon over the summer to get some industrial experience. While there, he solved a major problem, which gave him great satisfaction. He loved teaching but left Columbia a year later to work for Exxon. He retired from Exxon after 25 years.

The final chapter of Phiroz’s career was as a consultant with a hedge fund, where he learned the language of that field and applied what he wrote in his book, *Pattern Recognition in Industry*.

Phiroz retired for good in 2015 and says he “loves every minute of retirement,” waking up each day with nothing on the horizon. He still enthusiastically wrestles with physics problems and pursues his two passions: listening to classical music and books. He reads a good deal of history and good fiction and *loves* having lots of books around. He said it was hard paring down his vast library in preparation for the move here.

Patti and Phiroz have traveled a lot over the years, including many times to India to visit family, and to England, Italy, and France. Phiroz’s favorite place is London, especially Charing Cross Road, with its many quirky specialty book stores. Hands down, Patti’s favorite place is Paris.

New feature

With this issue, we introduce what we hope will be a recurring feature: mini-reviews of works of fiction that speak to issues of aging and ageism with which many of us can identify.

Memento Mori, by Muriel Spark, Macmillan, 1959

Memento Mori is a delightful romp through life's later years, featuring a cast of quirky septuagenarians, both the gentrified upper crust and those in service to them. With humor, irony, and a light touch, Spark takes on weighty issues of aging and ageism, such as invisibility. Older people remain their younger selves only housed in aging bodies but are often relegated to the margins of life and made to feel invisible by younger folks.

I wish *Memento Mori* and its timeless wisdom about aging graced the bookshelves of readers of all ages.

- Patti Steckler

If you have read a work of fiction whose theme or content addresses a facet of aging that you think would be of interest to BMAV members and could provide a brief description, we would love to hear from you. Contact newsletter editor [Lynn Barclay](#).

Recent events of interest

Enjoying our last outdoor coffee talk meetup of the year



New member social at Tim French's house



Fun outings: visiting Glenstone Museum, hiking on Glover Archibald Park trail, canoeing on the Potomac, and dining out together at Rosemary Bistro Café





Upcoming events. Mark your calendars now, and think of non-member friends or neighbors who might welcome the chance to join you at a village event or two.



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.

Learn how to choose a Medicare Part D drug plan, Tuesday, November 1, 4-5 pm

If you have drug coverage through Medicare Part D, now is the time to research your options. Open enrollment has started and lasts until December 7. Many people find they can save hundreds, even thousands of dollars by switching plans. If you would like to learn how to find the plan best for you in this Zoom presentation, join Gail Shearer and Francie de Peyster, who will walk you through it. [RSVP](#) recommended. Open to BMAV members and volunteers only.

Optimal exercise prescription for cognitive and physical benefits, Monday, Nov. 7, 3-4 pm

Learn about the latest scientific evidence on the optimal exercise prescription to preserve cognition and improve strength and function. You will see some of the best exercises you can do to promote healthy aging. The session will conclude with time for Q&A and a robust discussion. Register [here](#) for the Zoom link.

Tech Tuesday, November 8, December 13, 12-1 pm, via Zoom.

BMAV members and volunteers, please join us the second Tuesday of every month at noon to talk tech with volunteer Tony Mastria. He gives advice on universal problems and answers your specific questions about computers, smartphones, anything tech-related. Open to full and social members. Join as many or few sessions as you like, but send an RSVP by the day before with your question to give Tony time to prepare.

Tony also discusses a new topic each month. In November, it'll how to access digital items from the library (audiobooks, ebooks, e-magazines, etc). In December, he'll talk about private browsing and messaging apps.

Tai Chi (in-person), Wednesdays, November 9-December 21 (no class November 23), 10-11 am



Members of Bethesda Metro Area Village, Bradley Hills Village and Chevy Chase At Home are invited to weekly tai chi classes with internationally recognized master Nick Gracenin teaching. He will focus on the essentials and forms of traditional tai chi to improve balance, circulation, strength, and relaxation. All levels welcome. \$15 per class, \$75 for all six. [Register with BMAV](#) and pay at the class via cash, check,

mobile payment or credit card. Held at the Town of Chevy Chase hall, 4301 Willow Lane, Chevy Chase, MD 20815.

TED Talks, Wednesday, November 9, December 7, 4-5:30 pm

Join hosts Paul Thorn and Barbara Reese for a new series of TED Talks. For this popular program, BMAV members watch selected TED Talks together and discuss their reactions and the most important takeaways. The November 9 topic is fostering resilience. Come for what is sure to be enriching conversations with other BMAV members. Register [here](#) for the Zoom link.

The benefits of palliative care, Monday, November 14, 4-5 pm (rescheduled).

Dr. Steven Wilks, hospice and palliative care specialist at Suburban Hospital, will lead a discussion on palliative care, how it differs from hospice care, and strategies for families to effectively communicate about the care of a loved one. Open to the public; registration required [here](#). After registering, you will receive a confirmation email and information how to join the meeting. Come with questions or share them ahead with [Chris Palmer](#).

The dying Constitution, Tuesday, November 15, 1-2 pm, via Zoom

David K. Shipler, Pulitzer Prize-Winning author and former foreign correspondent of *The New York Times*, will discuss liberals' belief in a "living Constitution" that can be applied to contemporary issues with little regard for the Framers' intentions, versus conservatives who, it is argued, are subjecting the document to a pinched interpretations that starve the Constitution

of its vitality in a modern world. Register [here](#) for the Zoom link. BMAV, Chevy Chase At Home, and Bradley Hills Village are co-sponsoring this event.

Notre Dame: restoring an icon, Tuesday, November 29, 1-2 pm

The ongoing reconstruction of Notre Dame, severely damaged by a devastating fire in April 2019, is posing hard questions of historic preservation and revealing strong opinions about what constitutes a proper reconstruction of this iconic cathedral. Join art historian Judy Scott Feldman, PhD, for this talk. Open to friends and neighbors. [RSVP](#) for the Zoom link.



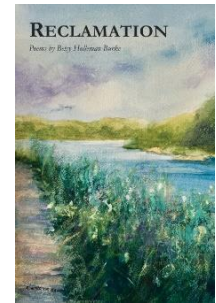
Solutions for Hometown Connections, Tuesday, December 6, 2-3 pm

[Solutions for Hometown Connections](#) (SHC), a nonprofit organization that works with refugees and immigrants to connect newcomer families to our community and provides a network of mentors, tutors, and community connections. SHC founder Merritt Groeschel will talk about the issues facing refugees as they try to navigate life in the US and how neighbors can help.

BMAV member Sandra Foote will discuss her experience spearheading a community effort to sponsor one Afghan family in Bethesda and how others can learn from the obstacles this family overcame. Register for this Zoom meeting [here](#).

Reclamation, by Betsy Holleman Burke, Thursday, December 8, 2-3 pm

BMAV is delighted to welcome Betsy Holleman Burke upon the publication of her third book of poetry, *Reclamation*. Betsy will read her poems, which go to the heart of pain and loss and explore the intersection between creativity and spirituality. She will be glad to answer questions about her creative process. [RSVP](#) for the Zoom link.



Tech Tutors: one-on-one help with your devices. Saturday, December 10, 10-11 am, BMAV members only

Do you have a question about using your iPhone or Android smartphone? Want to learn how to add or use apps or how to text? Bring any of your portable devices (phone, iPad, Kindle, laptop) to the library and get your questions answered by tech-savvy area students. You'll be paired up with a student volunteer who can help diagnose and fix most any troubles with your devices. You will need to know your logins for Apple ID or other accounts.

[RSVP](#) required by December 8 so that we can match you up with a student. If this time slot doesn't work for you, please let us know and we'll try to set up a different day or time.

Off the beaten path in Montgomery County, Monday, December 12, 2-3 pm

An illustrated presentation of the top 10 lesser-known spots in Montgomery County with historical importance, amazing natural beauty, or superlative in some other way, such as famous residents' homes, houses designed by famous architects, spots with connections to events of national significance, oases of natural beauty, and museums every bit as good as those on the Mall. Sponsored by Montgomery History and Bethesda Metro Area Village.

Free and open to the public. No registration required. Join Zoom link [here](#); meeting ID: 875 7191 6419, passcode: 367334.

Beginners' chess club, Sundays through December 18, 4-5pm

BMAV members and volunteers are invited to free online chess classes, taught by high school chess expert and tutor Uday. Students will pair off and play practice games live on screen while Uday gives direction. Uday also will delve deeper into chess theory and explain openings. All are welcome, even if you did not attend earlier beginning chess classes. Plan to attend for multiple classes. Owning a chess board is not required. [RSVP](#) so Elizabeth can get you set up on chess.com.

Celebrating the winter solstice, Wednesday, December 21, 4:30-5:30 pm

BMAV members and volunteers join in for a celebration of the winter solstice. This period can be a time of respite, regrouping, and slowing down. We can learn from people living in northern areas how to receive the winter solstice in a positive light. Let's light candles, sip some good cheer, and toast each other this holiday season. [RSVP](#) for Zoom link.



The (Aging Well) shared interest group is one of the main reasons I wanted to keep up my BMAV membership. Of all the other sessions for this group, the one this Sunday might be one of the most important "take-aways" I have from being associated with the BMAV and knowing you....so that's saying quite a bit. I look forward to buying the book, (setting) up our "Medical Go-Bag," modifying our current advanced directives, where we keep them, and how we involve our adult kids in this process...Onward, together, with admiration and gratitude!" – BMAV member

Shared interest groups for members

Afghan refugee assistance. Since last fall, several BMAV members have been helping a young Afghan refugee family get settled in Bethesda. Anyone who is willing to be a driver occasionally and has room for an infant car seat and a toddler car seat, please contact Elizabeth at director@bmavillage.org. She will put you in contact with the right person in the Afghan refugee assistance group.

Aging well. This popular discussion group meets via Zoom monthly on Sundays at 4 pm; the next meeting is November 14, on the benefits of palliative care. To be added to his email list or for more information, contact host [Chris Palmer](#). Written summaries of members' contributions from these meetings are on the BMAV website in the [Forums](#) section (accessible to members only).

Armchair travelers. Do you have photos from trips you've taken? Armchair travelers would love to hear about your trips. [Diane Goldman](#) can help with the presentation if you don't know how to screen share; just send her your digital photos ahead of time. Please contact her if you're interested.

Biking. Join other BMAV members on occasional bike rides, kayaking and canoeing outings. Contact leads [Steve](#) and [Stephanie Sutton](#) and [Elyse Jacob](#) for details, questions and to learn about future rides.

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 recommend and discuss favorite works in any genre. Rather than all reading the same book and discussing one book, the group discusses whatever they have read and enjoyed. Authors occasionally join the Zoom events to discuss their books. See the website [Forums](#) for a compilation of recommendations. 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 outside to share tips, activities, and inspiration. Hosted by [Ann Labriola](#) and [Naomi Collins](#). Make sure to RSVP for in-person meetups. Updates will be sent by 9 am.

Dining Out Together. Participants of this new shared interest group go to a different restaurant each month to get to know each other better and enjoy a fun meal out, sampling new places or new choices from old places. The next outings will be on Wednesday, November 16, at La

Ferme, and December 24 at Guardado's. Seating will be outdoors, if possible. Separate checks. RSVPs required; email [Janet Dante](#).

Film Fans. [Diana Kitt](#)'s film group meets monthly on Zoom to share titles of recommended films and to discuss, debate, critique two movies of the month members have selected. The theme varies month to month. Ten to twelve film fan regulars don't hold back providing their assessments of the reviewed movies, both positive and less positive. All are welcome.

Gardening. [Ann Labriola](#) hosts a group that meets to share gardening tours, tips, questions and answers. Contact Ann 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 on Zoom or on the outdoor patio at Silver 7150 Woodmont. All topics welcome. Coordinated by [Stephanie Sutton](#), [Susan Gorman](#) and [Barbara Brown](#). RSVPs required for in-person meetups.

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

Knitting, Needlework and Friends. Members of this group work on their own projects or a charity project. The group meets on Zoom and in person the first and third Tuesday of the month at 1 pm to share tips, patterns and socialize. All skill levels welcome. Contact [Sandi Ross](#) for more information.

Ladies' lunch. Members meet monthly at noon for lunch, conversation and camaraderie at an area restaurant or a member's home, sitting outside if weather permits. The next lunch meetups are November 30 and December 29. Hosted by [Lynn Barclay](#).

Men's lunch. [Bob Metzler](#) and [Reid Detchon](#) host lunch and discussion gatherings the first and third Tuesdays at 1 pm on Zoom or at area restaurants. Themed discussions are held the first half of the lunch; the second half is for catching up. RSVP required for in-person meetups.

Walkie-talkies. [Nancy Balz](#) leads a weekly 11 am Tuesday walk-and-talk group on a leisurely 30-45-minute circuit. If it's raining at all or below 49 degrees, the walk is canceled for the week. Contact Nancy if you are interested and would like to receive updates.

"I am glad our household joined the Village, enjoy walking in our neighborhood and seeing all the "Happy to be here" yard signs around, and specifically to have met many of you in the walking interest group."

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Suggestion box

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

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