



Mount Pleasant Village Newsletter

Volume 6, Issue 4 • September 2020

www.mountpleasantvillage.org

In This Issue:

The Interview Project
Beware of Medicare Scams
Dr. Bronner's Donates
GALA Theatre Featured
Welcome New Members!
Zoom Workshops Returning!
Help Feed Our Neighbors
Reflecting on Race
Meet the Street a la Mask
And... T-Shirts Are Back!

The Interview Project: All About Us

What do **you** like about being a member of the Village? What's missing from our repertoire? The Village's Interview Initiative, supported by the DC Department of Aging and Community Living (DACL), invites members to speak about themselves and their involvement in the Village with another Village member. The interviews allow members to share information about their needs and interests, while giving all parties an opportunity to connect during these isolating times.

The information we gather will help the Village leadership provide useful and relevant programs and services to members. While the Village may have anecdotal or less current information on the topics discussed in these interviews, the Interview Initiative provides quantifiable and detailed insights useful for future programming and for advocating for support from outside entities like DACL.

Fourteen Village members attended orientations this summer to learn to conduct the sessions and have begun the process. With each interview, the information shared is added to useful summaries like the one below:

Reliable Sources for COVID-19 Information

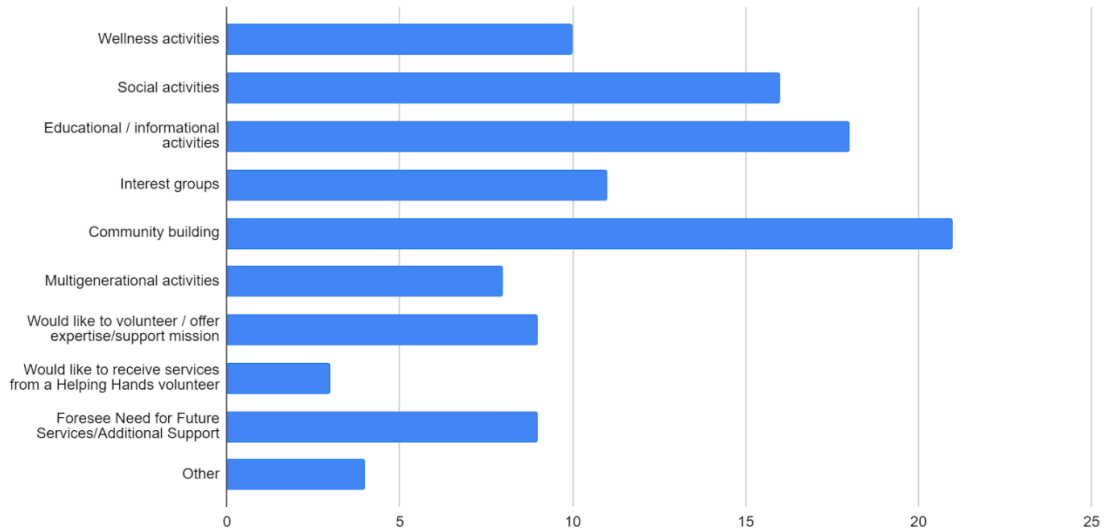
The following are valuable resources for information on the COVID-19 pandemic:

- Centers for Disease Control: <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus>
- National Institutes of Health (NIH): <https://www.nih.gov/coronavirus>
- District Government: coronavirus.dc.gov
- Mount Pleasant Village Website: www.mountpleasantvillage.org

To Request Assistance

The Village/Neighbors Helping Neighbors initiative provides volunteers to help with shopping, pharmacy pick-ups, and other tasks, as well as masks and food aid. To request assistance, call **202-573-7548** (please leave a voice message) or email request@anc-volunteering.org.

Why have you decided to renew your membership to Mount Pleasant Village?



Many of the interviewers are Cluster Coordinators, further strengthening that program and the Cluster Coordinators' connections with their Cluster members. As Cluster Coordinator Olivia Cadaval says, "It was great to be the scribe for my Cluster Co-Coordinator Michelle Hannahs' interview with Rob Fleming. I liked hearing Rob share his experiences over the years in Mt. Pleasant, but it was also a great window into the beginnings of the Village." (For more information about the Cluster Program, please contact Jill Eden.)

Village Member and Interviewer David Blackstun has volunteered a number of times with the "Helping Hands" program. For David, "This was another opportunity to connect with folks in the Village. Often discovering that we had crossed paths before at other Mt. Pleasant Village functions or just walking the neighborhood."



David and Courtney Arnold, left, are interviewed by Leo Sanchez and Mary Anne Gibbons – masked, distant, and outdoors!

So far, about 20% of Village members have participated in an interview. Our goal is 60% participation by early fall. **If you are contacted, we strongly encourage you to**

participate! Please email Josephine Escalante (josephineescalantedc@gmail.com) to learn more. Interviews can be online via Zoom, in-person with COVID precautions, or over the phone. Bob Hoffman (Hoff) a Village member who lives on Kenyon Street was recently interviewed. He commented, “It is really great to belong to a neighborhood group where the leadership is truly interested in the opinions of each member. During my personal interview, I appreciated that I was able to share my experiences and suggestions about possibilities for future creative Village activities.”

Medicare Warns of Contact Tracing Scams

Medicare warns: Be aware of scammers pretending to be COVID-19 contact tracers. Someone may call and report that you have been exposed to a COVID case, requesting personal information. Legitimate contact tracers will **never** ask for your Medicare Number or financial information. If someone calls and asks for personal information like this, **hang up and report it at 1-800-MEDICARE.** For more information about Medicare and COVID, visit <https://www.medicare.gov/medicare-coronavirus>.

Dr. Bronner’s Donates Sanitizer

From Village member and ANC 1D Chair Robin Sandenburgh comes this great story:

Several weeks ago, a Mount Pleasant neighbor, Ryan Fletcher, reached out to the ANC after reading in Jack McKay’s *Nextdoor* newsletter about the \$10,000 grant ANC1D had made to support the Spanish Catholic Center food pantry.

Ryan is Director of Public Affairs and Media Relations at Dr. Bronner’s, the legendary soap manufacturer and an early adopter of sustainable business models, with the



coolest labels in the industry (<https://www.drbronner.com/>). After learning about NHN and the multiple food pantry sites we’re involved in, Ryan offered to donate Dr. Bronner’s hand sanitizer to be distributed along with food.

As you can see (left), a LOT of boxes of Dr. Bronner’s product were delivered yesterday; they’re currently living in my basement awaiting distribution at several neighborhood venues.

A big thanks to Ryan and Dr. Bronner’s, as well as to Bill Emmet and Chelsea Allinger, who arranged for the donation and delivery. For many of us who were around in the ‘60s, Dr. Bronner’s will always

hold a special place in our hearts - and on our bathroom shelves.

GALA Theatre Featured in September 17 Presentation

The Woman's National Democratic Club has announced "a continuation of our recurring series **Social Role of the Arts**. This fall, our theme is *Confronting Racism In and Through the Arts*. In honor of Hispanic Heritage Month, we're pleased to welcome GALA Hispanic



Theatre Co-Founders Hugo Medrano, Producing Artistic Director, and Rebecca Mead Medrano, Executive Director [and MPV member], to kick off the series.

"Like its roots in the Latin American theater, GALA has always had social justice and racial equality at its core. The Medranos

will explore various kinds of racism from within and without the Latinx community, and the role of artists to become catalysts for social change. They will also discuss a recent initiative called *Stories from the Park'n Lots* in which residents from their local community are invited into story circles to explore their issues such as lack of housing, gentrification, and racial tensions. These stories are being videotaped for development into a performance piece."

To register for the event, visit https://democraticwoman.org/event/9-17-20_gala/.

Welcome New Members!!

Sherrill Berger, of Newton St. NW

Viola Baecher, of Newton St. NW

Zoom Classes Coming Back

In August the Village sponsored three free Zoom workshops, teaching beginner through advanced skills. Dozens of Villagers learned how to use the many features of the Zoom App ("Skype on steroids") that let us come together online to meet, learn, exercise and even harmonize.

The workshops were so well received that the Village Program Committee has scheduled a new round of sessions after Labor Day:

- Beginner: Monday, October 19
- Intermediate: Tuesday, October 20
- Advanced: Wednesday, October 21

Biljana (“B”) Milenkovic, an employee of the DC Public Library who also leads workshops for Around Town DC (a service of the DC Department of Aging and Community Living), generously contributed her time and expertise to help Villagers learn the ins and outs of Zoom. In exchange for conducting these online workshops, she asked to be able to remind participants about the Census and the DC Public Library.

The Beginner workshop, among other things, covered how to create a Zoom account and use it to host a meeting; how to use the icons on the screen to conduct a public or private chat; how to get help on Zoom; and how to share your screen. The Intermediate workshop covered scheduling a meeting; how to be a host; how to make someone a co-host and how to keep uninvited people out of the meeting. The Advanced workshop covered breakout rooms; polling; and use of online tutorials, among other topics.

Participants found all three sessions helpful, calling B “extremely competent,” “a terrific teacher,” “quite winning,” “quite ethical,” and “very good.” Some plan to attend again as a refresher. For her part, B said she “enjoyed the workshops and loved interacting with the participants.”

“I believe in the mission of public libraries,” B said, “and I am proud of many of the services (including ‘my’ workshops) DC Public Library has been able to offer to our communities across city before and during the pandemic.”

Information about times and registration for the next series of workshops will be provided later this month.

GoFundMe Page Feeds Our Neighbors – Can You Help?

At the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic, [Food For All](#), a program that has been providing food to vulnerable populations in DC for decades, shifted its operations to meet the moment, drastically scaling up its food deliveries. In May, it joined forces with [Neighbors Helping Neighbors](#) (NHN), a grassroots volunteer network focused on serving the Mount Pleasant community. The Village is a founding partner of NHN.

Together, Food For All and Neighbors Helping Neighbors are now providing food aid to **400 households in the Mount Pleasant neighborhood every week**. Beneficiaries receive

a variety of shelf stable items, fresh produce, and milk at weekly distribution sites at Bancroft Elementary, Sacred Heart, the Woodner Apartments, and La Clínica del Pueblo. These distributions effectively reach some of Mount Pleasant's most vulnerable



residents directly in their communities, not only providing food but freeing up limited resources to pay for rent, utilities, and other necessities.

By relying on an enthusiastic group of volunteers and, whenever possible, procuring food through food rescue efforts and from discounted sources, Food For All has kept costs low. However, there are still costs

required for such a large operation. Food For All needs to purchase groceries, rent delivery trucks, and pay for gas. Every dollar counts!

\$10 buys a bag of nonperishable groceries to feed a family for one week.

\$15 covers gas for one week of deliveries

\$100 covers truck rental for one week of deliveries

Donate at <https://gf.me/u/ysc3x9> (Yes, it looks weird, but trust us! It works.)

Personal Exploration and Reflection Toward Racial Justice Action: a Dialogue

On June 6, the Board of Mount Pleasant Village adopted a statement affirming that Black Lives Matter and committing the organization to anti-racist action. In keeping with that commitment, the Diversity Committee has created an opportunity for Village members to reflect with each other (via Zoom) about racial justice and White supremacy. You can register for a small group session by emailing Rick Reinhard, rick@rickreinhard.com. Sessions will be facilitated by local resident Sonya Hoffman, who has extensive experience working with groups around the issues of race and racism. Sonya proposed the following questions:

What has living in this moment of national reckoning concerning people who are marginalized in this country brought up for you? And, what are you thinking that you might want to do differently because of this moment?

Zoom sessions will be offered:

- + Wednesday, September 23 at noon
- + Tuesday, September 29 at 7 pm
- + Saturday, October 3 at 4 pm

A maximum of 20 people per session will attend. Each session will be 90 minutes.

Meet the Street a la Masks

Mount Pleasant Street is open for business, and the popular “Meet the Street” program is back, with masks and social distancing. On September 8, ten Villagers sat down outdoors at Don Juan for a delicious dinner and a talk with owner Alberto.

Pictured are Jill Eden, Carolyn Kari, Jan Fenty, Phil Fenty, Michelle Hannahs, Larry Rickards, Tia Pratt, Claudia Schlosberg, Wayne Kahn, and Nancy Shia. (Perhaps our photographer enjoyed an adult beverage with his/her meal??)

Other restaurants open for outdoor dining include Marx Café, Haydee’s, and Purple Patch.



Village T-Shirts Are Back!

Refresh your fall wardrobe with a Mount Pleasant Village t-shirt. We have a full and fresh inventory. Below, all three styles are pictured: long sleeve, modeled by Rick Reinhard; Scoop neck, modeled by Jan Fenty; and traditional crew neck, modeled by Phil Fenty. Of course, we welcome a \$10 donation, but your enjoyment of the t-shirt is most important. Contact judy@judybyron.com with any questions and to arrange easy pickup or delivery.



JOIN MOUNT PLEASANT VILLAGE!

Membership Fee: \$50 annually per individual. For more information, contact Michael Burke at membership@mountpleasantvillage.org.

Donate: Make a tax-deductible donation by sending a check to Mount Pleasant Village at 1735 Lamont Street NW, Washington, DC 20010 or clicking the “Donate Now” button on our home page (mountpleasantvillage.org).

The newsletter is a cooperative effort! If you have questions, comments, or news to share, contact: information@mountpleasantvillage.org