BETTON HILLS NEIGHBORHOOD ASSOCIATION

FALL 2019 NEWSLETTER

https://bettonhills.us
Facebook: Betton Hills Neighborhood

Come Join Your Neighbors To Welcome the Fall Season at our Annual Fall Fest!

When: Sunday, October 27th, 4:00-6:30PM

Where: Harriman Circle

Event Highlights: Get your groove on with the Runaway Biscuits, enjoy a 'cruise in' of Betton classic and well loved vehicles, grab a bite at some of our city's beloved food trucks, and treat your sweet tooth with desserts provided by the Betton Hills Neighborhood Association! There is tons of fun in store for the kids too including crafts, games, and pumpkin decorating. Come join the fun!

Get more involved with our neighborhood! There is a group waiting for you!

Betton Hills Family and Children's Playgroup. Thursday 9:30 AM at Winthrop Park. Weekly. Open to parents, grandparents, nannies, etc. Dustin Carruthers, leader. Facebook: Betton Hills Family and Children's Playgroup.
Betton Ladies' Night. 2nd Tuesday; monthly. Megan Funkhouser, leader. Closed group Facebook: Betton Ladies Night.
Ladies' Bunco Night. Last Thursday; monthly. Beth Nolan, leader (Bmulrennan@gmail.com

Betton Hills: Beyond Wishin' and Hopin' and Thinkin' and Prayin' Plannin' and Dreamin'... Mike Brezin, BHNA President

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I run in our neighborhood a lot. There's a reason for that. I love its quiet, the natural beauty of our parks and canopied streets and yards, the appealing variety of homes, the friendliness of the dogwalkers, runners, walkers, and from-the-yard wavers I see, and the feeling that I'm safe from errant or speeding drivers (most times, anyway). It's more than that that keeps me living in Betton Hills, though. We have all sorts of levels of community from nearby neighbors to friendly exchanges with fellow walkers to the fun of neighborhood events to helping one another pre- and post-hurricanes. In sum, many reasons and loving feelings to consider Betton Hills home.

It's my nature to think about these neighborhood gifts and how fortunate we are to share them. Because of these gifts, while there are some things I would tweak, I'd like for Betton Hills to stay exactly as it is. That's the dreamer in me.

What's the Plan?

There's also a realist buried inside. He asks bothersome questions such as, "What should Tallahassee be like in 10 years? 25 years? What should Betton Hills be like then?" He recognizes that change is inevitable; that personal responsibility lies in how to direct that change in the most enhancing way. What's the plan?

While I don't believe there can be a point-by-point plan, there does need to be some overarching city (and county) direction based on our best guess of how to resolve current problems, maintain or enhance what we most appreciate and respect, and prepare for what we anticipate as future challenges and opportunities.

Theoretically, there is. It's called the Tallahassee/Leon County Comprehensive Plan. You may be aware two parts of the plan are currently being updated: land use and transportation. You may be, but I wouldn't be surprised if you were not aware of that four years and counting effort. Despite good intentions of the planners involved, critical planning foci have not been identified, the effort has not received endorsing support of the city administration or city commission, and citizen participation outreach and education has been woefully inadequate.

The Plan is Us

I had hopes that the new city commission would be able to right the ship, but, on their own, that is not the case. They need our help. And, to draw on the Allman Brothers, that means it's up to you and me, brothers and sisters, to try and try again. Because here in Tallahassee, we can't waste time no more. Time goes by like a hurricane and much faster things. (I hope you are fortunate enough to remember that great song, Ain't Wastin' Time No More.)

But, getting citizens and neighbors to pitch in is not easy. Many of us have been trained to be community consumers rather than community creators. We expect the streets to get paved, the crime to be low, the schools to be good, our city staff and leaders to be innovative, practical, and responsive, and our neighborhoods to stay as they are. That's what we buy with our taxes. We're finding that's not enough. A well-functioning community is not a purchased amenity. It's a work in progress and we all need to participate and work together in building it.

Help Crack the Nut

Here's the nut to crack for the next 25 years. How do we maintain/enhance the precious qualities of Betton Hills and other intown neighborhoods when faced with more people coming to Tallahassee, the reasonable expectation to increase population density intown rather than pay for sprawl, and the need to make housing more available and affordable to accommodate growth and maintain neighborhood vitality?

There's no silver bullet answer. Your friends and neighbors as BHNA officers and directors and other intown neighborhood associations are working together to find reasonable ways forward. It seems to me there are some worthwhile concepts being formulated. Here are the main ones in no particular order:

- Improve the citizen education, outreach efforts, and involvement so informed residents can voice their concerns and solutions and participate in growth management decision-making affecting their neighborhoods.
- Livability infrastructure first. Before contemplating higher density, provide for better walkability/bikability, nearby retail/entertainment, and public transportation.
- Establish design standards for additional housing options so the look and feel of a neighborhood is respected and maintained. Good design contributes to community.
- Make changes incrementally. Limit the scope and timing of zoning and land use changes to see what changes are working and not working and allowing for fixes as appropriate.
- Ensure the preservation/enhancement of the natural infrastructure of the neighborhood – the natural areas and open space in our parks, street and yard trees, water quality, stormwater management, etc.
- Support an active neighborhood association or homeowners association. Assist it to serve as a sounding board and feedback mechanism for city government and to enhance the neighborhood consciousness that creates a sharing and supportive community among new and established residents.

I've said my piece. What's your vision for Tallahassee? What's most important to you in Betton Hills? Want to get more involved in planning our future? Let me know. We have a place for you.

Hurray For Fall...And Betton Hills Fall Fest and Cruise In!
Margie McInnes and Mario Taylor

Ready to celebrate the coming of fall and no more 100 degree days? Oh Yeah!! Bring a blanket or lawn chair and join your neighbors at our annual Fall Fest on Sunday, October 27, 4-6:30pm.

This year we will gather at a new location – beautiful Harriman Circle and Park. And here's a shout out to all "Betton-ites": welcome in FALL and show off YOUR Favorite: bicycle, e-bike, tricycle, or unicycle; scooter, motor-bike, or Harley; stroller, red wagon, or Cozy Coupe; skateboard, hover-board, or Segway; Volkswagen van, bus, or Beetle; classic car, muscle car, Smart car, hybrid, or full electric; Benz, Beamer, or Bowtie, Lamborghini, Ferrari, Bugatti; or Model-T; golf cart, 4-wheeler, or wooden roller derby.

If it rolls bring it on over to Harriman Circle and meet your neighbors for a FUN-filled CRUISE-IN fall afternoon.

There also will be music, crafts, games, face painting, pumpkin decorating, door prizes, and information tables...and an incredibly short business meeting to vote on the proposed slate of officers for 2020.

To take care of any hunger pangs that may occur during this fun evening, there will be a variety of food trucks and your Betton Hills Neighborhood Association will provide drinks and desserts. If you are able to walk, bike or scooter your way to Harriman Circle, that will help with parking.

When you arrive, please sign in at the Welcome Table for a name tag and to enter for door prizes. If you would like to join or renew your neighborhood association membership, you can
pay your dues at the table.

Of course all of this fun requires some help, so if you can volunteer to help with any of the activities or with setting up/cleaning up, please email us.

Looking forward to seeing you at the Circle!

Margie: Margiemcinnes92@gmail.com
and
Mario: mariotaylor@comcast.net

Neighborhood Beautification:
Adopt-a-Tree This Year to Add Cooling Shade to Our Neighborhood Roadsides
Donna Legare

Hurricane Michael along with friends Hermine and Irma have toppled many fine trees in Betton Hills. I have recently noticed some of the big pines that withstood these hurricanes are only now dying. They may have had internal damage that is not visible; it can take up to two years after a windstorm for a tree to die. In addition, neighbors have been removing healthy trees from their yards to protect themselves from possible damage from future storms.

As a result, our neighborhood is becoming less "leafy" and hotter. If you are a walker, runner or bicycle rider, you feel the heat when you walk along a stretch of road that has no shade.

The City of Tallahassee has a FREE program that some neighbors have taken advantage of in past years. It is called Adopt-a-Tree. City residents may request up to two trees to be planted in the front yard within 100 feet of the centerline of the roadway. The resident needs to be within the City limits and must agree to keep each tree watered for one year. City personnel will visit each site prior to planting and will assist with tree selection and proper location. This is a FREE program. The City provides the tree along with FREE planting. For those people who are wary of large growing trees, there is usually a shorter tree such as Granny Greybeard (Fringe Tree) available. Even a small tree will eventually shade and cool the roadside. It will provide a refuge for birds and other wildlife, capture carbon, improve air quality, muffle road noise and beautify the neighborhood (and your yard!).

The City will advertise the program, usually in your utility bill, sometime this fall. At that time, the Betton Hills Neighborhood Association will also pass the word along to neighbors through emails and on Facebook. Let's cool down our roadsides by planting trees in our front yards.

Now's Your Chance . . . Volunteer!
Michael Bannister, BHNA Vice President

Your Neighborhood Association needs you! Volunteer! If you have a particular hobby, interest, or concern that you'd like to share with the neighborhood, you can lead the way on that. Some examples of neighbors stepping up are the Harriman Circle Christmas Caroling, Annual Easter Egg Hunt, Ladies Night, Bunco events, hurricane and storm prep, etc. You can also help us organize and put on our Fall Festival, Park Cleanups, Arbor Day, Food Truck Night, and other BHNA get-togethers. If you have a talent you'd like to share, the BHNA can help you get organized and get the word out throughout Betton Hills.

If you find yourself wanting to do more "steering" consider joining the Board of Directors. Fresh ideas, perspectives and energy are always a good thing in any organization. We have many opportunities to focus your interests and energy. The Board meets once a month except during the summer. We work on issues such as enhancing our parks, walker and bicyclist safety, traffic management, improving drainage, city-neighborhood planning and growth management, (cont'd.)

(con’td. from pg. 5) our neighborhood gatherings and, in general making Betton Hills an even friendlier, safer, and more uplifting neighborhood. Give us a hand!

Let the BHNA board know of your interest: board@bettonhills.us.

Keep Facebook Neighborhood-Friendly
Melissa Jacoby

Betton Hills Neighborhood is a closed Facebook group for Betton Hills residents. We all love our neighborhood and want it to be the best place in Tallahassee to live. This group forum is meant to be a positive place for neighbors to share information about our community. It has worked tremendously in that regard. We’ve let neighbors know of lost pets, competent tradespeople, City of Tallahassee work within the neighborhood; we’ve shared information about hurricane prep and impacts, neighborhood crime; we’ve sought neighborhood opinions on BHNA actions within the neighborhood and how it works with other neighborhoods on issues like the Midtown Garage and Accessory Dwelling Units (ADUs). In short, the Facebook group has been a wonderful information exchange for the neighborhood.

In a few instances, the administrators have been asked to intervene and even remove inappropriate posts. What’s inappropriate? To help answer that question, BHNA has created rules of engagement for the Facebook group. Please take a moment and review the rules below. These rules are also located under “About” on the group site.

1. Be Kind and Courteous
Let’s treat everyone with respect. Healthy debates are natural, but kindness is required. Off-the-cuff or even direct and authentic posts make groups spicy, but might also be taken as aggressive behavior toward a person. As always, think before “speaking.”

2. No Derogatory Comments
Derogatory comments about things like race, religion, culture, sexual orientation, or gender are not acceptable. If posted, they will be removed and if repeated, the author banned from the group.

3. Be Vigilant But Careful
We want to be vigilant against crime, but ask that you report suspicious activity to the police. Don’t take matters into your own hands. Avoid posting unverified photos.

4. No Promotions or Spam
Self-promotion, commercial advertising, spam and irrelevant links aren’t allowed. No memes or GIFs. Please use Facebook Marketplace for frequent personal sales. Teens can post their availability for jobs.

5. Privacy and Safety
Please be judicious about information you share. Although this is a closed group, don't share your address, phone number, or your vacation plans.

6. No Politics Please
We are an inclusive neighborhood with neighbors with wide-ranging political views. If you feel compelled to share your politics, please use your personal Facebook page.

That's it. The overwhelming majority of posts meet these posting rules, no problem. Thank you all for being such considerate neighbors.

Carol Bellamy Neighborhood Beautification Fund
Donna Legare

When you donate to the Carol Bellamy Fund, your dollars support neighborhood beautification and conservation projects. The fund has been used for Arbor Day plantings in our four neighborhood parks, to sponsor one of the McCord Park statues, to maintain the Betton Hills neighborhood markers, and to provide park benches, tables, recycling bins and plants for traffic islands. We use this fund to set up and maintain bluebird and wood duck nest boxes in McCord Park.

Last Arbor Day, over 25 neighbors showed up at McCord Park including a professional crew of certified arborists from ArborPro to plant native trees and shrubs, remove invasive plants, care for past plantings, maintain nest boxes and remove litter from the pond. We also rescued a bed of wild azaleas that had been planted years ago by Chuck Salter. They were overrun with invasive vines, mostly skunk vine and catclaw vine, though native grape vines were also removed. Camphor trees, Taiwan cherry trees, Chinese privet and tree Ligustrum also had invaded the wild azalea bed. These invasive non-native plants were cut and painted with an herbicide.
Arbor Day is always a fun event that starts with hot coffee and pastries and provides two hours of great exercise in the fresh air, working side by side with neighbors to improve habitat in the park. Very rewarding work!

McCord Park would look like a very different place without our Arbor Day volunteers and the funding provided by the Carol Bellamy Fund. There would be little diversity in trees and shrubs in the park and therefore fewer songbirds and other wildlife. We would be overrun with Chinese tallow trees especially around the perimeter of the pond. There would be few bluebirds. There would not be any blueberry bushes.

In my walks around the neighborhood, I recently noticed three large dead or dying pines in Chittenden Park. We will need to replace these with young ones next Arbor Day. Please donate to this fund when you pay your dues. Thank you!

Join Betton Hills 2019-20 Plan For Readiness And Emergency Preparedness (PREP)
Margie McInnes and Mario Taylor

We have been extremely fortunate to escape hurricanes this season…thus far! As you know, hurricane season continues until November 30, so it's important for us to continue to be aware and prepared.

Our neighborhood needs to be prepared for storms and disasters by being able to respond to our own needs until emergency managers, responders and utility crews can arrive. A baseline for hurricane preparedness is everyone having enough food, water and batteries to sustain themselves and their family members for 3-7 days after a storm hits our area.

But many residents may need additional assistance during and after a severe storm. That is where our neighborhood's PREP program comes in.

PREP helps us determine neighborhood assets and needs now, ahead of any storms. This includes checking with our neighbors to identify:

volunteer leaders;
tools (e.g., chainsaws, axes, etc.);
resources (e.g., gas cooking equipment);
materials (e.g., extra tarps, plywood);
skills (first aid, medical skills, mechanical skills) and people who may have needs that require special attention (e.g., have disabilities, frail, need oxygen or other equipment that requires electricity, etc

We need a PREP leader on every block to survey their immediate neighbors. Many folks have volunteered to be a PREP leader for their block, but we still need many more leaders for our big neighborhood. PREP leaders can take responsibility to cover only the number of homes they feel they can manage. PREP leaders are not expected to remain at home during a hurricane. Participation in PREP is totally voluntary.

Please contact us (see below) if you will volunteer to help your block. For long roads with lots of residents, you can choose how many neighbors you would like to survey. We will provide the survey forms and information about how to get started.

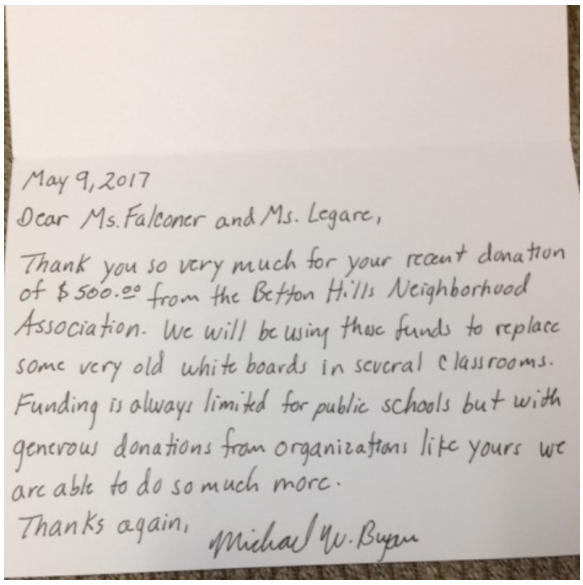
Many thanks to Gini Hosford West who is a nurse and who has volunteered to help us focus more attention on identifying the needs of the elderly and others who may require special attention in our neighborhood.

And many thanks to Eric Thorn who is helping to establish a "Betton Hills Chainsaw Brigade."
Please join us in this effort to help Betton Hills be a caring and safe community-rain and shine!

THANK YOU,
Margie: margiemcinnes92@gmail.com or Mario: mariotaylor@comcast.net

BHNA Partners with Our Public Schools:
Jack Robertson Partners for Excellence Fund
Mary Kay Falconer

BHNA values our neighborhood schools. Each year, we look for opportunities to support and fund activities at our schools that enrich the educational experience of the students. In the spring of 2019, the BHNA approved $1000 donations from our Jack Robertson Partners for Excellence Fund for our three neighborhood public schools, Kate Sullivan Elementary, Cobb Middle, and Leon High.



May 9, 2017
Dear Ms. Falconer and Ms. Legare,
Thank you so very much for your recent donation of $500.00 from the Betton Hills Neighborhood Association. We will be using these funds to replace some very old white boards in several classrooms. Funding is always limited for public schools but with generous donations from organizations like yours we are able to do so much more.
Thanks again, Michael W. Bryan

The funds for Leon High School go to the Leon Foundation which supports a wide range of education enhancement activities.

The funds for Kate Sullivan purchased picnic tables for an outdoor playground area that is used for older children. The note expressing appreciation for the donation from the principal at Kate Sullivan, Michael Bryan, is displayed. The funds for Cobb Middle School provided assistance for the summer reading program and activities in a new STEM class for the 6 th Grade. The principal, Sarah Hembree, shared multiple funding priorities with the BHNA board. She used the funds for the options that we thought were most appropriate.

Of course, many of us also support our public schools in other ways. One of these is mentoring students. Meg Guyton, a Betton neighbor, coordinates student mentoring at Kate Sullivan. If you are interested in mentoring, her email is ksesmentors@comcast.net. At Cobb Middle School, the principal mentioned that there will be opportunities for neighbors to assist as guest speakers or participate in other activities. You can find example activities at https://www.leonschools.net/cobb. A field trip to Marpan Recycling Center was mentioned as a possibility. I would like to join that trip!

Bill and Marge Mansfield Writer's Fund
Mike Brezin

The Bill and Marge Mansfield Writer's Fund supports Leon High students with writing talent and a commitment to journalism. The BHNA established this fund in 2000, shortly after Bill's death. Bill and Marge Mansfield served on our Board of Directors. Bill was a working journalist for much of his life, including a stint as Editorial Page Editor for the Tallahassee Democrat in the 1980's and 1990's. He was particularly committed to helping new journalists "find their voice."

Award winners are selected based on the student's diligent efforts in journalism and serving as a key worker for either the student newspaper or yearbook (the yearbook includes stories as well as pictures). Journalism teachers select the award winners. Last year's award amounts were: $300 for working on the school paper and $300 for the yearbook.

Here is an example Thank You note from one of last year's winners:

Alena Nash: *Thank You! I was so thrilled to receive the Writer's Fund Award. The Leon High Life has been such an important part of my life during my four years at Leon. It definitely helped me to "find my voice" at high school. I am attending the University of Florida in August and am thankful for the check. I hope to make you proud as I study engineering and pursue journalism outlets. Thank you again!*

The Mansfield Fund recognizes the importance of young writers developing their voices and telling their stories. It seeks to reward them for the writing challenges they've faced in high school. It also is meant to encourage them to further express themselves through writing . . . and maybe even through a college major in journalism.

Upcoming Events:

10/24/19: BHNA Fall Fest
4:00-6:30PM at Harriman Circle

12/24/19: Christmas Caroling
4:00PM at Harriman Circle
Thank you, Bill Jones

1/25/20: Arbor Day
9:00-11:00AM at McCord Park
Led by Donna Legare

4/11/20: Easter Egg Hunt
Chittenden Park
Orchestrated by Karen Weimer

April - June: Neighborhood Parties

Membership Has Its Benefits –
Renew/Join BHNA Now!
Michael Bannister, Membership

Joining the Betton Hills Neighborhood Association has never been easier. Join online (https://bettonhills.us/join) or complete and mail the membership form included in this newsletter. Membership is a real bargain at $10 a year per family. You can sign up for one or two year memberships.

Member dues fund this newsletter, our website, and the various neighborhood get-togethers and activities the BHNA

sponsors. Additional contributions to our special funds help beautify our neighborhood and support programs at our neighborhood schools, Kate Sullivan Elementary, Cobb Middle School, and Leon High School. The funds are described elsewhere in this newsletter. Your support for them does a lot of good and is greatly appreciated.
Don't delay, renew/join today!

Getting more BHNA members serves another important function, too. As the BHNA engages with the City of Tallahassee, both city commissioners and staff, it's very beneficial that they
know we represent a large group of concerned and engaged voters. City representatives rightly see membership numbers as an indication of the vitality of our neighborhood and as support for BHNA board actions on behalf of the neighborhood. Next to voting, joining the BHNA may be the easiest and most effective way to have your voice heard and respected by city government.

Think you may have already paid dues for 2020? Check to make sure. See:
https://bettonhills.us/members-2020.

2020 BHNA Officers and Board of Directors Slate

Here are the nominations for 2020 BHNA Officers and Boardmembers.

The slate will be presented to BHNA members for election at the Fall Fest.

Officers:
Mike Brezin President
Michael Bannister Vice President
Margie McInnes Secretary
Tom Schulte Treasurer

Board of Directors:
Mary Kay Falconer
Eliza Hawkins
Melissa Jacoby
Donna Legare
Casey McLaughlin
Mario Taylor

Betton Hills Neighborhood Association
P.O. Box 15612
Tallahassee, FL 32317-5612

JOIN BHNA OR RENEW YOUR MEMBERSHIP NOW!

BETTON HILLS NEIGHBORHOOD ASSOCIATION

P.O. BOX 15612, TALLAHASSEE,, FL 32317-5612

MEMBERSHIP FORM

Annual Membership Dues ($10 minimum)	*$_____*
Donation to Carol Bellamy Neighborhood Beautification Trust Fund	*$_____*
Donation to Jack Robertson Partners for Excellence School Fund	*$_____*
Donation to Bill and Marge Mansfield Fund for Young Writers	*$_____*
Additional Contributions	*$_____*
TOTAL	***$_____***

Membership Year: Please let us know if your contributions are for one year or two.

,
__ One Year: January 1, 2020 – December 31, 2020 (this year) ,
__ Two Years: January 1, 2019 – December 31, 2021

We have many great opportunities, big and small for you to get involved and help keep our neighborhood be a great place to live.
☐ ***Please contact me about volunteer opportunities.***

Your Name: _____
Address and Zip Code: _____
Email Address: _____
Phone (optional): _____

Enter your donation amounts, name and addresses. Make checks payable to BHNA. Send your form and check today (address above). You can also pay your membership online at:

https://bettonhills.us/join Thanks!