BETTON HILLS NEIGHBORHOOD ASSOCIATION

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

BHNA President Talk:
We've Got a Fantastic Fall Lineup for our Fiftieth Year!

By: Eliza Hawkins, BHNA President

As we come to the last few months of 2022, I hope you have had a wonderful year as, hopefully, life has finally returned to a comfortable post-pandemic normal. The BHNA plans to close out the year with a Fantastic Fun Fall lineup of events for our Fiftieth Anniversary! We have coming your way: Food Truck Thursday's through December (3rd Thursday of the month, Harriman Circle), the Fall Fest on October 16th, a Halloween event for kids, and Holiday Caroling on Harriman Circle on December 24th. Don't miss the fall fun! Sign up for our email list to keep up to date on all these events and more: https://www.bettonhills.org/mailing-list/

For the October 16th Fall Fest, we look forward to electing the 2023-24 slate of BHNA officers and board members. I'd like to thank all our BHNA officers and board members who have worked so hard for the 2021-2022 term to keep you informed on Betton Hills happenings and to put on all the wonderful community events which bring us together.

If you would like to join this wonderful team or help out with any events, please email me at President@Bettonhills.org.

The BHNA has made a few administrative changes in the past couple years to bring our operations up to date. We have re-organized our BHNA website (https://www.bettonhills.org/). We hope you find it user-friendly, well organized, and helpful. The BHNA has recently become incorporated as a non-profit Florida corporation. You will now find our bylaws and Articles of Incorporation on our website. As always, we will continue to keep the neighborhood up to date on critical happenings via our email blast and Facebook Group as we follow issues that affect Betton Hills or neighborhoods in general.

Remember, you are always welcome to drop us a line to let us know what you think about a neighborhood issue or if you have a suggestion for the good of the community. You can use the comments section when paying dues. Both the form attached to this Newsletter and the online credit card form have a comments section. There is also a "Contact Us" link on our website if you want to drop us a quick comment: https://www.bettonhills.org/contact/

Here's to another wonderful 50 years in Betton Hills! Please have a happy and safe rest of the year everybody!

HALLOWEEN CRAWL:
Monday, October 31, 2022

BETTON HILLS NEIGBORHOOD

HALLOWEEN CRAWL

MONDAY, OCTOBER 31
BETWEEN 5:00 & 9:00 PM

ATTENTION TRICK-OR-TREATERS:

Let's go on a candy crawl! Trick-or-treat driveway to driveway at participating homes and get all the treats you can handle. Keep your eye out for the mailbox pumpkin signs that will be popping up throughout October, so you'll know where to go on the big night.

Parents, hop in your car or on your bikes on Halloween and use our interactive map to stretch your crawl to every corner of the neighborhood! We'll provide a link to the map via email and on Facebook Wed, 10/26.

ATTENTION NEIGHBORS HANDING OUT:

Be a part of our crawl and give out treats from your driveway or lawn this Halloween. In addition to creating a fun block party feel, the crawl allows kids to move quickly and easily between stops. In our large, spread out neighborhood, your participation could help to double (or even triple) the trick-or-treating opportunities for kids!

Post a pumpkin sign to show kids where to go and to get your spot on our map! Signs will be available at Fall Fest on 10/16 and at McCord Park from 1-3 pm on Saturday, 10/1, 10/8, 10/15, and 10/22 and on Sunday, 10/23.

Still have your sign from last year? Text 850-339-3774 or email Claire.Watkins@bettonhills.org, so we can add you to this year's map.

In the spirit of the holiday, the BHNA is throwing a Halloween decorating contest! Judging will take place Sat, 10/29, with bags of Halloween candy awarded to the winners. Enter your home in the contest and nominate your neighbors on Facebook or using the contact info above!

McCord Pond Drainage Ditch Stormwater Project

By: Eliza Hawkins and Mary Kay Falconer

This project was introduced and summarized in last fall's newsletter: https://www.bettonhills.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/10/Fall2021-Newsletter-website-pdf.pdf

The construction phase is now underway. Recently, several BHNA board members met with the city Underground Utilities and Public Infrastructure project staff. Staff stressed the hazards that are present at the construction site and requested that you not trespass!

The key takeaways were:

- **Contacts:** The City's project engineer is Amelia Bryant (850-891-6842). On-site inspectors are Chris Hampton (850-661-0820) and Joel Daughtry (850-545-7048).
- **Information:** The best source of information will continue to be https://talgov.com/you/mccord-pond
- **Timeframe:** The project is projected to take up to 12 months.
- **Trees:** Although the installation of the culvert is sited to minimize tree removal, there will be significant amount of tree removal east of the service road that serves the back side of Circle K to Goodwill.
- **Nature Trail:** When construction begins there will be significant disruption to those using the Betton Hills Nature Center paths in the vicinity of culvert installation area.

As the BHNA board receives future critical updates, we will let you know.

What's the Future for McCord Pond?

By: Eliza Hawkins

A couple years ago, an idea formed from a question posed by one of our members. That idea has become a concept for putting an observation deck on McCord Pond. Nothing extravagant, just a quiet little ADA accessible deck with a couple benches. The deck would give a person an unobstructed view of the pond without having to crash through brush or walk down the embankment by the bridge. The location under consideration is just opposite the Komodo Dragon sculpture on the west side of the pond.

We are fortunate that one of our board members, Tom Waits, is a structural engineer and he graciously volunteered to work up the design you see below. The preliminary cost estimate is $30,000. The majority of the cost comes from driving pilings to secure the deck over the water. A private contractor would do that job. The city has committed to maintain the deck if it is built. If you visit most of our city parks with ponds, you've seen many similar observation decks.

It's time to get some feedback from our neighborhood on whether this is a worthwhile and feasible project and, most important, do residents feel it would be an attractive addition to the pond.

Continued from page 5

In the near future, once we finalize a few more cost and design issues, we will be asking for your feedback through our email blast and Facebook Group. In the meantime, feel free to share your thoughts with us via our "Contact Us" link on the BHNA website: https://www.bettonhills.org. You can also email me at: President@bettonhills.org. At this point, this project is a concept; no funds have been spent.

Create An Insect-friendly Habitat

By: Donna Legare

We are in a period of global decline in diversity and abundance of insects. Why should we care and why might we want insects in our own yards? The answer is simple: we cannot exist without them. Insects are an essential part of the food web both as prey, supporting songbirds, lizards, bats, fish and other wildlife, and as predators creating a balance of nature. Most flowering plants depend on insects for pollination and thereby reproduction. Many insects consume waste products, making them essential to the recycling of nutrients. Insects have at least an annual ecosystem services value of $70 billion in the United States. Plus, they are fun to observe, and many are extremely beautiful. Simply put, humans cannot survive without insects.

There are many things we can do as individuals to create insect-friendly habitats, including planting native plants and reducing the size of our lawns but I am focusing on two other actions that are often overlooked.

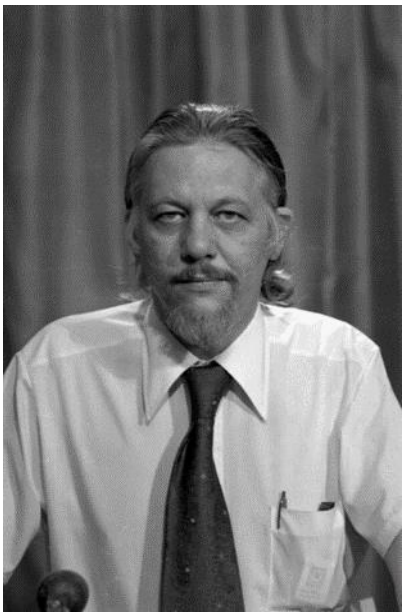
Reduce pesticide and herbicide use. Consider having a more natural lawn, where weeds and lawn grass are mowed together for the look of a green meadow lawn. When seeking help on mosquito control, choose a company who offers a natural approach of spraying natural mosquito repellents such as garlic periodically. Avoid using pest control companies who apply chemicals such as pyrethrum every three weeks to vegetation surrounding a home. This kills all insects and other invertebrates along with the targeted mosquito. Though pyrethrum is a relatively short-lived natural insecticide, it is toxic to all insects, not just mosquitoes. You can reduce mosquitoes in your yard by **removing standing water** in containers – buckets, pots, birdbaths, gutters, old tires – wherever water is collecting. Talk to your neighbors and ask them to do the same.

Limit use of exterior lighting. The majority of nocturnal insects are attracted to artificial lights which act as sensory traps that can indirectly kill insects via exhaustion or result in predation before sunrise. Fireflies also need darkness so they can recognize the blinking patterns of their mates. Turn off unneeded lights. Use motion-activated lighting for security. If you do feel the need to keep a light on all night, switch from LED white lights to bulbs that produce amber- or red colored light, wavelengths that are less attractive to insects. If you have a streetlight in front of your house, ask the City of Tallahassee utilities to switch the bulb from bright white to yellow and to provide a shield on the bulb so the light points down. If you have security lights, point them down rather that out. This will also prevent them from becoming a beacon into your neighbor's windows!

These are just two simple things that we can do as individuals to support insect diversity and health in our own yards.

Bill and Marge Mansfield Writer's Fund

By: Mike Brezin



Would you be willing to face off with this guy if you were trying to pull any political shenanigans? Bill Mansfield was a gritty investigative reporter of the self-professed "old school." He was a firm believer in the Sunshine Law and the public's right to know how our government conducts business. Bill and a co-worker created the system of tracking political campaign contributions which is still used today by the Secretary of State's office. The Bill and Marge Mansfield Writer's Fund supports Leon High School students with writing talent and a commitment to journalism. 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: $250 for working on the school paper and $250 for the yearbook.

Bill was the Editorial Page Editor for the Democrat in the 1980's and 90's. He wrote and spoke publicly on education, the environment, social equity, and many other issues of local interest. After his retirement in 1995, and until his death in 2000, Bill devoted his time and talents to a number of local causes, one of which was the BHNA. Bill would be the first to say that Marge contributed a great deal to his success. She was a fine thinker, didn't hesitate to voice her opinions, and had a great desire to see each person in our society treated fairly.

The 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.

Carol Bellamy Neighborhood Beautification Fund

By: Donna Legare

Carol Bellamy, a native Floridian, moved to Betton Hills in 1974. She quickly became enamored with Betton Hills' natural and horticultural beauty and the neighborliness of the residents. She joined the BHNA board, serving as president in the early 1980s. She then went on to be a city commissioner and, in 1983-1984, mayor. In 1991, she died at 49 after an extended illness. The Carol Bellamy Memorial Rose Garden in Chittenden Park was dedicated shortly after her death.

This fund supports neighborhood beautification and conservation projects. The fund has been used for Arbor Day plantings, to help fund the McCord Park sculptures, to maintain the Betton Hills markers throughout the neighborhood and to provide park benches, tables, recycling bins and plants for traffic islands. We have used this fund to set up and maintain bluebird and wood duck nest boxes in McCord Park as well as the bat house, which now houses over 175 mosquito-eating Brazilian freetail bats!

Fall Bird Migration is Underway!

By: Eliza Hawkins

Have you ever noticed the numbers and kinds of birds you see in your yard increase significantly in September and October? Or maybe you saw a strange looking bird in a field, mudflat or flying overhead while driving? Migratory birds generally move north in spring and back south in the fall, specifically in September and October, tapering off in November and December. There are no hard and fast rules to migration; different species each have different migration routes and schedules and birds don't read guidebooks! Some bird species arrive in fall and stay in the area through winter and leave in spring. For example, some ducks can be found in our ponds all winter (Hooded Mergansers, Buffleheads, Ring-necked, and Northern Pintail, etc.) but they disappear in spring. Some warblers, like the Yellow Rumped Warbler arrives in October and is ever-present in large numbers in our yards (and McCord Park), finally leaving in early May. Many bird species fly over Leon County without stopping. On any given fall migration night there are tens of thousands of birds flying over us making their way south. Some will stop and stay. Some will stop for a short break and move on. And, if you are lucky, maybe you may see a rarity!

The Most Popular Migrants

Warblers are the most popular birds people want to see during migration. Perhaps it's because they are so colorful or that they can often be seen in your own yard. When they first arrive, they may be hungry and thirsty. Be aware most warblers don't come to seed bird feeders. Put suet cakes out and make sure your water features and bird baths are full. You can also grow native bird friendly plants which produce berries and fruits or function as host plants for insects. Great food for warblers! Common warblers you are likely to see in your yard this fall: yellow-rumped, black and white, yellow, palm, and a few others. (See the following page for pictures.)

Remember this tip for finding fall warblers: "Where the Chickadees call, look for warblers in fall!"
Many birds form feeding guilds, a group of chattering birds of different species that group together for safety while feeding. Most everyone knows the chickadee call, "chickadee-dee-dee"! So next time you are in your yard, or McCord Park or Harriman Circle, and you hear "Chickadee-dee-dee" look for the chickadees because you might just see a warbler hanging out with them.

Birds Online and Apps
Cornell University has great online tools and phone apps for anything and everything birds. If you are a beginning birder, I highly recommend you check these out. They are mostly free and by using ebird to list your bird sightings, you will help the Cornell Ornithology Lab with their work studying bird populations and movements.

- eBird bird listing (app and web) – requires you set up a free account: https://ebird.org/home
- Merlin Bird Identification (Bird call ID and photo upload ID): https://merlin.allaboutbirds.org/
- Bird Migration Daily Forecasts – shows pictures of expected birds nightly: https://birdcast.info/
- Monthly Bar Charts by County - know what birds are here each month – Select Bar Charts by County: https://ebird.org/explore.

See https://www.allaboutbirds.org/ or a bird book for additional identifying and behavioral information about these and other birds.

Thank You to Betton Ladies Night Organizer Megan Funkhouser!

By: Shannon B. Hartsfield

On the second Thursday of the month, anywhere from 10 to 30 or more ladies from our neighborhood can be seen bringing beverages to the home of the latest volunteer hostess of Betton Ladies Night. Everyone enjoys delicious food provided by the hostess, seeing friends, and making new ones. This tradition began in 2018 with Megan Funkhouser, who at the time was fairly new to the neighborhood and wanted a way to get to know more women in Betton Hills.

People volunteer to host by signing up on the "Betton Ladies Night" Facebook group, which currently has 322 members. Meeting reminders are posted on the page, along with photos that serve as treasured reminders of past events. Even during the pandemic, Megan worked to keep the ladies connected by starting a "porch pictures" event with families posing for photographs in front of their homes at a safe social distance. We also met by Zoom on occasion. Once we could meet in person again, the meetings resumed right away.

The gatherings are for women of all ages who live in or near the Betton area. Each meeting is in a different location, which draws a variety of people. Most meetings are in host homes, but a few of them have happened at local venues that generously offered space. There are always new friends to meet, and the attendees make an effort to introduce themselves. Conversations flow easily because "Where do you live?" and "How long have you been here?" are always easy conversation starters.

Megan and her family.

In a world where it is often difficult to meet neighbors due to busy schedules and commitments, Betton Ladies Night provides a fun, low stress way to connect with our neighbors. It has sparked deep friendships. We are indebted to Megan for her ongoing commitment to her neighbors by leading these wonderful Betton Ladies Nights. If you have not yet been to a gathering, please join us soon. Thank you, Megan!

Jack Robertson Partnership for School Excellence Fund

By: Mary Kay Falconer

For many years, our neighborhood has donated a modest level of funding to our neighborhood schools, Kate Sullivan Elementary, Cobb Middle, and Leon High School. We meet with school administrators and teachers each year to identify the needs and how our neighborhood can give each school a special lift. The BHNA board has a set of criteria that is used to guide us in this process. Each school is always appreciative to have us engaged and offering assistance, particularly in this post-COVID phase. For 2021-22, our donation approved for each school was $500. This article shares how the donations were or will be spent.

Our donation to Kate Sullivan spotlights a program that is directed by the team focused on Exceptional Student Education (ESE). The ESE student population includes those with disabilities as well as gifted students. Kate Sullivan has been developing a "sensory room" to serve these students based on its success in other schools. Recently, I visited the room. Kate Sullivan would like to add tools and equipment to serve older students as well as a wider variety of disabilities. Our donation will meet some of those needs.

Cobb Middle School recommended our funds cover costs associated with their new drum therapy program. Djembe drums are used, and they are $350 each. This program is open to all students and drum circles will occur after classes. District staff at several schools are receiving special training for this program. More information is available at https://oneworlddrum.com/. They also offered to hold a concert for us during the school year.

Leon High School is a starship in the Leon County Schools. In addition to its academic achievements, there are sporting events, concerts, and theater productions each year. Several are open to the public and are FREE. We work through the Leon High Foundation to have our donations allocated to projects that are proposed by teachers. In 2020-2021, our donation was used to purchase sewing machines in vocational training classes for ESE students. For 2021-22, the allocation of our donation will be reviewed and approved by the Foundation on 9/13. We will report back to you on this partnership.

School-Related Articles:
Dog Therapy at Kate Sullivan School—Make PAWS Pauses Happen!
We sure love our dogs in the Betton Hills Neighborhood! Kate Sullivan is interested in considering initiating a dog therapy program. If any of you would like your trained therapist pup to be a part of this opportunity, please let me know: MaryKayFalconer39@gmail.com.

Mentoring Students:
A Great Way to Make a Connection with the Community
Mentoring students is one of my favorite ways to reach out to the community. Both Kate Sullivan Elementary and Cobb Middle School are accepting mentors this year. Post-COVID, the needs have become even more evident. Mentors meet with a student for 30 minutes once a week. Leon County Schools provides the basic mentor training. If you want to learn more, go to https://www.leonschools.net/volunteers. There is an application for you to complete online to get you started.

You Can Help Monarch Butterflies: Beautiful and Amazing Creatures

By: Kerri L. Post

How You Can Help The Monarchs

- Replace non-native milkweed with native.
- Provide diverse nectar sources spring thru fall.
- Grow plants of single species in clumps.
- Avoid use of pesticides.

Source: Courtesy of Native Nurseries

Watching the metamorphosis from caterpillar to chrysalis to butterfly is absolutely magical. Whether monarchs or swallowtails, seeing their first flight provides awe-inspiring hope that our children's grandchildren will also get to witness these majestic beauties. Unfortunately, that is not a given. Internationally the monarch butterfly recently descended to the "Endangered Species" list. Small efforts can have a big impact and I believe our neighborhood can make a big difference.

I've always appreciated Betton Hills as an urban forest, teeming with wildlife right here in the middle of the city. As such, I've always tried to do my part to support the ecosystem and particularly the bees, butterflies, and birds in this little patch of the globe. For two decades I've planted native pollinator plants and native milkweed in the yard for the traveling and newly emerged monarchs. However, over the last two years I got serious about doing more to create, protect and promote the ever-dwindling population of monarch butterflies. My neighbor Shirley Zhang joined in, and she added an increased scientific approach to our effort.

Tallahassee is located along the spring and fall flyways of the monarch migration to and from Mexico and Canada. Over the years many of us have likely visited the wonderful St. Mark's National Wildlife Refuge Monarch Festival held each year in October. That's the month when many monarchs stop-over in our area, like tourists visiting to rest up and eat before continuing a long journey. (The festival is October 22nd this year.) Monarchs somehow find the best food sources in an area even though they don't have TripAdvisor.

Many neighbors have native milkweed in their yard for these winged sojourners. If you do not, please consider planting milkweed, golden rod, and/or pollinator plants in your yard. (These plants are readily available at both Native Nurseries and Tallahassee Nurseries. Select your milkweed planting location strategically as it is toxic to dogs and cats.) The idea is for Betton Hills to become a "**Monarch Butterfly Waystation**," a designed seasonal stop-over area to provide the food (native milkweed and nectar) necessary for the magnificent species to produce successive generations and sustain their journey. Thousands of "Monarch Waystations" have been established in communities around the southeast, U.S. and the world but the butterflies need more. Please consider joining the Betton Hills neighborhood "Monarch Waystation" effort. You'll see more butterflies in your yard! You can also look forward to seeing future monarch initiatives in the BHNA newsletter and website.

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

It's still hurricane season!
Be safe! Download a Step by Step Hurricane PREP Guide from: www.Talgov.com.
Get a free PREP bucket (while they last) at the BHNA Fall Fest!

Time to Join or Renew Your Betton Hills Neighborhood Association Membership!

You can join or renew **online** via secure credit card payment or you can **mail** us a check. Suggested dues are $10 a year. Membership is voluntary. Dues are used to fund special events, the BHNA website, enhance our neighborhood parks and schools, and print and mail bi-annual newsletters, among other things. **Already paid? If not sure, check the BHNA website membership directory by year (upper right side of page) at: https://www.bettonhills.org/join/**

Please indicate your donation amounts:

2022 Dues Year: November 1, 2021 through October 31, 2022 $10: _____

Additional 2022 Donation: _____

2023 Dues Year: November 1, 2022 through October 31, 2023 $10: _____

Additional 2023 Donation: _____

Total Check: _____

Note: Additional Donations will be split between the Bellamy, Mansfield, and Robertson project funds at the discretion of the BHNA board (see bettonhills.org/funds). If you do not specify a dues year, the BHNA will apply your funds to 2023.

Name: _____ **Write how you want to be listed in the BHNA website membership directory** (e.g., the "Smith Household", John Smith, John Smith and Jane Jones, etc.)

Betton Hills Street Address: _____ **Zip Code**: _____

Email: _____ Phone: _____

Check here _____ if you want to volunteer to help with BHNA neighborhood projects or events.
Provide any comments here:

Mail this page with your check to: BHNA, P.O. Box 15612, Tallahassee, FL 32317