

HAMPDEN HAPPENINGS

The latest news and updates from Hampden, Baltimore



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DAVID STYSLEY

President's Message

by *Eli Lopatin*, HCC President (hccpresident@gmail.com)

Dear Neighbors,

Welcome to this newly revamped edition of The Hampden Happenings, which has been made possible by the tireless efforts of our all-volunteer board members. We know that during these challenging times, as we face a global pandemic, and as we reckon with the systemic racism that has shaped our world, many are seeking a stronger sense of community. While we are unable to meet in person at this time, it is our hope that this newsletter and our monthly community meetings are able to contribute to that sense of community among residents of Hampden.

We have seen an outpouring of interest in supporting our community's efforts, whether through attendance at meetings, or contributing to our efforts to reframe our Public Safety committee to a focus on public health and racial justice. Our fundraising committee has a number of virtual events in the works, which will continue to allow neighbors to come together, albeit from a distance.

The HCC is open to all members of our community, and to become a voting member all that is required is the payment of annual dues and attendance at two meetings during the calendar year. Our board elections for 2021 will take place at our November meeting, so, if you've been wanting to become involved but haven't had the chance, there is still time to qualify for a board position - just join us at our September meeting and let us know you're interested!

Hope to see you around the neighborhood!

Community News

COVID Q&A with Keswick Multi-Care Center:

In each issue for the foreseeable future we will highlight one local organization to share with the community how they are navigating the current pandemic:

How has COVID most impacted your business?

COVID-19 had significant impact on the Keswick campus. We were required to close our Adult Day Services and suspend in-person activities at the Wise & Well Center for Healthy Living, moving these classes on-line virtually overnight. We also had to close the Keswick campus to external guests, which is difficult for families of the residents who live here. Adult Day Services is still closed; however, the Wise & Well Center is now open in a limited capacity for in person activities and is continuing and expanding our virtual programs.



What are some things you are changing in light of the current situation?

Keswick has instituted a myriad of procedures and processes in light of COVID-19; all the details are on our [website](#). Governor Hogan has instituted Universal COVID-19 Testing so all Keswick staff are tested weekly.

How can local residents best support you during this period?

We have been so lucky, having received and continue to receive so much support from this community during these challenging times. We have had many people send pictures, letters, notes and cards to our nursing home residents. The residents have LOVED receiving these daily treats! The smiles on their faces tell the story!



We've also been grateful to the many local restaurants, caterers, families, organizations and faith communities that have sponsored meals, treats, coffee and desserts, offered kind words and shared positive social media posts for our Healthcare Heroes that have been on campus working each and every day during this pandemic.

Why do you feel it is important to support the local community?

Oh my, where do we start?!? Keswick truly believes that we thrive as a service business when the community thrives. Our goal as an organization is not to just “exist” in the community; we want to be part of the community in every way possible. Keswick recognizes that it is our responsibility to be good neighbors, to be active contributors to the local economy and to be part of the social fabric that has been created here.

What are different ways in which you support the local community?

Recognizing that working in partnership is most effective, we are in a local coalition with Action in Maturity, St. Mary's Outreach and the Hampden Family Center to meet the health and wellness needs of the community in a variety of ways. Keswick is a member of the Hampden Merchants Association and the Hampden Community Council. In addition, Keswick has been a proud sponsor of numerous local nonprofit events, HampdenFest, The Mayor's Christmas Parade and HonFest.

Hampden Family Center Updates:

While the Hampden Family Center is not open for all their regular activities, they are continuing to respond to the needs of the community. Check their website for ways to donate at www.hampdenfamilycenter.org, or call 410-467-8710.

- Weekly Food Distribution: Fridays at noon. With the help of private donors, Civic Works Real Food Farm, City Harbor Church & YWAM Baltimore, we are distributing essential items, produce, milk and nonperishable food to our clients in need. Case management also continues during the distributions and through remote meetings. For more information, call us at 410-467-8710.
- Virtual Youth Enrichment Programs: Coming soon! As school starts remotely, we are creating a virtual enrichment program and one-on-one tutoring.

St. Luke's Church on the Avenue Updates:

- St. Luke's is offering outdoor, socially distanced, Service of the Word on Sunday mornings at 9:30am in the Courtyard and on Zoom. Visit churchontheavenuehampden.org to login to worship
- Sunday, Oct. 4th is the annual Blessing of the Animals. Prayer requests can be sent to churchontheavenue@gmail.com
- The Avenue Drop-In continues to provide services in the courtyard on Wednesdays from 11:30am-12:30pm from The Baltimore Harm Reduction Coalition
- The Lost & Found Thrift Shop remains closed and we are working to reopen some time this fall

Editor's Report

by Kathy Krampien, Newsletter Committee Chair
(hccnewsletter@gmail.com)

Baltimore Art Gallery Opened Before the Shutdown

Baltimore Art Gallery opened on 36th Street in Hampden just before the shutdown. The opening was a snowy February evening and it was packed. Not as star studded as a BMA opening but definitely a Who's Who of Hampden. A great start, and then Yo! Pandemic time.

With a very clever concept, owners and artists Kristin Wiebe and Sonny Lacey have finally re-opened and remain optimistic. The gallery currently represents 8 Baltimore artists, some of whom include Matt Muirhead, Beppi Isbert, Robert Hoffman and the current featured artist, Gary Mullen.



Each artist produces multiple works in 3 different sizes. Kristen and Sonny will help customers pick out themes, sizes and framing. You can even do a test run, which allows you to envision how the work might look in your home. It's a clever concept that educates people on the how-to of buying original artwork and the artists get 50% of the selling price, so purchases support the gallery and the artist as well.

It seems to have an enthusiastic following and owner Sonny told me that they are seeing increased business from young homeowners who are moving into the neighborhood from New York and Pennsylvania. A positive sign for both the gallery and Hampden as a whole.

August featured artist was Hoes Heights resident, Robert Hoffman. He has a long artistic affiliation/affliction to birds. The birds have their own mythology and have many adventures. They travel to far-away lands and their brightly colored stories are rendered in fiber, painting, sculpture and various other mediums.

September's featured artist is Morgan State graduate Gary Mullen. Mullen's work, self-described as "Synthetic Cubism with subject matter that ranges from cool dark cats to sweet slices of lemon. Of course, my personal fave is the pug, it's witty pugnaciousness highlighted by the boxy cubic style.

Baltimore Art Gallery is open for business @ 855 West 36th Street. Be sure to drop by.

Become A Wise & Well Member Today



WELCOME to the Wise & Well Center for Healthy Living, the hub for Keswick Community Health activities. The first of its kind in Maryland, Wise & Well is designed as a place for older people to pursue their health and well-being goals. This membership-based center offers classes, coaching and personalized services across multiple dimensions of wellness. Wise & Well serves as a partner in developing purpose and meaning and staying active and connected – the proven foundation for healthy aging.

Membership Features and Benefits

- Members-only access to 14,000 square feet of spaces nurturing growth and infinite potential with a mile marker check to ensure you're on course:
 - Active/fitness
 - Classroom and group learning
 - Visual arts
 - Culinary arts
 - Gardening
- Individual self-assessments
- Access to private consultation with professionals like personal trainers, counselors, massage therapists, art therapists, personal pharmacists, life coaches and more
- Specialty courses and coaching available for additional fees

**Annual
Membership: \$60**

**To register as a Wise & Well Member or for more information
contact the Community Health Services office at
410-662-4363 or CommunityHealth@ChooseKeswick.Org.**

Apply Now



If surviving a pandemic had a guidebook, Atomic Books would be your place.

One of Hampden's oldest surviving institutions, it provides all of the necessary essentials for the hipster crowd during the continuing days of doldrums. Where else can you score a facemask with John Water's jeering mug on it? Or get that new book by Werner Herzog; with his head and a grizzly bear on the cover. A cover which veers the mind towards the eternal question, was the documentary "Grizzly Man" a black comedy? In an era of absurdities, Atomic Books owner Benn Ray and I agreed it that it was indeed funny. I know, people got eaten by a bear, but grim times require grimmer laughs.

Personally, I'm always confused by Atomic Books because I am so out of the loop on the modern comic and anime culture. But I love looking at the smoking bunnies (are smoking bunnies still a thing?) and other weird toys and gadgets, trying to guess what they represent and to whom they might appeal. The store, which was looking more like an Amazon warehouse than the usual hip locale had been closed, with on-line and sidewalk sales as the only retail options. Fortunately, Ray and his partner Rachel Whang started out this way; they predated Amazon in the online book market. And while the online sales have kept Atomic Books alive, Ray expressed frustration at the amount of work involved for just 25% of the business. And trying to receive and maintain inventory from publisher's and comic distributors, not easy. No one anticipated the sell-out of popular new titles, such as the Baltimore police/crime saga "I Got a Monster", and the agonizing lag time on follow up printing runs is as dragged out as the pandemic itself.

Atomic Books recently reopened, by appointment only. While this is good, Ray has been less than enthused about the current re-openings. He is uncomfortable with gatherings of people and it remains to be seen if his apprehension is precognitive or paranoia. Either way, there is certainly inventory in his store that can relate to one or the other. Or maybe he spends too much time pondering as to whether smoking bunnies can get cancer?



HCC Committee Updates

Zoning and Land Use Committee by *Martin Burian, ZLUC Committee Chair*
(hcczoning@gmail.com)

1502 Clipper Rd: The owner of this property, located along the Jones Falls between Birroteca Restaurant and Whitehall Mill, requested a conditional use to use the building as a cafe with a beer, wine and liquor license from the Board of Municipal and Zoning Appeals (BMZA). The current tenant is SoBotanical, and aromatherapy business, and the prepared food and alcohol uses would be in addition to the existing business.

The owner did not contact the HCC about the BMZA hearing and refused to postpone the hearing to discuss the most recent plans with the community. The HCC submitted a letter of opposition and provided verbal testimony objecting to the conditional use at the August 11 hearing. The BMZA approved the request. In order to transfer or obtain a new liquor license, the owner will need to have a hearing before the Board of Liquor License Commissioners (BLLC) for Baltimore City. The HCC is exploring a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with the owner in advance of a liquor board hearing.

810 W 36th St (Dangerously Delicious Pies): The Dangerously Delicious Pies location at 810 West 36th Street applied for a 7-day restaurant beer, wine and liquor license, with outdoor seating. The proprietor reached out to the HCC and discussed his plans with the HCC President. The BLLC hearing was scheduled for August 20. The HCC was unable to complete an MOU with the owner ahead of the hearing.

Other Updates:

Construction continues on the site at the end of Edgehill Ave. near West 40th Street, the residential development known as Flamingo Place. The stabilization and compaction of fill has concluded, and work has begun on the foundations for the first set of stacked townhomes. The project will ultimately include two sets of stacked townhomes and a building of garden apartments, for a total of 47 units.

Whitehall Market, located in Whitehall Mill (3300 Clipper Mill Road), has opened. The space currently features six vendors offering prepared foods as well as other retail goods.

Fundraising Committee by Kathy Krampien, Fundraising Committee Chair



Spot the Flamingo: Yes, this is certainly easy enough to do in Hampden, with Café Hon's Pink Flamingo-saur roaring in your face. But, during this October's First Friday in Hampden, we will make this game a whole lot harder and a lot more rewarding. Cash money \$\$\$ rewarding and who doesn't need that extra cash during a pandemic.

On the next First Friday, October 2, 2020, the Hampden Merchants and the HCC are sponsoring a "Spot the Flamingo" contest. Details are still being finalized, but pink flamingos will be on display within all of the participating shops. The individual that finds them all first will win \$100 with \$50 and \$25 going to the second and third place finishers. So, get your flamingo spotting specs on and start looking. Let the bird watching begin.

To stay updated as details emerge, follow the [Hampden Community Council Facebook page](#).



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