

# CALENDAR

Check [www.mayfieldassociation.org](http://www.mayfieldassociation.org) and [mayfieldupdate@gmail.com](mailto:mayfieldupdate@gmail.com) for updated calendar between scheduled newsletter distributions and other events worth noting.

**Saturday, Dec 12 —**  
**Santa cruises Mayfield's streets**

**Thursday, December 17 — Last day for donations for Food Baskets prepared by SFA Social Justice Comm**

**Monday, December 21 thru early Jan — Judging for Holiday Decorating occurs**

**Sunday, January 17 — Mayfield Racial Justice — 4 pm. Send email to [mayfield.racial.justice@gmail.com](mailto:mayfield.racial.justice@gmail.com)**

**Saturday, January 30 – Live Baltimore Virtual Trolley Tour – Mayfield included**

**Saturday, March 27 or April 3 — TBD Easter Bunny visits Mayfield**

**Friday, April 16 or 23— up til 12noon — TBD Shred it Day in Mayfield; you must have paid 2021 dues**

**May TBD — General Membership meeting**

**Friday, June 25 — Youth Scholar Vision Prize deadline**

**July TBD — Summer Block Party if possible.**

**Dates may change depending on COVID 19 matters and public policy requiring a change.**

Check [Mayfieldupdate@gmail.com](mailto:Mayfieldupdate@gmail.com) or [www.facebook.com/mayfield.update/](http://www.facebook.com/mayfield.update/)

If you have not subscribed to either send an email to subscribe.

## Mayfield Improvement Association Officers

**President**  
JoAnn Trach Tongson  
**Vice President**  
Deborah Mason  
**Recording Secretary**  
Janelle Cousino  
**Corresponding Secretary**  
Stephanie Buttner  
**Treasurer**  
Julia McDonald

## Board Members

Mary Ann Dresler, Marie Lymon, Michelle McWhirter, Jan Shipley, Thomas Spring, Jan Shipley, Phaedra Stewart, Nina Tou, Jon Weiland

## Committee & Project Leaders

**Block Party** — Phaedra Stewart & Stephanie Buttner  
**Children's Events** — Linn Thorburn & Caedmon Haas  
**Communications** — Janelle Cousino  
**Webmaster** — Brian Baughn  
**Newsletter Layout & Graphic Design** — Nina Tou  
**Greening and Open Space** — JoAnn Trach Tongson  
**Holiday events** — Tom & Mary Rybczynski, Phaedra & Harry Stewart  
**Mayfield for All Ages** — Deborah Mason acting chair  
**Playground** — Dave Hardy  
**Traffic Calming** — Deborah Mason  
**Welcome Basket** — Tom Rybczynski  
**Youth Scholar Committee** — Phaedra Stewart, Nina Tou and JoAnn Trach Tongson

**All committees are open to more volunteers. Send an email to [mayfieldupdate@gmail.com](mailto:mayfieldupdate@gmail.com) to let MIA board know you want to help.**



## Link to Mayfield Policy for Zoning Variance Requests and Mayfield Memorandum of Agreement

Residents that want a zoning variance from the city, be sure to read this Mayfield policy. You will find it on the website at <http://mayfieldassociation.org/news/zoningnews/>

## Link to City Zoning Regulations

Residents who have questions about permits for fencing, signs, home improvements or other issues regulated by city codes can log onto this website for answers:

**Zoning:** <https://planning.baltimorecity.gov/programs/transform-baltimore> and what needs a permit? <http://www.baltimorehousing.org/permits>

**Northeastern District Police**  
410-396-2444

## For an emergency dial: 911

All board meetings are open. If you'd like to attend, we ask you let the President know so that the host of the meeting can make adequate arrangements. Interested in volunteering for a committee? Email [mayfieldupdate@gmail.com](mailto:mayfieldupdate@gmail.com) to let us know. There are many ways to volunteer for Mayfield.

## Want more frequent info about news and activities around Mayfield?

Sign up for the moderated listserv by sending a message to: [mayfieldupdate@gmail.com](mailto:mayfieldupdate@gmail.com) asking to subscribe.

[www.facebook.com/mayfield.update](http://www.facebook.com/mayfield.update)

Follow us on twitter  
[@mayfieldupdate](https://twitter.com/mayfieldupdate)

Sign up for the weekly Mayfield E-News: [mayfieldupdate@gmail.com](mailto:mayfieldupdate@gmail.com)

## Are you new to the neighborhood or know a new resident?

Our welcome gift committee would like to know. Please send an email to: [mayfieldupdate@gmail.com](mailto:mayfieldupdate@gmail.com)



# T H E MAYFIELD NEWSLETTER

A Hamlet in the Heart of Town 2020 | Issue Four

## PRESIDENT'S LETTER

I am writing this at time when we are reminded to take stock of our blessings and give thanks. It is a struggle this year with friends and family affected by the pandemic, and recognizing the personal sacrifices needed to protect ourselves and others. Please heed the Governor's advise and wear the darn mask!

Despite the times, I am grateful for many things and people. To take a cue from Jimmy Fallon's thank you notes on the Late Night Show and in honor of the coming holiday season, I offer

### ~ THE TWELVE DAYS OF THANKSGIVING NOTES ~

1. Dear reciprocating saw: I am grateful for having you on hand with a clean blade to make a 15 lb frozen turkey the perfect size for four people.
2. Dear helpful Mayfielders: Thank you for enough people who turned out to plant 15 street trees, 50 ornamental onions, 500 Daffodils, 1000 crocus and dozens of perennials.
3. Dear Sweatpants and Pajama bottoms: Thank you for being the perfect business casual attire for working at home and virtual meetings.
4. Dear Mayfield Musicians and Singers: Thank you for lifting our spirits throughout the summer and fall. Your front porch concerts supported fellow artists and raised funds for the Maryland Food Bank. [www.mdfoodbank.org](http://www.mdfoodbank.org)
5. Dear reduced attendance religious services: Thank you for packing in weekly observance in a half hour or less.
6. Dear garden: Thanks for being there for destressing and sharing the many tomato and ground cherry seedlings with neighbors and passers-by within a two block radius of my house.
7. Dear pollinator pals: Thank you responding to and growing pollinator plants that have been planted in the Lake Montebello and Harford Road medians. (This was such a successful effort in helping replant the 3,000 linear feet of Lake Montebello and the Harford Road median at Chesterfield Ave, that we will put a call out next spring.)
8. Dear Traffic-calming committee: Thank you for your comprehensive and inclusive review of streets regarding safety concern in the neighborhood.

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[www.mayfieldassociation.org](http://www.mayfieldassociation.org)



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Your review of the community's concerns and ideas led to a plan to improve Mayfield's roads, so all pedestrians, cyclists, and motorists can safely enjoy our beautiful neighborhood. Committee members are now meeting to implement the plan, and are planning to engage officials of the new administration. Interested in participating in this effort? Join the committee with an email to [mayfieldupdate@gmail.com](mailto:mayfieldupdate@gmail.com)

9. Dear Friends: Thank you for the countless hours of help and emotional support received while cleaning out a neighbor's house and navigating the duties of a power of attorney. A special thanks to the two elder events developed by the Mayfield for All Ages Group. The events greatly helped in preparing for and understanding some of the issues to address in health and finances. In my case, it has been a process of what to do with a lifetime of a family's belongings including hundreds of cards from a career as an illustrator. If you would like to help save the US post office, I have access to greeting cards for a variety of occasions to support you in this effort.
10. Dear BGE and BGE Contractors: Thank you for coming into our lives at the height of a pandemic and telling us you needed to come into our houses. You answered our questions, dug up our streets, sidewalks, front yards and a few water lines and returned streets to conditions that seem better than when you started.
11. Dear parents: Thank you for the inventive schooling,

pods, outdoor movies theatres and chicken rearing boom. I hope that everyone will be able to look at this unprecedented amount of time with kids and parents in a fond way. I hope that it will take on the historic proportions of my family's summer vacation with three kids in a station wagon towing a pop-up camper. My family is still telling stories from that cross-country trek

12. Thank you holiday decorators: Your beautiful décor lights my spirit and makes a warm and welcoming environment. After serving as a judge on the holiday decoration competition for the past three years, I know that it will be a real challenge to choose the best of the best. But we are all winners: Mayfield is rewarded with the beauty of the decorations, the decorators have the pleasure of creating joy, and the charities selected by the winners will benefit from their generosity. In the age of social distancing, you and the organizers of our other holiday events (the Santa neighborhood cruise, caroling, and gathering food for families in need) prove that Covid cannot destroy our holiday spirit.

With all of these things for which to be thankful, I am looking forward to a hopeful and healthy new year.

Sincerely,

JoAnn Trach Tongson, President  
Mayfield Improvement Association



## Cupcakes, Competition and Cream Cheese Icing

— Deborah Mason



There are many wonderful aspects to Mayfield, but none has convinced me more of the fact that here, at last, I have found my people, than the Summer Block Party Cupcake Competition. Combining two of my favorite things (cupcakes and competition), I was very happy to be an observer for the first few years I lived here. There were some truly glorious entries, and, trust me, I enjoyed every single one of them. However, the time inevitably came when I was seduced by the competitive aspect of the annual contest. I decided that I would throw my hat in.

My first foray into the bakery battlefield was an unmitigated disaster. What was supposed to be chocolate chip cupcakes instead turned into chocolate chip hockey pucks. For some reason, they just wouldn't rise, and even my husband, after several gallant attempts, found them inedible. They didn't make it to the block party, and instead found a happy afterlife in my compost bin.

The year after that, I entered some chocolate cupcakes with vanilla frosting. The frosting was my downfall: the butter cream, while delicious in my kitchen, pretty much melted away in the heat of a mid-July evening. However, there must have been some resid-

ual flavor left over in the puddle of vanilla and butter, because I managed to get an honorable mention. Hmpf. I suppose I should be grateful, but I'm afraid I'm rather ungracious that way. I never liked participation trophies.

But that honorable mention did not discourage me. Instead, I was more determined than ever to win. Seriously. I started researching not only delicious cakes, but also which frostings had asbestos-like abilities to withstand heat and humidity. The combination I hit upon was a lemon/blueberry cupcake with lemon flavored cream cheese frosting. And it was a winner! I was so thrilled that I decided then and there that I

would never enter again, because I want as many people as possible to experience the same joy.

There are a couple of notes to keep in mind. I didn't use lemon extract. Instead, I used essential lemon oil. I normally wouldn't suggest that you chug essential oils, but some brands, such as Doterra, are manufactured to such a high standard that they are edible. I use Doterra's lemon, lavender, anise, and peppermint oils in my baking, and the result is an intense burst of flavor. You use only a few drops, so a small bottle lasts a long time. Our neighbor, Katherine Endy, sells Doterra's products, and I'm sure she'd be happy to

hook you up with some. Also, while I added lemon to the frosting, you might think it's too much. Feel free to leave it out of the frosting. Additionally, be sure to dust the berries in flour; otherwise, they will sink to the bottom of the cupcake instead of being evenly distributed. The recipe also calls for buttermilk, and there is always leftover buttermilk after any recipe calling for it. I don't know about you, but the excess buttermilk invariably ends up in my refrigerator long enough to create new life forms. King Arthur Baking sells a superb dried buttermilk powder that has made my kitchen both more frugal and less bio-hazardous. Add the powder

to the other dried ingredients, and use water when it calls for the addition of the buttermilk.

Finally, it's worth putting the little extra effort into the decorations. Talking to a judge after the fact, he let on that the sight of the cupcakes whetted his appetite and gave me a competitive edge. So, break out that piping kit you bought but never used, zest some lemon peel, and have some fun!

The recipe is from: [livewellbackoften.com](http://livewellbackoften.com) Use the search box and use the search term: Lemon Blueberry Cupcake. Your guests will be delighted.

## Deer are All Around Us.

There has been an increase in deer visiting Mayfield coming from Herring Run Park. It has led to some Baltimore residents living nearby to feed them and for some to kill them with firearms and leave the dead carcass to rot in place. It isn't safe to feed them and it is definitely NOT legal to kill them with any weapon. Baltimore City Recreation and Parks have told us to call the police and report people using weapons to kill deer.

Towns and cities all across the U. S. Northeast have been seeing an ongoing resurgence of deer populations in recent decades, as suburbanization patterns have deepened and hunting practices have faded. Baltimore City neighborhoods shouldn't expect things to change much any time soon. One reason the North American deer population is growing is the near-elimination of their main predators, wolves and cougars. Also, as suburban-style development continues to spread haphazardly across the land, deer aren't crashing our party — we're effectively inviting them over for hors d'oeuvres.

"Deer are what we consider an edge species," says David Drake, a wildlife specialist at the University of Wisconsin-Madison. "Any place where you have two or more vegetation types come together—a wooded area and a residential neighborhood or field—that's a vegetation edge. If you think about suburban areas, or any area developed for humans, there's a lot of habitat fragmentation going on."

The typical American suburb, with its mix of ornamental shrubs, lawns, and small patches of trees, makes a pretty ideal deer factory. And grazing in suburban yards has another benefit for deer, Drake points out: Unlike in the real woods, homeowners typically replant the vegetation they eat, so they can return and eat it again. Americans in deer-rich places like Herring Run Parks and Mayfield with parks or "edge environments" on three sides of us will be coexisting with them for the foreseeable future.

### Other Suggestions to Discourage Deer

- Switch to deer-resistant plants and use. Visit The University of Maryland Extension Service for suggestions: <http://www.extension.umd.edu/hgic>
- Reduce food sources, by wrapping saplings shorter than 4 feet in corrugated plastic tubes or sleeves, deer netting, or mesh.
- Fence in gardens and heavily landscaped areas
- Advise residents to do the following:
  - (1) plant native species and avoid exotic plants, which attract deer, and cover any ornamental plants with netting or mesh;
  - (2) employ scare tactics such as motion detector-triggered lights or sprinklers, models of coyotes, and outdoor radios;
  - (3) strategically place bars of soap (and even human hair) to deter deer; and
  - (4) spray pepper-based repellent on foliage