

Mount Vernon Belvedere Clarion

April 2008

Volume 23, Number 04

MVBA General Meeting

On the agenda this month are updates on the proposed Homeless Shelter, the budget and new cap on Midtown Benefits District, an update on State Center project by Struever Brothers, an introduction of the plans for the Mayfair and a proposal for a new downtown arena by Accent Development.

The general meeting will take place at the Belvedere Hotel, Tuesday, April 15, 2008, beginning promptly at 7:30pm. Both members and non-members are welcome to attend.

Mount Vernon in the News

The gold fence in Mount Vernon Place provided enough controversy for the Sun to fill a whole week's worth of news. The MVBA, contrary to some reports, did not approve the fence exhibit. Our outstanding Architectural Review Committee carefully and thoughtfully reviewed the exhibit plans and declined to recommend approval for the exhibit. The unanswered concerns of the community were related formally and informally to the staff of the Commission on Historic and Architectural Preservation (CHAP) who approved the exhibit without resolving MVBA's concerns.

On a related front, the MVBA and Friends of Mount Vernon Place are continuing to work with the city to establish a formal partnership which will oversee major fundraising, preservation and management of the parks of Mount Vernon Place.

In other news this month. Both Abacrombie and Night of Cookers received rave reviews in this month's *Baltimore* magazine.

Children's Park Fundraiser – Volunteers Needed!

A fundraiser for the Mount Vernon Children's Park will be held again this year at Baltimore's historic Flower Mart on May 2nd and 3rd, where we will be selling glassware and fine china created by renowned artist Michael Weems. We also will be raffling a basket of fine wine, thanks to the generosity of Spirits of Mount Vernon on Charles Street. The proceeds of all sales will directly benefit the children's park.

This will be the most important park fundraiser this, but it will require a tremendous amount of manpower. If you are interested in helping with the fundraiser by selling glassware or raffle tickets, please contact **Laura Giantris at 443-322-6853** or lgiantris@gmail.com.

Flower Mart Volunteers Needed

The Flower Mart is for two days, May 2nd (Friday), and May 3rd (Saturday). We will need volunteers for both days. The Lemon Stick booth is the most popular booth at the event. We will need lots of help. No special skills needed. It is truly a lot of fun, so please respond as to what times you might be able to help. The event runs from 11:00AM -7:00PM on Friday and Saturday, however the Lemon Stick booth starts to loose steam between 4:00PM-5:00PM. **Contact Regina Minniss at 410-837-4896**, or rminniss@cbmove.com



SUBSCRIBE!

If you are getting this newsletter in the mail, you are probably missing out on important email newscasts, neighborhood alerts and early electronic delivery of this newsletter itself. Help save a tree and convert to email delivery by sending an email to membership@mbva.org with "SUBSCRIBE" in the subject line and your full name in the body. Non-members can join the association and sign up for email communications at www.mvba.org.

Volunteers Needed for Maryland House and Garden Tour in Mt Vernon

We are very lucky to be one of the sites selected for the Spring 2008 Maryland House and Garden Pilgrimage this year. The date is Sunday, May 4th, the day after the Flower Mart. Volunteers will be given opportunity to buy discounted tickets. We will be working two shifts that day at a variety of sites, including historic homes and gardens as well as proving guided tours of the four parks and monument (talking notes will be provided).

Please **Contact Barbara Gilbert** at 410 937 9585 or barbarag20817@gmail.com if you would like to help.

The Charles Street Trolley Project

The Ridership, Finance and Engineering committees of the Trolley Project are completing their reports this month. Stay tuned for more information. In the meantime, the city and Downtown Partnership are making plans for a free shuttle system that would move north and south through Mount Vernon.

Homeless Shelter

The MVBA board has formed an Ad Hoc committee to address the matter of the proposed homeless shelter at Centre Street and the Fallsway. The board supports a city-funded independent Community Impact Study as well as further consideration of mitigation strategies and a better understanding of the city's plans and budget for the proposal. No commitment as to the community's support or opposition will be made until after the results of the study and other findings are presented at a General Meeting. We would expect this phase to be completed within 6 months.

Development News

For all who remember the fight to keep 509 Cathedral from being turned into a women's prison facility (and those who can't believe it every time they hear it), there is good news on this large property. It has been converted into condominiums that are now on the market and should provide even more vitality to this great block of Mount Vernon.

Liquor License Update

The application of El Patron Restaurant to expand its license to upper floors of the building at 801 N. Charles have been withdrawn. The community mounted a protest to this application based on excessive noise and crowd issues emanating from hip-hop parties being held in the upper floors. This is the third liquor license application

the community has successfully fought in the past year (5-Seasons, 815 Saint Paul, 801 N Charles). All three protests were driven by operational problems with the establishments.

Business Spaces Available

Business owners and residents ... spread the word to your contacts. We have a few great retail spots available right now in Mount Vernon. The beautiful bay windowed storefront at 1015 N. Charles next to Minato. Complete with fireplace and old wood floors.

A small shop space is open at 220 W. Read. The interior is in excellent condition and this block is a great Mount Vernon retail success story.

House Tour Alert

Attention business owners and residents. Mark this date on your calendars: Sunday, May 4, 2008. That's when up to 2,000 out of town tourists will be pouring into Mount Vernon for the state's House and Garden Pilgrimage Tour. Take time in April to clean windows and tree wells. Plant flowers, install flower boxes, sidewalk planters, or hanging baskets. Clean in front of your place on Saturday or Sunday morning and offer a welcome to those on the tour as you see them around the neighborhood that day. Let's put our best foot forward with this important group of visitors.

More New Business Members

MVBA is very pleased to welcome The Standard Building on Saint Paul Street as a new member. This is a beautiful building – once the offices of Standard Oil that now has amazing apartments, a business center, and an elegant lounge area. Also joining this month is GiGi's at 1005 N. Charles Street. Gigi's is under creative new ownership – just take a look at the baby grand piano that now graces the shop's dining room. It is easy to tell that new things are happening there. They continue to serve fresh and inventive breakfast and lunch fare.

Business News

The Inn at 4 East Madison will begin its award-winning Lunch in the Garden on May 16. Eli the Computer Guy, now at 900 Cathedral Street, has been so successful in his first year in business that he is expanding to a larger space on Howard Street. Congrats to Eli and his growing staff of crack computer experts. And Jay's on Read, the city's best and classiest

piano bar, has changed hands. This means Jay's will continue to be a great gathering place for live music and cocktails.

Cultural Happenings

Mount Vernon has been called the Paris of the Mid Atlantic and now we can enjoy fabulous cabaret music in Mount Vernon, too. So put on your black berets, grab your pack of Galois and head to **An die Musik LIVE** (409 N. Charles) which features cabaret chanteuse Sally Martin on April 18 at 8 p.m. The Peabody Jazz Quartet performs every Monday at 7:30 p.m.

Kudos to **Center Stage** for their second sold out show of the season with *A Little Night Music*. Can they do it again with *These Shining Lives*? Remember, tickets cost as little as \$ 10 on weeknights, and babysitting is offered for some matinees.

The **BSO** performs a high energy *Camina Burana* May 1, 2 and 4 and Gershwin's *Rhapsody in Blue* May 22 and 23.

The **Walters' wonderful map exhibit** continues until June 8. And while you are on Centre Street, go one block west to enjoy the amazing Contemporary Museum. Open Wednesday to Sunday from 12-5 with current show *Double-Take: The Poetics of Illusion and Light* ending May 11.

The **Chocolate Factory Performance Collective** and Towson University's MFA Theatre Program present *Lost in ElectroLand at the always interesting Theatre Project (45 W. Preston)*. The show is a multimedia concert retelling of Peter Pan that examines the search for happiness in a culture obsessed with lifestyle. Live original music, comedy, absurdist storytelling and a fully interactive sound and video design aid to tell a tale of processed food, online dating, video games and the world economy. April 17-27.


The **Maryland Historical Society** is featuring *Borders & Boundaries: The Mason-Dixon Line* until June 29, 2008 and the *Sun* gave a rave review to *The Voss Family, Artists of American Sporting Life* which is running until July 27.

Check out **Baroque music at the Basilica** on Sunday April 13 at 7:00 p.m.

For drama and romance, it is hard to beat **Madame Butterfly** which arrives at the Lyric May 10, 14, 16, 17, 18.

ART-IN-THE PARK

The Mill Valley Cultural Arts Umbrella, Inc is a community-based organization that supports, promotes and showcases the artistic, cultural and humanitarian activities in our neighborhoods of North Baltimore. As an organization with artists and art-related organizations as members, the



MVBA MEMBER OFFER

- First Month Free
- 10% Off Monthly Rates
- 30 Day Guarantee

www.mvfit.com

MVCAU cultivates a diverse art environment through community activism and collaboration. For more information, please visit our website at www.millvalleyarts.org

Art-in-the-Park is an Open Air Art and Eclectiques Market in Hampden's Roosevelt Park-corner of Falls Road and 36th Street, starts April 12, 2008 and runs through October, 2008. Events are held the second Saturday of each month from 9 am to 2 pm. Information about participating in any event is located at www.millvalleyarts.org. You can also learn about the event on MVCAU's Internet radio station at www.Umbrellaradio.org.

Parts of the proceeds from the sales of art go to participating artists and to fund the MVCAU's Summer Youth Camp Arts Program. MVCAU, the Roosevelt Recreation Center Council and the Roosevelt Recreation Center together sponsor the events.



Mt. Vernon ~ Belvedere Clarion

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RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED



To contact members by phone, call MVBA's main number 410-528-1919 and select the desired extension from the menu.

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Bill Oelke, Walters Art Museum
Stan Keyser

Ex-officio Members

Steve Johnson
J.J. Pecora
Mary Ann Henderson

Historic Mt. Vernon/Belvedere

**Flower Mart—May 2nd & May 3rd
11am to 7pm**

**Maryland House and Garden Tour in
Mt Vernon—Sunday, May 4th**

**Looking for great places to shop, dine,
or be entertained? Check out our
shopping section at:**

www.shopmtvernon.org

Starting January 8, 2008, "Single Stream" starts.

Set out all mixed paper and bottles and cans every Tuesday and Friday 5pm-7pm, the same time as your regular trash each week. Recycling materials should be set out in front of house. Your regular trash goes in the same location as it did previously.

