

BELLA VISTA NEWS

FALL 2019/WINTER 2020

BELLA VISTA NEIGHBORS ASSOCIATION

a Registered Community Organization

Bella Vista Neighbors Association (BVNA) serves residents of Bella Vista, which is bounded by 6th and 11th Streets, and South Street and Washington Avenue. BVNA encourages civic involvement, provides a neutral and public discussion forum, preserves and augments our institutions and character, supports the delivery of government services, and promotes dialog with elected officials. We are an independent and nonprofit registered community organization (RCO).

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SHOP LOCAL THIS HOLIDAY SEASON

By JoAnn Greco

Bella Vistans are fortunate to have both the Ninth Street Market and South Street nearby. As the holidays approach, be sure to check out the wares at the host of independent shops lining both streets as well as many of the side blocks between them. Below, some ideas.

GIFTS/JEWELRY

The Space. A new spot selling handbags, jewelry, accessories and craft items for the home, all hand made by artisans. Open weekends and evenings. 749 S. 8th St., shopdimsum.com

Maxwell James. This brand new outpost of Haddonfield's long-standing women's clothing favorite offers an array of candles,

jewelry and accessories. 824 Christian St., Maxwelljamesjeans.com

Armando Rey Jewelry. A decades-old, family-owned staple on Ninth Street that's perfect for that special, bling-worthy someone. 816 S. 9th St., italianmarketphilly.org/armando-rey-jewelry.html

Bario Neal. At its flagship showroom and workshop, this contemporary jeweler features hand-crafted pieces made from ethically-sourced and reclaimed metals and stones. 700 S. 6th St., bario-neal.com

PsandQs. All the things to put some (stylish) life in your men. 820 South St., psandqs.com.

See **SHOP LOCAL**, page 2

FALL HARVEST FUN IN BELLA VISTA



Photo courtesy of Claudia Archer



Photo courtesy of Janet Elfring



Photo courtesy of Janet Elfring

Young Bella Vistan Artists Create Jack-o-Lantern Masterpieces
during BVNA's Annual Pumpkin Painting at Palumbo Rec Center with Fleisher ColorWheels

SUKKOT IN CIANFRANI PARK



Photo courtesy of Eugene Desyatnik

Sukkot Celebrated in Cianfrani Park

This year, thanks to a grant and the help of volunteers, Cianfrani Park joined three other parks across the city, in hosting a community sukkah. This temporary tent-like structure, made available to both neighbors and faith-based groups, is traditionally used for festive meals during the week-long Jewish harvest celebration of Sukkot. The Center City Kehillah, Friends of Cianfrani Park, and BVNA worked together to identify the best size and location for the sukkah and helped assemble, watch over, and remove the tent. ♦

SHOP LOCAL, continued from page 1

TO MARKET, TO MARKET

Consider sharing your favorite local restaurant by presenting a gift card to any of the Ninth Street restaurants. Or, ask the good folks at places like Di Bruno Bros., Claudio Specialty Food or Cardenas Oil & Vinegar Taproom for help in assembling a filled-to-the-brim basket of goodies. italianmarketphilly.org

COFFEE, TEA OR CHOC?

Perk up your gift list by picking up a pound or two of caffeinated goodness from your favorite Bella Vista spot.

Anthony's Italian Coffee & Chocolate House. 903 & 905 S. 9th St., anthonysonline.com

9th Street Coffee & Tea. 814 S. 9th St., 9thstreetcoffee.com

Other Animals Coffee Roasters. 806 S. 6th St., otheranimals.com

Sweet Memories Chocolate. 951 E. Passyunk Ave., sweetmemorieschocolate.com

ART

From several local coffeeshops to Fleisher Art Memorial, Bella Vista has a variety of options for purchasing art from local artists.

B Square Gallery. 614 S. 9th St., bsquaregallery.com

Chapterhouse Cafe and Gallery. 620 S. 9th St., chapterhousecafe.wordpress.com

Da Vinci Art Alliance. 704 Catharine St., davinciartalliance.org

Fleisher Art Memorial. 719 Catharine St., fleisher.org

Jed Williams Gallery. 615 Bainbridge St., jedwilliamsgallery.com

Rally Coffee. 701 S. 7th St., heyrally.com

MISCELLANEOUS

Anastacia's Antiques. This sprawling space is filled with enough ephemera and trinkets to stuff the stocking of any lover of vintage finds. 617 Bainbridge St., anastaciasantiques.com

Fantes. From cookware to cutlery, moka makers to mixers, this expansive emporium is sure to please your foodie friends. 1006 S. 9th St., fantes.com

Pit Stop HQ. This doggie day care and overnight boarding spot carries a small selection of toys, collars, and leashes for the pampered pooches on your gift list. 838 Christian St., pitstophq.com

CLASSES/EXPERIENCES

Instead of more stuff, how about gifting your loved ones with an only-in-Bella Vista experience?

Philadelphia's Magic Gardens. 1020 South St., phillymagicgardens.org

Butcher's Sew Shop. 800 S. 8th St, butcherssewshop.com

The Expressive Hand. 622 S. 9th St., expressivehand.com

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Freelance journalist and editor JoAnn Greco has lived in Bella Vista since 1999.

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GET TO KNOW PALUMBO PARK

By Hope Scott

When I first moved to the Bella Vista neighborhood, I did not know Palumbo Park existed. One afternoon in the early fall I took my dog for a walk and went down the alleyway that connects Fulton and Catharine Streets and there it was – the serene elegant park framed in brick with old sycamores, scrappy dogwoods, and an expansive vibrant mural of a pastoral autumn scene. That afternoon the sun shafts scattered through the treetops and the leaves in David Guinn's mural looked as though they too were shimmering and lifting in the light breeze. As I've come to discover in the years since I've moved here the park, at 723 Catharine Street, like the neighborhood and the city itself, has many seasons.

In 1875 the land for the site was purchased for \$8500 from a private individual and designated for use by the School District of Philadelphia. The Thomas B. Florence Public School was built on the two-tenths of an acre site. About 75 years later, when the school became obsolete, the Board of Education gave the land to the city stipulating that the site be forever utilized as a park. The Florence name remained when the park opened in 1955.

Local residents whose families have been in the neighborhood for generations recall that in the 1950s local teenagers tended tomatoes and peppers in garden beds as part of a youth club organized by the House of Industry, originally at 714 Catharine Street. Old men fed the pigeons. Children ran through the park

and over to climb on the stone lions at the adjacent Fleisher Art Memorial. Teenagers smoked cigarettes and sipped wine sneaked from home.

"Everyone in the neighborhood made their own wine," Domenick Lazzaro of Sheridan Street recalled.

And there were serenades in the park on warm summer nights.

"In the evenings in the 1960s local teenage boys in groups of three or four would sing a cappella in the park," said Alfina Sorbello, whose parents' house on Fulton Street backed up to the park.

"You know, South Philly," she said, "and I would fall asleep with my window open listening to them." I didn't know, but it made me wish I'd been there then.

In the 1970s the park reflected rough times when it was a gathering ground for drug users, leading neighbors to nickname it "Needlepoint Park."

During a dedication ceremony in 1978 following major renovations, the park was renamed Frank Palumbo, Sr. Park to honor the philanthropist and restaurateur.

The park's active and devoted Friends of Palumbo Park (FOPP) group coordinated with the city to lead another major renovation in 2016 that brought ground resurfacing, new benches and picnic tables, plants, an irrigation and sprinkler system, lighting, and an ADA-compliant ramp. Fencing was installed in the spring of 2019 to protect plants.

See **PALUMBO PARK**, page 4



Photo courtesy of Laura Burtner

Palumbo Park today

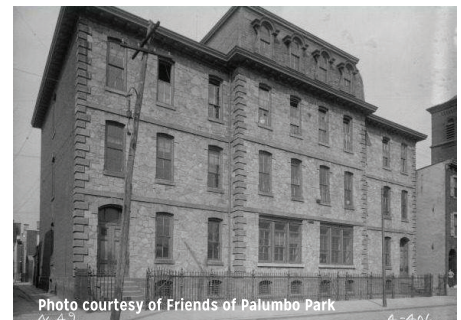


Photo courtesy of Friends of Palumbo Park

Florence School, 1875 - 1950s



Photo courtesy of Friends of Palumbo Park

Alfina, Loretta, and Salvatore Sorbello playing in Florence Park, 1959



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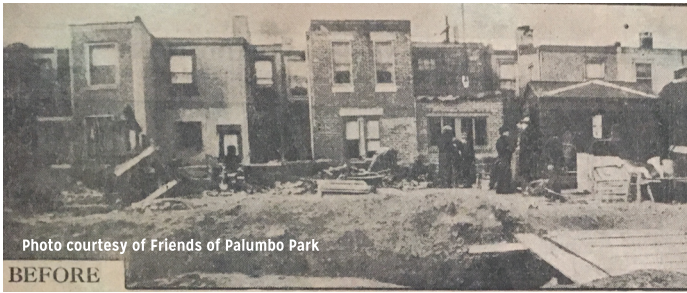


Photo courtesy of Friends of Palumbo Park

BEFORE

The former Florence Park before renovations, (now Palumbo Park)
Source: Evening Bulletin, May 1941



Photo courtesy of Friends of Palumbo Park

AFTER

The renovated Florence Park (now Palumbo Park)
Source: Evening Bulletin, May 1941

The 2019 summer season at Palumbo Park kicked off with a Memorial Weekend 40th year celebration with festivities and a concert by the local area Blackbird Society Orchestra which played tunes from the 1920s and early 1930s. The event was a nod to South Philadelphia son Eddie Lang, "the father of jazz guitar," who was born in Philadelphia in 1920 and lived near the park. Recently St. Albans Street where he lived was renamed Eddie Lang Way. State Representative Brian Sims and Councilman Mark Squilla and many neighbors and park users were in attendance.

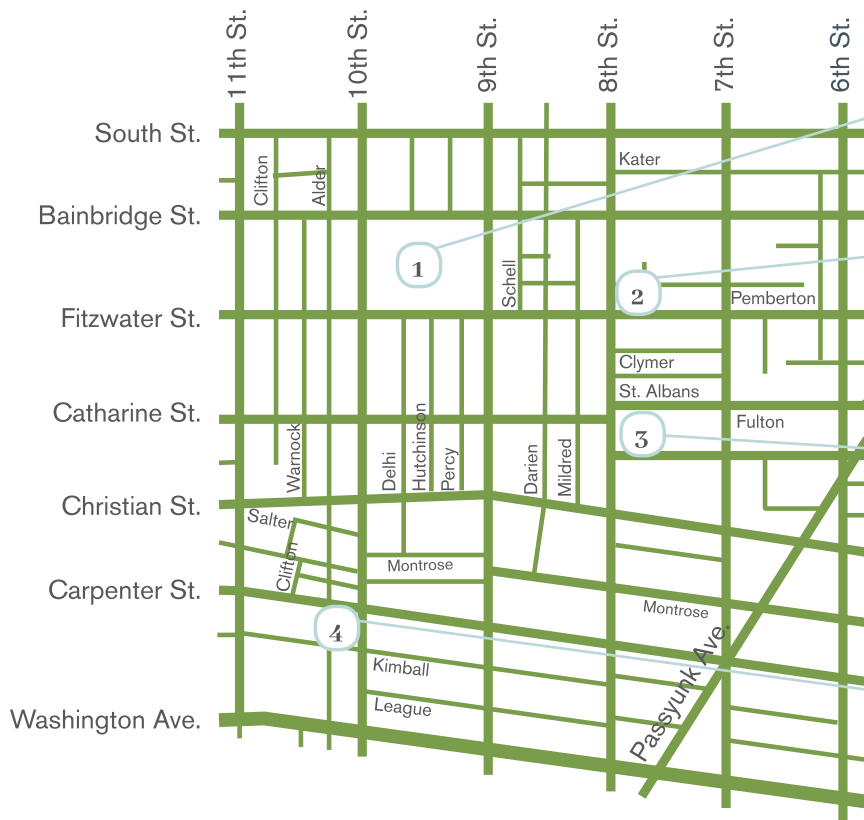
FOPP which gathers to maintain the park, conduct fundraising, and plan neighborhood events, oversees a free summer yoga in the park series, art in the park events with local arts organizations, including the Da Vinci Art Alliance, and other programs. The Love Your Park program is alive and well at Palumbo with two yearly clean up events that bring neighbors and friends together. A new bulletin board located at the entrance keeps all informed about upcoming events and news.

New members to the Friends of Palumbo Park are welcome. The FOPP has a Facebook page, www.facebook.com/FriendsofPalumboPark, and its own website, www.palumbopark.org.

Seasons have changed at Palumbo Park, one of Bella Vista's gems, as it continues to be a place to enjoy nature in the heart of the city and enhance this South Philadelphia neighborhood.

Hope Scott is a writer and writing coach who lives in Bella Vista. www.hopewscott.com.

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CONTINUOUSLY IMPROVING PARENTING THROUGH THE CLIMATE CRISIS

By Jason Sandman

We heal our most precious asset, our children, when they are in need, in crisis, or have a scraped knee from an active day. As parents, we quickly realize that one of our "calls to action" is to heal. The role of a parent is to heal when our children are hurt, sick, or unhealthy feels intuitive and natural. Parents are obvious problem solvers. Parents are natural healers. The job demands it.

The role of a parent is incredibly multifaceted and as a caregiver to my son, I have been thinking a lot about his near term future and how I can prepare him for the challenges that require something a bit more complicated than a band aid over a scraped knee.

Obviously we heal our children. They need us. I would argue there is a level of reciprocity during the healing process as well. Our children need us when they are at their most vulnerable and we need them too. We need them to eventually take care of us. They are extensions of us. Our children are a representation of ourselves. They are our legacy.

What role or responsibility do parents have as both caregivers and healers during the climate crisis? It is a question that permeates my heart and mind, and is one that really was driven by the birth of our first-born son. All great victories start with a single step, a single leap of naive ambition. I believe more parents need to speak up about climate change and more specifically, how our collective capacity can be a successful catalyst in supporting climate adaptation strategies at home and in our neighborhoods.

Problem solving and healing have always been part of the parent handbook. Is climate stewardship also a parenting skill? Is there a script or template for raising an empowered, climate conscious child during planetary warming? Unlike a scraped knee, there is no magic band aid that can "fix" the climate crisis. So, how do we solve this problem and heal one another? I think the phrase 'it takes a village' is relevant. There is real power in collaboration. As the co founder of Climate Dads, I believe that dads have an incredibly critical and important

responsibility both for our families and our communities. Our dedicated community of Climate Dads is so very prudent at this most critical time because parents are healers, parents are always solving problems, and parents are arguably the most ambitious population on the planet.

I'm often reminded that no one single individual is carrying the great burden of our global climate crisis on their shoulders. Nor should they. I am challenging all of you in Philadelphia, in the United States, and worldwide to consider how a changing climate will affect your children and those vulnerable young people under your care. For you fathers, grandfathers, uncles, and godparents, please know that you aren't doing this alone. Your community is right here in our neighborhood. We can do this together. I know we can. ♦

Jason Sandman is a resident of Bella Vista. He is also the Co Founder of Climate Dads, a diverse population of male caregivers who lead by example. Learn more online: www.climatedads.org

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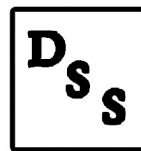
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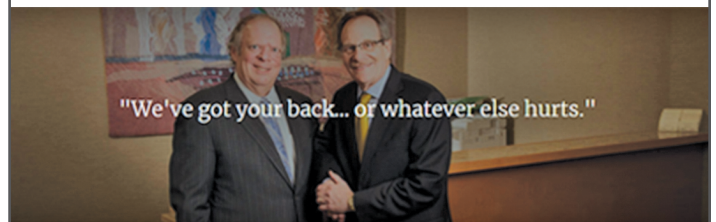
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BVNA HISTORIC PRESERVATION COMMITTEE

By Scott Welden

We all know that Philadelphia is a special place. It is the birthplace of the United States, the setting for *Rocky*, and a pretty phenomenal foodie town once you get past the cheesesteaks (or is it because of the cheesesteaks?). It is also the first UNESCO World Heritage City in the United States—an honor that in 2015 recognized the city for its historical and cultural significance to the global community.

Yet despite the city's importance, it has significantly fewer historically designated sites than comparable cities, with only 2.2% of buildings recognized compared with the national average of 4.3%. This is an urgent issue as the city's recent construction boom has led to the destruction of historic properties across the city.

With this in mind, the Bella Vista Neighbors Preservation committee has been working to identify historically and culturally significant locations throughout our neighborhood that should be conserved or protected to maintain the unique qualities that have shaped Bella Vista for generations.

Bella Vista has a deep and diverse history—it was a landing for enslaved people who first felt freedom while traveling the Underground Railroad, and later for immigrants from around the globe—and an abundance of historically significant buildings and sites. This history continues to shape the dynamic and vibrant culture of the neighborhood today where people from all backgrounds make Bella Vista such a wonderful and diverse place to live and visit.

To protect this history, the committee has been identifying properties for official historical designation with the City of Philadelphia, which allows for preservation of a property's structure and architectural identity, and also provides a check and balance for developers considering properties for future investment. As real estate investors continue to target properties in Bella Vista for demolition and construction of new buildings, the committee believes it is vitally important to preserve and protect locations that are significant to our community and its culture.

This problem is not unique to Bella Vista, and the committee has joined with other neighborhood organizations to form a coalition that aims to align and support local civic efforts and advocate for legislation that will support protecting properties that meet the criteria for historic significance. Bella Vista is well represented within this group and we are ensuring that our goals are being heard. We have also begun conversations with Councilman Squilla to align ourselves with some of the initiatives being undertaken in City Council and are excited about the possibilities.

If you would like to know more about these initiatives or are interested in preserving your property, please email scott.welden3@gmail.com! Our committee would be more than happy to answer questions and to assist you in this process. ♦



Some historic architectural features to be found in Bella Vista

Does your property include architectural features that represent the history of Bella Vista?



BVNA's Beautification Committee reminds us: to avoid causing a "trashnado" wait until garbage/recycling collection morning to set out refuse when the weather is windy, rainy, snowy, freezing rain, sleet, or any combination of the aforementioned. Thanks!

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DA VINCI MURAL PROPOSAL

By Jarrod Markman

Creativity Is Just Connecting Things: A New Philly Mural comes to Bella Vista.

On October 24th, Bella Vista Neighbors Association, Da Vinci Art Alliance, Fleisher Art Memorial, and Mural Arts announced a new mural will be coming to Bella Vista between 7th and 8th street on Catharine Street in 2020. The mural will overlook all of Fleisher Art Memorial's parking lot on the side of Da Vinci Art Alliance's historic rowhome. Since its founding by nine Italian immigrant artists, Da Vinci Art Alliance (DVAA) has continuously provided space for creative refuge and it has been a constant dream to designate the building as a hub for creativity, collaboration, and artistic innovation. This new mural will cement the 700 block of Catharine Street as a lively hub for visual art-making and exploration.

In January 2020, artists will be asked to submit proposals that explore the idea that creativity flourishes at the intersection of disciplines. Community members and neighbors will be invited to review the submissions in spring, 2020. Following installation, the mural will be dedicated on October 11, 2020 as part of the inaugural Da Vinci Fest. Stay tuned to Bella Vista news sources for updates! ♦

Jarrod Markman is the Executive Director of the Da Vinci Art Alliance, located at 704 Catharine St. For further information about the gallery: davinciartalliance.org.



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BVNA BOARD MEMBER CHANGES

By Eugene Desyatnik

It is with mixed emotions that I share a few key recent BVNA board updates. I would like to recognize Brandy Bones for all of her contributions, and wish her success as she makes a move to Detroit, Michigan. I've had the privilege of serving with Brandy in her capacities as BVNA Treasurer, Vice President, Beautification Chairperson, and fellow Crosstown Coalition delegate for which she chaired the affordable housing committee.

Thanks to Brandy's vision and leadership, we were able to respond quickly to external developments that affected our insurability, make key decisions for the organization, and restore financial stability for BVNA's continued operations. Additionally, she redoubled our fundraising efforts enabling the launch of Bella Vista's first-ever curb and sidewalk sweeping initiative.

A Citizen Planning Institute graduate, Brandy concurrently held a number of other community and non-profit positions. She was the board president of Project HOPE, volunteered at Mighty Writers, and was a local committee-person. We will all greatly miss her energy and positive attitude, but we also know she will go on to do amazing things in Detroit, a city which is lucky to have her.

I'd also like to recognize Mark Kasten and David Yu, who have stepped up to serve as Vice President and Treasurer, respectively.

Mark Kasten has been instrumental in evaluating our insurance options, led the committee to re-write our bylaws, and continues to administer our activities grants, and coordinate sponsorships for our weekly e-newsletter and biannual print newsletter.

David Yu, in his short time as Treasurer, has already injected efficiencies into our accounting and donor tracking systems, diversified our asset allocation strategy, and produced analytics to help the board make more informed, data-driven financial decisions. David has a background in specification design, preservation, and remodeling, and brings with him prior non-profit board service experience, and has the flexibility to tackle special projects as they arise.

BVNA still has a vacancy on the board. We are always on the lookout for neighbors or business owners who share our passion for the neighborhood, giving back to improve our community, tackling issues, producing programs and events, and having fun! If this sounds like you or someone you know, please drop us a line. Send your name, short bio, and the name of the BVNA committee(s) or initiatives you would be most interested in participating to info@bellavistaneighbors.org ♦

A black and white photograph of a young woman with long hair, wearing a blue t-shirt and black pants, playing an electric guitar. She is standing in a dark, smoky environment. The background is dark with some smoke or fog. The text is overlaid on the image.

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Mail check and this portion to: **BVNA, PO Box 63955, Philadelphia, PA 19147**

 **Save postage by donating via PayPal!**
Please visit BellaVistaNeighbors.org



BVNA Meetings

ZONING

First Tuesdays at 7:30 pm
Palumbo Recreation Center, 10th & Fitzwater

Open meetings for community input on building and renovation projects requiring variances of the zoning code.

PSA 1

First Wednesdays at 6:30 pm
Santore Library, 7th & Carpenter

Meeting between police leadership and stakeholders in Police Service Area 1 of the 3rd District. Review of monthly crime statistics.

BVNA BOARD

First Mondays at 7:30 pm
Palumbo Recreation Center, 10th & Fitzwater

Board of Directors' monthly business meeting. All meetings open to the public.

Check our website and social media for possible schedule changes:

BellaVistaNeighbors.org



@BVNeighbors

Your Ad: Here!

Reach 3,000+ homes in Bella Vista

For info/rates: BellaVistaNeighbors.org/Newsletter
Contact Mark Kasten: MKasten1@gmail.com

A MESSAGE FROM THE BVNA BOARD PRESIDENT

Eugene Desyatnik

As we near the end of our second year of providing sidewalk and curb sweeping, we are thrilled that so many neighbors and business owners have chosen to join in this important effort. But continuing it requires neighborhood-wide support! How much would you give for clean streets? While we do not charge member dues, we do rely on donations from neighbors to fund our general operating expenses. As an all-volunteer, tax exempt, 501(c)(3) non-profit organization, we ensure 100% of your tax

deductible donation goes directly toward support of BVNA programs and modest virtual office expenses.

As you fill out the attached form, please indicate where you would like to direct your donation, note whether you would like to remain anonymous, and send it back—or donate online today! We would like to wish you a safe and happy holiday season, and we look ahead to producing more programs and making greater strides in improving the quality of life in Bella Vista in the coming year. ♦

BELLA VISTA SIDEWALK AND CURB SWEEPING REPORT

The sweeping program is entirely funded by neighbors, we need \$30,000 for weekly cleaning in 2020, so #givegivegive



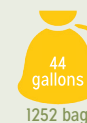
\$22,732 RAISED
from the community



\$21,735 PAID
for sidewalk
and curb cleaning



137.8 MI. CLEANED
5.3 mi./wk



55,088 GALLONS
of garbage collected



\$0.39/GALLON
of garbage collected

BVNA is excited about the continued success of our clean-up program in 2019. We currently have enough money to sustain bi-weekly cleaning through November, and monthly cleaning Dec/Jan/Feb/March. We are looking to raise the \$5000 starter to relaunch 2020 with the goal of weekly cleaning.

Do you get Bella Vista news delivered to your email inbox? No?! Well then . . .

Sign up for our weekly eNewsletter
BellaVistaNeighbors.org/News