



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Belair at Bowie Exhibit Opens with a Ceremony on June 7

A new permanent exhibit about Belair at Bowie opens June 7 at the Kenhill Center. The exhibit, which details the history of one of Levitt & Sons most successful suburban developments, will be unveiled at a public reception Friday evening at 7 p.m.

The event will begin with a short ceremony outside of the Kenhill Center, with remarks by Mayor G. Frederick Robinson. Then, attendees will be invited inside to see the exhibit and have dessert. The film "Tales of Belair and Bowie" by professional filmmaker and Bowie native Jeff Krulik will be shown in the multi purpose room. Attendees will also have the opportunity to record a memory or comment about Belair at Bowie at the memory booth outside of the Kenhill Center. Original owners of Belair at Bowie will be recognized during the ceremony.

The collection of neighborhoods known as "Belair at Bowie" were built in the 1960s and came to be known over the years as "Levitt Bowie". Each of the neighborhoods, or sections as they were called, were built to be self-contained, walkable, and affordable for middle-class families. However, not all families could purchase the new homes as Levitt & Sons policies prohibited sales to African Americans until it was forced to do so by the courts.

Belair at Bowie's story is a pivotal chapter in Bowie's history. During the years of rapid growth and development, many houses of worship and several organizations were established and a council-manager type of structure was adopted for the government. Between 1963 and 1970, ten schools opened in the City to support the burgeoning population.

The Kenhill Center is located at 2614 Kenhill Drive. It was originally the Foxhill Elementary School, until the 1970s when declining enrollments forced its closure. From 1978 to 2011 the building served at Bowie City Hall. Today it still houses some City offices and the Bowie television studio; and some of its space is leased to local organizations, such as the Greater Bowie Chamber of Commerce and the Bowie Boys and Girls Club.

Pamela Williams, who retired earlier this year, after serving as Historic Properties Manager for more than ten years, wrote the content for the exhibit. It will be on display permanently at the Kenhill Center and may be viewed any time the building is open. (Hours are 8:30 a.m. to 9:00 p.m. Monday to Thursday, and 8:30 to 5 p.m. on Fridays. Closed weekends.)

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