serving the waterfront communities of southwest and navy yard

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Courtesy of Matt Koehler

The Vulcan Concrete ready mix facility next to the Watermark and Eagle Academy Public Charter School down in Buzzard point

Buzzard Point: A Struggle with Dust and Ill Health

BY MATT KOEHLER

own in Buzzard Point, amidst the sound of hammering, saws, and heavy Mack cement trucks, sit two cement plants that supply the essential raw materials to make all the new high rises, rise. The whole area used to be an industrial wasteland with parcels of toxic soil designated as brownfields, but warp speed development has transformed this no man's land into a Sim City-like utopia of amenities and market rate housing.

The widespread development and the factories that supply them don't come without issues, though. There are acute listen to them, or only paid them lip serenvironmental concerns but before the new developments came online, there wasn't anyone to complain about it.

Well, let me backup. There weren't the right kind of people to complain about the issues.

The communities most affected over the years by the contaminants from the soil, dust from the factories, and how development exacerbated both, were generations of poor Black residents, advocating in vain for their right to live with clean air and water.

Developers and city officials didn't

vice - until now. Now, with more affluent residents rapidly moving in, suddenly the operators and the city government are taking complaints of environmental contamination more seriously.

Over a Zoom call in early April, ANCs Fredrica 'Rikki' Kramer (ANC 6D05) and Rhonda Hamilton (ANC 6D06) told me that Councilmember Phil Mendelson called Buzzard Point a classic example of environmental racism. The surrounding African American communities are vulnerable - many live at or below the

See "Buzzard Point," page 18

COMP PLAN AMENDMENTS: WHAT NOW?

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VOLUNTEER WATER OUALITY MONITORING

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KIDS CORNER

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2021 GRADUATES OF SWNA **SCHOLARSHIP** PROGRAM

Page 10

Southwest Welcomes New Feathered Neighbors!

BY DENISE RENNIS

any Southwest residents have been thrilled to see the new neighbors that have moved into our newly revitalized Duck Pond. A mother mallard (known as a hen) and her 10 ducklings have taken up residence on one of the new island habitats that were recently installed.

Here, the babies will stick close to their mother for protection as they forage in the shallow water, eating aquatic plants and insects. The shallow water,



Courtesy of Denise Rennis

Ducklings hanging out with mom in the shade under the trees See "Neighbors," page 16

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by supporting the Thelma D. Jones Breast Cancer Fund.

Donations support outreach and education strategies for young girls and link low-income, uninsured and underinsured women and men with information, acreening diagnostic services and counseling. Donate online at www.tdibreestcancerfund.org.

The Thelma D. Jones Breast Cancer Fund is an all-volunteer award-winning grassroots organization whose mission is to advocate and improve the overall health and wellness for women and men through outreach, education, and prevention. We promote early detection strategies for breast health and access to the best biomedical and evidence-based complementary therapies to reduce the incidences and mortality rates of breast cancer. Our vision is to save lives, embrace and achieve a world community free of breast cancer.

When donating by mail, please make check or money order payable to the Thelma D. Jones Breast Cancer Fund and mail to:

Thelma D. Jones Breast Cancer Fund



400 "1" Street, SW Washington, DC 20024 theime@tdjbreastcancerfund.org www.tdjbreastcancerfund.org (202) 251-1639

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Op-Ed

Op-Ed: Comp Plan Amendments: What Now?

BY FREDRICA KRAMER, ANC 6D05 AND VICE CHAIR, ANC 6D

he District's Comprehensive Plan, adopted in 2006, is a 20-year guide to future growth and development. The Plan was amended in 2011, the Framework chapter was amended in 2020, and the full Plan is now being amended again.

The Office of Planning's (OP) 2019 draft met with stiff resistance, including a perceived weakening of the language that might provide stronger directives and legal authority to redress the consequences of rapid growth and increased density. In response, the DC Council charged the ANCs with collecting and submitting comments of their own and their constituents. ANC 6D submitted detailed comments to OP in February 2020 on Chapter 19 on the Lower Anacostia/ Near Southwest, with additional reference to Chapter 4 on Housing, and testified with extended comments to the Council in November and Decem-

With the Council's May 18, 2021 final vote, including their own amendments to the OP draft, we should take the time between now and the full rewrite beginning January 2025, to consider some critical issues that can and should be addressed outside of the Comp Plan to shape the community we strive for.

Whether Southwest can remain an "exemplar of equity and inclusion," as our Small Area Plan (SAP) memorialized, can be shaped by legislative and policy changes outside of the Plan. While the principal vehicle for addressing housing affordability has been increasing density and infill, we will continue to lose the social diversity that Southwest values without additional ways to create varied and affordable housing stock as aggressive redevelopment continues.

Changing our Inclusionary Zoning (IZ) law can be a target now to cover more projects and to make more units available to those who cannot afford market rate rents or purchase prices.

Current IZ rules typically require only 8% below market rate units in the new buildings to which IZ applies – as we increase density with more tall buildings, affordable housing will become an increasingly smaller slice of the whole.

The Amendments propose 40% of new affordable (below market rate) units be capped at 30% of our region's Median Family Income (MFI), and the rest split between 30-60% and 60-80% of MFI (80% of MFI is nearly

\$70,000 for one person and nearly \$101,000 for a family of 4, while 30% of MFI is \$37,800 for a family of 4). Capping 40% at deep affordability is a good target, but still leaves most developments stuck at providing only about 8% of the total units below market rate and many buildings not subject to IZ at all.

Public housing is the last assurance for deep affordability, but essential maintenance is not properly funded and most public housing is disappearing through replacement projects

We must ensure that our commitment to Build First for Greenleaf is realized – one-for-one replacement and *one move* from current to new unit *within our community*.

The Amendments include a tenant's right of return and a full relocation plan, but absent the strict application of Build First above, redevelopment has scattered public housing residents, breaking community ties and services and making future return largely unrealistic.

Publicly owned parcels destined to be surplused or repurposed, and public subsidies in other redevelopment parcels, are opportunities to lead equitable development.

The Council's Amendments prioritize deeply affordable housing for city-owned land, and we should press the District to harvest these parcels, including the DMV facilities in Southwest as long as we remain a redevelopment hotspot for private developers; by DC law, if converted to residential use, it could produce 20-30% below market rate housing.

Benefits from public subsidies (e.g., tax relief in Opportunity Zones and otherwise, long-term leases, deep price reductions on sales of publicly owned properties) also ought to play prominently in discussions as redevelopment projects are vetted.

The dictates for review of development proposals by ANCs and others is extremely variable, and not all communities have Small Area Plans to articulate community values and objectives and apply them to development. Southwest has an SAP, but its recommendations are often not well reflected in development plans, and may not have primacy when they overlap with other planning directives (e.g., the Capitol Gateway Project).

Except for Planned Unit Developments (PUDs), many projects are subject to only limited review, comments may be due only to the OP rather than the Zoning Commission – with the potential to become part of a Final Order, or may have no man-

dated community review at all. A full review of the review process itself could strengthen the ANC's and community's ability to influence development decisions.

We should also require social impact assessments, as we do environmental impact assessments, as part of local planning and as a tool to take stock of the short- and long-term consequences of a proposed new development in relation to the SAP and other critical community effects.

Historic preservation can be a means to retain the cultural fabric of a community and to preserve affordable housing. Thoughtful consideration of how the historic character can be preserved, inventorying important structures, creative integration of historic structures with new development, and more subtle recognition of how social interaction works in a community and can be protected, should be part of the process as new projects are reviewed.

As new residential buildings move common spaces to the interior, we are losing open space, both green space and the physical ground that nurtured social interaction across demographic divides. Whether creative design can regain some of that space is a challenge and merits consideration.

We agonize over the scarcity of neighborhood-serving businesses but need to find new tools to support small businesses – including smaller spaces, and lease and ownership arrangements to control costs and support neighborhood services.

Transportation planning focuses on a dramatic reduction in automobile use, expanded use of smaller motorized vehicles and bikes, and more support for walkers. An equitable transportation policy must minimize competition between all motorized vehicles and others to maximize safety.

It must also account for realistic public transit availability, especially for those who rely on it to get to work at odd hours. Automobiles are necessary to get to areas not well served by public transit, and when age or disability requires auto use, planning must account realistically for available parking and garage space for those who need it.

Details of an equitable transportation plan must accompany all new development, which they too often do not.

These are not abstract issues or long-term goals but govern our ability to realize the dictates in our own Small Area Plan and can provide a blueprint for needed reform now.

Can-do Marketing Guru for JMA Solutions Personifies Volunteerism

BY ANTHONY TISDALL

s. Iman Brown is a lifelong resident of Southwest DC. She graduated from Elizabeth Seton High School and played volleyball, which became a lifelong passion of hers. After graduation, she attended the University of North Car-



Courtesy of Author

Ms. Iman Brown

olina at Charlotte, where she earned a bachelor's degree in public relations with a minor in journalism (and avid volleyball player). Her degree would play a pivotal role in her selection as a marketing assistant for the Southwest-based JMA Solutions in 2016, after graduation.

Hired mainly for her social marketing skills, Iman quickly took to the various aspects of marketing for a rapidly growing government consulting firm, embracing the company culture, family atmosphere, and the spirit of giving back to the community created by JMA Solutions CEO and president, Jan Adams (also a resident of Southwest DC). In short order, Ms. Brown began to actively manage the company's social media, which included Facebook, Twitter, YouTube, Instagram, and other accounts. She wrote press releases, newsletters, speeches and supported the many philanthropic efforts of the company and the executive team. With her cando attitude and friendly and outgoing demeanor, Iman became the face of JMA to the community and a valuable part of the JMA team. She received her first promotion to marketing coordinator within her first two years while simultaneously pursuing her passion for volleyball by refereeing with the DC Fray. She then moved on to her master's degree in sports industry management from Georgetown University, graduating in 2020.

Fueled by JMA's ultimate mission and vision of giving back to the community, Iman has led the coordination in a company that supports over 40 charities annually. Iman not only serves as the main point of contact for the company's philanthropic outreach efforts, but she also makes it a priority to volunteer at these events. Some of the organizations that she supports regularly include Luke's Wings, Project Giveback, Arena Stage, NFL Player Josh Norman's Starz24 foundation, the USO, and several veteran's organizations.

Every Thanksgiving, Iman volunteers at Project Giveback's Thanksgiving Food Basket Distribution to help pack and deliver food baskets to needy families located in DC and hand-deliver baskets to several families in Southwest. In the summer, Iman volunteers at Luke's Wings charity walk to raise money for military families to visit their loved ones who were wounded while serving their country.

Iman is the JMA corporate representative for the DC Adopt-a-School Program as well. She works closely with Amidon-Bowen and Jefferson Middle School Academy schools (JMA has adopted both schools) to ensure that students and teachers have the necessary supplies and equipment. She spearheads annual teacher appreciation events sponsored by JMA and recently visited both schools to hand out monogrammed teacher appreciation mugs to each teacher. JMA employees have the opportunity to volunteer for career days, tutor or participate in game nights and contests for the students.

Ms. Brown was part of a panel of young professionals that addressed scholarship recipients from Southwest for SWNA. She has supported the Thelma D. Jones Breast Cancer Fund in the past by providing opening remarks, drafting closing remarks, and other voluntary editorial support. She has written numerous articles for The Southwester that highlight JMA Solutions community service, awards, and contributions.

Never one to look for the spotlight, Iman has authored numerous award nominations for the company. Her efforts have resulted in JMA receiving the following accolades, to name a few: ranking in Black Enterprise as one of the Top 100 Largest Black Businesses in America, INC 5000's Fastest-Growing Private Companies in America, the Washington Business Journal's Book of Lists for the Largest Veteran-Owned Companies in Washington, DC, The Disabled American Veterans (DAV) Small Employer of the Year Award, and Washington Business Journal's Corporate Philanthropy Award for Cash Giving Donations in the Mid-Sized Business Category.

Ms. Brown worked with the NBA's Mothers of Professional Basketball Players to coordinate a banner that JMA sponsored for their welcome reception at the NBA All Star event in Chicago. She also coordinated with the John Wall Family Foundation to deliver 1000 bottles of water to accommodate the 1000 meals for their holiday food drive giveaway in Southeast DC. She attended and volunteered to support every effort throughout the event.

When COVID-19 shut down the JMA office in March 2020, Ms. Brown interviewed numerous, on-line host-

See "Guru," page 6



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CREATIVITY SOCIAL CONNECTION

A Partnership Built on Giving Back and Paying It Forward

BY SOUTHWESTER STAFF

or the third time since the pandemic occurred, the Frederick Douglass Memorial Bridge Team (FDMB) has partnered with the Thelma D. Jones Breast Cancer Fund (TDJBCF) to give back or pay it forward. Their ongoing efforts remind the Breast Cancer Fund that the bridge's progress has not just beenon the physical bridge but also in rebuilding bridges in the local community, especially with the seniors and immune compromised residents at River Park in Southwest.

Started through a connection during the SWNA's Forum in early 2020, in which the FDMB Management was a participant and Thelma D. Jones was a lead organizer, the two continue to bridge connections in the community and make a significant difference.

In March, the FDMB team arrived with boxes full of PPEs, supplies, and canned food for the seniors and immune compromised residents at River Park. The thankful residents were overjoyed with the variety of necessary items that they could barely contain themselves: "Wow! Oh my! This is a lot of good stuff! Can I get one of everything? Thank you, Thank you! Those folks (FDMB) are so nice, bless them and you, too!" said one happy resident. These were just some of the comments, punctuated with smiling faces while selecting the desired items.

Coupled with the two previous pay it forward events, the March



The Bridge Team and Thelma D. Jones

event afforded nearly 70 seniors and immune compromised residents - a total of over 200 for the three events - a way to avoid the risk of venturing out to stores in what was still a risky environment. It also provided a cost savings to them as many, if not all our seniors, are on fixed incomes with limited resources and mobility restrictions. In addition, the event afforded an opportunity for the participants to enjoy a bit of fresh air, exercise, and socialization, as they often had limited opportunities to connect with others in a socially distanced environment. To see a video of the event, click here: https://www. youtube.com/watch?v=hxDvfivSQlw. Equally important, the participants were able to receive literature on breast health appreciated seeing and receiving reminders on the FDMB's progress, which they hope to venture across soon. While TDJBCF Founder travels across the bridge frequently, only a limited number of the seniors and immune compromised residents have seen the bridge in its present state of completion. Through a commitment from the FDMB team, the participants will journey across the bridge and perhaps tour the Frederick Douglass home in Anacostia, as well, when the pandemic restrictions allow this type of activity.

The TDJBCF was pleased with the overall support from the River Park

Management and FDMB team in coordinating and setting up the event in a festive and decorative fashion. A special thanks to Patrice Brooks for her overall efforts. Also, the TDJB-CF was pleased to connect with the FDMB Project Management Team again. "It is gratifying to know that the FDMB Management cares enough to participate in activities of this nature during your busy schedule. I salute and applaud you and trust that you will pass on our sincerest thanks to those who donated and contributed to the event's success," said TDJBCF Founder Thelma D. Jones.

The FDMB Management team sur-

See "Partnership," page 10



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SWNA **ESTF** - Education and Scholarship Task Force was established to encourage and assist youth in the Southwest Washington DC, Ward 6, Zip code 20024 neighborhood to pursue a post-secondary education.

Volunteer Water Quality Monitoring in Our Neighborhood

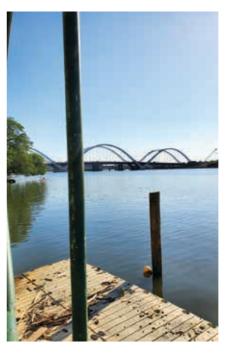
BY BETH HALL

orking together to understand the health of District of Columbia waters, the Department of Energy and Environment (DOEE) awarded a grant to Anacostia Riverkeeper to implement a volunteer-based, citizen science water quality monitoring program with the goal of providing up-to-date, weekly water quality data to residents and visitors. This information can be used to make informed decisions about recreating in District waters.

The program was established in 2018, and each summer, trained volunteers collect water samples from 22 specific sites in the Rock Creek, Potomac, and Anacostia watersheds. In our neighborhood, weekly sampling is done at Buzzard Point, Yards Park Marina, the recreation pier at the Wharf, and the Tidal Basin. All samples are analyzed in Anacostia Riverkeep-



Citizen Science Water Quality Monitoring volunteer Beth Hall



Courtesy of Melinda Cavichia

Buzzard point water quality monitoring

er's lab. Parameters include pH levels, bacteria (E. coli), temperature, and turbidity. The results are made available to the public each Thursday through social media (@AnacostiaRrkper), the Anacostia Riverkeeper website, and online data portals.

Thus far this summer, all four sites have passed. This continues a trend, beginning from a baseline in 2019, of improvement in DC's overall recreational water quality. The low bacteria results are especially important for DC's goal of fishable and swimmable waters.

This year, the Riverkeeper's partners in this effort include the Audubon Naturalist Society and Rock Creek Conservancy. To learn more about this Citizen Science Water Quality Monitoring program, visit anacostiariverkeeper.org/ dc-water-quality. Questions can be directed to monitor@anacostiariverkeeper.org.

DOEE Community Science Water Quality Results May 26, 2021								
Site	¹ Funder	E. Coli Bacteria, Single Day (MPN/100mL)	² E. Coli Bacteria Geometric Mean (MPN 100/mL)	Temperature	Temperature	pH	Turbidity (NTU	
				(°C)	(°C)			
			Anacostia River					
National Arboretum	DOEE	488.4 - FAIL		24	22.5	5	8.37	
Hickey Run	DOEE	1986.3 - FAIL		23	19	7	6.16	
Kingman Lake	DOEE	142.1 - PASS		28	25	7	7.3	
Anacostia Park	DOEE	101.3 - PASS		30	25	7	9.15	
Yards Park	DOEE	35 - PASS		25	23.5	7	4.69	
Buzzard Point	DOEE	29.5 - PASS		21	23	7	4.66	
Washington Channel	DOEE	48.7 - PASS	-	24	23	7	3.31	
			Potomac River					
Battery Kemble Park	DOEE	48 - PASS		19.5	11.5	5	0.82	
Fletcher's Cove	DOEE	307.6 - PASS		23.5	22.5	6.5	2.22	
Foundry Branch	DOEE	228.2 - PASS		20.5	17.5	6.5	0.32	
Washington Canoe Club	DOEE	45.5 - PASS		22	24	8	1.8	
Thompson Boat House	DOEE	30.5 - PASS		26	24	6	1.59	
Tidal Basin	DOEE	93.3 - PASS		30	24	7	5.07	
Columbia Island	DOEE	146.7 - PASS		23	23	7	1.09	
			Rock Creek					
Rock Creek @ Juniper St	DOEE	107.1 - PASS		19.5	18.5	6	1.5	
Pinehurst Branch	DOEE	1986.3 - FAIL		17.5	17	5	1.86	
Broad Branch	DOEE	275.5 - PASS	1	23.5	18	7	5.74	
Soapstone Creek	DOEE	622.1 - FAIL		22	18	7.5	0.5	
Melvin Hazen Run	DOEE	107.1 - PASS		22	17.5	7.5	0.56	
ock Creek @ Piney Branch	DOEE	435.2 - FAIL	-	25	23	6	2.46	
Normanstone Run	DOEE	>2419.6 - FAIL	2	19	17	6	1.72	
P St Beach	DOEE	95.9 - PASS		21	19.5	8	1.37	

Updated weekly on Thursdays 9https://www.anacostiariverkeeper.org/dc-water-quality/

GURU

Continued from p. 3

ing platform companies and singlehandedly moved the JMA summer and holiday in-person events, for over 170 employees and their families, to very successful virtual events with gift giveaways and meals delivered to their respective homes. Each event was highly praised and appreciated by all employees. She also hosted JMAsponsored virtual happy hours for the

Air Traffic Control Association and the Professional Women Controllers, Inc., at their annual conferences. Again, mments from the attendees highly praised Ms. Brown for her attention to detail and her professional demeanor.

Ms. Brown spearheaded food deliveries to Southwest fire stations and police departments during the pandemic shutdown. She coordinated a dessert bar for the SWDC MPD police station during Police Week in 2020, and coordinated with and provided snacks for approximately 3000 U.S. Capitol Hill Police as they worked additional shifts in January 2021.

recently promoted to marketing team lead, where she will mentor and guide new marketing employees, develop strategy, and expand the brand of JMA Solutions beyond our current client and partner portfolios. JMA has recognized her work with their Above and Beyond and Job Well Done awards for her morale-boosting planning of employee events, alongside her other accomplishments.

The list is endless and there is no doubt that Iman will continue to For her efforts, Ms. Brown was make an impact on our community on behalf of both JMA Solutions and herself. There is a lot to learn from this dynamic and thoughtful young woman who understands and practices the true meaning of community involvement, especially giving back.

> Anthony Tisdall is the senior vice president of Global Affairs and Aviation Solutions for JMA Solutions.

²The geometric mean is more indicative of overall water quality at a site and is calculated from the five most recent single day sample values.

National Air and Space Museum Receives \$3 Million Gift for New World War II Gallery

BY SOUTHWESTER STAFF

he Smithsonian's National Air and Space Museum has received \$3 million from the Daniels Fund to support the new "Jay I. Kislak World War II in the Air" gallery. The exhibition will examine how the revolution in warfare that took place during the war redefined the promise and peril of military aviation. It is part of the museum's ongoing transformation of all its galleries at the flagship building in Southwest, and is scheduled to open in 2025.

"We are honored to receive this generous support from the Daniels Fund in honor of Bill Daniels," said Jeremy Kinney, associate director for research and curatorial affairs at the museum. "The gift will help the museum share meaningful stories, not only about World War II aviation, but also about the character and courage exemplified by pilots and veterans like Mr. Daniels."

The "Jay I. Kislak World War II in the Air" gallery will explore how the conflict transformed aviation and warfare and inaugurated a new era in



National Air and Space Museum

military aviation. The gallery will open with a carrier war section featuring the Eastern Aircraft (Grumman) FM-1 Wildcat. The North American P-51D Mustang and the Messerschmitt Bf 109G are among the other rare fighter aircraft that will be featured. Smaller artifacts, images and digital interactives will also be used to tell the stories of workers from all walks of life that helped the United States and its Allies defeat their enemies.

"It is a privilege to be a part of bringing the incredible stories of sacrifice and bravery of World War II aviators to life," said Hanna Skandera, president & CEO of the Daniels Fund. "Bill Daniels believed he owed much of his success to the character and discipline he gained as a Navy fighter pilot"

Photo of the Month



The SWNA birdhouses. Courtesy of Jessie Himmelrich

If you would like to submit a photo for consideration for Photo of the Month, please email it to editor@thesouthwester.com.

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Each month check out the most recent issue of the paper for activities and games to help you discover SWDC! Have a suggestion? Email us: editor@thesouthwester. com. Check out next month's issue for the answers!

Spot the difference!

Can you spot the differences in the two scenes below?



1.			
2.			



4	
5.	

Answers from May 2021 issue

Differences: The comets in the top left of each picture are different; the rockets at the top of each picture are different; the picture on the right has a space shuttle on a planet; there is an alien on Earth in the picture on the right; the girl has a hat in the picture on the right; the UFOs in the bottom right of each picture are different.

Word Scramble: There are 119 words you can make from "Outside."

WORD SEARCH: SUMMER HEAT!

L	C	H	Q	Y	Х	L	Ŭ	S	0	0	I	J	R	\mathbf{E}
N	E	E	R	C	S	N	U	S	\mathbf{T}	L	L	A	P	J
V	H	S	M	Х	T	K	$_{\mathrm{T}}$	Τ	S	D	N	F	H	V
S	W	R	Α	E	0	В	Х	U	W	T	0	Α	Q	Z
E	0	Y	T	G	H	0	0	F	U	N	R	В	J	0
M	I	E	E	G	G	М	U	R	F	М	Y	0	Ç	Z
Α	W	v	R	K	Х	\mathbf{z}	R	Т	Y	E	S	I	P	K
G	A	В	A	P	G	Х	H	N	S	H	$\tt T$	$\tt T$	Q	S
D	С	W	S	M	z	U	v	E	A	I	\mathbf{F}	R	Α	С
P	Α	M	Y	W	L	D	E	D	P	I	D	Q	V	D
Х	Q	S	N	I	F	R	E	K	Y	L	D	E	L	G
W	S	F	V	Y	G	R	Х	Y	C	T	C	T	D	D
K	Q	Х	D	E	v	В	Y	В	E	N	Q	S	F	H
V	М	M	D	Q	E	K	V	T	U	Х	Н	R	I	С
N	F	Y	X	W	I	U	С	R	H	F	D	H	H	Z
	DEGREES WATER													
	FUN SUNSCREEN													
		(GAN	ЛES					SPC	DRT:	S			
			НОТ	-					SHA	ADE				

RUN

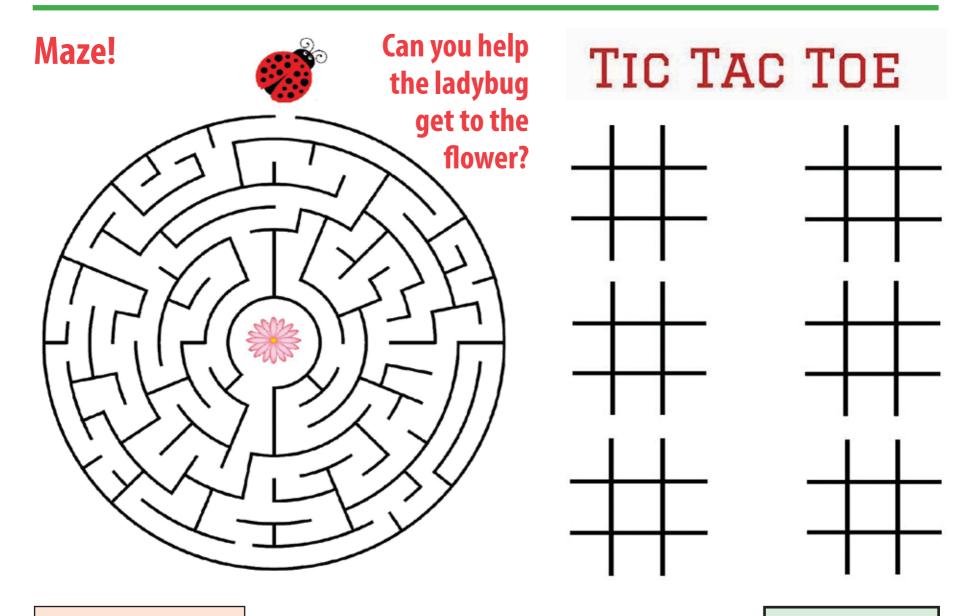
OUTSIDE

Word Scramble! How many words can you make from TEMPERATURE?							



KID'S CORNER





Jokes!

What has a tongue but never talks, and has no legs, but sometimes walks? A shoe!

What do you call a bear with no teeth?

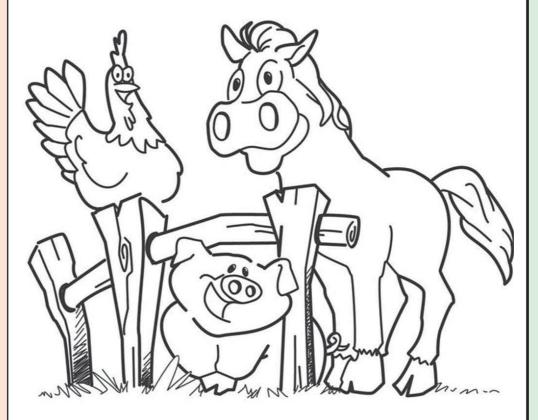
A gummy bear!

When do truck drivers stop to eat?
When they find a fork in the road!

Would you like to submit a joke for Kid's Corner? Email it to editor@thesouthwester. com.

Include your first name so we can tell other kids who sent it in!

COLORING TIME!



Math Moment!

Can you complete these equations?

a. 18 + 18 =

b. 19 + 10 =

c.7 + 3 =

d. 12 - 6 =

e. 110 + 10 =

f. 15 - 8 =

g. 42 - 10 =

h. 500 - 200 =

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2021 Graduates-SWNA Salutes You!







Christopher Johnson

Courtesy of Author

Ned Yarsky

Sam Anderson

Courtesy of Author

BY UNA YARSKY

his year, the Southwest Neighborhood Assembly (SWNA) celebrates three four-time recipients of the SWNA Scholarship

Program. The Scholarship Program was established in 1974 to encourage and assist young people in Southwest, Washington, DC to pursue a post-secondary education. The multi-year scholarship recipients 2021 college graduates are Sam Ander-

son, Chris Johnson, and Ned Yarsky. Congratulations to all three!

Sam Anderson graduated from Washington Latin PCS in 2017 and majored in Geology at Carleton College with a minor in Archaeology. One of their best experiences at Carleton was a geology course they took in New Zealand, where they developed their collaborative and social skills. Additionally, the trip helped them reaffirm their appreciation of the natural world. After graduation, they will start a two-year Master's Degree in Earth Sciences at Indiana University. Their thesis will focus on the intersection between East African environments and human evolution. After completing their education, Sam hopes to pursue research that focuses on both natural and human histories in order to help inform "adaptation and remediation of modern climate crises." Their biggest life lesson during their time at Carleton is maintaining a work-life balance and setting realistic expectations for themself, as well as

learning to adapt when faced with failure and new opportunities.

Chris Johnson graduated from Dunbar High School in 2017 and pursued a degree in social work at Virginia State University. His favorite classes included oral

interpretation, voice and diction, and human behavior and social environment. Chris' time at college offered many opportunities, including the Pathways POWER program, an internship that helped people ages 16-24 obtain their high school diploma or GED. His mentors, SWNA Task Force members John White and Rick Bardach, inspired him to pursue social work. His most memorable experience at college was a senior trip to Orlando, Florida, where he was able to explore an area outside of his hometown. After college, he hopes to pursue a Master of Social Work (MSW) in fall 2021, or begin his career by working with teens and young adults. His ultimate career goal is to help young adults finish and further their education and obtain jobs to help achieve self-sufficiency. The best piece of advice Chris has ever received is to not be discouraged from achieving your goals. Chris' time at Virginia State University has taught him to never give up on what he wants to accomplish.

Courtesy of Author

Ned Yarsky graduated from Washington Latin PCS alongside Sam Anderson in 2017. He entered the University of Pittsburgh in the fall of 2017 and graduated as a Communications major the spring of 2021. Ned's favorite extracurricular activity at the University of Pittsburgh was singing in his acapella group, C Flat Run. His favorite classes included history of modern Ireland, audio production and film editing. His time at university has taught him to appreciate the value of teamwork, while also realizing the importance of independence and personal strength. In order to complete his communications degree, Ned had the opportunity to intern with SWNA, focusing on their social media outreach. He is open to several different career opportunities due to the flexibility of his degree, but is currently pursuing a career in audio production. He hopes to begin his career by moving to a new city in the coming months. His best piece of advice for any students is to know their limits and push themselves in order to succeed.

Each of these graduates thanks the SWNA Scholarship Program and the Southwest community for their support during these past years, and look forward to the coming years as they pursue new opportunities, both in professional and personal development.

Graduating college is not easy, even during a typical school year, and the SWNA Scholarship Program salutes these graduates' perseverance and strength as they completed their education during the COVID-19 pandemic.

SWNA is currently accepting donations to help other students complete their educational goals and thrive, both during and after their education. To support future SWNA graduates, you can make a tax-deductible donation online following the donate link on the website or make your check payable to SWNA and mail it to: SWNA Scholarship Fund, PO Box 70131, Washington, DC 20024-0131. Please put "scholarship" in the subject line.

Scholarships are open to residents who reside in Zip Code 20024, are less than 24 years old, and who wish to pursue, or are pursuing, any course of study at an accredited undergraduate college, university, or technical institution. The SWNA Scholarship Program is currently accepting applications until Tuesday, June 15, 2021. Apply online at https://swnascholarship.org!

PARTNERSHIP

Continued from p. 4

prised Jones with a beautiful Easter Basket filled with special personal and welcomed items. That surprise complemented the event's success and enabled Jones and the dedicated volunteers to feel a sense of gratitude and accomplishment. Jones thanked the FDMB Management team again for their "continued bridge building efforts, including bridging gaps to help a vulnerable population in our community during an unprecedented era."

Furthermore, the FDMB Management team shared with Jones information about an upcoming outreach effort at Martha's Table and invited

her to read *The Book of Yawns* by Carolyn Blasinsky for the students (ages birth to 4-year-old) at Martha's Table, who will also receive copies of the book. A few weeks later, the team filmed Jones in the River Park lobby as she animatedly read the book for the students. (A video of Jones reading can be seen here: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=3C08jNTgvPI.)

In appreciation of their partnership effort, the FDMB team featured Founder Jones in the Spring 2021 edition of their Progress Magazine, *In Their Words: Thelma D. Jones*, which Jones has been passing out freely at River Park and throughout the community. A link to the article can be found here: https://www.newfrederickdouglassbridge.com/newsletters.



Courtesy of Author

Organizing the goods to distribute to community members

M Street Corridor Redesigned?

BY SOUTHWESTER STAFF

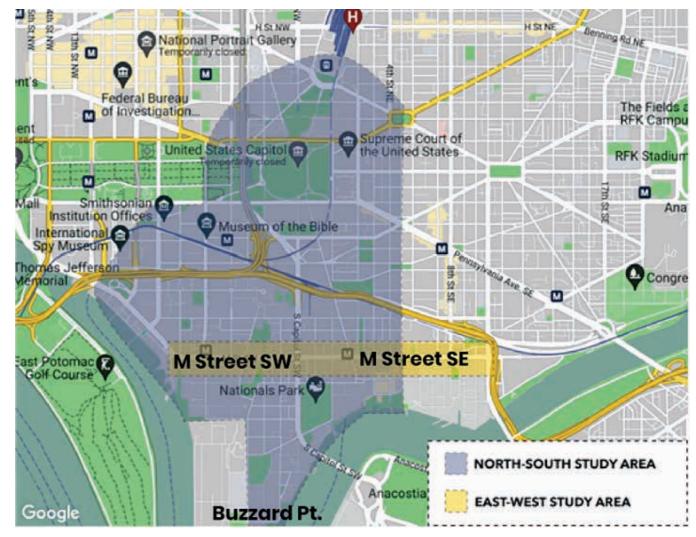
he Southwest BID, Capitol Riverfront Bid, and DDOT (funding provided by all three) are doing two new studies: the M Street Non-automotive Planning Study; and (2) the SE-SW Mobility Study. The studies will look at "mass transit, micromobility (bicycles, scooters, and other small, low-speed personal vehicles), an improved pedestrian environment, shared parking strategies, and more" for the M Street corridor, between SW and near SE.

More specifically, the M Street Non-automotive Planning Study will look at "planning for multimodal transportation, specifically protected mobility lanes (bike, scooter, and other small, low-speed personal vehicles), on M Street SE between South Capitol Street SE and 11th Street SE."

The SE-SW mobility Study will focus on these three key areas:

- 1) A high-level concept of how the design from the M Street Non-Automotive Planning Study alternatives could be applied along the SW portion of the corridor.
- 2) A concept plan for how the public realm along the entire M Street SE-SW corridor can be improved for all modes/users including the pedestrian realm; and
- 3) Feasibility study and recommendations for transit connectivity between Buzzard Point and commercial/transit hubs to the north, including Capitol Riverfront, SW Waterfront/ The Wharf, Capitol South, and Union Station.

According to their website (https://



www.capitolriverfront.org/do-business-here/mobility-initiatives), Capitol Riverfront is the fastest growing neighborhood in DC and "will continue to experience rapid growth over the next 10 years, adding nearly 20,000 more residents."

Southwest Waterfront and especially Buzzard Point are also experiencing exponential rates of growth, which will further add more people and commuters to the dynamics of all three neighborhoods. The existing infrastructure of these neighborhoods was "designed around the previous light-industrial land uses that dominated the waterfront of Near Southeast and Buzzard Point." With the rap-

idly increasing density, transit has to be reimagined.

The public comment period for this survey is open until June 8. Add your thoughts to how the M Street Corridor should be redesigned and fill out the survey here: https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/DRQ96ZR.

Community Center Kicks Off Crowdfunding and Community Engagement Campaign

BY THE SWDCCC COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT AND COMMUNICATIONS COMMITTEE

Ithough the 6,000-square-foot Southwest DC Community Center (SWDCCC) is not planned to be open at the corner of 4th and M Street SW for a few years, the volunteer Community Engagement and Communications Committee has been hard at work over the past couple of months on several fronts.

Following the asset mapping efforts presented at the November ANC6D meeting, we completed more than 15 interviews with organizations serving Southwest and Navy Yard/Capitol Riverfront and gathered additional information through surveys to learn about the tremendous work community organizations do to provide critical services in our neighborhood. It's been truly humbling to hear about

all the phenomenal groups that contribute to such a strong social fabric within ANC6D and to see how much effort goes into advocating for and improving the quality of life for all our neighbors. What we learned from these conversations and surveys will inform our future engagement efforts, which we hope will ultimately be integrated into a virtual community asset map.

One theme that emerged from this partner engagement process is that youth programming – particularly more than a year into the COVID-19 pandemic – is a key need and crucial component of our neighborhood's ability to thrive. With that insight in mind, along with our desire to engage deeply and broadly within our community, we are piloting a summer initiative to provide training to five Civic Fellows (ages 16-24) who will receive a stipend to conduct interviews and

co-facilitate focus groups. Community members will also be compensated for their time sharing their lived experiences as interviewees or as focus group participants. Youth in our community who are interested in being a Civic Fellow are encouraged to apply at https://swdccc.link/CFapplication.

We've launched a crowdfunding campaign to give members of our community an opportunity to contribute financially to the initiative. We've set a fundraising goal of at least \$2,000 and invite you to make a tax-deductible donation on our crowdfunding page: https://swdccc.link/crowdfunding. Any additional funding is welcome and will go to turbocharging our summer initiative efforts, supporting additional engagement activities, and covering operational expenses.

We are also seeking volunteers who want to support our work with time

and expertise or be a focus group participant, so please visit https://swdccc.link/getinvolved if you'd like to be considered. Ultimately, we hope this initiative will enable us to engage segments of the population that we might not otherwise be able to reach, empower youth through more meaningful exposure to the civic space, and gather helpful feedback to consider as we design and develop programming for the SWDCCC.

If you missed our May 25 Engagement Kickoff Meeting or want to review the materials covering our summer initiative, other upcoming engagement activities, and how to get involved, please visit https://swdccc.link/kickoffevent. While you're there, subscribe to our email list at https://www.swdccc.org/subscribe and stay tuned for updates!

Support Group Kicks Off New Initiative: National Black Cancer Awareness Week

BY THELMA D. JONES

f you missed last month's Thelma D. Jones Breast Cancer Fund (TDJBCF) Support Group meeting on the Community Grand Rounds on Ovarian Cancer, in partnership with Georgetown Lombardi Comprehensive Cancer Center, perish the thought and visit https://www.facebook.com/TDJ-BreastCancerFund/.

While you are there, check out





Courtesy of Author

Guest Speaker Crystal T. Dixon, MPH, MA, MCHES, NBC-HWC, Assistant Professor, Department of Public Health, University of North Carolina-Greensboro

previous support group meetings and like us on Facebook. Afterwards, join the Support Group on Wednesday, June 16, at 7 p.m., via Zoom and Facebook live as we kick-off the first-ever U.S. Food and Drug Administration Oncology Center of Excellence Project community initiative "National Black Family Cancer Awareness Week: Engaging the Generations" (June 17 – June 23, 2021).

The guest speaker for the meet-

ing will be Crystal T. Dixon, MPH, MA, MCHES, NBC-HWC, Assistant Professor, Chancellor's Advisory Committee on Equity, Diversity and Inclusive Excellence, among other titles, UNC Greensboro. Dixon also serves on the President's Commission on Race, Equity, and Community at Wake Forest University. She will speak on the topic of "Seeking Health Equity: Examining Racism as a Social Determinant of Health." The topic highlights the ground-

breaking research of the Greensboro Health Disparities Collaborative, which led a five-year national study that implemented technology and other tools to address systemic racism impacting African American breast and lung cancer patients in the healthcare system.

Other invited speakers include Dr. Lucile L. Adams-Campbell, Ph.D., Professor of Oncology, Senior Associate Dean, Community Outreach and Engagement, Associate Director, Minority Health & Health Disparities Research, Georgetown Lombardi Comprehensive Cancer Center and Program Director, M.S. Epidemiology and Carla D. Williams, PhD, Associate Professor Medicine, Interim Cancer Center Director (unconfirmed) and Talya Gordon, Post-Baccalaureate Fellow, National Institutes of Health, University of Maryland '20 (unconfirmed) and LaRuby Z. May, Managing Member, May Lightfoot PLLC.

For information regarding the TDJBCF support group meeting, visit www.tdjbreastcancerfund.org, email thelma@tdjbreastcancerfund.org, or call (202) 251-1639.











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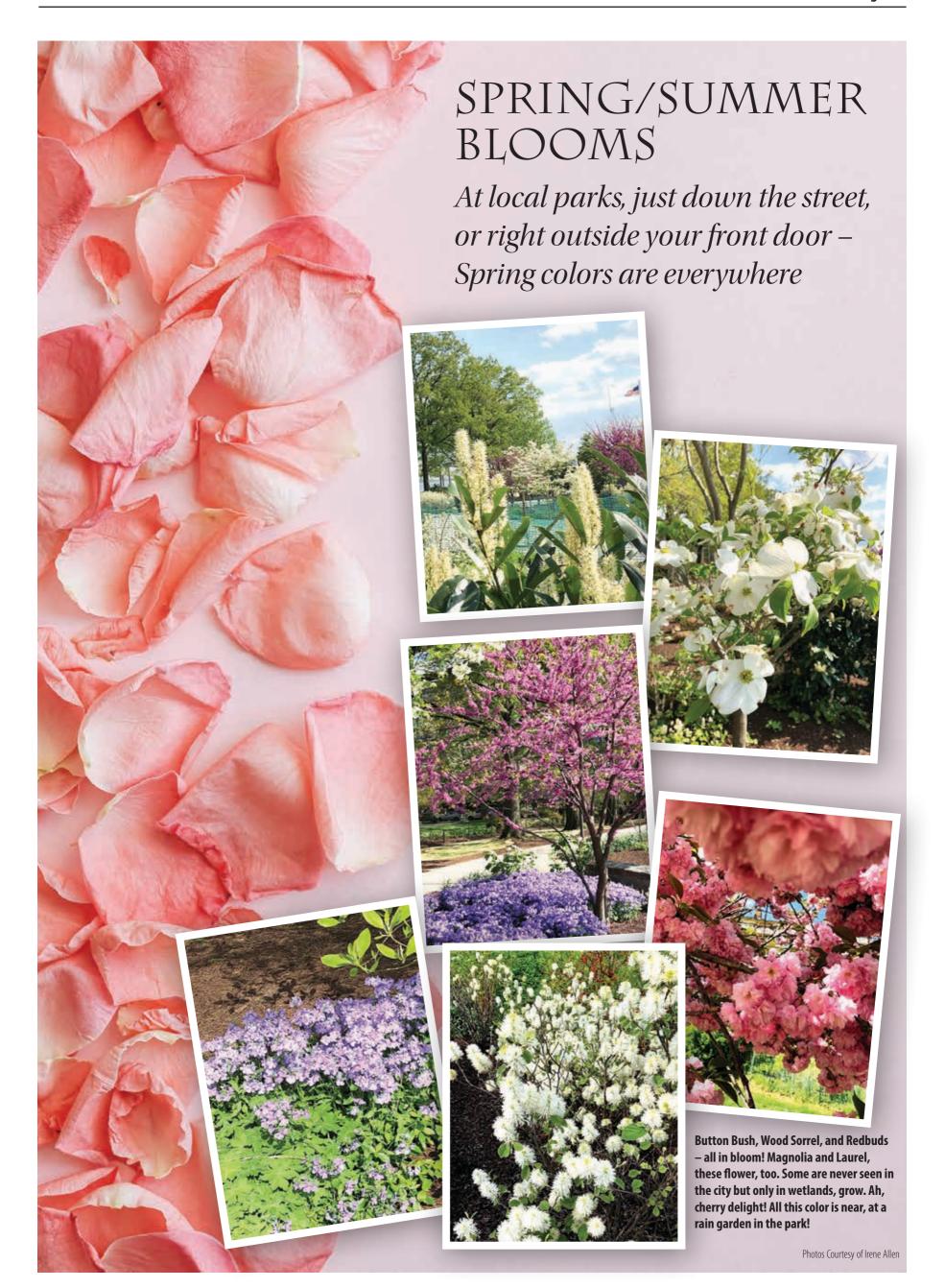
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Waterfront Village Relaunches with New Strategic Plan

BY SOUTHWESTER STAFF

uilding on lessons learned through the pandemic, Waterfront Village will be making major changes in the next five years to better support older adults in Southwest DC and Navy Yard, according to the Village's recently released fiveyear strategic plan.

"We have always been here to support our members with social activities and home and health services," said Carroll Quinn, president of the Village Board since January. "The pandemic and the Black Lives Matter protests last year helped us recognize that there is much more we need to do as a community to help all older adults feel valued and supported."

The Village was founded as a membership organization in 2016 and is one of 13 such Villages in the District of Columbia. It provides its members with social engagement opportunities and a wide range of home and health services, including transportation, technology assistance, light home repairs, check-in calls, and delivery services.

"The new plan is about getting more people involved so we can address the needs of those who could benefit from our service, but we haven't reached previously," Quinn said. "We recognize that there are still people falling through the cracks, and we want to catch those we can help."

Quinn said that some older residents in our local area may not qualify

for District services but could still use help. Many of these older adults could benefit from association with the Village. While she added that the Village will not be the answer for everyone, Village staff can always point people towards other resources which provide the needed services.

The new plan will expand membership, increase the number and quality of services, and partner with churches and other community organizations in the Southwest DC/Navy Yard neighborhood. "The plan is bold and challenging, and it changes how we look at our mission and what it means to the community," said Quinn. "We hope to start the conversation about how our neighborhood supports - and benefits from - our older residents."

The plan includes significant revisions to the Village's vision statement and consists of five goals, each with specific performance targets. The planning process started last fall with an all-member survey seeking input on all facets of the Village's operation and management. Many of the comments received were discussed and considered by the Board in making planning decisions. After the survey, the Board worked with a facilitator through the fall and winter to develop the expanded vision for the Village.

"As we get closer to the point where COVID-19 is under control, it will be important for the Village to relaunch its public activities in a very visible way," said Len Bechtel, the Village's Executive Director. "No group in the country has paid a higher price than those 60 years and older. Our message has got to be that we were there for you in the pandemic, and we are still here for you."

Among the improvements targeted by the plan are:

- · Establish membership subsidies for lower-income residents.
- · Work with communities of faith and other community organizations to leverage resources for older adults.

- Expand outreach to underserved areas of the community.
- Increase the number and quality of home and health services.
- Create intergenerational volunteer opportunities to tap into the creativity and wisdom of older residents and ensure that support is available for older adults when they need it.
- Expand care navigation services for the frailest members.
- Continue to develop new, interesting, and enriching health and educational programming.
- Reach out to local agencies and elected officials to make sure older residents in our neighborhood can access services available from the District and federal governments.

"Many of the ideas reflected in the plan originated from comments received through our member survey. Members know best what their needs are and what they want to see from the Village," Quinn said.

Waterfront Village will also continue to place a priority on recruiting and training volunteers to assist the neighborhood's older residents. Quinn thinks that there are multiple benefits that younger volunteers can get by volunteering with the Village.

"For whatever reason, our society tends to push older people to the margins. One of the benefits of getting volunteers of all ages involved in the Village is that it can open some eyes about what older neighbors have to offer. Old age often is accompanied by useful wisdom and experience," she said.

The Village plans to assist its members in becoming volunteers for other community groups too. Quinn notes that many Village members have worked for decades in some highly skilled fields, including doctors, engineers, lawyers and scientists, and can be wonderful resources for schools and other community groups.

Southwest Moments



Courtesy of Nicole Renard

As previously reported by The Southwester, a contractor hired by the District Department of Transportation killed six heritage trees on Maine Ave., SW in March, forcing the removal of the trees. Some of the pieces of the trees have made it back to Southwest in various forms, including this outdoor seating at Amidon-Bowen Elementary School - a small reminder of these giant oak trees that formed a crucial part of Southwest's canopy.

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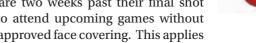


Nationals Park to Ramp Up to Full Capacity

BY SOUTHWESTER STAFF

n May, the government of the District of Columbia approved the Washington Nationals' request to operate at 100% capacity starting June 10. Single game tickets are available for upcoming Nationals games.

The team also recently unveiled a new facemask policy. Fully vaccinated fans - meaning those who are two weeks past their final shot - are able to attend upcoming games without wearing an approved face covering. This applies



to all fans regardless of whether they are seated indoors or outdoors.

Ticketed fans who are not fully vaccinated will be required to wear an approved face covering at all times except when actively eating or drinking in their seats. Fans can visit nationals.com/WelcomeHome for more information regarding acceptable face coverings at the ballpark.



National Museum of the American Indian Reopens

Timed entry now available; Virtual events will also continue

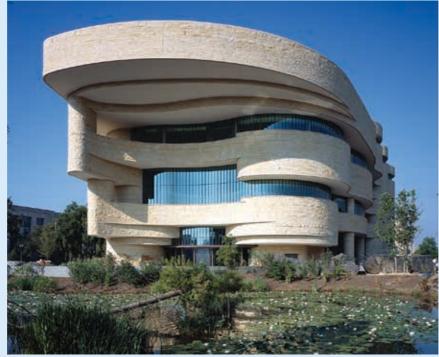
BY SOUTHWESTER STAFF

n May 21, the National Museum of the American Indian reopened to in-person visitors. The new hours are 11 a.m. to 4 p.m., Wednesday through Sunday. New health and safety measures due to the COVID-19 pandemic will be observed including timed-entry passes, limiting attendance, social distancing, mandatory use of face coverings and enhanced cleaning. For more information about visiting the DC museum go to AmericanIndian.si.edu.

In addition, the museum is continuing its virtual program. The June schedule of virtual programming is below:

Flag Day Program: Honoring the American Flag through Native Art June 14; on demand

americanindian.si.edu/online-programs Objects decorated with American flag designs were incorporated into Native art in the late 1800s and early 1900s. Today, objects adorned with the flag usually signify that a family member has served in the military. Watch Emil Her Many Horses (Oglala Lakota), museum curator and historian, as he walks participants through objects in the museum's col-



By Carol M. Highsmith - Library of CongressCatalog: http://lccn.loc.gov/2011630892lmage download: https://cdn.loc.gov/master/pnp/highsm/12600/12698a. tifOriginal url: http://hdl.loc.gov/loc.pnp/highsm.12698, Public Domain, https://commons.wikimedia.org/w/index.php?curld=52220307

lection that were created to honor the American flag.

Youth in Action: Indigenizing Pride Thursday, June 17; 4 p.m. Free, registration required

https://smithsonian.zoom.us/webinar/register/3116188639750/WN_ VcOVur0fRaS1_R53Oq1Zyg How does identity influence activism? Many tribal nations have always recognized multiple genders and those who possess both male and female spirits. Native people who identify as more than one gender or possessing both spirits sometimes refer to themselves as Two Spirit. In celebration of Pride Month, hear from Indigenous youth working in the fields of education, health, cul-

tural heritage and the arts to amplify Two Spirit and Native LGBTQ+ voices and issues.

At the Movies 2021: *Monkey Beach* Sunday, June 27; 4 p.m.

americanindian.si.edu/online-programs (Canada, 2020, 105 min.)

Director: Loretta Todd (Cree/Métis) Based on the novel by award-winning author Eden Robinson (Haisla/Heiltsuk), *Monkey Beach* is a supernatural coming-of-age story that layers tragedy, humor and redemption. Lisa Hill (Grace Dove) reunites with her Haisla family in Kitamaat Village and realizes she is meant to save her brother (Joel Oulette) from a tragic fate she's foreseen since childhood. Contending with mystical creatures, ghosts and spirits, this modern epic is a testament to Indigenous women's abilities to not just endure trials but emerge from them empowered. Conversation and live Q&A with director Loretta Todd and actress Grace Dove to follow. Q&A conducted via StreamYard with The Americas Film Festival New York (TAFFNY).

For mature audiences. Contains some scenes of violence, strong language and discussions of sexual violence. Program presented in cooperation with TAFFNY-Closing Night.





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Ward 6 Youth Meal Sites

All DC youth ages 18 and younger may receive free grab-and go meals at DCPS and DPR meal site locations through June 30, 2021. Please note that during this period, DC youth are not required to be enrolled DC Public Schools students to receive meals. Youth and/or parents/guardians on their behalf may receive up to 3 breakfast and 3 lunch meals daily.

School Name	Address	Ward	Meal Distribution Hours (Monday - Friday)	Grocery Distribution (while groceries last)
Amidon-Bowen Elementary School	401 Street SW	6	10 am - 2 pm	
Arthur Capper Recreation Center	1000 5 th Street SE	6	10 am - 2 pm	
Brent Elementary School	301 North Carolina Avenue SE	6	10 am - 2 pm	
Eastern High School	1700 East Capitol Street NE	6	10 am - 2 pm	
Miner Elementary School	601 15th Street NE	6	10 am – 2 pm	
Payne Elementary School	1445 C Street SE	6	10 am - 2 pm	
Rosedale Recreation Center	1701 Gales St NE	6	10 am - 2 pm	
Seaton Elementary School	1503 10th Street NW	6	10 am – 2 pm	
Tyler Elementary School	1001 G Street SE	6	10 am - 2 pm	
Walker-Jones Education Campus	1125 New Jersey Avenue NW	6	10 am - 2 pm	Friday 10:00am - 2:00pm

Ward 6 Mutual Aid Summer Hours

BY MAX GROSSMAN AND CARLEE BROWN

ard 6 Mutual Aid (W6MA) is a grassroots group working with Black and Brown grassroots organizations to help keep our communities safe. For over a year, the Southwest Pod of W6MA has partnered with Christ United Methodist Church (CUMC) on a community food and supply drive to serve our neighbors in response to COVID-19.

Interested in ways to help W6MA and CUMC?

 Donate groceries, cleaning supplies, and household items at CUMC. We accept donations Wednesdays and Fridays 3-6 p.m., and Saturdays 11 a.m.-2 p.m. Needed items include:

- Non-perishable foods: canned meat, soup, chilli, coffee, powder drink mix, pasta sauce (plastic jars), breakfast bars, fruit cups, and any food that does not need to be cooked such as crackers, raisins, nuts, energy bars, etc.
- Personal hygiene: sanitary pads, diapers, pull ups, bar soap, and body wash soap
- Cleaning supplies: dish soap and laundry detergent
- Clothing: men's socks, underwear, and T-shirts in all sizes
 Household: pots, pans, dishes,
- bath towels, and bedding.
 Come say hello and consider donating fresh produce bought at the

Southwest Farmer's Market at our table on **Saturdays** between **9 a.m.** and **1 p.m**.

Help make sure every student can access the online classroom by donating a device. Alongside our partner organization Serve Your City, W6MA is working to bridge the digital divide by providing laptops and tablets to students. Please fill out the form at bit.ly/w6ma_laptops if you would like to donate.

W6MA and CUMC have a number of ways you can get the support you need:

 If you or someone you know has a need for food or cleaning supplies, call the W6MA Hotline at 202-683-9962. You can request food, masks,

- cleaning supplies, and other goods for delivery.
- Obtain groceries, hygiene, and household supplies at the CUMC's 5000 Ministry Food Pantry on the 1st and 3rd Saturdays of the month at 1 p.m. (courtyard entrance). **Attention**: Starting in July summer hours will be 9 a.m. on the 2nd and 4th Saturdays of the month.
- If you can not come to the church due to health or mobility issues and you live in SW, call 202-554-9117 to request a delivery.
- Starting in July, SW Mutual Aid will give out fresh produce every Sunday morning at 9 a.m.

Want to learn more? Email swmutualaid@serveyourcitydc.org.

NEIGHBORS

Continued from p. 1

increased vegetation, and sloping islands allow the ducklings to easily get in and out of the water, which is extremely important because ducklings, particularly during the initial weeks after hatching, are too small to climb over a ledge to reach dry land to rest and stay warm.

Without being able to leave the water, ducklings will become water-logged and drown because they don't yet have a functional oil gland to coat their down and make them water-proof. Their mother provides this through preening when they are still in the nest so they can quickly get to water after hatching and float while swimming.

We don't know exactly where this hen nested, but we assume in a planter or garden nearby, although some



Courtesy of Denise Rennis

Going for a swim!

hens will lead their newly hatched ducklings for miles to reach water. This initial walk starts the hazardous life of a duckling. Not only do they have to quickly get to water and be able to get out of the water before drowning, they are eaten by crows, attacked by squirrels, sometimes killed by the male mallards (called drakes), and occasionally harassed or taken by humans. Although we can't do much about protecting these

ducklings from nature, the Federal Migratory Bird Treaty Act helps protect mallards and other migratory birds from humans by making it illegal to kill, capture, sell, trade, and transport any migratory bird.

More locally, volunteers of City Wildlife's Duck Watch program monitor mallard nests, help them get to water when necessary, and keep an eye on their well-being. Problems are reported to City Wildlife at 202-882-1000 or the Humane Rescue Alliance at 202-723-5730

So, quietly enjoy our neighbors while they are here. They are growing fast, and eventually their new home will become too small and they will move onto a larger body of water. We might see this hen again with her next brood of ducklings, but hopefully, other new mallard families will move into our neighborhood and our lovely duck pond habitat.

A Just Recovery for a Just DC

Erica Williams, Executive Director Doni Crawford, Senior Policy Analyst Qubilah Huddleston, Policy Analyst



"If there is no struggle there is no progress. Those who profess to favor freedom and yet deprecate agitation are men who want crops without plowing up the ground; they want rain without thunder and lightning. They want the ocean without the awful roar of its many waters.

...Power concedes nothing without a demand. It never did and it never will."

Frederick Douglass, 1857

Visit SWNA's website! www.swna.org



BUZZARD POINT

Continued from p. 1

poverty level and are already sick (both attributable to historic racism), and have been so for at least a few generations.

Hamilton says that before the construction of the soccer stadium in 2017, the Department of Energy and Environment (DOEE) did a complete assessment (published in 2016, link below) of Buzzard Point and qualified it as an industrial brownfield. They found dangerous contaminants in the soil, like benzo[a]pyrene, arsenic, and lead, to name a few. Developers, including DC United, were given liability protection to build down there but they were expected to clean up the sites before building.

Hamilton and Kramer say it's more likely that those highly toxic substances were simply buried under the new developments.

Promises to clean up these dangerous substances aside, the broader population (mostly Black) had already been exposed to and affected by these chemicals for years. "The way the environmental expert explained it to me," Hamilton said, "he was like, 'Being exposed to these chemicals are not something that you all will feel sick right away. It may take 5 or 10 or 15 years down the line."

Longterm, these substances can cause a range of pulmonary and cardiovascular issues – of which, long-existing border communities around Buzzard Point were found to have higher rates of chronic lower-respiratory diseases in the 20024 zip code, as well as higher death rates for heart diseases and cancer (https://doh.dc.gov/sites/default/files/dc/sites/doh/page_content/attachments/Buzzard%20Point%20Community%20Health%20and%20Safety%20Study%20(CHASS)%20August%202016.pdf).

"And then what you do is you dig up a bunch of contaminants right beside them. You don't put any core protections in place," Hamilton emphasized. "To be honest with you, I would not move in Buzzard Point the way those chemicals in that soil is being actively thrown up like it's regular dust."

The new residents moving in are part of Kramer's constituency and she has started hearing intermittent complaints. She told me of one constituent who lives down in Buzzard Point on a high floor in one of the new buildings. "She's working from home all the time and allegedly she's seeing a lot of things that contribute to the problem."

Other than from multiple construction sites, the dust also comes from two cement factories that have been operating in the area for a long time. Both factories have received multiple violations over the years, and many people, including activists and the ANCs, say they continue to flaunt

regulations and coat the surrounding communities in dust.

"We been pressing on the Department of Energy and Environment for a very long time to do something about Buzzard Point," said Hamilton," to do a cumulative impact analysis. Because when you talk to the cement factories, they assume really no responsibility. And the realities are, is the way that cement plants do their everyday business... They release a huge amount of particulate matter, just by design."

Starting where the cement is made

Back in March, a local activist group, SW DC Action – "residents who organize and advocate for a more equitable, anti-racist, and environmentally sustainable neighborhoods," according to their web page – published a Letter to the Editor with *The Southwester*. In their letter, they accused Vulcan Materials Company, one of the cement plants in Buzzard Point, of violating the Clean Air Act, the Clean Water Act, and operating without a permit.

(The other plant – Superior Construction Services – was not in violation of any regulations, nor did it have an expired permit, so we omitted them as part of our official investigation.)

The Southwester reached out to Vulcan to get some answers, and I had a chance to speak with Jimmy Flemming, vice president of Permitting and External Affairs, about the company's operations and the community's concerns.

Right now, Vulcan is still technically operating without a permit, except for the fine print. According to Flemming, they filed for a renewal in February of 2020, four months before their permit was set to expire. They've been granted extensions since then, which allows them to operate as if they had an active permit.

The ANCs informed me that the official review of their permit hasn't been opened up yet, and Flemming confirmed they are still waiting for their permit to be renewed (more on that later). Meanwhile, there are community concerns about how the cement plants are operating, especially Vulcan.

One of the major concerns with the Vulcan plant specifically, is that it is much older than the Superior plant and contributes more to the environmental and health problems of community members.

Flemming told me their ready mix facility in Buzzard point "has its challenges" but pointed to the fact that it's not just them, the whole area is undergoing an exponential rate of construction.

"I would call it an inordinate amount of construction going on in that area right now. If you're looking at the river and you look to the left, you've got the bridge that's under construction. If you look to the right, we've got a condominium or apartment complex that's going in. There's construction everywhere," Flemming explained to me. "Honestly, that's... the concrete we're supplying is a product of all that development."

What about the Clean Air Act (CAA) and Clean Water Act (CWA) violations?

Flemming thanked me for the question and said they did receive a notice of violation of their air permit from the Department of Environmental Quality. "It was a technical violation, not a violation that involved public health in any way. One of the settings in the bag house was at issue. So, we challenged that notice of violation and appealed it through [the] EPA."

"[What] was there was a conflict between what was in the permit and what the manufacturer setting recommended. And so, what they did was... We signed a consent order to fix the language in the permit. So there was no violation...Well, it was a violation of the permit, per se, but it was not a public health issue. It was just an issue with the setting."

He said that, otherwise, when they see track-out material (dirt, mud, or other debris that comes out of a construction site on the public roads), they take whatever steps they can to ameliorate the situation.

The ANCs, as well as DC Action and other community members I spoke to claimed that this isn't true a lot of the time. I went down to where both Superior and Vulcan operate – they share an access road along S Street SW – and saw dozens of trucks exit the plants and kick up dust. Looking out over Superior's much larger facility towards Nat's Park, the air was hazy with particulate matter from the plant.

At Vulcan, which hugs a riverbank along the Anacostia, clouds of dust kicked up everytime a cement truck entered the facility, but, true to what Flemming told me over Zoom, mitigation protocols seem to be followed for each Truck that left (that might have been due to the fact that I was down there taking pictures).

The same could not be said of trucks leaving the Superior plant. The air was gritty along Half Street and got grittier the longer I stayed there. Still, you could see joggers, parents and their kids, and people on bikes going up and down the road, enjoying the warm weather.

Despite assuring me that Vulcan does the best they can to mitigate dust, and using the systems and checks they put in place regularly, he says they'll be making some changes. He also said they need to do a better job of beautifying the site.

About that CWA violation? Flemming said he did not know anything about violations to the Clean Water Act, but that if there was something, "We'd certainly like to see it."

When I reached back out to DC Action, they couldn't find the corrob-

orating documents either. Superior Concrete was fined \$250,000 in 2020 for violating the CAA, though.

I asked if they had received a lot of complaints from the community about excess dust in the air or not following protocols. "We've had conversations about issues that they've brought to our attention before," he assured me. He downplayed the excess complaints, saying they try to keep in-touch with the community – keep the lines of communication open. "Gosh, we want to work with the community and, you know, all they have to do is pick up the phone and let us know."

When pressed on the issue of community engagement – something the ANCs brought up – Flemming said, "I would say that we probably need to do a better job of broadening that outreach and looking for ways to communicate with the neighbors and with the community." He stressed that they want the community in which they operate "to be successful and do well" and that they "want to be a part of that."

The ANCs brought up the status and age of the equipment at Vulcan as compared to Superior – the difference is "night and day" as Kramer told me. I asked Jimmy about it and said, "The equipment is not something, on our site, you look at and say, 'Wow! What a beautiful plant!"

"The question is, does it do the job? And, is it meeting all the permit requirements, which protect the safety and health of, not only our employees, but people outside the gate."

This, however, reminds of what the ANCs said about the air monitors and how the District doesn't require them. The sense that the way the policies and regulations are set now is good enough, and it seems what Flemming is telling me is that the state of the plant is good enough.

He paused for a moment thinking, and continued, "You'll be seeing changes in the way it just looks, by the way."

Concrete solutions moving forward

Buzzard Point's story has been one of years of never-ending development, from the PEPCO substation, to Audi Field, to housing, and now the bridge project. The rapid pace of development will continue, as will the production of building materials at both cement plants.

Unlike the past, though, when only border communities of poor Black residents were affected and ignored, now the tax base that city officials usually cater to is moving in. Whether the new residents know it or not – or care – they will be affected by dangerous contaminants in the soil and dust from cement factories.

What exactly is the city doing about all this? According to the ANCs and DC Action, next to nothing. Hamilton said they can't get the city to commit

BUZZARD POINT

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to things to protect the health of the community. And, the community is not asking for a lot – just basic things that wouldn't cost too much.

One of those low cost mitigation strategies would be real time air monitors. When the soccer stadium was going up, DC United put up four active air quality monitors, which allowed them to see air quality in real time. Right now there is only one on top of Greenleaf Recreation Center, and that one records air quality over a 24 hour hour period, which does not give an accurate look at air quality.

In a letter the Ward 6 ANCs sent to the EPA, the Commissioners announced that "environmental scientists at American University and colleagues at Washington Trinity University are in the process of expanding a system of air monitors." These are real time monitors and will give a more accurate reading of how contaminated the air is. The first monitors will likely start going up in June, but they need volunteers to put the monitors in their homes.

In that same letter, the Ward 6 ANCs said that DOEE is set to renew Vulcan's permit soon but they have yet to schedule a hearing or public comment period. The ANC has written to DOEE several times over the past year but to no avail. An open comment period will give the community a chance to weigh in as stake-

holders on the future of how Vulcan operates. Kramer says that not opening up the comment period, it puts the community in kind of a 'no man's land.'

A third and low cost mitigation measure the city could implement is simply paving the roads around the cement plants.

These are not big asks according to Kramer and Hamilton, and given the long history of ignoring the concerns of existing communities and now putting new ones at risk, it's the least the city can do.

Hamilton tells the story of another resident, who has lived near Buzzard Point all her life, and played down in Buzzard Point with her friends when they were kids. "That was a gathering spot for young people – most of those people, her friends, died from cancer. You see people move here and slowly over time they develop heart disease. They develop chronic asthma."

"It's a disservice to existing residents and new residents to say that we can coexist with an industrial site. You know, you're selling and renting places where people are buying into a contaminated area that you know over time, if they stay here long enough, they're gonna get sick like other residents who have gotten sick who have been here more long-term. So, I think the city should be ashamed of itself to not clean up the area and make it safe before they started stacking residents."

SWNA Car Wash Returns This July

BY THELMA D. JONES

ith the promising possibilities of being able to drive more, now is the time to start thinking about a good-old fashioned car wash!

Join the Southwest Neighborhood Assembly Youth Activities Task Force (YATF) for its second car wash fundraiser on Saturday, July 10, from 10 a.m.-3 p.m., at Westminster Church's parking lot (entrance at rear of church, off McKemie Place, SW). YATF is hoping that Mother Nature will be in our favor just as she was last September when we held our first-ever car wash – an amazingly beautiful day.

This year, YATF is looking forward to doubling the net proceeds raised last year from over \$450 to \$1000. We also want to double the number of vehicles washed, from 15 last year to 30 or beyond.

Benefiting the YATF's proposed mural painting, photography, and storytelling class for SW Youth, YATF looks forward to not only raising additional funds but also bringing the community



together again in a socially distanced car washing effort. It will also provide a volunteer opportunity for a host of community youth, residents, and friends, as well as create a lot of splashing fun. Vehicles are \$15 each with welcomed tips. If you are pushed for time and are unable to get your vehicle washed, YATF will gladly accept generous donations again this year for a great cause.

Volunteers are needed to help ensure the success of the car wash. To volunteer, please email james.yarsky@gmail.com or call (202) 270-6390, or email thelma@swna.org or call (202) 251-1639.



Over 20 years of helping Southwest!

Will you help a neighbor?

So far this year our grants have included:

- Scholarships for SW kids to attend Camp Arena Stage
- A clothing drive for SW residents
- Hot meals for AYA short-term housing residents in SW
- An educational trip for SW teens to Hampton VA

Make SW a better place for all its residents! Send tax deductible contributions to:

Friends of Southwest DC P.O. Box 44434, Washington DC 20026

To donate by credit card or to apply for a grant visit: **FriendsofSWDC.org**

We welcome grant applications from organizations working in Southwest.

Friends of Southwest DC is a 501(3)(c) nonprofit organization. All our work is done by volunteers, so your contribution goes to help Southwest residents.

We support The Southwester through our advertising.



CONSTRUCTION JOBS & APPRENTICESHIPS AT THE WHARF

All DC residents, particularly residents of Southwest and Wards 5, 6, 7, and 8, are invited to take advantage of jobs, apprenticeships, and training opportunities at The Wharf Phase 2.

To apply for construction jobs: Visit wharfdc.com/jobs to find contact information for over 25 contractors and sub-contractors.

To sign up for construction pre-apprenticeship training: Contact training partners Building Futures (wharfdc.com/building-futures or via Sylvia Casaro at scasaro@dclabor.org, 202-506-0398) and Skyland Workforce Center (skylandworkforcecenter.org, 202-793-2141).

To register for Wharf and District-wide job openings from contractors: Sign up on the DC Networks website (dcnetworks.org).

LEARN MORE AT WHARFDC,COM/JOBS





MARKET SW RETURNS!



MARK YOUR CALENDARS FOR JUNE 25

Southwest DC's eclectic Friday night market returns with a diverse mix of art, crafts, handmade jewelry, accessories, bath and beauty goods, and vintage and antique furnishings.

On stage, local musicians and DJs curate a mix of live music and inviting evening soundtracks. Additionally, specialty food businesses, a fully-stocked beer garden, a cigar lounge, and select food trucks add to the programming mix.

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