Op-Ed: Auditor’s Report Reveals DCHA Continues to Neglect Lead Issues

A November report from the Office of the DC Auditor (ODCA) highlighted major concerns regarding lead-based paint exposure in public housing. The Report asserts that the DC Housing Authority (DCHA) largely neglected to execute proper lead abatement after hazards were noted in the mandatory lead-risk assessment. In fact, the Auditor’s office “found that as recently as October of 2017, DCHA did not know the location of lead-based paint with certainty in public housing, despite 96% of their properties being constructed before 1978 and federal law having required risk assessments to determine this by March 2002.”

The audit by ODCA went on to highlight that DCHA was unsuccessful in addressing lead levels in a sample of housing units with residents under six years of age, an age group most at risk of developing detrimental mental and physical health problems. The finding indicates a profound and grave risk to the livelihood of young residents within the District of Columbia.

The ODCA accuses the DCHA of disregarding requirements to conduct annual lead inspections. The neglect is life-endangering as many DCHA units are in dire condition. DCHA was also found to have ignored and failed to maintain records of work orders surrounding lead-abatement in 50% of the work orders reviewed.

A local community organizing group, Southwest Action, is well aware of the issue and recognizes the importance of lead abatement in public housing units as one of the key tenets of health and prosperity for District residents.

Members of Southwest Action strongly urge DCHA to adhere to the proper guidelines set forth by ODCA and consider it extremely reprehensible to
DC Native Choreographs Success at Arena Stage

BY SHEILA WICKOUS

Washington, DC native Jay Staten made his name as a dancer, performing in locations from New York City to Italy and appearing on several TV shows. As the new Associate Choreographer at Arena Stage, Staten is currently working on the production Toni Stone.

He provided an interview to The Southwester, which has been edited for clarity.

The Southwester: Did growing up in Washington, DC shape your career?

Jay Staten: Attending Duke Ellington School of the Arts was one of the biggest highlights of my life. That place was life-changing for me. It was a safe haven for me and still is for a lot of other budding artists in DC. When I think to myself, “how am I here?” I give most of the credit to Ellington, a place that doesn’t get enough credit or funding for the amount of lives it touches and changes.

The Southwester: What did you learn about her while working on this production?

JS: I had never heard of Toni Stone before the production. What I learned is that strength and perseverance have been running strong in Black women for generations. Before there was Kamala Harris and Stacey Abrams, there was Toni Stone, paving the way and hitting balls.

The Southwester: How did growing up in Washington, DC shape your career?

JS: I used to ride past Arena Stage every day on the way to middle school and high school. Arena Stage and every other DC theatre has always been on my bucket list. It’s great to be home!

SW: Toni Stone has been called “one of the best [baseball] players you have never heard of.” What did you learn about her while working on this production?

JS: I had never heard of Toni Stone before the production. What I learned is that strength and perseverance have been running strong in Black women for generations. Before there was Kamala Harris and Stacey Abrams, there was Toni Stone, paving the way and hitting balls.

SW: Do you have any specific memories of Arena Stage?

JS: It was life-changing for me. It was a safe haven for me and still is for a lot of other budding artists in DC. When I think to myself, “how am I here?” I give most of the credit to Ellington, a place that doesn’t get enough credit or funding for the amount of lives it touches and changes.

Toni Stone to Appear at Nats Park

BY SOUTHWESТЕR STAFF

Toni Stone was the first woman to play baseball in the Negro Leagues. She was also the first woman to play in a professional men’s league in the 1950s. Now, Toni Stone is about to make another appearance on the ball field when Arena Stage at the Mead Center for American Theater partners with Nationals Park to host a free, live simulcast of the Roundabout Theatre Company’s production of Toni Stone.

Based on Martha Ackmann’s full-length biography Curveball: The Remarkable Story of Toni Stone, Lydia R. Diamond’s play Toni Stone premiered off-Broadway in 2019. The play addresses Stone’s baseball career, as well as the challenges that she faced as a Black woman.

The screening live performance inside the Kreeger Theatre will be broadcast on the video board at Nationals Park at 7:30 p.m. on September 26, 2021.

Tickets are free and must be reserved. To RSVP, please visit this web site and click RESERVE: https://www.arenastage.org/tonistonenatspark.

The stadium will open two hours before the performance. Prior to the performance, there will be a ceremonial first pitch on the field. A variety of concessions and food will be available for purchase at the ballpark. Hundreds of Toni Stone commemorative bobblehead figures will be raffled off during the event.

“Toni Stone’s story is hidden history and needs to be told. To tell this story in front of thousands at the ballpark and to celebrate Toni and the Negro League is an honor and a thrill,” said Artistic Director Molly Smith.

While there have been movie screenings in stadiums to celebrate the lives of ball players, this is very likely the first time any ball player has returned to the field in a play being simulcast. The opportunity for thousands of people to view the performance could help Arena Stage reach the largest audience in its history.

Toni Stone’s story of perseverance and fighting long odds resonates with current audiences while strengthening links to the past, including a local connection to Mamie Johnson, the first female pitcher to play in the Negro leagues, who died in Washington, DC.

“Ever since our organization consciously drafted Mamie Johnson in 2008, we have strived to raise up the legacy of both women in baseball and the Negro Leagues,” said Gregory McCarthy, who serves as the Senior Vice President, Community Engagement for the Washington Nationals.
Breast Cancer Support Group June Meeting a Wild Success

The Thelma D. Jones Breast Cancer Fund (TDJBCF) kicked off the FDA Oncology Center of Excellence's (FDA-OCE) Project Community Initiative (National Black Family Cancer Awareness Week – “Engaging the Generations” June 17 – June 23, 2021) at its June Support Group meeting. The Breast Cancer Fund’s effort dovetailed the FDA-OCE Initiative’s commitment to raising awareness of cancer in one of the most vulnerable populations in the country, a population that the TDJBCF’s embraces on a grassroots level locally in Southwest, as well as nationally and globally.

The meeting was emceed by Andrea Roane, a former WUSA TV news anchor and breast health advocate (Roane emceed a Support Group meeting back in June of 2019, too). TDJBCF Founder Thelma D. Jones provided welcome remarks followed by Emcee Roane’s introduction to the Project Community Initiative National Black Family Cancer Awareness Week video – highlights of the meeting can be viewed here: https://youtu.be/PcJWPExA1rC.

In the video, Rea Blakey, an associate director for external outreach and engagement at the FDA (she also leads Project Community), lauded the Breast Cancer Fund for being a vital stakeholder for many years. Emcee Roane then shared her overall cancer advocacy work, including the popular WUSA Buddy Check9, a program which encourages women to do breast self-exams and remind “a buddy” to do the same. She also shared the devastating impact that cancer had on her family, including her spouse, son, and two brothers-in-law – one of which succumbed to his own diagnosis.

Starting the line-up of speakers was Professor of Oncology Dr. Lucile Adams-Campbell, Professor of Oncology at the Lombardi Comprehensive Cancer Center and Associate Director for Minority Health at the Georgetown University Medical Center, among other titles. Dr. Adams-Campbell set the tone for the meeting, telling the audience of the importance of reducing the burden of cancer for the Black community by “talking the talk and walking the walk.” She spoke on the importance of mammography and screening but as well as the entire meeting can be seen here (https://facebook.com/1kOQpo47T/) and on the Facebook page (https://facebook.com/1kOQpo47T/).

Emcee Roane introduced the FamiliesSHARE, which is a collaboration between NIH and Georgetown University Lombardi Cancer Center. The program’s goal is to have a conversation about the family history of certain common diseases affecting Black families. It provides information that will allow researchers to create a family history chart that individuals can use; it also provides people with a customized workbook that has information about common diseases such as breast cancer, prostate cancer, heart disease, diabetes, etc. The study collaborators feel the workbook will facilitate conversations amongst Black families about their family history, as well as keep a record of common diseases that can be shared with healthcare providers.

Over the course of the meeting, several speakers who share partnership or collaborative efforts with the TDJBCF, updated the audience on their efforts, which included:

- Dr. Ione D. Vargus, Author and Founder, Family Reunion Institute (Philadelphia, PA) discussed her book Black Family Reunions: Finding the Rest of Me – a tribute to and celebration of family reunions and the purposes and benefits of family reunions as well as the many aspects of family reunion planning. Dr. Vargus was accompanied by her son Bill Vargus, a former sportscaster for FOX in Philadelphia.
- Dr. Simina Boca, Adjunct Associate Professor Georgetown University Medical Center (Recorded) discussed the study on the “Experience of Black/African American and Latina Breast Cancer Survivors in the Washington, DC region during the COVID-19 Pandemic.” The study examined how the pandemic disproportionately affected the targeted audience because of their vulnerable state. Eighty-four survivors shared their experience for the study. Dr. Boca indicated that a website is being created to reflect the data derived from the study. Both the TDJBCF and Nueva Vida are community partners in this effort.
- Dr. Chiranjeev Dash, MBBS, Ph.D, Assistant Director of Health Disparities Research, Georgetown Lombardi Comprehensive Cancer Center expanded on the importance of FamiliesSHARE, which enables doctors to have a better understanding of a patient’s health history. He also spoke recently.

See “Support Group,” page 14
They Practice What They Preach

BY WILMA GOLDSTEIN

For 25 years, Brian and Ruth Hamilton have served as co-pastors at Westminster Presbyterian Church, located on the corner of 4th and I Streets in DC’s Southwest neighborhood.

“I think a church really needs to be a community center and has the responsibility of organizing around all kinds of issues and problems that afflict the community. We’ve tried to do that over the years, not just to conduct services, but to really be out and engage with the neighborhood,” Brian Hamilton said in an interview with the Buzzard Point Oral History Project. This guiding principle has benefitted both the church and the community. Westminster has served as a haven for LGBTQ neighbors, immigrants, the recently incarcerated and other historically marginalized groups. As a result, the Reverends Hamilton have built a diverse group of congregants, followers, and others who have received comfort and assistance from their various ministries that have evolved over the years.

In recognition of their thoughtfulness, selflessness and devotion, the Education and Scholarship Task Force of the Southwest Neighborhood Assembly (SWNA) presented the Reverends Brian and Ruth Hamilton with the 2021 Star Award. Each year, the Star Award is given to a Southwest organization that practices exemplary community service.

On August 15, SWNA President Donna Purchase presented the award, noting that the Hamiltons have been longtime supporters of the work of SWNA and the Education and Scholarship Task Force. In prior years, before the COVID-19 pandemic required pivoting to a virtual ceremony, celebrations of SWNA’s scholarships and awards were often held at Westminster.

Ruth Lyle and Brian Hamilton met while each staffed churches in Detroit in the 1990s. In February of 1996, they accepted an offer to co-pastor at Westminster and moved into one of Southwest’s original Sanitary Houses, where they raised two sons and still live today.

Ruth, the daughter and granddaughter of pastors, lived in New Mexico and Arkansas before studying at Mt. Holyoke and training for the ministry at the San Francisco Theological Seminary. Brian, who was born and raised in Maine, went to college at Eastern University and then to the New School of Social Research, now known as New School University.

First Person: Music in the Heart

BY WILMA GOLDSTEIN

Like so many in the Southwest community, I have a personal connection to Westminster and Brian and Ruth Hamilton. I have been to many memorial services at Westminster for jazz fans and musicians for whom Westminster is not their church, or who may not belong to any church, but feel connected to Westminster. I expect my own to be conducted there.

Shortly after I was assigned to do this story, I was standing in a checkout line at Safeway and overheard this conversation. Assuming it must have been karma, I decided it should be shared as an example of how Southerners think about Ruth and Brian.

Shopper #1: “Didn’t see you in church this morning.”

Shopper #2: “No, I do usually come to that church but ‘my girl Ruth’ was doing the sermon at Westminster and I had to go hear my girl.”

Announcement from Beth and Loren Hall

Our daughter, Madeline Phyllis Hall is engaged to be married to Warren Horston of Flagler, New Zealand. We are delighted. Madeline was born and raised at River Park. She settled into New Zealand after attending Otago University there on a Fulbright Scholarship. She is currently with Beef and Lamb New Zealand, working with farmers on environmental and climate change issues. Warren is a beekeeper and house builder.

PROGRAMMING

Continued from p. 1

Participants to achieve a positive collective impact through experiential learning – literally learning through direct experience – or what we call “learning by doing.” Our core competencies in applying this approach are in our three focus areas: Education, Workforce Development, and Health, Wellness, & Community Safety. Through this work, Living Classrooms has impacted the lives of over 110,000 residents over the last 20 years by co-designing with communities programs that provide holistic and transformative opportunities.

SW: Your mission is linked to historic and contemporary racial, social, and economic disparities. How does this legacy shape your programming?

DE: Our legacy of historic and contemporary racial, social, and economic oppression has created the inequities and disparities that the Living Classrooms Foundation and other social service agencies and non-profits exist to attempt to both mitigate and dismantle. The oppression of marginalized communities is the core reason we seek to ensure that communities are heard, valued, and actively involved in the creation of programming and services to dismantle inequitable systems. We utilize a listen first approach, and we seek to respond with empathy.

We recognize that community members are the experts of their experiences, and that it is imperative to keep families, stakeholders, and constituents involved in our planning and programming. Our participants know what their definition of success is and often just need support and resources to achieve their goals.

SW: How will the recent financial contribution from the Capitol Riverfront BID support the Southwest community?

DE: The generous donation from the Capitol Riverfront BID led by Michael Stevens will help to sustain our existing programming. The donation allowed us to expand the Creative Arts and S.T.E.A.M. enrichments offered to middle school scholars enrolled in our summer program. Scholars were able to express themselves through creative writing and music production, learn more about the environment in their community, and enhance 21st-century skills by learning foundational engineering principles. Additionally, it will help us continue to implement our award-winning robotics team and our music programs, the Queen Bee and BeatZone, into the 2021-2022 school year.

SW: The Dent House opened on June 16 just two years ago. With new development coming to Buzzard Point, what is the importance of holding this space for the community?

DE: The incredible legacy of Rev. Dent and the history of the community are integral components of the legacy of Buzzard Point and the Southwest community. We are committed to holding this space to ensure the diverse history of residents and the community are preserved. We have an obligation to honor the work of our ancestors and ensure that the future generations are aware of their rich history. Furthermore, we have an obligation to ensure that we utilize this space to ensure that every resident can be participants in the changes occurring in the community and not be displaced by them.

SW: As the new Managing Director, what are your top priorities?

DE: My overall goal for the Living Classrooms Foundation of the National Capital Region is to continue to disrupt the ecosystem of poverty by creating opportunities for youth and adults. We will achieve this by expanding the great work that already exists, including educational opportunities for youth, creating workforce development opportunities that create a path for participants to earn a family-supporting wage, and partnering with the local government to enhance the environment surrounding the Anacostia River. Ultimately, our goal is to partner with residents, government agencies, foundations, and businesses to build a Workforce Development & Education Center with the capacity to serve thousands of residents a year.
Moving toward a BRIGHT FUTURE!

CELEBRATE the SWNA ESTF 2021 Scholarship Award Winners

Dia Mynn Brown
Bowie State

Cedric Gaschetta
Virginia U

Nicla De Biase
Northeastern U

Mikayla Edwards
GWU

Gabriella Grimaldi
GWU

Ellen Guo
Virginia Tech

Steven Guo
GWU

Dejhit Harris
Trinity Washington

Eleanor Holt
Clark U

Sydney King
Xavier U

Nour Mahmoud
Virginia Commonwealth

Grace Mitchell-Jenkins
Lackawanna

Nick Moses
Colorado Tech

Jackson Muse
Boston U

Kendal Parks
Jackson State

Antoinette Porter
Trinity

Dayonna Queen
U of Hartford

Shaniyah Robin
California State

Aidan Smith
GWU

Khalil Warren
Lincoln U

Jordan Watson
Virginia State

Aaliyah Wilkinson
Virginia State

Una Yarsky
U of Albany

To donate or apply
www.swnascholarship.org

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.

Design by David Alde
Spot the difference!
Can you spot the differences in the two scenes below?

1. _________________________________________________
2. _________________________________________________
3. _________________________________________________
4. _________________________________________________
5. _________________________________________________
6. _________________________________________________

Answers from August 2021 issue

Differences: The picture on the left has a seahorse where there are yellow fish in the right picture; the picture on the right has an umbrella and bottle of water with the two people on the blanket; there are two crabs in the picture on the right; there is a beach ball in the picture on the right; there is a message in a bottle in the picture on the right; the sea turtle in the picture on the right has seashells on its back.

Word Scramble: There are 281 words you can make from “Birthdays.”

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

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Jokes!

Why did the banana go to the doctor?  
*Because it was peeling bad!*  
(Submitted by Ellie)

What is fast, loud, and crunchy?  
*A rocket chip!*

What did the left eye say to the right eye?  
*Between us, something smells!*

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!

Math Moment!

Can you complete these equations?

a. $50 + 50 = \ \ \ $500$

b. $150 + 20 = \ \ \ $170$

c. $15 + 5 = \ \ \ $20$

d. $196 - 97 = \ \ \ $99$

e. $21 + 21 = \ \ \ $42$

f. $28 - 4 = \ \ \ $24$

g. $72 - 18 = \ \ \ $54$

h. $200 \times 3 = \ \ \ 600$

Maze!

Can you help the penguin get to the iceberg?

Tic Tac Toe

COLORING TIME!

Can you help the penguin get to the iceberg?
September Mutual Aid Hours, Back to School Bash

BY CARLEE BROWN AND MAX GROSSMAN

W
and 6 Mutual Aid (W6MA) is a collective of Black and Brown grassroots organizations working together to help keep our communities safe. For over a year and a half, 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. as well as Saturdays 11 a.m.-2 p.m. Please note that our Wednesday and Friday hours are subject to cancellation due to heat. On days when weather is preventatively hot, we will leave a sign outside the courtyard entrance indicating that the Pod is closed.
- Needed items include:
  - paper towels, toilet paper; non-perishable foods: hearty canned soup (good for a meal), corned beef hash, microwaveable meals, mac and cheese, powder drink mix, instant coffee, breakfast cereal, bottled water;
  - personal hygiene: sanitary pads, diapers (sizes 2-4), pull-ups (size Adult XL);
  - cleaning: spray cleaner, dish soap, laundry detergent, floor cleaner;
  - kitchen supplies: frying pans, manual can openers;
  - paperback books for adults, fiction novels, memoirs.

• Donate blood: to help save lives, in times of need. Westminster Presbyterian Church has partnered with Inova Blood Service to host a September Blood Drive at Westminster Church every Sunday morning at 9-10 a.m. at CUMC’s courtyard entrance.

• 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 2nd and 4th Saturdays of the month at 9 a.m. (courtyard entrance).

• If you cannot come to the church due to health or mobility issues and you live in SW, call 202-554-9117 to request a delivery.

• Obtain fresh produce from SW Mutual Aid every Sunday morning at 9-10 a.m. at CUMC’s courtyard entrance. Just want to learn more? Email swmutualaid@serveyourcitydc.org.

September is NATIONAL PREPAREDNESS MONTH

Make a plan to donate blood regularly to ensure a steady and adequate supply of blood is available in case of disasters and emergencies.

September Blood Drive at Westminster Church

Someone in the United States needs a blood transfusion every two seconds, yet less than 10% of Americans donate blood. Westminster Presbyterian Church (400 L St. SW) is helping our community meet its needs by hosting an Inova Blood Service drive on Saturday, Sept. 18, from 9 a.m.-1 p.m. There are lots of reasons to donate blood: to help save lives, in appreciation of times when a loved one received a transfusion, or to enjoy the free juice and snacks afterwards!

Donors must be 17 years of age or older (16 with parental permission), weigh at least 110 lbs, and be feeling well. All donors and staff must wear masks during the donation process.

To make an appointment, get more information about eligibil-
ity, or to learn more, please visit https://www.inovabloodsaves.org

The Southwester September 2021

Community Grant Opportunity

The Southwest Community Foundation (SWCF) announces a special grant opportunity that opens October 1, 2021. The foundation expects to award up to seven grants of up to $25,000 each for programs, operations, and projects from nonprofit organizations that are based in Southwest or primarily serve residents of all ages, races, and incomes, in public housing, market-rate rental units, and single-family homes.

SWCF welcomes grant applications for programs, operations, and projects from nonprofit organizations that are based in Southwest or primarily serve Southwest residents. The foundation will publish application guidelines on its website by October 1. The deadline for submission will be December 1, 2021. Awards will be announced and distributed in early 2022.

For further information, stay in touch with Southwest Community Foundation | Improving Life in Southwest DC (sw-community-foundation.org).

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September Blood Drive at Westminster Church

Someone in the United States needs a blood transfusion every two seconds, yet less than 10% of Americans donate blood. Westminster Presbyterian Church (400 L St. SW) is helping our community meet its needs by hosting an Inova Blood Service drive on Saturday, Sept. 18, from 9 a.m.-1 p.m. There are lots of reasons to donate blood: to help save lives, in appreciation of times when a loved one received a transfusion, or to enjoy the free juice and snacks afterwards!

Donors must be 17 years of age or older (16 with parental permission), weigh at least 110 lbs, and be feeling well. All donors and staff must wear masks during the donation process.

To make an appointment, get more information about eligibility, or to learn more, please visit https://www.inovabloodsaves.org

The Southwester September 2021

Community Grant Opportunity

The Southwest Community Foundation (SWCF) announces a special grant opportunity that opens October 1, 2021. The foundation expects to award up to seven grants of up to $25,000 each for programs, operations, and projects from nonprofit organizations that are based in Southwest or primarily serve residents of all ages, races, and incomes, in public housing, market-rate rental units, and single-family homes.

SWCF welcomes grant applications for programs, operations, and projects from nonprofit organizations that are based in Southwest or primarily serve Southwest residents. The foundation will publish application guidelines on its website by October 1. The deadline for submission will be December 1, 2021. Awards will be announced and distributed in early 2022.

For further information, stay in touch with Southwest Community Foundation | Improving Life in Southwest DC (sw-community-foundation.org).

• Donate blood: to help save lives, in times of need. Westminster Presbyterian Church has partnered with Inova Blood Service to host a September Blood Drive at Westminster Church every Sunday morning at 9-10 a.m. at CUMC’s courtyard entrance.

• 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 2nd and 4th Saturdays of the month at 9 a.m. (courtyard entrance).

• If you cannot come to the church due to health or mobility issues and you live in SW, call 202-554-9117 to request a delivery.

• Obtain fresh produce from SW Mutual Aid every Sunday morning at 9-10 a.m. at CUMC’s courtyard entrance. Just want to learn more? Email swmutualaid@serveyourcitydc.org.

September is NATIONAL PREPAREDNESS MONTH

Make a plan to donate blood regularly to ensure a steady and adequate supply of blood is available in case of disasters and emergencies.
where DC meets to celebrate

Enjoy the change of seasons with your friends and family at The Wharf. Experience outdoor dining, music, and cultural festivals along the waterfront. Don’t miss our spectacular annual Holiday Boat Parade and so much more!

Fall 2021

SEPTEMBER 1, 9
Transit Pier Concerts

SEPTEMBER 2
Sunset Cinema Outdoor Movie

SEPTEMBER 4-5
DC JazzFest

SEPTEMBER 11-12
Fiesta DC

OCTOBER 2
Wiener 500 Oktoberfest

OCTOBER 3
DC Turkish Festival

OCTOBER 24
Dia de los Muertos

NOVEMBER 14
Oyster Derby

Holiday 2021

NOVEMBER 26
Lighting of The Wharf Christmas Tree

NOVEMBER 28
Lighting of the Menorah

DECEMBER 4
The District’s Holiday Boat Parade

Schedule subject to change; visit wharfdc.com for updates.
All events are open to the public.
Please consider leaving your car at home. It’s easy to get to The Wharf—via water taxi, Metro, SW Shuttle, bus, bike, or even kayak.
Stories of Healing, Resilience and Advocacy Shared by Smith Center and Thelma D. Jones Breast Cancer Fund

BY SOUTHWESTER STAFF

The Smith Center for Healing and the Arts and the Thelma D. Jones Breast Cancer Fund (TDJBCF) partnered for an evening of inspiration and powerful examples of courage and resilience on Wednesday, July 21, 2021. The third annual event was hosted on Zoom and livestreamed on Facebook, and featured Smith Center Board Members the Honorable Lee Satterfield, Senior Judge, DC Superior Court and Kimberly Parekh, Senior Education Advisor, UNICEF.

Smith Center Executive Director Lisa Simms Booth said, "I'm delighted to be back with the Thelma D. Jones Breast Cancer Fund, and I'm thrilled that the relationship between our organizations continues to thrive. I'm especially proud to have this conversation tonight about healing, resilience and the power of service to the community which is so important to both our organizations."

Simms Booth served as the evening’s emcee and began with an overview of the Smith Center’s twenty-five years of work, including exciting events to mark the organization’s twenty-fifth anniversary. Subsequently, Simms Booth moved to the conversation portion of the evening with the Honorable Lee Satterfield.

Judge Satterfield shared his story, which started with the loss of his leg at age 17 to osteosarcoma, a difficult form of bone cancer. Following many years of good health, the latent health effects of his cancer treatments on his heart caused a stroke, and a few years ago, necessitated a transplant.

In response to the question of what he would say to someone facing a cancer diagnosis, Satterfield replied, "I would say that life is not permanent; it is constantly evolving, which is a good thing. We could get sick, but we can also get better. We all have the capacity to overcome obstacles."

Judge Satterfield, the author of Courageous Warriors: Overcoming Obstacles to Inspire and Lead shared his motivation for writing the book. "The primary reason was to highlight the need for better treatment for children diagnosed with cancer;" he said. "The second reason was to highlight the latent effects that can happen to those that had childhood cancers. Lastly, I was fortunate to survive long enough to get a heart transplant and I wanted to promote the need for organ donors."

The evening continued with Simms Booth interviewing Kimberly Parekh, founder and facilitator of the Young Adult Metastatic Support Group at the Smith Center. Parekh shared her story of being diagnosed with Stage IV metastatic breast cancer in her 30s, and the impact of shifting from being very healthy to very sick. She slowly earned back her health using an integrative approach including both traditional treatments and holistic options.

When asked why she chose an integrative approach, Parekh said, "I believe it helps me in my disease management and has suited me. But my approach is unique to me, as everyone's body is different and everyone's disease is different. There is no one size fits all approach. This is a part of well-being and healing, and everyone has to find their own way."

Simms Booth asked Parekh about the difference between healing and cure. Parekh said, "I think about impermanence; everything is constantly changing, and everything is in flux. I strive not to attribute positive or negative feelings; rather, it just is. There are a lot of war-related terms used when talking about cancer patients – warrior, battle, etc. It is not peaceful. I have accepted my diagnosis and let go. But acceptance doesn’t mean I have given up. In fact, I do everything in my power to stay well and be well. I think that is part of healing."

The meeting shifted to focus on service, advocacy, and the power of community. Simms Booth asked the speakers, including Thelma D. Jones, Founder, TDJBCF, about what inspired them to give back or pay it forward.

Jones said, "Altruism is part of my community outreach and education. Support is part of the healing process."

The evening concluded with Simms Booth interviewing Kimberly Parekh, founder and facilitator of the Young Adult Metastatic Support Group at the Smith Center. Parekh shared her story of being diagnosed with Stage IV metastatic breast cancer in her 30s, and the impact of shifting from being very healthy to very sick. She slowly earned back her health using an integrative approach including both traditional treatments and holistic options.

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See "Healing," page 15
Swimming Moments

A Southwest sunset from a St. James balcony

Courtesy of Irene Allen

Celebrating our 2 year anniversary serving the Southwest and Navy Yard waterfront communities!

Comprehensive Ophthalmology
Cataract
Glaucoma
Comprehensive Eye Exam
Dry Eye Syndrome
Refractive Error/Presbyopia
Diabetic Eye Exam
Ocular Surface Tumor

Cosmetic
Upper Blepharoplasty
Lower Blepharoplasty
Brow Lift
Midface Lift
Wrinkles (BOTOX, Intradermal Fillers)
Latisse Eyelash Growth

Reconstructive
Blepharoptosis (Droopy Eyelid)
Ectropion/Entropion
Eyelid Trauma
Eyelid Tumors (Lumps, Bumps)
Thyroid Eye Disease
Tearing
Orbital Fractures

Optical
Licensed Optician
In-house Optical Lab
Unique Frames

Time for an eye exam? Check out Washington, DC’s newest private ophthalmology office with state of the art technology and electronic medical records! Most major insurance carriers accepted. We are conveniently located in Capitol Hill directly across from the Washington Navy Yard (8th and M Street SE).

The rooftop bar at Cambria

Cambria Offers Quite a View

Earlier this year, a new hotel opened up at Q St. and South Capitol St., SW, within a very short walk of both Audi Field and Nationals Park. Cambria Hotel Washington, DC Capitol Riverfront features 154 rooms, modern amenities, and two restaurant/bars with sufficient space to accommodate DC United fans, Nationals fans, and any others who wish to stop in.

Just off the lobby is RowHouse, a restaurant and bar open for breakfast, lunch, and dinner, with a 4pm-7pm happy hour on Mondays through Fridays. And on the Cambria open-air rooftop, with stellar views of the city, is Perch SW, featuring small plates, cocktails, and local craft brews. The hotel has hosted neighborhood events and private events on the rooftop space, and the rooftop bar is open Thursday-Sunday evenings, as well as for Saturday and Sunday brunch. The view is certainly worth checking out.

Royale Cambria

Courtesy of Cambria

The rooftop bar at Cambria
SW Community Survey Results - What did we hear from SWDC Residents?

BY MIRANDA CHIEN-HALE, SW DC ACTION

Thank you to the more than 300 neighbors, -2% of the total SWDC population, who filled out Southwest Action’s Community Development survey either at Christ United Methodist Church (CUJMC) or online via links shared on social media, or by following an article in the February Southwester from January - May of 2021. This survey aimed to capture what types of businesses or community organizations Southwest residents find to be most important for ensuring a healthy, inclusive, and thriving neighborhood. Residents identified businesses and organizations they value and/or would like to see in Southwest.

What type of businesses would residents like to see in SW?
- Over 60% of all total respondents would like to see some type of hardware store.
- Over 50% of all total respondents would like to see coffee shops.
- Over 40% of all total respondents would like to see restaurants, bars, grocery stores, medical/doctor’s offices, floral/garden stores.
- Over 30% of all total respondents would like to see banks or credit unions.

Spotlight:
- Long-term residents of 10+ years also identified hardware stores, coffee shops, banks or credit unions, and medical/doctor’s offices.
- Residents that identified as Black/African American identified medical/doctor’s office as a top choice. This was closely followed by a dollar store, as well as interest in seeing a Barber’s shop/hair salon, banks/credit unions, grocery stores, convenience stores, and coffee shops.

The following question highlights the biggest difference among key demographics.

What community organizations do you feel are important to have in SW?
- Over 50% of all total respondents chose youth-serving organizations (scouts, summer day camps, clubs, etc).
- Over 40% of all total respondents chose Senior Center and after-school programs, arts programming, health access/education.
- Over 30% of all total respondents would like to see job training.

Spotlight:
- Long-term residents of 10+ years and residents that identified as Black/African American identified youth-serving organizations (scouts, summer day camps, clubs, etc.), Senior Center, and after-school programs and job training as top needs.

Which businesses & community services in SW do you use the most?
- Over 50% of all total respondents use Safeway/grocery stores.
- Over 30% of all total respondents use the CVS pharmacy.
- Over 20% of all total respondents use the restaurants.

Who responded?
Nearly 60% of the respondents identified as White as compared to 46% resident reported in the US Census. Nearly 1/3 of respondents have lived in Southwest for 0-5 years and nearly 44% reported being between 21-40 years old.

According to the US Census’ 2019 American Community Survey, SWDC is composed of nearly 14,500 residents. The racial breakdown in 2019 was White – 46.2%, Black/African-American – 38.7%, and Hispanic/Latino, Asian, or other – 15%. Roughly one-third of the SWDC population is between 20-34, another one-third is 35-59, with the last third ranging from 0-19 of age or over 60. According to the DC Office of Planning, SWDC has experienced the following demographic shifts since 2000 – the white population nearly doubling while the black population dropped by nearly 30%. Given this extreme demographic shift, we seek to pay special attention to the needs and desires of our longer-term and Black residents.

As we continue our push to bring community-controlled, permanently affordable housing and retail space to the neighborhood, via the expansion of the Douglass CLT, information like this can help us learn how best to address the needs of our neighborhood, especially for those who have been intentionally and historically underserved (to learn more about the community land trust proposal, visit bit.ly/swclt).

See “Survey,” page 13
Support Group Parties with Dual Purposes this September

BY SOUTHWESTER STAFF

With the change of the season upon us and all that’s happening in our lives, the Thelma D. Jones Breast Cancer Fund (TDJBCF) believes that it’s time to celebrate and party with a purpose. Join the support group Wednesday, Sept. 15, at 6 p.m. via Zoom and Facebook live to celebrate the 9th Anniversary of the Fund and party with a purpose at the virtual 60th birthday of Thelma D. Jones.

The celebration will feature renowned guest speaker Vanessa B. Sheppard, Ph.D, who serves as Associate Director, Community Outreach Engagement and Health Disparities at Massey Cancer Center at Virginia Commonwealth University School of Medicine (VCU). She is also Chair of the Department of Health Behavior and Policy at VCU School of Medicine.

Dr. Sheppard will discuss the study she led on “Sisters informing Sisters,” the first peer-led decision support intervention for Black/African American women diagnosed with breast cancer, which improves patients’ communication with providers and treatment decisions outcomes. Dr. Sheppard will also discuss her upcoming efforts in working with the TDJBCF to expand the “Sisters Informing Sisters” intervention effort.

In addition, she will talk about her research work at VCU’s Massey Cancer Center which is focused on cancer disparities with an emphasis on breast cancer, cancer care delivery, behavioral trials, and longitudinal cohorts. Lastly, Dr. Sheppard will touch on the importance of her research work being conducted within persons diagnosed with cancer and/ or at increased risk due to lifestyle behaviors or potential genetic alterations.

The TDJBCF will welcome virtual guests from throughout the country, feature a musical presentation, share brief video tributes from our ambassadors, breast cancer survivors and partners, and raise a birthday toast to TDJBCF’s Founder Thelma D. Jones.

“This birthday, like all my birthdays, is special,” Jones said, referencing her 2007 diagnosis of a late stage, and rare, aggressive form of breast cancer. “I am still passionate about using my lived experience, network, connections, and voice to help bring about a paradigm shift in reducing the incidence and mortality rates of breast cancer, especially in our underserved communities. At the same time, I want to be an example of courage and hope to others as we travel this journey together as no one should have to travel their journey alone.”

Don’t miss this special virtual celebration that’s defying COVID-19 and looking ahead to brighter days. For more information on the celebration, email thelma@tdjbreastcancerfund.org or call (202) 251-1639.

SURVEY

Continued from p. 12

So, what did we learn? How do these responses line up with how you feel? What can we take away from these responses? How can we inform and drive what we ask and push for from Southwest’s Advisory Neighborhood Commission (ANC), the DC Council, and DC government more broadly. Check out our website at www.swdcaction.com to learn more.

What does Community Development mean to the Community and Southwest DC Action?

Community development means creating an equitable, vibrant, diverse, economically healthy community with services that meet the needs of the people who live here. Our vision for Southwest is a community in which all residents have access to all basic services and there is a thriving local business community. There would be many multi-use open and vibrant spaces that are inviting to all residents. Furthermore...

- Businesses should meet the community needs and focus on locally owned and small businesses.
- This means having: medical/doctor’s offices, affordable grocery and convenience options (e.g. dollar store, convenience store, hardware store).
- a neighborhood Barber’s shop/hair salon
- access to a bank and/or credit union
- a nearby and affordable neighborhood coffee shop and restaurant
- More broadly speaking...
- The community needs open spaces for socializing, recreation, small businesses (e.g. farmer’s markets), and entertainment.
- There must be recreational opportunities for all ages with inclusive accessibility options for all residents.
- Any new developments in Southwest should include investments in open spaces, including parks, recreational fields, and communal spaces.
- Community WiFi should be made available and free to low-income district residents.
- Families need accessible and affordable childcare, after-school programs, and early childhood education.
- To be an equitable community, Southwest youth need employment opportunities and job training, and a Senior Center.
- The Southwest Business Improvement District (SWBID) should include representatives from all parts of the community and be racially and socially diverse.
- Southwest should have more community gardens, edible landscaping, and community-maintained flower/green beds.

Who is Southwest DC Action?

Founded in the fall of 2019, Southwest DC Action is a volunteer group of more than 30 Southwest DC neighbors who are organizing and advocating for anti-racist development and an equitable and environmentally sustainable neighborhood. We have five workgroups – Community Development, History and Culture, Environment and Climate Resiliency, Housing, and Youth – meeting all together once a month to organize, advocate, and take action. Check out our website at www.swdcaction.com to learn more.
SUPPORT GROUP

Continued from p. 3

about the Georgetown/Howard Uni-
versity partnership study on “Dispari-
ties in Chronic Stress, Quality of Life
and Physical Activity among Black and
White breast cancer survivors.” The
study is a collaborative effort between
Howard University and Georgetown
University and is designed to help
better understand how breast cancer
survivors are coping with stress and
examining the correlation of stress and
breast cancer outcomes.

Attorney LaRuby Z. May, Manag-
ing Member, May Lightfoot PLLC talk-
ed about the Zantac litigation and the
over-prescription of the drug to Black
and Brown people and others who live
in food deserts and lack accessibility to
healthy food options. Zantac and the
generic version known as Ranitidine
were prescribed for individuals with
other digestive related issues. Zantac/
Ranitidine has been shown to cause
cancers, including but not limited to
breast, prostate, bladder, and stomach
cancers.

Dr. Carla D. Williams, the associate
professor of medicine and interim Can-
cer Center director of Howard Univer-
sity, bemoaned Dr. Adams-Campbell’s
words about the importance of being
at the table in her closing remarks. Dr.
Williams spoke about the importance
of being a health advocate and shared
her definition of health justice. “Health
justice permanently corrects the con-
ditions that have allowed health dis-
parities, inequities, and injustice to
arise and persist.”

Encouraging the audience to
become individual health advocates,
she gave an impassioned call to action,
“Let’s all find our roots [to be health
justices]. Pick your cause [from the
many injustices presented during the
meeting]. What is the one thing you
can work on as a root cause issue in our
collective spheres of influence so that
we can make these changes?”

Dr. Williams also described the
TDJBCF and its founders as “a true
drum major for health justice and
health equity” and praised Jones for
her newsletters, which help to keep
everyone informed.

Thanks to Encore Roane and all the
speakers. The kickoff of the FDA-OCE
National Black Family Cancer Aware-
ness Week (*BlackFamCan) ended on
the same high note that it started on,
leaving the virtual audience with a lot
of food for thought and a call to action.

Special thanks to the TDJBCF news-
letter editor Lashanah Thomas, TDJB-
CF Ambassadors, Peri Hamlin, Jenelle
Leonard, Pentadental Digital Market-
ing Consultants LLC, and the A-Team
(Rodney Minor, executive producer,
BRTV Consulting, Anthony Venuto,
and Derek Tawiah).

For information regarding future
meetings or the TDJBCF contact thel-
mag@djbreastcancerfund or call (202)
251-1639.

Community Center Seeks Community Engagement Participants

BY SOUTHWEST DC COMMUNITY CENTER COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT AND COMMUNICATIONS COMMITTEE

After a successful crowdfunding
campaign powered by gener-
ous neighbors, the Southwest
DC Community Center (SWDCCC)
volunteer Community Engagement and Communications Committee is
embarking on a community engage-
ment initiative to lay the groundwork
for co-creating the future SWDCCC.

This initiative will empower local
youth as Civic Fellows to connect with
neighbors who can share their lived
experiences as Community Experts.
Insights collected during this process
will be used to inform the design and
operation of the new community cen-
ter. The crowdfunding campaign we
conducted this summer will enable
us to both provide the Community
Experts compensation for their con-
tributions and to offer a stipend to
Civic Fellows for their efforts.

Civic Fellows will receive training
in topics like interview and group
facilitation practices, civic engage-
ment and urban planning concepts
more broadly, and human-centered
design principles. In addition to one-
on-one interviews with neighbors,
Civic Fellows will leverage this train-
ing to co-facilitate a neighborhood
discussion group around one of the
following themes:

• Promoting workforce readiness
and entrepreneurship
• Supporting older adults aging in
the community
• Designing a center accessible for
all
• Creating a family-friendly amenity

The Civic Fellows will then pres-
ent a final project that reflects on
their experience and shares their own
vision for the community center at
an event open to the public. Youth in
our community who are interested in
being a Civic Fellow are encour-
aged to fill out a short application
at https://swdccc.link/CFapplication.

Each discussion group will meet
once for 90 minutes in September
or October in a COVID-safe way. If
you’re interested in participating in
a discussion group, please sign up at
https://swdccc.link/getinvolved.

This engagement process will be a
key feature of our longer-term efforts
to build a community center that can
achieve the vision of the SWDCCC,
which is to serve as a vibrant, central
hub for the community to support
lifelong learning, arts, cultural enrich-
ment, and community life. We hope
you’ll join us!

Ben Curran of SW Strong, the local disaster preparedness group, was joined by
Miss District of Columbia, Andolyn Medina, on Saturday, August 14th at
the SWNA table at the SW Farmers Market. Miss DC has generously agreed to
support disaster preparedness efforts by encouraging everyone to become one,
make a plan, build a kit, and stay informed. For more information on disas-
ter preparedness, please see https://ready.dc.gov/.

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Lead (Pb) Toxicity: What Are the U.S. Standards for Lead Levels? | ATSDR - Environmental Medi-
cine & Environmental Health Edu-
cation - CSEM. (2019). Retrieved
17 January 2021, from https://
asp?cssem=34&po=8::text=
In%201977%2C%20the%20
Consumer%20Products,%20
contains%20greater%20
amounts%20of%20lead

REPORT

Continued from p. 1

neglect an issue as severe and widely
understood as lead levels in paint.
DCHA is believed to be an agency
that represents and protects the peo-
ple living in their housing units, not
one that puts them in harm’s way.
It is already known how dilapidated
some of the housing units throughout
the city remain. Greenleaf Gardens,
located in the Southwest-Waterfront
neighborhood, is one among many
public housing complexes in these
conditions.

SW Action reached out to a life-
long Washingtonian and resident of
Greenleaf Gardens, who agreed to
speak with us on the condition of
anonymity. The resident expressed
several concerns with DCHA’s han-
dling of public housing communities
and its residents. The resident noted
during our call that she “knows for
a fact that a lot of properties tested
positive for lead and mold” in recent
years. She pointed to DCHAs disre-
gard as the source of these issues,
expressing that there is “still so much
mold, and neglect of these properties.
They do a patch job at best, and in the
meantime, families are living with it.”

In the meantime, families are living with it. “We can’t replace people’s lives. The City
is already known how dilapidated
them in harm’s way.”

Although she is no stranger to change,
leaf Gardens further expressed that
it’s how “you’re doing the change and
around talking about equity - what about instilling equity in the places where people [already]
live?” she said.

References:

• Creating a family-friendly amenity

The Civic Fellows will then pres-
ent a final project that reflects on
their experience and shares their own
vision for the community center at
an event open to the public. Youth in
our community who are interested in
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17 January 2021, from https://
asp?cssem=34&po=8::text=
In%201977%2C%20the%20
Consumer%20Products,%20
contains%20greater%20
amounts%20of%20lead
for a master’s degree and doctoral studies. Frustrated by his inability to find a place in academia where he could work on the intersection of sociology and theology in urban settings, he returned to Eastern University for his ministerial degree. Time spent at Old Pine Street Presbyterian Church in Philadelphia convinced him that he could find what he was looking for among select Presbyterian churches, and he never looked back.

While they share many pastoral activities, Ruth, the more extroverted of the two, leads community outreach with existing and emerging organizations. Brian is known for his ability to build and repair almost anything, and created the beautiful stained glass window in the church sanctuary. He also established and serves as President of the Southwest Development Corporation, which includes Westminster’s food and catering programs, Friday Night Jazz, Monday Night Blues and the bimonthly discussion group Thinking About Jazz, which is held on Saturday afternoons. A fervent fan of American roots music, Brian is frequently heard saying “God loves jazz.” A 2019 article in CapitolBop described the birth of Westminster’s Jazz Night as a way for the then majority white congregation to connect with the then majority Black surrounding neighborhood. Today, the event connects hundreds of Black and white fans of jazz, known as America’s classical music, and honors African-American cultural traditions, including offering fried fish on Fridays. For the Hamiltons, these concerts are conduits to crucial community-building.

Ruth’s outreach in the community began with her service on several boards, including the Community Benefits Council, which she chaired for a decade, and the United Planning Board. The relationships she built working in the community have allowed the Hamiltons, who think of themselves as servant leaders, to successfully develop a wide range of partnerships based on shared values and vision.

Their personal flexibility and accessibility results in Westminster hosting a broad spectrum of programs and events. Westminster has provided space and support to survivors of domestic violence and narcotics addiction and held anti-racism events and prayer vigils for families who have lost children to police violence. They have hosted car washes that raise money for organizations like SWNA and helped make choir robes for children at Amidon-Bowen. Westminster has provided access to COVID-19 testing, offered food and sleeping space to advocates and protesters who travel to DC, held community meetings and dance parties, and hosted April’s Remember the Pearl event. Food and Friends, the organization that delivered daily meals to homebound people with HIV/AIDS, started in Westminster’s kitchen.

In addition to a commitment to service, the Hamiltons have been allies and advocates for social justice. Reverend Brian Hamilton performed marriage and civil union ceremonies for members of the LBGTQ community before these unions were recognized under the law, which he calls “practicing ecclesiastical disobedience.” Along with other churches in Southwest, Westminster is working on plans for a new facility that will include both affordable and market-priced housing. As they look to the future, the Hamiltons aim to expand their work in the arts and provide even more space for community needs.

HEALING
Continued from p. 10

family values from North Carolina. Giving is as natural as getting up in the morning and brushing my teeth. Giving is as natural as getting up in the morning and brushing my teeth. Giving is as natural as getting up in the morning and brushing my teeth...

PREACH
Continued from p. 4

To the Almighty that if you take me

...nosed with breast cancer and I prayed

...serving. When I retired, I was diag-

...serves as President of the Southwest

Continued from p. 10

...serves as President of the Southwest

Continued from p. 10

...serves as President of the Southwest

Continued from p. 10

...serves as President of the Southwest

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Continued from p. 10

...serves as President of the Southwest
COME VISIT THE POP-UP ARBORETUM AT LANSBURGH PARK

Take a trip to Lansburgh Park to check out the Pop-Up Arboretum and learn fun facts about nineteen different tree species!

Visit tinyurl.com/popuptrees to learn more

In partnership with DDOT Urban Forestry Division