serving the waterfront communities of southwest and navy yard

OCTOBER 2021 FREE

A Gateway to Southwest: New Frederick Douglass Bridge Opens with Community Gathering

BY MELISSA SILVERMAN

n a sunny Labor Day in Southwest, community members gathered to celebrate a transportation and infrastructure milestone: the completion of the new Frederick Douglass Memorial Bridge.

Located between Audi Field and South Capitol Street, the new bridge will ferry pedestrians, cyclists and motorists across the Anacostia River. The first to cross the new bridge were participants in D.C. Mayor Muriel Bowser's Frederick Douglass Memorial Bridge 5K Community Celebration.

"It's an amazing view, the architectural design is nice," said lifelong Southwest resident Arnice Mack, who attended the bridge opening with family and friends.

Courtesy of Fredo Vasquez

See "Bridge," page 8

The new Frederick Douglass Memorial Bridge opened with a community celebration.

Thank You, Matt!

BY MIKE GOODMAN

s many of our readers know, The Southwester is an all-volunteer staff. We pride ourselves on providing a quality newspaper focused on issues happening right here in our community, every single month, as well as having a web and social media presence. We also try to be a voice for all Southwest residents, to illustrate the diversity of views that Southwesters are discussing every day.

Over the last two years, we have had the privilege of having Matt Koehler as Copy Editor for the paper, as well as managing the website. Every article that our readers have read has been edited, finalized, and in many cases, written, by Matt.

Matt has contributed some of the best content we have published over the past two years. In his recent series of articles about growing complaints of air pollution and dust in Buzzard Point, Matt dug deep to highlight the roots of the problem. He also worked to make our community aware of rental assistance offered by the city with support from some of our local charities.

Matt helped The Southwester survive through the pandemic and cover the events of January 6, which hit very close to home for many of our readers. Back when Southwest residents were struggling to get information about COVID-19, we ran a front page article with Matt's

See "Thank You," page 4

Welcome, Melissa!

BY MIKE GOODMAN

he Southwester staff is comprised of dedicated volunteers, all working hard to cover the news right here in Southwest. One of the most impactful positions on our staff is the Copy Editor, and we are pleased to announce that Southwest resident Melissa Silverman has joined the team as the new Copy Editor. This issue is her first issue in this position.

Melissa is an experienced writer and editor with a professional background in marketing and public relations. She currently leads communications for a humanitarian assistance and international development organization, and has previously worked as a communications director and speechwriter in government and the nonprofit sector.

Melissa and her husband reside in the heart of Southwest, where they enjoy attending community events and cheering on the DC United at Audi Field. Melissa can often be found reading at the Duck Pond or the new Southwest Library.

The Southwester is excited to have Melissa join the team, and we are looking forward to continuing to serve and inform our community.



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ANNUAL SUNDAY **SUPPERS** GENERATE COMMUNITY POETRY

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Help Save Lives 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, screening diagnostic services and counseling. Donate online at www. tdjbreastcancerfund.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

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



Washington, DC 20024 Washington, DC 20024 thelma@tdjbreastcancerfund.org www.tdibreastcancerfund.org 202) 251-1639

The Southwester

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Meet the Team Behind the Southwest DC Community Center: Gail Fast

BY THE SWDCCC COMMUNITY **ENGAGEMENT AND COMMUNICATIONS COMMITTEE**

he Southwest DC Community Center (SWDCCC) that is planned to open in our neighborhood in the next few years will serve as a vibrant, central hub for the Southwest and Capitol Riverfront communities. SWDCCC provides an inclusive space for a wide range of services and activities that foster personal and collective growth. As a way to get to know your neighbors who are volunteering their time to bring the SWDCCC to life, we present the Meet the Team series. These profiles will highlight each member of the SWDCCC Board of Directors and Community Engagement and Communications Committee. Don't be shy, when you see us around the neighborhood, say hi!

Name: Gail Fast

Please tell us about your background: I was born in Chicago, Illinois, and grew up in New York. I'm a graduate of the University of Maryland (bachelor's degree) and Trinity University (master's degree) and spent 27 years in the health and wellness field. I currently work at the Office of the Advisory Neighborhood Commission as a program specialist.



Gail Fast

Courtesy of Author

How are you involved with the **SWDCCC?:** After serving seven years on the Board of Directors of Carrollsburg, A Condominium (five as president), I knew I wanted to take the next step. So, in 1996 I launched a campaign to run for ANC commissioner for 6D01, which is the single member district that represents all the residences west of 4th St. SW to 14th St. and north from Maine/M St. SW to Independence Ave. I won and was re-elected in 2018. I served as chair until my tenure ended in 2020. The location of the SWDCCC was in my single member district so I was very involved in solidifying the Community Benefit Agreement that will become the SWDCCC.

Why did you become involved with the SWDCCC?: I also was tapped as a member of the advisory group that worked with the Office of Planning to develop the Southwest Small Area Plan. It was during meetings with the community that we heard that there was a need for a place where neighbors could gather, meet, and socialize. The idea of a community center was born from those meetings.

What do you hope the SWDCCC will offer to the community?: What it was intended to be—a place to gather with friends, a place to meet new ones, and a safe place to socialize and have

What's your favorite part of our **neighborhood?:** The Southwest Duck Pond. During my time as ANC commissioner, I worked hard to get funding to begin to make renovations to the park. We now have a duck habitat, peninsulas that don't flood, new lighting, and fountains. It is one of the great gems in Southwest.

To learn more about the SWDCCC please see our website at https://www. swdccc.org/ and if you're interested in getting involved, please submit your information at https://www.swdccc. org/volunteer-form.

Southwest Students Awarded College Scholarships

BY AUDREY HINTON, SOUTHWEST NEIGHBORHOOD ASSEMBLY EDUCATION AND SCHOLARSHIP TASK FORCE

he Southwest Neighborhood Assembly's (SWNA) Education and Scholarship Task Force held its 47th annual scholarship awards program on August 15, awarding 23 young people \$50,000 in college scholarships.

About 100 viewers joined the prerecorded virtual event as the students received scholarships ranging from \$2,000-\$2,500. In addition to providing scholarships for youth who live in ZIP code 20024 or attend Richard Wright Public Charter Schools for Journalism and Media Arts, the task force mentors scholarship applicants, provides internships, and tutors Richard Wright students. Task force member Wilma Goldstein served as Mistress of Cer-

Musician Benjamin C. Sands, Jr., one of the first recipients of a Southwest scholarship, provided entertainment and shared the story of how the Southwest community helped him buy his first saxophone, telling the students that "when someone helps you, you help others."

Vyllorya Evans, who has chaired the task force for the past seven years, opened the program by recognizing the River Park Cooperative Community Relations Committee for starting the grassroots initiative in 1974 by awarding \$1600 to three students. To date, 230 students have received \$464,000 in scholarships.

The SWNA Education and Scholarship Task Force has been a partner of the Friends of Southwest DC for over 20 years, and is also its single largest grant recipient. Friends of Southwest DC President Peter Eicher presented scholarship awards to five students. "We are proud of the work they are doing and the success they have been having," Eicher said.

Rick Bardach and Delmar Weathers, co-chairs of the Task Force Scholarship Committee, introduced an additional nine new scholarship recipients and 14 returning students. Viewers watched recordings of the students as they shared their accomplishments, college plans, and aspirations for the future.

Former scholarship recipients Bianca Kersellius, Haili Blassingame, and Kenneth Tinseley, offered advice to help the students navigate their college experience. Kersellius is a Penn State graduate, an author, and small business owner. Blassingame, a Spelman College graduate, is a producer at WAMU, DC's NPR station, and is working on a master's degree in creative writing at American University. Tinsley graduated from Central State University and is the running back coach at the University of Maine.

Dr. Marco Clark, founder and Chief Executive Officer of the Richard Wright Public Charter Schools for Journalism and Media Arts, was the event's keynote speaker. Aliyah Vines, a recent graduate of Richard Wright, choreographed and performed a modern dance to honor the senior class of 2021 and the challenges they have overcome graduating amid a global pandemic.

To view the 2021 program, please visit the SWNA website: https://swna. org/swna/task-forces/educationscholarship/. To make a tax-deductible donation, please make your check payable to Southwest Neighborhood Assembly and mail it to SWNA Scholarship Fund, PO Box 70131, Washington, DC 20024-0131

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Anacostia Watershed Society Announces New President

RY SOLITHWESTER STAFF

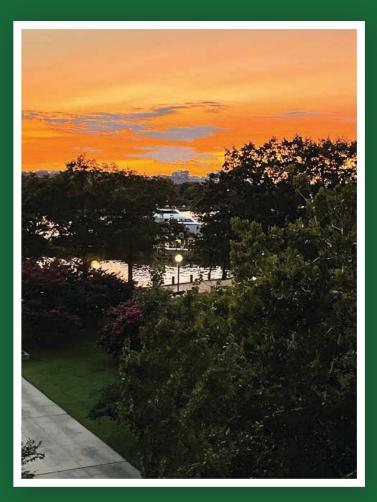
he Anacostia Watershed Society (AWS) has tapped an international conservation leader as their new President and CEO, appointing Christopher E. Williams after an extensive national search. Williams most recently served as the Senior Vice President for Conservation at American Rivers. He previously held senior leadership roles at World Wildlife Fund and began his career at the National Wildlife Federation as a legislative advocate.

"With a broad national and international perspective on river restoration best practices, Chris will build on our growth and propel us to our goal of a fishable and swimmable Anacostia River," said Neil Lang, Chair of the AWS Board of Directors.

Williams has lived in the DC region for almost 30 years, most recently in the Anacostia watershed, where he enjoys paddling the river and exploring the bike trails connecting Montgomery County, Prince George's County, and the District. With Williams in his new role, Erin Borgeson Castelli, Interim President and CEO, will return to her role as Senior Vice President/Chief Operating Officer.

The Anacostia Watershed Society is a nonprofit organization founded in 1989 and headquartered in Bladensburg, MD. It offers a variety of programs designed to protect and restore the river. In order to pursue this goal, AWS works to stop pollution now, restore the river's natural systems and rebuild the community's relationship to the river. More information can be found at www.anacostiaws.org.

Southwest Moments



Courtesy of Anne Rensberger
A rare orange sunset from a Riverside Condominium balcony

International Disaster Risk Reduction Day is Wednesday, October 13th.

Join SW Strong! The SWNA Emergency Preparedness and Resiliency Building Task Force in a panel discussion on:

CLIMATE CHANGE: WHY IT IS A SERIOUS PROBLEM AND WHAT CAN WE DO ABOUT IT

WEDNESDAY, OCTOBER 13, 2021 FROM 6:00PM TO 7:30PM

GUESTS INCLUDE:

Dan Misleh, Executive Director, Catholic Climate Covenant Garry Harris, President, Center for Sustainable Communities Jono Anzalone, Founder, The Climate Initiative

Join Zoom Meeting

https://us02web.zoom.us/j/89881539373

Meeting ID: 898 8153 9373

One tap mobile

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+13017158592,,89881539373# US (Washington DC)



Titanic Memorial Park Gets Fresh Update

STAFF

■ orty-four benches at Titanic Memorial Park received a fresh coat of paint on Saturday, September 17.

The National Park Service (NPS) provided the materials and 18 volunteers provided the labor to update the benches. The event was organized by the Friends of Titanic Memorial Park, an allvolunteer, nonprofit organization that works with the NPS to preserve, restore and maintain the park. The group has developed several projects and plans to restore the park to its original beauty, maintain the park for everyone's enjoyment, and

build community within the neighborhood of Southwest DC.

When not limited by the COVID-19 pandemic, the bench repainting is an annual project. In addition, the group hosts cleanups each year after July 4 as well as planting during the spring and fall season. The northern play area of the park was re-tiled in 2019, though the southern play area re-tiling was delayed by pandemic restrictions.

In 2018, the Friends of Titanic Memorial Park found as-built drawings of the original landscaping and



Friends of Titanic Memorial Park celebrate their 2021 bench repainting project.

the water service at the National Archives. These documents will be used to inform a major renovation project that the National Park Service is scheduled to begin in 2023 or 2024. To celebrate and support this effort, the Friends will commemorate the 110th anniversary of the sinking of the Titanic and celebrate the future of Titanic Memorial Park at Arena Stage on April 16, 2022.

The Friends of Titanic Memorial Park welcomes all new members. More information is available at www. fotmpdc.org.

Real Men Wear Pink to Fight Breast Cancer

BY SOUTHWESTER STAFF

his Breast Cancer Awareness Month, Jamal O. Jones has joined the American Cancer Society's Real Men Wear Pink campaign and will raise awareness and funds for the fight against breast cancer by wearing pink every day of October.

Jones aims to raise \$2,500 to support research and local patient programs. As the son of Southwest breast cancer advocate Thelma D. Jones, his multigenerational efforts will also include his 11-year-old son

"Breast cancer affects everyone; it doesn't matter if you're a man or a woman," Jones said. "My mom has been a thriving survivor for more than 14 years and continues to passionately spread the message that early detection saves lives. That's why I'm stepping up to fight breast cancer with all I have."

Real Men Wear Pink raises millions of dollars a year to support life-saving breast cancer programs. To join Jamal's campaign, please visit www. realmenwearpinkacs.org/baltimoremd or mail a check of any amount to: American Cancer Society, ATTN: Real Men Wear Pink of Baltimore - 3MAH48, 405 Williams Court, Suite 120, Baltimore, MD 21220 and include Jamal O. Jones in the memo line.

Revamped Southwest High **School Opens Doors**

BY SOUTHWESTER STAFF

he Richard Wright Public Charter School for Journalism and Media Arts held a ribbon-cutting ceremony on September 17 to mark the completion of a new state-of-the-art facility at 475 School Street SW.

As the first public high school to open in Southwest in over 50 years, the new Richard Wright School includes over 62,000 square feet of space, including news studios, learning labs and community lounges to support students studying music, dance, film and art. The facility is owned and operated by founders of color, and seeks to develop, educate, and cultivate young creatives, innovators, multimedia storytellers, and leaders in the District.

The ceremony was attended by a wide range of community members, including students, parents, alumni, faculty, staff, partners and donors, as well as educational, business, and political leaders.

THANK YOU

Continued from p. 1

reporting on a local dry cleaner, The Press, who had started sewing masks. Following Matt's article, demand spiked, with requests from hundreds of residents per day and orders from major employers. By June, they had distributed 10,000 masks, many of daily struggles of dealing with the them as donations. Thanks to Matt's coverage, thousands of DC residents family-owned business right here in

Matt also focused on diversity and equity in Southwest and Navy Yard as major priorities in our gentrifying neighborhood.

He highlighted issues of environmental justice and affordable housing and also played a significant role in covering the philanthropic efforts of SW Mutual Aid, which has helped many area families get through the pandemic.

So, thank you, Matt! You didn't just were able to access masks from this improve our local newspaper; you improved our community.

Student Perspective: Life at Richard Wright Public Charter School

BY ARBRE WINSLOW, GRADE 8

ife at Richard Wright has been wonderful since school started! As an incoming 8th grader, I love it so much. I have been caught off guard because I keep forgetting that I'm in high school now. Richard Wright, unlike other schools, begins in 8th grade, and is a huge upgrade from my elementary and middle schools. We transition by ourselves, we have lockers, and we have clubs, which I've never had before. For example, there's instrumental band club, which I signed up for, and will be learning how to play the piano and the guitar.

Richard Wright also teaches us

about responsibility. They teach us to act respectfully and be prepared for anything that may come our way. As they say at Richard Wright, "If you stay ready, you don't have to get

The teachers here are pretty incredible, too. They're so kind, helpful, and understanding! Everyone's personalities are immaculate. They actually care about us and want to see us succeed. Teachers make that very clear.

At Richard Wright, we also do this "Triple L" thing. We set Limits, we teach Lessons, and we do it all in the name of Love. I love it here, maybe you will too!

LOG ON TODAY! www.swna.org



Navigating Together

Fifth Anniversary and Annual Awards Virtual Celebration

October 3, 2021



Waterfront Village has been serving older adults in Southwest DC and the Navy Yard since 2016.

Interested in attending?

To get the link for the celebration or to make an anniversary contribution, please send an email to:

Celebrate@dcwaterfrontvillage.org

or call 202-656-1834.

www.dcwaterfrontvillage.org

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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?



11	1 Andrew		
1		 	4
2			5



4.	 	 	
5.		 	

Answers from September 2021 issue

Differences:: The picture on the left only has two butterflies; the picture on the left has a second purple bird; the picture on the right has a duck on top of the elephant; the picture on the right has a hat on the snail; the picture on the right has a rustache on the zebra; the lion on the right has qlasses.

Word Scramble: There are 295 words you can make from "Hibernate."

WORD SEARCH: HALLOWEEN!

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 B
 R
 G
 P
 U
 A
 G
 S
 M
 C
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 M

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BAT GHOST

SPIDER WOLFMAN

BOO GOBLIN

TREAT COSTUME

PUMPKIN WITCH

Jokes!

Where do pencils go on vacation? *Pencil-vania!*

What does a panda ghost eat? *Bam-BOO!*

What was the witch's favorite subject in school? Spelling!

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. 60 + 20 =

e. 12 + 5 =

b. 132 + 6 =

f. 52 - 24 =

c. 25 + 10 =

g. 183 - 19 =

d. 234 - 35 =

h. 300 x 4 =

Longtime Southwest Resident Publishes Kids Book set on Capitol Hill

Exclusive Excerpt Provided to The Southwester



Courtesy of Chesapeake Press

Kitty Felde

BY MIKE GOODMAN

itty Felde, who lived in River Park for nine years, covered Capitol Hill for public radio for nearly a decade. Now, she's explaining Congress to a new generation of kids with a series of mystery novels set on Capitol Hill.

On August 13, State of the Union was released by Chesapeake Press. It is the second book in the Fina Mendoza Mysteries series of books, the story of the 10-year-old daughter of a congressman from Southern California who is on the hunt for a mysterious bird that pooped on the president's head during the State of the Union address. While Fina's father is working on immigration reform legislation with his House colleagues, her grandmother is nearly arrested outside the Capitol with a group of activists.

The books have also been turned into an episodic podcast called The Fina Mendoza Mysteries. Felde also hosts the Book Club for Kids podcast, which is in partnership with the Southwest Neighborhood Assembly (SWNA). The Book Club for Kids was named one of the top 10 kidcasts in the world by The Times of London. More information can be found at https:// www.bookclubforkids.org/.

Below is an excerpt of State of the Union provided to The *Southwester:*

Chapter Five

Every member of Congress got to bring one person to the State of the Union address.

"Usually, you pick a guest to make a point about an issue you care about, like gun control or small business growth or education," said Papa. "Tonight, I'm making a point about family. We are finally a family, here together at last."

Well, sort of. Gabby didn't want to come. She wasn't interested in politics, she told Papa as often as he would

listen. So Abuelita got Papa's ticket and Congresswoman Mitchell gave me hers. She was kind of my boss. She paid me five dollars a day to walk Senator Something. When she handed me my money last week, she also handed me a fancy cardboard ticket for the State of the Union speech.

"It's like gold," she told me. "Don't lose it."

Of course, I did lose it. Papa said it was because I wasn't thinking about "the task at hand." The good news was that Gabby found the ticket next to the bathroom sink. I must have left it there when I was brushing my teeth.

Papa told us to wear our nicest clothes. That meant the Christmas dress that Abuelita had sewn for me. It was

bright red, which was okay, but it

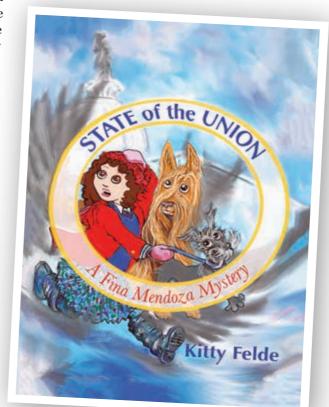
had old-fashioned ruffles on the skirt and it itched. I felt stupid, like I was wearing a costume in a school play. I wanted to wear my school uniform, but Abuelita said this was an important night and I needed to "dress the part." She meant that I had to look like the daughter of the man who was going to be on TV after the State of the Union speech to tell America all the things that the president said that were wrong, and say them in Spanish.

Abuelita held onto her State of the Union ticket so hard, I thought she'd tear it. My shoes pinched as we walked over to the Capitol. I hadn't worn the shiny black church shoes since last Easter. Now they were too small.

I showed Abuelita what to do as we walked through a bunch of security checkpoints, putting her house keys and my jangly bracelets in the little plastic tub of the X-ray machine and walking through the metal detector. Finally, we got up to the House gallery, the balcony over the House floor. The stairs in the gallery were really steep, and I worried that Abuelita would fall over the edge and land on the lawmakers down below.

Down on the House floor, there was a kind of roar, with lawmakers talking over each other. It was more crowded than usual. Usually, senators stayed on their side of the Capitol. But tonight, all one hundred of them came over here to crowd into the

extra chairs on



the House

floor for the president's speech. Except none of them were sitting down. They stood around, pounding each other on the back and shaking a lot of hands. And just like when the House members were there all by themselves, the Republican senators were on one side of the chamber and the Democrats were over on the other

Our seats were right above the Republican chairs. I spotted Congresswoman Mitchell. She must have felt my eyes on her because she looked up and waved at me. I waved back, but then worried that I might get into trouble. I wasn't sure whether you were supposed to wave at people on the House floor.

The back door to the chamber opened and a bunch of people walked in. "That's the cabinet," I told Abuelita. "They work for the president."

After the cabinet, some generals marched in, wearing uniforms covered in ribbons and pins. A group wearing black choir robes came next. It was the Supreme Court. And then I saw her, with her curly black hair and black framed glasses and yes, even her jangly bracelets just like mine!

"Hola, Justice Sotomayor!" It was Abuelita.

We were in trouble now. Abuelita loved Justice Sotomayor, but I knew that shouting at people on the House floor was definitely not okay. Papa gave me a list of rules when I showed him my ticket. "No laughing unless

> everyone is laughing and it's a real joke. No doing anything to call attention to yourself. And no talking."

Abuelita wasn't just talking. She was shouting.

"Nosotras te amamos!"

I loved Justice Sotomayor, too. But I wasn't sure that I wanted every member of Congress and all of the generals and everybody watching on TV to know that.

"Shh, Abuelita!" I whispered, tugging on her dress to try to get her to sit back down. She didn't sit. I looked around to see if there was a Capitol policeman coming to take us

But then, Justice Sotomayor looked up at the people in the gallery. Abuelita waved.

"Don't do that, Abuelita," I whispered.

She wouldn't listen. She kept waving. Just as the other justices were sitting down, Sonia Soto-

mayor waved back at Abuelita, her many bracelets clinking so loud that I could hear them up here. I couldn't believe it!

"Close your mouth, Fina," whispered Abuelita. "You're catching flies."

I loved my grandmother, but sometimes I wished she wasn't my grandmother. Tonight I wished she was just some stranger sitting next to me. I pretended that I was a tourist and this was the first time I'd ever visited Washington, D.C. I looked at the old fashioned lights by the doors and the giant American flag behind the chair where the Speaker sat. I stared up at the ceiling. I guess I never looked up all the other times I'd watched Papa give speeches on the House floor. There was an eagle up there. Not a real eagle, just one made out of white



Courtesy of Author

The future site of the Boardwalk Bar and Arcade.

Boardwalk Bar & Arcade Opening by End of Year

BY MIKE GOODMAN

AC-MAN is coming to The Wharf, and he will be joined by Golden Tee, shuffleboard, and a slew of other arcade and bar games. The new Boardwalk Bar & Arcade is expected to open by the end of the year at 715 Wharf St. SW in the spot previously occupied by Anchor and Yoga Factory.

This new boardwalk-themed bar is owned by Better Hospitality Group (BHG), which currently runs two other bars in DC, including The Boardwalk in Penn Quarter which has a similar arcade and game section. Ryan Seelbach, Founder and CEO of BHG, has emphasized that he views the new bar as a place that will be inclusive to all patrons. "We really wanted to have a neighborhood gathering place at a reasonable price point for young people, families, and the community," says Seelbach. "The idea of inclusion is paramount for our company, and I'm excited about having a place for the community."

In addition to the mix of new and nostalgic arcade and bar games, the bar will feature a varying food menu, and a cocktail menu on tap. Examples of food options will include sandwiches, pizza, salads, fish tacos, and corn dogs. The menu will change regularly.

Boardwalk prides itself on its on-tap cocktail and beer menu. They will start with roughly 10 cocktails on tap, including a Sidewalk Sangria, Cotton Candy Collins, and Takoda Mule, and a large selection of draft beers.

Seelbach is following the latest COVID-19 developments very closely, and is designing the new space to be able to accommodate the ever-changing rules around social distancing and indoor restrictions. "I've seen the benefits of having an outdoor space in two of my three venues now during COVID, which allows us to operate as circumstances change. Coming out of COVID I was really only interested in outdoor. We'll very much have that at the new location-one of the largest outdoor patios at the Wharf, and covered with a retractable canopy that can accommodate all seasons," says Seelbach. "The end product will feel very open air."

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Blessing of the Animals Returns to Southwest

BY DAN FELGER, ST. MATTHEW LUTHERAN CHURCH

ur pets charm us, love us, and because the pandemic has left many owners spending more time at home, comfort us more than ever.

In communities where such services are held, Blessings of the Animals generally are conducted on October 4th, the day which annually commemorates the life of St. Francis of Assisi, patron saint of animals. This year, St. Matthew Lutheran Church, located at 222 M Street SW, will conduct an abbreviated Blessing of the Animals for our four-legged, feathered, and finned friends, and their owners, on Saturday, October 30 at

2:00 p.m.

St. Matthew Lutheran Church is located at the intersection of Delaware Avenue and M Street SW. Pets and their human companions should assemble in the Community Courtyard that St. Matthew and Valo Apartments share south of their buildings. The courtyard is entered by the gate on the western side of Delaware Avenue south of St. Matthew.

Owners are asked to wear masks and to have their pets leashed. Water and refreshments will be provided. Come to meet and greet other pet owners and neighbors in our Southwest and Navy Yard communities, make new acquaintances, and renew friendships.



Courtesy of Fredo Vasquez

Lifelong Southwest residents Vernon Gudger, Arnice Mack, Davina Carson, Renee Harris and family enjoy the community celebration.

BRIDGE

Continued from p. 1

"The weather was gorgeous, with a nice breeze off the water."

According to the Executive Office of the Mayor, construction began in February 2018 to replace the existing Frederick Douglass Memorial Bridge and reconstruct the Suitland Parkway/I-295 interchange. The official website of the Frederick Douglass Memorial Bridge Project states that the new bridge includes three abovedeck arches, four pedestrian overlooks, and two piers. The project also created a new traffic oval west of the Anacostia River that connects South Capitol Street, Potomac Avenue and Q Street SW.

"It's like a new gateway," said Vernon Gudger, who completed the 5K in summer sandals. "It's a revitalization of this area, it's going to bring more vibrancy to the city, from Navy Yard all the way to the Wharf, the entirety of M Street."

The community celebration featured music, dancing and food trucks, as well as historic resonance, honoring the legacy and contributions of the bridge's namesake, DC's most famous abolitionist. Event attendees included the great-great-great grandchildren of Frederick Douglass, Hailee, Kevi and Joseph Greene.

"It's cool to see the legacy carrying on today," said Joseph Greene. "A lot of people don't know their history, so for us to have that opportunity, we're very grateful."

The Greenes paused to take a photo with Sean Moore, dressed for the day in full Frederick Douglass regalia.

"It's a monumental project," Moore said. "The District has invested a lot of money in this bridge. It's a fitting replacement for the old bridge, it's something that's connecting the communities. All the features of this project are built to connect Ward 6 and Historic Anacostia to the rest of the city. It's wonderful to build something so grand to honor the legacy of Frederick Douglass."

Party with a Purpose Marks Anniversary for Breast Cancer Fund

BY REGINA D. BLYE

n Wednesday, September 15, distinguished guests virtually celebrated the ninth anniversary of the founding of the Thelma D. Jones Breast Cancer Fund (TDJBCF) and the 69th birthday of the founder. Thanks to CSG Urban Partners' sponsorship, a safe space was created for guests to learn unfiltered facts about COVID-19, surviving breast cancer, and more. CSG Urban Partners also contributed an initial donation to the TDJBCF Transportation and Utilities Fund, which will enable breast cancer

survivors to focus on healing rather than financial barriers to care.

Speakers included Dr. Jehan (Gigi) El-Bayoumi, Founding Director of the Rodham Institute, Dr. Bryan O. Buckley, Research Fellow at the MedStar Institute for Quality and Safety, and Dr. Vanessa B. Sheppard from the Department of Health Behavior and Policy at the Massey Cancer Center, at the Virginia Commonwealth University School of Medicine. Dr. Sheppard presented a study she led, with support from TDJBCF, titled "Sisters Informing Sisters." Her work is the

first peer-led decision support intervention for Black/African American women diagnosed with breast cancer, which improves patients' communication with providers and treatment decision outcomes.

The evening also included tributes by TDJBCF Ambassadors, community stakeholders, family and friends. Benjamin C. Sands, Jr. performed an original composition entitled "Thelma" and local artist and former Southwest resident Cecily Bumbray sang her original composition "Acceptance."

If you missed being a part of this

spectacular celebration, please visit https://www.facebook.com/TDJ-BreastCancerFund/. Planning for the platinum tenth anniversary and 70th birthday celebration is underway. For sponsorship and partnership opportunities, please email thelma@tdj-breastcancerfund.org. If you would like to stay informed, follow TDJBCF on social media or visit www.tdj-breastcancerfund.org.

Regina Blye is a TDJBCF Ambassador and a blogger and creator of the forthcoming "Hanging out with Regina."

Black, Latino Communities Come Together for Breast Cancer Awareness Month

BY SOUTHWESTER STAFF

n Wednesday, October 20, the Southwest-based Thelma D. Jones Breast Cancer Fund (TDJBCF) will join Nueva Vida, Inc., a culturally sensitive cancer support network for Latino families in the DC area, to mark Breast Cancer Awareness Month.

The virtual event will begin at 6:00 p.m. and feature remarks from Dr. Alejandra Hurtado de Mendoza. Dr. Mendoza serves as an Assistant Professor at the Cancer Prevention and Control Program at the Georgetown Lombardi Comprehensive Cancer Center. She will address barriers to Black/African American and Latina women's participation in clinical trials and genetic counseling and testing services. She will also launch a new website to provide information about COVID-19 and vaccines to breast cancer survivors.

Jointly emceed by Claudia Campos Galván, the Chief Programs Officer and Mental Health Director at Nueva Vida and TDJBCF Founder Thelma D. Jones, the event will include bilingual interpretation facilitated by Larisa Caicedo from Multicultural Strategies Consulting. The interpretation is supported by the National Cancer Institute through the Georgetown Lombardi Comprehensive Cancer Center and Moffitt Cancer Center.

For more information or to join the event, visit www.tdjbreastcancerfund. org or www.nuevavida.org.



Friends of Southwest DC

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- Camp Arena Stage scholarships for SW kids and "Voices of Now"
- Christ United Methodist Church Food Pantry
- DC STORM trips and radio programs for SW youth
- GOODProjects assistance for SW families
- Living Classrooms
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- Omicron Eta Lambda SW school supply distribution
- Serve Your City SW Ducklings Clothing Drive
- St. Augustine's Church hot meals for the SW AYA
- SW Comm-Unity Forum community day and Christmas Toy Drive
- SWNA college scholarships
- Waterfront Village for seniors

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.

Arena Stage Prepares to Launch Pandemic-Delayed Premiere of Celia and Fidel

BY SHEILA WICKOUSKI

n March 2020, the pandemic forced Arena Stage's production of *Celia and Fidel*, written by Eduardo Machado, to close the same day it opened. On October 8, the cast and crew will be prepared for another opening night of this world premiere production.

Set during a critical moment in the Cuban revolution, when 10,000 citizens sought asylum at the Peruvian Embassy, Machado's play imagines vivid conversations between Fidel Castro and his real-life confidante and Cuba's most influential female revolutionary, the deceased Celia Sánchez. Infused with magical realism, the play is a work of fiction based on historical events

Arena Stage Artistic Director Molly Smith directed the production. Smith provided an interview to *The Southwester*, which has been lightly edited for clarity.

The Southwester: How does it feel to bring this production back?

Molly Smith: Great. I know that this time away has meant that the play has lived more inside of us, that the actors' work will be deeper. Eduardo has done some pretty amazing rewrites. Plus, we are able to rehearse on our set and be in the Kogod Cradle from now until the end of the run, which is really unusual and blissful.

SW: What preconceptions did you have about Cuba and the United States' response and involvement in Cuba prior to bringing this to the stage? What has changed?

MS: I have so many associations with Fidel and Cuba. My mother was a social worker in 1961 and was involved with the Pedro Pan movement. She flew to Miami to pick up 250 Cuban children who were escaping the country under the belief that their parents would come to pick them up



Courtesy of Margot Schulmar

Heather Velazquez (Consuelo) and Andhy Mendez (Fidel Castro) in Celia and Fidel, running October 8 through November 21 at Arena Stage at the Mead Center for American Theater.

within weeks. Some did, some came years later and Castro stopped some from emigrating and they were forever separated. I remember in 1962 during the Cuban missile crisis or Bay of Pigs, going down to the basement with my grandmother in the canned fruit cellar looking for places to hide if a nuclear bomb went off. I was ten. I have visited Cuba and was saddened by the impact of the embargo. I am not surprised at the recent protests and hope they achieve their goals for more freedom. I think there was joy in the country and a sense of entrepreneurship when [former President Barack] Obama relaxed restrictions, and that was taken away again by [former President Donald Trump.

SW: While Cuba is much in the news, many have never heard of Celia

Sánchez. Why do you think she is so left out of the history of Cuba that is presented to the rest of the world?

MS: Celia Sánchez was the Mother of the Revolution and Castro's closest confidant. Honestly, I think her missing story represents the missing story of many women around the world who make huge contributions, but their male counterparts are credited and accounted for much more. In Cuba, however, her presence and legacy is much more evident.

SW: What are some of your experiences in revisiting this production? Had you visited Cuba before preparing for this production?

MS: Twenty years ago, my partner Suzanne and I traveled to Cuba with the Washington Ballet, and we went to Cuba again a month before we

started working on Celia and Fidel in 2020. We soaked up the joy and pain that is contemporary Cuba, experienced amazing artists in dance, music and visual arts, walked the streets and corridors that Fidel and Celia and our fictional characters Manolo and Consuelo walked. We delved into the culture of the Island. I think this was critical in preparing to put the play on stage. Revisiting this play now, with the important political movement happening there, I hope to educate and empower Americans to support the Cuban people's goal of freedom from oppression.

SW: This is Arena Stage's seventh production in the Power Play Cycle. What do you see as the success of the Power Plays?

MS: Arena's Power Plays initiative is focused on American stories of politics and power, exploring the people, events and ideas that have helped shape our country's narrative and identity. These works have the ability to show America at its best and worst, to bring people together who may not otherwise find themselves in the same room and to introduce audiences to historical figures they may not know or understand. While Celia and Fidel is about Cuba, it also illuminates America's relationship with Cuba, which completely aligns with our mission to understand who we are as Americans. The ultimate success of the Power Plays will be to build a contemporary canon of work about the American experience and all the diverse and expansive voices within it.

Arena Stage's production of Celia and Fidel runs from October 8 through November 21, 2021. Southwest Night is November 18. More information, ticket sales and video highlights are available at https://www.arenastage.org/tickets/2021-22-season/celia-and-fidel/

Community Meetings on Greenleaf Redevelopment

Residents and community stakeholders are invited to participate in a series of meetings to inform a "Greenleaf Revitalization Plan" that will guide a significant, long-term development project in Southwest. The redevelopment of the Greenleaf complex will be led by Greenleaf District Partners, a partnership between the DC Housing Authority and private firms Bozzuto, EYA, and Pennrose. The community meeting schedule is as follows:

October 5th

6:00 pm - 7:00 pm Focus Area: Relocation Plan/Tenant Rights 7:00 pm - 8:00 pm Focus Area: Ongoing Engagement/Human Capital

October 14th

6:00 pm - 7:00 pm Focus Area: Development Plan 7:00 pm - 8:00 pm Focus Area: Greenleaf Senior

October 19th

6:00 pm - 7:00 pm Focus Area: Relocation Plan/Tenant Rights 7:00 pm - 8:00 pm Focus Area: Ongoing Engagement/Human Capital

November 10th

6:00 pm - 7:15 pm Final Revitalization Plan

For more details, including Zoom links for virtual meetings, visit www. greenleafforward.com.

Obituaries

Vera M. White, Former Jefferson Jr. High School Principal, Passes Away

BY ANGELA RICE

rs. Vera Mae White, Jefferson Jr. High School's illustrious former principal, peacefully passed away on Saturday, August 7, 2021 at the age of 86. A devoted wife to Blanchard White for 62 years and the mother of three sons, she led a life of faith in God and faith in the power of education. Mrs. White was nationally and internationally known for her 40 years of educating the District of Columbia's youth, and was selected for more than 100 awards, including the Washington Post Distinguished Educational Leadership Award and the McGraw Prize in Education.

Born in Leesville, Louisiana to a minister and a nurse, Vera succeeded early in school and was selected for an accelerated threeyear program at Southern University and A&M College in Baton Rouge, Louisiana. On campus one day, Blanchard White said hello and



Courtesy of Author

Former Jefferson Jr. High Principal Vera M. White passed away in August.

started a relationship that would last a lifetime. Vera, her husband, and young sons moved to Washington, DC in 1963.

Vera often awoke early and went

to sleep late as she raised three boys and pursued a career as an educator. During the school year, evenings were full of cooking dinners, mending torn pants, tending to her sons' bruises and checking homework. Summers were full of visits to Louisiana and DC museums, plus time to watch the soaps ("As the World Turns" was a particular favorite) and read (she always had two or three books on her nightstand).

As principal of Jefferson Junior High School, Vera focused on what the kids could do rather than what limited them. Former President Bill Clinton once remarked when visiting Jefferson that he was overwhelmed by its can-do spirit. Mrs. White's emphasis on math and science led to Jefferson winning National Math Council competitions and later garnering a \$1.1 million donation from the COMSAT Corporation. She received national recognition for introducing character training focused on courtesy,

caring, respect and responsibility. Jefferson also became the first DC public school to be recognized as a U.S. Department of Education Blue Ribbon School.

Throughout Vera's career, it was clear that her priority was always "her kids." A passionate advocate for DC students, she once said, "You have to care a lot for them and get them to care about themselves. Let them know that what they are doing is important. Sometimes kids just need someone to say 'I care."

Mrs. White is survived by her husband, Blanchard, and was preceded in death by a son and a sister. She is survived by two sons, a brother, a sister, and many nieces and nephews.

A campaign to rename Jefferson Middle Academy as the Vera Mae White Middle Academy is being developed. For information on how you can express your support for the renaming, please email jeff.pta@hotmail.com.

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Culture House and Korean Cultural Center Bring Joint Exhibitions to Southwest

BY MELISSA SILVERMAN

outhwest's Culture House and the Korean Cultural Center in Washington, DC are presenting joint exhibitions featuring digital video works by three Korean artists and a large-scale outdoor mural by a Korean-American artist, DC-based Julia Chon, also known as Kimchi Juice.

Chon's mural, *Crane Dancers*, is the first mural installation in the Culture House's outdoor Avant Garden. The work includes symbols of longevity and panels that evoke traditional Korean screen paintings.

"I wanted to paint a mural that celebrated my Korean culture while having a modern, contemporary twist," Chon said. "With public art, it is something people will see when they go outdoors, it's something you come across every day. I usually paint Asian women, Korean women, so to

have that representation in portraiture, in a way that speaks to my experience as a Korean woman, is very important. At the heart of it, public art is the democratization of art."

The accompanying video exhibition, titled *The Day After*, is on display

Courtesy of Fredo Vasquez

Washington, DC-based artist Julia Chon, also known as Kimchi Juice, poses with her mural Crane Dancers in the Avant Garden of the Culture House.

inside the Culture House's gallery and explores themes of pandemicinduced shifts and recovery. Works from Korean media artists Ivetta Sunyoung Kang, Su Hyun Nam, and Jayoung Yoon offer visitors a window into intimate moments and highlight images of the unseen in every day life. $\,$

"The Day After examines the physical, spatial and emotional effects of unexpected changes to our life and environment during and after COVID-19," said Ji Young Yun, curator of exhibition and design for the Kore-

an Cultural Center in Washington DC. Yun said that the pandemic has made it challenging to invite international artists to display traditional works, but that the video format made it possible to highlight artists of Korean heritage living in the U.S. and Canada.

The exhibitions offer a crosscultural exchange at a time when travel is limited by the pandemic, and Allison Nance, curator of exhibitions at Culture House, spoke to the importance of bringing works from artists with a global perspective to Southwest DC.

"There are so many residents who have lived here for decades or generations, so ideally we are showing exhibitions and doing types of programming that are accessible for tourists who are coming in and anybody across the District, as well as our neighbors all around us," Nance said.

The Day After remains on display from September 18 through November 20, 2021 (walk-in hours are 11:00 a.m. - 2:00 p.m. on Saturdays only) and *Crane Dancers* remains on display from September 4 through January 30, 2022 (viewable 24/7).



Ward 6 Mutual Aid Updates

ard 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 3:00 p.m. 6:00 p.m. as well as Saturdays 1:00 p.m. 2:00 p.m. Needed items include:
 - Food and beverage: corned beef hash, bottled water.
 - Personal hygiene: Diapers (sizes 2-4), Depends (L and XL)
 - Cleaning: Spray cleaner, dish soap, powdered laundry detergent
 - Adult fiction books
- Come say hi and consider donating fresh produce bought at the Southwest Farmer's Market at our table on Saturdays 9:00 a.m.

- 1:00 p.m.
- Tutor DC students through W6MA's K-12 virtual tutoring program. You can sign up at bit. ly/sycvolunteertutor or email miranda@serveyourcitydc.org.

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 2nd and 4th Saturdays of the month at 9:00 a.m. at the courtyard entrance. If you can not come to the church due to health or mobility issues and you live in Southwest, call 202-554-9117 to request a delivery.
- Obtain fresh produce from SW Mutual Aid every Sunday morning 9:00 a.m. - 10:00 a.m. at CUMC's courtyard entrance.

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

Photo of the Month



A view from Southwest of the "Tower of Light" tribute on the 20th anniversary of the attacks of September 11, 2001.

Courtesy of Shelby Poage

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



Annual Sunday Suppers Generate Community Poetry

BY SOUTHWEST BID STAFF

n Sundays in August, the SWBID invited neighbors to join us at the Southwest Duck Pond for our annual Sunday Suppers event. This summer, attendees worked together to co-create a poem at each supper. Curator Beth Ferraro of The Art Island asked each table of guests to write one line that was inspired by either their experience at the event, the neighborhood, or what community means to them. The results are poems about community by the community. We invite you to view the poems in person at the Southwest Duck Pond on boards designed and painted by My Ly Designs. These poems will be on display through the end of October.

Sunday Suppers is a free program all about getting to know your neighbors and enjoying a meal together. They have been a favorite annual tradition hosted by the SWBID since 2017. To view photos of the programs, visit www.swbid.org/sundaysuppers. See you there next summer!



Neighbors gathered at the Duck Pond for annual Sunday Suppers and generated unique community poems.

Sunday Supper Community Poems

August 8, 2021

A safe space for openness and access at your pace

With ducks on a low-carb diet Everything is convenient Neighbors are wonderful A home for people from all over and close to the center of power People from a lot of places in conversation with polite exchanges We are well cared for by the BID

August 15, 2021

Green open space Trees sway in the breeze Ducks on the pond Ripples in the river Sun in my face I'm in the right place Great neighbors at our table SWDC is the best place to be When you help a stranger you may be helping an angel Where friends and neighbors meet to

relax it's a good place & space

August 22, 2021

I am here - right time, right place, otherwise I would not have seen your beautiful face

Whether at the Duck Pond or Lansburgh Park, Southwest neighbors have made their mark

The Southwest Garden has figs – tasty and sticky!

Writing poems with neighbors is fun but tricky

They say Southwest is the hidden gem of DC, but it's really the hidden gem of the whole DMV

Let's not forget this particular tradition of Family Day when neighbors gather from their kitchens

CHAPTER 5

Continued from p. 7

glass. It wasn't very pretty, but it was plenty big. I stared at it so long that I thought I heard it screech.

"Yeah, right," I told myself. "Glass eagles don't screech."

"Screech."

I turned to Abuelita. "Did you hear that?'

"Hear what, mija?"

It got really quiet and a bald man with a loud voice announced, "Mr. Speaker, the President of the United States."

There was a lot of cheering on one side of the House floor and some polite clapping on the other side.

The back door opened again, and the president walked in. He didn't get very far because he had to shake hands with all the lawmakers who sat at the ends of the rows of chairs. "Claudia told me they had to get there by lunchtime if they wanted to save those seats," I whispered to Abuelita. "I think they just want to be on TV."

Finally, the president made his way to the microphone and started talking. It was a long speech about a lot of stuff. He even talked about immigration, or at least how he didn't want Congress messing around with it. "No amnesty, ever," he said.

Abuelita grumbled under her breath. It was a good thing the president didn't speak Spanish.

The president pointed to soldiers and nurses and farmers sitting in the seats around us and told stories about them. People applauded. I yawned.

Don't fall asleep," Abuelita whispered.

It wasn't just because the speech was boring. It was late. The president didn't even start talking until after my bedtime. I decided I could keep my eyes busy by counting how many times people applauded and see who was doing the clapping, the Democrats or the Republicans. One time - I think it was when the president mentioned veterans trying to get better health care - both sides clapped. But just that one time.

And then it happened. Right when the president raised his arm to point to another person in the gallery, something fell from the ceiling. It landed right in the middle of the president's fluffy hair.

"What the ..." The president patted his head. His perfectly hair-sprayed hair looked as crunchy as a bird's nest. He looked at his hand. He smelled his hand. He made a face.

"Screech!"

Everybody looked up. It was a bird. There was a great hush on the House floor. And then one lawmaker shouted, "Get that bird!"

Secret Service agents ran onto the House floor and surrounded the president. Lawmakers started talking loudly, pointing at the ceiling. People sitting in the gallery looked up, shouting, "I think it flew over there" and "there's a feather!"

A bird. A trickster. Could it be Monica's Chickcharney?

Join Climate Change Discussion on Oct. 13

Join SW Strong! -- the SWNA Emergency Preparedness and Resiliency Building Task Force -- for a panel discussion on Climate Change: Why it is a Serious Problem and What We Can Do About It. The discussion will take place on Wednesday, October 13 from 6:00 p.m. to 7:30 p.m. That date is known as International Disaster Risk Reduction Day. Guests for this conversation include:

- Dan Misleh, Executive Director, Catholic Climate Covenant.
- Garry Harris, President, Center for Sustainable Communities.
- Jono Anzalone, Founder, The Climate Initiative

The meeting will take place on Zoom at https://us02web.zoom. us/j/89881539373, or dial by phone at 1-301-715-8592. Meeting ID: 898 8153 9373.

Southwest Library Offers Free At-Home COVID-19 Tests

♦ he Southwest Library has to one of the District's laboratory been added as a location for the District's Test Yourself DC program. All residents can pick up and drop off a COVID-19 Home Testing Kit at the Southwest Library free of

The kit contains a rapid viral PCR test and instructions for collecting a sample at home. When a kit is returned the sample is sent

partners. Residents can expect their results in 3-5 days.

Hours for pick up and drop off at the Southwest Library are 10:00 a.m. - 6:00 p.m. Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday, Friday, Saturday and 12:00 p.m. - 6:00 p.m. on Thursdays.

For more information, visit https://coronavirus.dc.gov/testyourself.

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The Humorist

'Tis the Season to be Scary

BY DEBORAH JONES SHERWOOD

he cool, crisp October weather brings a refreshing sense of vitality and renewal. Cotton shirts and swim attire are replaced with sweaters ready to stave off sudden wind gusts. Store shelves abound with bags of fun-sized candy bars and front porches display carved pumpkins, hay bales, and wispy ethereal spider webs.

October also brings a proliferation of TV reruns with ghoulish themes. We are bombarded with movies like "The Shining," "Poltergeist," "The Exorcist," and anything with Freddy Krueger, all ready to terrify us with blood curdling screams, ghosts, goblins, and creepy noises.

But, it's all harmless fun, like sitting around a campfire telling ghost stories or becoming disoriented in an autumn cornfield maze. Most often, we quickly recover from the temporary spine-chilling entertainment until Halloween reoccurs the follow-



Courtesy of Author

Deborah Jones Sherwood

ing year, when theaters and TV stations once again focus on providing us with our annual supply of goosebumps.

That is most often the case.....but not always.

When I was twelve years old, I saw the movie "Darby O'Gill and the Little

People." It's a fanciful story about an old timer who matches wits with the King of the Leprechauns. (Walt Disney Productions, 1959.) The macabre scenes with flying banshees continue to haunt me to the point that I still freeze in terror when the wind howls and dark storm clouds approach.

Another story that continues to scare me is episode 22 of "The Twilight Zone," titled *The Monsters are Due on Maple Street* and written by Rod Serling, which originally aired on March 4, 1960.

The opening scene is an ice cream vendor on a quiet street in a small, peaceful suburban town. The narrator begins, "Maple Street, U.S.A. Late summer. A tree-lined little world of front porch gliders, barbecues, the laughter of children and the bell of an ice cream vendor. At the sound of the roar and the flash of light, it will be precisely 6:43 p.m. on Maple Street. This is Maple Street on a late Saturday afternoon. Maple Street in its last calm and reflective moment before

the monsters came."

The storyline is about aliens conquering Earth, not with weapons, but from within, allowing humans to destroy each other with their own fear, paranoia, manipulation and bigotry.

The episode ends with a voiceover commentary by Rod Serling. "The tools of conquest do not necessarily come with bombs and explosions and fallout," he says. "There are weapons that are simply thoughts, attitudes and prejudices to be found only in the minds of men. For the record, prejudices can kill and suspicion can destroy. And a thoughtless, frightened search for a scapegoat has a fallout all of its own for the children and the children yet unborn. And the pity of it is that these things cannot be confined to 'The Twilight Zone."

Life imitating art. Now that's scary!

Deborah Jones Sherwood is a resident of River Park.

Waterfront Village Marks Five Years with Virtual Award Ceremony

BY SOUTHWESTER STAFF

aterfront Village will celebrate its fifth anniversary of helping older adults in Southwest DC and the Navy Yard with a virtual ceremony recognizing the contributions of leaders, volunteers and supporters on October 3 at 2:00 p.m.

Waterfront Village is a nonprofit organization that supports older adults who want to age in place in the Southwest and Navy Yard communities by providing social opportunities and home and health support services through a network of volunteers. Currently, 183 local residents are members.

The award ceremony will recognize those who supported the Village during its early years of operations.

"We are so glad to have an opportunity to recognize the people who have given so much back to the Village, to the community really, with their time, effort and donations to the Village," said Village President Carroll Quinn.

Among the award recipients are Barbara Erhlich, the Village's first board president, and Robert Craycraft, the Village's first executive director. The Village also will honor volunteers who stand out for their lasting contributions to the Village, including Victoria Peckham, Dick Lang and David Ehrlich. The work includes contributions such as establishing a weekly grocery store shuttle, providing technology assistance and organizing events such as book readings and musical performances.

The Village awards also recognize the importance of supporters who have provided financial and advisory assistance during the past five years. This includes Vania Georgieva and Bruce Moody, who provided videography and production support to allow the Village's annual fundraising event, a home tour of the Southwest Waterfront, to go virtual due to the ongoing pandemic. Nelson Crouch, who has supported the Village's home tours, and the Friends of Southwest DC, which provided critical funding, will be honored as some of the earliest and most important supporters of

"At the end of the day, the Village depends on the generosity and advice of supporters to move the organization forward and expand our reach to older adults in our neighborhood," Quinn said.

Westminster to Host Seminar on Biblical Translation for Gay Liberation

BY SOUTHWESTER STAFF

estminster Presbyterian Church will present a seminar titled *The Scrolls Revealed! Biblical Translation for Gay Liberation: How the Bible Does Not Condemn Homosexuality.*

The seminar, which is sponsored by Westminster's Resistance Bible Study Ministry, will take place on Saturday, October 19 at 400 I Street SW. Registration and refreshments will begin at 9:30 a.m. and the seminar at 10:00 a.m. Lunch will be served.

The seminar, facilitated by the Reverend Harry Stock, intends to show that the Bible does not condemn homosexuality. In order to better understand certain scriptures, participants will look at the writings of ancient scrolls through the influences of ancient Middle Eastern, Hebrew, Greek and Roman traditions, as well as early Christian situations. Other topics include: the difference between translation and interpretation, the difference between historical-critical reading and literal reading, defining sexuality and spirituality, the danger of picking and choosing scripture passages, and the challenge to question scriptures.

Reverend Stock served as Pastor of the Metropolitan Community Church of the Disciples in Washington, DC, for fourteen years. He served on the faculty of Samaritan Institute of Religious Studies for ten years, where he taught "Homosexuality and the Bible" and "Introduction to Sexuality Studies." He has traveled the country presenting the Scrolls Revealed seminar to churches and conferences in more than a dozen states. He is currently serving as Parish Partner at Westminster Presbyterian Church.

A tax-deductible registration fee of \$20.00 will include refreshments, lunch, and a binder with all working materials. Registrations can be made by calling 202-484-7700 or at www.westminsterdc.org.

The deadline for registration is Monday, October 4. In order to create a safe space, there is a maximum of 25 registrants.

