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**JANUARY 2024** 13,000 PAPERS PRINTED THIS MONTH

#### DC Parks and Rec Requests Community Input on SW Town Center Parks Redevelopment

BY MELISSA SILVERMAN

**■** he District's Department of Parks and Recreation (DPR) launched a series of public engagement events on the planned redevelopment of a project called Southwest Town Center Parks. The land, which is already owned by DPR, consists of two L-shaped parcels on either side of 4th Street SW just south of I Street SW.

Parcel A is made up of the sidewalk and land in front of Westminster Presbyterian Church and the alley that runs from 4th Street SW west to the Duck Pond, next to the Eliot apartments.

Parcel B is made up of the sidewalk and land in front of Christ United Methodist Church and the alley that runs from 4th Street SW east to the library, next to the newly completed Westerly apartments.

proposed redevelopment The includes a multi-purpose market space and event stage with terraced seating, which are envisioned as potential permanent homes for the Saturday Southwest Farmer's Market and Friday night



Courtesy DC Department of Parks and Recreation

The location of the Southwest Town Center Parks property.

art market if the Lot at 4th Street and M Street SW where they are currently held were to be developed.

DPR's initial concept for a Southwest Town Center Parks would also include lighting, utilities, plantings, landscaping

and plumbing, including an eventual possible water feature.

According to a presentation delivered by DPR Community Engagement Manager Christopher Dyer, the reimagining

See "Redevelopment," page 15



ARENA STAGE

WASHINGTON

WIZARDS STAR,

DC UNITED

**CELEBRATE** 

**HOLIDAYS** 

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SEASON

LINEUP

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KIDS CORNER

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WHERE ARE THEY NOW: **SERGIO** ROZELLE

Page 13

#### Local Civic Leader Honored for Service, Volunteerism

BY MIKE GOODMAN

s the country looks forward to celebrating Martin Luther King, Ir. Day – a day of service and "a day on, not a day off" - The Southwester sat down with one of our own community's volunteer leaders, Thelma D. Jones. Jones was recently honored for her lifetime commitment to volunteer work, receiving the President Joseph R. Biden Presidential Lifetime Achievement Award, commemorating over 4,000 community service hours. The President's Volunteer Service Award, established in 2003 and led by AmeriCorps, recognizes the important role of volunteers in America's strength and national identity, and honors individuals whose service positively impacts communities throughout the country. There will be a reception

honoring Jones on Saturday, Jan. 13 at Westminster Church (400 I Street, SW), hosted by the Board of Directors of the Thelma D. Jones Breast Cancer Fund (TDJBCF). All are welcome to attend.

Jones is known throughout the community for her work providing food to those in need, her founding of the Southwest-based TDJBCF, and her volunteer work with the Southwest Neighborhood Assembly (SWNA), St. Augustine's and Westminster Churches, and Southwest DC Action. The Southwester sat down with Jones to catch up on her latest efforts, ask her about the award, and get her thoughts about our community. The following are excerpts from that inter-

See "Honored," page 4





COMMUNITY CALENDAR

Page 14-15

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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.tdibreastcancerfund.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



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

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#### Op-Ed

#### Southwest Town Center Parks Are Not Fit for Purpose

BY SOUTHWEST DC ACTION

n November 30, 2023, the DC Department of Parks and Recreation (DPR) and the DC Department of General Services (DGS) held a town hall at the Southwest Library to discuss a proposed redesign of the Southwest Town Center Parks.

Developers shared that the Southwest Town Center Parks are intended to replace the Lots at 4th Street SW and M Street SW, which are a treasured gathering space that have hosted the Southwest Farmers' Market for several years. With its unique size and location at the heart of 4th and M, the Lots brings together all members of our community, whether to invest in small local businesses, listen to music, sit and talk with friends, or just enjoy being outside.

The future of the Lots is currently unknown. Southwest DC Action has been advocating for public ownership of the space under a Community Land Trust since 2022. The land is currently privately owned, and the Zoning Commission already approved plans to build 598 units at the site with only 8% of those units to be "affordable" which would eliminate the openness and accessibility of the space for public events, including markets and festivals that have long supported Black, Brown and minority-owned small businesses.

Under the proposed design for the new Southwest Town Center Parks, Parcel B would include a multi-purpose market space and serve as the new location for the Southwest Farmers' Market. Parcel A would include an event stage and serve as the new location for music nights. Currently, there is only funding for the build out of Parcel B. Additional proposed features across both sites, which are separated by 4th Street SW, include a plaza, terraced seating, paved walkways, commissioned artwork, and a water feature (e.g. a fountain).

#### **Community Concerns**

Southwest DC Action has major concerns about the proposed project design of the Southwest Town Center Parks as a "replacement" location for the amenities and community provided at the Lots at 4th Street SW and M Street SW. Our concerns and requests reflect the views amplified by community members at the November public meeting.

Size: The size of the Lots at 4th and M is larger than the new Town Center. Prioritizing the preservation of the Lots has been expressed directly to the DC Mayor, who offered to look into purchasing the lots, but has taken no action as of yet. To echo the words of one town hall attendee, the space is "not fit for purpose" - i.e. it is not large enough to comfortably accommodate the activities and the crowd of the Southwest DC Farmers' Market and other gatherings like the Friday night markets.

Loss of Green Space: The Southwest Town Center Parks design team opened the town hall by affirming their commitment to "preserve trees and green space as much as possible" but may lack the accountability to follow through on this activity. This point appeared to spark concern among community members, with one participant recounting promises made, and broken, to preserve six massive oak trees on Maine Avenue during the development of the Wharf in 2021. Mature trees and greenspace should be valued and preserved as a top priority. How will the developers be held accountable for preserving green space to ensure that what has happened in the past, does not happen again?

Lack of Public Input: The proposed designs for the Southwest Town Center Parks are concerning because they appear to have been created in isolation from the community, a sentiment echoed by ANC Commissioner Gail Fast at the November meeting. Fast went on to share the success of the Southwest Library redesign, largely because it was grounded in community input. Participants at the town hall agreed, with many noting that this project was a surprise to them. How have community members' input been integrated into the design since the process began more than five years ago?

Lack of Communication with DC Department of Transportation **(DDOT):** Lastly, we'd like to share that DDOT's absence from the planning is concerning. Given that 4th Street SW separates Parcels A and B, how will we ensure public safety at the Southwest Town Center Parks? Will the proposed plan include road closures, parking and set-up availability for vendors and visitors? If so, how will these road closures affect residents of nearby apartment complexes and families at Amidon-Bowen, which is adjacent to this area?

#### **Call to Action**

We encourage the community to share their questions, concerns, and comments on the Town Center Parks project. Please complete the DPR survey before January 12 at https://dpr.dc.gov/ SWTownCenterParkSurvey or direct your input to Christopher Dyer, who serves as the Community Engagement Manager at the Department of Parks and Recreation. He can be reached at Christopher.Dyer@dc.gov or 202-702-

You can also share your thoughts with us at swdcaction@gmail.com.

Southwest DC Action is a group of Southwest residents who organize and advocate for a more equitable, anti-racist, and environmentally sustainable neighborhood. You can find us on Facebook, Twitter, or check out our website swdcaction.com. Anyone is welcome to join our meetings by emailing swdcaction@ gmail.com.

## SWNA Task Force Co-Chair Regina Blye to Step Down

BY SOUTHWESTER STAFF

he Southwest Neighborhood Assembly (SWNA) and its **Emergency Preparedness Task** Force, commonly known as Southwest Strong! is known for working to build a disaster resilient community. Task Force Co-Chair Regina Blye is stepping back after dedicated service.

Blye is a dynamic advocate committed to high-impact systems change. She targets public policy reform to improve the quality of life for people with disabilities by removing barriers to education, employment, healthcare, transportation, and housing. For ten years, she served as the Executive Director of a statewide nonprofit that promotes the independence and integration of Texans with disabilities into a community of their choice.

Her advocacy led to President Barack Obama appointing her to serve on the United States Access Board for more than six years. As a board member, she was responsible for developing accessibility guidelines and standards for the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) and the Architectural Barriers Act (ABA).

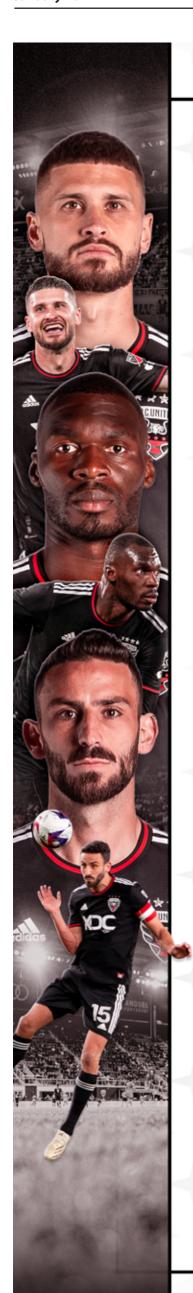
During her time in DC, Blye gave back to the Southwest community not

only by serving as Co-Chair Southwest Strong! but also as an ambassador for the Thelma D. Jones Breast Cancer Fund, Chair of the Southwest DC Community Center and board member of the DC State Fair.

In her spare time, Blye stays active playing wheelchair rugby, teaching people to play Boccia, teaching Zumba, and playing music at community events.

SWNA and the Emergency Preparedness Task Force wish to wish Blye well and thank her for all her contributions to make Southwest Strong!

The Southwester January 2024 Page 3





# D. C. UNITED SCHEDULE



FEB. 24 - 7:30PM VS. NEW ENGLAND



MAR. 2 - 10:30PM ® PORTLAND TIMBERS



MAR. 10 - 8:00PM ® FC CINCINNATI



MAR. 16 - 2:00PM VS. INTER MIAMI CF



SATURDAY MAR. 23 - 8:30PM ® ST. LOUIS CITY SC



MAR. 30 - 7:30PM

#### April



SATURDAY APR. 6 - 7:30PM ® COLUMBUS CREW



APR. 13 - 7:30PM VS. ORLANDO CITY SC



APR. 20 - 7:30PM ® NEW YORK CITY FC

SATURDAY



SATURDAY APR. 27 - 7:30PM



SATURDAY MAY 4 - 7:30PM



HOME = AWAY =



SATURDAY MAY 11 - 7:30PM



WEDNESDAY MAY 15 - 7:30PM



MAY 18 - 7:30PM @ INTER MIAMI CF



SATURDAY MAY 25 - 7:30PM vs. chicago fire fc



WEDNESDAY MAY 29 - 7:30PM





JUN. 1 - 7:30PM vs. toronto ec



JUN. 15 - 7:30PM @ CHARLOTTE FC

WEDNESDAY



JUN. 19 - 7:30PM VS. ATLANTA UNITED FC



JUN. 22 - 7:30PM VS. HOUSTON DYNAMO FC



SATURDAY JUN. 29 - 7:30PM ® NEW YORK RED BULLS



WEDNESDAY JUL. 3 - 7:30PM VS. FC CINCINNATI



SATURDAY JUL. 6 - 7:30PM @ ORLANDO CITY SC



SATURDAY JUL. 13 - 7:30PM



WEDNESDAY JUL. 17 - 8:30PM ® MINNESOTA UNITED FC



SATURDAY AUG. 24 - 7:30PM VS. FC DALLAS



SATURDAY AUG. 31 - 7:30PM ® TORONTO FC





SATURDAY SEP. 7 - 8:30PM



SATURDAY SEP. 14 - 7:30PM VS. NEW YORK CITY FO



SEP. 22 - 6:00PM @ PHILADELPHIA UNION



SATURDAY SEP. 28 - 7:30PM VS. COLUMBUS CREW



WEDNESDAY



OCT. 2 - 8:30PM

SATURDAY



OCT. 5 - 7:30PM

• NEW ENGLAND REVOLUTION



SATURDAY OCT. 19 - 6:00PM VS. CHARLOTTE FC

Time zone set to EST. Schedule subject to change.

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#### **HONORED**

Continued from p. 1

We're entering 2024, and these last few years have certainly been a time of change in DC and the country. What have the past few years meant to you? What has kept you busy recently?

Thank you for asking. What has kept me busy have been a few things. One is the food program that the TDJBCF started at the outset of COVID in March 2020 at River Park, in partnership with the James Creek Resident Council and the SWBID. It is a COVID outreach program with dedicated volunteers who distribute meals to seniors and others in need. Originally, we were distributing 50-60 meals daily, including on Saturdays from sources such as World Central Kitchen and DC Central Kitchen. We'd also take the surplus lunches around the community where I knew seniors and others in need lived. Shortly after,

we started receiving bags of fresh produce from at least two or three different sources. Today, we receive meals and fresh produce at least six times monthly with the Capital Area Food Bank being one of the main providers.

It's wonderful that we don't live in a food desert, as some communities do, but we do have a lot of seniors here and with COVID occurring, it poses a challenge for them to go grocery shopping which could put them at greater risk of catching the virus. So, we feel good about being able to reduce the likelihood of getting the virus and, because some are shut-in, we help to reduce their loneliness. As you know this is a big problem now in our country. We also helped them with picking up their prescriptions, transporting them to get their COVID vaccinations, and doing additional grocery shopping for them.

The other thing that has kept me busy is my breast cancer organization. We were handing out masks and hand sanitizer, and Georgetown University became aware of my effort, so they awarded me a small grant, as those masks are expensive. In addition, I was doing a lot of phone conversations with the patient navigation work that I do, especially after COVID shut down everything. So, the people that would normally be helping to schedule mammograms and helping survivors get to and from their doctor's appointment - all had a change in roles. There was also a lot of emotional support needed so I spent time talking to survivors - holding hands over the phone - because there were a lot of frightened and anxious survivors in Southwest with whom I had the opportunity to work with regularly.

Prior to that, I started the TDJBCF. I didn't know about the breast cancer death rate or that many breast cancer survivors lived in Southwest at the time, but I was aware that there were some issues with breast cancer here. I am grateful to George Washington Cancer Center, who motivated me to start my breast cancer organization.

When I was there for an appointment as a newly diagnosed survivor and mentioned something about starting a support group, they said "you really should start that, as there's a lot of people in Southwest who could use your help" because they were GW patients. So, my personal journey became a motivation to start my support group which was modeled after the support group at the World Bank which is where I retired from after more than 33 years.

#### When was that when you started the Thelma D. Jones Breast Cancer Fund?

The TDJBCF was born in April 2010 as a support group and ever since then we have held a monthly support group meeting except for once, and that was when the metro shut down. We do not only address the needs of Southwest residents, but also it is a regional nonprofit serving the DMV and beyond to help reduce the incidence and mortality rates of breast cancer. Of course, when COVID occurred, and everything shut down, we instantly pivoted to an online format. We now reach people in six different countries, including Barbados, Bermuda, Jamaica, Mexico, Guatemala, and Spain and about 18 to 20 states in the US. So, the online platform has really helped to reach a diverse audience.

# Let's switch to a little more recently, in October 2023, when you were awarded the Presidential Lifetime Achievement Award for a lifelong commitment to volunteerism and service. What does that award mean to you?

It was a big surprise that I received the award. It really said to me that someone noticed what I was doing, that they appreciated it, and that what I was doing was making a difference and impacting the lives of many people

I was really honored when I got the award. Jan Adams, Founder and CEO of JMA Solutions, a philanthropist and a TDJBCF honorary board member nominated me. I instantly thought "Oh gee! My parents would have loved to have seen me receive this," or at least known about it, because they are the alpha of my involvement in volunteerism. They were actively involved in the community in rural Snow Hill, NC, which is in the eastern part of the state. So, I grew up on a farm. My parents were sharecropper farmers, and my mom was also a midwife. Anytime you're involved in the health care field, you see the gamut of what's going on. In addition to the farm work and her midwifery career, they were actively involved in the community. My mom was a member of the NAACP and my dad always drove her to all the meetings and events. My mom was also a PTA president. They were both actively involved in the voter registration drives and my dad was the substi-



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# Continue the legacy. Donate to the SWNA Scholarship Fund. www.swnascholarship.org

Parks, Kendall V.



SWNA Scholarship Fund is established to encourage and assist youth in the Southwest Washington DC, Ward 6, Zip code 20024 neighborhood to pursue a post-secondary education.



#### Winter Warmth from Serve Your City/Ward 6 Mutual Aid

BY KATRINA AVILA

**■** he enduring mission of Serve Your City/Ward 6 Mutual Aid (SYC/W6MA) remains steadfast: to provide resources to Black and Brown youth and families across DC that others may already possess. Whether it involves offering afterschool enrichment and tutoring programs or essential support, SYC/ W6MA plays a pivotal role in ensuring community safety and supplying our neighbors with necessary provisions. The collaboration between Christ United Methodist Church and the Southwest Pod of SYC/W6MA, coupled with joint efforts with grass-

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roots organizations serving Black and Brown communities, has made a significant contribution to this cause.

SYC/W6MA consistently explores innovative approaches to community support, spearheading various initiatives throughout the year. Activities such as the dis-

tribution of food and the organization of clothing drives through the Southwest Pod of SYC/W6MA represent just a fraction of the initiatives undertaken by SYC/W6MA to uplift our communities. The Southwest Pod of SYC/W6MA expresses profound gratitude for the continuous donations and support that sustain these efforts year-round.

Curious about Ways to Contribute? Discover various ways to engage with Serve Your City/Ward 6 Mutual Aid:

Help the Unhoused: Our unhoused neighbors here in Washington, DC still need essential supplies to thrive, not just survive! You can make a difference this winter by purchasing items from Serve Your City/Ward 6 Mutual Aid's Wishlist at bit.ly/syctentlist. If you have any questions about the wishlist, reach out to us at info@serveyourcitydc.org.



#### **Virtual Tutors Needed:**

Serve Your City/Ward 6 Mutual Aid's "Free School for Unlimited Youth" program provides FREE virtual tutoring to Black and Brown K-12 students across Washington, DC. We are constantly seeking passionate volunteer members to join our team! We welcome college stu-

dents, graduate students, and professionals who are committed to making a difference in any subject. If you're interested in becoming a virtual tutor, please visit bit.ly/sycvolunteertutor or contact us at youthenrichment@serveyourcitydc.org for more details.

**Upcoming** Holiday/Winter **Hours:** The Southwest Pod of Serve Your City/Ward 6 Mutual Aid, located at Christ United Methodist Church (900 4th Street SW - access through the courtyard gate at the back of the building on the side street off Wesley Place SW), will temporarily suspend our table at the Southwest Farmers Market and the related produce distribution operations until Spring 2024. During this period, Christ United Methodist Church's 5000 Food Pantry will continue to offer food and supplies on the 2nd and 4th Saturdays, with no distributions on the 1st and 3rd Saturdays of the month. SYC/

W6MA's Southwest Pod will be open on Saturdays exclusively for receiving donations but will be closed from December 21 to January 3.

#### SYC/W6MA's SW Pod Donation Hours:

Wednesdays from 3-5pm Saturdays from 12pm-2pm

Neighbors in need are invited to visit once a month for provisions, including food, hygiene items, cleaning supplies, and access to the Clothing Closet.

## Support SYC/W6MA's Southwest Pod! We are in need of donations such as:

Non-perishable foods like canned tuna, canned chicken, pasta, pasta sauce, soup, canned fruit, boxed milk, peanut butter, jelly, cooking oil, condiments, hot and cold cereal, Ensure, tea, coffee.

Toiletries including toothpaste, toothbrushes, bar soap, deodorant, feminine products, and Depends.

Monetary Donations: Contribute online at bit.ly/sycw6ma-donate. Your contributions enable us to secure food from the Capital Area Food Bank, effectively tripling the impact compared to purchasing from a store.

**Want to Learn More?** For further details, feel free to reach out to us at: swmutualaid@serveyourcitydc.org.



#### Arena Stage Presents Diverse Lineup for Second Half of 2023-24 Season

BY SOUTHWESTER STAFF

anuary brings a new calendar year for making resolutions and trendy lists of what's in and what's out. It's still the middle of the planned theater year, however, and Arena Stage has five more shows lined up to close out its 2023-24 season.

Each has its own unique theme and offers an experience of entertainment and inspiration. That is the special gift of live theater all year long. Here's a preview:

#### "Swept Away" Continues to Make Waves

"Swept Away" has garnered widespread acclaim since its opening on November 25 and has been extended until January 14. The show, featuring music and lyrics by The Avett Brothers, is a 19th-century tale of survival during a violent shipwreck off the New England coast. With a memorable set featuring a rollicking boat, this production may be on a voyage to Broadway. Discounted Southwest Night performances are on January 4 and January 10.

#### Vinny DePonto Takes Center Stage in "Mindplay"

Mentalist and theater artist Vinny DePonto will explore the realms of magic and memory in "Mindplay" from



Photo by Jati Lindsay. Courtesy of Arena Stage

Step Afrika! performs "The Migration: Reflections on Jacob Lawrence."

January 19 to March 3, 2024. The performance promises to captivate audiences, with Southwest nights scheduled for January 19, 20, 21 and 30 (see the Arena Stage ad below).

#### "Tempestuous Elements" Connects Black History and Women's History

Timed to celebrate Black History Month and Women's History Month in February and March respectively, "Tempestuous Elements" (February 16 - March 17, 2024) is the eleventh entry in the Arena Stage's Power Play cycle. It narrates the inspiring story of Anna Julia Cooper, a visionary Black feminist and educator. Born into slavery in 1858, Cooper's life was dedicated to education and she is noted as the fourth African American woman to earn a doctoral degree.

This play has a strong connection not just to American history but to DC history, as it focuses on Cooper's tenure as principal of Washington's historic M Street School, where she fought to keep Black education alive, despite the racism and sexism that threatened to consign her efforts to obscurity. Southwest Nights are on March 5 and March 15

#### "The Unknown Soldier" Unravels a Musical Elegy

From March 29 to May 5, "The Unknown Soldier" takes the audience on a musical journey through time. The story unfolds as a woman discovers a picture of an unknown soldier in her grandmother's keepsakes, sparking a poignant exploration of the past. Southwest Nights are scheduled for April 24 and May 3.

#### "The Migration: Reflections on Jacob Lawrence" by Step Afrika!

To close the season, Step Afrika! presents "The Migration: Reflections on Jacob Lawrence" from June 6 to July 14. The production uses percussive dancetheater to portray one of the largest movements in U.S. history, the migration of six million African Americans from the rural South to the industrial North in the 1900s. Original artworks by Jacob Lawrence from his iconic "The Migration Series" are currently on view at Dupont Circle's Phillips Collection, providing a visual complement to Step Afrika!'s performance. Southwest Nights are on June 11 and July 11.



# D.C. United Celebrates Holidays with Community Engagement



Courtesy of Hannah Wagner, D.C. United

D.C. United's Ted Ku-DiPietro, Matai Akinmboni and club mascot Talon surprised junior enlisted service members, wounded warriors and their loved ones for Blue Star Families annual holiday party where they distributed gifts, participated in games and took holiday photos.



Courtesy of Hope Foundation Reentry Networ

The D.C. United Foundation and Malloy Law teamed up with the Hope Foundation Reentry Network and DC Department of Corrections to bring holiday cheer to children and families with a family member currently incarcerated. As part of the holiday party hosted at Busboys & Poets Anacostia, each child received items from their wish list as well as a holiday card from their incarcerated loved one.

## NBA Star Spreads Holiday Cheer at Greenleaf

BY GUY ALDRIDGE

he Washington Wizards' Kyle Kuzma visited Southwest on December 14 to bring holiday cheer to the children of DC. The Kyle Kuzma Family Foundation, partnering with Ward 6 Councilmember Charles Allen, the nonprofit GOODProjects, the DC Department of Parks and Recreation, and others to make the event happen, donated over 10,000 home goods and toys to around 600 DC families at King Greenleaf Recreation Center as part of the Golden Ticket Family Drive, according to Allen's office.

"DC and the DMV - this is where I lay my head," Kuzma said in a video posted to the foundation's website. He added, "giving back to the community is important to me." Kuzma, founder of the foundation, was accompanied by his mother Karri, who serves as the foundation's president, as well as Santa Claus, who brought Christmas cheer to Washington's youth.

Planning came together quickly, beginning only a couple weeks before the event, thanks to the hard work and quick thinking of all partners, Allen said.

The visit to Greenleaf was one of several trips on Kuzma's Golden Ticket Family Drive. On December 9, he returned to his hometown of Flint, Michigan to bring the same

outreach to children there. In all, Kuzma's foundation donated about 20,000 toys between the two

Allen said in his acknowledgments the event was a great way to bring the community together. Turning to face Kuzma, Allen added the "partnership with Kyle Kuzma, the Family Foundation, [and] the Wizards" means "a lot to the community." Allen said "it's a special relationship, we're grateful for it."

But DC may not be where the franchise lays its proverbial head for much longer. The event came amid tension between city leaders and the owner of the Wizards, Monumental Sports and Entertainment owner Ted Leonsis. Just a day earlier, plans were announced to move the NBA team and the Capitals National Hockey League franchise to a new arena in Northern Virginia.

Allen has been an outspoken critic of the proposed move since it was made public. He has accused the DC government and Mayor Muriel Bowser's administration of having overlooked the possible move in past months. Bowser and the City Council announced they are making efforts to keep the franchises downtown and modernize Capital One Arena.

#### Late December Shooting on Half Street SW Leaves Two Dead, Two Injured

BY SOUTHWESTER STAFF

ust before noon on December 21, Metropolitan Police Department (MPD) officers responded to a shooting in the 1300 block of Half Street Southwest.

According to information published by MPD, three men and a woman were found at the scene with gunshot wounds. The woman, who neighborhood residents identified to Ward 6 Councilmember Charles Allen as a beloved mother of two children, was pronounced dead at the scene. The men were transported to the hospital, where one later died and the others were treated for critical injuries.

Photos taken at the scene showed bullet holes in the brightly painted murals outside Friendly Food Market at Half Street SW and O Street SW. In a press conference, DC Police Chief Pamela Smith said shots were fired from inside a moving Jeep Grand Cherokee and the victims were struck as they stood outside the store. Video surveillance captured the vehicle, which matched the description of a car taken in an armed carjacking the previous evening in Northwest DC.

In the press conference, Smith acknowledged a history of neighborhood disputes in the area, but stated that "over the past 30 days, we have not seen any violent crime in this area." Smith stressed that officers have an "increased presence in this area" due to frequent events at nearby Nationals Park and Audi Field.

# Top Boats, Captains Take Home Prizes in 31st Annual Holiday Boat Parade

BY SOUTHWESTER STAFF

he 31st annual District Holiday Boat Parade took place along the Washington Channel on December 2, 2023. More than 60 boats decorated with holiday lights and boasting timely, pop-culture resonant themes sailed down the river from Alexandria to The Wharf.

The Wharf announced prize-winning boats and captains for this year's event, which supported the Washington Area Fuel Fund. Prizes for winning boats ranged from \$100 to \$1,000.

- **Best in Parade:** "Thanks for the Memories, Jimmy Buffett" on power boat It's Always Something Captain Steve Gwensberg.
- 1st Place: "Ken's Mojo Dojo" on power boat Hold My Pier – Captain John Stevens
- 2nd Place: "Cheeseburgers in Paradise" on power boat All In Captain

  Leff Deem
- **3rd Place:** "The Naughty List" on power boat Nauti List – Captain Matt Martelli
- Showstopper Award: "Hippopotamus" on power boat Magical Knots
   Captain Brian Dollinger

- Partner's Award: "Dreams Do Come True" on power boat Tuesday - Captain Joe Landa
- Founder's Award: "Coexist" on power boat Sante - Captain Dan Ricks
- Best Motorboat: "Lighting McQueen" on power boat Aquaholic - Captain Chris Johnson
- Best Sailboat: "Barbie Let's Party" on sailboat Bullet Proof – Captain Brian Terhaar
- Waterfront Wow: "Hard Rock Holidays" on power boat Lake Effect – Captain Chris Lake
- Most Likely to Capsize: "Capsizable" on power boat Capsizing Captain Walter Weis
- Best Crew: "Skeleton Crew" on sailboat Hiatus Captain Joe Caminiti
- Most Ingenious Idea: "Elves on Shelf" on power boat Little Nauti – Captain Paul Cianciolo
- **Spirit of DC:** "Rockin' Round the Tree" on power boat Big Sky Captain Tim Locke

The 32nd annual holiday boat parade has been scheduled for December 7, 2024.

# Photo of the Month

**Courtesy of Irene Allen** 



Portrait of the Duck Pond residents

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



#### Celebrating 25 years of helping Southwest!

#### Honoring our 2023 grantees!

- Alpha Phi Alpha/OHA SW Day school supply drive
- Bread for the Soul SW holiday family assistance drive
- Camp Arena Stage SW scholarships
- Carron Baptist Church SW holiday meals and coat drive
- Children's chorus of Washington SW student participation
- Christ United Methodist SW food pantry and garden
- Coralie Farlee Graduate Scholarship
- DC STORM trip to Norfolk for SW youth
- GOODProjects learning hub for SW
- James Creek Winter Wonderland
- Jefferson Middle School Voices of Now Program
- Nathaniel Pickett Foundation SW mental health fair
- Serve Your City SW food pantry
- SW Academy summer intern program
- SW Community Center "Mutt Strut"
- SW Comm-Unity Forum SW Day and Toys-for-Tots
- Southwest Community Gardens
- SWNA college scholarships
- SWNA emergency preparedness event
- Waterfront Village subsidized memberships and aging class

# Thanks for your good work for Southwest!

You can help, too!
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Friends of Southwest DC P.O. Box 44434 Washington, DC 20026 FriendsofSWDC.org



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!

#### WORD SEARCH: MARTIN LUTHER KING, JR. DAY!



# TIC TAC TOE HH

#### **Favorites**

BY MALAKAI MCLAUGHLIN, FIFTH GRADE, AMIDON-BOWEN ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

t Amidon-Bowen everyone is welcome, this is important to me because I think everybody of any race or gender has the right to feel welcome. We also have after school sports so you can either play the sport you love or learn a new sport, this is perfect to match your sporty needs. And then we have after school, a program that makes learning fun. It also lets parents that have to work late get a little extra work in. During the day we have specials, these are music, art, library, and gym. During the year we have lots of spirit weeks and food prints. My personal favorite spirit week is the week of Halloween, we get to play games to win candy, but as for people in after school you get to go classroom to classroom going trick-or-treating. But we also have kite day and field day, which are closer to the end of the year. And in food prints we get to make delicious food and learn about gardening. What's your favorite thing mentioned?



#### **Young Readers**

#### Put Those Gift Cards to Good Use

By Kitty Felde

It's likely that among your children's holiday gifts this year, there were more than a few gift cards. Left to their own devices, kids will head straight to the electronics store. But if there's flexibility in what kids can spend their gift card money on, take them to the bookstore. Find them a book so intriguing, they'll take a break from their screens and just read. Here are some suggestions from a convention of librarians:

#### **Read Aloud Picture Books**

Rebecca Opalca from the Phoenix Public Library reads to kids in the hospital. They're always surrounded by parents or family members. "These books get a big laugh

from both the teenage brother and the dad. They're really funny."

**Bark George** - Jules Feiffer **We Don't Eat our Classmates** - Ryan T. Higgins

**Grumpy Monkey** - Suzanne Lang

#### Middle Grade Classics that Kids Still

**Hatchet** - Gary Paulson (Rebecca says she's never met a boy who didn't like it.)

Island of the Blue Dolphins - Scott O'Dell ("Still amazing," she says. "When you get a kid to start reading it, they totally get into it.")

For something more modern, may I humbly suggest my own middle grade mysteries set on Capitol Hill, *Welcome to Washington Fina Mendoza* and *State of the Union*.

#### **Graphic Novels and Anime**

Anne of Green Gables - Mariah Marsden's adaptation of L.M. Montgomery's classic tale in a graphic novel format

**Five Nights at Freddy's** - Scott Cawthon's series of books based on the video games

**Demonslayer** - Koyoharu Gotouge For older kids, Rebecca recommends a book banned in Michigan, **The Absolutely True Diary of a Part-Time Indian** (National Book Award Winner) by Sherman Alexie.

Kitty Felde hosts the award-winning Book Club for Kids podcast and writes the Fina Mendoza mysteries series of novels and podcasts.

# Brickies Head Northeast for 2023 Ceremony

BY GUY ALDRIDGE

ard 6 Councilmember Charles Allen held this year's Brickies awards ceremony in December at the Atlas Performing Arts Center on H Street, NE.

The Brickies are an annual award ceremony honoring "the people in our community who make it such a special place to call home," Allen said in a press release. Award winners receive a symbolic brick, giving the ceremony its name.

In years past, the Brickies have included community members from Southwest and Navy Yard, but this year, all award recipients apart from the Metropolitan Police Department's First District Community Outreach Team, which represents that entire district - hailed from Ward 6 north of Pennsylvania Avenue.

Tommy Wells, Ward 6 Councilmember from 2007 to 2015 and Charles Allen's former boss when Allen was a staffer, snagged the Neighbor Award in honor of his long and devoted career in public service. Wells also notably started the Livable, Walkable Awards, which are now known as the Brickie Awards.

The Community Organization Award went to Capitol Hill Little League for "creating a fun, welcoming, and supportive youth sports environment." Earning the Business Award was Old City Market and Oven (6th and K Streets, NE) "for its unique and deep connection to the Near Northeast community."

The Metropolitan Police Department's First District Community Outreach Team took home the Public Service Award for building relationships to promote public safety. Last but not least, the Civic Pride Award went to Hill Family Biking for "offering a safe and welcoming experience for those who want to explore DC's streets and trails."

In years past, the Brickies have been held in more central locations in Ward 6, such as the Hill Center at the Old Naval Hospital. This year, Allen's choice of H Street made the trip difficult for Southwest and Navy Yard residents who do not have cars.

For those able to attend, the event offered music and food in addition to the awards ceremony. Vendors donating food included The Queen Vic, Tunnicliff's Tavern, Hill East Burger, and numerous other Ward 6 businesses.

#### Waterfront Village has New Executive Director



Pictured above are the two prior and the current Executive Director of Waterfront Village: Bob Craycraft, Len Bechtel and Pam Troutman.



Thank you for your continued support of The Southwest Neighborhood Assembly, *The Southwester* and our hard-working task force committees.

We are looking forward to resuming our community meetings in the New Year on such topics as public safety, transportation and more. We welcome your suggestions for meeting topics! Over the next week, we will be updating our website with important dates and events @https://swna.org.

To our donors, we know you have a lot of choices when it comes to donating, and we are so grateful for those that chose to donate to SWNA. We promise to be responsible stewards of both your donation and your trust.

Special Thanks to our advertisers who make it possible to offer *The Southwester* FREE to thousands of readers online and hardcopies throughout the Southwest neighborhood.



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#### **HONORED**

Continued from p. 4

tute bus driver for our Sunday school, where I also did a lot of volunteer work. I taught classes, and was the Secretary of our Sunday School, and occasionally had to fill in as Acting Superintendent of the Sunday School.

I still appreciate what Shady Grove Free Will Baptist Church, my childhood church, did in terms of being a tool or vehicle to help develop me. We often think about our parents and our mentors, but not establishments -being able to be a part of my Sunday School - did a lot to help develop me. And then when I was in school, I played in the school band, which was something else to help me in terms of developing team spirit and discipline. I was on my school debating team, which helped to build my speaking abilities. And years later, I would join a Toastmasters Team, which really helped develop me and prepared me for different roles in the community.

## What would you say are some of your proudest accomplishments over the years?

Interestingly what I am most proud of is growing up in a strong, loving family environment. I grew up in a household with four generations. It was my siblings, my parents, my father's mother, and my father's mother's father. As a single parent, I see the greatness and benefits of being in a large, loving family, and my siblings and I are still close.

Another accomplishment was being educated in a Rosenwald School in Snow Hill. The Rosenwald Schools were built by Julius Rosenwald, a philanthropist, and I'm still part of my high school alumni association.

Also, in 2018, I met a gentleman here at the Georgetown University breast cancer conference who helped to get my college, Durham College, on the national scene. Durham College was founded by an African-American woman in 1947 so you can imagine what it was like for a woman creating a school back then, that ended up graduating more than 5000 students by the time it closed in 1980. So when Durham, NC had its 150th anniversary in 2019, Durham College and its president were represented, to show what Durham was all about, and we were selected along with the likes of John Hope Franklin. We feel very good about that.

One other proud accomplishment was my years at the World Bank Group where I worked with more than 150 different nationalities for more than 33 years. I appreciate the things that the World Bank allowed me to do, much of it because of my history of volunteerism. James D. Wolfensohn, our president at the time, wanted to establish an institutional outreach program at the World Bank, as the Bank was one of the largest employers in the city, and he felt that we

should be doing more for the city since we benefited from so many of the city's resources and services. So, I was plucked to help create an institutional outreach program and am very pleased to be one of the principal founders of the World Bank's institutional outreach program back in 1997. So essentially, I was the face and voice of the World Bank in the local community carrying out the Bank's poverty reduction mission on the local level, in the areas of volunteerism, grants management, homelessness, working with the city, and education reform, to which I had the greatest impact and involvement. We welcomed the kids from Cardoza Senior High and Bell Multicultural High Schools into the World Bank, and I know that it was because of that program that those kids were able to visit and, in some cases, work at the World Bank. That led to other schools, including Jefferson Middle School Academy and Amidon-Bowen Elementary, visiting the World Bank lots of times.

The other thing is that through my work with SWNA, I was able to apply my skills and knowledge of the city thanks to the Bank's institutional outreach program. So, when I approached the World Bank about creating a summer jobs program, well that was new because many of my colleagues had very unfavorable views about what that would mean. That was one of my accomplishments because there are kids who now have successful careers because they had summer job experiences at the World Bank.

That went well, but I'll be the first to say it was very challenging. A lot of days I came home and cried because I knew that my reputation was at stake. But more importantly, I knew that if the program didn't succeed, there would be a lot of kids that would lose an opportunity, if I didn't keep pushing to make the program work. And I knew it could work, because I spent many summers working with kids in Southwest and the Bank employed a Southwest youth for several years which I recommended.

When I asked the Bank to allow me to start an internship program at Howard University (HU), the Bank said, "we have not had good success at trying to employ students from Howard University," and all I could think was, "but we have kids from Georgetown, George Washington, American and Catholic, so why not the world's premiere African American institution?" I had to convince the Bank to empower and authorize me to start an HU internship program. We did it thanks to Ofield Dukes, an instructor at HU who was a longtime Southwest resident who received numerous public relations rewards. So, my other proud accomplishment is that I did a lot of work with racial equality at the World Bank. As much as I love the institution, the World Bank has some serious challenges in racial equality, and I helped create a staff African American Association to address some of the racial challenges around recruitment, hiring, promotion, and just overall recognition of African Americans skills and abilities. That association was created on the 45th Anniversary of Brown versus Board of Education. As you know, the chief legal counsel for that case was Thurgood Marshall, a Southwest resident. I have been proud to have been a close friend with his widow, Cissy Marshal who attended St. Augustine's Episcopal Church where I am a member.

# What other Southwest residents have had an impact on you, and how are you feeling about the current state of Southwest DC?

The late Dale MacIver [former Editor-in-Chief of *The Southwester*] and Neal Peirce were great mentors. I miss both. Sometimes I ask myself "what would Dale or Neal advise me to do on this?" And they both shared a fear, and one that I have, having to do with the gentrification that is occurring in Southwest. We are seeing the African American population erode, and the demographics of the community are changing, and I work with SW Action on these issues. We know that Greenleaf is slated to be demolished, essentially. When you think about urban renewal, and the history of urban renewal, and how it has impacted this community, and its effects are still very prevalent, I can't help but wondering what else it is going to do in terms of maintaining harmonious relationships and growing as a community.

I've been at River Park since 1993, but the co-op fees are rising high, so that in the last two years, I have been worried about whether I'll be able to afford to live here. That really bothers me because I'm on a fixed income. My health is declining as I live with the side effects of a rare, aggressive, and late stage of breast cancer in remission. To know that I have generously given my life to this community and go to bed at night wondering if I'll still be able to live here, it bothers me. It makes me think about people who don't have the resources or advocacy wherewithal that I do. Or even worse those that haven't been involved in the community. So, if I've been involved, and I fear that I'm going to be pushed out, I cannot imagine what the people in Greenleaf and other people in the community must be thinking. I don't think that is fair. I welcome change and growth, but they should never be at the expense of the people who have been here first and who have made this their home. When people decide to come here from wherever they're coming from, they should come with an attitude of learning about the people and history and not coming with their money and A-type personalities that they are going to fix what's broken.

So much of society is rooted in structural, institutional or systemic, and interpersonal racism that impacts housing, jobs, health care and all the other things. And because all of this is impacted, the social determinants of health are rampant in this community. So, when you want to come and make a difference, it's important to come with the attitude of sitting down and learning and listening about the challenges; what would they like; and how can we help them, while building trust as opposed to coming in with that great white hope attitude.

#### What would you like to see happen in our community over the coming years?

One would be a more dedicated and coordinated expanded effort around youth. We could benefit from having a paid person to work with the SWNA Education and Scholarship Task Force (ESTF) and the Youth Activities Task Force (YATF), which I chair, in carrying out some of the wonderful programs and activities we are or have been doing for decades as volunteers. In both task forces, most of the people are over 70 years old. We would benefit from a coordinator. who can also relate to the kids, and work with us to bring in the institutional knowledge to educate and orient this person on what the community can do to help our youth. They are tomorrow's future.

I think The Southwester has done a great job and obviously I'm biased, although I know how to be objective too - in highlighting our community activities, especially the things SWNA has done, from Black History, Emergency Preparedness, ESTF, and YATF. Also, my breast cancer programs and activities have all been highlighted. When we look at the changes in the community, through our Black History Program, we try to look at famous African Americans in our community like Dorothy Height, Ofield Dukes, Thurgood Marshall, Cathy Hughes, and Roger Wilkins, among others. One of the projects I hope to finish, which I started with Dale MacIver, as he kept encouraging me to work on an exhibit of famous African Americans who have lived in Southwest. We need to do this exhibit while giving credit to these many famous people who lived here in Southwest.

#### Any final thoughts about the award itself that we haven't covered?

I would hope this award would be an inspiration to others when they complain and say, "things aren't the way they should be." Perhaps this is inspiration, motivation, encouragement - a blueprint - that here is a person who really loves her community, and loves making a difference in the lives of the community they were born in, the church that nurtured them, their high school, their college, their place of employment, and anything they were involved in and the challenges they saw along the way were used for the greater good. We should take our life experiences to help improve and change life in general.

#### **WHERE ARE THEY NOW?**

#### Southwest Neighborhood Assembly's Education and and Scholarship Task Force Catches Up with Multi-Year Winner Sergio Rozelle

BY SOUTHWESTER STAFF

he Southwest Neighborhood Assembly (SWNA) Education and Scholarship Task Force (ESTF) has supported young people in the Southwest DC community for more than 45 years. All together, more than 530 scholarships totaling \$444,000 have been awarded to 230 young people who have gone on to great educational, cultural and business success.

In our "Where Are They Now" series, we catch up with some of our scholarship winners to see where their talent and hard work has taken them.

Sergio Rozelle was a three-time ESTF Scholar, earning scholarships in 1988, 1989 and 1990.

His journey to Southwest DC began in the early 1970's, when his mother Margaret Rozelle's career as an architectural engineer for the U.S. Navy brought her to the DC area. At age 7, Sergio Rozelle moved to the neighborhood and began what would be a distinguished educational career at the elementary school that is now known as Amidon-Bowen. Margaret Rozelle retired as a project manager at the Navy Yard, and she and Sergio are

both still proud Southwest residents to this day.

After Sergio Rozelle graduated high school, he was accepted at the nation's first degree-granting Historically Black College & University, (HBCU) Lincoln University, located near Oxford, Pennsylvania. Founded in 1854, Lincoln's famous alumni include the first Black Justice of the U.S. Supreme Court, Thurgood Marshall, and the poet, author, playwright and activist Langston Hughes. Rozelle majored in political science at Lincoln, then went on to Clark University in Atlanta, also an HBCU, where he received a Masters of Science in International Affairs and Development/ International Business Marketing. He also earned a Doctorate in Divinity (Community Service Studies) and the title Dr. Sergio Rozelle.

His ambitious nature first set him on a path toward politics and later he became interested in economics, gravitating toward wealth management. Knowing that either profession takes some independent funds, he chose to continue his education and gain experience in the corporate and government worlds while building his work as a strategic consultant in international wealth acquisition.

He spent his first five years after graduating from Clark at Delta Airlines in the Executive Training program at their Atlanta headquarters, which he enjoyed immensely. It was during his time at Delta he also began pursuing his future as a wealth acquisition entrepreneur. He then joined the Fulton County, Georgia government where he spent the next five years as the Senior Grants Manager. His portfolio included timely issues from workforce development, homeless and transitional housing, children and youth services, HIV/AIDS, seniors and aging services and compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act.

Following his work with the Fulton County government, Rozelle also gained experience working for the federal government, with stints at the U.S. Department of Agriculture, the U.S. Department of Commerce and the U.S. Department of Labor.

He continued building his entrepreneurial effort to attract people who could use his experience and talents as a consultant in building businesses, acquiring wealth and successfully managing it. Working from Georgia

Ginkgo Gardens

and then DC, he co-founded a \$200 million debt-free holding company and became an internet marketing consultant, mentor, coach, trainer, speaker and community volunteer.

Rozelle has been featured on news and financial programs on most national network and cable television stations, as well as in financial publications such as Fortune, Business Week, and Entrepreneur. He has served on the board of several 501(c)3 organizations, including the United Way. He has built teams of thousands for direct sales companies. He also co-authored a book, The Art and Science of Success, Volume 5, that spent time on Amazon's #1 Best Sellers List in three separate categories: Global Marketing, Work-Life Balance and Business & Investing.

Rozelle has a desire to help people in every area of their lives. He thinks of his three scholarships from ESTF as one of the lights of his life, along with his daughter Jessie, now 24, and continues to drive toward his dreams in asset management, real estate and as a volunteer working in community service.



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#### Southwester Community Calendar | January 2024

Please check the web references or telephone numbers in the listings for details.

**TUES 2, 7 P.M. ANC 6D Administrative Meeting**. To view the meeting, send request to 6D@anc.dc.gov.

THUR 4, 8 P.M. additional Southwest Night at Arena Stage. Musical, "Swept Away"

**SUN 7, 14, 21, 28 (and all Sundays through March 17, 2024).** Cycle 2 of "Modern Well-Married Saints & Holy Couples" 9:15 a.m. – 10:15 a.m. in the Parish Meeting Room. St. Dominic Catholic Church, 630 E Street SW.

**SUN 7, 7 P.M. Solemn Vespers** in the Church followed by a reception in the Parish. Meeting Room, St. Dominic Catholic Church, 630 E Street SW.

MON 8, 7 P.M. ANC 6D Business Meeting. For information about ANC 6D meetings and agenda, visit https://www.anc6d.org/virtual-meetings/ If you have an item for the Community Concerns portion of the meeting, please e-mail your comments to 6D@anc.dc.gov at least 48 hours prior to the meeting time.

**TUES 9, 6:30-7:30 P.M. Komen Toastmasters**. We meet on the second Tuesday of the month. If interested in attending our meeting, please contact us at: komentoastmasters8714@gmail.com

WED 10, 7:30 P.M. 2<sup>nd</sup> added Southwest Night at Arena Stage. Musical, "Swept Away"

**THURS 11, 5:30 P.M. Let's Play SPADES**, SPADES is a trick-taking partnership game where players bid the number of tricks each expects to take. Games are played to 500 points and the team with the highest score wins. Southwest Neighborhood Library.

**SAT 13, ALL DAY, Origami Fox Craft Bookmark.** Children ages 3-12 are invited to drop by the Children's Room to make an origami fox bookmark! Southwest Neighborhood Library.

**SAT 13, Faith & Film Zoom**, 7 P.M. Presentation of AIR. *Release Date: 2023 Genre: Biographical Drama Runtime: 1h 52m Rating: R* Sonny Vaccaro and Nike pursue basketball rookie Michael Jordan, creating a partnership that revolutionizes the world of sports and contemporary culture. Join us for a lively after film discussion. Official Trailer- https://www.youtube.com/ watch?v=Euy4Yu6B3nU For Zoom link, email the office at wpcdcoffice@gmail.com. All Invited. Westminster Presbyterian Church.

**SUN 14, 1 P.M. Sit & Stitch**. Stitchers of all kinds and skill levels, join us for an hour of stitching and community at Southwest Library! Basic guided instruction for beginners in crochet, knitting, embroidery, and cross-stitch available.

**SUN 14, 6:30 P.M. Religious Movie Seminar** in the Parish Meeting Room. St. Dominic Catholic Church, 630 E Street SW.

**TUES 16, 7:00 P.M. ANC6D Transportation Committee** meeting online. Registration details at https://www.anc6d.org/anc6d-transportation-committee/.

**TUES 16, 5:30 P.M.Game On! For Adults and Seniors**. Play CLASSIC boards games, checkers, uno, dominos, backgammon and scrabble for this fun 2 hour program event. Are you bored? Do you like playing games? If you do, come out to our Adult/ Senior Game on event, where you will have a chance to play CLASSIC board games against others in this fun event. Southwest Neighborhood Library.

**TUES 16, 6:30 P.M. Off Script Celebrity Book Club.** Join us each month as we explore the lives of the fawned-over and the forgotten, the inspirational

and infamous! January's Pick: Viola Davis' Finding Me. This group will meet every 3rd Tuesday of the month. Southwest Neighborhood Library.

WED 17. 12 Noon-2 P.M. The Southwest Waterfront AARP Chapter Come meet our guest speaker, Hana Sharif, the new Artistic Director at Arena Stage! Everyone is welcome. Please come out and join friends, neighbors, meet new people and have a conversation about her creative plans, community engagement and theatrical productions for Arena Stage. Everyone welcome: Current AARP Members, Prospective Members, Guests, Neighbors, and Visitors to our Community Luncheon Meeting at River Park Mutual Homes. Location: River Park-South Common Room, 1311 Delaware Ave. SW, Street Parking available and Waterfront Metro, (Green Line) is two blocks away. Bus #74 stops in front of the River Park Delaware Avenue Gate. Lunch Available: Cost \$5.00. Masking is optional but strongly encouraged. We will also provide masks for attendees. For further information contact - Betty Jean Tolbert Jones, bettyjeantolbertjones@yahoo.com or 202/554-0901.

**THURS 18, 1 P.M. Coffee &Conversation.** Customers are invited to join a casual conversation with other library customers and individuals from the neighborhood. Coffee and Tea provided. Southwest Neighborhood Library.

**THURS 18, 4 P.M., Teen Bingo.** Teens are invited to play as many rounds of BINGO we can fit into an hour! Prizes are available for the winning players. Southwest Neighborhood Library.

**SUN 21, 6:30 P.M. Religious Movie Seminar** in the Parish Meeting Room. St. Dominic Catholic Church, 630 E Street SW.

**THURS 25, 5:30 P.M. Let's Play SPADES.** SPADES is a trick-taking partnership game where players bid the number of tricks each expects to take. Games are played to 500 points and the team with the highest score wins. Southwest Neighborhood Library.

FRI 26, 6 P.M. 25th Jazz Night Anniversary \*\*Special Admission Fee-\$25\*\*. Join us for special music and community as we celebrate with the best jazz performers the DMV has to offer! Westminster Presbyterian Church, 400 I St, SW

**SUN 28, 1 P.M. Sit & Stitch**. Stitchers of all kinds and skill levels, join us for an hour of stitching and community at Southwest Library! Basic guided instruction for beginners in crochet, knitting, embroidery, and cross-stitch available.

**SUN 28, 6:30 P.M. Religious Movie Seminar** in the Parish Meeting Room. St. Dominic Catholic Church, 630 E Street SW.

**TUES 30, 5:30 P.M. Game On! For Adults and Seniors.** Play CLASSIC boards games, checkers, uno, dominos, backgammon and scrabble for this fun 2 hour program event. Are you bored? Do you like playing games? If you do, come out to our Adult/ Senior Game on event, where you will have a chance to play CLASSIC board games against others in this fun 2 hour program event. Southwest Neighborhood Library.

**WED 31, 3:30 P.M. Urban Fiction Book Club**. Join us as we read and discuss Urban Fiction short-stories. Our first selection is from Girls From Da Hood 10 by Treasure Hernandez, Blake Karrington and T.C. Littles. We will discuss "Sack Chasing Star" by T.C. Littles. Southwest Neighborhood Library

#### **WEEKLY, BIWEEKLY**

**ALCOHOLICS ANONYMOUS,** Mondays-Fridays at Noon (St. Dominic Catholic Church) or Wednesday evenings (St. Augustine's Episcopal Church). Post-pandemic we have resumed live meetings. This fellowship is open to all men and women who desire to recover from alcoholism. You will be welcome; for more information, contact Josie at 202-880-6971. https://aa-dc.org/meetings/t-g-i-f

**AFTER SCHOOL GAMES,** Thursdays 4 P.M. End the school day at the Southwest Library and join us for some self-directed after-school games on Thursdays from 4-5 P.M.! We'll have board games, card games, and occasionally some larger games to play, or we can help you login to your preferred computer game if computers are available.

**BABY LAP TIME,** Thursdays, 1:15-2:15 P.M. Babies under 1 who are not yet walking, and their caregivers are invited to join us for a special 20-30-minute story time full of songs, bounces, and good books. Southwest Neighborhood Library.

**BLUES MONDAYS,** 6-9 P.M. Various Blues musicians and singers are featured each Monday. \$10 cover and food for sale. Schedule at Westminster Presbyterian Church. https://westminsterdc.org/blue-monday-schedule

BREAD FOR LIFE - BREAKFAST, Sundays, 8-8:45 A.M. Free Breakfast. The pandemic has forced us to change how we serve breakfast—but we still offer a free breakfast every week as a to-go bag with a breakfast sandwich, juice, fruit, and slice of cake. If you would like to volunteer with Bread for Life, please contact Virginia Mathis, lead organizer and kitchen manager for the program at thor081828@hotmail.com. St. Augustine's Episcopal Church Community Room, 555 Water Street SW. www.staugustinesdc.org/bread-for-life.

**BUILDING BLOCKS,** Tuesdays, 10:30 A.M. Children birth to 5 and their caregivers are invited to a special early literacy play date themed around building, knocking down, and building back up again! Come explore constructive play with us. Southwest Neighborhood Library.

**CHAIR YOGA,** Mondays, Fridays 11 A.M. - Noon. Gentle movements to increase flexibility, strength, balance & endurance, adapted for all body types. Careful instruction promotes proper breathing, meditation, positive thinking, & deep relaxation. Westminster Presbyterian Church. Any questions? Email instructor, Pamela Wilson, wilsonpj108@gmail.com

**CHURCH CLEANING**, 2nd Saturdays of the month, 9:35 A.M. St. Dominic Church. www.stdominicchurch. org/

**Cycle 2 of "Modern Well-Married Saints & Holy Couples"** Sun 3<sup>rd</sup> through Sun March 17, 2024 9:15-10:15 A.M. in the Parish Meeting Room. St. Dominic Catholic Church, 630 E Street SW. www.stdominicchurch.org/

**ENCORE CREATIVITY FOR OLDER ADULTS,** Tuesdays, 6:30 P.M.- 8 P.M. DC Rocks Rehearsals. For more information, contact: https://encorecreativity.org/(Resumes January 9, 2024)

**FAMILY STORY TIME,** Mondays, 10:30 A.M. Come to the Southwest Library for story time fun. On Mondays, we have family story time or music and movement for young ones of all ages, birth to 5. Craft to follow.

**FILM DISCUSSION CLUB,** Tuesdays, 12 P.M. Join this lively conversation circle composed of your neighbors

See "Calendar," page 15

#### REDEVELOPMENT

Continued from p. 1

process for the area was launched in 2018 by the Southwest Business Improvement District (BID).

In 2022, the DC Council approved \$3.5 million for the project, which DPR confirmed is sufficient to cover only the design and a portion of the build. First to be built with approved funding would be Parcel B, which sits on the east side of 4th Street SW and abuts Christ United Methodist Church.

Parcel A, which sits on the west side of 4th Street SW and abuts Westminster Presbyterian Church, could only be redeveloped if additional funding is allocated. Westminster's private redevelopment plan, which is also underway, is not related to DPR's project, but Dyer assured community members there would be communication and collaboration between the two design teams.

Using the city's Request for Proposal process, a design and build team for the Southwest Town Center Parks redevelopment was selected in August 2023. Since being selected, architect Lee and Associates and general contractor Thiha, Inc. have been conducting existing conditions analysis, a tree survey with an arborist and a geotechnical survey.



Courtesy DC Department of Parks and Recreation

A rendering of a post-development Southwest Town Center Parks.

On November 30, 2023, representatives from the architect and contractor joined Dyer and other DPR staff members to brief the community during a meeting at the Southwest Library. The team also hosted a community walkthrough of the proposed parks space on December 15, 2023.

At the public events, community members expressed strong views on the potential approach, design and use of space. Concerns ranging from traffic, noise, construction and environmental impact, including potential flooding and tree preservation, were raised.

According to Dyer's presentation, the project's goals include "preserving green space and trees as much as possible" and utilizing "resilient design - especially flood mitigation."

The DPR team stressed their desire to coordinate with leaders at both Christ United Methodist Church and Westminster Presbyterian Church, whose property lines run parallel to the outer boundaries of the project.

DPR also responded to community concerns about cooperation with the District Department of Transportation, which would ultimately make the determination whether to issue temporary closures of 4th Street SW during the hours of operation of the Friday or Saturday markets.

Dyer gave examples of Eastern Market and the Dupont Circle Farmers' Market where regular, temporary street closures are utilized for pedestrian access and safety. As long-time neighborhood residents know, 4th Street was previously permanently closed to traffic as the site of the Waterside Mall, described by Nena Perry-Brown, writing for Greater Greater Washington, as a "bulky, modernist office/retail shopping center completed in the early 1970s." The mall was demolished in 2007, opening the artery of 4th Street for regular pedestrian and vehicular traffic.

For community members interested in the next phase of the Southwest Town Center Parks redevelopment, DPR is conducting a survey to gather input. The survey is available at https://dpr.dc.gov/SWTownCenter-ParkSurvey and will be open through Friday, January 12, 2024.

Information from DPR about the Southwest Town Center Parks redevelopment project can be found at https://dgs.dc.gov/page/sw-town-center-park. The project website includes a link to the slides Dyer presented at the November community meeting.

To sign up for email updates from DPR, visit dpr.dc.gov/stakeholder.

#### **CALENDAR**

Continued from p. 14

and fellow library users. Enjoy watching an award-winning short film (30 minutes or less) with others and then participate in a friendly conversation afterwards. Share your point of view and meet new people. This program is for adults. Films are not listed ahead of time. Southwest Neighborhood Library - Large Meeting Room. https://dclibrary.libnet.info/events

**GODLY PLAY PROGRAM FOR CHILDREN,** Sundays 11 A.M-12 P.M. ages 4-12. Fun sessions including videos and interactive activities about the life and teachings of Jesus. Westminster Church. https://westminsterdc.org/

**HYBRID SUNDAY WORSHIP SERVICE,** Sundays, 11 A.M.-12 P.M. All welcome to share in inspiring worship! Westminster Presbyterian Church. https://westminsterdc.org/

**JAZZ NIGHT IN SW,** Fridays, 6-9 P.M. Various Jazz musicians and singers featured each Friday. \$10. Food for sale. Schedule at https://westminsterdc.org/jazz-night-in-dc-schedule . Westminster Presbyterian Church.

**JOB SEEKERS,** Mondays, 1-3 P.M. Stop by Southwest Library for this drop-in clinic where we answer your questions and provide guidance and assistance to job seekers in their search.

**KADAMPA MEDITATION CENTER,** See website for January events. https://meditation-dc.org/ 1200 Canal St SW, Washington, DC, 20024

**MAKE IT!,** Tuesdays, 4-5 P.M. Come make something awesome at the Southwest Library! Every Tuesday after school we'll make something--a craft, STEM project, experiment, or design. All materials provided--just bring your imagination!

**NARCOTICS ANONYMOUS,** Wednesdays, 7-8 P.M. Contact Westminster Presbyterian Church for more information at wpcdcoffice@gmail.com www.narcotics.com/na-meetings/washington-dc/

**NEW HYBRID ADULT EDUCATION CLASS** Sundays 10-11 A.M. Led by Rev. Dr. Alice Bellis (Howard University) and Jeff Nicoll (author of Strange and Gaudy Fruit: Toxic Theology). Westminster Church. To Register, contact: wpcdcoffice@gmail.com. FREE. https://westminsterdc.org/

**RESISTANCE BIBLE STUDY (ZOOM),** Tuesdays, 6:30 P.M. Discuss timely issues on Jesus and Social Justice. For Zoom link, contact: wpcdcoffice@gmail.com

RIVERSIDE BAPTIST CHURCH PROTEIN PANTRY, 2nd Sundays, 11:30 A.M. All are welcome! For more details contact rsbc@riverside.org. Riverside Baptist Church, 699 Maine Ave SW, https://riversidedc.org/

**SEASONAL CRAFT.** All Day. Join us in the Children's Room for a seasonal or book-themed craft. Children ages 3-12 can drop by for a fun craft. Southwest Neighborhood Library.

**SEATED YOGA (In Person),** Mondays & Fridays, 11 A.M. - 12 P.M. Low impact stretches and mobility exercises performed under the direction of Pamela Wilson. Westminster Presbyterian Church. https://westminsterdc.org/

**SENSORY PLAY TIME,** Fridays, 10:30 A.M. Babies, toddlers, & preschoolers are invited to play and explore their senses in this fun program. Southwest Neighborhood Library.

**TECH HELP,** Wednesdays, 2-3 P.M. Need help navigating a new device, setting up an email account, connecting with friends on social media, or something else tech-related? Drop by Tech Help, a one-hour technology assistance clinic for guidance from library staff. Come prepared with any necessary log-in information

and your charged device. Be ready to learn new skills and get comfortable in the digital environment while accomplishing the tech tasks you need done. Southwest Library. https://dclibrary.libnet.info/events

**THEMATIC BIBLE STUDY (Virtual),** Second Thursdays, 7 P.M., If you don't know our Zoom channel address, just email Rev. Scott at priest@staugustinesdc.org and he will be happy to send you the info! All are very welcome to join us. St. Augustine's Episcopal Church. https://www.staugustinesdc.org/

THURSDAY EVENING MEDITATION, Thursdays, 7:15 - 8:30 P.M. Suitable for everyone, these meditation classes offer practical methods to improve the quality of our lives through meditation and Buddhist teachings. Each class is available by drop in and you can come to either the entire series for the month or by individual class. Each class is self contained. Everyone is welcome. For support with our online classes, prayers & events: support@meditation-dc.org Kadampa Meditation Center www.meditation-dc.org/

**THE WASHINGTON STAMP COLLECTORS CLUB (WSCC)** meets at 7 P.M. on the First and Third Wednesdays of every month at Christ United Methodist Church, 300 Eye Street, SW. Visitors are always welcome to take part in our meetings. Ring the church's doorbell at the Eye St. entrance to enter the meeting. https://www.dcstampclub.org/

YOGA AT THE LIBRARY, Saturdays, 11 A.M.-12:45 P.M. Join us for weekly yoga classes. Chair Yoga 11:00-11:30 A.M., Mat Yoga 11:45 A.M. - 12:45 P.M. Please come in comfortable clothes to move in and bring your own mat for mat yoga. Southwest Library, Large Meeting Room.

#### VIEW OUR ON-LINE CALENDAR AT WWW.SWNA.ORG

Submit Calendar events to calendar@thesouthwester. com by the 15th of the month preceding the month it is scheduled.

