Local Activists Call for Community Land Trust at 4th and M Streets SW

BY MATT KOEHLER

On a typical hot and sunny early June day, members of SW DC Action convened a rally at a lot across the street from the Waterfront Metro stop.

“Look at this group of people! I’ve always wanted to do this in front of the people. Can y’all repeat after me, ‘Power to the people!’” Coy McKinney, one of the organizers for SW DC Action, said to

See “Land Trust,” page 13

Jefferson Outdoor Learning Center to Break Ground

BY ELINOR BACON, ER BACON DEVELOPMENT, LLC, PARTNER, HOFFMAN MADISON WATERFRONT

A new destination for learning is coming to the Southwest community as construction begins on an outdoor classroom pavilion at Jefferson Middle School Academy on Maine Avenue SW, across from The Wharf. The project is a joint effort of the DC Students Construction Trades Foundation and DC Public Schools, highlighting career and technical education in Phelps ACE High School and

See “Learning Center,” page 2

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Join Us for An Evening with Smith Center for Healing and the Arts

BY TELMIA D. JONES AND LISA SIMMS BOOTH

A re you interested in learning more about the power of cancer programs, patient navigation and the impact of connection on healing? If so, join the Thelma D. Jones Breast Cancer Fund (TDBCF) as they welcome "An Evening with Smith Center for Healing and the Arts" on Wednesday, July 20 at 6:30 p.m. via Zoom and the TDBCF Facebook page for the fourth consecutive year. Smith Center for Healing and the Arts, a nonprofit health, education, and arts organization located in the heart of U Street NW, pioneered and fostered patient navigation in the Washington, DC region and has become a leader in the nationwide movement to promote the use of the arts in healing. TDBCF Founder Thelma D. Jones was trained as a patient navigator in integrative care at Smith Center more than a decade ago and has enjoyed the benefits of the arts and the power of connection in healing during two residential Smith Center retreats. Smith Center’s mission is to develop and promote healing practices that explore physical, emotional, and mental wellness and lead to life-affirming changes.

Back by popular demand, the support group meeting will be emceed by Lisa Simms Booth, Executive Director of the Smith Center for Healing and the Arts. Booth, a former Senior Director of Patient and Public Engagement at the Biden Cancer Initiative (BCI) who served as the staff lead for BCI’s Patient Navigation Working Group, will lead the evening through a brief overview of Smith Center and will explore the history of patient navigation, Smith Center’s work in the field past, present and future and the importance of connection to healing.

Simms Booth will be joined by Smith Center Senior Advisor Dr. Julia Rowland and Young Adult and Psychosocial Support Programs Director Erin Price. “We are thrilled to join our dear friend Thelma D. Jones and the Thelma D. Jones Breast Cancer Fund at the July meeting to celebrate our continued relationship,” said Simms Booth.

Founded in 1996, Smith Center’s philosophy on healing is a natural and often deeply personal process that can encompass the entire spectrum of our lives—the physical, mental, emotional, and even spiritual. The Smith Center believes that every individual possesses the innate powers to heal within. So mark your calendar and join us for another exciting evening in learning more about cancer programs, patient navigation and arts and healing—physically, mentally, emotionally and spiritually—something we can all benefit from after experiencing the shutdown of our nation from the pandemic.

LEARNING CENTER

Continued from p. 1

STEM learning at Jefferson Middle School Academy. DCS Foundation is one of the grantees of the Wharf’s Workforce Program, and the learning center project is supported by a grant of $350,000.

Hoffman & Associates is the managing member of Hoffman-Madison Waterfront, developer of The Wharf. Monty Hoffman, Chairman and Founder of Hoffman & Associates said, “As a founding board member of the DC Students Construction Trades Foundation, I am thrilled The Wharf has been able to support such an exciting project for the Southwest Community. We look forward to this dynamic new enhancement to the historic renovation of our neighborhood, Jefferson Middle School Academy.”

The design build project has attracted support from leading architectural and construction firms while instructing students about all aspects of the development—concept, design, selecting sustainable materials, obtaining permits, and now construction. The result will be a 1,000 square-foot open-air structure on the school’s campus that will complement the school’s recent award-winning renovation and modernization.

“This partnership brings technical education onto our campus in an exciting way,” said Michelle Mays, director of logistics and strategy for Jefferson Middle School Academy. “The outdoor classroom pavilion will expand our instructional space for both in-school and community programs.”

DC Students Construction Trades Foundation sponsors the Academy of Construction and Design “ACAD” BUILDS internships for high school students to earn and learn while working under the guidance of building industry professionals on projects that create value in the local community. ACAD students previously helped build a single-family house in Northwest DC, took part in renovation and modernization projects at local schools, and built two tiny houses that were featured in the DC Government’s tiny living demonstration site in Northeast Washington.

“We sponsor learning experiences that introduce students to the lifetime benefits of technical education,” said Mark Drury, building industry veteran and president of the DC Students Construction Trades Foundation. “The new site at Jefferson Middle School will teach students about sustainable building and connect them to the natural environment in lessons about the District’s intersecting waterways at The Wharf.”

The Foundation hosted its annual Meet the Future scholarship and awards ceremony at Jefferson Middle School on May 18, kicking off the construction phase of the outdoor classroom pavilion project. Each year, this event recognizes DC Apprentice- ship Academy graduates who earn professional certifications and journey licenses and celebrates the outstanding achievement of high school students in Academy of Construction and Design or ACAD BUILDS Internship programs. These opportunities offer career and technical education, employer mentoring, scholarships and awards that launch District of Columbia youth into industry employment or college degree programs after high school graduation.

StudioMB, project architect and designer of many buildings surrounding the fish market at The Wharf, engaged students throughout the process, and the final outdoor classroom pavilion design incorporates many of the students’ ideas.

“The DC Student Architecture firm, it was a great experience to work with local high school students through the ACAD BUILDS program,” said StudioMB principal Adam McGraw. “Over the course of our mentoring sessions we were able to share our knowledge of the profession as well as listen to interns’ design ideas for the project and hopefully, at the end of the day, we were able to inspire some students to consider architecture as a career path.”
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Faith Community

Riverside Baptist Evolves to Meet the Needs of Southwest for 165 Years

BY GEORGINE WALLACE

At night, the illuminated stained-glass windows of the new Riverside Baptist Church cast a soothing glow on the corner of 7th Street and Maine Avenue SW, providing a morsel of serenity to the busy intersection. The stained-glass windows may look familiar as they were transferred from the preceding structure. In fact, the entire building contains small tributes to special points in their history. The present structure opened in 2018.

According to Church Administrator Sarah Fairbrother, Riverside started its presence in Southwest in 1857 under the name of the Fifth Baptist Church. The church moved several times in its first century, in part to accommodate the size of its growing congregation. In 1957, as the church was celebrating its 100th anniversary, the property was purchased by the Redevelopment Land Agency via eminent domain. This was a shock as they and two other churches had been promised that their property would not be part of the project. Using the funds from the sale of the property, they purchased the current lot at 699 Maine Avenue SW. During the construction of the building, they worshipped at a restaurant by the name of Hogates, an establishment known to long-time Southwester. The congregation changed its name to Riverside in 1969 to reflect their location.

As the years progressed, Riverside’s congregation and values reflected the times. In the 1960’s, Riverside integrated its congregation. In 1992, Riverside opened its doors to members of the LGBTQ + community. They left the conservative Southern Baptist Convention and “reaffirmed its relationship” to the DC Baptist Convention the same year.

Today, the church is without a pastor following the retirement of Reverend Dr. Michael Bedsoe and the assignment of an interim pastor. They hope to call a new pastor this fall. In the interim, the deacons see to the care and spiritual feeding of the congregation by performing visitations and welcoming new members. The church trustees ensure the financial viability of the congregation.

Cheryl Parham, the Chair of Deacons and Outreach and Missions Coordinator, said that they remain active in the community. For example, they helped Westminster Presbyterian Church on their Toys for Tots campaign last December. The congregation is working together to plan a 165th anniversary celebration of Riverside and its place in Southwest’s history.

The church sold part of its land during the last rebuild and created an endowment for the future care of the structure and the congregation. Part of this fund was used recently to award $30,000 in grants, divided among the following local and international organizations: SWNA Scholarship Fund, Friends of SW, Open City Advocates, SOME, The Wanda Alston Foundation, the Poor People’s Campaign, and others.

Toys for Tots is part of the congregation’s ongoing efforts to support those in the community. The congregation has also donated to the Permanent Food Bank and the United Way.

The church’s mission is to provide a morsel of serenity to the busy intersection and to be a welcoming place for all. They hope to call a new pastor this fall, and they look forward to continuing their work in the community.

See “Riverside Baptist,” page 9

Car Wash Raises Funds for Youth Programs

BY SOUTHWESTER STAFF

The Southwest Neighborhood Assembly Youth Activities Task Force (YATF) held its third car wash on Saturday, June 4 in the parking lot of Westminster Presbyterian Church. Plans for a fourth, timed for YATF’s 40th anniversary this fall, are already in the works, according to YATF Chair Thelma D. Jones.

The June car wash earned more than $500, which will benefit YATF’s youth programs, including the proposed cultural outing to the grand opening weekend of the International African American Museum in Charleston, SC on January 20-21. The proposed plan is to take fifteen students and chaperons.

Thanks to support from SW Kin-

shasha Holman Conwill, Deputy Director, Smithsonian National Museum of African American History and Culture and a Jefferson Alum, YATF hosted about a dozen Jefferson Middle School students to the museum’s grand opening in September 2016 and welcome the exposure and new and different cultural experience for the students.

Special thanks to WPC and our generous donors, patrons, and volunteers. To donate to YATF please make your check payable to the Southwest Neighborhood Assembly, note ‘YATF on the memo line, and mail to the Southwest Neighborhood Assembly, P.O. Box 70131, Washington, DC 20024. For more information on YATF please email thelma.d.jones@outlook.com.

A car wash raised funds for the Southwest Neighborhood Assembly Youth Activities Task Force.
**JULY SCHEDULE**

- **WEDNESDAY**
  - JUL 13 - 8:00PM
  - VS. COLUMBUS CREW

- **WEDNESDAY**
  - JUL 20 - 7:30PM
  - VS. FC BAYERN MUNICH
  - INTERNATIONAL FRIENDLY

- **SATURDAY**
  - JUL 23 - 8:00PM
  - VS. CF MONTREAL
  - KIDS NIGHT! / LOLLIPOPS FOR FIRST 5K KIDS

- **SUNDAY**
  - JUL 31 - 5:00PM
  - VS. ORLANDO CITY

PURCHASE TICKETS AT DCUNITED.COM/TICKETS

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**MOVIES ON THE PITCH**

- **JUNE 2**
  - Spider-Man: No Way Home

- **JUNE 30**
  - Sing 2

- **JULY 28**
  - A Quiet Place 2

- **AUGUST 25**
  - In The Heights

PRESENTED BY: CAPITOL RIVERFRONT

---

Spider-Man: No Way Home
Sing 2
A Quiet Place 2
In The Heights

---
Playwright Charles Randolph-Wright Shines Spotlight on Frederick Douglass in Arena Stage World Premiere

BY SHEILA WICKOUSKI

On July 15, Arena Stage will host the world premiere of the musical American Prophet: Frederick Douglass in His Own Words.

Douglass' own words power soaring new melodies and an original script from Grammy Award-winning songwriter Marcus Hummon and Charles Randolph-Wright, also known for Arena Stage's Born for This: The BeBe Winans Story and Broadway's Motown the Musical.

This new work presents Douglass as a fierce abolitionist and distinguished orator and features interactions with key figures including President Abraham Lincoln, activist John Brown and Douglass' wife, Anna Murray-Douglass, without whom his escape from slavery would not have been possible.

Filled with electrifying new songs including "What Does Freedom Look Like," "We Need a Fire" and "A More Perfect Union," the show celebrates the revolutionary legacy of one of history's most famous freedom fighters.

Charles Randolph-Wright's extraordinary career includes previous collaborations with Arena Stage. Ahead of his latest show's opening, he joined The Southwester for an email interview.

The Southwester: Frederick Douglass is known as a great orator. Thousands of pages have been written on his life and work, and Douglass himself wrote three books. How did you and your collaborators begin to condense so much in order to create this show of a few hours?

Charles Randolph-Wright: We decided to focus on a ten year period of Douglass' life, in his 30's and 40's, which encompasses a defining part of his extraordinary journey of identity to become our American Prophet. What we also wanted to show was that this journey was not done alone. His wife Anna figures prominently in our new musical, something we have rarely seen portrayed in history.

The Southwester: What were your earliest recollections of discovering Douglass? When did you decide to create this show?

Charles Randolph-Wright: I am descended from a long line of educators and historians, so I don't remember a time when I was not aware and in awe of Frederick Douglass. Several years ago, I met the amazing Marcus Hummon, who was working on this concept. I heard his music, and immediately knew I had no choice but to get involved.

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HELPING HUMANITY IN CRISIS
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6:00PM – 7:30PM
SW LIBRARY
900 WESLEY PLACE SW

Come along and meet local author and humanitarian Sarah Petrin who will speak on how personal preparedness leads to community resilience, based on her experience working in conflict and disaster operations in 20 countries with the UN, Red Cross, and nongovernmental organizations.

She will share stories of working with communities affected by Hurricane Katrina and Superstorm Sandy in the U.S. and how meeting needs in our own neighborhood begins with assessing potential risks and anticipating unexpected events.

CALL BEN CURRAN FOR MORE INFORMATION 202 294-7043
Obituaries

Southwest Resident Irv Gamza Passes Away After Life of Service

BY SOUTHWESTER STAFF

Longtime Southwest resident Irv Gamza died on June 9, 2022 at the age of 97. Born in Pinsk, Poland, Gamza emigrated with his family to the United States in 1929. After growing up in New York City and attending City College of New York, Gamza served honorably in the U.S. Army Air Corps in World War II. He moved to Washington in the early 1950’s, where we worked in the Office of the Secretary at the Department of Defense.

Gamza was a resident of what was then known as Carrollsburg Apartments beginning in the late 1960’s, and became an original unit owner at Carrollsburg, A Condominium in 1980.

An active volunteer with the Metropolitan Police Department First Police District for many years, Gamza participated in Orange Hat and citizen walks, holiday children’s party and school fundraising, monthly Police Service Area meetings, nominations and screening for police officer awards, and the monthly First Police District Citizens Advisory Council with the First District Commanders. He was also an original member of Fourth Street Neighborhood Group, a collaborative group of condo and coop leadership.

Irv Gamza felt a calling to be an exemplary citizen and do everything he could to make Southwest a safer and better place for all its residents, many of whom became his unofficial family. He will be missed by many.

Irv Gamza

Courtesy of the Author

Summer in Full Swing for Serve Your City/Ward 6 Mutual Aid

BY REGINA MAZUR

Keeping our community safe has been a long-standing priority of Serve Your City/Ward 6 Mutual Aid (SYC/W6MA). For more than two years, the Southwest community has been coming together, providing invaluable support to each other with food, cleaning supplies, household items, and clothing. They have been putting a continuous effort into providing our neighbors with food and supplies throughout the COVID-19 pandemic and beyond.

A partnership between the Christ United Methodist Church and the Southwest Pod of SYC/W6MA as well as their collective work with Black and Brown grassroots organizations have proven to be an incredible contribution to this cause.

The Southwest Pod is incredibly grateful for the donations and support that they continue to receive. These supplies are critical to aiding our neighbors in need. It is a great accomplishment to unite as a community and support each other.

In April and May, SYC/W6MA hosted a temporary Clothing Closet at our Southwest Pod in Christ United Methodist Church (CUMC). This project involved accepting clothing donations, which were checked for cleanliness and quality and then organized and displayed by size. Multiple volunteers spent hours assisting with that project. The care and desire to help these in need and the effort put forward by the people who helped make this project a true success.

Throughout the month of May, community members made appointments to come and select men’s, women’s, and children’s clothing that they needed. The donations of new underwear and socks from the CUMC congregation and SYC/W6MA were much appreciated by the over 100 individuals who were served during this project.

Summer is in full swing!

Sign up your DC student for Serve Your City/Ward 6 Mutual Aid’s Free School for Unlimited Youth Summer 2022 Program! Teen art camp, tapeze school, robots & coding learning camp, field trips & more. **Register TODAY at: bit.ly/sycw6masummer22 (*next steps will be emailed upon online registration.) Questions? Email us at: youthenrichment@serveyourcitydc.org

Interested in ways to help?

SYC/W6MA continues to collect non-perishable foods, toiletries, and household cleaning items on Wednesdays and Fridays from 3:00 p.m. to 5:00 p.m. and Saturdays from 11:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m. at Christ United Methodist Church’s back courtyard gate (900 4th Street Southwest: entrance near library).

This Month’s Donation Needs:

- **Food:** canned fruit, soup, cold cereal, pasta sauce, canned tuna, or chicken
- **Cleaning:** spray disinfectant, Pine-Sol or other cleaning concentrates, dish soap, sponges, bathroom

See “Mutual Aid” page 9
Breast Cancer 101 Event to Offer Free Information, Mammography Registration

Continued from p. 4

Want to Learn More or Get Involved?

We need more people to help with the food distribution on Saturdays. Please contact us for more information at swmutualaid@servyourcity.org.

BY SOUTHWESTER STAFF

In partnership with GOODProj-ects, James Creek and Syphax Gardens Resident Councils and the SWBID, the Thelma D. Jones Breast Cancer Fund (TDJBCF) is hosting Breast Cancer 101 on Monday, July 11, 2022, from 2:00 p.m. – 4:00 p.m. at River Park, 1311 Delaware Avenue SW, Washington, DC 20024.

Free and open to Southwest residents only, Breast Cancer 101 will feature powerful stories of survivors, discussions on myths and misconceptions, prevention, importance of mammography screening and adherence, risks, causes, symptoms, diagnosis, treatment options, genetic counseling and testing and survivorship.

Additionally, the event will offer on-site registration for mammography screening at the Capital Breast Care Center.

The event was created based on demonstrated community need, as Southwest residents previously shared the ways cancer has touched their lives at the Liberty Fest and Earth Day event held along Canal Street near the Greenleaf Recreation Field. TDJBCF founder Thelma D. Jones spoke to local residents from an information table at the event.

“Of all the tabling I’ve done since my 2007 diagnosis, this event was a wake-up call for me,” Jones said. “Practically everyone that visited my table and signed up for further assistance was either a breast cancer survivor or their sister or mother was one. One resident even indicated that she had five members in her family who were or had experienced some form of cancer. I knew then that we had to do something, as early detection saves lives and no one should have to walk their cancer journey alone.”

Breast Cancer 101 will also feature guest speaker Dr. Lucile Adams-Campbell, Professor of Oncology, Senior Dean Associate, Community Outreach and Engagement, and Associate Director, Minority Health & Health Disparities Research at the Lombardi Comprehensive Cancer Center.

Registration is required by Friday, July 8, 2022. Please RSVP to Thelma D. Jones at (202) 251-1639. Fresh produce, refreshments, gift bags and raffle prizes will be available.

 continua...
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?

![Two scenes side by side](image)

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

Answers from June 2022 issue
Differences: The right picture has more stars; the picture on the right has a purple alien on the side; the comets are different in each picture; the picture on the right has an alien standing on the planet in the lower corner; in the picture on the right, the alien in the flying saucer has a mustache; in the picture on the right, the animal in the rocket has a hat.

WORD SEARCH: INDEPENDENCE DAY!

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U U D X B O F K L N K F X N S
L R H F C D L I J U N Y U T
A M E R I C A Q E E R R P F R
P Q F L K R G P E I T Z Z V I
R J Q C Z D E D O N W F Y O P
M N G E H R O W U R T A O W E
Y X W X U M V O O B M U N E S
D T I M D C C R A R B O V E J
A N M I J U K E K Y P K V J J B
U H R L S S R B B N X S K X S
U V C M Z T X R K M B J T I
K Z Q S E D A R A O T T G N
N S T H G I R U R G B A B J K
T A N J Z W I P X S V C S L H
L U V K S A L D S K T P I A B
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Jokes!
Do fish get summer break?  
No, because they’re always in schools!

What is a shark’s favorite sandwich?  
Peanut butter and jellyfish!

What do you call a snowman in July?  
A puddle!

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. $4 \times 4 = $
- b. $39 - 10 = $
- c. $450 + 450 = $
- d. $6 \times 6 = $
- e. $52 + 48 = $
- f. $25 + 25 + 25 = $
- g. $11 - 11 = $
- h. $125 + 25 = $
CELEBRATE!

2022
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Career-Spanning Exhibit Showcases Sam Gilliam in the Round

BY SOUTHWESTER STAFF

For the past 60 years since he moved from Tupelo, Mississippi to Washington, D.C., Sam Gilliam has been a significant abstractionist artist, and his work is on view at the Hirshhorn Museum and Sculpture Garden through September 11, 2022. For more information, please visit si.edu/hirshhorn.

Sam Gilliam: Full Circle is a special treat for all who have followed the career of the pioneering abstractionist artist.

The exhibit opens with one of Gilliam’s earlier works, Rail (1977), which is in the Hirshhorn’s permanent collection. The immense work, 15 feet in length with stained underpinning pieced canvas structure and deep tones, is a counterpoint to his latest works, a series of circular paintings (or tondos) created in 2021.

Ranging in size from three to five feet in diameter, each tondo begins with a beveled wood panel, which is loaded with layers of dense, vibrant pigments, their aggregate effect heightened through the addition of thickening agents, sawdust, shimmering metal fragments, wood scraps and other studio debris. The course surfaces are abraded, smeared and scraped with a stiff metal rake and other tools to reveal a constellation of textures and colors below the surface. The Hirshhorn Museum and Sculpture Garden, with its circular second floor gallery, provides a unique venue to experience the round-shaped tondos.

Gilliam’s approach focuses on the cornerstones of abstraction: color, materials and space as form. He has cited the improvisatory ethos of jazz as an influence in his works, and particularly jazz saxophonist John Coltrane. Gilliam’s work is a study in color, its contrast, placement and movement within the space of a given painting. As the tondos grow in diameter, he fills the space with an ever-increasing and complex series of micro colors below the surface. The Hirshhorn Museum has created a special, limited-edition, lenticular poster to commemorate the exhibit. The Hirshhorn website also provides a look at select works from the exhibit.

Sam Gilliam: Full Circle is on view through September 11, 2022. For more information, please visit hirshhorn.si.edu.

The Family That Reads Together

BY KITTY FELDE

When I was growing up, I often heard the phrase from Fr. Patrick Peyton, “The family that prays together stays together.” At the National Council of Teachers of English conference, I was reminded of that mantra when I heard about Family Book Clubs.

Family Book Clubs are similar to a grownup book club – minus the alcohol.

Kids and their parents read the same book. Families can read separately, take turns reading a chapter aloud, or you can read to your child at bedtime.

Once a month, set aside 45 minutes to discuss the novel. Find a quiet place with few distractions. Phones off.

Feed the kids. Get that blood sugar going. It could be donuts and juice on a Saturday morning, or an afterschool gabfest over pizza.

Make it fun: kids can create book-themed decorations. Adults can create a fun quiz to kick things off.

Give your Family Book Club permission to veer off on a tangent. This happens all the time on the Book Club for Kids podcast. Those left turns are where the conversation goes deep. You’ll be amazed at the topics that crop up, inspired by one tiny thing in that book.

Shannon Brandt, an instructional coach for Auburn City Schools, says parents in particular love the program. “It’s like bringing back their bonding time,” she says, “the days when they would crawl into bed with their kids and read aloud.” Shannon says one parent confessed she was “heartbroken” when her kids outgrew the bedtime ritual and wanted to read on their own. Now, she says, the family has a shared experience again, rekindling the bonding she had missed.

And if you need book suggestions, check out the “Books We Love” page at bookclubforkids.org.

Kitty Felde is host of the Book Club for Kids podcast and author of The Mendoza Mysteries series of books and podcasts. Her latest is State of the Union.
Spy Museum Hosts Pop-Up Exhibit on Daring Colombian Operation

BY SOUTHWESTER STAFF

The International Spy Museum on L’Enfant Plaza has opened a new pop-up exhibit telling the story of Operación Jaque, a deception operation planned and executed by Colombian forces in 2008.

Artifacts on loan from the Embassy of Colombia in the United States can be viewed at the exhibit, where visitors will learn about an operation involving codebreaking, cover identities, and the successful rescue of 15 hostages held by the FARC in the Colombian jungles—all without spilling a drop of blood.

Among the rescued hostages was Colombian Senator Ingrid Betancourt, who was campaigning for president when she was kidnapped by the FARC and held for over seven years before being freed in Operación Jaque.

At the heart of the operation was an electronic deception. Colombian Army cryptanalysts, who had broken FARC radio communication codes, came up with a plan to imitate FARC broadcasters. Over several months, a Signals Intelligence (SIGINT) team sent encrypted messages to the FARC camp they believed was holding the hostages, and tricked a FARC leader into bringing the hostages to a location where Colombian forces could carry out a rescue operation.

After months of planning, the FARC emerged from the jungle, believing they were greeting a group of humanitarian mission workers, TV journalists, and FARC colleagues who would transfer their hostages to another FARC camp. In fact, they were handing their hostages directly into the hands of undercover Colombian Army intelligence agents.

The exhibit will be on view through the end of the year, including as the International Spy Museum celebrates its 20th anniversary on July 19, 2022.

LAND TRUST

Continued from p. 1

the gathered crowd of more than 100.

The reason for the rally? Recently, two parcels of land at 425 and 375 M Street SW, which had been slated for development, went up for sale. Activists and a rapidly growing number of Southwest residents have been pushing the city to purchase the parcels and put them in a community land trust (CLT). CLTs were born out of the civil rights movement and were first used by Black sharecroppers after they lost their homes and jobs for registering to vote.

According to a 2019 study by Grounded Solutions, CLTs are increasingly being used by people of color and provide stable, affordable housing over generations, as well as stave off displacement. They are also an effective way for lower-middle-income families to build wealth and either avoid poverty or escape it.

A post-rally press release, SW DC Action said: “[CLTs] are non-profit organizations that own land and lease access to it at affordable and below market-rate prices for housing and retail. CLTs have been proven to prevent gentrification and the displacement of residents and small businesses.

A CLT at the site would provide the opportunity for residents to control and steward the land while also allowing the possibility of permanently affordable housing and retail space.”

The two parcels have been in limbo for more than 12 years and were originally zoned for commercial development.

“In 2017, the developers submitted to the zoning commission that they wanted to change the zoning from commercial to residential, and what they wanted to build here was 598 units — 8% of those units would be quote-unquote, affordable,” McKinney explained to the rally-goers. “So that’s when myself, along with a group of other Southwest residents got involved and said, ‘Hell no.’

An underlying philosophy guiding SW DC Action’s advocacy is the belief that the most fundamental and transformative part of the effort in Southwest (and elsewhere) is the collective ownership and stewardship of the land.

“There should be more of that wherever possible, not less,” McKinney said in a follow up email to The Southwester.

In December 2019, the nascent activist group held a press conference on the same parcels as the rally. They were filing a brief with the Court of Appeals to halt the development and push for more affordable housing, as well as time for the community to weigh in. The appeal ultimately failed, with the court siding with the Zoning Commission, but now that doesn’t seem to matter as the land is up for sale.

For the last several years, the parcels, particularly 425 M Street SW, have become community and cultural assets inseparable from Southwest itself. The lots have hosted a weekly farmers market that goes year round and a night market every other Friday during the warmer months. They’ve also hosted the state fair and the 202 Creates festival. And generally, people use the lots across the street from the metro to gather, hang out, or just take a lunch break for free.

“This space is so central and integral to our community,” Thelma Jones, one of the activists and long-time community icon, told the crowd. “A community like ours needs a central place to convene and meet. This is that space, and we want it to stay that space.”

It’s not just that the spaces host some events, though, as there’s a deeper community buy-in, according to Jones. “Many different people of all walks of Southwest come [here]. Our low-income families come here to purchase fresh produce — to use their Produce Plus card, so that they can go home with nutritious food. And they’re not feeling that they’re in a food desert, which is representative of so many places in our city.”

However, the space and what it offers isn’t just a community asset. Many of the vendors are local Black and Brown business owners who can’t afford the high rent of a brick and mortar at The Wharf, for example, or elsewhere. Without this space, its convenient and visible location, and popularity, these vendors might be out of luck, and out of business.

“If the vendors are pushed away from here, where else will they go?” Jones said. “Some people say well, there’s a lot of other places they can go. That’s not true. That’s simply not true. We wouldn’t be taking up your time if that were the case. This is our space for a centrally located space to gather, shop, and celebrate.”

What is the path forward? It’s unclear right now, even as community support grows. SW DC Action’s petition was filed in March with the court, along with a group of other Southwest residents, and community buy-in, according to Jones. “We’re gonna get the land somehow.”

Kiesha Davis, who spoke at the rally and is the community engagement coordinator for Douglas CLT, said: “[W]e need more presence to go down…[a]nd let these elected officials know that we’re gonna get the land somehow.”

A Ward 3 community member, who requested to remain anonymous but is deeply embedded in the CLT movement, said over email, “to control development outcomes the city must prepare in advance to buy land when it comes on the market, for example, 4th and M Streets SW and the former Wardman hotel site.”

Margaret Dwyer, convener of Ward 3 Housing Justice, a grassroots group organizing for affordable housing in Ward 3, wrote in an email that they “Stand in solidarity with SW DC Action and the Southwester community in calling for the city to acquire the parcels at 4th and M Streets SW.”

Dwyer likened the push to acquire the Southwest parcels to the failure at the Wardman Hotel (in Ward 3), which she said was a “huge missed opportunity.” Dwyer also said that waiting for private developers to produce the neighborhood serving amenities and affordable housing doesn’t work. “This is the moment for the Bowser administration to step up and change business as usual. The proposal from SW DC Action is simple and brilliant: Acquire the lots, turn them over to a Community Land Trust, and create true community assets. We agree. No more Wardmans.”
Submit Calendar events to calendar@thesouthwester.com by the 15th of the month preceding the month it is scheduled.

Due to COVID-19, there may be last-minute changes to these events. Be sure to check the web references or telephone numbers in the listings.
CALENDAR
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not received this empowerment please join us for another puja, such as Heart Jewel and Wishfulfilling Jewel. Dakini Yoga is the tantric practice of Vajrayogini, a female enlightened being. This prayer session is open for in-person and online participation. To get the link for online participation please email epc@meditation-dc.org. Kadampa Meditation Center DC. https://meditation-dc.org/

IN PERSON DOMESTIC VIOLENCE WALK-IN CLINIC, Wednesdays, 1-4 P.M. Call DC Volunteers Lawyer Project to make an appointment: 202-425-7573

ENCORE ROCKS CHOIR REHEARSAL, Tuesdays, 6:30-8 P.M. Seated 90-minute rehearsals. Tuition-based and led by a professional choral conductor. For additional information, contact: https://encorecreativity.org/programs/encore-rocks

EVENING PRAYER, Tuesdays, 6:30 P.M. St. Augustine’s Episcopal Church. https://www.staugustinesdc.org/

FARMERS MARKET SW, Saturdays 9 A.M. - 1 P.M. at the Lot SW, 4th & M St SW. Join us to show support for our farmers and food artisans selling local produce, sustainable meat & eggs, fresh baked breads, and hot cuisines from around the world. The market features live music and performances, community organizations, kids’ activities, and special giveaways and promotions throughout the season, with support from our sponsors at the Southwest Business Improvement District and Waterfront Station.

FREE COVID SELF TEST, Saturdays, 10 A.M. - 4 P.M. 48 hour results. Westminster Presbyterian Church.

HYBRID GODLY PLAY FOR CHILDREN, Sundays, 10 A.M. 4-12 years old. Westminster Presbyterian Church.

HYBRID WORSHIP SERVICE, Sundays, 11 A.M. All Welcome to share in inspiring worship! Westminster Presbyterian Church.


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! Southwest Neighborhood Library.

MONTDAY NIGHT MEDITATION, Mondays, 6 P.M. These classes include a guided meditation, short teaching, and beautiful chanted prayers for world peace. The focus is on solutions to problems in daily life, authentic optimism, and the development of altruistic love and compassion. Suitable for everyone. Each class is self-contained and can be joined on a drop-in basis. Everyone is welcome. Kadampa Meditation Center https://meditation-dc.org/

MUSIC AT THE DUCK POND, Wednesdays, 5 P.M. Community open mic sign-ups start at 4:30 P.M., open mic starts promptly at 5 P.M. Concert starts at 6 P.M. Southwest Duck Pond.

NARCOTICS ANONYMOUS (ZOOM), Wednesdays, 7-8 P.M. Contact Westminster Presbyterian Church for more information: wpcdcoffice@gmail.com

RESISTANCE BIBLE STUDY (ZOOM), Tuesdays, 6:30 P.M. Discuss timely issues on Jesus and social justice. Westminster Presbyterian Church. https://westministerdc.org/

REST AND REFLECT, Tuesdays, 6 P.M. To participate in-person for this chanted prayer session doors open 15 minutes before start time and lock promptly at start time. Kadampa Meditation Center. https://meditation-dc.org/

SENSORY PLAYTIME, Fridays, 10:30-11:30 A.M. Babies, toddlers, and preschoolers are invited to play and explore their senses in front of the Library. Just bring your imagination; we’ll supply the materials. Southwest Neighborhood Library. https://www.dclibrary.org/southwest

STORY TIME FOR BABIES AND TODDLERS, Wednesdays, 10:30-11 A.M. Come join us for stories and songs for your little ones! We will have fun and help babies and toddlers develop literacy skills. Southwest Neighborhood Library Large Meeting Room.

STORY TIME, Thursdays, 6-6:30 P.M. Come to the Southwest Library for story time fun all July long! On Thursday nights, you’re invited to come to the library in your pajamas for Pajama Story Time! Contact southwestlibrary@dcl.gov for more information.

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/

YOGA AT THE WHARF, Sundays, 9-10 A.M. through August 30th. Unwind with an hour-long vinyasa outdoor yoga session taught by District Flow Yoga every Tuesday evening and Sunday morning on Transit Pier at The Wharf. Enjoy waterfront views and fresh air as you shed the stress of the day or greet the new one. The class costs $15. Tickets must be purchased on Eventbrite. We look forward to seeing you on the pier!

20’s AND 30’S HAPPY HOUR - VIRTUAL, Second Thursdays, 6-7 P.M. The 20’s & 30’s group meets virtually for Happy Hour, and you’re invited! Here, you’ll find young adults creating time and space for intentional community. All are welcome to this space. This Happy Hour is meeting VIRTUALLY via Google Meet. - https://meet.google.com/yny-tdqk-iir. For additional information or questions, please email Lori at Lopitts12@gmail.com.

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.

Photo of the Month
Winner: Shelby Poage

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

In Da Club
50 Cent

Just Fine
Mary J. Blige

I’ll Always Love My Momma
The Intruders

I Want To Know Your Name
The Whispers

Forever Mine
The O’Jays

Blee Me (The Prayer Of Jabez)
Donald Lawrence & The Tri-City Singers

Amazing
Ricky Dillard & New G

Dear Mama
2Pac

Boogie Nights
Heatwave

Trouble Man
Marvin Gaye

Million Dollars
The Soul Generation

Run Joe
Chuck Brown

Love U 4 Life
Jodeci

Time Will Reveal
Debarge

Love
Lyfe Jennings

My Life
Mary J. Blige

Portuguese Love
Teena Marie

Careless Whisper
Teena Marie

Hard Knock Life
Jay-Z

Sorry
Rick Ross, Chris Brown

No More Drama
Mary J. Blige

Kisses In The Night
Cashma

Ojitos Lindos
Bad Bunny, Bomba Estero

Lemonade
Gucci Mane

Listen to the playlist on Spotify
https://spoti.fi/3zH5FUa

@swbid
swbid.org