



Dupont Circle Village

Special Interest Articles:

- ◆ Village Gets \$25,000 Grant
- ◆ Village Helps Member With Career Change
- ◆ One Member's Medical Experiences
- ◆ DCV's First Group Dinner

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Village Receives \$25,000 Grant

Thanks to the ANC2B, the Village will receive a \$25,000 grant. The money is from the first installment of an amenity package agreement with the Planned Urban Development (PUD) at 1616 Rhode Island, Avenue, NW. The Center for Strategic and International Studies is the current developer, although the agreement was reached by the ANC and DCCA in December 2006 with a previous developer.

Mike Silverstein, chair of the ANC, made the announcement at its October meeting. "When we are able to provide a grant like this to people in our community, our neighbors and friends," he said, "it is a payoff for all the work we do, all the meetings we

attend, all the initiatives that don't pan out." He went on to point out that "we can accomplish so many wonderful things when we all work together."

The Village plans to use the money to help subsidize lower income memberships and to expand volunteer activities and outreach efforts in the community. A portion of the grant will be set aside as a reserve fund.

The original developer sought zoning exemptions for the project, which is next to the Human Rights Campaign building. Under DC law, a developer can exceed zoning limits by negotiating an amenities package with the community if a portion of its anticipated revenue is allocated to the neighborhood.

The ANC spent more than \$30,000 in legal fees and associated costs but emerged with a deal totaling \$30,000.

"We can accomplish so many wonderful things when we all work together"

Mike Silverstein
ANC Chair

It originally included funding for projects that already have been completed, so both organizations, knowing that the Village recently lost \$25,000 in funding from the District because of budget cutbacks, generously agreed to reconfigure the package and direct money to the Village.

Silverstein announced the grant on the eve of the 2009 House Tour. "I wanted to do this now," he said, "to point out the value of DCCA to our community and to show just how important they are."

Saluting Our Champions

Mark Bjorge, commissioner for ANC2B05 in 2006, and **Rob Halligan**, former DCCA president, are two people instrumental for brokering the deal that brought the \$25,000 to the Village. Mark fought relentlessly to convince the ANC to spend the money (almost an entire year's budget for the ANC) needed to battle the developer to raise the amenities package from the initial \$75,000 offer. **Darren Bowie** was chair of the ANC when the deal was finalized. Current ANC chair **Mike Silverstein**, along with the full support of DCCA president **Robin Diener**, initiated the reconfiguration that made the grant to the Village possible.

Village Weaver Fashions a New Life

Alaire Rieffel, along with her husband, **Lex**, is a long-time Dupont Circle resident who has been involved in myriad community activities over the years. She recently joined DCV and already declares the services she received “worth the price of the membership.”

About to launch her third career, Alaire sought advice from DCV executive director Amy Gyau-Moyer about health insurance plans and options available to her and her family as an independent professional. The switch means she will have to contract for her own health coverage and so she turned to the Village for guidance about COBRA and the range of health insurance available. “I tried getting quotes on the phone,” she reports, “but it a difficult giving private information on the phone to many people, which made



Alaire at her loom in Washington

me uncomfortable. Amy was able to sort through the various options with me, and helped me understand what’s best for us. She is giving up her current job as patient care technician at Children’s Hospital to join the Breastfeeding Center of Greater Washington in November. Alaire, a licensed lactation consultant, is a strong advocate of breast-

feeding. “Breastfeeding can save lives of both babies and mothers by lowering the risk of many serious diseases,” she says. Her future plans include providing home visit lactation consultations to mothers in the Dupont Circle neighborhood.

In addition to her work, Alaire is also a skilled and dedicated weaver and

became interested in weaving when my mother learned to weave. Later I bought a Swedish loom on E-bay,” she reports.

Alaire’s professional and private lives are pretty varied: she worked as a staff lawyer, an emergency technician at George Washington Hospital, and represented Ward 2 on the D.C. Board of Education where she successfully fought the demolition of Sumner School.

When asked why she decided to join the Village, Alaire said, “I have already met a number of neighbors who have become new friends, which makes me feel more connected to the community and I hope to become involved with some of the social activities, like the knitting group that is being formed.”

Do You Know Your Code?

Do you know the personal code number that enables you to benefit from the information available on the website of *Washington Consumers’ Checkbook*?

As a Village member you automatically are eligible to access ratings about local businesses ranging from auto repair shops to kitchen appliances

and in-depth articles. Villager **Dan Gamber** notes “it’s much better than Amy’s List because there are more contributors.”

If you have misplaced or didn’t get your personal access code, please contact executive director Amy Gyau-Moyer (202-436-5252 or contact@Dupontcirclevillage.org).

News Notes



The rain let up just in time for DCCA’s 2009 House Tour. This year’s tour featured a variety of public as well as private buildings, which made for a nice mixture. The volunteer reception following the tour included lots of Villagers: **Rick Busch, Nancy & Dan Gamber, Susan & Bob Meehan, Iris Molotsky, Judith Neibrief, Gerry Schwinn, Peggy Simpson, Judy Werdel** and **Abigail Wiebenson**.

Congratulations to **Alaire** and **Lex Reiffel**, who just celebrated their 40th wedding anniversary with family at their house in Rappahonnack.

Jewel and Guido Fenzi moved into their new digs at Thomas House and we send our best wishes to them. Luckily for us they are staying in the neighborhood and will continue their good work.



Many Ideas Aired at DCV Meeting

The October 22 meeting at Sumner School, featuring volunteers and the services they are providing, attracted over 40 people. Judy Silberman's animated description of the Village's yoga program led to new class recruits.

BEST IDEA: Member Burke Dillon's suggestion that the Village invest in a bottle of wine and host a session on how to use iPods and other new technologies. It was warmly received and will be scheduled.

Membership Cards Arrive

All Village members should have received membership cards in the mail this month. We are talking with a dozen cafes and restaurants in the Dupont area to see about discounts for Villagers, such as lower prices during certain hours. And also are approaching other stores to see if we can get breaks on merchandise. In all cases, your membership card would be essential. Tell us if you have a favorite café or restaurant and we will try to arrange a discount.

Helping Other Villagers Make Hard Choices

By Mary Haber

My good friend Kathie and I spent my third chemo day at the Kreeger Museum followed by a delicious lunch afterwards. How could I do it?

I was diagnosed with breast cancer this summer. The message was devastating and from mammogram to sonogram to MRI the screening results got worse. I finally underwent surgery at the end of July and was scheduled to start chemo treatments early September—if I had not gone for a second and third opinion.

I tell this story to help others with similar problems. My friends were comforting me all along and I received so many good suggestions and so much help, I want to pass along some things that I have learned.

My friends were so responsive I never felt alone, although I live alone. I was reluctant at first to accept too much help, but realized that I would want to help my friends in a similar situation, so I agreed when they set up a website with a calendar: www.lotsahelpinghands.com. You can post messages, obtain patient information and sign-up to help. Access is by invitation only.

My health care provider is a health maintenance organization. On the day I received the bad news, I got a call from Kate, the oncology nurse assigned to my case, who mailed me a stack of helpful

Tips For Cancer Patients

- Take a written list of questions for the doctor's visit and write down answers
- Take a companion on all visits, since you will be too stressed to remember answers
- Get copies of all blood tests, screening and reports. Take them to doctors' visits You're the only one who has seen all

brochures and was the single most helpful person during my entire ordeal.

The HMO oncologists prescribed chemo and set up my treatment plan. They told me the treatment was used worldwide with little variation, but I had a choice of intervals between sessions. They did not offer other options.

I went for a second opinion at a university cancer center and they

disagreed with the HMO. I then went for a third opinion. Before making a final recommendation, this doctor ordered a genetic test for the tumor. This test can predict the recurrence of the cancer. My recurrence "score" was 7 percent, which was so low that neither chemo nor radiation was necessary. Instead, I will need to take the same pill for several years that I would have been given after chemo and/or radiation.

Confronted with the results of the gene test, all doctors agreed to the treatment suggested by the third doctor.

Chemo day at the Kreeger Museum? My friend Kathie, who had set aside eight days to accompany me to the HMO chemo location, and I decided to take off those hours from work anyway with outings we never do during the week. We have six more days to go and are looking forward to them!

The moral of the story: If you receive bad news from your doctor, go for a second opinion, or a third, if the first two do not agree with each other.

Feel free to contact me through DCV if you are diagnosed with breast cancer and if you think I may be of help.

Join Us November 3 At First Group Dinner

Join Villagers for our first group dinner, a fixed-price, three-course meal at Scion, 2100 P Street, NW. Joanne Liu, the CEO and owner of Scion, describes the food as “sophisticated casual.”

The date is November 3 at 6:00 pm and we have reserved up to 25 seats in a private room. You will get a choice from two appetizers, four entrees and a dessert for \$19.99 or \$24.99 (depending on the entrée), This includes taxes and tips but not beverages, including coffee. Pay by cash or credit card.

Please call DCV by noon Monday, November 2, to reserve your space (202-436-5252) or email amy@dupontcircle.village.org. Please let us know if you need assistance getting to the dinner.

Villages Across Country Connect

The Village concept is now a national movement. It's become a critical player in the health reform movement spurred on by longevity and the fact that 89 percent of those over 50 want to stay put in the communities they know and love. A daylong *Village-to-Village Network Symposium* on October 25 at Gallaudet's impressive Kellogg Conference Center enabled 186 attendees from Maine to California to learn from national organizations including AARP as well as share successes, dilemmas and ideas with one another. Learning how to “customize, personalize and humanize” Villages to reflect their community circumstances and needs drives their work.

Our Executive Director, Amy Gyau-

Monthly Calendar for November

Tuesday, Nov. 3

6 pm--DCV Group Dinner at Scion Restaurant, 21st and P Streets, NW (see article on this page for details)

Tuesday, Nov. 10

7 pm, Sumner School—Ex. Dir. Amy Gyau-Moyer will take Villagers through Medicare options A,B,C and D, just in time for the open enrollment period in mid-November. (A second session may be scheduled for this topic)

Wednesday, Nov. 11

10 am-- Tour of special photo exhibit of the Scurlock Photography Studio at the American History Museum. Addison N. Scurlock was a pioneering photographer of notable African-American Washingtonians and had a studio at 18th and Swann Streets.

Wednesday, Nov. 18

10-11:30 am--Conversation with Houseworks CEO Andrea Cohen about how a home health care company operates. 1719 Swann Street, NW. Houseworks gives DCV members a 10% discount.

Thursday, Nov. 19 and Friday, Nov. 20

1-5 pm—Senior Safety Driving Refresher courses, taught by AARP. Two four-hour courses. Taking the courses will entitle you to a 5 to 15 percent reduction on your car insurance, depending on your insurer.

Monday, Nov. 23

1:30 pm, National Geographic Museum. Group entry to Terra Cotta Warriors exhibition. Use your ticket to get in early to see the film on the Warriors, starting at noon. The tour is self-guided but by reservation only. We have ordered 15 tickets, at \$8 each.

Thursday, Dec. 10: 6-8 pm—VILLAGE HOLIDAY PARTY

Upcoming Events—visit our website: www.dupontcirclevillage.org)

❖ Panels of experts dissecting reverse mortgages, elder law issues

Moyer, as well as board members Iris Molotsky, Peggy Simpson and Abigail Wiebenson attended. Peggy was on a panel that debriefed participants regarding the newly published AARP study of lessons learned from Villages using six in the Washington area.

Universal challenges for Villages nationally include financial sustainability and encouraging membership for individuals in the prime of life after 50.

The *Village-to-Village Network*, to be launched in January, will link Villages in their efforts

and also provide critical technical know-how for maintaining databases, sending information and a myriad of other important services. This conference represented a significant leap forward for Villages in general and ours in particular.

Villager Stays Green With DCV Help



Marianne Anderson (standing) and Julia Cuniberti with the "released" lily.

When cold weather threatened, Villager **Julia Cuniberti** knew she needed help getting her plants inside. She had a perfect spot—an added sunroom built around a circular staircase.

The plants had been outside all summer and were pretty straggly. They needed repotting but before that could be done, the space had to be cleared. DCV volunteer **Marianne Anderson** arrived at Julia's house at 9:30 am and worked without stop for seven hours.

"She did an incredible job," Julia said, She repotted every plant, carefully displaying them in the best light. All the hanging plants were hung, all the dead branches snipped, all the faded blooms deadheaded.

Julia reported that her lily bloomed the day after being repotted "in thanks for being released." She added, "Marianne is wonderful and I'm grateful too." Marianne plans to return soon to work on the iris bed.



Jazz at the Madison: Old Tunes, New Style, Great Delivery

Fifteen Villagers heard an amazing group, Harmonious Wail, at jazz night at the Madison on October 22. The Wisconsin Group played some jazz, some pop, and some original pieces. DCV had a reserved table upfront and could see all. Villager **Irv Molotsky** asked group leader

Sims Delany-Potthof about an odd instrument he was playing. It looked like a guitar but had only four strings. Sims explained that it was an instrument of his own invention with a banjo neck and a ukulele body, Irv said.

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Executive Board

Peg Simpson, president
Abigail Wiebenson, secretary, vice president
Mary Braden, treasurer
Nancy Hartsock
Caroline Mindel
Iris Molotsky
Marilyn Newton
Bradley Runyan

Executive Director
Amy Gyau-Moyer

Volunteers Work

The number of requests is increasing monthly—an indication that we are doing well by doing good.

In the month of September Dupont Circle Village volunteers filled over a dozen service request from members. The requests range from transportation and computer assistance to gardening and escorting a member to the MVA. One of our volunteers even let a plumber into a member's house while they ran an errand. Many members do not know when to turn to the Village for assistance, so when

when in doubt, **JUST ASK.** With the help of our dedicated volunteers you won't regret that you did.

Gallery plan b Hosts Fundraiser

Gallery plan b's owner **Paula Amt** and manager **David Kalamar** graciously were hosts to a fundraiser on October 8 benefiting Historic Dupont Circle Main Streets, Dupont Circle Village and Logan Circle Community Association.

The three artists for the one-night show were cast

members of *The Real World*, a reality show that filmed in Washington from June to late October and will be aired beginning December 30.

The Gallery, located at 1530 14th Street, NW, raised \$480 for each of the groups. Much thanks to Paula and David for their efforts on our behalf and additional appreciation goes to **Mike Feldstein**, ANC Commissioner and **Paul Williams**, Executive Director of Historic Dupont Circle Main Streets for their support and help.