

Georgetown C I T I Z E N S



CITIZENS ASSOCIATION
of GEORGETOWN

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WWW.CAGTOWN.ORG

CAG Presents Georgetown ARTS 2011

Five Day Show Featuring Resident Artists

The talent of Georgetown resident artists will be on view again this year under one roof at the Shops at Georgetown Park (3222 M Street) for five days—Thursday, January 27, through Tuesday, February 1.

The opening reception will be Thursday evening, January 27, from 6 to 9, with catering compliments of Memorable Meals. CAG's unique show of more than thirty George-



Luca Pivato, Heidi Hess, Travis Price, Hayley Pivato, show coordinator Michele Banks, and Johanna Mueller were part of the creative team that launched CAG ARTS last year

town artists will include painting, photography, sculpture, 2D and 3D mixed media. While some works will be just for display, many will be for sale. There will be an artists' talk on Saturday.

According to Michele Banks, coordinator of the CAG art show, the call for artists is open. To apply—or volunteer to help—please send an email to Michele Banks at cagmail@cagtown.org. Committee

members Elba Molina, Wendy Plotkin and Barbara Downs are busy lining up artists for the second annual presentation, making sure the creative works of Georgetown artists are showcased.

Vornado Realty Trust has generously made available a stunning large store on the Wisconsin Avenue level of

The Shops at Georgetown Park for this event—take the escalator down one level from the Potomac and M Street entrance (next to Dean and Deluca and Intermix)—the CAG Arts 2011 show will be immediately on the right.

So mark your calendar for January 27 through February 1 to see your favorite local artists—and to discover new ones in the neighborhood!



At the first CAG Arts show, Water Street resident Gail Bassin (l) bought a painting from Wendy Plotkin-Mates (r)

GU Campus Plan Threatens Neighborhood

CAG's special edition newsletter **Georgetown University Campus Plan Threatens Neighborhood** was mailed in December to provide information that all residents need to know and consider. Copies are available from the CAG office and it is also posted on the CAG website at www.cagtown.org.

Yard signs (shown here) opposing Georgetown University's campus plan are available for pick up at the CAG office. The signs are 18" by 24" red and white vinyl and are anchored on a metal stick-in frame. If you would like to

support the effort to hold the University to their commitment for responsible growth, please contact the CAG office at 1365 Wisconsin Avenue, Suite 200 (entrance via the exterior staircase on the O Street side). Office hours are Tuesday, Wednesday, and Thursday from 9:30 until 5. Or call (337-7313) or email (cagmail@cagtown.org) to arrange another drop off/pick up time.



PRESIDENT'S LETTER

Happy New Year!

In the past couple of weeks I have heard from Mayor-Elect Vince Gray, Councilman Jack Evans, and the Georgetown business community leaders that DC, and Georgetown in particular, are in great shape going into 2011. I wholeheartedly agree.

2010 was a banner year. Snow-mageddon couldn't stop us. We strapped on our snowshoes and soldiered through. Safeway reopened with spectacular fanfare. And the city unveiled the renovated Georgetown Library which is over the top incredible. New stores are opening almost every week. Houses are being bought and sold. The community seems energized.

Last year CAG's monthly membership meetings showcased amazing venues in our village. It has been fascinating exploring Georgetown and I am impressed with the diversity of spaces. Members have turned out in droves to see the mix of modern, historic, renovated, and open air venues. I am grateful to our generous neighbors for hosting us and looking forward to the meetings to come.

We saluted our Oral History Project's inaugural interviews at the City Tavern Club. Mary Kay Ricks packed Mt Zion Church and captivated us with stories of the Underground Railroad running through Georgetown. The stroller set got their groove on at George, the Concerts in the Parks kickoff party that raised funds for what turned out to be our best concert season yet. The historic Dumbarton House was the ideal site for Claudia Powell to speak about classic architecture and design. The Mayor joined us at the Four Seasons to honor some of the incredible people who have made Georgetown a better place to live and visit. Our Fall Gala was a spectacular evening at the Russian Embassy. And Wisconsin Avenue became a pedestrian plaza for Merriment in Georgetown—the perfect start to the holiday season.

Lots of things are in the works for 2011. Georgetown ARTS 2011 will showcase art from Georgetown residents and business owners. It is stunning to see how much talent we have in our midst. Will it translate to the



Joining me for the reception before the zoning meeting (l-r) Elizabeth Maloy, Pamla Moore, John Hopkins, Shahab Farivar, Jeff and Robin Jones.

kitchen? We are going to find out with CAG's own version of Top Chef. The Concerts Committee is already lining up the bands for the summer concert series and their Kickoff Party is always a welcome reprieve from the winter blahs. The Georgetown Gala Committee is recruiting new members and researching venues for the fall festivities.

We also had success behind the scenes. Our Historic Preservation & Zoning Committee has been reenergized and is tackling many projects including protecting Georgetown's historic character during the zoning law re-write. Crime is down in the residential district, even in these troubled times, through our Public Safety Committee's efforts.

The ABC Committee has worked tirelessly to ensure that the seven new liquor licenses added this year have no adverse impact on nearby residents. I'm looking forward to these new dining options in the hood. Dead trees are gone and new ones have been planted thanks to Trees for Georgetown. Our GU Relations Committee just produced an informative newsletter devoted to the GU Campus Plan. And they have been diligently preparing our case to present to the Zoning Commission. We have lawn signs available for pick up at the office if you would like to show your support.

None of this would be possible without all of the tremendous work of our volunteers.

I hope you will join us as we move into 2011. See our website for more details www.cagtown.org.

—Jennifer Altemus

ASPECTS OF GEORGETOWN

Georgetown Morphing

Some reflections on where we are in early 2011, including our appearance and what might be called our life style. We are morphing. A certain amount of shop purging is still going on, but then a few new and interesting shops are appearing. A number of the really classy shops are still here, so that's good news. And we keep our fingers crossed for them. They are fun to visit even if we can't really justify impulse buying there. Some of the shops that have disappeared we were ready to see go. Good-bye, we think to ourselves, and don't let the door hit you on the way out.

Such a fine word, morphing, evoking the changing, sometimes radical changing, of one person or thing into

another. Many of us went to a community meeting recently where we were told that every square inch of Georgetown was going to be built upon, at least that's what it sounded like. What a truly dismaying idea.

Even the language is changing and somehow being degraded. We don't urge people to do things, we incentivize them. We don't go to a meeting to share thoughts, we go to ideate. When we thank someone now, the response is "no problem." What ever happened to "You're welcome?"

Oh well. Let's segue on into the future. It's easy to get carried away by words, new and old. Here are a few to help you adapt to the new decade and

the new Georgetown. There are some you have heard before and some you never want to hear again. Frenemy: a person with whom one is friendly despite a fundamental dislike. Catastrophizing: overdoing the calamitous nature of things. Manifest, think man up. Staycation: not going anywhere for vacation (ugh). Christmastize: (double ugh). Overthink (not bad), nonversation: a discourse with no substance, one has them all the time. Peppier, the person whose sole job is to grind pepper onto your dinner.

Now you will know how to conduct yourself in the new Georgetown in 2011.

—Edith Schafer

Improving Signage in Georgetown

Georgetown's commercial corridors are both the figurative and literal heart of the neighborhood. Commercial buildings are protected under the historic preservation laws just as residential buildings are. Entities like the Old Georgetown Board and the Historic Preservation Review Board enforce these laws and regulations strictly and, as a result, the buildings that make up the commercial corridors are—for the most part—just as beautiful and historic as the residential buildings.

Too often "though" the signage in, on, and around these stores detract from the beauty and historic integrity of the buildings. For instance, last year several storefronts on the west end of M Street were covered with shrink wrapped advertisements and turned into giant street-level billboards. While that was a particularly egregious example, storefronts throughout Georgetown have many unattractive

signs. Think of all those huge "going out of business" signs for stores that never actually go out of business. Or consider the bright neon or LED lights that have proliferated in the neighborhood recently. While you're thinking of those watch your feet—because you might trip over a sandwich board taking up half the sidewalk.

There really ought to be a law about those. And there is. Every sign that goes up in Georgetown must receive a permit. If it is only a temporary sign (generally those up for fewer than 60 days) it must be permitted by the District's Historic Preservation Office. If it is up for longer, it has to be approved by the Old Georgetown Board.

Right now, those rules apply to all signs within 18" of the store's windows. So if a store hangs a poster in its window without obtaining a permit (either from HPO or OGB) it's violating the rules. Neon or LED signs need permits too. In the near future, that

regulated zone will be increased to four feet.

While these protections are on the books, they are observed more in the breach. Rarely do shopkeepers obtain permits for temporary signs. The Historic Preservation and Zoning Committee of CAG would like to change that. We're working along with the Business Improvement District (BID) and the ANC to educate Georgetown shopkeepers, catalog those that don't come into compliance, and work with HPO to fine commercial businesses that do not.

With a sustained effort, we hope to clean up the shop windows of Georgetown. Please help us by sending or emailing photos of questionable signs to CAG identifying them by address.

—Topher Mathew
CAG Historic Preservation
& Zoning Committee

Large Turnout for CAG Meeting on Zoning

The CAG November 22 general meeting provided more than 120 Georgetowners the opportunity to consider the large number of complicated issues covered by zoning regulations in the District of Columbia, to hear a debate on the current “zoning re-write” being undertaken by the DC Office of Planning (OP), and to ask questions. For residents of Georgetown the new zoning policies being considered will have major long-term implications. In the CAG Newsletter of September 2008, Barbara Zartman put the zoning issue in excellent perspective. “Often put in the my-eyes-glaze-over category, zoning regulations are actually the vital backbone of our community. They constitute a social contract between the people and their government about what can and cannot happen next door, across the street, or down the block. Since the biggest investment most families make is the purchase of their home, zoning’s protection of property rights is much more than theoretical.”

Travis Parker, since 2007 the point person on the re-write at the DC Office of Planning, and Nancy MacWood, Vice-chair of the Committee of 100 on the Federal City, a member of the DC Zoning Revision Task-Force and ANC Commissioner, presented the pros and cons of the current proposed zoning



Standing room only at zoning meeting

regulation changes. Richard Hinds, as CAG’s legal advisor, moderated the discussion. In his written summary of the major issues (a hand-out that evening and soon to be on the CAG Web site), Richard wrote, “While the proposed general regulations are an improvement over existing law in several respects, they could also encourage over-development, increased density, and an increase in non-residential uses in Georgetown that could over time destroy the historic character of DC’s only National Historic Landmark District.”

The CAG Committee on Historic Preservation and Zoning has determined that the zoning re-write will be a high priority issue. A special sub-committee has been formed to monitor the progress of the re-write, attend Zoning Revision Task Force meetings, and seek a customized zone for Georgetown

which maintains the integrity of our neighborhood.

A special thank you to the Letelier Theater in the upper courtyard at 3251 Prospect Street for providing both the reception room and the state-of-the-art theater for the meeting and to Shahab and Maziar Farivar, proprietors of the popular Peacock Café at 3251 Prospect, for the refreshments served by Shahab himself.

On a final note, recently *The Washington Post* reported that Mayor-elect Gray has moved to retain Harriet Tregoning as city planning director. The article states that Ms. Tregoning “...has been a stalwart advocate of easing zoning restrictions to allow higher-density development that takes advantage of public transportation and other non-automobile options.” “Well-organized ‘smart-growth’ supporters had called for her retention, while an influential planning and preservation group with some ties to Gray, the Committee of 100 on the Federal City, had called for her ouster.” We hope to persuade the Office of Planning that historic preservation trumps “smart growth” in Georgetown.

—Pamla Moore, Chair
*Historic Preservation
& Zoning Commission*

GEORGETOWN *Baby* BOOM

CONGRATULATIONS AND A WARM WELCOME TO THE NEW LITTLE ONES

Adelaide Elizabeth—OCTOBER 25 2010
Amy & Josh Kuhnert
Big sister Caroline
Volta Place

Carl Eric—JUNE 26 2010
Heidi & Paul Strain
30th Street

Bradley Ethan (“Ethan”)—AUGUST 26 2010
Melissa & Steve Baur
P Street

Finley Gray Simons—AUGUST 2 2010
Grandparents: Betsy & Steve Cooley
Potomac Street

Please email information about new arrivals to cagmail@cagtown.org

A Few Eastside Updates

For those of you that have driven by the old Friendly property on 31st Street and wondered what was going on...the answer is nothing! I slipped under the green plastic fence the other day, like the intrepid reporter I am, and found the grounds deserted and no evidence of much work having been done. The old artist studio is now what looks to be an unfinished three room apartment, the main house looks much the same, but of course the tennis court is gone. There are few wheelbarrows, bags of cement, nails, old soda bottles and miscellaneous bricks strewn around—but no sign of activity. There have been rumors that the contractor has run out of money, but no one I spoke to could give me any reliable informa-

tion. What a shame! Many of us remember happy days at the Friendly's, playing tennis, sharing a glass of wine, enjoying Mrs. Friendly's generous hospitality.

Scheeles Market has been sold. Beth Wainwright, who lived over the market for over thirty years, has moved out. Apparently the new owners will live there and the good news is that Mr. and Mrs. Lee, the long time proprietors, will continue with the store. I recently saw Mr. Lee at P Street Seven-Eleven buying lottery tickets. He winked at me and said... "my retirement." I'm happy that the property will soon be in good hands and Scheeles will continue to serve its neighbors as it has for so many years.

Also, Sara's Market on Q Street has branched out to include dry cleaning, shoe repair and alterations. According to Sara, business is good.

—V V Harrison




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[Please submit items and info by the 10th of the month prior to the month of publication.]



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JANUARY COMMUNITY EVENTS AND CALENDAR

- Mon. Jan. 3** Advisory Neighborhood Commission (ANC 2E) Public Meeting; 6:30pm; Heritage Room, Georgetown Visitation, 35th & Volta Streets; agenda available at www.anc2e.com; call 338-7427 for more information.
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- Wed. Jan. 5** Mother Goose on the Loose Story Time; 10:30am; story time for children aged infant to 24 months; Georgetown Public Library, 3260 R Street; visit www.dclibrary.org for more information.
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- Thurs. Jan. 20** Georgetown University Performing Arts Center Presents: *The House of Yes*; 8pm; Davis Performing Arts Center, Gonda Theater; \$10 general admission; visit www.performingarts.georgetown.edu to purchase tickets; more showings throughout January.
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- Sat. Jan. 22** Historical Toymaker for Juniors at Dumbarton House; 10am-12pm; learn about daily lives of children during the Federal period and create your own 19th century toy; suitable for 4-5th grade students; \$10 per child, \$5 per adult; Dumbarton House, 2715 Q Street; visit www.dumbartonhouse.org for more information.
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- Tues. Jan. 25** DC Preservation League Tour: "Behind the Scenes of Preservation at Dumbarton House;" 6-8pm; explore how the staff at a historic house museum determines how to accurately reflect the house as it was really lived in by early residents with Museum Curator, S. Scott Scholz; \$15 for members, \$25 for nonmembers; Dumbarton House, 2715 Q Street; call 337-2288 or email info@DumbartonHouse.org for more information.
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- Thurs. Jan. 27** CAG Presents: Georgetown ARTS 2011; a show of Georgetown artist residents at the Shops at Georgetown Park, 3222 M Street; opening reception Thursday 6-9pm; show continues Friday Jan. 28 through Tuesday Feb. 1.
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