

# Georgetown C I T I Z E N S



Citizens Association  
of Georgetown

VOLUME XL / ISSUE 1 / JANUARY 2015

WWW.CAGTOWN.ORG

## CAG Salutes Oral History Pioneers at City Tavern Club

**Betsy Cooley** - CAG Executive Director

**O**n Tuesday, January 13, CAG will hear from well-known Georgetowners Richard Levy, Elizabeth Stevens, Philip Levy, Ann Emmet, and Gary Tischler — all of whom have participated in CAG's oral history project. These engaging Georgetowners have recorded their recollections about life in Georgetown in one-on-one interviews with CAG's oral history volunteers. The results have been fascinating — visit [www.cagtown.org](http://www.cagtown.org) to read the summaries and/or the entire interviews.

Gary Tischler, has known and interviewed the famous and ordinary people of Georgetown for 50 years. Come and meet these living Georgetown legends and hear some of their intriguing stories first hand.

The program begins with brief overview of the project by Oral History Committee Chair, Cathy Farrell. The interviewees will then talk informally about their memories of growing up in or moving to Georgetown, pursuing careers here, raising families, building businesses, entertaining, renovating buildings — and more.

The City Tavern Club will host our evening and will provide refreshments for the reception starting at seven o'clock. The program



**Oral History pioneers from l-r: Ann Emmet, Elizabeth Stevens, Gary Tischler, Philip Levy, and Richard Levy**

Developer Richard Levy and his brother, Bridge Street Books owner Philip Levy, grew up in Georgetown living over their family store on M Street.

In a joint interview they talk about everything from the rough and tumble waterfront including “characters” — businessmen and police officers — of their childhood — and then go on to give an inside, insightful account of commercial development here, including Philip's bookstore, their late brother David's Key and Biograph movie theaters, and Richard's extensive involvement with commercial development, including the founding of the Business Improvement District. Artist Ann Emmet has deep family ties here and reminisces about the old social traditions. Elizabeth Stevens raised three children in Georgetown and relays fond memories of her favorite bookstore, butcher shop, hardware store, and dress shop as well as recollections about the times of the King and Kennedy assassinations. Long-time writer for *The Georgetown*,

begins at 7:30 and ends at 8:30. The City Tavern Club also invites CAG members to continue the evening following the program by offering a cash bar beginning at 8:30 and the opportunity to have dinner on a space-available basis in the Grill Room.

Please join CAG at the elegant City Tavern Club, 3206 M Street, for an evening filled with well-deserved salutes to significant Georgetowners — and their role in capturing the history of Georgetown.

# “GOODNESS IS THE ONLY INVESTMENT THAT NEVER FAILS.”

—Henry David Thoreau

As a leader in Georgetown’s real estate community, our firm proudly supports the Georgetown community. We are proud to sponsor the following event and organizations:

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## President's Letter

**W**elcome to 2015. All of us on the board of the Citizens Association of Georgetown wish you a healthy and peaceful New Year.

January is a month for reflection. Maybe you don't have a list of resolutions, but most of us give some thought to what took place last year that we enjoyed and accomplished and what we did not. For this year, looking forward, I imagine you, as I, hope to accomplish some meaningful goals, whatever they may be, and minimize the things that complicate our lives.

One thing you can count on is that CAG's board and committee members are committed to preserving and improving Georgetown. Toward this goal, we have established good working relationships with the commissioners of ANC2E, Georgetown University leadership, the Georgetown Business Improvement District and the Georgetown Business Association. This bodes well for Georgetown residents.

The CAG newsletter is a good source for important information about how CAG benefits the community. You can enjoy a quick read or, after reading the articles, you may decide on a more active role with the association. I hope the latter is what you chose to do this year. As a member of one of our many working groups, you can learn much about the community – and make new friends. Consider being part of a committee, including Concerts in the Parks, Transportation, Parking, the Gala, Historic Preservation & Zoning, Public Safety & Guards, Trash & Rodents, Trees for Georgetown, Membership & Meetings or Alcohol Beverage Control. We need you!

Your membership and dues are also important to fulfill CAG's mission and meet the needs of the community. Although we invite all in

the community to attend our free monthly meetings, it is membership dues that keep our office open. As costs for postage, printing, computers, production of the newsletter, bookkeeper fees, insurance and office supplies continue to climb, our need for additional income has grown. In February, dues will be raised for the first time in eight years: individuals, \$55 from \$50; families, \$75 from \$65. Please consider renewing today or, if not a member, please join so we may continue to provide our community with our many important services.

CAG's 2015 goal is to increase membership so that we can better meet your needs. We are developing a plan, determining what our members want, assessing how we currently meet their needs, and identifying who are not members and why. How can we become more relevant to them? How can we more effectively communicate our mission and achievements?

As we move into the new year, your ideas on how best to grow CAG membership would be greatly appreciated. Please give me your ideas – [cag-president@cagtown.org](mailto:cag-president@cagtown.org).

*Pamla Moore - CAG President*



### Trees For Georgetown

This year, Trees for Georgetown will be planting 50 new trees. All trees are native species including shumard, swamp white, scarlet, burr and willow oak; hackberry; American hornbeam; sweetgum; London plane; and American elm. We are particularly excited about a new sweetgum hybrid – sweetgum Worpleston—which has brilliant red fall color, replacing the maples that are no longer being planted as a street tree.

Planting will begin in early spring, hopefully the first week of March, depending on the weather.

As always, our contractor, Casey Trees, will be taking all tree boxes down to sidewalk level and removing all non-regulation surrounds including bricks, rocks, and railroad ties. Work began in December and will continue through January and February. Thanks to all whose generous donations have helped to keep Trees for Georgetown growing.

*Betsy Emes - Chair Trees For Georgetown*

## Public Safety Update

**John Rentzepis and Jennie Buehler - Public Safety Committee**

**T**he 2014 fourth-quarter crime report for PSA 206 is in. Violent crime showed a slight decrease from the same period last year (10/1-12/31) from 18 total incidents to 17. This can largely be attributed to a drop in assaults with a dangerous weapon excluding a gun from six to two incidents.

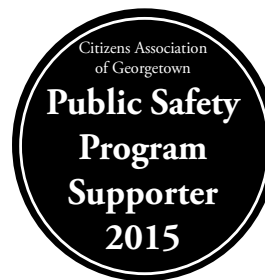
Compared to the fourth-quarter of 2013, property crime has increased with a total of 255 incidents this quarter vs. 187 last year. This quarter's property crime includes a significant increase in theft from 141 to 189 incidents. Theft from auto was also a contributing factor from 31 incidents in the same period last year to 45 this year, as well as stolen auto from five to 10 incidents.

During this period, MPD substantially increased its resources to Georgetown, and apprehended several suspects, including a thief caught near Rose Park breaking into cars. Despite this, crimes of opportunity have increased. This is a good reminder to check that your doors and windows are locked (even when you are at home) and to lock your car and leave nothing visible, including chargers, plugs, and cords. Remove valuables including your garage door opener. Also, have your packages delivered to an office address, and help your neighbors by hiding their packages at their downstairs entrance (if possible), or bring their packages to your home and let them know. Always carry your cell phone and call 911 to report anything suspicious.

Thanks to all our Block Captains, CAG Guards, and supporters of the CAG Public Safety program.

### 2015 Public Safety Program

Have you made your donation to support CAG's Public Safety Program? Donations can be made online at [www.cagtown.org](http://www.cagtown.org) or by calling the CAG office: 337-7313. Be sure to send in your contribution and post your window sticker!



## Georgetown Arts 2015 set for February 12-15

**Jennie Buehler - Program Manager**

**P**lans are afoot for the annual Georgetown Arts Show 2015 being held at House of Sweden in their premier gallery space. The show features art work by Georgetown residents or artists who have studios in Georgetown. Each year brings together new and exciting work varying in medium, size and genre. Georgetown Arts opening reception is on Thursday, February 12 from 6-9pm. The show will continue through the weekend from Friday, Feb. 13 through Sunday, Feb. 15 from 11 am to 5pm.

The slate of participants is shaping up to include a number of returning artists and some new talent.

Returning artist Fabiano Amin is self-taught. His signature use of bold colors and sweeping brush strokes make his abstract works come to life. Amin credits his Brazilian roots for his use of color and the theme of music in his art.



*Blue Bottle* by returning artist **Fabiano Amin**

Another returning artist, Cynthia Howar, depicts colorful saturated landscapes in her watercolor pieces. Ms. Howar has been known to study here locally in Washington DC and travel abroad to Europe to paint en plein air.



*Ode to Wolf Kahn* by returning artist and sponsor **Cynthia Howar**

The show also will feature mid-day "art talks" on Saturday, Feb. 8 and Sunday, Feb. 9, when chosen artists will discuss their art pieces, inspiration and other life experiences. Most works will be for sale, with a portion of the proceeds going to support CAG.

The Citizens Association of Georgetown invites all to come celebrate and view various types of art and behold the creativity of local artists at House of Sweden!



## West Heating Plant Update

Walter Groszyk - *Historic Preservation Committee*

**A**t its November meeting, the Old Georgetown Board (OGB) heard presentations by two structural engineering firms on the condition of the former West Heating Plant (WHP). The WHP, on 29th St., was sold in 2013 by the Federal government to a development team comprised of the Richard Levy Group, the Georgetown Co of New York City, and the Four Seasons Hotels and Resorts.

At a year earlier meeting of the OGB, the Board asked that a peer review examine the assessment and findings of the development team's structural engineer, Robert Silman Associates. The structural engineering firm of Wiss, Janney, Elstner Associates conducted the peer review. The presentations centered on how much of the existing brick façade might be retained in a future, adaptive re-use of the building. While several alternative re-uses were studied, the studies focused on a class B commercial office use.

The north, east, and south walls of the WHP can be characterized as a three-part envelope, unsupported laterally by floors, and consisting of exterior brick, a supporting, steel frame, and an interior of vitreous clay tile. The exterior brick and interior tile encase the steel frame. Much of the exterior brick is cracked, or otherwise damaged, and moisture has begun rusting the steel frame.

The two firms agreed all the interior tile must be removed, and exterior brick at the top of the facade and surrounding the vertical windows must be replaced. The main disagreement was how much exterior brick in the columns between the windows on the north and

south facades required replacement, whether the extent was nearer 20 percent than 50 percent. Closely matching the old, retained brick with new brick would be a major, if not impossible, challenge. The assessments did not examine the economic feasibility of retaining the façade. The development team estimates the cost of converting the WHP into a Class B office building would exceed \$100 million, and asserts such a sum results in a significant financial loss.



View of the West Heating Plant

The development team with its architect, David Adjaye, have made several design changes. A skybridge that was to connect the WHP building to the Four Seasons hotel has been dropped. Other changes include now having the main entrance directly on 29th St., and creating an atrium with light well, thus giving a sense of the enormous scale of the building's interior.

The developer's environmental consultant conducted a further investigation of contamination within the building. This revealed the presence of PCBs in the concrete floor at 20,000 times the allowable limit; mercury is also present in the concrete floor at 29 times the allowable limit. Concentrations of mercury in the indoor air were measured at 160 times the allowable limit, which was the maximum value that could be recorded by the instrumentation being used.

As a next step, the development team is seeking the assent of the DC State Historic Preservation Officer to begin a DC historic review process. The process would act on a request to demolish much of the building, and ultimately involve the ANC, the OGB, the Commission on Fine Arts, the District Historic Preservation Review Board, and the Mayor's Agent.

### Check Out the 1874 Photograph Series: An Online Exhibit from the Georgetown University Archives

On two occasions in 1874, in April and in July, an unknown photographer under the direction of Librarian and Chaplain John S. Sumner, S.J., walked the Georgetown University grounds taking photographs. The resulting twenty-three images provide a fascinating and at times unrecognizable glimpse of a campus on which only seven buildings stood (the South Building, the North Building, McSherry, Gervase, Mulledy, Maguire, and the Observatory), surrounded by rolling fields and woods. Each photograph is accompanied by original captioning information; explanatory notes by the University Archivist.

Below is a link to the Georgetown University Library online exhibition of these 19th century photographs taken of the campus and also providing some panoramic views of the area.

<http://www.library.georgetown.edu/exhibition/1874-photograph-series-exhibit-georgetown-university-archives>

## EVERY DOG HAS ITS DAY

Craig Wilson

**G**abe, a six-year-old Yellow American Labrador Retriever, shares a house on 26th Street with David Abrams. And quite the Washingtonian he is:

**JOURNEY TO GEORGETOWN:** Born of humble beginnings in Southern Virginia, he came into Lab Rescue and in 2009 traveled north where he resided in a foster home in Foggy Bottom for less than one week. He then became a Georgetowneer.

**GOOD FIT:** His early residence in Foggy Bottom was portentous as he now follows a long line of Georgetown residents in the foreign service: Official Ambassador from Labrador Retriever Rescue of Scotland Scio, his Ambassadorial medal bestowed upon him by Carolyne Poulton, founder of LRRSS. He also serves as an Ambassador for his local Lab Rescue group.

**REPUBLICAN OR DEMOCRAT:** As a current diplomat Gabe works both side of the aisle although, since he is from the South, he could be considered a Yellow Dog Democrat.

**LOCAL ISSUES:** Active in Friends of Rose Park, working on maintenance issues and helped on the recently completed renovation of the two playgrounds, basketball court and Recreation Center.

**DOES HE SHOP LOCALLY:** As to Jean-Pierre Antiques on the corner, we know and love Jean-Pierre, but if he ever went in I'm afraid he'd destroy everything in it and I'd have to buy the store!

**FAVORITE PASTIME:** Scouts the sidewalks around the tennis courts and is the proud owner of over 200 lost tennis balls. He shows his charitable side by giving them back every few months to underprivileged pups in the dog park group.

**CAG MEMBER:** Serves on the Public Safety Committee of CAG

and when confronted with something amiss, calls 911 and uses the CAG GroupMe app on his iPhone.



David Abrams with Gabe at Rose Park

**ROSE REGULAR:** A lifelong member of the Rose Park Dog Group he can be found every morning and evening socializing with all of his friends in Rose Park.

**WATER, PLEASE:** Gabe loves the Georgetown waterfront and during warm months can be found cavorting in the water fountain. He also loves swimming in Rock Creek and the Potomac.

**FAVORITE RESTAURANT:** He misses the old

FURins.

**HATES:** When humans don't pick up after their dogs.

**LOVES:** All people and will show you by giving you his awesome lab "lean." He also loves tennis balls, babies, tennis balls, any food, and tennis balls.

**PERSONALITY TRAIT:** Very shy. Says he's quite embarrassed his father submitted his name for this feature, but decided to be diplomatic about it.

A Georgetown pooch will be featured in this space periodically, and why not. They're as much a part of the local scene as we are. Share your Georgetown dog's story. For an interview contact Craig Wilson at [craigwilsononolive@gmail.com](mailto:craigwilsononolive@gmail.com)

### Newsbytes

**The Friends of Rose Park** hosted a ribbon cutting ceremony on December 13th to officially re-open the playground, Mayor Gray and other DC notables attended the ceremony, the re-opened playground features upgrades to two playgrounds, the basketball court, tennis courts, and recreation center... **Glover Park Hardware** store, 2251 Wisconsin Ave., will close its doors January 15th after 10 years in business... Delaware based sandwich shop **Capriotti's**, known for its turkey sandwiches and a favorite of VP Biden, opened its doors at 3347 M Street in the building that once housed Philadelphia Cheesesteak Factory (and the late-lamented Cellar Door)... Frank Ruta has been hired as executive chef at the **Capella Hotel** on 31st Street, Ruta plans to expand menu options to draw more Georgetown residents to the Grill Room.

### Eco Tip:

Change your lighting: if every household in the U.S. replaced one regular light bulb with one of the new compact fluorescent bulbs, the pollution reduction would be equivalent to removing 100 million cars from the road! Don't like the color of the light? Put them in closets, laundry rooms and baths. Simple things can make a difference.

*Lee Child - Georgetown Garden Club*

## Via Umbria: We've Only Tasted the Wine

Natalie Grasso

**H**ere's something I didn't know: Via Umbria—the new Italian food, wine, and gift emporium at 1525 Wisconsin (between P and Q)—is still merely in “pop-up” mode. Since opening in September, the shop has overflowed with all Italian-made products and has set the stage for weekly cooking demos, wine tastings, and an Italian book club. But behind-the-scenes, owners Suzy and Bill Menard have been hard at work with architects, renovating the second floor. The projected completion date is sometime during the fall of 2015.

When it's ready, they'll host cooking classes, private events, and intimate dinners and gatherings featuring products from the store out of the new second floor kitchen and event space, and—in addition to their current stock—they'll serve espresso, breads, and imported meats out of the retail shop. At the heart of it all is the 18th-century stone farmhouse that the Menards own in Italy, a rental property and the home base for their curated food and wine tours throughout Umbria.

“So much of our passion for Italy is about connecting with others,

which is often done over food and around the table,” Bill said in an email. “We have many chefs and foodie friends in Italy that we plan to bring over to share their joy of culinary adventure, and [the] renovated upstairs space will really be a place to showcase our friends and to build a community around the table.”



Via Umbria is filled with Italian delights

In the meantime, they're adding to the shelves in the first floor shop, which already serve forth everything from savory foods, olive oils, and wines (they officially started selling wine in December), to gorgeous kitchenware, linens, and collectibles. Every item has a story, and the couple has personal relationships with the artisans and craftsmen behind each product.


“For Suzy and me, Via Umbria is not just a small business. It's the living out of a dream,” said Bill. “We are very grateful for the support of the Georgetown community in these first few months, and we have a lot more growing to do.” In other words, with the planned expansions underway, the best is yet to come.

To stay up-to-date with Via Umbria's cooking classes, tours, and other events, visit [viaumbria.com](http://viaumbria.com) or follow them on Facebook.

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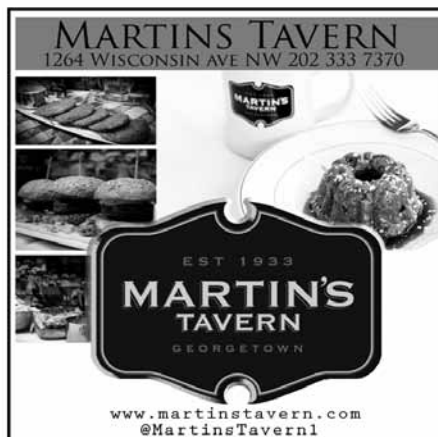
Patrick Clawson & Georgine Anton

#### Trees for Georgetown

Betsy Emes

### Volunteer Needed: Georgetown Forum Moderator

Are you interested in what's happening in Georgetown? Are you one of the over 2100 members of the Georgetown Forum? If so, you may be interested in volunteering as the Georgetown Forum Moderator. The job requires a small daily time commitment, is relatively quick and easy and the best part is you don't have to leave home! If you're interested or would like more information, call the CAG office at 337-7313.



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# CommunityCalendar

**■ Saturday, January 10****DC School Lottery: How does it work? What do I need to know?**

Informational event featuring a professional from My School DC to explain how the system works and answer questions

**11:30 am; Free; Georgetown Neighborhood Library; 3260 R Street; 202-727-0232**

**■ Wednesday, January 21****Yoga at Georgetown**

Take an OM break at the Georgetown Neighborhood Library

**7:15pm; Free; Georgetown Neighborhood Library; 3260 R Street; 202-727-0232**

**■ Thursday, February 12****CAG presents Georgetown Arts Show 2015**

Georgetown artists exhibit at House of Sweden

***Reception at 7pm program at 7:30pm***

**■ Friday, January 23****Myriad of Voices Festival: Amrika Chalo (Destination: U.S.A.)**

Written and directed by Pakistan's leading theater artist, this performance explodes stereotypes through satire

**8 pm; \$15 general; Georgetown University Davis Performing Arts Center, Gonda Theatre; 37th and O Street; 202-**

**687-3838****■ Friday, January 23****Cheese and Bubbles**

Taste the difference between French and American cheese

**7pm; \$40 general \$30 members; Alliance Francaise; 2142 Wyoming Ave, NW; 234-7911**

**■ Saturday, February 7****Downton Abbey Tea**

A special tour complete with English scones and tea service.

**1-3pm; \$25 members / \$30 non-members; Tudor Place; 1644 31st St. NW; for more information call 202-965-0400 x115**

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