

Georgetown C I T I Z E N S



CITIZENS ASSOCIATION
of GEORGETOWN

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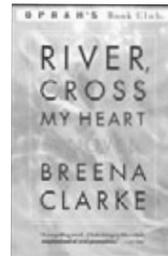
Author Breena Clarke at First Baptist Church February 23

CAG salutes Black History month with author Breena Clarke speaking at First Baptist Church, Georgetown on Wednesday, February 23 at 7:00. Come tour First Baptist Church, meet Breena Clarke and learn about the influences that shaped her work.

Breena Clarke's debut novel, *River, Cross My Heart*, was an October 1999 Oprah Book Club selection. Ms. Clarke, a native of Washington, will read excerpts from both of her novels, *River, Cross My Heart* and *Stand the Storm*. Both novels are set in Georgetown and illuminate the African American community in the neighborhood. She will talk about Georgetown's unique African American history and describe the ways she inherited a black Georgetown identity from her parents and grandparents and how this informs her writing.

A graduate of Howard University, Breena Clarke is also co-author of *Remembering Aunt Jemima: A Menstrual Show*. Her short fiction is included in *Black Silk*, A Collection of African American Erotica, and *Street Lights: Illuminating Tales of the Urban Black Experience*.

The historic First Baptist Church, Georgetown was founded in 1862 by the Reverend Sandy Alexander, a former slave. Prior to the formal organization of the Church, Collins Williams, a licensed preacher, had led religious meetings in Georgetown in private residences on 27th and P



Streets, 27th and N Streets, and then at his own home. Williams donated a small piece of land at 29th and O Streets to be used for a church.

In 1856 Rev. Alexander came to Georgetown to start a Baptist Church and eventually erected a small frame structure known as the "Ark" on the land donated by Collins Williams at 29th and O Streets. The building was soon found to be too small and a committee of Brothers, Henry Lucas, William Wormley and William T. Brown selected the present site at 27th and Dumbarton Streets for the new building.

Rev. Alexander embarked on a trip north and solicited \$300 for the new building while the members were able to negotiate a loan for another \$300. The cornerstone for the Church was laid in 1882. Today, The Rev. Robert Pines is the church's twelfth pastor.

Our program will begin with a brief history of the church from a representative of First Baptist followed by the main presentation from Breena Clarke. Please join CAG and our speakers for a celebration of Black History month at First Baptist Church, Georgetown at 2624 Dumbarton St NW on February 23 at 7:00.

—Robin Jones

VALENTINE'S DAY

please join us for **COCKTAILS AND SONG** to support CAG's concerts in the parks series

monday, february 14th, 2011

6:30-8:30 pm
halcyon house
34th & prospect streets
georgetown

with special music and vocals by georgetown's own rebecca mccabe

download rebecca's new song and buy tickets at: www.cagtown.org

\$225 per couple - \$125 per person
red attire suggested!

Valentine's Cabaret Party at Halcyon House

Love is in the air! And what better time to support the Concerts in the Parks Series sponsored each summer by the Citizens Association of Georgetown. Don your best red attire and come to Halcyon House from 6:30 to 8:30pm on Monday, February 14. Join your neighbors and friends for a festive intimate evening of cocktails, hors d'oeuvres and the gorgeous songs of Georgetown's own song writer and vocalist, Rebecca McCabe. The beguiling Ms. McCabe is the creator of the She Sings movement. Rebecca's performances

Continued on page 4

PRESIDENT'S LETTER

As you have probably heard by now, Georgetown University filed their 2010-2020 Campus Plan with the District of Columbia Zoning Commission on December 30, 2010. A copy is available on line at community.georgetown.edu/campusplan.html.

The Plan is disappointing in that it proposes no new student housing — a priority issue for the community — and therefore does nothing to mitigate the problems created by the current density of undergraduate and graduate students living in the neighborhoods. Indeed by proposing to increase graduate enrollment by 2400 students the Plan will exacerbate existing objectionable conditions. GU cannot continue to use the neighborhood for its residence halls.

The submitted plan does not include two items from its draft rendition to which the community strenuously objected: an 83' tall smokestack and the 1789 block proposal to demolish historic townhouses to build faculty/student housing outside the traditional campus in the residential area. While the omission of these initiatives is recognized, no progress has been made on the community's principal demand that the University move a substantial number of students back on campus or house them in a satellite campus. On the idea of satellite campuses the University only committed "to investigate the possibility of relocating the School of Continuing Studies and certain continuing studies programs to satellite locations."

The ANC held a special meeting on January 20 devoted to the campus plan. Representatives from the University, CAG, Burleith, Foxhall, and Hillendale, along with students and residents attended to ask and answer questions and to give feedback on the plan. Five major topics were discussed: student issues including lack of new housing and conduct, the hospital, Kehoe Field roof enclosure, transportation, and the proposed increase in enrollment.

We made it clear to the ANC and GU that we are extremely concerned that the proposed plan has the capacity to forever change the character of our neighborhoods. We are at the tipping point. If dramatic action is not taken now we will not recognize our community in 2020.



BCA President Lenore Rubino, Hillendale President Cindy Howar, myself and Foxhall Citizens President Robert Avery at the ANC - GU Plan Meeting

The Plan is disappointing in that it proposes no new student housing — a priority issue for the community — and therefore does nothing to mitigate the problems created by the current density of undergraduate and graduate students living in the neighborhoods.

And I'm afraid I have to ask again for your help. As we move forward preparing our case to present to the Zoning Commission *we need more funds to pay for the experts* we have hired to help build our case. Anyone who has had to hire a lawyer knows that they don't come cheap. The Zoning Commission has scheduled the first hearing in this case on April 14. This gives us plenty of time to prepare but we need more money to do it properly. We also need residents who have been adversely impacted by the University to act as witnesses. To get more information on how you can help visit our website at www.cagtown.org.

With all the acrimony of the town/gown controversies swirling it is really nice to come home and find a big red Valentine on my door. Someone has invited me to "Spread the Love" — what a grand idea. The Concerts in the Parks committee is blanketing the neighborhood with hearts in anticipation of an Evening of Champagne and Song on Valentine's Day. I hope you'll join me at Halcyon House on the 14th to kick off the Summer Concerts series.

The committee is putting together a super fun slide show with images of love. Send in photos from your wedding, your honeymoon or other LOVELY moments so you can be included. And make sure to RSVP early, this evening will be a sellout and it may be one of the last chances we get to enjoy Halcyon House. A big thank you to John Dreyfus for hosting us in his spectacular home.

—Jennifer Altemus

ASPECTS OF GEORGETOWN

Winter Getaways

But probably not the kind you are thinking of.

When we are confronted with the bleak sameness of winter days, the tyranny of newspapers and their mournful content, the ubiquitousness of head colds and, especially, the relentless indoorness of daily life, what are we to do?

Here is a suggestion: Have a quick romp through travel writers of other days. We will see what they have done for excitement in the past and we will end up pleased to stay home.

Famed travel writer Robert Byron went to Venice. He went swimming at the Lido. "The bathing," Byron wrote, "on a calm day, must be the worst in Europe: water like hot saliva, cigar ends floating into one's mouth."

That's just the beginning of the suffering caused by travel. The word travel, in fact, comes from travail, which derives from the Latin tripalium, a torture instrument with three spikes designed to puncture the body.

Eric Newby is the amusing author of *A Short Walk in the Hindu Kush*. A brief stroll through a verdant countryside it is not. Once you are clued in that Hindu Kush means Hindu killer you get a sense of what lies ahead. A day in the mountains: "The ice fields, the falling rocks, the extreme cold at

night and unbearable heat in the day, the lacerated hands and feet, the altitude headaches, the ever present dysentery, interminable nights in cramped tents." All self-inflicted and some wildly dangerous. *Why do people do this to themselves.*

The mountain, Mir Samir, presented itself as a vast wall of sheer rock, rising in a fiendish-looking unscalable ridge, serrated with sharp pinnacles, like a mouth full of filed teeth. The mountain itself was made of granite long past its prime that came away in sheets sharp as needles

There is more: "The smell of burning dung, the moaning of the wind, the restless horses, Abdul Ghiyas saying his prayers, and above all the mountain itself with its summit now covered in swirling black clouds, all combined to remind me that this was Central Asia. I had wanted it and I had got it."

Colin Thubron writes: of all the Silk Road passages the Taklamakan desert was the most dreaded. Taklamakan: those who enter here do not return. Sometimes you see tracks disappearing into the sand. The nomads say they are the tracks of those who lost their souls.

The emptiness of inner Asia filled the land with its premonition. The deserts of Lop and Taklamakan - the

Western surge of the Gobi -forced travelers to skirt them north or south. "Our way was shadowed by old towns which had died in the desert alongside strangled rivers and vanished lakes. Three hundred settlements, it is said, lie under the sands of the Taklamakan. Sometimes when the wind pushes the dunes clear, petrified timbers poke up where orchards and wheatfields were. Taklamakan, the place of fiend-filled distances.

"Over this desolation centuries of caravans had moved. Everything on the known earth had passed this way: frankincense, rhinoceros horn, cucumbers, musk, dwarfs, lapis lazuli, peacocks, indigo, even a caged lion or two. In the seventh century a pair of Arabian ostriches was marched to China, their speed and digestion (they ate metal) was a great marvel. All these goods and creatures slogging for centuries over the soul-searing landscape of Central Asia."

Whew, now that's travel. Next time you feel sorry for yourself standing in a wintry mix on the corner of M and Wisconsin waiting for the light to change, think about Robert Byron and Eric Newby and Colin Thubron. Think about those fiend-filled distances - and how there are probably few of them in Georgetown —and count your blessings.

—Edith Schafer

NEWSBYTES

An era has passed: **Commander Salamander** finally has really closed... Canal bridges update: the **Thomas Jefferson Street Bridge** has been renovated and reopened and the 29th Street Bridge is now closed for major renovation... **Capital Bikeshare** launched its "Winter Weather Warrior" contest offering prizes to the person who logs the most bike trips during January and February... Bangkok Bistro is now **Mai Thai** after changing ownership in early January... Note the new improved changes to the **Historic Preservation and Zoning section of the CAG website** (www.cagtown.org) - much more comprehensive information on many HP issues and projects .

Beautification Committee: From Rats to Trash to Snow

On an icy January 18 evening, the CAG Beautification committee met for a lively discussion of priority issues. First up was an in depth discussion of rodent control (aka rats) with Gabriel Curtis, the informative and effective Department of Health pest controller assigned to Georgetown, and Gerard Brown, the program manager for community hygiene in the Rodent and Vector Control Division. They and other committee members reported some real successes when the residents and businesses on a block join together, as they did on Cherry Hill Lane and a block of O Street. The Business Improvement District (BID) has been helpful in working with businesses and residents spearheading 15 projects to fight rats.

The committee discussed how residents can do more via several initiatives. Easier-to-move trash cans are now available, smaller than the usual Georgetown green cans and with wheels, for those who do not want to haul the larger cans out — but also realize that putting trash out in bags is illegal and feeds the rats. DPW has limited supplies (call 311), Home Depot has unlimited numbers and they are not prohibitively expensive. CAG encourages residents to learn from the BID by using one pesticide company in any given alley/block. The BID works mostly with Western Pest Control. If one firm is responsible for

all the businesses and residences in an alley, they can do a much better job. The Beautification Committee will meet often for alley patrols with Mr. Brown and representatives of the BID and discuss how to encourage residents to clean up to prevent rats from eating and burrowing, e.g., clean up after dogs; don't let leaves build up. We continue to work with GU about educating students why trash and resultant rodents are a health hazard.

A contentious issue has been enforcing the law. Both the Department of Health and the DC Department of Public Works (DPW) can and do issue tickets, which can be as much as \$500 for a first offense (!) but are usually \$50 for putting bags of trash out on the street for collection. Trash is legally required to be in cans. That is the only way to stop rats from eating into the trash. You may not notice the neat holes the rats put in trash bags if they sit on the street for even a few hours. Those fines are not popular, especially since enforcement has been spotty. We hope to work with the two Departments to get more systematic enforcement, perhaps targeting blocks with lots of rats.

Those fines can also apply if trash is put out before 6 pm the night before scheduled pickup. The committee will be looking into a related issue, namely, where is it legal to

keep trash cans in front of buildings (there may be nothing we can do about trash cans which are more than 10 feet back from the curb).

Watch for our spring cleanup day, tentatively set for April 9. We plan to gather for coffee and bagels, work for a few hours, and then have some wonderful burgers.

We will be watching some other issues. There has recently been an increase in graffiti, so we will work to let residents know how to get DPW to clean graffiti off private walls, and we will to alert DPW to graffiti on public spaces. The streets seem cleaner — DPW did a good job getting leaves off the streets this autumn — so there is limited enthusiasm for asking people to leave one side of the street car-free one morning a week so that DPW can sweep the streets. Regarding public litter cans for residential areas such as those in or near Rose and Volta Park, while potentially a good idea, they were deemed a problem because DPW must empty them in the wee hours and it is very noisy. Snow removal from private sidewalks within 24 hours after snowfall stops is a legal requirement; the committee plans to let more people know about that law.

—Patrick Clawson
Co-Chair Beautification Committee

Valentine's Cabaret Party at Halcyon House *continued from cover*

include the 1999 Kerrville Folk Festival, the Kennedy Center and Nashville Entertainment Association's "Women who Write" show. Rebecca McCabe is the creator of the She Sings movement. Shesings.com and a She Sings television series are currently under development.

A special slide show of *Georgetowners in Love!* will also highlight the evening. If you'd like to be a part of

the slide show please send CAG your favorite picture of you and your love (or any picture of *Love in Georgetown*) to cagmail@cagtown.org. And a lucky guest will go home with a certificate for a couples massage at the "Jewel Spa" at the Ritz Carlton.

Tickets for this very special occasion are \$225 per couple and \$125 per person and are available to purchase

online at www.cagtown.org (where you can also link to McCabe's dazzling new song *The Language of Love*) or by sending your check directly to the CAG office. Proceeds help underwrite the Summer Concerts in the Parks which are scheduled for May 22, June 19, and July 4.

—Renee Esfandiary Crupi
CAG Concerts Co-Chair



Counting Georgetown

In December, the American Community Survey's Five Year Estimates were released by the Census Bureau. This was the first time that the information captured by the survey was released for geographic units as small as a census tract. Since Georgetown is made up of three census tracts, this means that we can access this data for Georgetown specifically.

I sat down and compiled some of the more interesting data sets for Georgetown (for these purposes, I did not include the census tract that covers only the university). This information reflects the predicted average for the five years between 2004 and 2009. In other words, if you were to take a random snapshot of Georgetown in the second half of the last decade, this is roughly what you'd see.

Here's what I found:

Demographics:

- There are 8,781 people living in Georgetown
- They live in 4,732 households, thus the average household in Georgetown has 1.86 people living in it
- The east side has more people (4,701) and more households (2,921) than the west (4,080 and 1,811 respectively)
- Georgetown is roughly 91% white. Unfortunately the sample size is too small to determine what the racial makeup of the remaining 9% is.

Children:

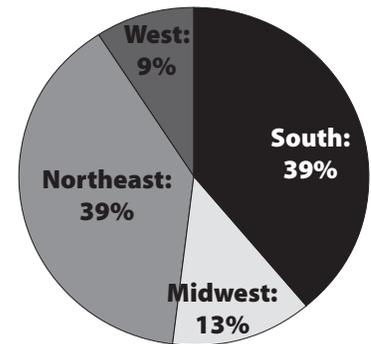
- There are 949 children under the age of 18 living in Georgetown
- The children live slightly disproportionately on the east side since 59% live on the east side, yet only 54% of the overall population lives on that side
- Children under five years, however, are more likely to live on the west side. Thus younger families are more common on the west side than the east.
- There is a baby-boom in Georgetown. Since 1990, the proportion of children to the general population in Georgetown has been rising steadily. Right now it may be over 12%, a huge jump from 1990 when it was below 9%.

Transportation:

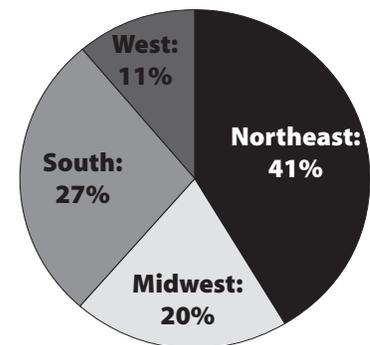
- A full 22% of households in Georgetown have no car
- In 2000, the Census estimated that there were 4,936 cars in Georgetown. Now they estimate 4,559, an 8% drop.
- Only 40% of Georgetowners drive to work. 50% take transit, bike, or walk to work.
- Transit use grew 38% since 2000.

Origins:

- There's a 76% chance that a randomly selected Georgetownner lived at the same address a year prior.
- New residents to Georgetown who are new to the District arrived from these regions:



- 13% of Georgetowners are District-natives, of the rest, they came from these regions:



- Thus, the people who have moved to Georgetown recently are more Southern and less Midwestern than the current residents.

That is just a little piece of the great information collected by the American Community Survey. I hope that this information will help inform any debates we have in the community.

—Christopher Mathews

GEORGETOWN *Baby* BOOM

CONGRATULATIONS AND A WARM WELCOME TO THE NEW LITTLE ONES

Allison & Chris Putala on Dumbarton Street

Caroline Eugenia — JANUARY 6, 2011

Caren & Mark Venturi and Big sister Chiara on Cambridge Place

Siena Carina — NOVEMBER 17, 2010

Join in the Oral History Project!

CAG will host a meeting for experienced – and new – oral history interviewers on Thursday, February 17 at 6:30pm. Experienced interviewers will exchange information and compare notes about their visits to date. New volunteers will get orientation to the project and basic training for interview procedures. New volunteers are very welcome – just call 337-7313 or email the CAG office cagmail@cagtown.org.




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Oral Histories Reflect an Evolving Georgetown

During the past two years CAG's Oral History Project has captured the memories of more than two dozen longtime Georgetowners. The takeaway: Georgetown is completely different from what it was 30, 50 years ago, and yet the same in many ways.

If you mentally wander the streets of the village with our oldest citizens, many in their 80s and 90s, you will see small bakeries and grocery stores and drugstores and kids skating and playing ball in the street because there is so little traffic.

From 86-year-old Catherine Bowman, who is a third-generation Georgetownner and has lived in her house on P Street since 1927, you learn that "we had a bakery," meaning a bakery that catered to black residents in the segregated era, and a black drugstore at 26th and P, and black shoemakers and beauticians and the Blue Mouse Theatre (at 26th and M) and "a fellow named Cy — Cy the tailor." There was even a black version of CAG: "We used to call it Rock Creek Civic Association," Ms. Bowman told CAG interviewer Ronda Bernstein.

Ms. Bowman delights in correcting people who think that at one time Georgetown was all black. "Certain sections of Georgetown were black, because we still had [black] schools in here." Her neighborhood, by which Ms. Bowman means 28th Street over to Rose Park, was black. "When I was coming up, Rose Park was a black playground." Black people also lived on 32nd and Poplar streets, she says, but Q Street was white.

And then the black residents began to move away. Ms. Bowman explains: "There were a lot of rentals. And they didn't have the proper jobs to have the money to buy the homes. And when the desegregation came, the Realtors wanted their places." Some old-time black residents remain: Ms. Bowman gestures with pride toward the P Street home of the physician C. Herbert Mar-

shall, noting that the late doctor's grandson now lives in the house. She cites other neighbors as well, mostly on her street and around the corner.

Over in the west village, right around World War II, a newly wed Grace Addison moved to O Street, then P Street. "Franklin D. Roosevelt had very nicely recommended that all of his people live around Georgetown because he felt very strongly about old places," Ms. Addison told interviewer Patty Murphy. Also, Addison's new mother-in-law insisted that her son and daughter-in-law live in Georgetown because of old Addison family connections here, starting with Colonel John Addison in the 1690s.

Ms. Addison now lives on S Street, but she remembers, down on P Street, her children having a snowball fight with a young Senator John F. Kennedy. "He'd never really outgrown being a child himself in many ways," she says.

Ninety-five-year-old Frida Burling also came to Georgetown during the New Deal, buying a house on 32nd Street for \$29,000. It wasn't until, as a widow, she married Edward Burling that she moved to her current house on 29th Street, where she has been for 50 years.

Ms. Burling told interviewer Annie Lou Berman that she remembers a time when President Truman's secretary of state, Dean Acheson, lived at 28th and P and Supreme Court justice Felix Frankfurter lived on Dumbarton and they walked to work together. "A formal car would follow behind them in case they got tired. . . . Everybody walked downtown and back." That, says Ms. Burling, was one of the pleasures of living in Georgetown.

Entertaining, Ms. Burling says, was "in your own house or in your own embassy. . . . You had good help, and it was nicer at home." There weren't so many restaurants in the neighborhood then. Nonetheless, she says she loves the vibrancy of today's Georgetown, beyond the "self-satisfied old-timers."

Particularly appealing is the way people keep renovating houses here, "letting in all the light."

Edith Bralove moved to her house on Prospect Street overlooking the Potomac in 1960. Her view of Key and Theodore Roosevelt bridges is splendid, but it has changed a lot in the past 50 years. "When I first moved in," she told interviewer Annie Lou Berman, "there were no high rises" in Rosslyn. "Arlington was very small. Across Key Bridge there were pawn shops . . . and that was all."

Ms. Bralove recalled changes in auto traffic (more!) and even river traffic and also cited some recent losses to the Village, namely Neam's Market (at Wisconsin and P, where Marvelous Market now operates), the French Market farther up Wisconsin and Little Caledonia, chockablock with everything from Georgetown-size furniture to Quimper faience to upholstery fabric to bobèches for your candlesticks. "It was little things they had that you have to go out of town now for."

Ms. Bralove is reminded she once entertained Eugene McCarthy on her river-view terrace when he was running for president. It was a quieter Georgetown then: "The planes were not making that much noise in the beginning. So, you could entertain outside, and you could hear each other. . . . Now you can't really." "The Exorcist" was filmed on Ms. Bralove's block, so she had friends for dinner, after which they watched the movie being made.

The oral-history transcripts - many with photos — can be read on the CAG Website, cagtown.org. They offer a textured portrait of our part of town. The old houses are important and come up frequently in conversation, but most of the reminiscences are about raising children and entertaining friends and occasionally crossing paths with the powerful. And that part of Georgetown hasn't changed at all.

—Nancy McKeon

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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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FEBRUARY COMMUNITY EVENTS AND CALENDAR



- Sat. Feb. 5** Valentine's Day Card Making Workshop for Children; children become history detectives in search of Valentine's Day cards from years past; 10:30am; ages 5+; member children \$7, nonmember children \$10, adult chaperones free; RSVP at www.tudorplace.org.
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- Sat. Feb. 12** Out of Sight: Life and Works of Enslaved and Domestic Servants at Tudor Place; tour of house explores domestic service from 1816 through modern day including personal stories of enslaved and free individuals; 11:30am; members \$5, nonmembers \$10; www.tudorplace.org.
-
- Sat. Feb. 12-
Sun. Feb. 13** Write into the Past Overnight Adventure for Brownies Girls Only Overnight; use writing skills by practicing with a quill pen and create a historical story; suitable for 2nd-3rd graders; 7:30pm-8:00am; \$30 per child, \$12 per adult (one adult required for 5-10 girls); Dumbarton House, 2715 Q Street; RSVP 337-2288.
-
- Wed. Feb. 16** Collections Conversations at Dumbarton House; study a ca. 1795 sugar urn created by Philadelphia silver smith Samuel Williamson with your brown bag lunch; 12:30pm; Dumbarton House, 2715 Q Street; RSVP@DumbartonHouse.org.
-
- Wed. Feb. 23** CAG Meeting at First Baptist Church: Author Breana Clarke; speaks about her novels *River*, *Cross My Heart* and *Stand the Storm* and talks about the influences that shaped her works; reception 7pm, program 7:30pm; First Baptist Church, 2624 Dumbarton Street.
-
- Sat. Feb. 26** Dumbarton Concerts Presents *The Preludes*; prize-winning pianists Adam Neiman and Andrius Zlabys perform; tickets are \$33, students and seniors \$29; 8pm; Dumbarton Church, 3133 Dumbarton Street; call 965-2000 or visit www.dumbartonconcerts.org for more information.
-
- Mon. Feb. 28** Advisory Neighborhood Commission (ANC 2E) Public Meeting; 6:30pm; Heritage Room, Georgetown Visitation, 35th & Volta Streets; agenda at www.anc2e.com; 338-7427.

Planning Ahead...Save the Date for the Summer Concerts in the Parks Sun. May 22 Sun. June 19 Sun. July 4

Progressive Dinner to benefit Hyde School Thursday May 5.