



DUPONT CIRCLE VILLAGE

SHATTERING THE STEREOTYPE

ADAMS MORGAN • DUPONT CIRCLE • KALORAMA

“I am not optimistic or pessimistic. I am determined.”

—Stacey Abrams

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Welcome New Members!

Jim Chadbourne
Gretta Powers

The Major League Country Singer

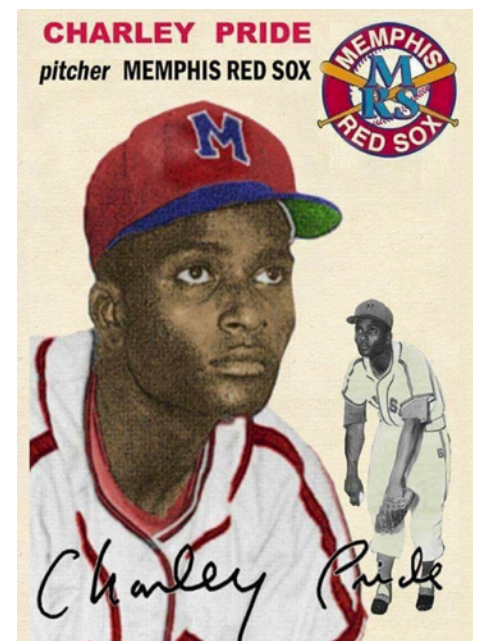
You may know Charley Pride as country music's first Black superstar, first Black singer to perform at the Grand Ole Opry, or the first Black member of the Country Music Hall of Fame. Perhaps you sang along to one—or all 52—of his top 10 country hits including 29 number ones. Did you know he had 12 gold albums?

By Eva M. Lucero,
Executive Director

What you may not know is that before his musical talents were recognized, Pride's dream was to be a professional baseball player. His first love was baseball, a passion that defined his formative and young adult years.

He left school at 15 and by 16, he landed a spot as a pitcher with the Negro American League's Memphis Red Sox. Pride was known for his curveball and had brief stints with different leagues, including the New York Yankees minor league system, before an injury sidelined him. The highlight of his baseball career, Pride claimed, was pitching four-innings of an all-star game where he stared down the likes of Hank Aaron and Willie Mays. Even though Pride didn't make it to the baseball majors, he went on to become the major Black country music superstar.

Pride's musical break came after his Army service when he moved to Helena, Montana. He was still playing baseball on a semi-pro team, the East



Helena Smelterites, and he picked up some singing gigs at local bars at night. He caught the ear of a local DJ who arranged for Pride to sing for country stars Red Sovine and Red Foley. The pair convinced him to move to Nashville and in 1964, he signed a management deal with longtime manager Jack D. Johnson.

Pride arrived in Nashville in the midst of the '60s Civil Rights Movement where he performed locally and caught the attention of producer Cowboy Jack Clement. Clement arranged for Pride to work with the town's top musicians and produced

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President's Notes



January has been a wild and satisfying month!

Our 2021 Board of Directors met early in the month and elected officers for the year. President, **Ann McFarren**, Vice President, Bob McDonald, Secretary, **Abigail Wiebenson**, Treasurer, **Steve Kittrell**. I am so pleased that we have such a strong leadership team. We will all work hard for Dupont Circle Village.

Our membership has been very generous this year. Our year end fundraising campaign went over our goal. This is, of course, extremely helpful as many of our money generating activities such as in person Celeb Salons and our Gala had to be cancelled. I believe one reason for this support is the efforts we have made to continue

to offer quality programming and provide support for our members.

Speaking of supporting our members, January has been COVID-19 Vaccine Month for DCV. When the District announced that vaccinations would be available for people 65 and over DCV's COVID-19 Working Group, **Sarah Burger, Mike Gould, Dick Kaslow, Steve Kittrell, Bob McDonald, Kathy Price, Abigail Wiebenson, Barbara Scott, Eva M. Lucero**, and I got to work. We provided all the information we could find about injection clinics and many members were able to get appointments. We did have a significant number of people who have the devil's own time getting an appointment. There were many reasons, difficulty using computer, the speed with which one had to work to get an appointment (sometimes the appointments were taken in 15 minutes), lack of internet access and feeling overwhelmed by the process. So, our COVID-19 working group helped make appointments, provided

support to members and basically wouldn't give up!

We asked members to let us know their status—I am proud to report that as of January 30, we have contacted all but two Village members. The result, of the members who are in town, three have declined for personal or medical reasons, 15 are ineligible because they are too young (Did ya ever think you would wish you were just a little older?), and 97% of our members have had at least the 1st vaccine. We have tentative appointments for the four people who still need one scheduled for early next week. Then we will be at 100% coverage!

Of course, all our efforts mean we are doing our bit to stop the pandemic. It also means we are less likely to become seriously ill if we do get COVID. Until our country is closer to the goal of 75-85% of the population vaccinated we still must wear masks and social distance to protect others and ourselves. The new COVID-19 strains make this even more important. We've had lots of practice—we can do it!

Be Well and Stay Safe

Charley Pride

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his first songs. Despite the professional quality of the production and Pride's talent, Clement and Pride's manager still had trouble finding a label to take him.

In 1966, Chet Atkins, a guitarist, record producer and co-creator of the country music style that became known as the Nashville Sound, convinced RCA executives to trust their ears and disregard racial politics or their conceptions about Black country singers. Pride's first singles were released without any mention of his race and there were no accompanying publicity photos. At his live shows,

audiences were often surprised to see he was Black when he walked onstage for the first time. Often, the venue would fall completely silent but Pride quickly disarmed his audience with jokes about his "permanent tan."

Pride's first love for baseball never left him. From 2010, Pride owned part of the Texas Rangers and from 1972, he had attended their Spring Training every year to work out with them. He had his own locker in the coaches' room, a team-issued uniform (number 05) and cleats. He was also on the board of the Negro Leagues Baseball Museum in Kansas City, Missouri.

Charley Pride died in December at



the age of 86 from complications of Covid-19.

Monthly Calendar

Currently, activities are being offered online, by way of Zoom. Updates will be posted in the Friday e-blast. Instructions for Zoom can be found under the Library tab at <https://dcv.clubexpress.com/>

We do ask you to register online at www.dupontcirclevillage.net and select "Calendar," find the event, and register. If you can't join an online event or figure out how to register, please email or call Ann Talty at admin@dupontcirclevillage.net or (202) 436-5252.

DC Villages Wellness Wednesdays

Fire Safety for Older Adults (Cleveland & Woodley Park Village)

Wednesday, February 3rd, 1 pm

Location: Virtual

Register: [click here](#)

Over 80 Group with Phyllis Kramer

Tuesday, February 9, 2:30 pm

Location: Virtual

RSVP: Register online or contact DCV Office

DC Villages Wellness Wednesdays

Declutter Your Life (Brookland Village)

Wednesday, February 10, 1 pm

Location: Virtual

Register: [Declutter Your Life](#)

Valentine Virtual Happy Hour

Friday, February 12, 5:30–6:30 pm

Location: Virtual

RSVP: Register online or contact DCV Office

Pour your favorite beverage, grab a snack, and spend some time with those loving Village members!

Men's Book Group

Monday, February 15, 11:00 am

Location: Virtual

RSVP: Robert Hirsch (rmhirsch49@yahoo.com)

For February, the choice is "**Squeeze Me**" by Carl Hiaasen. It is NOT a serious piece of literature, but it is fun to read (Nick and I can both attest to that. Here's a quote about it: *"If you could use some wild escapism right now, Hiaasen is your guy."*—Janet Maslin, *The New York Times*. It is a fictional story about a US President who owns a resort called "Casa Bellicoso" in Palm Beach Florida. It is a pretty quick read.



DC Villages Wellness Wednesdays

Living Long and Loving Well (Kingdom Care Village)

Wednesday, February 17, 1 pm

Location: Virtual

Register: [Living Long and Loving Well](#)

CelebSalon: Theater in Southeast DC

Wednesday, February 17, 6:00–7:00 pm

Location: Virtual

RSVP: Register online or contact DCV Office at (202) 436-5252

Dinner With Your DCV Neighbors

Thursday February 18

6:00–7:00 p.m

Location: Virtual

RSVP: Register online or contact DCV for more details. Since we can't meet in restaurants, we want to bring the restaurant to you. Join us and share a wonderful Italian meal from La Tomate

Sunday Soup Salon

Sunday, February 21, 5:00–6:30 pm

The format of these events during COVID-19 will take the form of discussion of specific TED Talks. Watch for details in upcoming e-blasts.

DCV Movie Group

Wednesday, February 24, 3:55–5:15 pm

Location: Virtual

RSVP: Register online or contact DCV Office

Details will be announced in upcoming Friday e-blasts.

Please note: the Movie group is now transitioning to the last Wednesday of the month/

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DC Villages Wellness Wednesdays

Eating for Heart Health (Northwest Neighbors Village)
Wednesday, February 24, 1 pm
Location: Virtual
Register: [Eating for Heart Health](#)

Mystery Book Group

Friday, February 26, 3:00–4:00 pm
Location: Virtual
RSVP: Register online or contact DCV Office
The book for February is **The Unquiet Dead** by Ausma Zehanat Khan.

Online Meditation with Christina

Mondays & Thursdays, 9:00–9:30 am
Location: Virtual
RSVP: Register online or contact DCV Office

Accessible Mat Yoga

Mondays, 5:00–6:00 pm
Location: Virtual
RSVP: Register online or contact DCV Office
(NOTE: in March, this will change back to 3:30 sessions)

Chair Yoga

Tuesdays, 5:00–6:00 pm
Location: Virtual
RSVP: Register online or contact DCV Office
(NOTE: in March, this will change back to 10:30 am sessions)



Online Feldenkrais Method Awareness Through Movement

Wednesdays, 10:00–11:00 am
Location: Virtual
RSVP: Register online or contact DCV Office

The classes are about improving function and well-being in our day-to-day activities, which is why they are good for improving walking, running, sitting, standing, gardening, relieving pain, breathing, working, and playing. The classes are usually done on mats on the floor, sometimes lying, sometimes sitting, or even standing. You may also do it on your bed.

Virtual Mahjongg

Wednesdays at 2:00 pm
Location: Virtual
RSVP: Bobbi Milman, rmilman@comcast.net or (202) 667-0245

Villagers are currently playing virtual Mahjongg with the computer app **RealMahjongg**. Contact Bobbi Milman if you are interested in details.

Coffee and Conversation

Thursdays, 10:00–11:00
Location: Virtual
RSVP: Register online or contact DCV Office

Afro Blue

To kick off Black History Month, the CelebSalon committee hosted a musical presentation from the group Afro Blue, a popular a cappella jazz vocal ensemble made up of undergraduate music department students at Howard University (HU). Afro Blue has been in existence for nearly 20 years and has recorded several albums. Upper class students rotate out upon graduation to pursue their careers and are quickly replaced by other, equally talented students. Some veterans of the group go on to find success as professional vocalists.

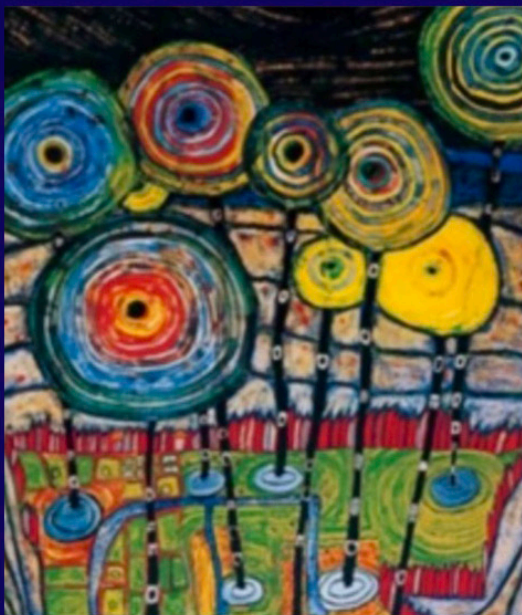
By Charlotte Holloman

The founder, director and moving force behind Afro Blue, Professor Connaitre Miller, was our live guest host for the evening. She first shared a student-made news video about the student experience in the music department which shows them auditioning for the group and preparing for public performances. She then played for us three of their previously recorded music videos. Her arrangements of otherwise familiar and recognizable tunes are exceptional. Well-known, award winning jazz pianist, Cyrus Chesnutt, also a professor at HU, appeared as the background accompanist in the news video.



If you missed our CelebSalon, and are interested in knowing more about the group and hearing music from their albums, please go to afrobluehu.com.

Save the Date



You Are A Guest
of the Earth...Behave

Dupont Circle Village
2021 Virtual Gala
Thursday April 22
6 p.m.

Could the Village Be Putting You on the Path to 100?

Not far from the District, a close-knit family got together this past New Year's Eve. Thirteen out of the 15 individuals in attendance came down with Covid-19. Out of the 13, all experienced relatively mild symptoms such as fatigue except for one, "Margaret." She had serious difficulties breathing, was hospitalized, then given oxygen. She is home now, but still on oxygen.

Nobody knows for sure, of course, why Margaret was hit hardest by the virus. But there is reason to think that it may have been because she was sedentary and overweight. The other family members were into walking, jogging, running, and competitive sports, presumably keeping their bodies fit and their immune systems primed.

Exercise is a hallmark of people who live the longest throughout the world, in the so-called Blue Zones, notably in Okinawa, Japan; Ikaria, Greece; Sardinia, Italy; the Nicoya peninsula in Costa Rica; and in Loma Linda, California (home to many Seventh Day Adventists, who view health as central to their faith). Julie Wendt, a licensed D.C. dietician nutritionist, spoke about these Blue Zones during a Village Live and Learn Program on January 25. She described how people in these regions don't go to gyms or engage in extreme exercise, but rather make exercise a natural part of their everyday activities—something that can easily be emulated by Villagers in the District, for instance, by walking to the supermarket or by visiting the arboretum with fellow Villagers and their dogs.

Dietary similarities can also be found in these centenarian pockets of the world, Wendt continued. Ninety-five percent of the foods they eat are plant-based—fruits, vegetables,



greens. Most eat meat, fish, or dairy as a source of protein once a day. Olive oil is a staple in many of their diets. A number drink wine, especially red wine, in moderation.

Many share the strong feeling that there is a purpose in life. This tends to be a common ingredient among many centenarians, Wendt pointed out.

A slower pace of life is another of their characteristics, Wendt noted. And so is belonging to a community. Research has shown that people who immigrate from centenarian locales to the United States, yet retain their community, are less prone to chronic illnesses than are those who immigrate and do not retain one. Studies have also demonstrated that belonging to a community is as important to longevity as eating right and keeping fit.

"You guys are creating a sense of belonging!" Wendt praised the Villagers listening to her talk. The implication of what she said? The Village is benefiting our health and may even be extending our lives.

How are people residing in the longest-lived regions of the world dealing with the Covid-19 pandemic? "I don't know," Wendt admitted. "But I would expect them to be healthier



and less susceptible to the virus and its complications."

If you have questions for Julie Wendt or want to schedule a consultation with her, she can be reached through her website:
www.juliewendtnutrition.com

Learning Each Other's Culture



Ask Ann

It is easy to assume either that everyone's culture is the same as yours, or that because you know one thing about someone's culture, *By Ann Talty* that you understand everything. And you don't even know that you are making assumptions.

Music and the other arts are a way to open a window into another culture. The arts let us use both sides of our brain to understand. Feeling must occur in the arts, not just use of the intellect. Although I have been exposed to many other cultures and their music, I have not necessarily understood them. Musically, for example, I was brought up in an English cathedral choir milieu. That means, among other things, that you are not allowed to move when you sing. You are taught that any movement is distracting, that the music is for the glory of God, not the glory of you, and essentially you are dissing God

if you move. Well, this is not true in many other cultures.

My real "Aha!"-moment came during a gospel music workshop. I was running a conference, and I signed up for this workshop for three reasons: I could be reached there; though I didn't particularly like gospel music, I wanted to understand it better; and frankly, because the workshop room was one of the few that had air-conditioning.

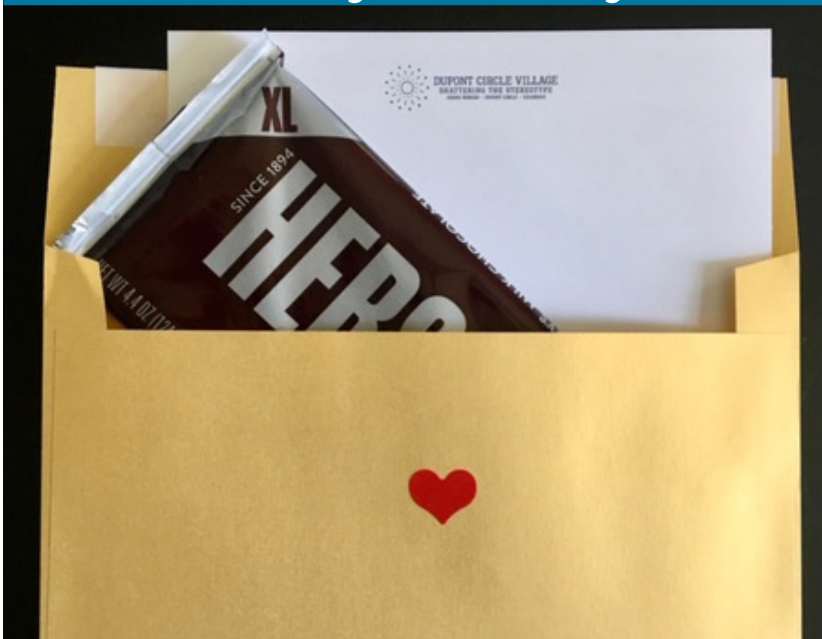
It was good to learn about some typical forms of the music, as well as its history. I tried to sing it, but just wasn't getting it. I tried to make sense of the music on the page, and the notated rhythm really threw me—I'm not used to counting like that. Well, when I was showering the morning of the third day, I found myself humming something, then moving around. Realizing it was a piece from the workshop, and that when I moved, the rhythm made absolute

sense, I got out of the shower before I broke my neck in excitement. I then couldn't wait to tell the instructor about my experience. He loved it! As long as I tried gospel music through the lens of English Cathedral choirs, it made no sense. Engaging my body and experiencing music in such a different way let me connect the dots, merging what I knew intellectually with more of the total experience, removing assumptions and judgments I didn't know I had.

Whether it is music, art, or literature, I have found this open approach really helps me understand so many cultures better. I don't pretend to understand any of them fully, but using both sides of my brain certainly opens the window to better understanding and moves me down an enlightening and, I hope, greatly enlightened path.



February Birthdays



DCV wishes a big Happy Birthday to the following members born in February!

Kathy Price, Valentina Wilbur, Gretchen Ellsworth, Peter Vandevanter, Mimi Feinstein, John VerSteeg, Dan Gamber, Mary Wheeler, Bill Roberts, Donna Batcho, Eileen Tanner, Harvey Friedman, Mike Gould, Katharine Gresham, and Kathy Cardille

Meet Peggy Siegel

Were it not for a broken heart and a lifelong passion for rock n roll, she might never have wound up in Dupont Circle.

In May 1970, the native-born Clevelander was pursuing a doctorate in political science at Ohio State. The Vietnam War raged on. As thousands of anti-war protestors faced off against national guard troops, word

DCV Member Profile

spread quickly that four students had been killed at Kent State several hours to the North. University

officials in Columbus immediately shut down the campus for the rest of the school year.

"For me, it was a moment of truth," Peggy recalls. "Should I still pursue an academic career or engage directly with the political system?" She chose option two, becoming a parttime intern in the Ohio General Assembly where, after refocusing her PHD on the politics of education, she served seven more years as a senior staffer with the Senate Democrats.

Partisan politics were highly competitive back then, as Democrats and Republicans routinely gained or lost control of the Executive and Legislative branches. But governance still prevailed. Peggy's most impactful experience was as director of a special joint legislative committee created to address Ohio's massive school desegregation challenges. After studying the issues for nearly a year, the bipartisan committee unanimously adopted a report—during an election year, no less—whose education and fair housing recommendations were enacted into law the following year.

Peggy spent the next several years representing Cuyahoga County (the Cleveland area) as director of state legislative affairs. In 1982, she completed a selective three-month senior executive program at the Kennedy School of Government, primarily

geared toward high-ranking (SES) federal officials. "One of my female classmates worked for state government in California," recalls Peggy. "As outriders, we dubbed ourselves 'Laverne and Shirley'."

While at Harvard, Peggy caught Potomac Fever, but not for the obvious reason. She and another classmate, a naval architect at the Pentagon and originally from Greece, fell in love and planned to get married. Whoever found a job first would move, which turned out to be her, with the National Conference of State Legislatures' DC office. The mid-eighties proved to be an exciting time to work on education reform policy with state lawmakers from across the country.

Peggy's 30-year career in DC bridged the public, private, and non-profit sectors. She worked for two global consulting firms (Cresap/Towers Perrin and Pelavin/AIR); spent 12 years at the National Alliance of Business directing and/or writing about national, state, and local business/education partnerships; and ended with K-12 accreditation and private consulting. One of her more memorable projects as a management consultant with Cresap was a study for the Bishop of the Episcopal Diocese of New York City, with the team's main contact, a disciple of Saul Alinsky. "The project felt like giving strategic advice, one step removed from God," she confessed in jest.

Peggy's professional career was immensely rewarding. Alas, the same cannot be said for what had first brought her to DC, proof that awesome romantic adventures don't always turn into lasting relationships. Seeking solace, she turned to another deep love: rock n roll.

Having schlepped her massive record collection to DC, she eagerly sought ways to fill up her evenings. A chance conversation with an NCSL colleague put her in touch with an



entrepreneurial teacher whose side business, named "Disco Inferno," placed disc jockeys in spots all over the DC area. During the next 10 years, she moonlighted as a hotel and club deejay, spinning tunes during the pre-digital era.

What started out at a Holiday Inn in Gaithersburg was soon followed by the Holiday Inn in Old Town Alexandria. Then came the Marriott at 22nd and M Streets, where Peggy witnessed a DEA-arranged drug bust (the Marriott was not pleased) and where she had to be yanked away from playing only Marvin Gaye tunes the day he was killed. Most interesting were the double-takes of professional colleagues visiting from Ohio and elsewhere who occasionally would wander into the hotel bar, only

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to be called out by the deejay. Peggy ended her club career at Pisces (now a sports store) on M Street in Georgetown that catered to powerful lobbyists, political figures, and ambassadors. One evening the Prince of Kuwait came by the deejay booth to request "Top Gun": A prescient choice, the year before the first Gulf War.

Peggy also deejayed at several private parties, including a dinner at the landmark Hogate's restaurant on the wharf for the White House Fellows, who deployed their wooden crab mallets in time to the music. "At least they pounded on the downbeat," she adds. Peggy came out of retirement to officiate musically during two

family reunions for a former publisher of USA Today. "A lovely group," she laughs, "and a big surprise when some family members got down and dirty on the floor, dancing the alligator."

In addition to rock n roll, Peggy has enjoyed a lifelong love affair with baseball. Her goal: to visit all 30 major league ballparks. Before Covid hit, she had made it to 26. "Ballparks," she notes, "are wonderful places to savor what has helped make America great (again, for real) and still does." For seven years, she also has volunteered at the Kennedy Center and with the National Symphony Orchestra.

Dupont Circle Village has become important, too, particularly

what began as an informal memoir writing group. Six intrepid stalwarts, the self-proclaimed "Writers' Bloc," continue to meet on Zoom, to share pieces about their lives as well as a deepening friendship. "Literary yoga," Peggy calls it. Only one of the compelling ways that the Village enhances community, both large and small.

Which gets us full circle. While deejaying at the Marriott in 1984, Peggy learned of a unit about to open up at 21st and N Streets. She was eager to move there, having fallen in love with the neighborhood—and has been a grateful resident ever since.

Surviving a broken heart now and then may be worth it after all.

Out and About



▲ **Lucia Edmonds** raising a glass after Joe Biden was sworn in as the 46th President of the United States.



▲ **Michaela Buhler** and a friend were in Great Falls, VA when they saw this wonderful, Painted Bunting feasting on some seeds. It was truly amazing.

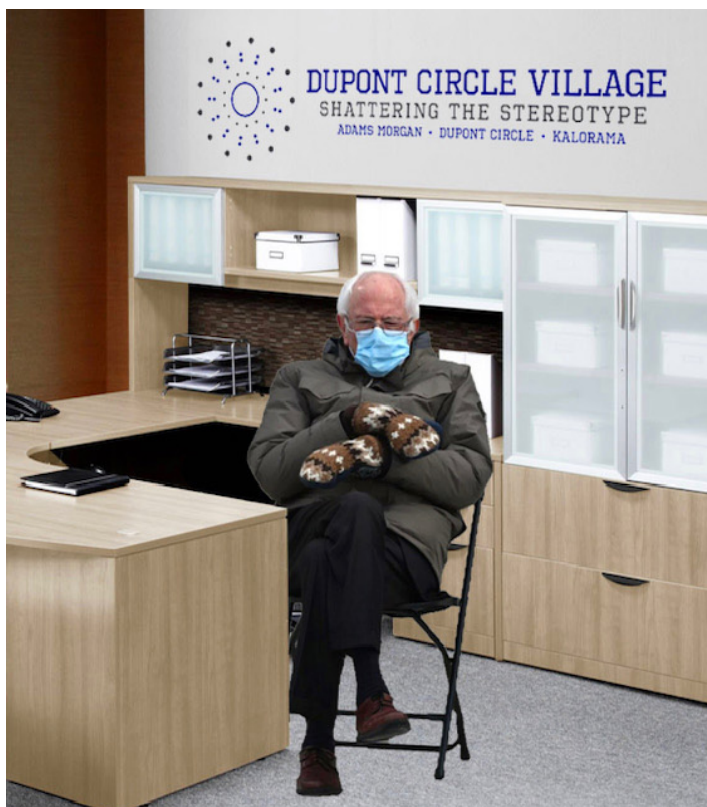


▲ **Geraldine McMann** was out on a walk on Massachusetts Avenue and met this little guy. He's pretty cute.

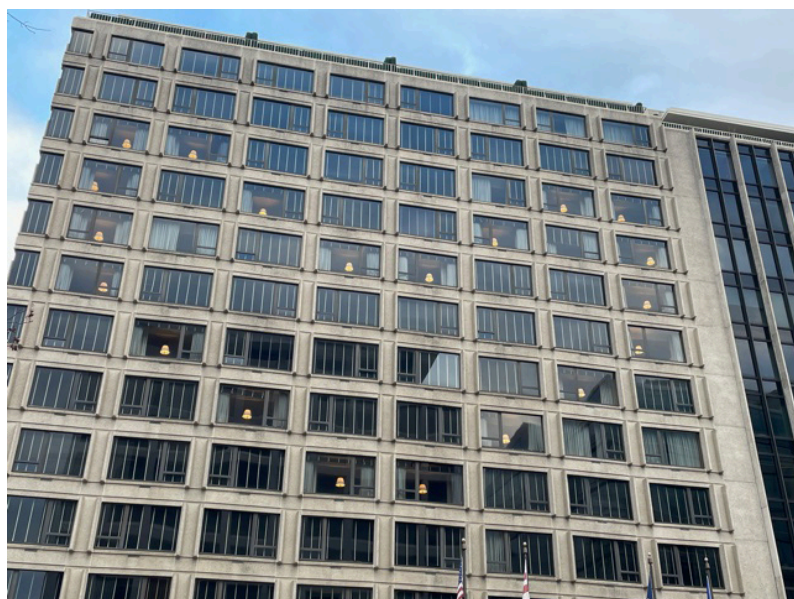


▲ Villager **Caroline Mindel** gives victory sign for mask mandate: no exceptions (except Roxie the doglet).

Out and About



▲ First DCV membership, next DC Statehood.



▲ **Donna Batcho** was walking past the boarded up and closed Loews Hotel on 17th Street right before the inauguration and saw some lights on. Then noticed the pattern, a heart! She also visited an eerily quiet Georgetown.

Out and About



▲ As much of the city was a fortress, **Carol Galaty** and **Ken Shuck** spent much of inauguration week glued to the TV watching democracy in action and then, like other Villagers celebrating what ended up, to all of our relief, being a peaceful transition of power. Carol went around the neighborhood and took photos of other Village member homes showing their bunting flags.



◀ Villagers **Monica Heppel**, **Abigail Wiebenson** and **Mary Wheeler** walking past the numerous National Guard troops that were in Washington, DC to support a peaceful presidential transition.



Saul Leiter (1923–2013, American), **Man in Straw Hat**, 1955
Chromogenic print

Poetry Corner

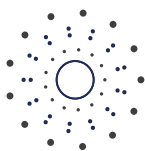
The Lesson of the Falling Leaves

the leaves believe
such letting go is love
such love is faith
such faith is grace
such grace is god
i agree with the leaves

Lucille Clifton

(1936–2010) author, educator and
Poet Laureate of Maryland

The Dupont Circle Village is a non-profit volunteer organization that connects neighbors to services and educational, cultural/social and health and wellness activities. Please consider a donation now or remember us in your will.



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