



# DUPONT CIRCLE VILLAGE

## SHATTERING THE STEREOTYPE

ADAMS MORGAN • DUPONT CIRCLE • KALORAMA

“This is not the year to get everything you want. This is the year to appreciate everything you have.”

—Nadine Sadaka Boulos

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### Welcome New Members!

Robyn Lipton

## Registering Voters in a Cultural Hub of the Black Community—The Barbershop

More Americans voted in the 2020 presidential election than in any other election in U.S. history. Reasons for this historic turnout include a surge in youth voters, voting by mail and early voting, record numbers of first time voters, and get-out-the-vote efforts by groups like Fair Fight Action, founded by Stacey Abrams. While Stacey Abrams may be the most prominent voice in activating the vote, other groups were also effective. For example, *Shape Up the Vote* enlisted local barbershops as voter engagement hubs to reach and empower men of color.

Barbershops hold a special place in the Black community. They are more than just haircutting and grooming businesses—they are a safe place for fellowship; for sharing information through dialogue and trust. Today, Black-owned barbershops play a central role in Black public life; however, that was not always the case.

Before and even after the Civil War, Black barbers were obliged by custom to serve an exclusively white clientele. Even in Black-owned barbershops in both the North and the South, Black customers were not allowed to get haircuts, mainly because white customers didn't

voters, voting by mail and early voting, record

By Eva M. Lucero,  
Executive Director



want Black customers next to them. Most Black barbers capitulated to the racism of their white customers and many rationalized it was because of economic necessity. As long as white men continued to patronize Black barbershops, the barber's family had stability and the ability to provide for his family in a middle-class household.

After Emancipation, Black-owned barbershops started serving Black clientele. They quickly became a type of sanctuary, places where patrons and barbers could exchange stories and confidences and talk freely about pressing issues of the day.

Fast forward to 2020. A Washington, DC tech start up, theCut, partnered with *Shape Up the Vote* to boost voter turnout. theCut is a mobile barbering app that connects

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# President's Notes



**W**hat a year this has been! My February President's message discussed smooth sailing for the year. Well, so much for that! Now we have a forecast for better times ahead with the possibility of COVID-19 vaccines and therapeutics but we have to traverse some very rough water between now and then.

This is where the Village shines. During the pandemic, Dupont Circle Village (DCV) has provided relevant information, activities, support and entertainment for our members. The

number of programs and total participation has increased this year. We are exercising, discussing issues, playing games together. We are also providing food and supporting members who need extra help. For example, 30 Village volunteers answered the request to provide the fixings

for a traditional Thanksgiving dinner for 55 other members. We'll keep on keeping on.

Of course, all this programming requires funding. We will be depending heavily on our year-end campaign because we could not have our annual Gala and our CelebSalons became free online programs.

A generous donor has agreed to **match any member contribution** up to \$25,000. Your donation will have twice the impact and will be doubled if you contribute by

December 31, 2020. I hope you will consider a donation to Dupont Circle Village.

Remember, the March CARES Act, which addresses the COVID crisis, modified existing tax laws to allow more liberal charitable deductions in 2020. Contact your financial advisor for more information or reach out to Eva M. Lucero, DCV executive director who can also assist you.

We have navigated these rough times for the last eight months. Members have needed help and each other and we, as a Village, have stepped up. This is confirmed by notes and calls I receive almost daily expressing thanks for the Village. Let's make sure we can continue to by supporting Dupont Circle Village during this campaign.

My best wishes for a safe and healthy Holiday Season.

## Barbershop

*Continued from page 1*

barbers and clients throughout the United States and facilitates bookings and payment. To date, theCut has successfully booked 15 million appointments from two million users who have patronized 70,000 barbers across the country. *Shape up the Vote* leveraged theCut's extensive database to target and then reach out to barbershops with voting tool kits that included voter registration forms, election materials, and informative posters.

One candidate realized the power of barbershops to deliver messages and help get out the vote—Joe Biden's campaign filmed three ads in barbershops in key states including Pennsylvania, Georgia and North Carolina. The series was aptly called "Shop Talk."



# 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](http://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](mailto:admin@dupontcirclevillage.net) or (202) 436-5252.

## CELEBSALON:

### Erik Wemple & Stephanie Mencimer

Wednesday, December 2, 6:00–7:00 pm

Location: Virtual

Limit: 40; Cost: free

RSVP: Register online or contact DCV Office

As the Presidential transition unfolds, there are many questions about what is to come in 2021. Will the media continue its focus on President Trump, or will it turn toward the new administration, which is unlikely to produce "breaking news" at the same pace as the current President? How will the Supreme Court shape 2021, with its solid conservative majority and the significant cases that are likely to be adjudicated. **Erik Wemple, a Washington Post** columnist and media critic, and **Stephanie Mencimer, a staff reporter for Mother Jones**, will discuss these issues and more.

## Cultural Affairs Group Book Discussion

Friday, December 4, 11:30–12:30

Location: Virtual

Limit: 20 people

RSVP: Register online or contact DCV Office

Discussion of Robin DiAngelo's *White Fragility: Why It's So Hard for White People to Talk About Racism*. The discussion will be facilitated by Anne Litwin, Ph.D. Keynote Speaker, Workshop Trainer and Author of *New Rules for Women: Revolutionizing the Way Women Work Together*. Please read the book before the program.



## LIVE AND LEARN:

### Beyond Coping: What COVID Confinement is Teaching Us About Personal Resilience

Monday, December 7, 3:30–5:00 pm

Location: Virtual

RSVP: Register online or contact DCV Office

What kind of toll does this cumulative stress take on our body and brain? What are we learning? How do we expand our resilience repertoire to serve us for the long haul?

- Learn what it really means to be resilient over time
- Bring more awareness of your short-term coping behaviors
- Expand your knowledge of actions that foster and grow resilience
- Practice simple, effective resilience skills
- Leave with a way to strengthen your personal resilience

Take a deeper dive focused on what makes a person resilient, and learn how to strengthen your own personal resilience.

Presented by Barbara Beizer, Co-Founder, Resilience Lab, Leadership & Transition Coach

## CULTURAL AFFAIRS GROUP

### 100 Years of the Negro National League

Wednesday, December 16, 6:00–7:00 pm

Location: Virtual

RSVP: Register online or contact DCV Office

DCV member, Peggy Siegel, will lead this discussion after we watch the 26-minute PBS documentary on the Negro Leagues.

## Mystery Book Group

Friday, December 18, 3:00–4:00 pm

Location: Virtual

RSVP: Register online or contact DCV Office

This month's book will be *The Dry*, by Jane Harper

*Continued on page 4*



*Continued from page 3*

### Sunday Soup Salon

Sunday, December 20 5:00–6:30 pm

Location: Virtual

RSVP: Register online or contact DCV Office

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.

### Men's Book Group

Monday, December 21, 11:00 am

Location: Virtual

RSVP: Robert Hirsch ([rmhirsch49@yahoo.com](mailto:rmhirsch49@yahoo.com))

The book for December is *Johnstown Flood* by David McCullough

### DCV Movie Group

Monday, December 28, 3:55–5:00 pm

Location: Virtual

RSVP: Register online or contact DCV Office

Details will be announced in Friday e-blasts.

### Online Meditation with Christina

Mondays & Thursdays, 9:00–9:30 am

(except December 24 or 31)

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



### Chair Yoga

Tuesdays, 5:00–6:00 pm

Location: Virtual

RSVP: Register online or contact DCV Office

### Online Feldenkrais Method Awareness Through Movement

Wednesdays, 10:00–11:00 am

(will not meet on December 30)

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.

### Coffee and Conversation

Thursdays, 10:00–11:00

(except December 24 or 31)

Location: Virtual

RSVP: Register online or contact DCV Office

# HAPPY HOLIDAYS

*May your hearts be filled with  
all the joys the festive season brings!*

Your friends at Dupont Circle Village

# CelebSalons Update

Last March when the pandemic forced cancellation of all in-person events, the CelebSalon committee had just put the finishing touches on another great season with more than a dozen notables signed up for these small in-home fundraisers.

As in the past eight years, we had lined up Celebs who donated their time and talent and hosts who donated food and drink and villagers who would pay \$75 a seat.

All had to be put on hold. The committee decided, after a few weeks, that we might try virtual salons—for free.

We didn't have a game plan or a lineup of speakers. But here we are, eight months later, doing virtual salons and going strong. For the most part, the committee members came up with ideas on folks who might be interesting to hear from. Musicians, politicians, media pundits, foodies, cultural leaders in the theater and art

museums—with some earth scientists thrown in for good measure.

We couldn't provide food or drink. We couldn't schmooze as we did when we were in a villager's living room. But there's a surprising amount of intimacy, seeing a Celeb up close and personal for an hour. It's also been relatively easy to work in questions from villagers. We weren't sure what villagers would think of this, in this time of Zoom fatigue.

We've been surprised and gratified—villagers came!

We used to seat between 12 and 25 for an in-person salon, depending on the size of the host's house or apartment. We have many more for virtual salons, averaging between 25 and 40, with **Ann Talty** playing a central role as Zoom-maestro. For the most part, we're getting Celebs through making cold calls—we don't necessarily know everybody who's

anybody—but the committee members are coming up with lots of "why not invite..." suggestions.

We'd like to know what you think!

Who would you like to hear from? What categories of Celebs would you like to see more of? We've avoided some subjects, especially Covid related topics, because we get that everywhere else. But we may be missing some bets—so let us know what you'd like. We're open to suggestions.

Going forward, we'll aim to put on two salons a month. If you'd like to work on the committee, let me know. We meet once a week for an hour, via Zoom of course.

Thanks for your support and keep it up!

**Peg Simpson**, co-chair, with **Jane Pierson**, **Andres Doernberg**, **Jeanne Downing**, **Charlotte Holloman**, **Ann McFarren**, **Georgette Sobel**, **Kathleen Cardille**, **Eva M. Lucero** and **Ann Talty**

## The Washington Home Supports DC Villages with New Funding Initiative

Earlier this year, the DC Villages established a relationship with The Washington Home (TWH) to support DC Villages' initiatives.

The cultivation of the relationship was led by Andrea Saccoccia, Palisades Village executive director.

Formerly known as The Washington Home and Community Hospices, the organization had been a long-time supporter of the annual Palisades Village House Tour.

When the organization transitioned to a charitable foundation, it sought to re-identify community partners to fund and support.

As a result, the TWH board of directors invited Andrea to share information about the Village network in DC, its strengths and benefits, and the challenges faced by older adults living in the city.

Following Andrea's presentation, TWH provided DC's 13 Villages with two grants designated to address social isolation and food insecurity within the community. The funding also included an opportunity to provide emergency funds to seniors in need. The grants were a

very welcome surprise during these uncertain times.

TWH has a long history of service and care in the DC area. It is a foundation that provides funding to entities that create and deliver innovative, compassionate, and well-managed programs to improve the quality of life for elderly and/or terminally ill residents in the Washington, DC metropolitan area.

Founded in 1888, The Washington Home, until recently, provided long-term care to residents of its nursing home facility in upper Northwest Washington, hospice care to patients in their own homes, and care in the in-patient hospice wing of the nursing home.

In recent years, the Board of Directors of The Washington Home directed a repositioning of the organization by ceasing hands-on care and consolidating its financial resources to be deployed for maximum impact in accordance with its longstanding mission.

TWH's mission is deeply aligned with the DC Villages' goals. We are proud of this expanded relationship, and grateful for The Washington Home's generous support of our work.

## Medicare: Only One Major Change

**W**hat with the pandemic, wildfires, racial violence, and political turbulence, it's good to know that at least one thing is still there for us seniors—Medicare. Moreover, there is only one major change in Medicare for 2021, and it is a positive one, concerning Medicare coverage for individuals under age 65 who have end-stage kidney disease.

*By Joan Treichel*

So reported Chris De Young, a Medicare expert with the DC Department of Aging, at a virtual Village Live and Learn Program about Medicare on October 26.

There are two major kinds of Medicare coverage, De Young explained—Original Medicare health insurance and Medicare Advantage health insurance. Under the former, Medicare pays for your medical expenses on a traditional fee-for-service basis. Under the latter, you get your medical care through a health maintenance organization (HMO), and Medicare then pays the HMO for that care. The most popular HMO in the District is Kaiser Permanente.

Most seniors have the Original Medicare plan. Such coverage consists of Parts A, B, and D.

Medicare Part A helps cover inpatient hospital care, short-term stays in a nursing facility, skilled home health care, and hospice care. You can enroll in Part A three months before or three months after you turn 65. Even if you are still employed at age 65 and have employer health insurance, it's a good idea to enroll in Part A because it is free. That is, there is no monthly premium with a 10-year work history. Part A has a \$1,408 yearly deductible. Copays depend on the length of hospital stay.

Medicare Part B helps pay for doctor services both in and out of the hospital, mental health services, a number of preventive services,

durable medical equipment, ambulance transport, and some other medical services (but not acupuncture and chiropractic services). Part B has a monthly premium of \$144.60, or maybe more depending on your income; a yearly deductible of \$198, and 20 percent coinsurance. Physicians who participate in Part B cannot charge more than the Medicare-allowed amount. If you work longer than 65 and have employer health insurance, you don't need Part B until you retire. You then have a six-month window to sign up

Part D helps pay for your prescription medications. There are some 20 different drug plans in the District. Not all Part D plans cover the same medications. So you'll want to select one that covers your medications. Most drug plans charge a monthly fee that varies by plan. The so-called "donut hole," or coverage gap, in Part D is not as large as it used to be, but it still exists, De Young noted.

Moreover, you can purchase a Medigap policy to help pay for Medicare A and Medicare B-approved services that are not totally reimbursed by Medicare A and B. Some of these policies also cover a few things that Medicare A and B would not pay for at all—say, medical care while traveling outside the United States.

Now, when should you consider using a Medicare Advantage plan such as the HMO Kaiser Permanente rather than Original Medicare? Under the Medicare Advantage rubric, you pay lower premiums typically, but you will be responsible for deductibles and copays for doctor visits, lab work, hospital stays, etc. You typically have to see providers in the plan's network. Some Medicare Advantage plans will cover your visits to out-of-network providers, but require you to pay higher copays and deductibles than if you visit in-network ones. Still other Medicare Advantage plans do



not cover out-of-network visits at all.

If you are largely healthy, it might be cheaper to sign up for a Medicare Advantage Plan instead of Original Medicare, De Young pointed out. But, if you need a lot of medical services, it probably wouldn't be cheaper because of the deductibles and copays involved.

Finally, more District residents than you might think might qualify for financial help with paying Medicare monthly premiums, deductibles, and copays. To qualify, you have to have a monthly income between \$3,000 and \$4,000. Required minimum distributions taken from pension money annually rather than monthly are not included in that amount.

**De Young said that he would be happy to help Villagers with any Medicare questions they have. His phone number is (202) 374-8435. His e-mail address is [chris.deyoung@dc.gov](mailto:chris.deyoung@dc.gov)**



# Meet Laurie Coburn (In her own words)

I grew up on a dairy farm in Wallingford, Vermont, in the valley by the Appalachian Trail. I attended the small village school, then Northfield School for Girls, Vassar College, and I then did some graduate work at Rutgers University.

I married a fellow Vermonter, Richard Coburn, and taught all four grades of high school English at a rural school near Ithaca, NY, while my husband completed veterinary school at Cornell. We raised four children, including our adopted African American son, Seth.

In 1968 I was severely injured in an automobile accident which left me with problems walking and lots of back and hip pain. This pain has haunted me ever since. Friends from our church in Somerville, NJ, where we lived at the time, rallied around us and “carried” us and the children with help and TLC for two long years. At that point I only needed a “mother’s helper” to manage the household.

As I recovered, I worked with the churches in the area to create the first non-profit day care center in New Jersey. This involved taking on the conservative church and community leaders who believed that women should stay home and take care of their children.

As our children grew, our life changed because husband Richard began dealing with the fact that he is gay (bisexual). At first we tried “open marriage,” which was common in the 1970s. By the time the children had all graduated from high school, it had become clear to me that our marriage and family were no longer Richard’s top priority. He had become involved with the man who is now his husband. These developments left me alone at home taking care of our herd of dairy goats which we had acquired because three of our children were

allergic to cows’ milk. I realized I needed to “reinvent” myself after those years of leading 4-H and publishing a newsletter about dairy goats. The first thing I did was learn to type.

Friends in the DC area found a job for me assisting the historians who were documenting the Three Mile Island crisis. After a couple of years, another friend offered me a job as the Assistant Director of the Campaign to End Hunger and Homelessness during the presidential election year of 1988, funded by the Hands Across America project (“We are the world; we are the Children!”). I was in charge of grassroots organizing all across the country. In those days we didn’t yet have the internet, so we hired homeless people to help us stuff, stamp, and sort the envelopes to be sent out weekly by mail to our activists. That’s when I began to realize that I had a gift for community organizing.

After the election, we closed the Campaign, and I was invited to open the national office of Parents and Friends of Lesbians and Gays (PFLAG.) This was an extraordinary experience. I found healing for my own grief in the process of ministering to families of LGBTQ people who were suffering as I was, having to deal with the pain and shame of what seemed like scandal and the destruction of our families. At one point, I was a guest on the Oprah Winfrey Show to talk about wives of gay men.

With PFLAG launched, I was then invited to work with the staff of the Religious Coalition for Abortion Rights, which morphed into the Religious Coalition for Reproductive Choice (RCRC.) This was another controversial issue and involved working with clergy and congregations. I especially remember working with people and congregations in Pensacola, Florida, where an abortion provider had been shot and killed.

In each of these jobs, I learned that creating opportunities for people to share their own stories was a good



way to help them heal and change attitudes. One highlight for me was travelling to the Soviet Union during the HIV epidemic and working “underground” to help LGBTQs organize in secret, because homosexuality was against the law there. We asserted that we were there to do HIV/AIDS education, but behind the scenes we were coaching and encouraging people who wanted to organize, even though it was illegal. On that trip I was delegated to carry into the country a gigantic box of condoms, which the customs officials pawed through, suspecting that I might be smuggling drugs in with the condoms. They closed the box, winked, and said to me, “Have a wonderful visit!”

Nowadays, my back and hip problems restrict what I’m able to do. This is why I retired early. I use a mobility scooter to get around DC. DCV volunteers have helped me in many ways. I am so grateful for their support and encouragement.

# In Their Own Words: Villagers Mark Biden Win

**T**he collective sigh of relief was almost palpable on DC streets with the announcement of a Joe Biden win on Saturday, November 7, around noon. Throngs gathered in the streets uptown and downtown; a parade of honking cars, a rainbow of jubilant folk, spontaneous jigs, fire-crackers and more marked the day. Here's how it felt for a handful of Villagers, in their own words.

## We did it!

Waiting to exhale. That's how it felt until Saturday, November 7, the day after the presidential election had been called for Joe Biden. I couldn't stay home. I wanted to mark the day. I wanted to be with other people who, like me, had been waiting to exhale. Lafayette Square, always alive with protest placards from the night before, was on my radar screen. Early afternoon, I headed there from home on 15th Street, with my camera and a neighbor.

Many people, all White, were returning by then. I quipped that I'd soon be the last Black person standing in DC, and that seemed accurate... until we got to H Street NW. There, the music was blaring and people who looked like me were moving in unison, doing the Electric Slide. My heart quickened; I exhaled: there it was...The Celebration!

**Lucia Edmonds**



## Joy ripples through DC and across the globe

It all happened at once: texts popping onto our phones; the break-in on "Wait Wait...Don't Tell Me!"; shouts and cheers from our condo hallway and outside on Connecticut Avenue. At last, the win we'd hoped for; we wasted no time joining the Celebration.

Throngs streamed down the Avenue toward BLM Plaza, on foot, on bikes, in wheelchairs, pushing strollers. Cars jammed the street, honking while the ever-growing crowd cheered, waving flags, banging pots and more. It was thrilling!

Being at the Plaza was a huge, therapeutic release: music and dancing, people sharing their excitement. Even a nearby policeman gave me a socially distanced hi-five. The dozens of foreign reporters/news services underscored the importance of this event world-wide.

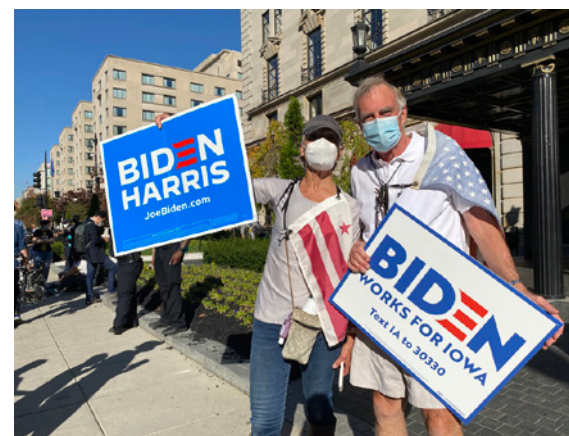
What struck me most was experiencing everyone's positive emotional reaction. I heard no anger aimed at Trump, but rather elation and relief at his defeat. Despite decades of political elections I've experienced, none has had this degree of total joyousness.

**Lindsey Holaday**

## Savoring an Olympic win

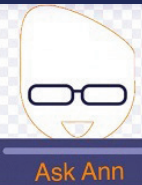
I couldn't sit still. Compelled to be part of an American crowd celebrating Joe Biden's win as President-elect, we headed to BLM Plaza. After months of a bitter, partisan campaign, and an unusually messy democratic election process, I felt as I had in the past after watching a successful U.S. space launch or a dramatic Olympic win for our country.

Joy! In the midst of a pandemic.  
**Kathy Price**





# Keeping Things in Perspective



**I**n these difficult times, keeping things in perspective is more of a challenge for me than it usually is. I spent decades unable to practice this or even understand it. Then

*By Ann Talty*

a couple of decades of therapy to begin

to understand it and change my thinking.

Being reactive is not the healthiest thing to be. By focusing on one thing and it doesn't go your way, chances are that it is not the end of the world, even though it may feel like it. "In the scheme of things" became a really helpful tool for me. At first, I fought back at this tool—perfectionism is not your friend, and it is a form of trying to control everything.

I will never forget at one of my first Al-Anon meetings, when I went down the list of questions to ask yourself to see if you had been affected by alcohol. I had thought I wasn't. I found that a typical symptom is the need to have everything

perfect, or somehow there would be a horrible consequence and it would all be your fault. It becomes a driving force.

Likewise, I had to unlearn the pattern of demonizing a particular person or group of people. In some ways, it is easier to do that—all bad or all good. It's their fault, not mine. Bad things come from them; they make you react and do something that you really aren't proud of.

In those therapy sessions, one of my revelations was that the more I avoided the demonized person, the worse the situation and feelings became. Simply greeting that person with a smile can break that demonization. Ironically, these days, people can't see us smile behind our masks, but we are learning other ways to convey friendliness.

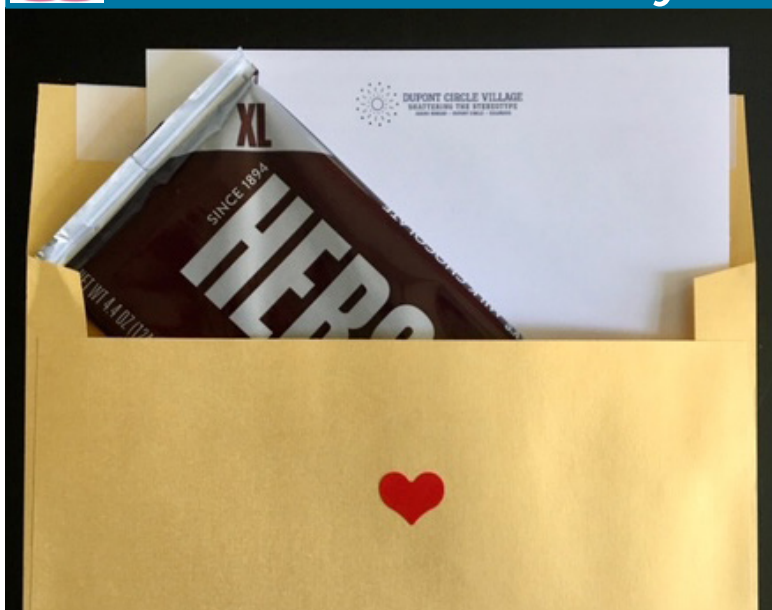
I have a half-brother I have only met a few times. I am now on Facebook with him, and it has been quite an education. Once he friended me,

I got to see pictures of his new wife, the upcoming birth of their child together, pictures of his first child and her first child. He was also doing upgrades to their home, so I really felt lucky that I had a window into who he is and who his family is.

Did I mention that he was born in Houston and has been there all his life? Well, Trump came along, and it became quite a challenge to maintain a relationship with my brother, since he is the product of his environment. What I found though, was that just when I would be ready to unfriend him, he would post family pictures and outings. And I would be reminded that people are complex. Yes, one human being could be an amazing father to his special needs child, yet be politically very conservative. I don't understand his views and beliefs, but I do know that at core, he is a loving person. So, do not demonize—we may not understand, but we can celebrate the good.



## November Birthdays

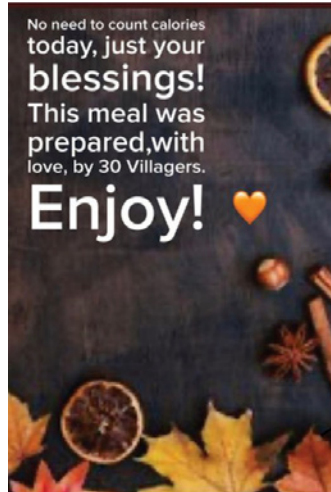


A very happy birthday to members born in November: **Nancy Barnum, Agnes Beale, Michaela Buhler, Jim Chamberlin, Tony Clifford, Kathy Davin, Brad Edwards, Kathy Jordan, Janet Kegg, Judith Kirvan, Mandi Lisbona, Joan Ludlow, Gregory Milman, Miriam Schottland, Ingrid Suisman, Darrell Totman, Carmela Vetri, and Victor Wexler**

# DCV's Spirit of Giving

The spirit of giving was in full force last week at DCV! The membership committee's request for volunteers to provide the fixings' for a Thanksgiving meal was immediately met by 30 members. Each contributed to a traditional Thanksgiving meal that included turkey, stuffing, gravy, cranberry sauce, and a variety of sides and pies. Volunteers also helped assemble and deliver these homemade meals to 55 people. It was truly a community effort infused with the spirit of the holiday for which we are all grateful.

By Eva M. Lucero



## Quarantine Stories



▲ After 40 years in DC, **Jane Cave** and **Eugene Versluysen** have finally discovered the gardens at Hillwood Museum, a charming oasis of calm only ten minutes from home!



▲ **Lynn Lewis, Caroline Mindel, Lucia Edmonds** and **Peg Simpson** enjoying the fall colors at the National Arboretum.



# Quarantine Stories



◀ To escape the news after the election, **Kenlee Ray** drove out to Sandy Springs, MD to see the 2020 Artina outdoor sculpture show at the Sandy Springs Museum. It was a gorgeous autumn day and she felt revived after wandering around the grounds viewing the sculptures.



▲ **Gretchen Ellsworth** and **Bob Hirsch**, spent the weekend of November 20–23 in a rental vacation house in the mountains of central Pennsylvania with their children and grandchildren. The top picture was from a lovely overlook at Raystown Lake near where they were staying. The photo on the left is Gretchen with her son Andrew on the trail near Raystown Lake. A great weekend was had by all. Thanksgiving was celebrated on Sunday November 22. They had planned on it being a weekend for 14, but Covid restrictions and job issues intervened for some of the younger generation, but they will try again for the whole group in the future. In the mean-time lots of joint cooking projects, games, hikes, great food and a good time for all who could attend.



# Quarantine Stories

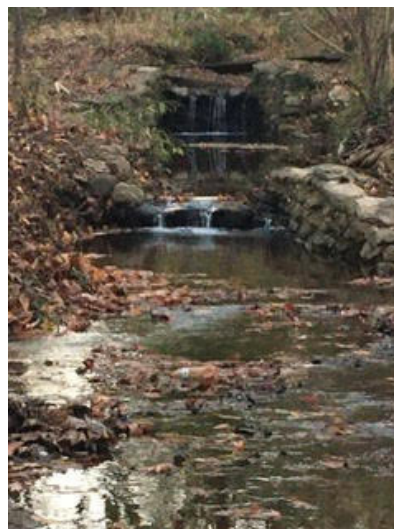
## Overcoming Fear

**D**espite the Covid-19 virus, **Carol Galaty** and **Ken Shuck** decided to take the hiking trip to Utah that they had scheduled in 2019. It was an exercise in figuring out ways to overcome fears and stay safe.

We were tested for Covid to ensure we were negative starting out. We wore masks with shields for the plane flights and *By Carol Galaty* only sipped or nibbled with the mask on but raised a bit from the bottom and the shields on. We wore masks most of the time except when we were alone, eating, or hiking on empty trails and socially distant from our four fellow hikers.

But the biggest fear Carol had to overcome turned out to be hiking and her vertigo. We started at the top of Bryce Canyon looking down on the incredible drip-sandcastle-like rock formations. We took the "Wall Street" trail, which is a strenuous, 0.6 mile, 550-foot drop, with switch-backs. Carol coped by using a walking pole she pretended was a fence that would keep her from falling over the ever-present drop-off-edge! Once down, the hike continued to descend more gently, weaving through narrow canyons looking up at towering rock structures until with relief we reached the wide canyon floor. The climb out was only slightly less scary!

The next day in 7-degree weather we started our hike in a magical snow-covered scene, with "diamond dust" air.



◀ **Donna Batcho** sharing some photos from her daily walks. The evening one is from Georgetown Farmer's Market in Rose Park from 3–7 on Wednesdays. Much smaller than the Dupont Circle one, more prepared food, fresh seafood, pizza truck, one farmer with vegetables and flowers.



## Coming to Terms with the Loneliness of Aging

**E**ver since March, the advent of the novel coronavirus and the subsequent restrictions, I have been struggling with an unusual sense of loneliness. I decided to write about how I have dealt with the problem because I suspect I am not the only DCVer to have these feelings.

While I have no children and no relatives living nearby, I have never been unhappy that I live alone. I have enjoyed being with friends and participating in a wide variety of activities. Suddenly, all of that has disappeared, and a truly crushing sense of loneliness has plagued me. Occasional emails, phone calls from friends and Zoom sessions help somewhat, but I blame myself that they do not help more.

I recently received an email from a German friend on the topic of loneliness, the wisdom and subtle humor of which stunned and relieved me. In the hope that some of you will profit from his words to the extent I did, I decided to translate what he wrote.

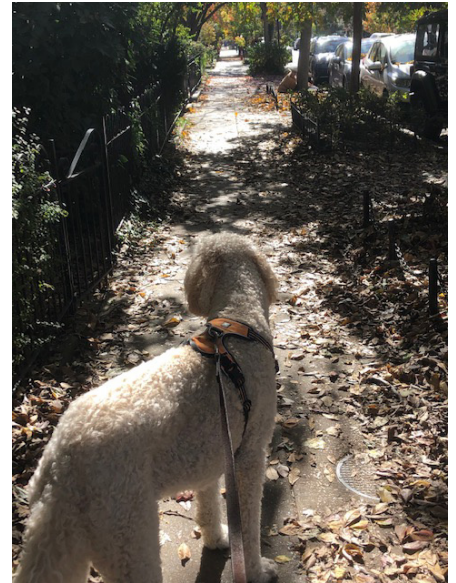
"Dear Helene, You are definitely too hard on yourself. But that is not really all there is to it. The loneliness that comes with aging cannot be made to disappear with any kind of magic. Just like many things we have in common with others when we're young (children, newly purchased furniture, our house, our garden, and especially our profession, all of the colorful fragments of life that surround us, or just the stupid neighbors we complain about, etc.), do they really matter as

much as we age?

And if we have nothing to pass on to others, we do not even have the proverbial estate-hungry legacy hunters among the relatives slinking around us. Even insurance agents avoid us because they know they cannot sell us anything. If we made our preparations in advance, we already have the insurance for our magnificent burial. All of this means we are no longer particularly interesting for anyone around us.

"Younger people do not approach us on their own because they have nothing to gain. I do not consider that to be particularly egotistical or calculated, just realistic. They simply have different priorities. I am calmly stating a fact. So that is why we must depend on people our own age, and most of them have enough to do to keep themselves afloat. Years ago, when I was in France, I picked up a great word from French youth slang designating old people: "les croulants" (those who are dilapidated or about to collapse). Isn't that a great image?! But I do need to mention the social workers in services for the elderly whose main responsibility is to care for us. I usually wave at them from afar as I pass them on my bicycle (no, I don't use a walker or rollator yet, and they don't have to make house visits for me, yet)."

My friend's positivity and optimism helped me overcome my looming depression, which is why I decided to share his words with others and with all DCVers.



▲ **Geraldine McCann** and her dog, Marley always have interesting adventures on their walks in the neighborhood.

## Managing Zoom Fatigue

**D**uring so much of our reconfigured, uncertain pandemic lives, Maya Angelou's pithy wisdom comes to mind: *"If you don't like something, change it. If you can't change it, change your attitude"*. Despite our gratitude

by Abigail Wiebenson to Zoom for keeping us connected to family and friends and involved in so many activities from lectures and book groups to exercise and yoga classes and meditation groups, screen time is wearing.

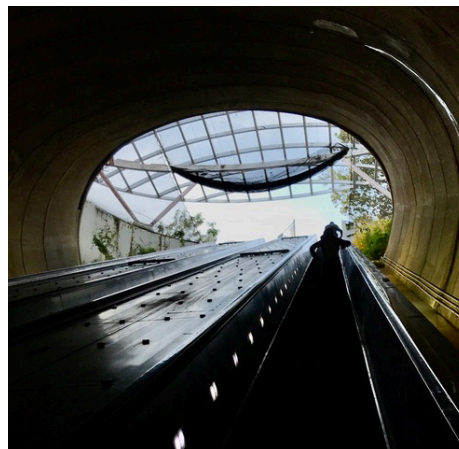
Recently, a group of Villagers pooled some ways to relieve and rethink Zoom fatigue:

- Turn off your screen and just listen. It rests the eyes and helps to keep focus. It also allows you to walk around a bit, always a useful reset to the mind and body.
- Practice 20-20-20 as recommended by the American Academy of Ophthalmology: every 20 minutes, get up and look for 20 seconds at something that's more than 20 feet away. Looking out a window is particularly helpful.
- Play soft background music. It helps to diffuse the concentration of visual energy.
- Sip water. Concentration can be dehydrating in ways you don't even realize.
- Make sure you are in a comfortable chair that supports your body. Shift your body from time to time. Breathe deeply. Be mindful of how closely or far away you sit. Tilt your screen for a different angle for your eyes to adjust to.
- Take notes, if a talk or lecture. It allows you to shift your eyes and of course, helps you to process and remember content.
- Encourage those who are speaking on your screen to move around, change angles, use a shared screen, play with green screen backgrounds.
- Take a purposeful, planned break from screen time. It refreshes and resets your brain and body. Ariana Huffington promotes a "tech Shabbat": completely unplug from sundown from Friday evening to Saturday evening.

Let us know how these work and other ideas. Email Eva M. Lucero, our executive director at [execdir@dupontcirclevillage.net](mailto:execdir@dupontcirclevillage.net).



**Pender McCarter** shared photos while out and about around town. Studio Theater's façade, the new Dwight D. Eisenhower Memorial across from National Air & Space Museum and the new canopy at the Dupont Circle metro stop.







HC 1/4

Louise Bourgeois 2004

Holiday Laurel (2004), Louise Bourgeois, 1911–2010, French  
(Museum of Modern Art, NYC)

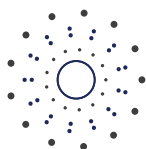
## Poetry Corner

Welcome your spirit back  
from its wandering. It may  
return in pieces, in tatters.  
Gather them together. They  
will be happy to be found  
after being lost for so long.

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— Joy Harjo  
(United States Poet Laureate)

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.



**DUPONT CIRCLE VILLAGE**  
SHATTERING THE STEREOTYPE  
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