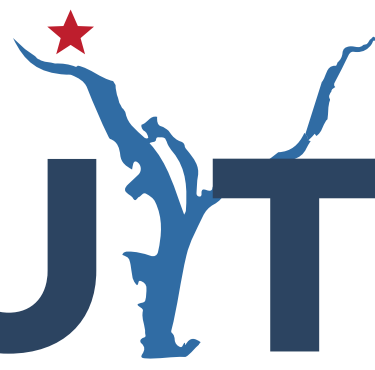


THE CONDUIT

NEWSLETTER OF THE PALISADES COMMUNITY ASSOCIATION



Washington, DC has a secret weapon, mostly unknown to those in political office, often overlooked by tourists, and woefully under-appreciated by many residents. It's our local music scene. From punk to go-go, we have an incredible stockpile of musicians of all stripes and colors. When I was growing up, we were known as the bluegrass capital of the country. Yep, you heard me. American University's radio station WAMU played

and Tankard, the Pour House Pub, the Round Table, One Flight Up and Babe's all had live music, but Georgetown was the epicenter of the scene. Clubs there proliferated like mushrooms: the Cellar Door, Crazy Horse, Emergency, Apple Pie, the Bayou, Desperados and more. Now Blues Alley seems to be the sole survivor of that era.

American University used to have free outdoor concerts that sometimes could be heard as far away as Glover Park. BB King, the Allman Brothers,



BETHESDA, CA. 1970

Do You Wanna Dance?

BY LYNDA COKINOS

bluegrass most of the time, and bluegrass bands performed regularly all over the area, including at the Red Fox Inn in Bethesda, the Dixie Pig in Cottage City and the Cellar Door in Georgetown.

And Palisades was well-connected to bluegrass and more. Tom Gray of The Seldom Scene and the Country Gentlemen grew up right here on Fulton Street. Bill Danoff picked Palisades to settle in—twice—and Nathan Strejcek of the Teen Idles, one of the earliest DC harDCore punk bands, lived here as well.

Once upon a time Wisconsin Avenue was lined with little venues from Georgetown to Friendship Heights. Places like the Keg, the Grog



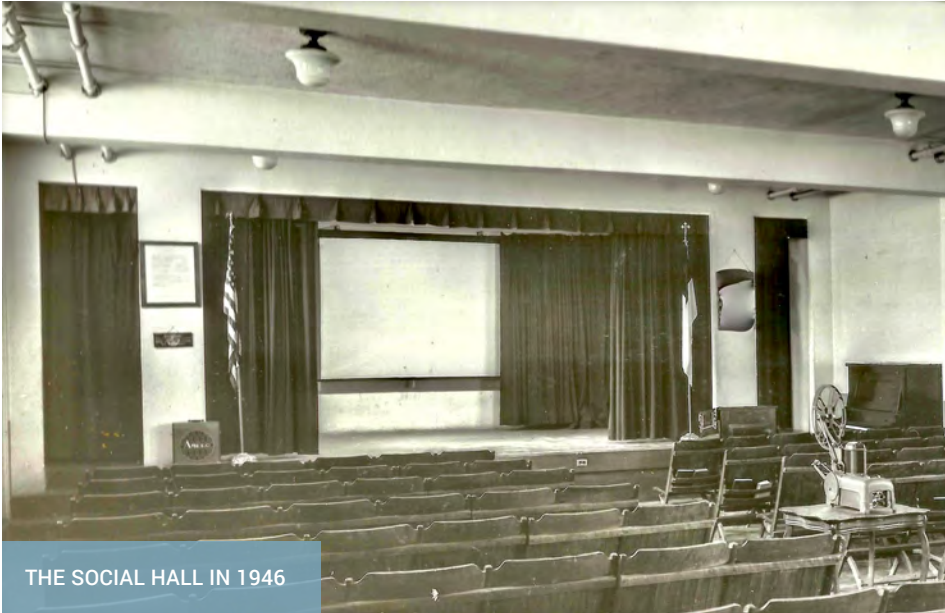
TEEN IDLES CA. 1980

Ohio Players, Commander Cody, Spirit, Mountain and The Psychedelic Furs all played there. AU seems pretty quiet now. Way more buildings, way less music.

Some Palisades neighbors will remember when the Danoffs brought us Starland

Cafe on MacArthur Boulevard. It was the only place to ever host live music in our neighborhood as far as I know—except for churches. Back in its heyday, the Palisades Community Church was formed not only as a church, but as a community gathering place. As soon as the congregation scraped together enough money to build the sanctuary in 1938, they also included an equally large room downstairs with a full stage called the Social Hall. Sadly, events like plays,





THE SOCIAL HALL IN 1946



THE AIRPORT 77s

hat parties, and the ham-and-oyster dinner have passed on with the tireless people who created them, but now the church is reinventing itself as a community hub once again.

Imagination is the limit here. Perhaps a second-run movie house? Anyone feel like putting on a play? Myself, I am looking forward to the Palisades History talks, which will be ongoing throughout the fall. And I'm truly excited to report that the Hub Cap Centre Concert Series will be revving up the Social Hall once again. The name gives a nod to the now defunct Capital Centre in Landover. (I know people played sports there, but I only remember it as a concert arena.) The Social Hall may be much smaller, but it's twice the size of most of my favorite music clubs. On September 11 we heard **The Longtimers**. Look for John Kelly's band **The Airport 77s** on **October 1**. The band self-describes as "a Silver Spring trio honoring the wistful glory of 1970s power pop and classic new wave." With plenty of room to dance, the place will rock. A food truck will be on hand before the show as well, so please come out and support local vendors and DC-based musicians. And on **October 15**, there will be the **Rhodes Tavern Troubadours**. Finally, there is something to do in the Palisades after dark.

2021 PCA BUSINESS MEMBERS

PLATINUM PLUS

Albertsons Safeway
Trammell Crow
Metro Motor

PLATINUM

Sibley Memorial Hospital
Mac Market
Grand Lodge of Masons, Inc.
Sibley Memorial Hospital
Et Voila

GOLD

MacArthur Beverages
St. Patrick's Episcopal
Church
Palisades-Georgetown
Lions Club
Rachel Levey—COMPASS
John I. Haas
Palisades Hub
Tirdad Fattahi, DDS

SILVER

Palisades Montessori
Vanessa Carpenter Lourie
Zantzing
Mimi's Convenience
The River School
Thomson and Cooke
Architects
Bistro Aracosia
Mindy's Catering
Black Coffee
BlackSalt
French Seams

Capital Antiques

Celia's Salon
Dennis O'Leary DDS PC
Abramson & Associates, LCC

BRONZE

American Painting Fine Art
Hanlon Design Build
MacArthur Cleaners
Standard Properties
Artisans Art & Frame
Lupo Verde
Sweet Agave

CATCHMENT AREA: MARK NOONE

BY ELIZA MCGRAW

Mark Alan Noone is a Berklee College of Music-educated, award-winning musician, songwriter and record producer, born and raised in Washington, DC and perhaps best known as the lead singer and frontman of The Slickee Boys. Slickee Boys officially broke up in 1991, but reunions continued until 2010. Mark holds the record for performances at the 9:30 Club with 94 appearances. He's currently playing in four bands: The Hula Monsters, King Soul, The Rhodes Tavern Troubadours and The Yachtsmen. He also teaches music and does instrument repair. Lynda Cokinos joined us for this interview.

Can you talk a little about the DC sound?

When I was playing with Ruthie and the Wranglers, I wrote a handful of rockabilly songs that we played. We got this new guitar player, Billy Shelton. Billy said, what y'all are doing, this is the DC rockabilly sound. He was from here, back and forth—I think he was like a military kid—and he said he really liked the rockabilly kind of music. And I thought, "Oh, that's cool, I can see that." DC also has go-go, which is probably the most recognizable, but there's also this whole DC hardcore punk rock thing, Minor Threat and Government Issue, Black Market Baby. Black Market Baby was more melodic than most punk bands, but those three bands had really mesmerizing frontpeople. You couldn't look

[like "Punk the Capital" and "Salad Days"] always talk about Minor Threat and Bad Brains. Great bands. They rely on that a lot. But you know, not to say, "We were here first," but we were here first. Because we're older.

Lynda: And he influenced them. Big time. This is the godfather of punk, right here.

DESPERADOS IN GEORGETOWN, CA. 1980



away. And the music was so powerful.

Everybody thinks punk was so terrible, so mean. [But] this whole DC punk/new wave/art rock scene was the most positive thing I've ever been involved in. Everybody got along. Everybody supported everybody. If I couldn't do a gig, I'd call Roddy [Frantz], from Urban Verbs, or call somebody else. It was a really close-knit scene, and everyone went to see each other's bands. You'd go to see one band, and there's like six other bands represented there. Everybody wanted to see what everybody else was doing, so I'm sure there's a lot of inter-influences from seeing each other's bands. Documentaries



ROBERT GOLDSTEIN TRIBUTE 2017 AT THE 9:30 CLUB

Mark: Before they were in bands, I could picture those guys in front of us at 9:30.

Lynda: Little skater dudes, going to Fort Reno...

You went from playing covers to writing your own originals. Was wanting to play them what connected you to wanting to write them?

Mark: Yeah, I wanted to write songs and play them for people, that's why I wanted to do songs like "Gotta Tell Me Why," which is probably Slickee Boys' most popular song. I've written and co-written some 60 songs.

[The way I write] constantly fluctuates... it's different every time. "When I Go to the Beach" as an example. I had this guitar that had a great surf tone so I wrote the music first, and then I thought about all the things I liked to do when I go to the beach like "drinking beer for breakfast" and "hanging out on the boardwalk." We shot the video in Rehoboth Beach, and it's out there online now.

[The video] was in an MTV competition. They wanted to have an underground show called The Basement Tapes, and you could send your videotape in. My buddy Leo, who was a friend of mine from Gonzaga, has been in radio sales his whole life, said, "Noone, let me pitch this." And he was relentless with it. The MTV guy said that when they watched the video, it was a winter day in New York, snowy, freezing and miserable. Perfect timing. In the video, everybody's drinking beers and it's sunny out, and they loved it. Some other band won first, but we won second place, and we got way more airplay.

What was that like?

It's hard to say. There's nothing to compare it to. When you actually hear your song on the radio for the first time, I really can't explain that feeling. And the same with seeing your

This is the godfather of punk, right here.

video on MTV. Have you ever seen the movie "That Thing You Do"? Do you remember the montage of scenes when their song is on the radio, and the band members are all hearing it in different parts of town? It's a lot like that. Euphoria.

I can remember when DC101 said they were going to play "Gotta Tell Me Why," and we just got a bunch of guys, my cronies at the time, six of us in the car. They said it's going to be close to 9:30, that's when we'll play it. We were on Foxhall Road, and we just pulled over on the side of the road by Battery Kemble. And the song came on, and we were all intent. The car went quiet, but when the song was over, everybody was hitting me. They kind of beat me up in a crazy friendly way. They were like, Noone! Unbelievable! And



9:30 CLUB'S 30TH ANNIVERSARY, 2010

they were pushing me out of the car, out of the back seat of Alan's Dodge Dart. We recorded that in 1979 at Inner Ear studio, which ended up being a go-to place for the Dischord folks. Then HBO used the song recently for their show "The Deuce."

I remember that summer didn't start until you heard, "When I Go to The Beach" on HFS.

WHFS had the biggest signal and the broadest playlist, and I was really flattered to be included in that. Just like you said, summer didn't start until you heard [DJ Jonathan Gilbert] Weasel playing Party Weekend, and "When I Go to The Beach." I really believe that I'm able to still make a living playing music because of how HFS played our stuff. Weasel, Cerphe and Bob here all played Slickee Boys and that's what made me, you know, Mark Noone. That's why I'm still able to make a living playing music and be in good bands with good people.

It sounds like you feel pretty lucky.

I'm not pretty lucky, I am unbelievably lucky. I am so lucky, I am the luckiest person that ever lived. Nobody, I don't care who you are, is luckier than I am. Nobody. I just am. I don't know what I did in another life, but...

There's stuff I want to record that will be a Mark Noone solo project, but it also fits in other bands that I am in. One song the Troubadours will do, and another King Soul will do. The Yachtsmen is a situation where I get to rock as hard as I did in Slickee Boys and write dope rock songs. Yachtsmen have a song called, "I Want to Go Fast." I just wanted to write the dumbest song possible. And everybody loves it.

I've got six or seven songs that I need to record at Hit and Run Recording; all originals that I've written. Even though I put out a solo single many years ago, this will be my first extended solo project.



There are so many kids you've interested in guitar in this neighborhood. How does the teaching fit in?

I amassed all this knowledge through my education at Berklee, and my experience playing in bands, so if there's a way I can pass that on to anybody, I'm happy to do it. A lot of the people I play with, and a lot of musicians I know, teach. When I'm teaching, I become a better player because I am playing more often. Also, I learn a lot from my students. I learn about new bands, new songs, and I like that. And it's an important income source. Sometimes my students ask me what it's like to solely survive on music. I say, don't try it.

But why? You said you were the luckiest guy.

They're probably not going to be as lucky as I am. Nobody is. I'm in four bands, repair musical instruments, produce records and teach. It's a lot of work, but when you walk on stage at the 9:30 Club to a sold-out show, and people start screaming, even before you've played a note, that's the best feeling in the world. You can't put a monetary value on that.

What about this neighborhood, what spawns creativity about living over here?

Well, when I came to Gonzaga, I came from boarding school, and I was starting over.

I had many friends from Leonard Hall [the boarding school] but only one guy besides me went on to Gonzaga. A lot of Gonzaga students lived in Glover Park and Palisades, but we never called it Glover Park or Palisades. Back then, it was always the Avenue or the Boulevard. The Avenue guys. The Boulevard boys. My high school band practiced on Macomb Street. After high school, I lived at 5050 MacArthur Boulevard. I think that was in '76. I rented a basement from a friend of mine. I wrote a song on the piano that happened to be there. "Droppin' off to

Sleep." I had some really good friends down here.

I'm excited that Palisades will have a new music venue at the Palisades Community Church's new reincarnation, The Palisades Hub.

Lynda: Mark named the series the Hub Cap Centre.

Mark: I can't wait to play here in the 'hood again. We have an upcoming date, October 15th, at the Hub with the Rhode Tavern Troubadours.

As far as the attraction here... it's the river. I love being this close to it. I really do.

What's special about our river?

I've fished all over the country, and the best fishing I've done is on the Potomac, but it's not as good as it used to be. It is a powerful river though.

I've had too many friends drown in it. But when you're standing out there fishing, if it weren't for the occasional plane flying over it could be five hundred years ago. It's real natural beauty. I just love being on the river.

What do you think most people would be surprised to know about you?

Wow, that's a good question. You know, I guess a lot of people don't realize how much of an outdoorsman I am. I like fishing, I don't like to hunt, but I like target shooting and skeet shooting. I used to shoot competitively when I was younger, and my eyes got so bad I was not hitting anything. Then I got my eyes fixed and now I'm the marksman I used to be. I like classic cars; I've got a '73 Cadillac. Wanna buy it?

What about the pandemic in this neighborhood? What do you think about how we rode it out, how we're still riding it out?

I have been asked what I miss the most because of the pandemic. Besides playing live, it might be going to Martin's [Martin's Tavern, in Georgetown]. I miss Martin's. It's my favorite bar. I've been going there since I was in high school. I just love the place.

Switching to online teaching was a huge ordeal. I lost a bunch of students when we went to online teaching because a lot of my students want to play with me.

When everybody is walking around, wearing masks, you can't see the smile. But you see the smiles in their eyes. That's cool, I like that. You're smiling, I can tell.

I am glad to see that gigs are happening again. That's kind of number one. When we started playing the first couple of gigs, we're all on stage looking at each other, saying yeah, yeah, man, this is what we do. We missed this.

This interview has been edited.

ARTISTS OF THE PALISADES at the Palisades Post Office

JOAN DANOFF October–November

Joan Danoff is a metalsmith and enamelist, who creates modern, affordable sterling silver and copper jewelry. She began this creative journey a while back as an art major at Penn State University.

From Penn State, Joan moved to Washington and started working as a waitress at the Class Reunion at 18th and H Streets N.W., a local watering hole frequented by White House staffers,

journalists, Secret Service agents and former CIA agents, to make money to go on a Florida vacation. The vacation never happened, but the love of the restaurant business stuck with her, and Joan was to spend many happy years in the business, which culminated in owning her own, Starland Café on



MacArthur Boulevard. After that ten-year adventure, she decided to explore another path and sold the restaurant.

Taking classes at Silverworks, a wonderful studio in Glen Echo Park, Joan fell in love with enameling.

Joan is married to musician and songwriter Bill Danoff, founding member of the Starland Vocal Band, most famous perhaps for the song “Afternoon Delight.” She re-embodied the band’s name for the Starland Café, and now for her jewelry business, Starland By Hand.

Joan continues to take classes to expand her knowledge and skills. She spends her time creating her collection in the basement home studio, sharing space with the drum set and numerous guitar cases. Her work is available at various craft shows, on her website, starlandbyhand.etsy.com, and at the Enamelist Gallery in the Torpedo Factory in Alexandria, Virginia.



CALLING ALL LOCAL ARTISTS

We are looking for local artists interested in showcasing their work inside the “Artists of the Palisades” display cabinet, which is located in the MacArthur Boulevard Post Office at 5136 MacArthur Boulevard. Past exhibitions have included paintings, drawings, collage, photography, dimensional and a combination of materials. We’d love to see an aspiring high school artist, as well! If you haven’t seen the display area, go check it out and get inspired to share your talents. All sales are handled directly with the artist. Each assigned artist’s work usually hangs for two consecutive months. If you’re interested, please contact Jennifer Howard, Artist of The Palisades Coordinator, at jhoward@dearlyandhonestly.com.

FROM THE PCA PRESIDENT

Dear Neighbors,

The beginning of the summer sure did seem like we were getting back to normal, emerging from our homes and expanding our pods, dining in restaurants and going maskless in our stores. I expect the fall will have us back to masking and distancing as we all keep each other safe from Covid. The PCA will continue to hold our community events but we may be adjusting things to keep everyone safe.

There are a few things we are keeping an eye on over the next weeks and months. First, we are all awaiting a decision from DC Public Schools (DCPS) on the fate of the two proposed schools in the neighborhood. I suspect we are guaranteed an elementary school, which will eliminate the need for modular classrooms at Key Elementary and should see the return of full access to Pre-K 4 and possibly the addition of Pre-K 3 at both Key and the new elementary school near Foxhall. There is a possibility of a middle or high school at the MacArthur Boulevard site. Will our neighborhood see two new public schools or will the new elementary school be located on the MacArthur site with the middle school or high school taken off the table? The decision is now with Mayor Bowser and Chancellor Ferebee, and I suspect that it will be

made by the time you read this, but you never know!

Trammell Crow is set to begin construction on the huge development on MacArthur Boulevard in November. When the project is complete, we can expect major upgrades to the public space in front of and around the site. New sidewalks and crosswalks will be built along 48th Place and V Street to enhance public safety. The public space in front of the building will include trees and a pleasant promenade of sorts. The Farmers' Market will benefit from these enhancements. I'm also anticipating an announcement of the retail tenant sometime this fall. It's certainly going to be a grocer of some kind, hopefully with a mix of prepared foods and traditional groceries.

The third exciting development I'm keeping an eye on is the formation of a Palisades Main Street. Check out [Jenny Wieroniey's](#) article on page 10. A huge thank you goes out to Jenny for her vision and hard work. She, along with Stephen Gardner and Spence Spencer, has been instrumental in making it happen.

I intend to continue to post updates on all things Palisades on the listserv, so you will be hearing from me this fall.
Sincerely, Tricia Duncan

IT'S MEMBERSHIP RENEWAL TIME!

PCA memberships expire either at the end of September or the end of March. If you are unsure whether you are a "September" person or a "March" person, please check your mailing label. If your membership has expired, please send in your dues.

Senior individual: **\$15**

Senior family: **\$20**

Individual: **\$25**

Household: **\$40**

Sponsor: **\$100**

Patron: **\$250**

Mail to:

PCA, P.O. Box 40603,
Washington, DC 20016

Please make your check payable to PCA. You can also renew online using PayPal or a credit card. Go to www.palisadesdc.org and follow the easy instructions. Thank you for your continued support.

PROPOSED BYLAW AMENDMENT VOTE: CHANGE TO MEETING TIME

The Palisades Community Association membership will be voting at our meeting on October 19 to amend the bylaws. The change will move our Town Halls from the first Tuesday of the month to the third Tuesday of the month with some flexibility around holidays. The new language is as follows:

Regular Meetings: *The regular membership meetings of the Association (also known as the Association's "Town Halls") shall, to the extent possible and practicable, be held on the*

third Tuesday of each month, October through June with a break in January. Notwithstanding the above, the Board, may in its discretion, change this schedule provided that membership meetings are scheduled no less than 8 times a year. The agenda for such Regular Meetings shall be provided at least five days in advance of the meeting and must include any amendment to the Bylaws, and resolutions (or the clear intent of any resolutions) to be considered at the meeting.

2022 BUDGET: REVIEW & VOTE

The PCA Board voted on the PCA's FY2022 budget at its September meeting. View the proposed budget here:

http://palisadesdc.org/documents/Proposedbudget_2022.pdf

The membership will have a vote on it at the October 19 Town Hall.

WINE OPINIONS

BY ROBERT WHALE

**WHEN IT COMES TO WINE,
THE OPINION THAT MATTERS
MOST IS YOUR OWN—
NO MATTER HOW FAR OUT
IT MAY BE.**

Scenes and tales from my experience as a wine importer:

A conversation overheard in the late 1990s between a Baltimore wine store retailer and a customer:

"This is a good Cab, a 90-pointer, but this one is a 96-pointer for only \$25 more. It's a steal!"

An encounter with a woman in her early 80s who had spent time at my table during the 2008 annual Australian and New Zealand wine expo at the Australian Embassy (and yes, she was also mentioned in my Spring 2018 *Conduit* wine column):

"Young man, should I like this wine?"

She offered me a sample of red wine from another exhibitor who had informed her it was by far the highest-rated wine in the exhibition—and therefore, the best. While new to the world of wine, she knew she did not like it. One sip revealed why: it was a high-alcohol, over-extracted beast made not to please but to impress. I advised her to have courage in her convictions.

A group of 12 men, with more money than sense, gathered once every two months at the most expensive restaurant in Dallas to play wine roulette:

Each brought a bottle of wine that was given to the sommelier who recorded the name of the provider and then masked the wine's identity, assigning it a number. A six-course dinner followed accompanied by two glasses of wine, each with two-ounce pours, with every course. The participants rated the 12 wines on the 100-point system; the participant who had brought the wine receiving the lowest total score was to pay the entire bill for the group—plus tip.

One chap, keen to avoid the loser's fate, took the advice of two British wine writers who had recently announced the release of a first-growth Bordeaux they both simultaneously declared to be "The Wine of the Century." His prayers answered, the chap gladly shelled out \$1,200 for a bottle and

had the wine delivered to the sommelier at the restaurant, confident that he would not be the loser. On the night of the wine dinner, he experienced a *schadenfreude* moment when he tasted a wine he was sure would be the night's loser—the wine was tightly wrapped up in a ball of tannins, displaying no fruit or personality.

He was correct—this wine would be the big loser. It was also his bottle. If he had chosen to

read past the screaming "wine of the century" headline, our free-spending, risk-adverse chap would have encountered admonishments from both wine writers not to open the wine for at least 20 years—until the wine had had time to integrate its tannins and display the majesty within.

The recurring mistake made by these individuals in each of these scenarios is that they are quoting—or otherwise relying on—someone's opinion and not their own. Just as there are no stupid opinions, there are no stupid questions when it comes to wine.

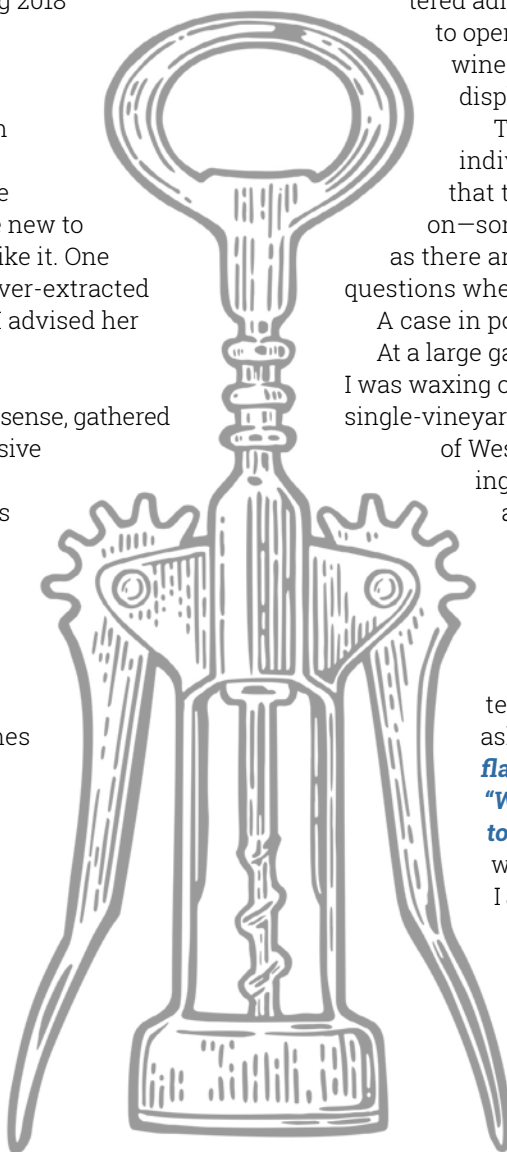
A case in point:

At a large gathering in Maryland in the early 2000s, I was waxing on about a newcomer to our portfolio, a single-vineyard Shiraz from a relatively warm region of Western Australia. I babbled on about finding hints of chocolate, tobacco and plums among the flavors. At the conclusion of the tasting, a group in their early 30s, who had been engaged in a very animated discussion, waved me over to their table.

They said they had also encountered the flavors I mentioned. **"How,"** one asked, ***"did the winemaker introduce those flavors into the wine?"*** Another joined in: ***"Was it powdered chocolate, actual pipe tobacco, plum juice?"*** I told them the flavors were not artificial but naturally occurring. I also told them their curiosity was admirable—and that they had made my night.

So, have an opinion, YOUR opinion. Treasure, defend and cherish it until it no longer suits you—then feel free to change your mind.

In Vino Veritas. Cheers!
Robert Whale



IN OUR BACKYARDS: FEEDING THE BIRDS

BY LINDSEY TRUITT

I love feeding the birds. All year long I watch them, count them, offer them treats, water and a fine habitat, and I feel excitement about their reproduction and their migrations. So it was with great sadness that I learned about the new mysterious disease (referred to as a “mortality event”) has been blinding and killing many of our songbirds—and that the only way we can help is to keep them from gathering at feeders and potentially spreading this infection.

For years, every morning as I went out to fill the feeders, I would hear them

feed their young are high-protein invertebrates, insects. That is where choosing not to spray insecticides on plants comes in. At any hour of any day, 365 days a year, there are various small birds picking around in the lichen-covered branches of my mature trees, gleaning the leaves of the River birch and picking around the needles of the old juniper—all looking for and finding food. And while insects have their own reasons for living, they are undeniably a very important part of the food web.

Of all the many plants that help sustain the birds, the single most abundant

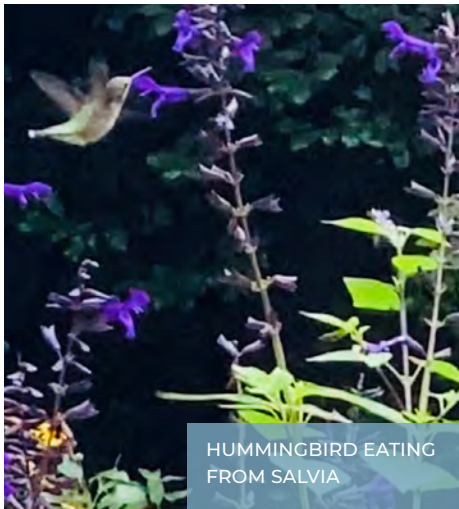


BIRD EATING AN INSECT IN THE TOP OF AN OAK

and varied source of insect food comes from the oaks. I have just read Doug Tallamy's new book, *The Nature of Oaks*, and have pledged to spend the rest of my life planting as many oaks as I can. Having learned of their immense importance in the overall health of the environment, I offer to all my Palisades neighbors delivery at wholesale cost of any oak that you would like to plant—as well as free advice on where to put it.

What to do for the birds

- **Keep feeders down.** Clean and sterilize them.
- **Document and report any dead birds** you find. Nationalzoo.si.edu has a “Submit Bird Report” page.
- Unless absolutely necessary, **stop spraying insects.**
- **Plant food sources** for birds.
- **Email me for an oak!** lindseytrutt@verizon.net



HUMMINGBIRD EATING FROM SALVIA



SHARING FIGS WITH THE CARDINALS

calling out to each other with what seemed to be the bird-song version of “Here she comes!” So I was worried that they had come to rely on me and would be facing the additional hardship of having less easily accessible food. But the fact is, I have planted my garden to feed birds, and though there is less frenzied activity than at the feeders, they all seem to be doing just fine.

I have chosen plants that have the dual purpose of pleasing me with their flowers and fruit, and providing the seeds, nectar or fruits that the birds need. The amelanchier fruits, the coneflowers seeds, the hollies and the salvias are just a few of the plants that provide food. But what the birds really need to



GOLDFINCHES HAVE EATEN THE SUNFLOWER SEEDS

THE PALISADES IS GETTING A MAIN STREET!

MacArthur Boulevard is about to get a whole lot better for residents and visitors. Thanks to the strong support of Councilperson Mary Cheh and her chief of staff, Jonathan Willingham, the Palisades was awarded a \$175,000 grant for the creation of a “Main Street” in the FY2022 budget recently approved by the City Council. The DC Main Streets Grant Awards provide funds to develop programs and services to (1) assist business districts with the retention, expansion and attraction of neighborhood-serving retail stores and (2) unify and strengthen the commercial corridor.

The Palisades Main Street district is proposed to include commercial properties along Foxhall Road from the intersection with Reservoir Road southwest to 44th Street and those along MacArthur Boulevard from Arizona Avenue to Foxhall Road.

The Palisades Community Association has been instrumental in advocating for a Main Street, particularly given the adverse effect that the departure of Safeway has left in “downtown” Palisades. Advisory Neighborhood Commissioner (ANC) Michael Sriqui informally interviewed business owners in the area immediately surrounding the now-vacant Safeway site and found that foot traffic has decreased significantly.

The Palisades Main Street will help create a cohesive identity to unite our long and skinny V-shaped commercial corridor. Specific projects will include beefing up the neighborhood’s media presence, making the area more pedestrian-friendly by improving streetscaping, gathering space

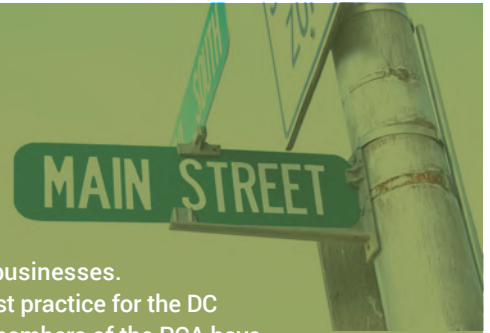
and public art, as well as organizing community events to attract customers to local businesses.

In keeping with best practice for the DC Main Street grants, members of the PCA have created a new nonprofit, the Palisades Commercial Corridor Coalition (PCCC) to apply for the grant funds. PCA Board members Jenny Wieroniey and Spence Spencer and PCA General Counsel Stephen Gardner will serve on the organization’s initial Board of Directors. We will add members, business owners and community stakeholders, at our October meeting. The ANC plans to approve a letter of support for the PCCC to receive the grant at their next meeting. The City Council is expected to officially announce the award recipients on September 24, 2021.

The PCCC and the PCA are throwing an Oktoberfest-style party, Paltoberfest, to raise funds for the start-up costs associated with applying for the grant. It will take place on September 18 from 3:00 pm to 8:00 pm on the green at the Palisades Hub (5200 Cathedral Ave NW) and feature live music, food and fun.

If you are interested in serving on the board of the Palisades Main Street, please email jennywieroniey@gmail.com to learn more.

—JENNY WIERONIEY



REMEMBERING MASTER PATROL OFFICER KEVIN KENNEDY: A TRUE FRIEND OF THE PALISADES

The Palisades lost a true friend when Master Patrol Officer (MPO) Kevin Kennedy passed away of natural causes on June 18. In his engagement with Palisades over 20 years of service here, MPO Kennedy embodied the spirit of “community-oriented policing.”

MPO Kennedy always had a big smile befitting his large stature. He took special pride in being *part of*—and not merely present for—community events in Palisades. He was engaging and charming, and he cared about the people and businesses he was sworn to protect. MPO Kennedy could frequently be seen engaging with kids at the Palisades Recreation Center. He especially liked being there following the annual Fourth of July Parade.

A native Washingtonian and life-long resident, Kevin loved both Washington, DC and the Dallas Cowboys. He was a graduate of McKinley Tech High School in the District of



Columbia. His 29-year career with the Metropolitan Police Department began on May 4, 1992. He was assigned to the Second District for his entire career and served Palisades (in Patrol Service Area 205) for more than two decades, receiving numerous commendations for his service to and engagement with the community. This included apprehending a violent felon, saving the

life of someone intent on jumping from a highway overpass, catching a serial burglar who victimized Palisades and locating a missing elderly resident with dementia. MPO Kennedy regularly attended PCA meetings to give updates on police activities in PSA 205, and he was a constant presence along MacArthur Boulevard and at the Palisades Recreation Center.

MPO Kennedy will be sorely missed by the residents and businesses of the Palisades, and the PCA would like to extend its deepest sympathies to Kevin’s family, coworkers and many friends. —ERIK GAULL



ANDREA SACCOCCIA WITH RUTH KOZELA

FAREWELL TO THE VILLAGE

Dear *Conduit* readers,

As I leave my job at Palisades Village, I am ever so grateful to the Palisades community for its continued support. As I served as the executive director of Palisades Village for over six years, I was able to witness firsthand how the greater Palisades looks out for its neighbors, a community spirit I truly appreciate. Over the years, many caring students and adults have reached out and volunteered to help our members thrive as they age in-community. You've volunteered to read to them; helped them with their technological challenges; driven them to essential medical appointments and errands; provided soup and other healthy foods; baked and packed holiday cookies; connected with them by sending cards; encouraged multigenerational experiences; joined and financially supported the Village, especially our Annual House Tour; and celebrated with our members at the Palisades 4th of July parade.

I can't thank the PCA enough for awarding grants that have greatly assisted our Village. They allowed us to provide a case manager for some of our vulnerable members and engage our isolated members through social events. I am also filled with gratitude at the outpouring of support during the pandemic. You continue to exemplify the "Neighbors Helping Neighbors" model. I know I leave the Village in good hands... your hands!

After six years of commuting from Virginia, I am taking some time off to recharge, work on some family health issues and explore new opportunities.

"I've learned that people will forget what you said, forget what you did, but people will never forget how you made them feel." Maya Angelou

Thank you for always making me and the Palisades Village community feel welcomed and supported.

Sincerely,
Andrea Saccoccia



Palisades Village invites you to its Fundraiser:

TASTES OF THE MEDITERRANEAN UNDER THE PALISADES SUN

A GARDEN PARTY
with Libations & Light Fare
Saturday, September 25, 2021
5 to 7 p.m.

For the second year in a row, out of an abundance of caution, Palisades Village has cancelled its principal fundraiser, the House Tour. Instead, we have decided to have an evening garden party to smoothen the transition. The event is scheduled for September 25, 2021, from 5 to 7 p.m. in the lovely garden of a Palisades Village member. It will feature tastings of Mediterranean cuisine prepared by the **Palisades Pan Handlers** accompanied by a special tasting prepared by our guest chef **Claudio Pirollo, owner of Et Voila!**



Tickets for this enchanting fundraiser can be purchased for \$150 at www.palisadesvillage.org or by calling the Palisades Village office at 202-244-3310. You can also click on this link, <https://palisades.helpfulvillage.com/events/1056-taste-of-the-mediterranean-under-the-palisades-sun>.

Space is limited to 75 guests. If you can't attend, donations are welcome. Once tickets are purchased, we'll send you the address of the event. Please note: This special event is open to all vaccinated adults. Please share.

OUR SKYDIVING CENTENARIAN

BY JACK KOCZELA WITH MAYA LATYNSKI



RUTH AS A CHILD

You have probably heard about our neighborhood's most recent centenarian, harmonica-playing Mrs. Ruth Koczela. Maybe you attended her birthday party on June 25—cupcakes, 100 balloons, honking fire engines and police cars driving by—as Ruth took it all in, smiling as she sat in one of her Washington Nationals chairs outside the Koczela manse. But maybe you don't know much about her. How do you even summarize everything that happened in the 100 years of an active and colorful life? Here are some bits:

Ruth Black was born on June 25, 1921, in her family farmhouse in the hamlet of Williamsburg, Massachusetts, and grew up there. She attended the North Adams State Teachers College, which is now part of the University of Massachusetts, and went on to teach elementary school in Monroe,



Massachusetts. She says that she liked the kids, but not teaching them subjects like math. Instead, she preferred to take them outside, where together they identified living creatures—a precursor to environmental education?! She left teaching after one year and enlisted in the Navy as a WAVE (Women Accepted for Volunteer Emergency Service). After basic officer training at Smith College, she was stationed in Washington at what is now the Homeland Security complex on Nebraska Avenue, which during the war was called Fort Nebraska. She was a "Code Girl" (do you know Liza Mundy's *Code Girls: The Untold Story of the American Women Code Breakers of World War II?*), but did not actually work on code-breaking but, being an officer, managed the office and its staff.

In 1946 Ruth married Leonard "Paul" Koczela in the Naval Chapel on Nebraska Avenue. They had met at college. After the war he came to DC and also worked with Naval Intelligence. They had six children, five boys and one girl. Jack, with whose family she has been living for some thirty years, is the third oldest. Paul died in 2003. She now has eleven grandchildren and sixteen great-grandchildren.

Ruth worked part-time as both a



ZIPLINING 2010

substitute teacher at Woodrow Wilson High School and the manager of its book room. She learned book binding from a member of the faculty, well enough to bind books for the Palisades Library after she was fully retired and living on Hawthorne Place. She and Paul also delivered Meals on Wheels.

Ruth has always been a big traveler, with Elderhostel (now Road Scholar) or with family. Maybe the most exciting adventures have been skydiving at age 87 in Massachusetts and at 93 visiting Kenya, where one of her granddaughters founded a chain of health care clinics in the countryside. Perhaps sitting in Queen Elizabeth's chair in a museum in Nairobi symbolizes Ruth's experiences in a country that reveres old people. Her living room coffee table groans under picture albums her children have made for her about her youth and her adventures with family and friends. Do you see the same sparkle in the little girl as in the 100-year-old, as she lights up at a story or to tell a joke?

WHAT MIGHT HAVE COST \$45.50 IN 1942?

BY LINDA WARNER CANNON

Going through my mother's things after she passed away in 1991, I made an unexpected discovery: I found some receipts from 1940. In order to put them into perspective, I researched the 1940 Census for Washington.

At the time, my parents were living with my father's parents at 4905 Potomac Avenue. In the census I found a reference to their rent being \$20 a month. My father's income as a plumber was \$1,425 a year, which supported my parents and my two-year-old sister, Terry. I wouldn't be born until October 1, 1940, after the census had been completed. Then, my brother, Billy, was born in 1943 and my sister Caryn in 1952.

Something else I discovered was that fifteen days after my birth my father registered for the World War II draft. Twenty-six years old then, he was taking care of a family of four on about \$27 a week. He did not serve in the war, though.

This story begins when my sisters and I were going through my mother's things. After Caryn reminded us that our mother had often inserted articles, pictures and notes between the pages of old books, we first sorted through her many books and papers. "Remember to shake out the books and look for small pieces of important information that might be hiding in them," said Caryn.

As I picked up the very first book, I made sure to give it a shake: out tumbled two small, very old pieces of paper. I expected them to include some of my mother's favorite recipes, but to my surprise, as I reached to pick them up, I was to learn what cost \$45.50 in Washington in 1940.

I gently unfolded the discolored papers. "Ohmigosh!" burst out of my mouth. In my hand was the original \$42 receipt for my birth at Georgetown University Hospital dated October 11, 1940. The second piece of paper told me that a lab fee was \$3.50. That this could

WASHINGTON, D. C., 10/11/40 193...

Mrs. Theresa Warner 3 mat J

to Georgetown University Hospital DR.

To 7 Day Hospital Accommodations from Oct 1 to Oct 8	at \$ 3.50 a Day	24 50
Delivery Room Fee		12 50
Nursery 7 Days		5 00
Laboratory		
Board of Special Nurse at \$		
Received Payment,		

Kindly have someone come to the office \$42.00

CLINICAL LABORATORY
VINCENT J. DARDINSKI, M.D., Director

Date 10/11/40

Patient Mrs. Theresa Warner

Routine laboratory fee 3.50

Special examinations

Total \$ 3.50

possibly be the total cost of the delivery of a baby and a six-day stay in the hospital for mother and child was unthinkable to me! So I came into this world for a total of \$45.50!

If finding these two receipts wasn't shocking enough, I blurted out to my sisters the story of my birth, which our mother had told me a couple of years earlier and which they were unfamiliar with. "The claw marks from my fingernails are probably still on the wall of the delivery room at Georgetown Hospital," she had said. She and I laughed as she told me about the difficult breech birth I had been. I was flabbergasted, having imagined all my life that I had been

nothing other than a normal delivery. My sisters and I, mothers ourselves now, felt her pain.

For us, the questions on hand were: How did these and other little pieces of paper survive three moves and four children? Had our mother tucked the receipts in for safekeeping? What had they meant to her?

I knew I wanted the receipts preserved for my family. I took them to a frame shop. There, I had another surprise. It was 2000, and the cost of framing my treasures came to \$45. I taped this receipt to the back of the newly framed keepsakes. Funny, now I can ask my family what they think might have cost \$45 in 2000!

What an unexpected bonus to us sisters it was to sit together and shift through our mother's belongings. We told each other our many happy memories of our parents, sisterhood and growing up in Palisades. One of my sisters owns the family home built by our Finnish grandfather, Andrew Hongell, in 1925. In 2025 we will celebrate one hundred years of our family living in the neighborhood.

THE CRESCENT TRAIL BEFORE IT WAS THE CRESCENT TRAIL

BY JOE McHUGH

September marks the 40th anniversary of a unique event which occurred on the Baltimore and Ohio (B&O) Georgetown Branch railroad. If you happened to be near Fletcher's Boat House or walking along the towpath on Tuesday, September 15, 1981, you would surely have heard the shrill of a locomotive's horn and watched the John Bull chug by. The railroad began in Silver Spring and threaded its way over Rock Creek Park, through Chevy Chase, Bethesda and the Palisades before terminating at the Georgetown waterfront.

The John Bull was the first steam-driven locomotive used in the United States. This granddaddy of all locomotives was built in Newcastle, England and shipped in pieces to the United States in 1831. It operated on the Camden and Amboy Railroad (segments of which still exist as Amtrak's Northeast Corridor) and took passengers on the fastest ride of their lives... at 18 miles per hour! The Camden and Amboy was eventually bought by the Pennsylvania Railroad, which also became the owner of this locomotive. In 1885 it was deposited at the Smithsonian, which took loving care of it. As the engine's 150th birthday approached, a celebration run was planned for the rebuilt engine. But where to find a nearby, little-used railroad to let the John Bull stretch its legs? No need to go far, as it turned out, and 40 years ago this month, after a few technical hiccups, the John Bull traveled from Key Bridge to Chain Bridge and back again. The Smithsonian has a short video of the trip, which also shows it crossing the bridges over Arizona Avenue. (<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=FxcdY2Cj5nQ>)

In the 1880s and '90s, the Baltimore and Ohio Railroad found its ability to expand into the rapidly growing markets south of Washington stymied. One of its chief rivals, the Pennsylvania Railroad, had built Long Bridge over the Potomac (today paralleling the 14th Street and Metro's Yellow and Blue Line bridges just north of National Airport), laying track all the way to Quantico, Virginia, where it connected with the Richmond, Fredericksburg and Potomac Railroad and all points south. The B&O had to settle for a car float operation to cross the Potomac at Alexandria, which was cumbersome and always at the mercy of weather. What to do?

Spanning the Potomac was costly, so a narrower stretch of the river into Virginia had to be found. The B&O planners looked at building track from its main line in Silver Spring over to Georgetown. They wanted to build a new bridge over the Potomac at Dalecarlia water facility and extend tracks out

of the Potomac Valley via Pimmit Run and on to Quantico. Another advantage in this alignment was gaining access to the Georgetown waterfront, as by 1890 Georgetown had been politically and economically incorporated into Washington and was becoming a major distribution center for warehousing, milling and building materials. The new line would allow the railroad to bring coal in large quantities to the waterfront to be used in the city and to be shipped by boat elsewhere. Another advantage was that the B&O controlled the C&O Canal and had unfettered access to locate the last three miles of track on canal property.

Construction of the branch line began in 1890, and by 1892 it reached Chevy Chase. There, it halted for seventeen years. At first, the reasons were financial as the Panic of 1893 bankrupted several railroads. Later, with the opening of Union

Station in 1908 and the consolidation of the city's railroads, the B&O was given trackage rights over the Pennsylvania Railroad to Alexandria, which made building a crossing at Dalecarlia less imperative. (Prior to the opening of Union Station, the B&O's station was located at what are now the fountains just west of the Russell Senate Office Building at New Jersey Avenue and C Street NW.) In 1909, construction of the line resumed, and by 1910 it reached Georgetown, for a total length of eleven miles. In 1914, it was briefly extended across Rock Creek to 23rd Street so that building materials for the Lincoln Memorial could be transported by train.

In the railroad's heyday, the majority of its business was carrying coal, cement and building materials to the many customers on its route. Even as late as the early 1980s, one could see a lumber car parked at the old T.W. Perry's siding off Connecticut Avenue just north of Chevy Chase Lake Drive. The line went under Wisconsin Avenue in Bethesda via a tunnel. As Bethesda was a busy market, a freight building with storage tracks was put up at Bethesda and Woodmont Avenues. Across Arlington Road from Strosniders Hardware was the Maloney concrete plant, which received train loads of cement and gravel. Numerous customers were located near the crossing of River Road, and a siding track survives in Lady Lane near the Washington Episcopal School. In 1980 Maloney was the last large Bethesda industry to go, and rapid development of the area around the rail line soon followed.

Between River Road and Massachusetts Avenue were several of the railroad's customers, including the Washington Petroleum company. Tank cars loaded with fuel would be placed on this track and hoses then attached to the cars and



A LANTERN SLIDE OF THE 1831
LOCOMOTIVE "JOHN BULL"
IN PHILADELPHIA IN 1876



GEORGETOWN BRANCH AT BRADLEY BLVD, 1983

pipe heads located by the track. The pipes went down a small hill and emptied into storage tanks. No pumps were needed: it was a simple gravity-fed process. Today, particularly in fall and winter, the storage track and old pipe heads are still visible and are one of the many remnants of the branch line in this section of the Crescent Trail.

The siding to the former Bethesda Cinder Block and Supply Company runs into the weeds near the new townhouse development on Little Falls Parkway between Massachusetts Avenue and River Road. Then, just before Georgetown, the water treatment plant would receive carloads of chlorine, which would be transported via a pipeline over MacArthur Boulevard to the storage areas on the north side of MacArthur Boulevard. Before 1964, the majority of Dalecarlia's operation was on the north side of MacArthur. An old timetable shows some twenty customers between Silver Spring and Georgetown. Along the Georgetown waterfront were multiple storage tracks, a freight house and fifteen more customers. Trains, some as long as fifty cars, would operate a daily roundtrip, but as it waned, once a week five or six coal cars went to Georgetown to service the coal-fired GSA plant, which also provided power for the White House.

There was never any scheduled passenger service on the B&O Georgetown Branch line, but in the late 1940s and into the 50s, the B&O would operate trips for rail enthusiasts, usually during the fall. During the Korean War, the army used the branch to transport soldiers from Forts Belvoir and Myers to other military locations. Long passenger trains would be

backed down the branch from Silver Spring, loaded and sent roaring up the Potomac Valley. Since this occurred at night, no photographs exist. In the summer of 1962, Jackie Kennedy read *The Little Red Caboose* to her children and, of course, they wanted to ride a red caboose. The B&O happily complied, and a small train was put together; soon, the Kennedys were moving through Georgetown and the Palisades, along the C&O Canal, past Fletcher's to Dalecarlia. A 1981 *Washington Post* article about the branch line describes Irving Miller, the owner of Talbert's Beverages, who as a young boy would hitch a ride on the train's caboose to Georgetown or to the canal to fish. He was probably not the only one to do so.

The bridges over Arizona Avenue are worth mentioning. Yes, there are actually two of them, and they are built on a curve, a rare engineering feat on a branch line. They represent an early case of recycling: after having been used on a mainline track, taken down to make room for new track, they were pulled out of storage and reused to construct a branch line. The bridges are much older than the 1910 line they were placed on. The bridge over the canal is Whipple pin connected, through-truss bridge. It was named after Squire Whipple, who worked for the B&O and was a major bridge designer in the period just before and after the Civil War. It was impossible to trace the origin of this particular bridge, but we can guess that it was built in the 1870s and used on another line before being disassembled and eventually reused for this branch line. The current bridge over Bradley Boulevard was built in 1959 to replace an older one, while the bridge over Massachusetts

Avenue was rebuilt and "beautified" in 1973. Note too that the tunnel under MacArthur Boulevard was overbuilt for a branch line, and its mainline construction (with high clearance and room for a second track) would indicate that even in 1910 a river crossing just to the east of the tunnel's south portal was still on the table. In fact, if you look closely near the Norton Street entry point to the Crescent Trail, where path and trail meet on the river side, you can see the beginnings of the rock pilings that were put there to mark the departure from the branch to the proposed bridge. Finally, the bridge behind the waterworks is what carried the B&O line over the Cabin John Trolley line.

Indeed, by the 1980s only a few of the railroad's customers remained. The GSA coal-fired plant in Georgetown was one of the last, and an important one. In the mid-1970s the government had drawn up plans to convert it to an oil-fired plant, but the world oil crisis shelved the plans. Had they gone forward, it is unlikely that the John Bull ceremony would have taken place. It is likely that the tracks would have been removed or their condition deteriorated, so that running the engine there would have been too risky. The final stroke was Hurricane Juan, which blew through the DC area



B&O BRIDGE OVER THE C&O CANAL

in early November 1985 and caused widespread destruction. The Potomac Valley was particularly hard-hit. Water raged under Key Bridge just below the actual span and washed out parts of the canal and towpath. On K Street in Georgetown it was nearly 12 feet high and came dangerously close to the top of the newly built flood walls around the waterfront. The "Election Day" storm, as it came to be known, washed away much of the track, sealing the fate of this branch line. But in December 1996, it was reborn as the Crescent Trail, much of its old infrastructure still in place, to carry walkers, bikers and the occasional deer or fox, but no longer trains.



...AND 20 YEARS AGO...

BY SUSAN MESSINA

Twenty years ago, on Saturday, August 11, 2001, the Earth opened and swallowed a car whole in the Palisades. It was an amazing sight. On August 13, crowds came to watch as the car was hoisted out.

According to the *Washington Post* ("Past the Saturation Point" by Steven

Gray and Andrew DeMillo, August 13, 2001), torrential rains fell and somehow a sewer line ruptured, opening a crater in the then-Safeway parking lot near MacArthur Boulevard and 48th Place NW. The hole was massive: 20 feet long and, at least in some places, 25 feet deep. And at the bottom rested a four-door Oldsmobile which, cur-

rent Palisades residents say, belonged to Pat, a Safeway employee who was working inside at the time.

The *Washington Post* article notes that the rains led to terrible flooding downtown and in basement apartments all over the city, swept a car into the Rock Creek and caused a power outage in Dupont Circle.



JULY 4TH MEMORIES

BY JESSICA DAVIS



THE CHAMP!

The 2021 Fourth of July celebrations were a huge success this year in the Palisades. The Hoedown on the Green turned into a truly messy event on the evening of the third as everyone caught blueberry fever for the pie-eating contest. **Jake Westermann** won the adult championship and **Evren Hincal** outbested his rivals in the youth division! The spectacular sounds of **Bob Perilla's Big Hillbilly Bluegrass Band** helped make the Hoedown the perfect kickoff to the festivities lying in wait the next day.

Early on Sunday the fourth, volunteers were popping up everywhere to make sure all the background magic was in place and, starting promptly at noon, the parade began to make its way down MacArthur Boulevard. A very happy crowd of neighbors and returning fans from all over enjoyed



the floats, candy, music and, yes, the politicians! The **Masons** again prepared hot dogs for the picnic and everyone had fun with the food, moon bounces, dunk tank, lawn

games and the new misting tents! The pure energy of **Crush Funk** kept the spirit and smiles going with music throughout the picnic.

After a year away, the perfect weather was both a notable and welcome gift we will gladly ask for again and again! As always, all of it would not have been possible without all the hard work of many volunteers, so a huge thanks goes out to everyone who contributed, and a very special thanks to those who came out and joined in the celebration!

See you all again next year!

And the parade awards went to:

General MacArthur Award: The Grand Lodge of the District of Columbia. Alan L. Gordon, Grand Master (in the parade); Jean-Paul Dongmo, Senior Grand Steward (serving hot dogs)

July 4th Fitness Fanatics Award: Fletcher's Cove Parkrun

Motor Head Award: The Yachtsmen

Founders Award: DC's Different Drummers Marching Band

Festive 4th Summer Sounds Award: Crush Funk Brass Band

Hot Wheels Award: Nicholas Carson (on his bicycle)

Palisades Pride Award (2): Key Elementary 5th Graders; the Palisades Hub (joined by the Palisades Village and the Palisades Community Church in the same float/group)

PHOTOS TOP AND BOTTOM LEFT: JOHN LOGGINS



HOPING THAT ROPE DOESN'T BREAK!



THE YACHTSMEN

A LOOK UNDER THE HOOD OF OUR CITY'S "NET-ZERO" ENERGY LAWS

BY CALEB ROSSITER

The cost of the energy we use in our daily lives has been rising:

- **In June the DC Public Service**

Commission approved Pepco's request to increase our electricity rates by \$109 million over three years.¹

- **Gas at the pump in DC broke the \$3**

mark in May for the first time since the mid-2010s.² August prices are 50 percent higher than last year's.³

- **Natural gas for home heating** this summer hit \$1.55 per therm, up 20 percent from last year.⁴

Many factors affect energy prices, from COVID-related changes in demand to the fracking revolution's massive supply of cheap oil and natural gas. Very few of them are directly influenced by political decisions. But one factor is: the drive by Democratic-controlled states (and federal districts!) to eliminate emissions of carbon dioxide, a warming gas and plant food that is a non-toxic byproduct of the fossil fuels that provide 80 percent of global and US energy.

This article doesn't address the much-discussed, complex and contentious issues of the past and future impact of carbon dioxide emissions on global warming and of that warming on "crisis" variables like rates of hurricanes, floods, droughts and sea-level rise. Instead, it summarizes a small but, for us consumers in the Palisades, still important piece of this gigantic puzzle: the impact on our energy costs of DC's efforts to reach "net-zero" emissions of carbon dioxide.

In May the DC Public Service Commission announced that the escalating requirements for "non-carbon, renewable" energy like wind and solar power in the District's Clean

NATURAL GAS
FRACKING RIG



Energy Act cost DC customers \$65 million in 2020, or about \$228 for each one of our 284,000 households.⁵ The requirement hit 20 percent in 2020 and rises steadily to 100 percent by 2032.⁶ It is likely, then, that the added cost to customers' bills will be at least five times as high in 2032, \$325 million, or \$1,144 per household.⁷

We receive nearly all our electricity from companies that buy it off a grid that includes many northeastern states. All the electricity on that grid—from natural gas, coal, hydro from dams, nuclear, wind, and solar—is mixed together. Hence, a provider for DC can't actually buy or deliver certain types of energy from the grid. What the Clean Energy Act requires, though, is that the provider purchase certificates that have the same effect: they are buying not just an amount of power but also a certificate from a generator of an equal amount of

"renewable" power. The cost of the more expensive power and these certificates is then passed along to consumers. That's what makes up our \$65 million annual tab.

As the Public Service Commission table shows, the cost to consumers in DC for its "non-carbon, renewable" mandate was \$38.5 million in 2015. About half of that cost was penalties ("compliance fees") for providers not buying enough certificates. You can see that by 2020 the penalties have fallen as companies learned how to handle the system. The current \$65 million cost to consumers comes largely just from the purchase of the "renewable" power and the certificates.

As the "non-carbon" requirement rises, it has the effect of pushing generating companies to create more wind and solar power. Despite significant federal subsidies, wind and solar are still more expensive to build and transmit than natural gas, coal and hydro power, and require far more landscape to be taken for a unit of energy production. They also are not "on-demand" like the traditional sources, so they require battery storage, which is currently inefficient and represents an additional cost. This also raises the cost to consumers when the purchase of wind and solar power and its certificates is mandated.

And electricity is just the tip of the cost iceberg for a "net-zero" approach. It's only one of many areas covered by the DC Clean Energy Act:

- **Taxes for heating with natural gas or fuel oil** are added to fuel bills and placed in a Sustainable Energy Trust Fund to help low-income DC residents weatherize their houses. Natural gas taxes will triple from \$0.015 per therm now to

COSTS OF RENEWABLE PORTFOLIO STANDARDS (RPS) RECOUPED FROM RATE-PAYERS

YEAR	REC COSTS	Compliance FEES	TOTAL
2015	\$18.6	\$19.9	\$38.5
2016	31.9	15.2	47.2
2017	16.1	26.6	42.7
2018	31.9	18.7	50.6
2019	45.2	12.1	57.3
2020	56.8	8.2	65.0

DC PUBLIC SERVICE COMMISSION ANNUAL REPORT (2020)

\$0.045 in 2026. Fuel oil taxes will double from \$0.0016 per kwh to \$0.0029.

- **An excise tax is being phased in on cars** that don't meet rising efficiency standards.
- **There will be fines on building owners** who don't increase building efficiency by 50 percent, on commercial fleets that are not 50 percent electric, and on owners of gas-powered cars, to push them toward electric vehicles.

Of course, our local costs are small stuff compared to the way "net-zero" will play out on the US economy as a whole, when the price of energy factored into US goods and service skyrockets. If global competitors like China, India and the European Union continue to make carbon-averse declarations without following through with the costly steps to achieve them, we could be looking back fondly on the days when "net-zero" only cost us \$65 million.

Happily retired from teaching climate statistics and modeling at AU and directing a climate change and energy policy organization, Caleb is eager to talk with neighbors about these controversial topics, so feel free to contact him at calebrun@igc.org and meet up at Black Coffee!



¹ <https://www.utilitydive.com/news/dc-approves-pepco-exelon-multi-year-rate-plan-despite-widespread-objections-rate-increase/601428/>

² <https://www.gasbuddy.com/charts>

³ https://www.bls.gov/regions/mid-atlantic/news-release/averageenergyprices_washingtondc.htm

⁴ https://www.bls.gov/regions/mid-atlantic/news-release/averageenergyprices_washingtondc.htm

⁵ [https://dcpsc.org/getattachment/Orders-and-Regulations/PSC-Reports-to-the-DC-Council/Renewable-Energy-Portfolio-Standard/2021-RPS-report-FINAL-\(1\).pdf.aspx?lang=en-US](https://dcpsc.org/getattachment/Orders-and-Regulations/PSC-Reports-to-the-DC-Council/Renewable-Energy-Portfolio-Standard/2021-RPS-report-FINAL-(1).pdf.aspx?lang=en-US)

⁶ https://lims.dccouncil.us/downloads/LIMS/40667/Signed_Act/B22-0904-SignedAct.pdf

⁷ Interestingly, DC doesn't actually generate much electricity itself. We consume about 100 times more energy than we produce. <https://www.eia.gov/state/analysis.php?sid=DC> Our only power plants are two small natural gas generators operated, and used exclusively, by Congress and the executive branch's General Services Administration.

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- Cosmetic & Family Dentistry
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- Implant restorations
- 1-hour Whitening
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- Emergencies Welcome
- Payment Plans/ No interest Financing

WASHINGTONIAN MAGAZINE
TOP DENTIST SINCE 2013

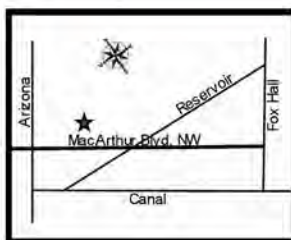


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Exam,
Full Mouth X-Rays and Fluoride
Without third party billing

Invisalign
Free Consult
+\$500 OFF
Full Case Without financing
or third party billing.

\$200 Teeth Whitening With Trays

With Current Cleaning, X-Rays and Exam
Without Third Party Billing

***Offers cannot be combined**

Across from Black Salt Restaurant



THE CONDUIT

NEWSLETTER OF THE PALISADES COMMUNITY ASSOCIATION

THE PALISADES COMMUNITY ASSOCIATION
P.O. BOX 40603
PALISADES STATION
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20016



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