

CAPITOL HILL VILLAGE

FEBRUARY 2011

NEWS

Stardust Gala An Evening to Enjoy!



Capitol Hill Village's Third Annual Stardust Gala has many new twinkles for your evening.

The January 29th Gala, 7:30 to 11:00 pm, is at the architecturally intriguing St. Coletta School on Independence Avenue at 19th Street SE.

Doug Bowles will be leading his SingCo Rhythm Orchestra,

line-dancing is likely to draw everyone to the dance floor, and nearby will be a quiet café welcoming attendees with snacks, drinks, and conversation with old and new friends.

A highlight of this year's Gala will be the extended list of opportunities to register for or bid on vacation homes, neighborhood lessons, and

► *continued on page 4*



St. Coletta Offers Much Behind Novelty Doors

St. Coletta School of Greater Washington catches one's eye when driving by as a colorful architectural novelty.

Visually, it seems to be an exciting and playful environment — maybe even a dreamland — for its daily students, age 3–22. Yet, the school was opened in 2006 to provide an atmosphere that builds on student's strengths and competencies.

The respected school serves students who have retardation, autism or multiple disabilities. World-renown architect Michael

► *continued on page 6*

IN THIS ISSUE:

- 2 January/February Events Calendar
- 3 Message from Gail Kohn
- 6 Ruth Rappaport Remembered
- 8 Share Your Talents
- 9 Random Musings
- 10 All the World's a Stage
- 11 Endowment Update
- 12 Tree Pruning Workshop, AARP Driver Class

Upcoming Events

Wednesday, February 2 • 7:30 pm
Arena Stage, 1101 6th Street SW (handicapped accessible)

Special Note: Discounted tickets to *Let Me Down Easy*

For a limited time, Capitol Hill Village members and guests are invited to purchase discounted tickets for the February 2, 7:30 pm performance of the acclaimed *Let Me Down Easy* by Anna Devereaux Smith at Arena Stage.

To obtain a ticket at the \$41.50 discount, call 202.488.4360 and mention this offer. Call early, as the number of tickets is limited.

► *Upcoming Events continued on page 13*

January/February 2011 Events

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
23 <i>Inherit the Wind</i> , 4:00 pm, see p. 13	24	25 Qui-Gong, 10 am, see page 16	26 Pre-Gala Dance Lesson 3, 7:30 pm, see page 13	27 Qui-Gong, 10 am, see page 16 Second Learn to Use the NIH Website class, 1:00 pm, see p. 14	28 Balance class, 12:30 pm, see page 14 <i>Inherit the Wind</i> , 8:00 pm, see p. 13	29 Third Annual Stardust Gala! 7:30-11:00 pm See page 13
30	31	1 Qui-Gong, 10 am, see page 16	2 Let Me Down Easy, 7:30 pm, see p. 1 Yoga Class, 6:30 pm, see page 14	3 Qui-Gong, 10 am, see page 16	4 Call the office by noon to: 1) Reserve a sport on the Feb. 8 St Coletta Tour, see page 14; 2) arrange Feb. 5 pickup of Hazardous Waste, see page 14	5 Hazardous Waste Pickup , Starting at 9 am from your house, see page 14
6	7	8 Qui-Gong, 10 am, see page 16 St. Coletta tour 10 am, see p. 14	9 Yoga Class, 6:30 pm, see page 14 Call the office to reserve arrange Feb. 11 used book pickup, see p. 14	10 Qui-Gong, 10 am, see page 16 Digital photo workshop, 1 pm, see page 15 Call the office to reserve a spot at the Dec. 14 potluck, see p. 15	11 Donated Used Book Pickup, starting at 9 am, see page 15	12 Lincoln's Birthday Tree Pruning , 2:00 pm, see pages 12 & 15
13 Carpet Bagger's Children , 2:30 pm, see page 15	 14 Valentine's Day Valentine Potluck Dinner , 6:30 pm, see page 15	15 Qui-Gong, 10 am, see page 16 Literary Club, 6:00 pm, see p. 16	16 Yoga Class, 6:30 pm, see page 14	17 Qui-Gong, 10 am, see page 16 Chew on That: Gentrification 7:00 pm, see p. 16	18	19
20	21 President's Day (Federal holiday)	22 Washington's Birthday Qui-Gong, 10 am, see page 16	23 Yoga Class, 6:30 pm, see page 14	24 Qui-Gong, 10 am, see page 16	25 Balance class, 12:30-1:30 pm, see page 16	26
27	28					

For more information about any event, or to reserve a space at an event, call the CHV office at 202.543.1778 during regular office hours (9 am to 5 pm) or e-mail info@capitolhillvillage.org

Capitol Hill Village News

To reach us: We are interested in your feedback.

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To become a member, go to www.capitolhillvillage.org and click on "Join." Payment of dues through PayPal is available online.

To support the Village, go to www.capitolhillvillage.org and click on "Support/Donate." Or support CHV through the Combined Federal Campaign # 55474. All donations are welcome!

Capitol Hill Village Leaders

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From the Executive Director...

Reservations for the 2011 Gala are ahead of 2010.

Even before the invitation arrived at your mailbox, Capitol Hill Village supporters were signing up to come to the 2011 Gala. Most of the early registrations came from Hill residents who had attended previous Capitol Hill Village Galas. Early registrants know they are going to have fun Saturday, January 29. They also know they will have the first chance to sign up for future entertaining events.

Read elsewhere in this February edition of the News about the many interesting opportunities to have fun that evening and in the months ahead. The more detailed list of silent auction items will be sent to you before the Gala.

A shift occurred this year. So far, most have visited the much admired Capitol Hill Village website to pay for their reservations using Paypal, instead of mailing a check.

Anticipate Further Capitol Hill Village Website Changes.

Already, one can make contributions, pay membership dues and obtain lots of information about Capitol Hill Village at its website. In the spring, members and volunteers will be invited to use the website to sign up for services and CHV sponsored activities.

Last year, compared to 2009, many more members requested services and signed up for events by sending an e-mail to the Village, instead of calling. Likewise more volunteers than the year before responded to e-mail and text message requests to undertake services. Capitol Hill Village anticipates that the telephone always will have a place in arranging services for some, but



setting up service connections via computer is the future.

Later in February a small group, including Capitol Hill Village board members—and you, if you are interested in participating in early testing—will critique the newest interactive parts of our website.

Then, all members and volunteers will receive their initial user name and password, and be invited to replace those initial identifiers with their own choices. Both group training sessions and one-on-one in-home help will be offered to help introduce how the website can be used. But it is our intention that many will adapt to our more interactive website intuitively, because it should be understood easily. So contact the CHV office if you want to be among those who participate during the upcoming website test.

Expect a Survey of Your Interests.

We want to offer activities you will want to attend. Our goal is to

► *continued on page 4*

2011 Village Gala *continued from page 1*

Capitol Hill Village Salon Dinners. Signing-up is an evening-long opportunity, but take note: many of the places for salon dinners and lesson experiences, open to limited numbers, get filled early. The vacation home bidding usually continues all evening.

Salon Dinners

include evenings with:

- ▶ **Alice Rivlin**, considered by many to be the District's financial guardian angel. She was the first Director of the Congressional Budget Office.
- ▶ Our Advisory Neighborhood Commissioners **Kirsten Oldenburg** and **Norman Metzger** and former member **Ken Jarbo**



- ▶ **Grover Norquist**, president of Americans for Tax Reform and a national spokesman on conservative issues



- ▶ Federal Reserve vice chairman (retired) **Donald Kohn**, who has spent his professional life focusing on the health of the economy
- ▶ **Joe DuPriest**, vice president of the Washington Capitals, whose job is to fill seats for hockey games at the Verizon Center
- ▶ **Amy Weinstein** and **Phil Esocoff**, the architectural team for the planned development at 7th Street and Pennsylvania Ave. SE



Neighborhood Lessons

being offered include:



- ▶ **Wine tasting** with the owners of Schneider's Liquor Store (back by popular demand)
- ▶ John Hirschmann on **how to construct a family tree** via the Internet
- ▶ Bill Sisolak, a lifelong golfer, will provide an **instructor-led round of golf**

▶ *continued on page 5*

From the Executive Director *continued from page 3*

increase member participation in Capitol Hill Village activities in 2011.

You may remember our endearing summer 2010 University of Pennsylvania intern, Julie Maggioncalda. She collected information on the interests of selected members. The goal was to engage those members in activities they enjoy and find fulfilling. The

resulting lists of members have been used to create activities and identify likely participants. As a result, different activities, including the intergenerational mentorship program and Chew on That were created. Participation of members in Julie's study has increased.

In February, all members will be asked to complete an online survey

that will give Capitol Hill Village more insight regarding when to contact you, if an event is planned that is likely to be of interest to you.

With the results of the survey, we also will know whom to contact when unexpected opportunities come up. Members regularly offer Capitol Hill Village tickets to events they cannot use or would like to invite another to go along. We make those connections happen now by sending a blast e-mail. The survey will give us insight about who is most likely to be interested.

Expect an e-mail with a hyperlink to the survey. Please help us help you to be as active as you would like to be...and maybe make new friends as well.

—Gail Kohn

Free Dance Class

Free class for Village members and volunteers who want to learn the fundamentals of swing dancing will be offered Wednesday evening 7:30 to 8:30 p.m. on January 26. Debra Sternberg of Gottaswing is teaching the sessions at the Community Center of the Townhomes of Capitol Hill, 750 6th Street SE. Participants are encouraged to bring partners if possible. See the Calendar on page 13 for more information and to register.

2011 Village Gala *continued from page 4*



- ▶ Frager's Hardware is offering **two-hour paint tutorials at your home**, including variations in paint quality and color trends, as well as the impact of new EPA regulations that cover painting activities

Vacation Homes include:

- ▶ Last year's much-desired week at the **Provence, France**, 12th-century house with 21st-century comforts in Seillans
- ▶ A two-bedroom apartment in **Cushing near Maine's coast**, with offers of dinner with hosts Terry and Geoff Lewis after you have spent your days exploring the region, including island trips, or just resting by the ocean
- ▶ A Victorian home that sleeps up to nine people at **Thousand Island Park on Wellesey Island, NY**. Step back in time and visit an old Victorian community located a stone's throw from Canada.



- ▶ A former boathouse, completely refurbished at **Oxford, Maryland, near St. Michaels**, ideal for two guests, with a loft bedroom accessible by ladder

When arriving at St. Coletta, note that two doors will be open, including one on Independence Avenue, close to the Metro stop, and another adjacent to the parking lot next to the building. Please contact the office if you have room in your car for extra riders.

Top: Designated one of the most beautiful villages in France, Seillans is located in eastern Provence.

Above: The Lewis apartment in Cushing near the Maine Coast, with hosted dinners and lots to do, including enjoying the view from the porch.

Lower Left: The apartment in Thousand Islands, is in upstate New York near the St. Lawrence River.

Tickets still are available, at the after January 15 cost of \$70-a-person. Contact the office at 202.546.1778 or info@capitolhillvillage.org.



Ruth Rappaport's Passing Is a Noticed Neighborhood Loss

By Petula Dvorak

Sometimes, it's plain old restraint.

Or stubborn pride, rugged independence, or perhaps even shame that folks say prevents asking their neighbors for help.

All that was rubbish to Ruth Rappaport.

In more than three decades on 3rd Street NE, Ruth asked and asked and asked.

She had neighbors changing her light bulbs, fixing her computer, building a desk, picking the swelling fruits from her epic fig tree, brushing her cat, shopping at Costco, driving her to the pool, and even taking her on an excruciatingly long mattress shopping excursion.

It wasn't always easy to be Ruth's neighbor, but she made it impossible to ignore her. And because of her insistence to be included, heard, and helped, she became the important, connective tissue in her community.

In exchange for the favors, her recruits were treated to the endless unfurling of Ruth's international adventures, her unwavering loyalty and affection, generous gifts she bought online, heaping gobs of neighborhood gossip, and a bumper crop of figs, among other things.

As a founding member of Capitol Hill Village, Ruth taught us how vital it is that our generations mingle, and how limited and less interesting a neighborhood becomes without the elderly. She was a living example of the aging-in-place movement when she died in her home November 17, at 87 years old.

"I don't think there is anything I hate more than 'age segregation.' I don't think I could survive in either assisted living or a retirement

home, or whatever you call it," she once said. "I enjoy the little kids from next door coming over to visit my cat. . . . I enjoy sitting on the front porch and giving out loads of Halloween candy."

Before settling on Capitol Hill, where she was a neighborhood activist, champion on everything from tree trimming to traffic control, and founding member of Hill Havurah, she was a citizen of the world.

A government librarian who saved herself from the Holocaust, her life story in her own words was always a treasure.

"Go back to 1938, Leipzig, Kristallnacht. I knew it was coming. Some 'Nazi' neighbors of ours came by the apartment the night before and told us under no circumstances to leave the house the next morning and under no circumstances to open the door to our apartment no matter who wanted to come in," she would begin, when telling the story of how she knew that the time to save herself was coming.

She was 15 when she watched her high school and synagogue burn during Kristallnacht (she, of course, did leave her house that night). Knowing only more horrors would follow, she took action during a trip to St. Moritz with her mother. On the way back, she jumped from the train, becoming a teenage runaway in Switzerland.

Her parents died in separate death camps later. This is something Ruth never talked about, but scholar Gail Schwartz at the U.S. Holocaust Memorial Museum helped her learn through a records search after she recorded Ruth's oral history for the museum's archives.



After Ruth made it to America — "By boat, of course," she once quipped, after someone asked her how she arrived — she lived with Seattle relatives and quickly became a leader in the West Coast's Jewish community. That's how she met Golda Meir and how she came to witness Israel's war for independence.

"I found myself on a 'convoy' to Jerusalem in Jan. of '48 . . . that was the convoy that got attacked at Latrun . . . our escorts were killed . . . [there] was a fierce battle . . . and near me sat the Chief Rabbi of Jerusalem, praying without stopping," she wrote, in one of her many e-mails (she had a very active on-line life - shopping, chatting, updating her Facebook page).

Ruth became a librarian for the Defense Department, organizing books as well for senior officers on U.S. bases throughout Southeast Asia. One of her infamous victories was the stalwart defense of Playboy magazine deliveries to her Vietnamese library. It was a first amendment issue for her, said her good friend and recruited

► *continued on page 7*

St. Coletta's *continued from page 1*

Graves designed the notable building, located at 1901 Independence Avenue SE.

St. Coletta's purpose, says CEO Sharon Raimo, is to provide "the special message that these children are worthwhile" (a message infrequent in the outside world), and "to make them as independent as possible." The school's philosophy stresses "the importance of building on and celebrating individual strengths."

Capitol Hill Village members and other guests attending the January 29th Third Annual Stardust Gala, will be entertained in St. Coletta's big open areas with dancing and entertainment. However, the schooling portions of the building will be closed that night.

Thus, a tour of the whole school for interested Capitol Hill Village members is scheduled for February 8, with reservations required by February 4. (See Calendar, Page 14)

The nonprofit, non-sectarian school is a Public Charter School for students of the District of Columbia (with acceptable students selected by lottery), while students from nearby suburban communities are referred for admission by their public school systems. No private placements are accepted, Raimo said. The student body is over 200.

St. Coletta also has two facilities to serve its graduates, some leading to job placement.

The St. Coletta School is divided in "houses" or small schools that are connected along an enclosed "village green." Each house, set to serve a small family, includes a kitchen to practice daily living skills. Students, grouped by age, stay in each house for several years, served by a continuing group of therapists and teachers.

The building's unique features include a full-size gymnasium, hydrotherapy room, sensory

room, and art and music studios. The basic program includes functional academics, daily living skills, community-based instruction, adaptive physical education, computer skills, and vocational training. Therapies include occupational, and behavior management; nursing, and parent training.

Artwork produced by St. Coletta students is sold in a number of stores, including stores in Old Town, Rockville, and on Capitol Hill at The Forecast, 218 7th Street SE.

Students graduate from St. Coletta when they have transitioned successfully into the world of employment, or the end of the semester they reach age 22. Some have been hired by DSW and Giant. Students receive a certificate of IEP completion upon graduation.

Rappaport *continued from page 6*

volunteer Peter Bartis, a folklorist at the Library of Congress, who also has wonderful stories to tell about Ruth's principles.

"She called me over one day to help her open a pressure cooker," he said. The pressure cooker was several decades old and refused to disgorge the corned beef and cabbage dinner she was trying to make. Bartis used all his tools – the ones he usually used to help fix something in her house – but the pot refused.

"Throw it out," he told her.

But Ruth mailed it back to the company, corned beef and all. Tensing for news of an exploding package incident, Bartis checked back in with her a week later. She reported the receipt of a gleaming,

state-of-the art, brand-new pressure cooker from the company.

"For Ruth, that was about justice," he said.

She eventually came back to the states and worked at the Library of Congress for 22 years, after buying that row house on Capitol Hill that would become not only Bartis's ongoing repair project, but also the base of operations for her crusades like the historic designation of the Sewell-Belmont House and the fight to change the city taxi-pricing system from zone to meters.

She was active in Eastern Market, the Stanton Park Neighborhood Association, Capitol Hill Restoration Society, AFSCME Local 2910, and AFSCME Council 26. When Capitol

Hill Village was founded, she was a huge advocate and a voracious consumer of the Village's services.

One of the biggest tasks was the taming of the crowded museum her townhouse had become.

"We like to call it collecting, rather than hoarding," said Gail Kohn, executive director of Capitol Hill Village. "I always loved her excuse for why it was that she collected things: She was a librarian. 'The truth is that you could never throw anything out when you're a librarian,'" Kohn said.

And there she stayed, in a more organized but unwaveringly Ruth-styled house, until that day in November, when the stories came to an end.

Share Your Talents (and maybe improve them) While Enjoying a New Young Friend

By Julie Bowes

As a young professional and CHV volunteer, I'm a practicing vegetarian cooking with a Capitol Hill Village member.

I don't have the opportunity to learn skills like this often, I think this is such an amazing chance to meet someone I typically wouldn't have the chance to interact with, and to learn something in the process. I really think we can benefit from our exchange."

Other young volunteer adults have been matched with Capitol Hill Village members for assistance with learning Spanish, gardening, and other types of cooking.

Though you may not always realize it, we all have valuable skills to share with our community. Perhaps, over the years, you've become a knitter or learned to play an instrument. Perhaps you're fluent in a second language or well-read in history, or a veteran soldier with an interest in comparing earlier wars with today's U.S. battles. All of these



are assets you can share with those around us to help build a stronger, more connected community.

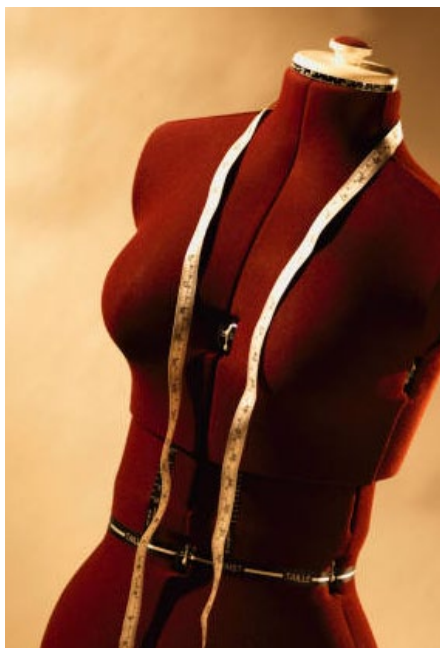
The Intergenerational Skills Exchange is a relatively new project of Capitol Hill Village [Julie worked with CHV in organizing it.] The exchange aims at connecting Village members and their many untapped skills and experiences, with young DC adults who have contacted the Village expressing an interest in learning or honing various skills and knowledge. Their requests include improving Spanish conversation, cooking, knitting, handicrafts and more.

These young professionals, living and working in DC, desire a meaningful connection and learning exchange with older community members.

The Intergenerational Skills Exchange provides a way for such connections to occur. CHV members will have an outlet to share their varied knowledge and experiences and to pass these skills on to a younger generation.



If you're interested in getting involved or would like to learn more, please contact the Capitol Hill Village office at 202.543.1778. We're especially seeking members with knowledge of Spanish language, guitar, handicrafts or jewelry-making, and cooking or baking, but would love to hear about whatever skills you'd like to offer. We hope to hear from you!



RANDOM MUSINGS

The Sultan of Scam

By Leo Orleans

Over the course of the many years that we have lived on Capitol Hill, I have had a number of learning experiences that made me more cautious and skeptical of smiling do-gooders and people in distress. That is why, when a nice-looking man in a white painter's suit came by as I was working in the front yard and asked if I wanted my wrought-iron fence painted, I said to myself, "What does he take me for, a noodle?" So even though I have been postponing the job for more than a year, I said, "Thanks, but no thanks."



Charles, the name he gave me later, was not deterred. He said he had been painting wrought-iron fences in the neighborhood, and he had mixed too much of a special primer that he learned about when he was a painter on an aircraft carrier. If he didn't use the expensive compound right away, it would deteriorate, so he would give me a good deal on a paint job.

Indeed, his price was most reasonable, but I told Charles that I have been taken too many times to have someone off the street paint my fence.

He was most sympathetic. "It is terrible, I know," he said. "People like that give us all a bad name."

But, hey, I'm no fool. I have had dealings with nice, bright, sincere people on the street before. So, I asked Charles to show me the fences he already had painted. He took me around the block and showed me some nice-looking wrought-iron fences and steps that looked newly painted. As we walked, he never stopped talking. He mentioned someone I knew on another block, whose fence he said he had painted. He told me about his Navy travels, including a trip to an Italian mountaintop where he saw fantastic flowers. He told me about his mother, who lived in the neighborhood and loved it.

Finally, I told him to go ahead with the painting. He went off to get his stuff, but not before making sure that I could pay in cash—because it was Saturday and too late to cash a check.

When Charles returned, he was carrying a large white bucket in which he had paint cans and paintbrushes. He also had a roll of foam rubber, which he carefully stuck under the fence "to make sure I don't splatter anything." As I went inside, he was scraping the fence.

In a few minutes, there was a knock at the door. It seems that Charles needed \$23.50 to buy some paint—the cost of which would, of course, be deducted from the quoted price. My ears perked up. Was



this another scam? Was I getting taken again?

Charles not only was astonished, but truly hurt that I would even think of suspecting him of chicanery. "Hey, Lee (we were big buddies by now), I'm leaving all my stuff here. You know I'll be right back."

Of course, I gave Charles \$20 (I said I was sure he could find \$3.50 in his pocket), and, of course, he vanished. After some time, I went to his bucket and found four empty paint cans, an empty can of turpentine, and three stiff and unusable brushes.

If, by chance, Charles reads this, I want him to know that I am not a bit upset. His performance was worth every penny. But I also would like him to know that someone as bright and personable as he can do much better.

A mind is a terrible thing to waste.

CORRECTION

The clothing shop near Eastern Market mentioned in the CHV January newsletter is Forecast at 218 7th Street SE. The store provided at-home assistance to CHV member Judy Bardacke in weeding out and up-dating her wardrobe.

Forecast, open for 32 years, has a Closet Call service available for \$75-an-hour with a two-hour minimum.

All the World's a Stage

By Ruth Mitchell

Beginning to learn acting when you're in your seventies sounds like a doomed enterprise. Where can you go with it? Certainly not to the stage of the Kennedy Center or Harman Hall. But, as I found when I took Introduction to Acting at the Shakespeare Theatre Company (STC), the experience took me in a rewarding direction—greater awareness of myself, of others, and the interaction between them.

I've always loved the theatre: during my adolescence in England, I bicycled to Stratford-on-Avon from my home in Cheltenham to see Shakespeare and I directed a Noel Coward play at Oxford. Now, I am that most vital member of the theatre community—an enthusiastic audience. But the idea of learning from the bottom attracted me, and at my age, I have nothing to lose.

The eleven-member class consisted of a mixed bag of participants. I clearly was the oldest, but others ranged from the mid-forties down

to an aspiring musical theatre actor just out of high school. There were at least two Ph.D.s among us; a state department officer; a former *Washington Post* writer; a stock broker; an au pair nanny from France; and several gorgeous young women who are hoping for, if not stage, then television careers. We were instructed by Michelle Jackson, who teaches theatre and acting at all levels for the STC. I was delighted to see her, because she was instructor in the Summer Shakespeare camp that my granddaughter enjoyed in 2009.

I expected to act. But we didn't act at first. In the large, empty rehearsal hall in the 8th Street Shakespeare studio, we went through physical exercises that reminded me of my Pilates class to help us breathe and loosen up tight muscles. We threw tennis balls to each other, remembering who had thrown to us and to whom we had to throw, intensified when two and even three balls were in play. We learned not to apologize if we dropped the ball, but to keep going. We walked



Ruth Mitchell is rehearsing with partner Mietek Boduszynski. Photo provided by the Shakespeare Company.

around the room as if we were dejected, or elated, or walking on ice. We paired up and repeated phrases like "You have striped socks!" in different intonations and emphases to the point of exhaustion.

Always, Michelle was directing our attention to what we were doing right then — no history, no explanation, just "being in the moment." The differences among us that I mentioned above vanished as we tried to focus intently on what we were doing and how it affected our partner. In one exercise, we had to glean from a partner's response what he or she thought of our status, which was concealed from us (we had a number on our backs). Another exercise sent us outside to 8th Street to watch people walking, their gestures, their gait, their sense of themselves. When we returned, we had to reproduce one person before the rest of the class, without words.

Throughout these exercises, I became aware that my analytical habit of mind screened me from the moment. Analysis and explanation are indispensable, of course, but

► *continued on page 11*

Shakespeare Theatre offers many classes at its two rehearsal studios, 507 and 516 8th Street SE. Some are for hopeful actors and actresses, while others are for those interested in a more real view of the Shakespeare world — from experience on basic acting to learning a wide variety of different aspects of Shakespeare plays and roles.

"There even is a class entitled "Acting for Business Professionals," notes Ruth Mitchell. Many require no drama background, especially for the basic and introductory classes.

A number of Mitchell's fellow classmates are taking, as a second class, one on scene study, but she intends to repeat the introductory class: "I got so much out of it."

The next round of classes (\$330 for 8-week classes) begins in late January, maybe too late to sign up as you read this story. However, a look at the Shakespeare Website might get your mind moving for an adventure in the near future: www.shakespearetheatre.org/education/training/master-classes/winter.aspx.

Capitol Hill Village Endowment Update

By William Phillips

The total value of the Capitol Hill Endowment Trust at the end of 2010 was \$100,642.96. This is very good progress for an endowment that only has been in existence for four months. Thanks to all of you who have made contributions and to those who have placed Capitol Hill Village in their estate plans.

As you know, gifts to the endowment trust will last in perpetuity. Only the income from the investments made by the endowment trust will be used for the Village's operating expenses.

At the very end of 2010, the lame duck session of Congress passed the tax bill that makes many changes in the federal tax code. As pointed out last month, the bill extended the Bush era tax cuts for two more years to 2012. They did a number of other changes to personal income taxes, for example, increasing the exemption for the alternative minimum tax, increasing standard deductions for 2011, and reducing the personal FICA taxes by 2 percent.

For those with IRA accounts who must take a minimum required distribution, the act allows you to

contribute the required distribution to a charity and not have to pay tax on it. This extends what was allowable for 2008 and 2009. The extension is good for 2010 and 2011. If you haven't taken your minimum distribution for 2010 yet, there is a special rule that allows you to make this charitable distribution from your IRA as late as January 31.

However, some of the largest changes occurred in the federal estate and gift tax areas. The federal estate tax is reinstated for 2011. The exemption for 2011 is \$5 million, with a 35 percent flat rate on assets above \$5 million. In addition, estates get to use the step up in basis rules for assets inherited in 2011. Perhaps one of the most important changes makes the estate tax exemptions portable. Under prior law, to fully use the marital deduction, one had to create a two trust arrangement. This no longer would be necessary.

The shorthand for this is, if your will is more than five years old, you should review your will and perhaps make a new one. The changes to the estate tax are significant, particularly the change in the portability of exemptions.

This will make the administration of estates much easier. It is important to note that states have not changed their estate tax rules. The District of Columbia still has a \$1 million exemption on all estates. Consequently, it's quite possible to have a tax-free federal estate, but a taxable estate in the District of Columbia, Maryland or Virginia.

There were significant changes in the gift tax as well. The lifetime gift tax exemption has increased to \$5 million from \$1 million. Larger lifetime gifts are now possible, and any increase in appreciation on the assets that are given away are not taxed in a person's estate. However, the annual gift tax exclusion remains at \$13,000 per donee.

As always, it is important to consult with your tax attorney when considering any changes to your estate plan. The Capitol Hill Village Endowment Trust is planning to hold some information sessions on these changes. We certainly will have these sessions publicized in the weeks ahead.

All the World's a Stage *continued from page 10*

interaction between people requires focus on what is happening right then. As Michelle moved us from these exercises to reading the text of a play, she taught us how to think about what the character's lines tell us about what the character is doing at that moment to the other characters. She kept having to pull me back from my desire to direct the play!

We finally did act, but not in the conventional sense. We improvised scenes in pairs, first without words

and then with minimal dialog. For the final exercise, Michelle provided us with the skeleton of a two-person scene. The dialog went: "Hello." "Hey." "What's happening?" "With." "You know." "Oh, yes" and so on. We selected partners and prepared scenes for presentation in the final session.

One pair told the story of a needy high school girl being brushed off by a campus queen; another brought to life an heiress whose lover wanted her money more than

her affection. My partner was a spymaster so annoyed by my flaky behavior as his informant that he pushed me off the Metro platform. All these with only that skeletal dialog and our body language!

I was so pleased with what I learned from Michelle and my fellow students that I've enrolled in another basic acting class beginning in January. I never may get beyond the elementary level in acting, but the lessons I've learned apply to life as much as to the stage.

Tree Pruning Workshop at Tyler School Garden

By Margaret Missiaen

A group of Tyler Elementary School parents led by Anya and Steve Sattler has completely transformed the playground at 10th and G Streets SE.

Now, we are looking for eight Capitol Hill Village members to join us in a pruning class at the school grounds Saturday, February 12 at 2 pm, where you can gain some expertise while giving the site the winter-time attention it needs. (If the day is extremely cold, the session will be postponed to Feb. 19.)

Once a barren asphalt plot, the playground now is a beautiful garden of native trees, shrubs and perennials. Anya and Steve are landscape architects whose son attends Tyler. Working with parents, Casey Trees and other environmental groups, they have created green space that cools the playground and reduces storm-water runoff while removing carbon dioxide from the air.



I watched the greening of this space as tree after tree appeared. The first river birches were planted a few years ago and have survived our harsh summers with help from a watering crew made of parents who came on weekends all summer long. As we all know, plants are wonderful teaching tools but these tools suffer a certain amount of wear and tear. This workshop will serve two purposes: 1) to remove damaged branches from trees and

shrubs and 2) to give parents and CHV members basic pruning skills.

We will begin by focusing on trees with dead, damaged or diseased branches. Low limbs will be removed to prevent additional damage. I hope to do a brief introduction to structural pruning. This technique evaluates the branch structure and makes corrections that will ensure the trees mature into strong, healthy specimens. There will be time for questions and a chance to do some hands-on pruning.

The wide variety of trees in the playground will allow us to see how different pruning techniques are used for shade, flowering and multi-trunked trees. The shade trees are willow oaks, maples and zelkovas. Flowering trees are redbuds, sweetbay magnolias and service berries. The last two also are multi-trunked. Proper pruning requires proper tools. I will give pointers on what to look for in pruners, loppers and saws.

The class will be limited to 16 (8 from Tyler and 8 from Capitol Hill Village.) Please call the office to register. Call Margaret Missiaen to confirm date in the case of inclement weather (546-8681).

AARP Driver Safety Class

Save Wednesday, March 16, 2011, 9 a.m. to 4:30 p.m., as CHV again is sponsoring a AARP Driver Safety Class. The CHV members who have attended our three previous sessions all praise it. Here's your chance to review rules of the road, defensive driving techniques, and how to operate your vehicle more safely. You'll learn to accommodate common, age-related changes in vision, hearing, flexibility and reaction time. The class includes no test, but you must attend the full-day program to qualify for a discount with your auto insurance carrier.

Check with your own insurance company about this discount. Insurance carriers discounts vary, and if you already attended the class in 2009 or 2010, you may need to repeat it to continue receiving the auto insurance discount. An AARP-certified instructor conducts the class. The classroom course costs \$12 for AARP members and \$14 for non-members. For further information on "Why Take a Driver Safety Class?," go to: <http://www.aarp.org/home-garden/transportation/info-03-2010/take-aarps-drivers-safetycourse.html>

Further details will available in CHV's March newsletter.

Upcoming Events *continued from page 1*

Saturday, January 29 • 7:30–11:00 pm

St. Coletta School, 1901 Independence Avenue SE (near Stadium-Armory Metro)

Stardust Gala

Tickets are on sale now at
www.capitolhillvillage.org/StardustGala.

The Third Annual Capitol Hill Village Stardust Gala is happening at a new location — St. Coletta School – but the same shining stars will be out to brighten your dancing with Crooner Doug Bowles and his SingCo Rhythm Orchestra. The Quiet Café will offer wine and fruit punch and coffee or tea as well snacks, and nearby will be an all-evening silent auction. The auction features vacation homes, handicraft classes, and salon dinners with authors and politicians.

Your formal invitation will be arriving by mail, and reservation information is available at www.capitolhillvillage.org. Ample parking is available, and St. Coletta School is near the Stadium-Armory Metro stop. CHV volunteers will organize car-sharing rides.



Sunday, January 23 • 8:00 pm

St. Marks, 3rd and A Streets SE

Inherit the Wind

by Jerome Lawrence and Robert E. Lee

Member Carol Thornhill is playing the role of Mrs. McLain in this adaptation of Clarence Darrow's and William Jennings Bryan's participation in the Scopes trial. For ticket information, go to www.stmarksplayers.org or call 202.547.9670.

Other performances:

- Fri, January 21 and 28 at 8:00 pm
- Sat, January 22 and 29 at 8:00 pm
- Sun, January 23 at 4:00 pm

Wednesday, January 26 • 7:30–8:30 pm

Townhomes on Capitol Hill, 750 6th Street SE

Pre-Gala Dance Lessons

Debra Sternberg will be teaching the fundamentals of swing dance for those planning to attend the CHV Gala. (Then, you'll be among the best on the Gala floor.) Bringing a partner is encouraged, but not required.

Please register by calling Capitol Hill Village at 202.543.1778 during office hours, or e-mail: info@capitolhillvillage.org.

Upcoming Events *continued from page 13*

Thursday, January 27 • 1:00–3:00 pm
Southeast Library, 7th and D Streets SE

Learn to Use NIH Website for Information You Need

Join fellow members for a repeat session of a workshop hosted by PIA Advocates, an organization that provides health literacy and education training.

Gain the ability to understand instructions on prescription drug bottles, appointment slips, medical education brochures, doctor's directions and consent forms, and the ability to negotiate complex health care systems. Learn how to use the National Institute of Health's web-based health information. **RSVP to CHV office at 202.543.1778.**

All are welcome

Friday, January 28 • 12:30-1:30 pm
Southeast Library, 7th and D Streets SE

Balance Class

Join other members in this monthly balance class, which will help you recognize that strength and agility are the best defenses against falls. Practice skills that will keep you on your feet. The class is taught by a physical therapist volunteering from Physiotherapy Associates.

Note the time has been moved to afternoon. **Please RSVP to CHV office.**

Members only

Wednesday, February 2 (and weekly thereafter) • 6:30–7:30 pm
Townhomes on Capitol Hill, 750 6th Street SE

Free Yoga Class

Volunteer, Capitol Hill Village member and certified yoga instructor Suzanne Gentes will be teaching free, one-hour yoga classes. Yoga increases flexibility, strength and balance. Persons of all abilities are welcome, including those who need chair yoga with focus on both movement and breathing techniques.

Members and volunteers welcome

Saturday, February 5 • Starting at 9:00 am
Your home

DC Hazardous Waste Materials Pickup

This is the periodic pickup day for hazardous materials and personal papers at CHV members' homes that will be delivered to the District's safe disposal site. Personal papers (medical records or financial files) will be shredded at the drop-off site, viewed by the CHV delivery team to ensure they are destroyed.

Hazardous wastes for pickup include paint, house cleaners, batteries, old medicines, television, video equipment, and others not accepted in weekly home trash pickup. (Note: Latex paint is not accepted. Proper disposal is to remove lid and let dry—cat litter quickens process, then put can in regular trash pickups.)

For the list of accepted wastes, check the DC hazardous wastes website: <http://dpw.dc.gov/DC/DPW/Services+on+your+block/recycling/household+hazardous+waste++E-cycling+document+shredding>

Call 202.543.1778 or e-mail info@capitolhillvillage.org by noon, Feb 4, to request a pickup or volunteer to assist with the drive.

Members only

Saturday, February 8 • 10:00 am
St. Coletta School, 1901 Independence Avenue SE

Tour Educational Aspect of St. Coletta

The educational section of St. Coletta will not be open to attendees of the January 29th CHV Gala, so the school is offering a special tour of the highly-respected facilities. The fascinating architectural building serves students age 2–22 with mental retardation, autism, and multiple disabilities. The facility includes a quality gym, cavernous atrium known as the "village green," nursing facility, a cafeteria that appears to be an up-scale restaurant, music studios, student kitchens, and a "sensory room" to stimulate children.

Tour reservations must be made with the CHV office (202.546.1778) by noon February 4.

Members only

February Events *continued from page 14*

Wednesday, February 9 • 6:30-7:30 pm
Townhomes on Capitol Hill, 750 6th Street SE

Weekly Yoga Class

See February 2 entry for details.

Thursday, February 10 • 1:00–3:00 pm
Northeast Library, 7th Street and Maryland Ave. NE
2nd floor meeting room, fully accessible

Managing Your Digital Photos

Did you miss this offering in June? (And repeaters also welcome!)

CHV member Casey Chandler will give tips on uploading your photos to your computer, renaming them (admit it, DCS59786 doesn't tell you that the photo is cousin Melba wearing a lampshade at the family reunion) and saving them so you can find them again. Casey also will demonstrate cleaning up old family photos with Adobe Photoshop Elements. A free trial edition of Photoshop Elements is downloadable at www.adobe.com.

Please bring your laptop if you have one. Let the office know when you sign up.

Members only

Friday, February 11 • Starting at 9:00 am
Your home

Book Donation Monthly Pickup

Friends of the SE Library will be picking up donations of used books, records, music and movie CDs and DVDs from Capitol Hill Village members front porches. The items will be included in the monthly used-book sale Saturday, February 12 (10 am to 3 pm), in the basement of the library at 7th Street SE, just off Pennsylvania Avenue.

Please RSVP to all events, and let the CHV office know if you need a ride, by calling 202.543.1778 during regular office hours or by e-mailing info@capitolhillvillage.org

CHV members wanting to receive a tax-related contribution thank-you note, include a list of donated items, plus your name and address.

For pickup, contact CHV by Wednesday, Feb. 9, at 202.543.1778 or info@capitolhillvillage.org.

Saturday, February 12 • 2:00 pm
Tyler School

Tree Pruning Class

Margaret Missiaen, CHV member, is one of the founders of Trees for Capitol Hill and fondly known around the Hill as the "tree lady." Margaret is offering a lesson in pro tree pruning at Tyler School. (See related story, page 12.) This class will include eight Tyler parents and 8 Village members. So don't wait to call the office to sign up. Meet at the gate to the playground behind Tyler School on 10th Street SE. Rain date (that is, if it's too cold): February 19.

Members only

Sunday, February 13 • 2:30 pm

The Carpet Bagger's Children

Village members already have purchased the tickets announced for this performance. You may put your name on a waiting list, in case someone has tickets they can't use.

Monday, February 14 • 6:30 pm
Private home

Special Potluck Dinner

This will be a Valentine's Day potluck dinner at a private home featuring curried chicken (with hot and not-so-hot varieties), plus rice. Guests should consider bringing friendly additions to the special meal.

Desserts will include a blind chocolate test, in honor of the occasion. Other desserts are welcome.

The dinner will be limited to 20 guests, so call the office by Thursday, February 10, to register, learn the address, and tell us what you are bringing: 202.543.1778.

February Events *continued from page 15*

Tuesday, February 15 • 6:00 pm

Private home

Literary Club

After the New York premiere of *Rosencrantz and Guildenstern Are Dead* in 1967, Clive Barnes wrote, "In one bound, Mr. Stoppard is asking to be considered as among the finest English-speaking writers of our stage, for this is a work of fascinating distinction." The play is a version of *Hamlet* from the bewildered perspectives of Rosencrantz and Guildenstern, Hamlet's two classmates from Wittenberg who have been summoned to Elsinore to spy on the Prince. Stoppard's darkly comic, absurdist play turns Shakespeare inside out. As we hear lines from Hamlet spoken "offstage," Rosencrantz and Guildenstern struggle to make sense of their situation. At our session, we will read selected scenes. **Call the office to sign up and learn the address.**

Members and volunteers

Wednesday, February 16 • 6:30–7:30 pm

Townhomes on Capitol Hill, 750 6th Street SE

Weekly Yoga Class

See February 2 entry for details.

Thursday February 17th • 7:00 am

Southeast Library, 7th and D Streets SE

Chew on That: Gentrification

This monthly-intergenerational discussion group for CHV members will begin the first of a two-part discussion on gentrification. Please bring your thoughts and join us. **RSVP to the CHV office!**

Friday, February 25 • 12:30–1:30 pm

Southeast Library, 7th and D Streets SE

Balance Class

Join other members in this monthly balance class, which will help you recognize that strength and agility are the best defenses against falls. The class, which members find is useful to take on a continuing basis, is taught by a physical therapist volunteering from Physiotherapy Associates.

Note the time has been moved to afternoon. Please RSVP to CHV office.

Members only

Continuing events

Tuesdays and Thursdays • 10:00 am

Capitol Hill Presbyterian Church, 4th Street and Independence Ave SE, accessible

Class Offering: Qi-Gong

The gentle but powerful Chinese movement exercise known as Qi-gong [pronounced chee gong] is offered for Capitol Hill Village members by Joni Bell. Joni, herself a CHV member, has practiced this discipline for the past ten years. Her strength and balance have improved remarkably, and she credits the activity with helping her as a 30-year patient with multiple sclerosis. The twice-weekly classes are free and last 30-40 minutes.

Open To Members Only

Please RSVP to all events, and let the Village office know if you need a ride, by calling 202.543.1778 during regular office hours or by e-mailing info@capitolhillvillage.org