

# The Village News

## Carter Barron Amphitheater: A local and national treasure

By Merilee Janssen and Jan Solomon

Do you have memories of attending concerts, plays, or The Shakespeare Theater Free for All at the Carter Barron Amphitheater? Watching affordable



performances by Ella Fitzgerald, Louis Armstrong, Diana Ross, Bruce Springsteen, Stevie Wonder, or Ray Charles? Or perhaps you were one of the lucky ones to snatch a \$3 ticket to the iconic Earth, Wind & Fire concert? From 1950

to 2017, the 4,200-seat outdoor amphitheater located in Rock Creek Park brought diverse communities together to celebrate the confluence of urban outdoors, nature and the performing arts.

As a federally owned and operated venue, the amphitheater was fully integrated in the 1950's, unlike other concert venues in D.C. that remained segregated. As part of NNV's Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI) initiative, our DEI Working Group, in collaboration with our Program Working Group, recently featured Tony Richardson as a speaker in our Virtual Speaker Series. Tony is the Senior Manager of Justice,

Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion initiatives at the Rock Creek Conservancy, which is tasked with protecting Rock Creek and the entirety of Rock Creek National Park. Born and raised in D.C., Tony shared personal stories of his childhood visits to Carter Barron as well as the history, present, and future of the amphitheater.



From its early days as one of the few racially integrated facilities in the District, and later through financially accessible and diverse programming, the amphitheater offered a place where people of all races and backgrounds could come together around a shared appreciation of the arts. The magical setting under the stars, the green canopy of trees, and the top performers brought sell-out audiences to a natural setting where everyone felt welcome.

Unfortunately, the amphitheater was closed in 2017 after an inspection by the National Park Service (NPS) found that the stage's substructure was not strong enough to handle the weight of performers and equipment and would need to be entirely rebuilt. In 2021, the NPS announced plans to invest in the reopening of the

See **CARTER BARRON**, Page 2

# Northwest Neighbors Village

a **community network of support** serving upper NW DC including American University Park, Barnaby Woods, Chevy Chase, Forest Hills, Friendship Heights, Hawthorne, Tenleytown, & Van Ness

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## Newsletter Team

Pat Kasdan  
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## CARTER BARRON, continued from Page 1

amphitheater. Major renovations will include a new edifice and stage with state-of-the-art equipment and infrastructure, and will also bring the venue up to code including universal accessibility and other 21st century needs.

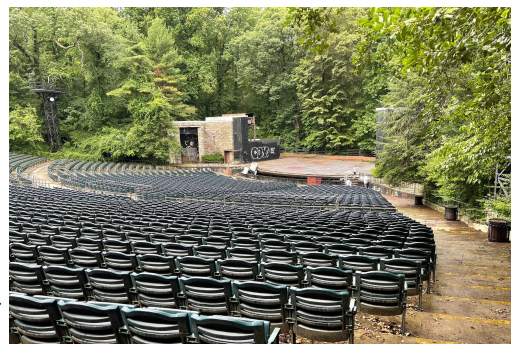
In August 2022, the Rock Creek Conservancy launched the [Carter Barron Alliance](#), a network of arts, parks, historic preservation, philanthropic, and community groups that are working together to support the revitalization of the amphitheater. The goal of the Alliance is to continue the tradition of providing affordable and diverse performances, community engagement events, and educational programming for all Washingtonians and visitors to the nation's capital.

Tony's virtual presentation is available on the [NNV website](#) under Events, [VSS Archives](#), where you will also find recordings of other speakers who spoke about the history of the Black experience in D.C. and beyond, including Dr. Andrew Billingsley, who spoke about his book "[Yearning to Breathe Free: Robert Smalls of South Carolina](#)"; Kitty Eisele who discussed [Missing History: Slavery in Washington and Our Visual Memory](#); Ralph Buglass's talk on the [Stevens School: DC's Little Known Educational Landmark](#), which was the first public school for Black children; Hank Klibanoff's talk on [The Past is Never Dead: What We Learn from Civil Rights Cold Cases](#); and Jerry Mitchell, who spoke about his book, "[Race Against Time](#)," and his reporting on unsolved murder cases of the Civil Rights era.

We hope you will join our upcoming virtual talk on April 13 at 2 p.m. to hear Jenny Masur share stories from her book, "[Maryland Freedom Seekers on the Underground Railroad](#)."



*Opening night, 1965*



*Spring cleaning, 2022*

**Northwest Neighbors Village** (NNV), founded in 2007 and opened in 2009, is a nonprofit organization created to help the residents of Northwest Washington live comfortably and safely in their homes and neighborhoods as they age.

## Join or volunteer

NNV welcomes new members and volunteers. For more information, call the office at 202-935-6060 or visit [www.nnvdc.org](http://www.nnvdc.org).



# Two NNV Board members testify before the D.C. Council

*By Gene Sofer and Karen Zuckerstein*

During my first quarter as Board president, I was honored to testify to the D.C. Council, from whom we receive important grant money, about the importance of the Village movement and NNV in particular. Board member, NNV member, and volunteer Karen Zuckerstein, joined me in testifying. I'd like to share some excerpts of our testimonies with the community to urge your continued support of our mission and to invite you to join us as a member or volunteer—or both!

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## **Testimony by Gene Sofer:**

NNV is part of an innovative grassroots movement that coordinates critical services for older adults. Villages are one of the most promising options to cope with the growing population of older adults. According to the Council of D.C., Office of the Budget Director, "The population of adults in the District of Columbia age 65 and older is substantial and growing. In 2019, D.C. was home to approximately 83,600 older adults, and the population could rise as much as 24.4 percent by 2030."

Andrew Scharlach, Professor of Social Welfare at UC Berkeley, analyzed the Village model and concluded that "Villages represent a promising new model, with the potential for positively affecting seniors in ways that may reduce social isolation, expand access to services, increase well-being, and increase seniors' confidence in their ability to age in their homes." I believe that we have proven Professor Scharlach correct.

At NNV, we have a paid professional staff that manages the Village on a day-to-day basis. They help to recruit and train the volunteers who provide services to our members and develop and plan the

programs that engage our members. I have been amazed at how well our staff and volunteers know our members. We build relationships with a minimum of bureaucracy and a lot of care. Our professional staff often identifies concerns and addresses them before they become a crisis. The short-term, time-limited case management services we offer provide immediate crisis management, crisis prevention, and/or crisis resolution, while bridging the gap between the Village scope of services and more formal senior services.

What services does NNV provide? In 2022, we put on 335 programs ranging from book groups and virtual speakers to yoga. We provided more than 2,640 direct volunteer services totaling more than 5,000 hours of service per year. We offer our members transportation on days, nights, and weekends. In addition to medical appointments, we provide rides to shopping, social events, places of worship, and others. We do more than pick you up and drop you off: our volunteers do their best to meet your needs. All services are provided by trusted neighbors - volunteers who have been vetted and trained.

Volunteering has proven benefits, as well. According to an article published on April 22, 2018, in the Wall Street Journal, a study of 2,705 volunteers aged 18 and older from UnitedHealthcare and VolunteerMatch found that 75 percent of those who had volunteered in the past 12 months said volunteering made them feel physically healthier. A much larger study—one involving more than 64,000 subjects aged 60 and older from 1998 to 2010—suggests that volunteering slows the cognitive decline of aging. The author of that study, Sumedha Gupta, an economics professor at Indiana University, Indianapolis, reported "we find

See **COUNCIL TESTIMONY**, Page 4

## Volunteer service spotlight

In the NNV office, we treat all service requests equally, but we do enjoy seeing an unusual request get filled! Thank you to volunteer Monica for stepping up and helping new member Carol with her very first request – changing the stitch size on her Kenmore sewing machine! Carol had the instruction manual and, working together, she and Monica managed to get the errant sewing machine to behave.



**Full Members** – if you have an unusual problem that you need help with, let us know! We just might have a volunteer who can help you. If the issue is beyond the scope of our volunteers, we'll refer you to an individual provider or business that can help!

### **COUNCIL TESTIMONY**, *continued from Page 3*

that as people volunteer, their cognitive health scores improve. If they don't volunteer, their cognitive scores decline faster."

NNV helps seniors combat the effects of social isolation. Seniors are particularly susceptible to loneliness, which is linked to early mortality. The lack of social relationships is as much a risk factor for death as smoking or obesity. Loneliness can cause high blood pressure and increase the risk of depression and stress. Lonely people have a faster cognitive decline than those who have more satisfying social connections. In January, an article in The Washington Post reported that a study by researchers at Johns Hopkins found that "older people who are socially isolated face a 28 percent greater chance of developing

dementia than do their counterparts who are not socially isolated."

We are very sensitive to the need to increase the racial and ethnic diversity of those we serve, the volunteers that we recruit, and our Board of Directors. We have contracted with consultants this year to accomplish these goals. We have already taken steps to increase our socioeconomic diversity. We have been fortunate in our ability to raise funds from our neighbors to the extent that in 2022 we provided \$19,200 in subsidies to cover the costs of membership for those earning \$45,000/year or less.

The need for Villages has never been greater. We hope you'll join us in creating a space where our older neighbors can continue to thrive.

### **Testimony by Karen Zuckerstein:**

*I am a member of and volunteer for a village - Northwest Neighbors Village—and I am proud of the community that the village has built and the volunteer efforts it has leveraged that permit older adults to continue to live independently in the community they love. Over the past year and a half, I have also been involved in advocating for a physical senior wellness center in Ward 3, another important tool for combating social isolation. Since that meeting, I have worked with advocates and leaders in the community to build support for a physical wellness center in Ward 3 that will provide a gathering space for older adults and an opportunity to co-locate related services.*

# Old Urban Naturalist

By Jane Whitaker

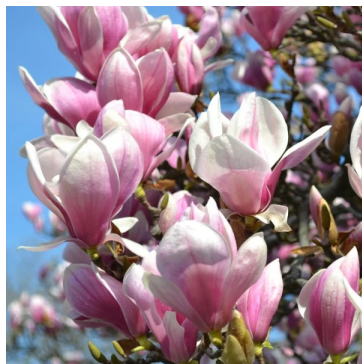
Spring is upon us! An exciting time of year when we can see, feel, and hear the world bursting forth with life after a cold dark winter. I always feel rejuvenated with the advent of spring.

As I write this article it's supposed to be spring but the temperatures are in the 30s and we're having 50+ mph gusts of wind. Some trees such as plums, magnolias, and Bradford pears are blooming due to the past month being so warm, but winter is hanging on.



*Bradford Pear*

Most of our native plants are still dormant. It's the non-natives that are blooming. People assume that warm temperatures are what stimulates our plants to bloom but it isn't that simple. The non-native plants



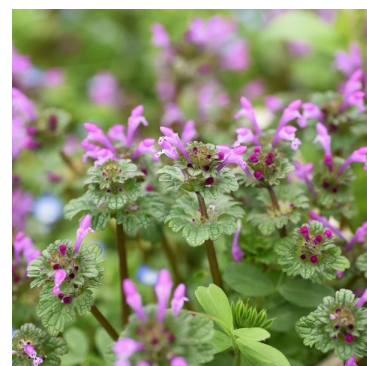
*Magnolia*

such as magnolias, forsythia, and daffodils seem to be temperature stimulated and woe to them if we have a hard freeze or extended cold snap.

Maples, which are one of our earliest blooming trees, are stimulated by day length and dependably bloom the first week or two of March regardless of the temperature. Other native plants may bloom a few days earlier in some years but the length of day is the deciding factor. The cherry blossoms are a good example of a non-native plant that, although it has some light enhanced stimuli, will respond to warmer temperatures as well.

If you want to observe our native early

spring flowers, they will be dependably blooming in very late March and April. They are easy to observe along the C&O Canal and in our local parks. Take a walk with your camera and see how many you can identify. Don't forget the tiny flowers too. Enlarged on your cell phone cameras they are delightfully delicate and colorful. I find many of these obscure flowers in my yard and along sidewalks where they are mostly overlooked. Henbit is a good example.



*Henbit*

Birds are the other spring arrivals that delight us with their songs as they set up territories and attract mates. I hope you've been looking and listening to the birds this late winter and early spring as the "locals" are already busy attracting mates. I have been hearing Tufted Titmice calling since the last week in February. Their "Peter, Peter, Peter"



*Tufted Titmouse*

is very loud for such a little bird. Carolina Wrens are also busily finding nest sites and attracting mates and singing loudly "Topeka, Topeka, Topeka". The males are the singers of the pair and are often more colorful than the females. Cardinals are a good example.

By the time you read this article migration will be in full swing. In mid-April you can put out your hummingbird feeders. A tired migrant will be very appreciative of an easy meal.



*Carolina Wren*

See **URBAN NATURALIST**, Page 6



## URBAN NATURALIST, continued from Page 5

Insects are essential for many of our migrants. In a pinch they will eat the suet impregnated with insects. I try to have a cake available until early May. Downy woodpeckers nest early so they will avail themselves of the suet treat. They are fun to watch hanging upside down and eating away.



*Downy Woodpecker*

There are excellent bird song apps. One, called [Merlin](#), is from Cornell. It will identify the bird if you play the song, a boon for the novice birder who wants to learn bird songs.

Good luck finding the spring treasures Mother Nature has to offer.

## Understanding the Qualified Medicare Beneficiary Program

*By Sal Selvaggio*

### What is the QMB program?

The Qualified Medicare Beneficiary (QMB) program, administered by D.C. Medicaid, provides secondary insurance coverage to Medicare beneficiaries who live in the District with income below \$3,665 per month (single) or \$4,950 per month (couple). It could cover all your Medicare cost-sharing charges, including premiums, deductibles, and coinsurance.

### What will I save in Medicare premiums?

The QMB program pays your monthly Medicare premiums. Once you are approved, QMB will cover the full Medicare Part B premium amount of \$164.90, thus increasing your monthly Social Security income. For most people, Medicare Part A does not have a premium. If you do have a Part A premium, the QMB program would cover it as well.

### How much will I save in Medicare cost-sharing charges?

The QMB program provides full supplementary insurance by covering all of Medicare's cost-sharing amounts.

- **Original Medicare:** QMB covers inpatient hospital deductibles of \$1,600 and daily inpatient hospital and skilled nursing facility coinsurance charges. It covers the annual Part B deductible of \$226 and all coinsurance charges (usually 20% of Medicare's approved amount) for doctor visits, outpatient hospital services, and medical equipment.
- **Medicare Advantage:** QMB covers your deductible and copayments for inpatient hospital stays, outpatient hospital services, doctor visits, and medical equipment.

### What happens to my Part D prescription drug plan?

People in QMB automatically qualify for Extra Help, a Medicare program that helps pay for your Part D prescription drug plan. Extra Help could cover your premium and deductible, and reduce your prescription copays to no more than \$4.15 for generic and \$10.35 for brand name prescription medications.

### How is the QMB program different from Medicaid?

Medicaid, also known as Medical Assistance or QMB Plus, provides benefits for services not normally covered by Medicare. QMB, which is partial Medicaid, helps pay for services only if they are covered by Medicare. For example, QMB does not pay for dental or routine vision services because these services are not generally covered by Medicare.

### Questions or to Enroll

If you have any questions or would like to enroll in QMB, contact the D.C. State Health Insurance Assistance Program (SHIP) Department of Aging and Community Living Helpline: 202-727-8370, Fax: 202-741-5885, Email: [ship.dacl@dc.gov](mailto:ship.dacl@dc.gov)

# Muffuletta in disguise with gusto

By Barbara Oliver

Salvatore Lupo, of Central Grocery in New Orleans, is credited with creating the first muffuletta in 1906. The sandwich derives its name from a Sicilian dialect that means "soft and spongy bread" onto which is piled marinated olive salad, cheese, and charcuterie. The following version has been slimmed down, substituting chicken breast for some of the high-sodium, high-fat meats in the original, yet providing a satisfying meal on a bun.

## Ingredients

2 (2-oz) Kaiser rolls, cut in half horizontally  
2/3 cup prepared olive salad\*  
2 (1/2-oz) slices reduced-fat Provolone cheese  
2 oz skinless, boneless rotisserie chicken breast sliced (about 1 breast) or Oscar Meyer deli rotisserie chicken  
2 thin slices genoa salami (about 1 1/2 oz) or Hebrew National lean beef salami  
2 thin slices ham (about 2 oz)

## Directions

Layer bottom half of each roll with 1 provolone cheese slice, 1 oz chicken, 1 salami slice, and 1 ham slice; top with about 1/3 cup olive mixture and top half of roll.

Wrap each sandwich tightly in plastic wrap; chill at least 1 hour or overnight (this will allow the olive mixture to seep into the bread). Remove plastic wrap; cut each sandwich in half and serve.



Barbara Oliver

## Notes:

\* Giuliano Italian Style Muffuletta Olive Salad Mix (16-ounce bottle) or Trader Joe's Cracked Olive Salad (11.64-ounce bottle).

## Home-made Olive Salad

3/4 cup bottled giardiniera drained and chopped (about 6 oz)  
1 tablespoon red wine vinegar  
1 tablespoon extra-virgin olive oil  
5 pimiento-stuffed Manzanilla olives (or green olives) chopped  
1/2 clove garlic chopped

Combine ingredients in a bowl; mix well.

## New members and volunteers Q1 2023

### New Members

Tamara D.  
Carol G.  
Susan H.  
David L.  
Lynne M.

### New Volunteers

Constance B.  
Christine G.  
Cynthia G.  
Carolina K.  
Rita K.  
Leena R.  
Deirdre S.

# Welcome!

## 2023 Tickets for a Cause Supports NNV's Volunteer Services

It's a double win for you and Northwest Neighbors Village! Purchase one \$100 ticket (or more) to NNV's Tickets for A Cause and you will be entered into a drawing to win one or more of our fabulous prizes valued from \$100 - \$3000.

Volunteer services are critical to NNV's ability to fulfill our mission. NNV volunteers provided over 5,000 hours of service last year. Our fundraising goal of \$10,000 helps support the vital services of our volunteer corps.

Purchase your tickets today, attend our event, support NNV's volunteer services, and enjoy the chance to win fabulous prizes! Once you purchase your tickets, you will receive a link to the event and more information about an in-person event.

**Thank you for investing in your Village community!**

Join us!

**Tuesday,  
May 23rd  
7 pm**



[Click Here to Purchase Your Tickets!](#)