



New Village Website to be Launched October 1

The Village will launch its new **Helpful Village** website on October 1. We anticipate that this new system will make it much easier for you to log-on to the site and to find the programs, assistance, and information you desire. The new website has many of the same features and choices we have become accustomed to, such as a calendar of activities, member information, and *Helping Hands* services. But, it is also visually inviting and much easier to use than the old website.

We understand that all new systems take some getting used to. The Village is offering members two ways to help you become familiar with the new website:

First, we will email a guide to all Village members on using the new website, which you can follow on your own computer, at home, and at your own pace. The guide will help you create a new password and show you where information can be located on the website. The guide will be sent to members towards the end of September.

Second, we are also offering one-on-one, individual tutoring sessions in your home, with your own computer, where a volunteer will help you become familiar with the new website. We will send you information about how to request this assistance.

We believe this new website is an important step in helping us to better communicate with each other – an important goal of the Village.

Upcoming Events

Solas Nua – “The Smuggler” – Sept. 9 to Oct. 6
(see details below)

Roundtable on Gentrification and Housing
Sunday, September 22, 2:30 to 4:30 pm
(see details on page 4)

For More Activities and Events

see the calendar on the Village website
www.mountpleasantvillage.org,
the weekly *Village Announcements* or the new *FYI*

If you have questions about any aspect of our change to the new website, please contact Lawrence Rickards, Communications Committee Chair, at ldrickards72@gmail.com.

Solas Nua’s “The Smuggler” Opens September 9

“The Smuggler,” a new play by Village partner,



Solas Nua, runs September 9 to October 6 at the Allegory Cocktail Bar in the Eaton Hotel, 1201 K Street NW.

Irish immigrant Tim Finnegan

has notions of being a writer in America but struggles as a bartender on the island of Amity. That all changes when a stranger arrives with a plan to make people “disappear and reappear,” and Tim learns the price of becoming an American. *The Smuggler* premiered at the “Irish Festival of New York” in January and won Ronan Noone the festival’s Best Playwright award. Tickets are \$40 [here](#). See the *Washington Post* article [here](#).

Villagers Help Protect Children Attending Bancroft Elementary School

At the start of a school year the streets of D.C. can be hazardous for children beginning school for the first time or returning after summer fun, as well as for parents dropping off their kids and drivers trying to navigate around crowds of children and learn new traffic patterns. This year, Village members are helping to ease this troubled situation by volunteering for the first two weeks of the school year as crossing guards at key intersections near Bancroft Elementary School. Their efforts have met with praise and gratitude from parents:

Dear Louise and Rick and Bancroft PTO

On behalf of so many parents, please extend our gratitude to the Mt. Pleasant Village for serving as our crossing guards. Not only does it make the community safer, it creates interaction between different generations of community members. This morning Rick shared that the Village agreed to volunteer as crossing guards for two weeks.

To our wonderful PTO, does our community have a plan for other crossing guards after these two weeks? If so, can you share the plan. If not, would there be interest from the Mt. Pleasant Village members to continue?

Thank you,
Eric Goldstein

Photos by Rick Reinhard



Photos: Top Left: Children arriving at Bancroft School; Top Right: Judy Byron & Josephine Escalante directing traffic
Bottom Left: Judy Byron escorting student; Center; Judy Byron, Tom Conway & Rick Reinhard; Right: joined by Josephine Escalante

Volunteers Still Needed. Bancroft continues to need crossing guards through September 6, particularly during the critical hour for school drop-offs, 7:45 to 8:45 am, along 18th Street between Newton Street and Ingleside Terrace. Responsibilities include directing cars for drop off and escorting some students from their cars to the playground. This a wonderful opportunity to support Mount Pleasant's future. To volunteer, contact Josephine Escalante: josephineescalantedc@gmail.com.

Adventures with Walking Sticks: A Special Fitness Report by Darlene Meskell

Hello from Ireland. Pardon my gloating, but we have enjoyed a lovely cool summer here (despite the day when the temperature bumped up against 80 degrees); great weather for walking. Since my introduction to Nordic walking in May, I have joined my lady friends for an hour's exercise on Fridays, taking a significant bite out of the 10,000 steps many of us aim to cover each day.



One Friday, I invited the group to meet at my house and take a walk through our lovely village, past the castle, across the footbridge over the river and up and back. We had planned to travel by the narrow country road, but adventure was in the air that day. Few of my comrades had spent much time in the Irish countryside, so we decided, memorably, to get off the paved path. Castleconnell is a lovely old village, a favorite day-out for Sunday strollers and courting couples since the 18th century. Its riverside walks, the ruins of ancient castles and remains of colonial-era mansions afford a romantic setting that's hard to beat. One of its key features is a run of rapids where the River Shannon narrows at the "Falls of Doonass" and a centuries-old "turret" hides in the lush tree cover. It's a wonderful destination—if you know how to get there and back.



I underestimated the magnitude of our adventure that day. After a great start along the managed forest floor, the path led through a field, where the local cows came around to check us out. "Nothing to worry about, girls," said a Brit whose hobby is attending agricultural shows. We were heartened when a couple approached from the turret direction and reported that it was not far away — "just behind the big sycamore." Turns out, that meant another field over, and another grove of trees. Finally, there it was, the hulk of an old tower, built centuries ago, on the ruins of an older edifice. You could still see the stone steps built into the inner walls, up past three stories of windows, despite the vegetation that was reclaiming it. Climbing over and around the ruin, we took a break, and some of us pulled out phones to check the GPS. Google Maps was in error when it said we had 2 hours and 45 minutes to go, but not everyone believed that, so we headed back, following a fresh tractor track up past the old manor house to the road. Half an hour later, after closing in on those 10,000 steps, we were downing tea and scones and I was looking forward to an afternoon nap.

Mah Jong Game Returns to Mount Pleasant

Mah Jong play has resumed – Mondays, 5:00 to 7:00 pm, at 1814 Lamont Street. Come join your neighbors and enjoy learning and playing the ancient Chinese game of Mah Jong. Beginners and experienced players are welcome. All materials, refreshments, and lessons provided for free, and no long-term commitment necessary - come try it and have fun with your neighbors.

Gala Theatre Opening New Play: *La Vida es Sueño* (Life is a Dream)

Village partner Gala Theatre has announced a new play, opening September 12 to October 13. *Vida es Sueño* (Life Is a Dream), by Pedro Calderón de la Barca and directed by Hugo Medrano, is one of the essential works of Spanish Golden Age theater. This timeless play explores free will, fate, and tyranny. Do we choose who we are or are we merely marionettes in the hands of a greater power? Is what we see real or an altered illusion? This new adaptation reflects on these universal truths. Show times: Thursdays through Saturdays at 8 pm, and Sundays at 2 pm. In Spanish with English surtitles. Reserve your tickets now.



Upcoming: Diversity Committee “Roundtable on Gentrification and Housing”

The Mount Pleasant Village Diversity Committee will present a “Roundtable on Gentrification and Housing” on Sunday, September 22, from 2:30 to 4:30 pm, in the Mount Pleasant Library’s large conference room. The session is structured as a roundtable where presenters will set the stage with reflections – mourning/remembering/reflecting – on the changes in Mount Pleasant and why and where former neighbors (mostly African-Americans) have gone. Participants will then be encouraged to share personal stories and reflective conversation about what the neighborhood was like when it was predominantly African American and how it has changed over time. This does not assume all the change has been negative, but positive changes have come at a cost. The goal is to educate ourselves about our neighborhood’s past and to strengthen the Village community going forward.

The presenters will include: **Gabriella Gahlia Modan**, Professor of Sociolinguistics at Ohio State University, who wrote *Turf Wars* about change in Mount Pleasant; **Brett Williams**, retired Professor of History, American University; and **Samir Meghelli**, Chief Curator at the Smithsonian Institution's Anacostia Community Museum. They will be joined by **Lupi Quinteros-Grady**, the new Executive Director of the Latin American Youth Center, who grew up in Mount Pleasant and attended Bancroft Elementary School. Also invited is a broad cross section of people who live or have lived for many years in Mount Pleasant.

For those who wish delve more deeply into gentrification, the Diversity Committee recommends two books that address the issue in Mount Pleasant: *Turf Wars*, by Gabriella Gahlia Modan, is very instructive about change in our neighborhood, and *Elm Valley*, by Brett Williams, is a fictional account of a neighborhood (think Mount Pleasant) undergoing changes in diversity. Also, a recent research article written about Mount Pleasant, titled “Gentrifiers, Distinction, and Social Preservation: A Case Study in Consumption on Mount Pleasant Street in Washington, D.C.,” can be read or downloaded at: <https://blogs.lse.ac.uk/usappblog/2019/08/13/why-theres-often-more-to-gentrification-than-meets-the-eye/>

Woodstock Concert's 50th Anniversary Celebrated in Mount Pleasant

Villager Bob Hoffman (Hoff) was an attendee at the original Woodstock concert in August 1969 (along with 450,000 of his closest friends). Hoff is sharing some personal history and memorabilia to celebrate the occasion of the 50th anniversary. He recently produced an 8-minute film entitled, "Woodstock - My Experience at the Historic 1969 Concert." This award-winning film contains many scenes of music and frivolity and shows some Woodstock items that Hoff has kept for 50 years. It can be viewed online at: <https://vimeo.com/287081696>.



Photo: Hoff at Woodstock – second row – blue shirt

Osher Lifelong Learning Institute Offers Classes to Seniors



The Osher Lifelong Learning Institute at American University (OLLI) provides university-level courses for senior citizens in the metropolitan Washington, D.C. area. In the Fall and Spring semesters, OLLI offers 90-plus classes (90-minutes once per week for 8 to 10 weeks). There are also short courses, called "Shorts," (3-, 4-, or 5-day classes for one week), in February and July. And "Minis" in June that meet once a week for four weeks. In addition, nationally renowned speakers give lectures each Friday during semesters and six to nine times each in January and May. A membership entitles a member to take up to three classes. One semester costs \$300, both semesters (paid together in the fall) costs \$550. Shorts cost \$75 and Minis cost \$100.

The majority of classes are peer-taught by OLLI members who typically have experience in or a passion for their subject. In addition, some classes are taught by American University faculty and organizations such as the Middle East Institute. All subject areas are covered. Classes and lectures are held in state-of-the-art classrooms with hearing loops. A dedicated Social Space gives members a place to read or to meet friends and classmates for coffee or lunch. OLLI is located at 4801 Massachusetts Avenue NW (across from Crate and Barrel). There is parking in the garage beneath the building. To learn more about OLLI, visit www.lli-dc.org, olli@american.edu, or call 202-895-4860.

Helping Hands Ready with Assistance

Villagers who want help with a task should contact Helping Hands, and the Service Coordinator will try to find a helpful volunteer. For more information about what Helping Hands can, and cannot, do, contact Rob Fleming at rhfdc@comcast.net or phone 202-797-2388.

You can request Helping Hands assistance by:

- **Phone:** Call the *Helping Hands* Hotline 202-854-8381 to leave information about the help you need;
- **Email:** Send an email to helpinghands@mountpleasantvillage.org, describing what you need.

JOIN MOUNT PLEASANT VILLAGE

Membership Fee: \$50 annually for an individual; \$100 for a couple. For more information, contact Katie Tyler at membership@mountpleasantvillage.org.

Donor: Make a tax-deductible donation to Mount Pleasant Village at 1735 Lamont Street NW, Washington, DC 20010.

Contact us. If you have questions, comments or news to share, contact news@mountpleasantvillage.org.