



Village Launches New Website

Mount Pleasant Village launched its new website on October 3. A last-minute glitch delayed the launch of our new website by two days. We apologize for any confusion or inconvenience this may have caused. Fortunately, the problem was solved and we are underway with our new site.

An update on the new website was recently mailed to all Village members. Because of the importance of the website in communication between members, key points are outlined here:

- The Village’s website address will remain unchanged: www.mountpleasantvillage.org.
- New passwords are necessary in order to use the new website.
- Helpful Village, the website designer, sent you an email invitation to create a new password, along with step-by-step guidance for you to follow (the invitation may already be in your inbox, but also check spam/trash folders).
- The invitation states that you have 48-hours to log-on to the website and create your new password. However, if you miss the 48-hour window, don’t worry, you will be able to create a password whenever it is convenient for you, by selecting the “forgot password” link.
- You are free to choose any password you wish, but be sure to write it down and save it.

To help you become familiar with the new website, Helping Hands is offering one-on-one, individual tutoring sessions in your home, with your own computer, where a volunteer will help you become accustomed to the new site.

We recognize that some of our members currently do not use computers. For those who have computers and would like to learn how to use email or the new website, Helping Hands is also offering one-on-one, individual tutoring

Upcoming Events

For Activities and Events

see the calendar on the Village website
www.mountpleasantvillage.org,
the Monday **Village Announcements** or
the Wednesday **FYI**

sessions in your home on computer use. Of course, you do not have to use a computer, the website or email if you do not wish to – the Village will continue to mail you the newsletter and other correspondence.

If you have questions about any aspect of our change to the new website or would like to request a tutor, please contact Lawrence Rickards, Communications Committee Chair, at ldrickards72@gmail.com or by phone at 202-234-7818.

Alert! Transition Underway for the Village’s Helping Hands Program

The Village will be moving to a new system for the Helping Hands Request for Services process. We will keep you informed, but for now, the phone numbers used previously to request services are inoperable. For the interim, please call our web manager, Claire Thompson, who will manage your request: 703-635-5114.

From the Membership Committee

The Village is delighted to welcome several new members:

- Dennis M. (Mike) Hill, 16th Street
- Patricia Jayne & Christopher Barr, Harvard Street
- Bill Mosley, Hobart Street

Meet the Villagers: Ross Hamory – Nominee to the Board of Directors

Ross Hamory brings enthusiasm and energy into everything he does, whether it be work or helping neighbors. Ross has been nominated to the Village's Board of Directors and will be standing for election at the next annual meeting.



Being raised in a Defense Department family, Ross grew up in many places around the country: Fort Detrick, MD; Salt Lake City, UT; and Woodbridge, VA, where he attended high school. He graduated from Maryville College, in eastern Tennessee, where he met his wife Chris. He continued to be a vagabond during much of his professional life. Although he worked for the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) for 34 years, his career took him to many different cities both nationally and internationally. His work with FAA began in Washington, but then took him to Seattle; Denver; back to Seattle; on to Atlanta; then to Brussels; Washington, DC; and Singapore; along with a visit to the Green Zone in Baghdad. Ross served in a variety of management and executive positions within the FAA: Deputy Personnel Officer; Manager of Civil Aviation Security's Europe, Africa, and Middle East region; Director of the Asia Pacific office; and Director of FAA's Office of International Aviation. After 9/11, Ross was moved back to Security to direct aviation security operations worldwide. In his final position, prior to his 2004 retirement, Ross was the Acting Director of the Department of Transportation's Office of Security and Intelligence, reporting directly to the Secretary of Transportation, where he was the liaison with other federal departments in maintaining transportation security.

Although Ross was very happy with his career, after retirement he wanted to avoid being drawn back into "official" Washington. He and Chris decided move to another Washington – a small town on the coast of North Carolina. There, Ross become involved in one of the things he enjoys most, restoring an old house. But it wasn't long before his management skills were tapped – this time for a "main street" project to reclaim an old factory area for community use. Ross served as board chair of the Harbor District Alliance, a Main Street organization, for six years.

Ross and Chris arrived back in DC in a rather roundabout way, first moving to Atlanta for five years, then to the District to be near their eldest daughter and two grandchildren (their younger daughter lives in Chicago). Ross has, of course, become involved in restoration and renovation, both on their own home and in helping neighbors with needed projects. He first became aware of Mount Pleasant Village when his daughter was given a piano by Katie Tyler, who insisted she take a membership brochure as part of the deal. Ross is delighted to be part of the Village and looks forward to serving of the Board of Directors.

Meet-the-Street Gathers Villagers at Pollo Sabroso

Villagers had another fun and lively gathering at our local Pollo Sabroso restaurant on Mount Pleasant Street. We were warmly greeted by Gerson Gomez, the restaurant's manager and son of the owners. The restaurant, opened in 2001, was the dream of Wilfredo Gomez, Gerson's father. Wilfredo was an immigrant from El Salvador who worked in construction until he saved enough to open the restaurant. The Gomez family has strong roots in Mount Pleasant, having lived for several years in what is now the Father Romero apartments and sending Gerson and his two brothers to Bancroft Elementary School. Long time restaurant patrons may remember Gerson as the small boy who stood
(continued on next page)

on crates in order to reach the counter and the old-fashioned cash register. His love for the restaurant has not waned. The family now owns two additional restaurants – in Columbia Heights, managed by Gerson’s mother, and in North Carolina.

While Pollo Sabroso (which translates as delicious chicken) may be best known for its roasted chicken, it also serves a delicious array of sandwiches, house specialty entrees, seafood, tacos, soups and salads. The Villagers enthusiastically sampled them all, coming away delighted by the food and the Gomez family’s success story.



Manager Gerson Gomez Welcomes Villagers



Villagers Socializing and Enjoying Their Meals



Gerson Gomez

Mount Pleasant Explores Gentrification

It was a full-house of participants for the recent Diversity Committee-organized “Roundtable on Gentrification and Housing.” The session was structured to allow presenters to set the stage with brief presentations on the changing demographics of Mount Pleasant, followed by reflections, personal stories, and conversations about the neighborhood by participants. Villager Joe Eldridge served as session moderator, first introducing Galbriella Gahlia Modan, Professor of Sociolinguistics at Ohio State University and author of *Turf Wars*, a description of the changes that took place in Mount Pleasant during the 1990s. She discussed whose voices get heard, and whose often don’t, when events are taking place within our community. As an example, she cited the varying views on the men who congregate near the 7-Eleven on Mount Pleasant Street – some people may view them as threatening or menacing, while others may see them as promoting a safe environment, keeping their eyes on what is going on about them. Dr. Modan also described changes in motivation for moving into the neighborhood over time – early on people moved here for the sense of community; later because the housing was affordable; and beginning about 2010, because of its amenities, such as transportation and new restaurants. Each of these carry very different viewpoints and assumption of Mount Pleasant and the meaning of community for residents.

Frank Smith, former Ward 1 City Council Member, described “community” as a place of shared experience. For many of the Latinx who came to the neighborhood in the 1980s, Mount Pleasant was a place of transition, an entry place on their way to the suburbs. He described several strategies that can help people from being forced out of their homes due to gentrification – the tenants’ “right of first refusal” when the property they live in is being sold; cooperative housing; strong rent control legislation, and government ownership of public housing. Elinor Hart noted that the current rent control statutes will expire in 2020. Teresa Edmondson, Columbia Heights ANC representative, noted (continued on next page)

there are many uncoordinated efforts to address gentrification, and that more collaborative efforts are needed. She added that people of low income need the help and political support of those better off to avoid being pushed out of their homes. Lupi Quinteros-Grady, the new Executive Director of the Latin American Youth Center, described growing up in Mount Pleasant and attending Bancroft Elementary School. She noted that the Green Line Metro Station in Columbia Heights resulted in increased rents and that many Latinx who were forced to move to the suburbs still return to the District for services, shopping, and for work. She said that youth should be included on the conversations about gentrification. Samir Meghelli, Chief Curator at the Smithsonian Institution’s Anacostia Community Museum, talked about the loss of public spaces due to gentrification. Willa Reinhard and Latasha White, friends who grew up together in Mount Pleasant and attended Bancroft Elementary School, described the loss of community feeling in the neighborhood as compared to when they were younger. Latasha also described her widowed grandmother as having to sell the home she had lived in for many years because she couldn’t afford the upkeep and property taxes. Nicole Curtis spoke of having feelings of regret in leaving the neighborhood for Maryland. Mara Cherkasky commented about moving in with friends to a Mount Pleasant group house in 1993. Then, neighborhood was about a third white, a third black, and a third Latino, and that’s what I loved about it. It was affordable, there was lots going on, especially politically and culturally, and there were lots of interesting people. She added, moving to a neighborhood that you can afford doesn’t make you a gentrifier. Gentrification occurs when large-scale investment is made to a long-neglected neighborhood, and that investment triggers redevelopment. Gentrification isn’t necessarily good or bad. What’s bad, in my view, is when developers with no interest in the neighborhood other than financial, swarm in and flip houses, driving up prices and forcing some people out, especially renters. The only way to preserve or add affordable housing is for government to step in. If rent control isn’t enough, it can help tenants convert their buildings to limited equity coops. It can also build public housing or provide developers with incentives to build it, as happened in the past. I don’t see any other solutions.

Photos by Lawrence Rickards



Rick Reinhard Introduces Session



Joe Eldridge Moderating Discussion



Frank Smith & Gabriella Gahlia Modan



Samir Meghelli



Latasha White & Willa Reinhard



Nicole Curtis

My Wishes for Mount Pleasant Villagers as the Year of Active Aging Comes to a Close: A Reflection by Mary Anne Gibbons

At the annual meeting last fall, Mount Pleasant Village launched the “Year of Active Aging.” Our hope was to engage as many Villagers as possible in some physical activity. There are many opportunities to do so, including two walking groups, yoga, exercise classes with William Yates, and biking.

I led the morning walking group this year, which meets Monday, Wednesday, and Friday at Lamont Park (now starting at 8:30 am). We have had a wonderful year—strengthening friendships, enjoying lively conversation, supporting members dealing with life challenges, and staying physically fit. As a group, we have walked 2,563 miles since May of 2018. We have made it all the way from DC to San Francisco, a distance of 2,441 miles, and are already headed back home. This does not include walking that group members have done while on vacation or on other days.

The YMCA classes led by William Yates have been great fun even as he regularly increases the difficulty of the strengthening and cardio exercises. I have heard how much others have benefitted from the other physical activities organized by the Village. Getting to know members of our community through sharing in the exercise opportunities has been one of my retirement pleasures.

As this year draws to a close, I’ve been thinking about my wishes for the health of all Village members for the upcoming year. It would make me smile to see several members of our Village at one of the Village physical activities in the upcoming year. It would be fun having new people join the morning walking group or the 2:30 pm Wednesday/Friday exercise classes at Sacred Heart Church. If you have thought about joining in one of the activities, now is a good time to try it out.

It can be hard to start a new physical activity or return to an activity you haven’t done for a while. But, regular exercise has immeasurable benefits. It burns calories, strengthens bones, heart and lungs, helps increase bone density, and helps fight the bodies’ propensity to add weight as we age. Exercising regularly keeps muscles toned, lowers blood pressure and cholesterol, helps prevent disease, relieves stress, improves mood and increases energy levels. Exercise with a group keeps us committed and builds friendships.

Check the Village Monday *Weekly Announcements*, the articles on fitness in the Village newsletter, and the weekly *FYI* of events on fitness around the city, for ways to be active. For the upcoming year, let’s build on a great Year of Active Aging!

Village Partner *La Clinica* Celebrates Second “*Fiesta del Barrio*”

On September 8th, more than 1,000 individuals filled the streets of Mount Pleasant for *La Clinica's* second “*Fiesta del Barrio!*” More than 70 volunteers; 25 vendors, including community partners, local businesses and artisans; sponsors; and a handful of live performers helped in meeting their goal of raising funds for their health care services and building a stronger and more inclusive community together.



In addition to fun on the block, inside their Community Health in Action site, *La Casa*, a health fair was in full gear, ensuring community members access to health information and screenings. More than 60 HIV tests were conducted and more than 100 women were consulted by their *Entre Amigas* team about gender-based violence. Mental Health, Language Access, and Health Promotion teams also provided individuals with important health information.

Upcoming Event: Beacon Newspapers' 50+ Expo

For the 20th year in a row, the Beacon Newspapers is holding its 50+Expo on Sunday, October 6, from Noon to 4:00 pm, at the Silver Spring Civic Center (click here to [MAP IT](#)). This free annual event features speakers and exercise demonstrations; health screenings (including blood pressure, bone density, glaucoma, and more); free flu, pneumonia, tetanus & Shingrix shots; live music; and informative resources and entertainment for older adults and their families. The keynote speaker will be Dr. Matthew Mintz, a board-certified internist and Washingtonian Top Doctor, who will address the issue: "Medical Cannabis and CBD Oil: What You Need to Know." The expo will include dozens of informative exhibitors — including government agencies, nonprofits and local businesses — who will provide helpful information and answer questions about retirement communities, home remodeling, financial planning, healthcare, travel, fitness, senior services and more. For more information about the October 50+Expo, call (301) 949-9766 or go to: www.theBeaconNewspapers.com/50-expos.

Upcoming Event: The Well Open House

Village partner The Well is inviting Villagers to an Open House on Sunday, November 3, from 2:00 to 4:00 pm, to learn and ask questions about the massage and wellness programs and services they offer. Please RSVP to Jan Fenty at janfenty@gmail.com.

Upcoming Event: Meet-the-Street Private Dinner at Pear Plum Café

The next Meet-the-Street will be at Pear Plum café on Nov 14, at 6:30 pm. The Café will be open to Village Members only. We will be enjoying foods prepared by Each Peach. More information about menu and prices will be coming in our Weekly Announcements. To reserve a spot, please RSVP to Jan Fenty at janfenty@gmail.com.

Upcoming Event: Blood Pressure Screening on Mount Pleasant Street

Following their very successful blood pressure screenings in June, the Village Diversity Committee will hold a fall screening on Saturday, October 26. Volunteers are needed to staff the table and assist nurses from Medstar's Community Outreach Program. For more information, contact Rick Reinhard at (202) 494-4447 or rick@rickreinhard.com.

Upcoming: The Village's "Well-Seasoned Turkeys" Will Walk So Others May Eat

"The Well-Seasoned Turkeys" will walk in So Others May Eat's "Thanksgiving Day Turkey Trot." Mary Anne Gibbons, coordinator of the Village's 8:30 am walking group, has formed a team, "The Well-Seasoned Turkeys," for the annual 5-K run/walk, sponsored by SOME on Thanksgiving morning. To sign up for the race (\$35) and join the team, click on this link: http://support.some.org/site/TR?fr_id=1210&pg=entry. If you plan to join the team, please contact Mary Anne, at Magibbons50@gmail.com, so that transportation to the race site can be coordinated.



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.