

*Skepticism is the first step
towards truth.*

Denis Diderot (1713 – 1784)
Pensées Philosophiques

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NEW MEMBERS

A warm welcome to the
newest member of the DCV:

Eileen Reilley

It's that Wonderful Time Again...

THE 2013 DUPONT CIRCLE VILLAGE SILENT AUCTION

Friday, April 12, 2013

6:30 - 10:00 p.m.

**Woman's National Democratic Club
1526 New Hampshire Avenue, NW**

This year's event will feature an **online auction** for the first time in addition to the popular live auction. Two opportunities to win!

"Some Like It Hot," the band from last year is returning with a jazz vocalist and, coupled with our delicious food and drinks, this will be another memorable evening.

We are starting to gather items for the auction and hope you can help us once again by providing generous support.

This year we are initiating a 3-step process that we hope will make donation-giving easier and more efficient.

The 2013 auction will feature the following categories of items:

- Vacation homes/destinations, getaways, local trips
- Restaurant meals, home dinners, cooking classes and food related items
- Jewelry
- Objects for the home
- Recreation, entertainment and physical/exercise activities certificates

Here's How it Works—

Step 1: Begin the process by contacting **Iris Molotsky** at iris.molotsky@gmail.com or 202-328-1121, if you have an item(s) you want to donate.

Step 2: A member of the committee's auction team will contact you to discuss your donation or, if it is an object, arrange to come to your home to see it and take a photograph for the booklet. Sorry, no books or records this year, please.

Step 3: Because we have space restrictions and want to offer a balanced variety of items, the auction committee will have to limit the number of objects exhibited. We will get back to you quickly with the decision.

DEADLINE: Because we need to post online auction items three weeks earlier than the onsite auction, we must have commitments for items no later than **March 4, 2013.**



Donors will be asked to sign a separate contract for each item, which will be available from DCV. The form includes a brief description of the item and its estimated value. Each donor should be given copy of the contract for tax purposes.

We appreciate your past support and look forward to your continued assistance with this year's efforts.

For more information about Dupont Circle Village and the 2013 Dupont Circle Village Silent Auction, please check our website, www.dupontcirclevillage.org. ■



MONTHLY Calendar

FRIDAY, FEBRUARY 15 7:00 – 9:00PM

DCV Fifth Birthday Party Celebration,
Chastleton Apts, 1701 16th Street, NW
Come join us to celebrate the
continuing growth and development of
the Dupont Circle Village.

WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 20 NOON – 1PM

The Next Time Reflex Dance Collective,
founded by Roxann Morgan Rowley and
Erika Surma, is an award winning modern
dance company. Happenings at the
Harman, 610 F Street, NW. Free lunchtime
presentation, bring your lunch and enjoy!

SUNDAY, FEBRUARY 24 6:00 – 8:00PM

Sunday Soup Salon - Member Lex
Rieffel is a leading expert on Myanmar,
formerly Burma, and will speak
about the economic and "democracy"
challenges ahead for this "frontier
country." Lex has visited Myanmar more
than 10 times, dating back to 1967
and in 2011 he served as advisor to
the Myanmar Federation of Chambers
of Commerce and Industry. At 1719
Swann St NW. Members only. RSVP to
Linda Harsh, lindajkh@mac.com.

MONDAY, FEBRUARY 25 3:30 – 5:00PM

Can the medications you are taking
cause more harm than good? Ms.
Stephanie Shepard, Physician Assistant
with Capital House Calls, will outline the
problems that many prescriptions can
cause. 1152 15th Street NW, Suite 600.
Contact Linda Harsh, 202-234-2567, or
lindajkh@mac.com. The talk is free for
Village members and \$10 for others.

MONDAY, MARCH 4 4:30 – 6:30PM

Dupont Circle Village, Trio Storytelling Time.
Join DCV members as they reminisce
about their experiences dining at Trio

continued on next page

"One of the most glamorous nights in Washington!"

DCV Members taste the Glamor of Inaugural Balls

The *Daily News* called inaugural balls
"one of the most glamorous nights in
Washington!"

DCV members gathered at the magnifi-
cent Pension Building one sunny, January
morning for a tour of the National Building
Museum, as it is now known, that was built
not only to house the Civil War Pension
staff of 1500, but also to provide a venue
for social and political functions, including
inaugural balls, our tour focusing on the
latter. The façade is a replica of Rome's
Farnese Palace and includes a frieze that
honors the Civil War soldiers.

Prior to the opening of the Pension
Building in 1887, the every-four- year
inaugural balls, first instituted in 1857 by
President Lincoln, were held in makeshift
temporarily built structures in Judiciary
Square. These structures were not heated,
and although the inauguration was held
in March, six months after election results,
the weather often proved to be daunting.

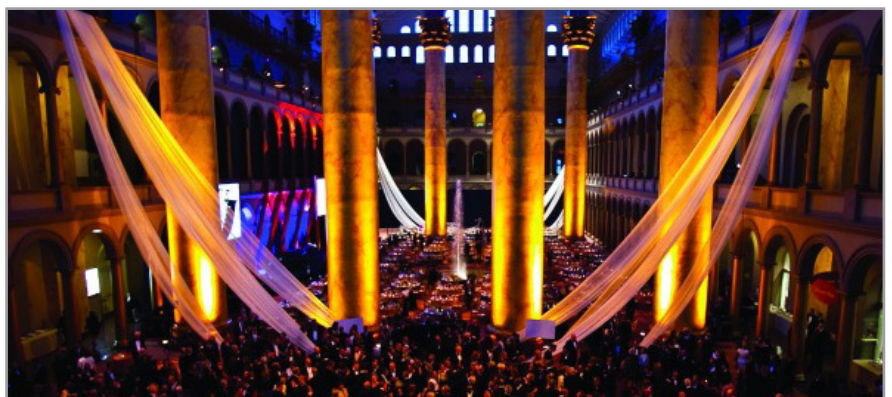
In 1873 the temperature was 16 degrees
and the canaries decorating the building
interior froze to death. These temporary
venues were often cold and crowded, with
anywhere from 4,500 to 12,000 guests,
but they offered sumptuous buffets and in
some years, liquor, all at no charge.

In 1883 the first inaugural ball was in the
uncompleted building: it had no roof, no
floors, just four walls. A temporary roof
was raised and a temporary floor laid.
The interior of the building was suffi-
ciently decorated to conceal the fact that
there was no building there! The Building
was completed in 1887 and electricity
installed in 1893.

With Teddy Roosevelt's 1905 inauguration,
guests paid \$5 to attend. By 1909 official
functions were no longer held because
the first floor was completely filled with
cubicles for the additional pension staff
needed to process veterans applications
and payments. One third of the US budget
was set aside for Civil War pensioners.

Wilson chose not to have an inaugural
ball and the Depression and WWII put
a halt to further balls. In January 1949,
Harry Truman chose to use the Armory
for his inaugural ball and invited African-
Americans to attend. From then onwards,
multiple balls were held at many different
venues, sometimes including the National
Building Museum. They proliferated until,
in 1989, President G.W. Bush had eleven
official balls.

President Obama had ten balls at his first
inauguration, but reduced them to two in
January 2013, with 35,000 people attending
at the Washington Convention Center. ■



The National Building Museum transformed for the Honor Awards in 2010. Photo by Paul Morigi.



MONTHLY Calendar

Restaurant, 1537 17 Street NW. RSVP to Bernice Hutchinson at bernice@dupontcirclevillage.org.

TUESDAY, MARCH 12 11:15 AM – 12:15 PM

Masterpieces of American Furniture, a tour of the recently installed Kaufman Collection 1700-1830, led by Dianne Stephens, Manager, Art Information Program National Gallery. It includes American, Chinese, and European porcelains, French floral watercolors and paintings by American Artists including Gilbert Stuart. RSVP by March 7 to jneibrief@aol.com. Put "American Furniture" in the subject line of the e-mail. National Gallery of Art, West Bldg. (main floor) between 4-7 Streets NW.

WEDNESDAY MARCH 13 NOON – 1 PM

Tin Pan Lady – a Cabaret with Joanne Schmoll Cabaret piece to honor 20th Century women songwriters of American Popular Song. All the songs included will be written by women—either the music, the lyrics, or both. Some will be very familiar to the audience while others will be a delightful discover. Happenings at the Harman, 610 F Street, NW. Free lunchtime presentation. Bring your lunch and enjoy!

TUESDAY, MARCH 19 6:00 – 8:00 PM

Dinner, Matchbox / 4th Street—vintage pizza bistro. A great oven makes a great pizza! Ours is an authentic wood-fired masonry with dough and toppings made fresh daily in-house. A three-course meal of salad, choice of individual pizza or a chicken-prosciutto sandwich and dessert. Cost \$25 per member (includes tax and gratuity). All beverages (plus tax and gratuity) are additional. RSVP no later than Saturday, March 16, 2013 to Judith Neibrief at jneibrief@aol.com. Please put "MATCHBOX" in the subject line of your e-mail. We will meet at the restaurant. 1901 14th Street, NW (at the northeast corner of 14th and T Streets, NW). ■

Why and How Lighting Conditions on Metro Are Being Improved

—Marilyn Lutter

Because of many more serious issues, dim lighting has been a low priority at Metro rail for many years, as I can attest, being visually impaired. The Metro Accessibility Advisory Committee, of which I've been a member since 2008, has a mandate to improve travel conditions for people with disabilities and senior citizens. Among improvements resulting from Committee efforts has been installation of barriers between rail cars to alert customers who are blind or have low vision of the space between the rail cars.

But poor lighting impacts all riders.

In the Fall of 2011 we found that members of the National Capitol Citizens with Low Vision were also concerned about inadequate lighting in Metro rail stations and informed the association president about our Committee. We suggested we work together to improve the situation. After this, we audited all Metro stations and in December 2012 the Lighting Task Force, which I chair, reported our findings to the Metro Board.

During this audit, we found that hundreds of bulbs were out at Metro Stations, for example, 69 bulbs were out just at the West Falls Church station. Following the audit, we have been told by Metro that work will be done on the maintenance issues contributing to the lighting problems. Six years ago the policy was to replace burned out bulbs within 10 days instead of three months. Now Metro tries to replace bulbs when they are reported. We have also requested that funds be appropriated to upgrade the lighting in the entire Metro system

We recognize that correcting all the problems will take time, but it is important that we begin moving forward. The Metro Accessibility Advisory Committee that reports to Metro Board every month opens all meetings to the public, with a

public comment period at all meetings. This is one of the ways the Committee becomes aware of issues, such as lighting problems, which benefits all riders, not only those with disabilities or those who are getting older.

People with disabilities and their advocates are welcome to attend Committee meetings. They are held the first Monday of each month from 5:30 to 7:30 p.m. in the lobby level Meeting Room at Metro's Headquarters at 600 5th Street, NW. For more information on the Accessibility Advisory Committee, please call 202-962-6060 or check the website at http://www.wmata.com/accessibility/advocacy_policy/. ■



—Judy Silberman, Yoga Master

In an attempt to keep that pesky intention/resolution to lose weight and outwit your appetite, here are a few reminders:

- Include plenty of fiber and protein.
- Try for 8 hours of sleep.
- Have low calorie snacks on hand, but only 3 or 4 choices.
- Don't eat in the dark.
- Start dinner with soup and/or cut-up veggies
- Use lightly scented candles.
- Use smaller plates.
- Drink lots of water.
- Keep your mind on your realistic goal. ■

A Pleasant Night at Heritage India

It was a noisy night at Heritage India when 21 DCV members crowded the tables for an evening of delicious food: chicken tikkas or papri chaat followed by a choice of one of four entrees: chicken makhani, lamb yakhani gosht or two vegetarian dishes (palak makai or tandoori gobi).

New members mingled with old-timers to create an atmosphere of intrigue: everyone had a fascinating story to tell. Others connected with those seated nearby in sometimes unlikely ways. And everyone seemed to have a good time.

Bob von der Lippe reflected the feelings of most diners, commenting that he “very much enjoyed the evening – the service was excellent and it was a very pleasant, relatively quiet, extremely comfortable restaurant.”

We thank **Judith Neibrief** for providing another great dinner occasion for DCV members and friends. ■



DCV members dining at Heritage India

Landscapes: Julia Cuniberti

—Garry B. Hutchinson

In the living room of her Dupont Circle home Julia Cuniberti shares stories, experiences, her days of playing on a woody hilltop (where Georgetown Library now stands) and summers spent on her father's family farm in the Emilia region of Italy. Much living has passed between Julia's youth and today.

Julia is another of our Villagers bursting with engaging stories from a rich, fascinating life well lived. There are the images from her recollections of flying over “fields and fields of orchids” in a war-wounded Germany just after V-E Day... of going in to the widespread wreckage of a London – shaken but not broken by Buzz Bombs – that had art museums and Buckingham Palace still open to the public ... of being assigned to the Italian desk of the OSS (the precursor to the CIA) translating cables and documents for its Secret Intelligence Branch ... of working in a downtown Washington that was a collection of buildings of individual architecture rather than a series of “steel and glass boxes.”

When we take the time to visit with our fellow Villagers, we are often taken on a journey of discovery. Often it is a wondrous, rambling road into a world we have only heard or read about, been unaware of, and, now, are drawn into. The world of Julia's youth is a far different place from our own.

She was born here in Washington, in 1923. Her father was a lawyer, originally from Italy, and her mother was born and raised in Wisconsin before coming east to attend Vassar. She returned to the Midwest, finding volunteer work in Chicago, where she met Julia's father. They married and moved to Washington where Mr. Cuniberti became a member of the Italian embassy as the equivalent of a press attaché.

Around 1931, when Julia's paternal grandmother died, the Cuniberti's went to live in Italy. Julia went to school in Florence, returning to Washington in 1934, where she finished at the Madeira School. She recounts how she rode a bus from 30 and

Q Streets, NW through the pre-subdivision Virginia suburbs that were dairy farms, pastures, and not well-paved roads.

After Madeira, she attended and graduated from Vassar; then took the unconventional road that by-passed New York City to enroll at DC's Corcoran School of Art. She then returned to Italy to attend the Florence Academy of Fine Arts, by which time WWII had begun

As a result of her Italian heritage and time spent in Europe, Julia's fluency in Italian and French garnered her a job with the OSS during the war years. In the Fall of 1945, she sailed back to the US, continuing to work for the OSS enlarging photograph images. After the OSS, Julia got work with the NEA and, later, the FAA, after which she used her graphic arts education and training to start up a business with one of her brothers, and finally, doing freelance illustration work.

Hers is an intriguing journey through myriad landscapes, and many are the sights, sounds, and fury of her memories, but one of the most haunting comes from her final wartime assignment in Europe—she has never forgotten the staggering number of displaced people she saw during this period. ■

Member and Nonmember Volunteers!

This is a reminder to submit your Volunteer Update Form to Bob McDonald at bob.mcdonald.dcv@gmail.com. This form is very important to ensure that our contact data for you is correct and also to confirm your commitment to continue as a volunteer. If you need a form, please contact Bob at the office by e-mail or call: 202.436.5252.

FROM THE President

—*Iris Molotsky*

An unexpected surge played a large and unwelcome role in the Super Bowl two weeks ago. In the Village, we're experiencing a series of surges as well, but ours are all very welcome.

The last five months we've had an upsurge in new members, adding seven new members, which brings our total membership to 133, with two additional memberships pending as I'm writing this column. We're within striking distance of our goal of 150 members and it's not unrealistic to think we can exceed our target. Many thanks to membership committee chair **Abigail Wiebenson**. Abigail and **Sandra Yarrington**, who is working with her, have been setting up our membership records in the office, making the transfer from papers scattered in several locations to a single, rational system in the office seem easy. (We know it wasn't.) **Ann von der Lippe**, who has taken over the task of maintaining our membership database, and **Alaire Rieffel**, who is overseeing membership renewals complete this strong membership team.

The surge of energy coming from this year's silent auction committee is emitting powerful signals. Enthusiastic and persuasive new members on the committee, **Georgette Sobel**, **Meera Wolfe**, **Carol Ragsdale** and **Antonia Avery**, have added new spark and a different perspective to the group, while veterans Abigail Wiebenson, **Judy duBerrier**, **Peggy Simpson**, and **Suzanne Legault** share wisdom gained from previous experience. As the ringmasters (otherwise known as



administrators-in-chief), **Bernice Hutchinson** and I keep track of the rapidly moving parts. This year's auction is going to be a **really** big show.

The online auction, a first for the Village, is an exciting addition, but a bit of a challenge as well. **Michele Molotsky** is the online program's administrator and master of the software, much to her mother's delight and heartfelt thanks.

The theme of this year's auction, "Lifestyles and Destinations," is off to a soaring start. So far our top three destination items to be auctioned are French: a week in a Paris apartment, a week in a house in Provence and a weekend in a house in the Tarn near Lautrec, including meals by the owner; a superb chef whose cookbook received rave reviews when it was published last year. And there are many more travel destinations being offered as well as wonderful treasures just waiting to find a new home.

The front page article about the silent auction gives more information and also highlights the types of items we seek for the auction. If you would like to contribute an item for the auction please contact me (iris.molotsky@gmail.com) or Georgette Sobel (genih@aol.com)

The last surge I want to highlight is the wave of technology skills flowing our way from George Washington University and the School Without Walls students. This week we are inaugurating our computer tutorial program that matches eight student tutors with Village members in a one-on-one program designed to increase members' comfort level and

knowledge of computer programs and applications. The program consists of two one-hour sessions focusing on topics chosen by individual Villager participants. The program, The Intergenerational Teaching and Learning Project, has been funded by George Washington's Public Service Grant Commission.

By the time you are reading this, the Dupont Circle Village will have celebrated our fifth birthday. I hope many of you were able to join us to raise a champagne toast to our continuing success. We all deserve recognition for the time, energy, and skills we have contributed to make this organization thrive. A huge thank you to all of you. ■



Kudos

This month we celebrate three volunteers, **Ella Cleveland**, **Gilbert Dunkley**, and **Teo Collin**, whose caring attitude and cheerful, dependable and competent manner has made them valued visitor/helpers. Gilbert, who recently rejoined DCV's volunteer corps after living in the Middle East, Ella, and Teo have repeatedly spent time with a Villager needing companionship for an afternoon. Teo, a student at Edmond Burke School, also has provided computer and electronic assistance for several members. ■



— Judy duBerrier

I spent some time in Santa Fe... should say I spent some time eating my way through Santa Fe! I was especially intrigued by what the staff at my friend's house was eating. The cook kindly shared some of her "peasant food" recipes and they are among my favorites.

Rosita's "Desayuno de los Campeones" (Breakfast of Champions)

2 Tablespoon bacon grease
(may sub oil, but not as tasty!)
2 Tablespoon flour
1/4 cup chili powder
1 tsp each, cumin and garlic powder
(optional)
2 cups water
1/2 can hominy
blue corn (or other) tortillas
1/2 onion, minced
shredded cheddar or monterey jack cheese
eggs (optional)

In (preferably) large cast iron skillet, stir grease, flour and chili powder on medium heat for 3 minutes. Add water and optional cumin/garlic, continuing to stir. Bring to a boil, lower to simmer and cook until liquid is reduced by half. Add hominy. Heat oven to 350 degrees. On oven-proof plates or platter, spread about two tablespoons of the sauce. Layer ingredients: First a tortilla, hominy and sauce, a bit of cheese, sprinkling onion. Another layer, ending with a healthy handful of cheese. Bake in the oven approximately 5 minutes, or until cheese melts and tortillas are slightly crispy around the edges. May add an egg to the top as it is baking if desired. Serve with sliced avocados and mangos doused in lime juice. *Cook's Note: this sounds spicy but it is quite mild.*

Sobras Verduras (Leftover Vegetables Southwestern style)

2 cups cooked veggies (such as green beans & mushrooms, peas & carrots,

squash, frozen mixed veggies, etc.)
1 jalapeno pepper, chopped - or -
4 oz. can chopped green chilies, drained
butter, salt & pepper to taste

Mix veggies with butter, salt & pepper in a bowl and set aside.

Batter

3 Tablespoon melted butter
3 eggs + 1 egg yolk
1 1/2 cups milk
3/4 cup flour
1 teaspoon sugar
1/2 teaspoon each salt & pepper

Process all batter ingredients in blender.

Preheat oven to 350 degrees. Butter a 3 quart pan or casserole dish. Pour half the batter into it. Cover with vegetables, add remaining batter. Bake 45 minutes or until puffed and golden. Note: Rosita gave this recipe to the famous Pink Adobe restaurant in Santa Fe where it has been a favorite for 25 years. She likes to serve it with a tomato/red onion salad and the following:

Pan de Queso Inflado (Puffy Cheese Bread)

8 slices white bread, crusts removed
1/2 stick butter
1/2 teaspoon Tabasco sauce
3 oz. package cream cheese
1/4 cup shredded sharp cheddar cheese
2 egg whites

Cut each slice of bread in quarters. Melt the butter in a small saucepan. Stir in Tabasco and cheeses until soft. Remove from heat. Beat egg whites until stiff. Fold into cooled cheese mixture. Spread bread quarters with mixture. Refrigerate for several hours on a cookie sheet. Preheat oven to 400 degrees. Bake about 15 minutes, until puffy and golden. Serve immediately.

Questions/Comments:
judydubrier@verizon.net
202-328-9123. ■

"Alouette & the King of Kalorama"

*Published on Kindle by
DCV Member*

Alouette and the King of

Kalorama, a thrilling novel set in the heart of present-day Kalorama, has just been published on Amazon's Kindle by DCV member, **Nicholas Ludlow**.

It's an iconoclastic tale of what happens when a scoundrel in the highest echelons of government, the perpetrator of a gargantuan swindle financed by taxpayers, is inadvertently confronted by an American Indian Chief returning to his ancestral home in Washington DC.

The novel, based on historical events, is an exhilarating adventure story of an American Indian and his niece on a life-time odyssey to meet the King of Kalorama. During the 17th Century, English settlers along the East coast of North America called Indian chiefs 'Kings' and 'Emperors'. Perhaps one of the best known was King Philip.

The threads of the novel converge in an electrically-charged atmosphere in the heart of Kalorama at locations with which every DCV member will be familiar. The novel, laced with wry humor and filled with love stories, concludes with a stunning series of climaxes, all of which take place in the Kalorama neighborhood. **Alouette and the King of Kalorama** is now available on <http://www.amazon.com/Alouette-King-Kalorama-ebook/dp/B00AN99DTW>, along with eight other works of fiction by Nicholas Ludlow. ■

The Flowering Garden of Sultan Suleyman

Those members who attended the Textile Museum's The Sultan's Garden: The Blossoming of Ottoman Art were rewarded with a fabulous treat. Although small, it is a jewel of an exhibit.

The show chronicles how stylized flowers—mainly tulips, carnations, hyacinths, honeysuckles, roses, and rosebuds—came to embellish nearly all media produced by the Ottoman court beginning in the mid-16th century



Copyright, Textile Museum, 2012

The floral style was the Sultan's official signature of the Ottoman culture (or in today's nomenclature, its 'brand'). The style was first created for their

textiles, using many materials including linen, silk, velvet, and wool and very soon expanded to every type of medium including manuscript illuminations, ceramics, architectural decorations, metal ware and furniture. These floral designs eventually expanded from the Sultan's court to all media within every level of society, including rural villages and nomadic tribes and beyond the Empire's borders to other parts of the world

including Europe, Persia and India.

The Museum's George H. Myers Collection, a man from a textile family, forms the majority of the exhibit. Mr. Myers began collecting as a college student and continued throughout his life, and, although he collected many textile pieces, he had a "prescient sense of the historically significant." Much of his collection was left to the Museum

Be sure to go!



Copyright, Textile Museum, 2012

The exhibit will run until March 10, 2013. Textile Museum, 2320 S Street, NW, Tuesday through Saturday, 10 – 5pm, Sunday, 1 – 5pm. Tours Saturday and Sunday 1:30pm.

Source: Walter B. Denny and Sumru Belger Krody, *The Sultan's Garden*, The Textile Museum, 2012. ■

Should I Stay or Should I Go: Care Options as We Age

Christine Bitzer, Assistant Director of the Care Management Program of Seabury Resources for the Aging, spoke about senior care options at the recent DCV Live and Learn seminar, emphasizing she was speaking about general issues rather than representing a specific provider of retirement and assisted living facilities e.g., The Residences at Thomas Circle.

Bitzer commented that there is usually a trigger that propels us to look at the status quo—specifically, reviewing our housing options as we age. Either the death of a spouse, health issues, costs associated with maintaining our home, the desire to be closer to our family and/or friends, or a combination of these, leads to us reassessing our housing options.

Bitzer spoke about the four main options we have. The first is remaining in our home but requiring some assistance, either a companion or, if more personal care is needed, a Certified Nursing Assistant (CNA). The second is independent living which is private pay, sometimes subsidized, but not supported by Medicare or Medicaid. It can be a high rise, rental or condo, or campus-style housing within a continuing care retirement community. The third is assisted living, which offers different levels of care depending on our needs, from basic home care to dementia. And finally, nursing home care that involves skilled, long term care for graduated levels of need e.g., dementia through to hospice. This care may be paid for by Medicare or Medicaid or long term insurance.

All these options were discussed using three case studies. The questions,

continued on the next page



From the top (L–R), Lucia Edmonds, Joan Ludlow, Bob and Ann Von der Lippe, Burke Dillon, Kenlee Ray, and Peg Simpson; Bottom (L–R), Abigail Wieberson, Judith Neibrief, Iris Molotsky, and Helene Scher.

continued from the prior page

needs and decisions of each of the sample individuals were given and helped us understand why they made the decisions they did.

Attendees asked many questions including queries regarding The Residences

at Thomas Circle, the host location for this presentation. Afterwards, those who wanted to stay were invited to take a tour of The Residences. The staff are always willing to host a tour if you are interested in seeing their facilities and living accommodations.

"I don't need it now, but it is good to know what is available when I decide to move", was the general comment heard after the presentation. ■

THE AWE INSPIRING ODYSSEY OF A FREE SPIRIT

Gillian Lindt, the featured speaker at the recent Sunday Soup Salon, and a member of the DCV, is an inspiring and vivacious speaker who helped us understand what it takes to overcome those difficult challenges in life that many of us face at some point in time. Her presentation was awe inspiring and numerous attendees (27) had many questions and comments.

Lindt lost much of her eyesight at age 70 through macular degeneration. Although the disease was within the family, her father losing much of his sight at 85, she commented that "I never thought it would happen to me. I was shocked. I had spent most of my life earning my living through reading and writing, first studying for many years at academic institutions in Berlin, London and New York City, and ultimately earning a PhD at Columbia University."

Along the way she married, raised two children and accompanied her husband to Washington, DC for his post with the Peace Corps, while she taught at Howard and at American University. In 1973 she returned to Columbia University to join its Department of Comparative Religion and in 1984 earned the distinction of becoming the first woman to serve as Dean of the Columbia's Graduate School of Arts and Sciences.

Always on the move, always a free spirit, always willing to embrace change, all of which she attributes to her Romany Gypsy blood and the free-lance journalist lifestyle of both parents, she vowed that her visual impairment would not slow her down nor change her lifestyle. Today she still has some residual vision in one eye and can see light and shadows. She also found that

her other senses intensified dramatically, especially those of touch and smell.

Once she worked through her depression and realized that getting out and being with people was a way to continue connecting with the world, she obtained mobility training and for two years used a cane to navigate the streets and mass transit system of New York City. "I found when using a cane I was often bent over and others did not see me on the street."

She finally decided that a guide dog would offer her more independence and mobility but her social worker told her retirement made her ineligible for a guide dog. "Neither I, nor my doctor, were willing to accept that fact, so I began researching schools. I found a school that, after a lengthy and thorough eligibility assessment, approved my application for a guide dog."

In 2005, after waiting 6 months, Gillian was paired with a labradoodle named **Bridgette** with whom she had a month's training. The pairing was, as they say, "a marriage made in heaven." Having Bridgette, Gillian found she had greater confidence and could more easily and quickly travel, locally and internationally. Bridgette is bilingual, understanding both English and French (Gillian maintains a home in France and over the past two years they have travelled to South Africa, Ghana and the Philippines)

Bridgette is very protective of Gillian, most recently pushing her aside as she waited to cross the street because of a car skidding out of control. Bridgette incurred a few damaged ribs.



New computer technology has greatly aided Gillian in reading and writing. She has begun research on a book she originally planned to write before losing her sight, and continues to travel and have as normal a lifestyle as is possible; Gillian commented, "the elderly don't just sit at home, a guide dog was the best thing that ever happened to me. Life without Bridgette is unimaginable."

Although Gillian knew those many years ago her genetic predisposition to macular degeneration, the medical profession at that time was unable to prevent or stop it. Today there are drugs that can stop and/or reverse visual impairment provided it is treated in its early stages.

We want to especially to thank new member **Anne Stephansky** for hosting Sunday Soup Salon. ■

KALORAMA BIDS ADIEU TO A FAMILIAR PRESENCE

—Nicholas Ludlow

The building completely disappeared in the days before Christmas.



The abandoned embassy in October

At the corner of Connecticut and Kalorama, the once-familiar Chinese Embassy was razed to the ground, demolished before our eyes by demolition company experts.

Now all we local residents have are memories of the non-descript former hotel that housed Chinese diplomats and welcomed Americans for over thirty years since 1979, the year the USA formally recognized the People's Republic of China (the PRC).

Here, in the midst of our neighborhood, the first PRC Ambassador to the US and

his Embassy staff shepherded through China's side of development of modern US relations with China. These relations began earlier, in a series of steps.

In 1971, nine American players visited the PRC to play ping-pong, the first group of Americans allowed into China since the Communist takeover in 1949. In 1972, President Nixon traveled to the PRC, after which the US and Chinese Governments issued the Shanghai Communique. Four years later, Mao Zedong died.

The two governments finally established diplomatic relations on January 1, 1979, after which the original Windsor Park Hotel became the Embassy of the PRC in DC.



Half way to ground-zero



Finale – a flat field

The end of 2012 brought the finale of the old Embassy. Where it once stood is a flat field, wrecking ball and excavating machines gone, stone piles leveled, the cloudy dust of destruction gone, and a beautiful silence. Finished was the 7:04am daily clanking that had gone on for weeks, jarring local residents. The Portuguese Ambassador's house is now in its full glory (at least until construction of the new Chinese building begins mid-year). Rock Creek Park is open to full view; parking spaces are back.

For those of us living in the neighborhood, a wonderful New Year! ■

The Dupont Circle Village is a **NONPROFIT** neighborhood organization that **CONNECTS RESIDENTS** to services and cultural/social activities. Membership enables Villagers to **MAINTAIN** their **HEALTH** and home as they **EMBRACE** the **BENEFITS** and **CHALLENGES** of aging.



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