



NEWSLETTER

HILLCREST COMMUNITY CIVIC ASSOCIATION
Lutheran Church of the Holy Comforter
3319 Alabama Avenue, Southeast
Washington, D.C. 20020
www.HillcrestDC.com

Next Meeting: Saturday, September 4, 2004 at 10:00 a.m.

NOTE: Meetings are normally held the first Saturday of the month

No Guest Speaker this Month

The September meeting will be devoted to strategic issues affecting HCCA. During the meeting we will examine the current state of HCCA and develop strategies and directional steps for the coming years. The information generated during the July 3rd HCCA meeting was incorporated in the discussion at the July 17th retreat of the HCCA Board of Directors. A briefing on the outcome of the retreat will be presented and attendees will have an opportunity to provide input, make recommendations, and volunteer to get involved in supporting the plans and activities of HCCA. All members of HCCA are encouraged to attend and participate in this meeting.

Critters on the Web

Do you have a digital camera? Do you enjoy taking pictures of backyard wildlife? We are fortunate to have a great variety of wildlife in Hillcrest-not only squirrels, birds, and raccoons, but the occasional fox, gopher, snake, an increasing number of rabbits, and others. E-mail me your best critter photo and I'll add it to the Hillcrest web page – www.HillcrestDC.com/critters.htm.

Here are the rules: 1) only wild critters, no domestic critters; 2) they must be from the Hillcrest neighborhood or nearby (state where the photo was taken); 3) the photographer must be a member of the Hillcrest Community Civic Association. Please send no more than 2 photos with each email, although you can send more than one email. Lets have some fun! My e-mail address is:

kathychamberlain@starpower.net.

Kathy Chamberlain, webmaster for www.HillcrestDC.com

Who are Your Neighbors?

Former Hillcrest resident Monique Craig, daughter of John and Barbara Craig (current residents of Hillcrest) has written two fiction books! Monique's first book, "**The Maidens of Babylon**" was published last year. Her latest book, "**The Arachne Experiment**" has been published recently. For more information, check out Monique's website at www.moniquecraig.com.

President's Message

Since its founding 15 years ago, the Hillcrest Community Civic Association (HCCA) has compiled an impressive list of accomplishments: providing leadership on Good Hope Marketplace, the Skyland development, the new Recreation Center, and a range of other initiatives that have helped change the perception of the area East of the River. But Hillcrest is a community in transition, and so is HCCA. The Association remains committed to continuous improvement in such areas as quality of life, neighborhood safety, economic development, and education. But with the "changing of the guard" occurring within HCCA, we must replenish our leadership ranks. Continued success requires not only organizational change, but also a deepening of our relationships with neighboring communities.

HCCA membership and participation must be increased through strategies reflecting the increasing diversity of the community. We need to take into account the interests of residents who don't come to HCCA meetings; and there is a lack of cohesiveness with adjacent neighborhoods.

HCCA is at a crossroads, with veteran leadership resigning or retiring and many positions remain unfilled. We have a good organizational structure, use technology well, and have a good relationship with the MPD. But financial resources are too low, there is slow growth in membership, and we need to attract more new neighbors and younger residents into active participation. We also need to improve HCCA's participation in city-wide organizations.

HCCA is a results-oriented organization whose leadership gets along well, stays on top of issues, sticks with priorities, and works in a collaborative style. But the work requires serious commitment, and we are losing valuable experience as officers depart. A small group is carrying too much of the burden. In fact, too many "committees" are really just the Chair. No one is directly responsible for recruiting new leadership except the President, and leadership development is not connected to membership recruitment -- which is the source of new talent.

The foregoing are portions of a summary of proceedings prepared by Nelson Smith, past Secretary of HCCA, regarding the findings and recommendations of a leadership retreat held by the HCCA Board of Directors on July 17, 2004. The retreat was designed to initiate and support transition planning for HCCA as it moves into its fifteenth year anniversary and to prepare for the next fifteen years. A briefing on the outcome of the retreat will be presented at the September 4th HCCA meeting; and attendees will be able to provide comments and recommendations. All members of HCCA are encouraged to attend and become involved in planning for the next 15 years of HCCA service to our community.

Sincerely, Vincent M. Spaulding, President, HCCA

LET'S CELEBRATE!

Hillcrest neighbors, mark Saturday, September 18th on your calendars and join us to celebrate the Hillcrest Community Civic Association's 15th anniversary at the Washington Navy Yard Conference Center from 1:00 -5:00 p.m. Tickets are \$35 per person and can be purchased from chairperson, Mark Johnson, or from any HCCA board member (Vince Spaulding, Kathy Chamberlain, Phil Hammond, Dennis Logan, Gloria Logan, Marvin Bowser, Linda Jackson, Rev. Kenneth Burke, Sherry Ways, Howard Ways, Faith Lyles, Carrie Thornhill, or Ed Wilhelm.)

Race, Class, and Real Estate

The following letter was written by Sherry Ways, a Hillcrest resident, in response to Sheryll Cashin's editorial on "Race, Class, and Real Estate" that appeared in the Sunday, August 1st Outlook editorial of the Washington Post, where she characterized our neighborhood as "the Hillcrest area in Ward 8, the District's Poorest Ward":

"Ms. Cashin,

Your editorial in the Sunday edition of Outlook "Race, Class, And Real Estate" in the Washington Post was quite intriguing. In echoing my husband's e-mail below, I would like to say, as the Chair of the Hillcrest Community Civic Association's Strategic Communications Committee, how important it is for the Hillcrest neighborhood to be represented in an intelligent manner.

I am reminded of a recent sermon my pastor gave about the word "wisdom" and what it means. Part of her definition lies in fully understanding the whole picture of a situation before a judgement is made about it. When you say "Hillcrest area" what do you specifically mean? If you check out our website at www.hillcrestdc.com you will see the clear and legal boundaries of the neighborhood. Was your rental experience clearly within those boundaries?

Part of the perpetual dilemma I have faced since moving to DC is the labeling of specific neighborhoods and quadrants and how people are "labeled" or viewed within that context. I have never lived in a city where this has been the frequent case. I think this is sad, particularly, within the African American community. It is sad that a professor, a researcher, who is obviously African American, and well educated such as my self and others in my community, continues to perpetuate negative images of southeast and of Hillcrest in particular. My husband and I moved from the rapidly gentrifying Michigan Park in Northeast to Hillcrest in 2002. We did so not because it was being gentrified, but because we wanted a bigger house with more yard space. Our move has been one of the best decisions we have ever made. We finally have moved to a community that truly cares about each other. We socialize, exercise, and work hard together. People here are so friendly and so real.

About Shepherd Park, "the Gold Coast." I have a very good friend from "the south" who lives in your neighborhood, Shepherd Park, and, at the first invitation, will come to Hillcrest to participate in some of the many events we hold. She actively promotes the neighborhood as a place equal to Shepherd Park for many middle and upper middle class residents, both black and white. As a matter of fact, she looked at a house here in my neighborhood before settling on the one in Shepherd Park. She selected Shepherd Park, not because of the reasons you stated in your editorial. She selected it because she liked the house itself.

Also, another misnomer, Hillcrest is a racially mixed neighborhood. We have residents of all colors, creeds and backgrounds. In addition, we have many middle and upper middle income African Americans who are doctors, lawyers, dentists, writers, artists, consultants, interior designers, architects, and EVEN PROFESSORS. My next door neighbor is a retired dentist, whose son is one of the most prominent judges in the city. We have a vibrant gay and lesbian community as well. Randall Highlands Elementary School on Pennsylvania Avenue is ranked in the top 25 DC public schools. By the way, many households boast six figure incomes and are proud to make our neighborhood home.

I am assuming that you rented in the "Hillcrest area" while going to graduate school. Rents were cheap and it provided you a lot of flexibility in living in DC on the cheap. I do not fault you for your selection of Shepherd Park. I think it is a fine community, with beautiful homes. However, I am just curious to know if you had a chance while you rented in the "Hillcrest area" to check out some of the big homes, big lots and leafy streets of Penn Branch, Dupont Park, Fort Davis, or Hillcrest. Again, check out the website and you will be surprised at what you will find. To really understand Hillcrest, I invite you to check out the Washington Times, Washington Weekend, Thursday, June 17, 2004 edition. There is an article there entitled, "Hillcrest Rides Crest of Popularity in SE." In it you will find the following quotes: "Today, however, what began as a whites-only community is a mixture of white and black residents, young and old, homosexual and heterosexual. It's a neighborhood that celebrates its diversity and embraces newcomers. In Hillcrest, where the lawns are large and the hills are high, some of the streets seem just built for Sunday drives. Not that there's a whole lot of traffic these days, unless you count the children out riding bicycles or their parents walking over to their neighbors with a hosta cutting or two in hand. Today, prices start at far more than \$200,000, with some larger homes reaching into the \$500,000 range." (Hardly a community of poverty) If you would like a copy of this article, I will be happy to send it to you. As a professional researcher, I know that I do not have to remind you to ensure that what you write is accurate and correct like stating that "the Hillcrest area in Ward 8" is a poverty stricken ward.

Sincerely,

Sherry B. Ways, Chair, Strategic Communications Committee, Hillcrest Community Civic Association"

Please feel free to email Ms. Cashin (cashins@law.georgetown.edu) and express your views. If you missed the Wash Post article, you can read it online at <http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/articles/A29454-2004Jul31.html>

Community Calendar for September

- 04 10:00 a.m. - Hillcrest Community Civic Association Meeting (Lutheran Church of the Holy Comforter)
- 08 10:00 a.m.-Goodhope Marketplace Taskforce Meeting, Good Hope Marketplace Substation, Alabama Ave., SE
- 08 7:00 p.m. –Police/Community Meeting, PSA 605B, 6th District Substation, 2701 Pa Ave, SE
- 15 6:00 p.m. –Police/Community Meeting, PSA 606, 6th District Substation, 2701 Pa Ave, SE
- 16 7:00 p.m. – 9:00 p.m. ANC 7B Regular Monthly Meeting
- 25 7:00 a.m.-12 noon – Twining Park Work Session, 2700 blk Pa. Ave, SE
- 25 10:00 a.m. – Friends of Francis Gregory Library, Francis Gregory Library, 3660 Alabama Ave., SE
for more calendar events, check www.HillcrestDC.com

HCCA Welcomes the Following New Members:

Maria T. Pettus 3817 W Street SE #A
Stephanie A. Mullen 2512 32nd. Street SE

Have you paid your dues yet?

It's only \$10 per year. Get on track and send your payment NOW!!!!

Names(s) _____
Address _____ zip code _____
Phone number _____ E-mail _____
New Member _____ Renewal _____
Recruited by _____

Make check payable to Hillcrest Community Civic Association and mail to: Dennis Logan, Treasurer,
3624 Austin Street SE, Washington DC 20020 phone: 582-4724