

The Corner Forum

for the 1200 and 1300 blocks of E, the 400 and 500 blocks of 13th,
Duncan Place and Emerald Street NE

Issue #22
Sunday, March 9, 2003
37¢ + 2¢ D.C. sales tax
<http://www.thecornerforum.org>

Miner Elementary School Enters New Building



Angela Tilghman

ANGELA TILGHMAN (1200 BLOCK OF E),
Principal of Miner Elementary,
Interviewed Friday by Marc Borbely

This week, Miner Elementary School (601 15th St. NE) had its official ribbon-cutting ceremony for its new building, which is right behind the old one. Angela Tilghman, Miner's principal, spoke to Marc Borbely about the building, which students have been in since Jan. 21, about choosing what school to send kids to, about what neighbors can do for the school, and about her career.

You've been here [in this building] since January. How has it been?

Hectic. It's been very hectic. Because we were moving in, but occupying at the same time. We didn't have [the chance to] move in leisurely — we were moving in on the jump — and so for the first month or so it was hectic. It's been a lot of getting adjusted, getting ready, being ready for the kids. The staff has been real

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Drug Activity on 400 Block of 13th Street NE Should Be Taken More Seriously by Police



Richard Sundberg

RICHARD SUNDBERG (DUNCAN PLACE NE)
AND SHARON COCHRAN (EMERALD),
Interviewed by Marc Borbely

At last weekend's weekly Corner Forum meeting, Mr. Sundberg and Ms. Cochran spoke about some of their concerns about public safety and quality of life issues in the neighborhood. Mr. Sundberg has lived on Duncan Place for about 12 years. Ms. Cochran has been on Emerald for six.

What are the major issues, living here, in terms of public safety? What are your major concerns?

Richard: My major concerns at the moment are the drug activity in the 400 block of 13th Street NE not being taken seriously or dealt with to end it, and a new generation of young kids who are just coming into their teenage years being drawn into the glamour of that at the corner.

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Parking, Liquor Stores Among Major Issues Facing Neighborhood

MICHAEL MUSANTE, 411 11TH ST. NE,
Interviewed by Richard Sundberg,
1200 block of Duncan Place NE

Michael Musante was elected in November to be commissioner for Advisory Neighborhood Commission (ANC) single member district 6A05, which covers the southern portion of the Corner Forum area. Within the Corner Forum area, Mr. Musante represents the residents on the 400 block of 13th Street, on Duncan Place, and on the odd side of E Street. Richard Sundberg spoke to him Friday about his background and about the neighborhood.

Michael, thank you for taking time out of your busy schedule to do this. Could you tell us give us some background on where you were born, and when you came to the neighborhood, and that sort of thing?

Okay. My name is Michael Musante. I have lived in the neighborhood for approximately four and a half years with my wife, Ramola, and our cat, Newman, and we now reside at 411 11th St. NE. We've lived in that location for about a year and a half. Originally, I came from a small town in the northern panhandle of West Virginia called Follansbee, which is approximately 35 minutes west of Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania. I've only lived in two places, in my life: Follansbee and Washington, D.C.

I came here to attend college at George Washington University, which I did in late August of 1990 — and from late August of 1990 to the present, I've been here in Washington, D.C., for both undergrad and grad school at G.W.

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Updates

NEIGHBORHOOD CLEAN-UP: Sharon Cochran, 1300 block of Emerald Street, has received an application from the D.C. Department of Public Works for the Helping Hand Neighborhood Clean-up program (645-7190), through which the city will loan us rakes, brooms, shovels and trash bags for a clean-up. All that remains to be done is to schedule a date for the clean-up and send the application back in.

MISSING GIRL: The police reported on Monday that at approximately 11:30 am on that day, 13-year-old Shawneka Mosee, missing since Feb. 24, returned home unharmed. From a press release, <http://www.mpd.org/blue/news.asp?sid=1945>. (— Sharon Cochran, 1300 block of Emerald Street NE).

SPINGARN BASKETBALL: Spingarn's boys basketball team lost to H.D. Woodson's team in Saturday's match to determine third place in the DCIAA tournament. Dunbar High beat Cardozo in the championship game. (— Marc Borbely, 536 13th St. NE)

HOUSE MOVES: If you have met one of the area's new residents or know someone about to move out, please ask them if they'd like to introduce themselves or say goodbye. According to the Long & Foster Web site, <http://www.longandfoster.com>, viewed yesterday, the real estate listings for the Corner Forum area are all the same as from last week: 1364 Emerald St. NE (\$365,000); 1302 E St. NE (\$485,000); and 1342 E St. NE (\$320,000). (— Marc Borbely, 536 13th St. NE)

CORNER FORUM ACKNOWLEDGMENTS: The following people helped produce or distribute last week's (March 1) Corner Forum: Marc Borbely, 536 13th St. NE (editing, folding, distributing); Tammi Cioffi, 536 13th St. NE (editing); and Sharon Cochran, 1300 block of Emerald St. NE (distributing). The following people attended last week's (March 1) Corner Forum planning meeting (held every Saturday at the Northeast Branch Library at 10 a.m.): Ms. Cochran, Mr. Borbely and Richard Sundberg (1200 block of Duncan Place

NE). There are 57 households in the area that have subscribed to the Corner Forum (21 on Emerald Street, 19 on E Street, 12 on 13th Street, and five on Duncan Place).

KINGSMAN: Council member Jim Graham (D-Ward 1)'s Subcommittee on Human Rights, Latino Affairs and Property Management held a hearing on Tuesday on legislation to declare Kingsman Elementary School surplus property that can be sold to the Charter Schools Development Corporation, to be used by charter schools beginning in September. Mr. Graham has instructed Xavier Beltran, the subcommittee clerk, to prepare a report so the legislation can be passed to the Council's Committee of the Whole. Mr. Beltran said he expects that if everything moves according to plan, the full Council will be able to consider the legislation when it meets on March 18. Beforehand that can happen, however, the legislation will still need to be approved by Council member Harold Brazil's (D-At Large) Committee on Economic Development. However, Barry Kreiswirth, that committee's clerk, said on Thursday that Mr. Brazil still has not scheduled a hearing. He said Mr. Brazil expects that an emergency resolution will be introduced so that the regular process can be sidestepped. He said that under the regular process, the full council would not be able to consider the legislation in time to meet the Charter School Development Corporation's tight construction schedule. Michelle Gelsino, vice president of the corporation, said in an interview on Feb. 28 that if the legislation is not approved by mid-March, Sasha Bruce Charter School's plans to occupy the building in September could be imperiled, as construction would have to begin soon. In an interview on the same day, Mr. Graham expressed reservations about supporting an emergency resolution, saying that the city's record showed that property disposition had to be carefully considered. Council member Sharon Ambrose (D-Ward 6) did not return phone messages left for her on three separate days this week, seeking her comments on Kingsman and on whether she would support an emergency resolution. (— Marc Borbely, 536 13th St. NE)§

Library Cuts Hours

BY MARC BORBELE, 536 13TH ST. NE

The D.C. Public Library has reduced its hours citywide, effective this past Monday, to save money.

Branch libraries, including the Northeast Library at 330 7th St. NE, are now open five days a week instead of six, for a total of 40 hours a week instead of 52.

Community libraries, including the R.L. Christian Community Library at 1300 H St. NE, are now open five days a week instead of six, for a total of 40 hours instead of 38.5.

Until this week, the Northeast branch library had been open Monday through Saturday, 10 a.m. to 5:30 p.m. — and 10 a.m. to 9 p.m. on Mondays and Wednesdays. The library will now be closed all day on Fridays. It will open three hours later on Mondays, at 1 p.m. and close three and a half hours earlier on Wednesdays, at 5:30 p.m.

The R.L. Christian Library, at 13th and H streets NE, had been open Mondays through Friday, 10 a.m. to 5:30 p.m., and Saturday 1-5 p.m. It will now be open 9:30 a.m. to 5:30 p.m. Mondays through Fridays. It will be closed on Saturdays. §

Contact the Corner Forum: ph. (544-2447); voicemail (517-9128); e-mail (news@thecornerforum.org); mail (536 13th St. NE). Help assemble and plan the Corner Forum every Saturday at 10 a.m. at the Northeast Branch Library, at 330 7th St. NE.

InForum

There Was No Drug Selling In the Garden at 13th and E

Lacey Bigelow, 1317 Emerald St. NE, responds to a comment made in an interview in last week's Corner Forum that the garden that had been at the northeast corner of 13th and E streets was a problem with drugs.

"For 21 years, I have taken care of this garden," Mr. Bigelow said. "Drugs were never sold in the garden."

"There's been drugs [in the neighborhood] around here ever since I moved here," he said. But he said when dealers walked by, he told them, "Nothing in here." §

Mail-Delivery Problems Experienced on 1200 Block of E

BY JIM LAISE
1200 block of E Street NE

Dear Editor Borbely,

Thank you for the fine job you are doing. You have provided a Web site for this community, and you are making a difference. Keep swinging.

I would like to pose a question in general to the community, but specifically to the 1200 block of E Street NE.

This concerns USPS carrier and mail issues. At our house, we have failed to receive mail confirmed to be sent as far back as Jan. 21. Can anyone else confirm such a situation?

More importantly, in speaking with our local post office on Tuesday, I was told that we have no carrier. What we have, according to the very professional representative, is a bevy of carriers. Our "sub" carriers come from a pool of full-time carriers who have put in a day's work elsewhere and are catching us up.

We receive mail normally after 5 p.m., which, in effect, means we are getting it two business days late. I was provided with two telephone numbers concerning this issue. Here they are: 800-688-9889 (ask for the postmaster); and 1.800.275.8777 (provide explanation to representative). Would other members of E Street like to join with me in discussing mail problems here on sunny E Street? I have done so, already. §

Best to all,

Jim Laise

jimlaise@aol.com

Blood Donors Needed

BY JAMES L. CLARK
1311 Emerald St. NE

On Wednesday, I made my 101st blood donation at the Red Cross Donation Center, at 191 I St. NW. On April 1, the American Red Cross Center will relocate to 2025 E St. NW.

For those who have not donated before, it is a painless procedure and it takes approximately 35 minutes.

You will get your blood pressure, pulse rate and iron level checked. The Red Cross needs blood donors due to the bad weather.

I hope this will encourage others to donate, you will never know when someone in your family or you will need blood. §

Firefighters Respond To 1300 Block of E Street

BY MARC BORBELY, 536 13TH ST. NE

Engine 10 was the first of multiple fire engines to arrive Thursday evening on the 1300 block of E Street NE, responding to a report of a fire at 1348 E.



According to Lieut. Dipietro, firefighters gained entry into 1348, which he said was a vacant building, and investigated.

Firefighters found that the smoke coming from the roof was actually coming from the fireplace

and chimney of 1350 E St. NE.

Because of the wind, Lieut. Dipietro said, the smoke had looked like it was coming from 1348. The door at 1348 is shown, above, at 9:55 p.m. §

Miner Students Get New Building

(continued from page 1)

good about giving the extra time to get things done that need to be done. So that has made it a lot smoother.

And then we've had some other things going on here. We haven't been quiet. We've had a press conference here, about a new program the D.C. Public Schools is having, called New Leaders, New Schools — that was in February — and then we had the ribbon-cutting, so we've just been having a myriad of people here. And then a lot of visitors coming to see the school. So it's been hectic, but it's been good.

The new school — what's new about it? For the kids, what are some of the advantages of being in the new place, compared to the old one?

Well, first the space. It's a larger facility. But more so than that, we have a lot of children in our building who have special needs, and so now those service providers are able to have their own space. Before, many people were using the same space at the same time, and so we had to be very creative in terms of occupying different places within the building.

This new building has a vocal music room, which we had in the old school, but we also get an instrumental music room, which we did not have in the old school, so our instrumental music teacher now has his own home and his own space.

The new building has an art room, which we are gonna hire a part-time art teacher, who will be an art therapist — that's what we hope — to be able to work with the kids who have special needs. It's real good, especially, in terms of behavior management — in terms of anger management — where kids have a different avenue to kind of vent some of that. And then also, we have some kids that show a giftedness toward art, and we want to try to capture that. Our new space will allow that person to have a home, have a space to work in.

We also have a lot of tutors that come to the school. We have a little over 100 State Department tutors that come, and then we have other people who volunteer to work with kids, and in the building we now have four what we call extended learning areas. Instead of the tutors having to find someplace to work with kids, [the children] can come right out of their classrooms, into those spaces right outside their rooms, and be able to be serviced and work with the tutors, and it kind of makes your time on task more manageable, because the kids aren't going long distances — they're right there, so it makes for better communication between the tutor and the teacher.

Upstairs, we have what we call our large-group instruction area. We have a partnership with the Kennedy Center, and so the Kennedy Center provides us with artists-in-residence. They also provide us a myriad of performers who come to do different programs with the kids, and so now, instead of having to convert our student dining area all the time into an assembly place, now we have a place where we can have those kinds of things, and that also allows grade levels to have meetings — you can have small programs. So that's a space we didn't have that we now have.

The media center, for one, is larger. We have not moved in

there yet, but we do have a full recording studio that is a part of the media center, so we'll be able to actually do live broadcasts from that area, that we'll be able to send all through the building, but then also it has the technology to record, so we can actually record things from within there.

What else? Instead of a P.E. room, a full gym. It's not finished yet. We're waiting on the delivery of the gym floor, and you'll get to see that area. [There's] now a counseling suite.

There's a play therapy room that is waiting for the two-way mirror. It'll be a two-way mirror, because a lot of times it's good for parents to be able to see the kinds of things that children express, but then on the other end, children would not necessarily know the parent is having that opportunity. It's also very healing for parents, because that helps them through whatever the processes are.

We have a lot of kids who have a lot of grief issues, and often you'll hear parents who'll say, "They'll get over." But a lot of times, adults can't get over. And so this is an opportunity to kind of expand some of the services that parents will be able to participate in with their child. We have several outside service agencies, like the William Wendt Center [for Loss and

Grand Prix Canceled for 2003

BY MARC BORBELY, 536 13TH ST. NE

The D.C. Sports and Entertainment Commission announced on Friday night the cancellation of the 2003 Grand Prix auto race, according to an article in yesterday's Washington Post. The race had been scheduled to take place June 27-29 at Robert F. Kennedy Memorial Stadium.

According to the article, sports commission officials complained that the event's promoter had proposed little to reduce the noise of cars racing about 50 yards from homes in Kingman Park.

Kingman Park residents had presented the sports commission with a petition signed by about 90 residents in opposition of having the Grand Prix in their neighborhood, according to the paper. The residents had also hired a public relations specialist and were receiving help from Georgetown University Law Center in preparing a lawsuit to block the race.

"The community is overwhelmingly pleased with the decision," Frazer Walton Jr., president of the Kingman Park Civic Association, was quoted as saying. "The sports commission and the Williams administration were turning a deaf ear to our concerns and offered not real viable alternatives. ... We also felt that not only was the community being exploited, but the health of the community was being put at risk."

Info: Washington Post, March 8 — <http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/articles/A60342-2003Mar8.html>. §

Healing] that comes in and does grief counseling with kids, and we're just launching a new partnership — there's a new agency opening down on 15th and Benning Road that will also do mental health services, through Catholic University — it's a partnership that they have. And they're also gonna come up and do some grief counseling with the kids.

That's basically it. We'll have a couple of additional classrooms next year that we did not have. Right now we have a preschool handicapped program that's an inclusion program, but next year we'll also have a pre-school handicapped self-contained classroom. That will be new. I guess that's about it.

We're waiting for that old building to be torn down. We anticipate that's gonna happen some time in April.

Is the entrance to this building gonna stay on 16th Street?

No. 15th Street is the entrance. There'll be a parking lot that will be out in the front. But our temporary entrance is on 16th. So everything is shifting. And it's funny because I tell people, "Now that's the back door!" And they'll say, "Well, why am I coming through the back door?" Well, you can't come through the front door yet.

So we anticipate that everything will be finished sometime August, September. Right now, they don't have the playground areas done. We got into the winter and the wonderful snow that has crippled everything, and so the ball fields and all the play apparatus and all that will come in the spring and in the summer.

Have you had a sense — from the faculty or the kids — what's your sense of their reaction to being in the new space.

They like the new space. We've had opportunities to talk to kids about things that they like about the new school. And it's funny, because when you listen to them, some of the things that they say — they pick up on the fact that the colors are different. They pick up on the fact that we don't have chalkboards anymore. They pick up on how the heating system is different. A lot of little things that you would say, "Well, I didn't even realize that they would pay those kinds of things any attention." The classrooms are larger. Each of the children from Head Start up through Second Grade actually have restrooms in the rooms, so they don't have to go out of the classroom to go to the restroom. Every classroom has a water fountain in the room. So those kinds of things that we never had we do have. So they like the newness — the new kinds of things that we have in the building. Generally, I think they like it.

For some of them, it's taking a while for them to adjust to the size, because [in the old school] you had a new building and an old building, so even though the size of the building was large, this building is larger. It really takes a lot to go through and get around it, and so for some of them, it's difficult to adjust to being in such a large space, and you don't

know where you are — you're learning your way around, where many of them were very comfortable. So it's a whole adjustment period — you're getting used to being in a new home, a new space, and probably by this time next year, they would be over that piece.

You've been in the community a long time.

I live in the community. I grew up in the community. Most people know me. I grew up in the house I came home from the hospital into. So I've been in the neighborhood all my life. We have a lot of new people, so they don't know me, but most of the seniors that are there, or the kids who are my age know me and know the family.

You yourself — do you have kids?

I have 500 in here all day long. (laughs!) Those are my children — those are the ones I have. No, I don't.

The reason I'm asking is — when people ask you, "I'm a parent. I'm trying to figure out my choices about sending my kids places." What do you suggest, [for] how they think about their choices? I mean, in my mind, if they have a lot of money, they can spend money. If they don't, they can come to the public schools that are here [or transfer to other, out-of-boundary schools,] or move. How should people think about that choice?

I've had that asked to me. What I tell people is that you need to go see. But you need to go see in different venues. You need to go see where you make an appointment to go see. You need to go see when you just happen to be in the neighborhood and you want to go see, so you can get a real taste of whatever the schools are. And to go see different facets of the school. So you might want to see the reading program — "When do you teach reading?" — or you may want to go see math — "When is math?" — or when are some of the special kinds of things that you have.

Miner Reunion in May

Angela Tilghman, principal at Miner Elementary, asks everyone who attended Miner — or who knows someone who attended Miner — to call the school and leave their address, so the school can send out invitations for a reunion, scheduled for the second week in May. §

Deadline Extended to Friday For Out-of-Boundary Transfers

BY MARC BORBELY, 536 13TH ST. NE
From a press release

The school system has extended the deadline for receiving out-of-boundary transfer applications, because of the snow last month.

Applications for transfers will be accepted until Friday and can be picked up at all public schools, or at Central Administration headquarters at 825 North Capitol St. NE, on the eighth floor. Applicants will be informed of their status by March 31.

Another thing is ask children. Ask the children who are in your neighborhood, “Tell me about your school. What kinds of things do you have in your school? What kinds of things do you like about your school? What kinds of things will my little one do when they come to your school?” The children know.

And children are very honest. I’ve noticed in your newsletter, you’ve interviewed some of the kids that are here. A couple of them have been featured in there. So the kids will tell you. But you need to go see.

I think a lot of times, people go on the premise of what they’ve heard about a school, rather than going to see the life of the school for themselves, and then a lot of the schools that we have on the Hill have reputations. And it very well may be that there are lots of other schools that are on the Hill, too, that you don’t give the opportunity, because you haven’t been in those particular schools to see. So I would tell them to go see the school — see the life of the school. That will give you a clearer picture of the kinds of things that are going on.

At this point, Ms. Tilghman began showing me around the new school building. We passed pre-kindergarten/kindergarten children, walking in a line with their after-school class. Ms. Tilghman showed me the play-therapy room, the counselor suite, and some of the classrooms. Each classroom currently has three — and will have five — computers in it. She showed me a room with a shower (for students whose clothing might get soiled), a stove, a refrigerator, a washer and a dryer. She showed me the Head Start classrooms for three-year-olds and four-year-olds. She pointed out the sinks and the big windows in the classrooms, and the skylights in the main hallway. She showed me the computer lab, where about a dozen children were playing on computers. She showed me the future playground, still under construction.

We met Ms. Portia Etheridge, a kindergarten teacher, who said her new room is “as big as a kindergarten room should be.” Ms. Etheridge, who has taught for 35 years, 10 of them at Miner, said she had nothing but good things to say about the new building. She said that having a contained water fountain and bathroom makes a difference for the kids.

We saw the teacher planning rooms (there are two on each floor) and the extended learning spaces, which are large open areas with chairs, where tutors can work with children outside the classrooms.



Pre-K/K children in Miner’s after-school program, on Friday.

You mentioned tutoring. Are there any opportunities or anything that people in the community could do to be useful? Are there goods or services, like tutoring, or donations?

All of the above. We don’t refuse anything.

If you had a wish list for the community —

Probably the biggest thing, right now, if I’m just wishing, is we’re trying to figure out what kind of things we’re gonna put together for an emergency — like water and those kinds of things. So those are our immediate kinds of things that we’re starting to look at, that we really know we need to put together. But budgetwise, there’s certain things you can buy out of your budget, and food, water, those kind of things you’re not permitted to buy. So that probably would be an immediate wish kind of thing. Small quantities of that.

Canned foods?

Well, see, canned foods probably no. Because if it were an emergency you can’t cook. So it would have to be non-cookable kinds of things.

What’s ideal? What kinds of foods would be ideal?

That’s what we’re brainstorming about. Crackers, and cheese and those kinds of things.

Tutoring or food — what should [neighbors] do if they’re interested in [offering] either of those?

Just call. They can just call the school. [724-4565].

We saw the future gym, where the floor and the bleachers still had to be installed. Ms. Tilghman pointed to the two-sided stage, in one of the gym’s walls. The stage opens up to the gym on one side and the dining room on the other.

We saw the media center, with equipment still to be installed, and the instrumental room, containing about numerous keyboards. We saw the library and the dining room. We saw the restrooms and community sinks in the halls on the upper floor, for the older children.

As we walked, Ms. Tilghman greeted children whom we passed — “Good afternoon.” Some of the kids responded in kind. Others just gave her a hug.

How long have you been in the school system or in education?

Since ’79.

Contact the Corner Forum: ph. (544-2447); voicemail (517-9128); e-mail (news@thecornerforum.org); mail (536 13th St. NE). Help assemble and plan the Corner Forum every Saturday at 10 a.m. at the Northeast Branch Library, at 330 7th St. NE.

Can you trace your career a little bit?

Professional? Or going to school? Or what?

Whatever you want.

Well, I went to Lovejoy, at 12th and E Street, and Lovejoy is getting ready to become the lofts and all. So I started there. At the time when I went to Lovejoy, we had a million children in the neighborhood. (laughs). Most families had four or five children per household, and Lovejoy was too crowded, so they split us up. When I was in second grade, I went to school part-day, because we had so many children. We went half a day. And then at the end of fourth grade, they moved us to Kingsman, in the 1300 block of E.

So I went to Kingsman and Lovejoy, and then I went to Catholic school — Holy Comforter - Saint Cyprian [Roman Catholic School], which is up on East Capitol [at 1503 East Capitol St. SE].

Catholic school was high school?

I went to Catholic school all the way through high school. Then I went to Catholic University. I had three-fourths of my tuition paid, so I went to Catholic University with a scholarship. Then I graduated, and I enrolled full-time in graduate school, and then I got the opportunity to open up a kindergarten classroom, so I started teaching up at Nativity Catholic School. I was there for a year, and then I came to D.C. Public Schools in '79. In '79, I was RIFed from public schools — because that was the year they had their RIF [Reduction in Force].

What does RIF mean?

It means that they let teachers go. And then I went out and taught in Fairfax for a couple of years, and then I came back and taught in my church school for three years, and then came back in D.C. Public Schools in '85, taught for two years down in Southwest [at a school that's now closed], and then I went into a program for training for principals, which they called an administrative internship program, which I did for a year. I was an intern up at Shepherd Elementary School, and then the following fall, which was '88, I went to River Terrace in Smothers — I was assistant principal there two years — and in '90 I went to Capitol Hill Cluster, where I was at Watkins and Peabody for two years. And then I came here in May '92, and I've been here ever since.

We saw a teacher teaching multiplication (kids were very excited, receiving play money for answering questions correctly) in the large-group instruction area.

Ms. Tilghman showed me how classrooms could be opened up and combined, to make larger spaces.

Aside from getting all this [construction and moving in] done, what are your very long-term hopes or dreams?

Keeping our test scores moving. I guess that's the long-range. Just to keep our academic achievement level where it is right now and moving to increase. That's the long-range. So all the kinds of things that you have to do to do that, that's what I want to try to do.

We saw the art room. Ms. Tilghman said there was a kiln

in the closet.

One of the parents [whose children are at Miner and] who lives close to me — I told her I was going to come talk to you. The one concern she had was about discipline.

Any school you go to, you're gonna have some kids that have some issues, but then how you address them is what we try to work through. So for some children, you may find that they have a difficult time.

But what we try to do is look where they came from, to where we're trying to get them to go to, and that's why we try to look at the services that we can provide. I did mention to you about grief issues. We have a lot of children that have a lot of anger. And so until you can get families to work through those, you have to work through them in school.

This is the first time, in this newsletter, that Miner is really being featured. Is there anything else that you'd like neighbors to know about Miner?

A: We have a lot going on here — you just have to come in and see the wonderful things that we are exposing the kids to. I guess I'm kind of the mindset that if somebody offers, we'll try. And so that's how we've been able to get a lot of the services and programs for the kids — to give them a rounded experience.

And it's good for them, because they have the opportunity to learn to read and to write and do math some other ways, so it doesn't necessarily have to be the traditional — a lot can be achieved through the arts, and we do a lot here with the arts. I guess that's about it.

Thank you. §

Inform. Explain. Tell. Speak.

Name: _____

Address or Block: _____

Please send in your thoughts or news, to 536 13th St. NE. Feel free to use more space. You can also use your own paper, send e-mail, or leave a voicemail message at 517-9128.

Greater Police Presence Needed

(continued from page 1)

Sharon: I have to add that the folks who get off of the bus at 13th and D who walk down 13th Street — they have to walk through that, and a lot of people will go an extra stop just because they're intimidated to walk down through that block at 13th Street.

Tell me, what do you actually — you mentioned drug activity — what do you actually see?

Richard: I see people out there in front of the stores making contact with individuals who apparently want to buy something, and money changing hands, and then somebody going into an alley or pushing back somebody's brick retaining wall to get something out between the mortar joints, and then some sort of interchange going on again.

When do you see these things?

Richard: Well, it depends on when I'm home. I took leave, recently, to work on my house, and I was struck that this begins at about 11 o'clock in the morning and seems to go on until the stores are closed at 10 o'clock at night.

Do you have ideas about what would help?

Richard: Well, I think we need more police presence on the corner. I think the commander of 5D needs to take the problem there seriously, and to have officers there more frequently and in the surrounding area too, so these dealers aren't pushed simply to other areas, like the intersection of 14th and Emerald Street, which typically is what happens, or in the 1300 block of E Street, or the side alleys in the 300 block of 13th Street. I also think the police know who these individuals are. They should go to these individuals' homes and talk to their parents or grandparents — whoever's in the house — and ask them if they know that their children or grandchildren are dealing drugs out there. That would be a start.

Can you tell me, in a personal way, either from you or people you know — how this activity affects your lives or our lives?

Richard: Well, it really degrades the quality of life. It's not as bad as it used to be, simply because the volume of drug dealing and drug consumption and alcohol consumption in the 400 block of 13th Street and the surrounding area has been significantly reduced, thanks to, in large part, neighbors efforts. But still there is trash that is just thrown into the streets by these individuals that are selling the drugs or buying them. They buy food items from either the markets or from surrounding fast-food places, and they typically eat a good portion of it and then just toss the rest of it into the gutters or stuff them into the storm drains. And [then there's] the 30-dollar bottles of champagne, which particularly give broken-glass concerns for both car tires and the kids that ride their bikes around the neighborhood. There's the hypodermic needles that one finds from time to time — certainly not as frequently as we used to. But the debris really — we used to have a very difficult rat

problem in the area, and it would be a shame for it to come back simply because these people are hanging out here, treating the area like their own personal trash bin. Also, the urination, and the doing of other things in the alley causes safety concerns besides the stench.

Sharon: I just think if there was just more of a [police] presence — the last time I talked to Richard, an article in the Post had just come out, where the Police chief essentially said [that crime] was D.C. residents' fault. It was a murder at 9:30 in the morning, at the Hess gas station on Florida Avenue. It was caught on videotape. A guy crossed Florida Avenue, shot someone at the gas station, and a person pumping their gas got into the car and drove away. And [Ramsey] was sort of wagging his finger, saying tsk tsk tsk, this is how D.C. residents are — just see these things and walk away, so blaming it on the victims, whereas if that guy had had a thought that there would've been a cop wandering by, he wouldn't have [crossed] the street and pulled out a gun. I mean it happens every week on H Street. You pick up the paper. At noon, someone's robbing a store on H Street. There's reasons why, at 6:30 in the morning, they're [shooting guns] on 13th Street and they are so sure that there's not gonna be a cop that catches them. And that's the real life of this city. It makes me extremely angry, because in real life, nothing's really gonna happen. [Also, the police officers] are always pulled out of the PSA. They're there, they get to know the faces, they know who is who, and they're pulled out to do special operations or something downtown.

Pulled off and then they come back? Or pulled off permanently?

Sharon: A lot of times, they don't come back. Gary, who used to be in our PSA, is now at the training academy, last time I heard.

Richard: Officer Dunlap. He was excellent. He's gone. Joe, who was excellent, was sent over to I believe 6A.

Sharon: At one point, [at the PSA meetings], they started keeping track of how many officers were in the PSA each day. And then they realized half the names the lieutenant [had on his roll] hadn't even shown up for work. It's ridiculous, because in fact they don't seem to have the power — and even if they're assigned to our PSA and they're supposed to be there, they're always called off to go to other, more dangerous areas.

Richard: Or just events at the MCI Center. Or at RFK. And those that are using our neighborhood for illegal purposes know this, and it just provides more of an opportunity for them to do whatever they're doing.

Sharon: Yeah, even when [the police] come up with a good idea, like last summer when they had the walking officer — [the guys on the street] know, oh, this is only gonna last a couple of weeks. It's an inconvenience to them, but it's no sense that that officer is gonna be there every day of the week, and he's gonna be there next month and the month after that.

Richard: [There's] another aspect of this that's irritating: one of the supposed benefits of living in town is to be able to

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walk to a corner market, instead of driving to a large shopping center to go to a large grocery store. But many people in our community do not patronize [the businesses in the 400 block of 13th] — the two stores and the dog-grooming [business], because of the individuals that hang out in front of there.

You're on Duncan Place. I spoke to some guy that I met — [a] marketing guy. He said that from his talking to people on the street, that was the number one issue — people hanging out at the stores and the drug activity there. Is that your sense, from talking to people on your street?

Richard: Yes. That is one of the concerns, because when I first moved to the block, the activity was up on Duncan Place, and, besides the tremendous volume of trash that was generated by that, there were personal safety issues, because of the extreme violence that was going on at that time, with the crack cocaine epidemic and the associated gun violence. And people are concerned — the ones that have been there for a while — that perhaps that activity could reappear. And then for the newer residents that come into the city and that are in the area — many of them are just amazed that this can go on out there in plain sight, and nothing, apparently, is done about it by the police.

Do either of you have any requests or thoughts about — let's say there are readers reading this and let's say have their own thoughts or feelings — any messages for them?

Sharon: Should we talk about having a community meeting, so that we can try to document, maybe, what are our concerns? I don't think, at this point, it's a good time to talk to the police officers until we can try to get a more organized viewpoint from the community, because a lot of times, when the police are there [at community meetings], they kind of excuse it away.

Richard: Yeah, I think you're right, Sharon, and I'd just like to complete my perspective. It [may sound] dismal, I know, on this recording, but I think [the drug dealing is less of a problem] than it used to be. It shows that if neighbors get together and work together in a consistent manner, they can accomplish things. I think the neighborhood shows that.

Can you tell me, from your experience — because it sounds like you've really had experience on this — what can a neighborhood do, if they do get together, for these kinds of issues?

Richard: I think the neighbors can make the police accountable. Really making the police accountable will take going to some of these meetings. Besides the PSA meeting, there's a meeting [at 5D] every month. [And there is the monthly ANC meeting.] The neighbors can go up there as a group, and not take the PR from 5D that's coming out about whatever's going on.

Do you remember any specific ways in which the neighbors together managed to get things done in the past?

Richard: Well, what really caused the change in the neighborhood were [several] factors, really. One was the neighborhood patrol. At the beginning of the '90s, when there was a really serious drug problem both there and at other locations, under the North Lincoln Park Neighborhood Association, we

started an orange-hat group, and we began walking at 14th and C, because at that time that was a major drug market there. And when that group gelled, we came down to the 400 block of 13th. At that point, the police started addressing it, and ever since then, we've been able to chip away at it. Also, the commander we had at that time, who came on board — Claude Beheler — really had a heart for the community. And he was just passionate about creating an environment where the residents were able to walk in their neighborhood without fear — especially the older folk. He really bent over backwards to help them with their problems, so that they could enjoy their neighborhood. [And I almost forgot our ANC commissioner at the time — Larry Broun. He was tireless in his efforts to resolve the problem. He held the responsible officials accountable in a very public way and was constantly on the street himself.]

Sharon: I know that when I moved here, we had PSA Sergeant Cousins — she came in and she did a street cleanup on 13th Street. She got rid of the graffiti — there was a lot of gang graffiti on different buildings, which is now, by the way, starting to reappear, I noticed, on street signs and things like that. She cleaned up all the graffiti, had her officers doing that. Neighbors did the street cleaning, and also officers showed up to do that. She worked on situations where the elderly — she really reached out. She went door-to-door and had citizens coming out to PSA meetings who have not since shown up, since she left. But she really knew all the seniors in our neighborhood. She really reached out and talked to them. She was out, every day. She knew where trouble spots were, and she worked with DCRA and other licensing and housing inspectors, and others to solve problems. Once there was a house on the 1300 block of E Street, where they really had to bring in dump trucks to empty out the trash out the back yard. I mean it was serious stuff. So it can work. It takes a lot of work and commitment.

Richard: Well, I think we're in agreement, Sharon, that one of the primary things that are needed is a commitment by people in authority to address community issues on a consistent, on-going basis, instead of short-term, band-aid type approach.

Sharon: I'm not sure that our officers really have the support that they need of their supervisors. My general experience has been that the beat cop is committed, but I'm not sure they have the backup they need from their bosses and from the prosecutor. When we started out, there used to be a thing where the U.S. Attorney's office had a pilot program, working with 5D, where the prosecuting attorneys actually knew the neighborhood and they worked with the 5th District police, and they actually knew who was who, so when they were repeatedly arrested, then knew who they were and what was going on, and within the community, that seems to have just totally dissolved on us. They used to show up at the PSA meetings all the time, and call their own community meetings. I've not seen any of that anymore.

Richard: I think a lot of this goes back to management. Because the beat officers — especially those who've been beat officers for a while — really have a heart for the neighborhood. But they can only do so much, and the neighbors have to get [the attention] of management at 5D or higher and have the problems addressed. It's been done in the past, so it can be done in the future. §

Musante Identifies Issues Facing Area

(continued from page 1)

You're our ANC commissioner, of course, here. Which ANC are you commissioner of?

Single member district 6A05, which would be the east side of 10th Street to the west side of 16th Street, and the north side of C Street to the south side of E Street.

What made you decide to run for the ANC?

Well, I actually thought about running for the ANC two years prior to this election. However, at that time, there were a number of things going on in my life. I had switched jobs, I was getting married, and I knew from people who lived in the neighborhood who were friends of both mine and my wife's that the gentleman who was running for ANC commissioner was actually a good guy — Ronald T.T. Nelson — and would do a very good job, so I kind of put it out of my mind at that point, and decided that it would probably be best, at that point in my life, not to add another thing onto it.

I decided to run this year because Ronald was leaving the country, and I still had a very strong desire to run for ANC commissioner and felt that this would probably be a very appropriate time, so I threw my hat into the ring.

What do you think are the major issues facing the neighborhood at the moment?

I would say there are at least four or five major issues, one of which has been brought to my attention by a number of residents, and that is out-of-state cars, or licenses that are not District licenses, parking along our streets, taking up spaces that should be spaces for permitted cars who actually have Zone 6 stickers. That's one major one.

The second is liquor stores following voluntary license agreements that they have signed, and, Richard, I know that you and I are going to start working on one at this next ANC meeting — and stopping any others [from] coming into the neighborhood, because we have enough of them. I'm not anti-business, and I'm not anti-liquor store, but when you have enough, you have enough, and I think for our radius here, we've got plenty.

Also, simple things like garbage collection and sidewalk repair — those are two major issues. When weather is warmer, [I have] plans for a Complain to Your ANC Commissioner Day. I'm gonna actually hold a day for each block, starting at 16th Street, working my way back towards 10th Street, where I will make sure the blocks are plastered with the fact that I

will be starting from C Street and walking down to E Street — [and to] come out and tell me that the trash isn't being picked up, things like that.

Also, traffic speeding through the neighborhood — the addition of some stop signs or different things like that — that's a big one.

And then, last but not least, there are, I think, opinions of some people in the neighborhood that not enough is being done to deal with the issues of regentrification, and the fact that there are a number of different people — and, to be quite honest, I would have to put myself in the "different" group, being a young, white married couple, even though my wife is Indian and by no means would fall under Caucasian — there are some racial tensions that, while it's nothing compared to the things that we've seen in the past in D.C. — it is an issue. There are older people here, who live in our neighborhood, and perhaps taxes are becoming burdensome, and different things like that, so that's something that I'd like to start a dialog on.

Great! Well, I think that pretty much covers it. Is there anything else you'd like to add?

Just that I am here, and my door is open, and people can call me. My home number is 202-548-2542. I can be reached by two different e-mail addresses: one is musanteanc@yahoo.com or mfm81472@yahoo.com. Either will work.

They can also stop by my home: I'm at 411 11th St. NE. And I'd just like to see as many people get involved in the neighborhood as possible, because I can do my job better only when concerned citizens approach me and say, "This needs to be worked on," or, "This is going well, but we can improve upon it."

And one more thing: I did want to put in a plug in for the fact that we are trying to construct a Lovejoy Park by the Lovejoy condominiums — the old Lovejoy School is being converted into condominium loft apartments — and a large number of citizens have rallied together to build a park.

We have formed a nonprofit organization, and that's something, actually, that I would like to see the neighborhood rally behind and push to a successful completion. And they can contact myself for more information on it.

Well, I thank you very much, Michael, for taking out some time to talk with me this evening.

Thank you, Richard. §



Michael Musante

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Calendar of Upcoming Events

If you attend any of these events, please send in anything from a few lines to a long article about what happened. And if you know of any upcoming events that other readers might be interested in, send them in! Events are free, unless otherwise noted, and open to all.

— Compiled by Marc Borbely, 536 13th St. NE

Tuesday, March 11

7-9 p.m. What's Going on With Baseball? Meeting by the Office of Planning and the D.C. Sports and Entertainment Commission "to update the public — and elicit their input — on the city's effort to return Major League Baseball to the District." RFK Stadium is one of the three sites being considered for a new ballpark. At 441 4th St. NW, Old City Council Chambers. http://dcbiz.dc.gov/home/news/2003/february/advisory02_26_03.shtm.

7:15 p.m. Presentation of a Proposed Redesign of Stanton Park Playground. By the Friends of Stanton Park Committee and the D.C. Department of Parks and Recreation and the National Park Service. At Capitol Hill Presbyterian Church, 201 4th St. SE. Info, Mary Fran Miklitsch, 546-6942.

7:30 p.m. Old City Capitol Hill Neighborhood Association meeting. At St. John's Church, 1301 H St. NE. <http://oldcitycapitolhill.org>.

Wednesday, March 12

6 p.m. Board of Library Trustees, monthly meeting. At MLK Jr. Memorial Library, 901 G St. NW, Rm. A-5. 727-1111. <http://www.dclibrary.org/calendar/thismonth.trustees.html>.

6:30 - 8:30 p.m. D.C. Public Schools Reform. District 3 (Wards 5 and 6) Education Meeting. "The public is invited to discuss ideas for improving individual schools, as well as the overall school system." By School Board President Peggy Cooper Cafritz and District 3 Representative Tommy Wells. At Langdon Elementary School, 1900 Evarts St. NE. Info, 442-5190. <http://www.k12.dc.us/dcps/boe/boecalendar.html>.

7 p.m. Bonhoeffer. "A new 90-minute documentary film that tells the dramatic story of Dietrich Bonhoeffer, the young German theologian who offered one of the first clear voices of resistance to Adolf Hitler. Bonhoeffer openly challenged his church to stand with the Jews in their time of need, and eventually joined his family in the plots to kill Hitler. ... Bonhoeffer is one of the great examples of moral courage in the face of conflict." At Washington National Cathedral, Wisconsin & Massachusetts avenues NW, \$15 or \$8 (students, seniors and limited-income), 537-2221. Event listing submitted by Richard Sundberg, 1200 block of Duncan Place NE. <http://www.bonhoeffer.com>.

Thursday, March 13

6-8 p.m. What's Going on With Baseball? Meeting by the Office of Planning and the D.C. Sports and Entertainment Commission "to update the public — and elicit their input — on the city's effort to return Major League Baseball to the District." RFK Stadium is one of the three sites being considered

for a new ballpark. At the Reeves Center, North Lobby, 2000 14th St. NW. http://dcbiz.dc.gov/home/news/2003/february/advisory02_26_03.shtm.

7 p.m. Bonhoeffer. See Wednesday listing. Note different location: At National City Christian Church, advance tickets, \$10, 5 Thomas Circle NW, 232-0323.

7-9 p.m. ANC 6A Monthly Meeting. Preliminary agenda includes: Laura Canfield of Stanton Park Neighborhood Association on Lady Bird Park Renovation (8th & Constitution Ave NE) and Adopt-a-Park activities; Sherwood Recreation Facility Update; New Samaritan Baptist Church Women's Ministry; Letter for Permit Parking for the Residents of 900 10th Street, NE; Out of State Plates and Parking Difficulties on the 1300 Block of D Street, NE; Update on Kingsman School. At Miner Elementary School, Student Dining Room, 601 15th St. NE (enter on 16th Street). Info, ANC 6A Chairman Joseph Fengler (6A02), 423-8868. <http://groups.yahoo.com/group/anc6a>.

Friday, March 14

7 p.m. Bonhoeffer. See Wednesday listing. Note different location: At National City Christian Church, advance tickets, \$10, 5 Thomas Circle NW, 232-0323.

Saturday, March 15

8:30 a.m. - 3:30 p.m. D.C. Public Schools Parent and Community Conference." Workshops include Navigating the System: Making DCPS Work for Your Family, How Monolingual and Bilingual Children Acquire Language, Free Health Insurance for DC Families, What's Special About Special Education. At UDC, 4200 Connecticut Ave. NW. Free continental breakfast, free lunch, free child care, free parking. To pre-register (by March 10), call 442-5160 or visit <http://www.k12.dc.us/dcps/ParentConf.asp>.

10-11 a.m. Corner Forum weekly meeting. Participate in the planning of next week's issue. Northeast Branch of the Public Library, meeting room, 330 7th St. NE. Info, 544-2447.

11 a.m. - 4 p.m. Orchid Auction. "The National Capital Orchid Society returns to the arboretum for their annual orchid auction. Plants from large commercial growers and society members, many in bloom, are auctioned off to the highest bidder." At National Arboretum, 24th & R Streets NE, off of Bladensburg Road, 245-5898. <http://www.usna.usda.gov/Education/events.html>.

Noon. National Convergence on the White House. Major march and rally against war in Iraq. Gather at Washington Monument. Organized by Act Now to Stop War and End Racism (International A.N.S.W.E.R.). <http://internationalanswer.org>.

2 p.m. Presentation of a Proposed Redesign of Stanton Park Playground. By the Friends of Stanton Park Committee and the D.C. Department of Parks and Recreation and the National Park Service. At Capitol Hill Presbyterian Church, 201 4th St. SE. Info, Mary Fran Miklitsch, 546-6942. §