

# 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 #51  
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<http://www.thecornerforum.org>

## Zdenek David: Librarian and Historian

*Zdenek (Zed) David, 517 13th St. NE, was interviewed last month by Eric Bernard and Demetra (Deta) Voyadgis, 1223 E St. NE.*

*Mr. David was librarian at the Woodrow Wilson International Center for Scholars from 1974 to 2002. He was educated as a historian and received a Ph.D. from Harvard University in 1960.*

*His latest book, Finding the Middle Way: The Utraquists' Liberal Challenge to Rome and Luther, was published in August by Johns Hopkins University Press.*

*This issue features the part of the interview focusing on Mr. David's background. Mr. Bernard asked all questions but the last, which Ms. Voyadgis asked. The next issue will feature the rest of the interview, focusing on the book.*

**Before we discuss your book, maybe we can get some general background information — a little bit about yourself. How long you have been living on Capitol Hill? And I detect a bit of an accent, if you would tell us where you are from, originally?**

Yes, gladly. I was born in a country which was called Czechoslovakia. It split up, peacefully, thank God, in 1993, into the Czech Republic and the Slovak Republic. I was from the Czech Republic part, and before coming to the United States I lived in Prague.



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## Romare Bearden Exhibit Should Be Visited by All

BY THOMAS J. WOODY  
1338 Emerald St. NE

Although I have had the opportunity to visit the National Gallery of Art in Washington on numerous occasions, this last visit experiencing the art of Romare Bearden has been the icing on the cake. The experience is one that will last a lifetime.



A bold and brilliant artist, Romare Bearden created collages and paintings of stunning humanity in which he aimed to do nothing less than "to redefine the image of man" in terms of the African American experience.

Born in Charlotte, N.C., Romare spent the formative years of his youth in Charlotte, Pittsburgh and Harlem, where he knew such luminaries as Countee Cullen, Duke Ellington, Paul Robeson, James Baldwin, Ralph Ellison and Langston Hughes during the Harlem Renaissance.

He ventured upon a lifelong study of art, gathering inspiration from such wide-ranging influences as cubism, social realism and the Italian Renaissance. His collages, watercolors, paintings and prints are richly textured with visual metaphors from his past, and he was successful enough to have his first solo exhibit by 1940.

After experimenting with many dif-

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## DDOT to Seek Input On Light-Rail Plans

BY LIBO LIU, 500 BLOCK OF 14TH ST. NE

Imagine the well-to-do folks of Georgetown or Woodley Park filling up the RFK Stadium for a top-notch football game, after crossing the town in half of the time without driving their cars.

Or the less well-to-do folks of Anacostia visiting their relatives and friends in Silver Spring, after arriving by the clean, fast and state-of-art light rail directly connecting the two places.

This is what the DC Department of Transportation (DDOT) and Washington Metropolitan Area Transit Authority (WMATA) have in mind for the future alternative transit in the next 10 years. And they want your opinion too.

At the monthly meeting of North Lincoln Park Neighborhood Association on Tuesday evening, Gregory Walker, senior program manager of WMATA, was on hand to explain how far the 18-month DC Transit Alternatives Analysis has come. He said the core of the study has to do with building light-rail transit corridors,

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## Washington Chorus To Perform on Sunday

BY DEBRA WYNN, 538 13TH ST. NE

On Sunday, the Washington Chorus, a group I've been singing with for over four years, will be in concert at the Kennedy Center Concert Hall at 3 p.m. We will be performing Verdi's Requiem.

Tickets are still available for this concert and can be requested through the Washington Chorus Web site, <http://www.thewashingtonchorus.org>, or they can be ordered on the phone at 342-6221.

Ticket prices range from \$19 to \$51. §

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I had left, however, in 1947 to come to the U.S. and study in secondary school. It was the time that Czechoslovakia fell behind the iron curtain. I managed to stay here and complete my education. I was studying as a historian — I have a PhD in History.

I did some college teaching at first. Then I shifted more towards library work, but I retained my interest in research. My original work was in the intellectual, especially religious history of Russia. It was, of course, a country of great interest in the Cold War. Later on I shifted more towards my native region, which was called Eastern Europe.

I produced a book in cooperation with a senior colleague which dealt with the history of the various nations of Central Europe. It was called *The Peoples of the Eastern Habsburg Lands*; it came out in 1984. From then on, I focused more on cultural history and especially religious issues.

**For people who might not know the current geopolitical makeup, is Prague a part of the Czech Republic or the Slovak Republic?**

It is the capital of the Czech Republic. Prior to the division it was also the capital of the whole Czechoslovakia. The capital of Slovakia is called Bratislava.

**When did you move on to Capitol Hill?**

In 1975, for the first time. I got my position at the Wilson Center in 1974 and first settled in Virginia, which involved three hours of commuting every day. It got very tiresome, so as a result I thought it was easier to move closer to my job. I moved here in 1975. But briefly — well not so briefly — for about five years, I lived in suburban Maryland, from 1980 to 1985. Then I moved back to Capitol Hill. Originally, the first time, I lived on 4th Street NE. The second time I lived in an apartment on 11th Street, from 1985 to 1992. In 1992 I acquired the present dwelling on 13th Street. So I have been shifting a little further east as time went on.

**Thank you very much. Is the Woodrow Wilson Center in Kalorama near Dupont Circle?**

No, you might be thinking of President Wilson's house. After he retired from the Presidency he lived there and spent his last few years there. But the Center itself is located in the Reagan Building, near the Federal Triangle metro station.

**Yes, on Pennsylvania Avenue.**

Exactly. Prior to that, about 1998, before the Reagan Building was constructed, the Center was in the Smithsonian Castle. So from 1974 to 1998 I was actually working in the Castle, where the library facilities were not very good. The books were mostly in corridors and various rooms. So moving to the new quarters in 1998 was a great improvement.

We have a genuine library which occupies the whole sev-

enth floor, in our section of the Reagan Building. The Center itself is a memorial for President Woodrow Wilson. It is maintained by the federal government — in other words we are sort of like the Washington Monument, except that we are an organization rather than a physical structure.

The purpose of the Center is to bring together the world of academia and the world of public affairs — the idea being that each side might learn from the other. In other words — this is a trivial example — somebody from the State Department carries on diplomatic works and has a great deal of experience in negotiating and matters of that nature, while somebody who is a professor of diplomatic history might know a lot of background about how things were being done in the past and how we got in the world to where we are, but has never had any hands on experience with diplomatic negotiations. And the idea is that the two sides can contribute to each other.

Also, as far as President Wilson is concerned, the two aspects of Wilson's person come together in the Center's activities. He was a scholar to begin with, with a PhD from Johns Hopkins, a university professor at Princeton, president of Princeton University, and then he became a statesman. He became the governor of New Jersey and president of the United States. So in his personality were combined the two aspects — scholarship and politics.

**I did a search at the amazon.com Web site on your name, and I noticed that you co-authored a number of books in a series titled *The Scholars' Guide to Washington*. Would you tell us what is the purpose of the *Scholars' Guide*?**

The Center is divided into several regional programs, such as the Latin American program, the African program and the Eastern European program. The idea was that since we were encouraging research in various world regions, we should try to survey what types of resources were available in the Washington, D.C., area for the study of these individual regions, as a service to our own fellows and scholars, and also to other scholars who come to Washington to do research using the unmatched resources of the city — the National Archives, the Library of Congress, and so on. It is estimated that there are some twenty thousand scholars who come to Washington, D.C., each year for that purpose.

Each of the *Guides* is divided into two sections. One of them deals with depositories which keep materials for specific regions, like libraries, archives, map collections and collections of sound recordings. And the other half is devoted to organizations which deal with the area of concern, such as private organizations, government organizations, universities and their special programs. Some of the guides have more than one edition, but there are 14 distinct guides which appeared between 1975 and 1995.

**Well, I don't have any more questions. Thank you very much for your time.**

Thank you, I enjoyed talking with you. §

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**SEND IN YOUR THOUGHTS AND YOUR NEWS! — by phone (544-2447); by voicemail (517-9128);  
by e-mail (news@thecornerforum.org); or by mail (536 13th St. NE).  
TO SUBSCRIBE (\$10.17 including tax for 26 issues), call 544-2447 or drop off cash or a check to the address above.**

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ferent mediums and styles, Mr. Bearden expressed his unique vision in collage. He was deeply impassioned about the people, places, issues and ideas that shaped the world. As an artist, he translated these passions to canvas and paper and left an incredible body of work that continues today to garner admiration and critical attention.

Mr. Bearden was an artist, educator, author and theorist, and a benefactor who helped African American artists establish their careers. He also addressed the need to document the unwritten and often forgotten history of African Americans. Mr. Bearden is recognized as one of the most creative visual artists of the twentieth century.

Mr. Bearden's work is included in important public collections such as the Metropolitan Museum of Art, the Whitney Museum of American Art, the Philadelphia Museum of Art and the Studio Museum in Harlem, among others. His radiant watercolor "He Has Risen" earned the honor of a place in the Museum of Modern Art's permanent collection.

The internationally renowned American of African American heritage died in 1988, at the age of 76. Two films are also shown in conjunction with the exhibit, tracing the artist's career and works. The films and exhibit are a must-see for everyone, and I can't wait to go again and again.

The exhibit runs through Jan. 4, and I personally advise *all* to make plans to attend. For additional information, call 737-4215 concerning exhibits and 842-6799 concerning films. §

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"to fill up the gap between existing Metro Rail and Metro Bus transit."

The proposed Georgetown-to-RFK Stadium line would be running either on H Street or along it, according to Mr. Walker.

The study has made steady progress.

In fact, WMATA won't even wait around for all the money necessary to fund the whole 10-year capital plan, which is estimated to cost \$1.3 billion.

The agency and DDOT are planning to build a 2.7 mile demonstration project starting as soon as next spring, to prove the feasibility for the whole 10-year plan.

However, before the \$40 million demo project proceeds officials will consider input from D.C. residents.

A formal public hearing on the matter will be held at 7:30 p.m. on Oct. 28, at Birney School, 2501 Martin Luther King Ave. SE.

But you can also voice your opinion by calling the project hotline at 669-8098 or by visiting <http://www.dctransitfuture.com>.

Mr. Walker of WMATA said the decision on whether to build the Anacostia Corridor Light Rail Demonstration Project will be made in January, 2004.

It will then take 12 to 18 months to build. §

## Updates

**ANC 6A LISTSERV:** The e-mail address to subscribe to the new listserv for the ANC 6A area is [anc-6a-subscribe@yahoogroups.com](mailto:anc-6a-subscribe@yahoogroups.com). The old listserv was deleted a week ago.

**COMINGS AND GOINGS:** The real estate listings for the Corner Forum area remain unchanged from last week.

**EXCELLO LICENSE TRANSFER:** N-A Minit's owners, Sae Won Lee and Hyon Suk Lee, have officially applied to transfer Excello's liquor license to the N-A Minit location, at 421 13th St. NE, from the Excello location, at 419 13th St. NE, according to a notice published in the D.C. Register on Oct. 3. If the transfer is approved by the Alcoholic Beverage Control Board, N-A Minit could sell liquor Monday through Saturday, from 9 a.m. to 10 p.m. The ABC Board will hold a hearing on the transfer application at 10 a.m. on Dec. 3. Residents' petitions and requests to appear before the Board must be filed on or before Nov. 18.

N-A Minit has previously stated that it would put its own Class B (beer and wine) license in safekeeping if the transfer of Excello's Class A (liquor, beer and wine) license goes through successfully. As part of the transfer, N-A Minit is requesting that Excello's current vol-

untary agreement, which was signed in December 2001, be changed so that whoever holds the liquor license will be allowed to sell singles. Michael Musante, the ANC Commissioner representing the Corner Forum area south of the middle of E Street, including the houses around Excello, has said he opposes the requested amendments to the Excello voluntary agreement.

Mr. and Mrs. Lee have also applied to renew their own Class B license, which their attorney Paul Pascal has said would be placed in safekeeping if the transfer of Excello's license goes through. Residents wishing to oppose N-A Minit's license renewal have until Nov. 25 to file letters of protest. An initial "roll call" hearing on N-A Minit's requested renewal will be held on Dec. 10. Thank you to Cody Rice, 310 9th St. NE, for alerting us to these dates.

**DATE CORRECTION:** The date on last week's issue should have read Sunday (not Saturday), October 5.

**CORNER FORUM ACKNOWLEDGMENTS:** The following people helped produce or distribute the Oct. 5 issue of the Corner Forum: Marc Borbely, 536 13th St. NE and Sharon Cochran, 1300 block of Emerald Street NE. There are 82 households in the Corner Forum area that are subscribed to the newsletter (29 on E Street, 27 on Emerald Street, 19 on 13th Street, and 7 on Duncan Place). §

# 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 SHARON COCHRAN  
1300 block of Emerald Street NE

## **Tuesday, October 14**

7 p.m. Sam Francis will speak about the Anacostia River at Capitol Hill Garden Club meeting. All are welcome. At Monica's Episcopal Church, 1340 Massachusetts Ave. SE. <http://www.ncafgardenclubs.org/chgcwebpage.html>.

7 p.m. Brown v. Board of Education. "A panel led by Robert Cottrol and Leland Ware will discuss Brown v. Board of Education. Cottrol and Ware are authors of Brown v. Board of Education: Caste, Culture, and the Constitution." Reservations suggested. At the National Archives, Room 105, 700 Pennsylvania Ave. NW. 501-5000.

## **Wednesday, October 15**

10 a.m. - 1 p.m. Journey Toward Equality Bus Tour. "The Sewall-Belmont House and Museum, the Frederick Douglass National Historic Site and Mary McLeod Bethune Council House National Historic Site merge their individual stories for a groundbreaking interpretation of one of America's key chapters in history, the struggle for equal rights." Reservations required. \$5 per person; \$3 for children under 7. Tour meets at Eastern Market metro plaza. Info, 546-1210. <http://www.culturaltourismdc.org>.

6:30 p.m. PSA 511 community meeting. At Teachers Credit Union, 9th & D Streets NE. <http://psa511.juniperdc.com>.

6:30-7:15 p.m. Avoiding Home Hazards, Part 2: Electricity Problems and Fire. By the Capitol Hill Restoration Society Preservation Café. At the top level of Trattoria Alberto, 506 8th St. SE. Info, 543-0425. <http://www.chrs.org>.

6:30-8:30 p.m. Washington Area Gentrification. "Gentrification, the influx of high-income individuals into previously poor neighborhoods, is one of the most important phenomena shaping Washington. This panel discussion, with [Mayor Williams and] experts from the fields of government, development and community activism, aims to promote a responsible and informative public dialogue on this contentious issue." At the City Museum, 801 K St. NW (Metro: Mount Vernon Square). \$3 adults; \$2 students and seniors. <http://www.citymuseumdc.org>.

## **Thursday, October 16**

7 p.m. Youth or Dare. "Come and join us for an evening of drama by D.C.'s most talented high school students. This is a benefit performance for Young Playwrights' Theater." \$35. At Carnegie Institution, 16th & P Streets NW. <http://www.youngplaywrightstheater.org>.

## **Saturday, October 18**

9 a.m. Free health screenings (i.e., glucose, blood pressure, body fat), information booths on cancer, diabetes, STDs, and diet. Speakers from the D.C. Department of Health. A free continental breakfast and a healthy lunch will be served. Info, 582-4811. <http://www.ewhbc.org/contactUs/directions.htm>.

9 a.m. - 3 p.m. Oral History Workshop. At Strayer University, in Takoma. "Like to talk to neighbors about the 'old days?' This layman's guide on how to do oral interviews includes tips on advance preparation, recording, and transcription." \$30. Info, Diana Kohn, 301-270-8187. <http://www.historictakoma.org>.

9 a.m. - 5 p.m. (Registration at 8:30 a.m.) Charles Hamilton Houston: Paving the Road to Brown — Celebrating a Washington Native Son and "Chief Architect" of Desegregation, Attorney Charles Hamilton Houston. Includes a "Griots Circle," featuring oral history; a high school student advocacy forum; and panel discussions about parent priorities and choices in public education, civil rights education, housing, and media that matters. With Mary Frances Berry, Darlene Allen, Adrian Fenty, Virginia Walden Ford, Courtland Milloy and Iris Toyer. By the Humanities Council of Washington, DC. \$15 for adults, including boxed lunch. At Howard University School of Law, 2900 Van Ness St. NW (Metro: Van Ness/UDC). Info, Michon Boston, 387-8391 or [info@wdchumanities.org](mailto:info@wdchumanities.org). <http://www.wdchumanities.org>.

10 a.m. Corner Forum meeting. "Help assemble the current issue and plan future ones." At the home of Marc Borbely and Tammi Cioffi, 536 13th St. NE, 544-2447.

10 a.m. - 5 p.m. Third Annual Renovator's House Tour. "These walls can talk is the theme for a tour of renovated houses on the hill." The tour benefits the Watkins, Peabody and Stuart-Hobson Elementary Schools. \$20. Info: John Burst, 547-3336.

11 a.m. Art and Spirit: A Celebration of Womanhood! "Vera Hope Walston, a fashion and furniture designer encourages women to empower themselves in all aspects of life by finding the artist within." Reservations suggested, 610-3371. At the Anacostia Museum & Center for African American History & Culture, 1901 Fort Pl. SE. <http://anacostia.si.edu>.

Noon - 3 p.m. A Bash for Bearden's Book. "Step inside the newly-published book by Romare Bearden, Li'l Dan the Drummer Boy. Celebrate this Civil War story with activities from the time period and projects inspired by the artist." At the Capital Children's Museum, 800 3rd St. NE. <http://www.ccm.org>.

2 p.m. Bike Ride for Beginners and Experienced. "Denise D'Amour of Capitol Hill Bikes will guide participants along the most scenic and safest routes from Capitol Hill to many of D.C.'s bike paths. This is a joint venture with The Healing Arts of Capitol Hill. Before beginning the ride, Denise will help get bikes adjusted and talk about how to safely navigate the streets. Bring water and a helmet." Meet at Capitol Hill Bikes, 709 8th St. SE. Info, 544-9389. <http://capitolhillbikes.com/site/intro.cfm>. §