

Inauguration 2009



ABOVE: Photo courtesy of Congressman Lincoln Davis from Tennessee's Fourth Congressional District.



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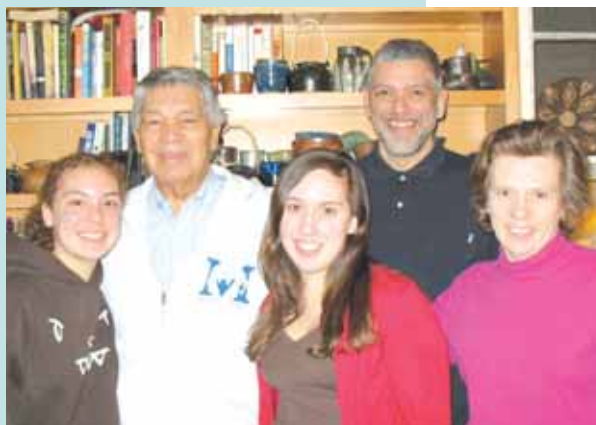


1. Photos by Olivia-Jené Fagon.
2. Photos by Andrew Lightman.



1.

A young Hill resident waves her flag to passersby on their way to the Inauguration.



Tuskegee Airman David F. James attended the Inauguration at the invitation of President Obama. He stayed with his son, David M. James, daughter-in-law, Becky Burke, and granddaughter's, Claire (left) and Genevieve; who are Hill residents.



2.

Not The Atlas!

This is in response to the January H Street article which appeared in the Hill Rag. Having had a business on H Street since the end of 2001 and being involved in H Street for several years before that, I not only have a large stake in the neighborhood, but also an obligation to address a nagging (to me) issue.

When, in 2002 through a monstrous amount of sweat equity, a group of us opened the H Street Playhouse, we were a lonely player on our block. During the day, we had a few stalwart neighbors (Smokey's, the Salvation Army and others now gone), but at night our lights were a lonely beacon.

But the arts are the catalyst for renewal. And when the art is good, people don't come just once, they return. And when they return, business rises up to fill the demands of the people. It's just like that.

About 10 years ago, as the corridor planning got underway, our little area started to be called the Arts and Entertainment District. And there for a while the H Street Playhouse was both the arts and the entertainment. There was much discussion about what to call H Street. Should it be something like "The New U" slogan? Or something to honor its Old City roots? My feeling was that "H Street" was enough. That's who we are.

Now, it appears we are in the "Atlas District." A while back, I argued against this moniker as, selfishly, it does not represent who we (the Playhouse) are. As a separate independent theater, being folded in under this umbrella confuses our patrons and diminishes our individuality. And it's a touchy subject, because we are friends with the Atlas and they are a generous bunch. One of our resident companies even has lovely office space in the Atlas. But we are constantly having to explain that we're "the other theater, you know, down the block." And even though the District government has not adopted the name, the more it shows up in the media, the more ingrained it becomes.

I would like to appeal to the Atlas and to Mr. Englert's dynasty (and to the local media) that we return to calling ourselves what we are: "the arts and entertainment district. On H Street." (Even Joy Zinoman on 14th Street doesn't call it "The Studio District." And if she did, that certainly would not sit well with Source Theatre.) And while I very much appreciate the combined work to achieve a shuttle for the corridor (although I was not asked to be part of the Business Cooperative referenced in Jen's article), this is very much starting to feel like David and Goliath. And I don't want nor like that.

Each year, several thousands of folks come to the H Street Playhouse to see work



that has been award-winning and very well reviewed. We're a small, scrappy theater hosting incredibly exciting work, artistically on par with anyone in the region. We want to keep it that way and maintain our unique identity. We are Theater Alliance, Forum Theatre, Madcap Players and more. We are arts and entertainment. We only ask that our neighborhood name reflect that.

Adele Robey & Bruce Robey
H Street Playhouse, arobey@fusemail.com

Long Lines At Eastern Market Branch Post Office

Customers of the Eastern Market branch post office breathed a sigh of relief after Christmas came and went; anticipating that the holiday's long lines would get shorter. They were disappointed. Day after day the lines stretch to the door and a wait of fifteen, twenty, or even thirty minutes is not uncommon. Frequently the clerks are so busy they don't have time to put the mail in the boxes that people rent.

Why is this? Customers know why. The clerks know why. The problem is that Eastern Market branch doesn't have enough workers. Typically there are at most only one or two clerks on duty at the counter. I rent a post office box. And since I live from paycheck to paycheck like many other people, a check from a client must get into my box on time, or else I pay my bills late.

The branch simply needs more personnel.
Bryce Suderow, streetstories@juno.com

Forward With the 11th Street Bridges Replacement

In Sept. 2005, the District's Department of Transportation initiated an environmental impact study to determine a preferred alternative for replacing the 11th Street Bridges. These bridges link the District's Capitol Hill and Historic Anacostia neighborhoods and provide a key component of the Anacostia Waterfront transportation system. The new bridges are needed to replace structures that have come to the end of their useful life.

As framed by the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA), consultants were asked to determine how best to balance the needs of District residents with those of regional commuters was a key component of

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the instructions DDOT gave the consultants. They were also tasked with recommending bridge designs that would anticipate future traffic demand and significant economic development along the Anacostia Waterfront.

Four years later, after receiving approval via a federal Record of Decision (ROD), DDOT is ready to launch a design-build construction project to replace the bridges, separate local and regional traffic, provide missing access to the Anacostia Freeway, and reduce the volume of freeway traffic that spills onto neighborhood streets.

Replacing the 11th Street Bridges will also provide benefits that help create a more inclusive and sustainable District of Columbia. But it also represents a promise kept. Four years ago, DDOT told District residents that we would begin bridge reconstruction within five years. We will meet that timetable.

That's why it is vitally important for citizens to have accurate and timely information about the 11th Street Bridges Replacement Project:

1. The traffic analysis performed for the 11th Street Bridges EIS was done in accordance with standard Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) guidelines including elements of the model designed to account for induced travel. The modeling is consistent with industry practice. There is no basis for the claim that DDOT did not follow standard modeling procedures or undercounted future traffic volumes.

2. The 11th Street Bridges replacement project will change the way the Southeast Freeway operates between 11th Street and Pennsylvania Ave. The connection will be eliminated by the 11th Street project. Conversion of this connection to a boulevard will be done in the future by DDOT. That section of roadway will no longer operate as a freeway.
3. There are four freeway lanes in each direction today: two connecting to the 11th St. Bridges and two connecting to the Southeast freeway spur and Barney Circle. When the project is complete there will be three freeway lanes in each direction connecting the South East Freeway and the Anacostia Freeway and no freeway lanes to Barney Circle. Thus there is a net decrease of one freeway lane in each direction.
4. Traffic increases on I-395 and the Southeast Freeway will result from decreased traffic on I-295, the Sousa Bridge, Whitney Young Bridge, Benning Road Bridge, Minnesota Ave, and Good Hope Rd. This is consistent with the project goal to reduce the volume of freeway traffic that spills onto the neighborhood streets due to current traffic patterns.

Where do we go from here? The 11th Street Bridges Replacement is a crucial project that provides needed infrastructure to enhance the social and economic benefits of new development along the Anacostia Waterfront and the District. It is also

needed as a part of the District's response to growth across the Washington metropolitan region.

DDOT has been listening to the concerns of District residents. Since 2005, DDOT has participated in more than 70 meetings with neighborhood groups, civic associations, business networks, recreational organizations as well as federal and District agencies and will continue to do so. For more information about the 11th St. Bridges Replacement Project, visit www.theanacostiawaterfront.com.

Let's move forward, together.

Kathleen Linehan Penney
Chief Engineer, District of Columbia

Thanks Hill Rag

I logged online to read the article about Thea Bowman Charter School (Hill Rag, Jan. '09). My children attend the school and I am really satisfied with the curriculum and the staff. I hope parents read the article and come visit Thea Bowman.

I also read the article "Living Well Below Your Means" by Pattie Cinelli. I really needed to read that story. I have just realized in the last two years what that statement means, and that it doesn't have to mean you can't have and do things you enjoy. It's having good spending habits and spending wisely, but still enjoying what matters in life.

I enjoyed reading the many different articles. They weren't too long and not too short, just right. I will be logging on more often.

smcook_ss@hotmail.com ★









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