

NEIGHBORHOOD UPDATE

A NEIGHBORHOOD NEWSLETTER PUBLISHED JOINTLY BY THE
SPRING VALLEY-WESLEY HEIGHTS CITIZENS ASSOCIATION AND
NEIGHBORS FOR A LIVABLE COMMUNITY

FALL 2020 SPECIAL ANC 3D ELECTION ISSUE

THOMAS M. SMITH, EDITOR

CHOOSING OUR ADVISORY NEIGHBORHOOD COMMISSIONERS

VOTER ASSISTANCE INFORMATION

All registered DC voters will receive a ballot for the November 3 election in the mail. If you have not yet received your ballot or if you have any questions about voting, call 1-866-328-6837. You have several options to vote:

1) Mail your ballot through USPS.

2) Drop your ballot off at a Mail-In-Ballot Drop Box Location beginning October 5 until 8 PM, November 3, at the Palisades Library, the 2nd District Police Station, or the Tenley-Friendship Library, or 3 other locations in Ward 3.

3) Vote in person at an Early Voting Location beginning October 27 through November 2 from 8:30 AM – 7 PM at the Horace Mann Elementary School or other locations across the city.

4) Vote in person on Election Day, November 3 at Horace Mann Elementary School or 10 other locations in Ward 3, including two Super Vote Centers.

Additional location information is available at www.dcboe.org

By Dr. Jeffrey Kraskin, President

Spring Valley-Wesley Heights Citizens Association

Typically, the summer and fall months before a November election are full of many knocks at our doors as candidates for DC City Council, School Board, and Advisory Neighborhood Commission (ANC) canvas the neighborhood to tell us who they are and why we should consider them for the elective office they are seeking. But, as we are painfully aware, the COVID-19 pandemic has changed much that we are used to – even grassroots campaigning.

The Spring Valley-Wesley Heights Citizens Association (SVWHCA), the neighborhoods' long-standing citizens association, and Neighbors for a Livable Community (NLC), another long-established non-profit organization that focuses on preserving the character of neighborhoods surrounding American University (AU), are publishing this special election issue focused on ANC 3D candidates seeking to represent the Spring Valley and Wesley Heights neighborhoods. We believe that everyone should have as much information as possible to make decisions that directly impact our neighborhoods.

As a former ANC Commissioner, myself, I was very disappointed to learn that some candidates for ANC in our neighborhoods chose **NOT** to share any information with you in this special newsletter. I have always believed that a candidate that chooses to not

fully participate in our community, in effect, disqualifies themselves and has absolutely no reason to even be considered. Sadly, not only have candidates with no registered competition chosen to not participate in this special edition of your neighborhood news, but some candidates in competitive races have stated they “respectfully” would not provide any statement. I believe that speaks volumes about their lack of any true interest in being a representative of **ALL** our residents.

Our 3D Advisory Neighborhood Commission Single Member District (SMD) boundaries are determined every 10 years as a product of the U.S. Census. Once the national census is completed, the current boundaries of the districts are likely to change to adjust to population growth within the neighborhood, including at AU. SMD boundaries must conform to guidelines approved by the DC City Council, but each SMD is roughly equal in the number of residents represented. That is why our neighborhoods are represented on ANC 3D by more than one commissioner; but your specific ballot will only have the name(s) of those running in your SMD based on your address.

As ballots arrive at our homes this year because of COVID-19, you have the option to vote by mail, to deposit your completed ballot in a designated Drop Box, or to vote in person at an early voting center or at a polling place on November 3. However you choose to vote, the most important thing is that you VOTE!

All candidates for ANC 3D01 (Wesley Heights), 3D02 (Spring Valley), 3D03 (Spring Valley), 3D07 (American University), and 3D08 (Wesley Heights) were invited to submit statements for publication in this special issue.

I sincerely hope you will find this special edition helpful as you either go to the voting poll or your dining room table to complete your ballot.

CANDIDATE STATEMENTS

ANC 3D01 – WESLEY HEIGHTS

CAROLINE CROFT

As a long-time resident of Wesley Heights, with decades of national public, political, and career service, I am asking for your trust and your vote in the November 3 election to be your new representative on Advisory Neighborhood Commission (ANC) 3D. For those of you who may not know, ANCs are neighborhood-based boards that “advise” DC elected officials and agencies on local issues, such as planning, public safety, transportation, street

repairs, and zoning. ANCs were established in the DC Home Rule Charter to ensure that neighbors, like us, had an advocate with DC government. We need that advocate now more than ever. And, at this point in my life, I want to use my life and work experiences and skills for the betterment of our neighborhood.

In normal years, I would be able to walk the neighborhood, meet you face-to-face, and ask for your vote. As we all know, these are challenging times for every one of our citizens.

But, this is an important election for our neighborhood. We need a new Commissioner who will respond to our needs. We need a new Commissioner who is committed to an open and transparent decision-making process at the ANC. And we need a new Commissioner committed to the highest of ethical standards.

I will be a Commissioner who will not settle for back room decision-making. I will be a Commissioner who engages with you, wants to hear from you on matters of concern; and I will represent your interests – not the interests of large institutions or other special interests that do not reside in our neighborhood. I will insist that all deliberation and decision-making by the ANC occurs in public, not behind closed doors. As a Commissioner, I will do diligence on the issues that come before the ANC. ANC 3D at one time had the most stringent ethics rules in the city. Sadly, the ANC eliminated strict conflict of interest and ethics rules in recent years. I will work to ensure the ANC recommits to the highest of ethical standards for our ANC. Having performed my years of service with integrity and transparency, I want the Commission also to be forthright in its decision-making.

This is the time in my professional life when I can devote a tremendous amount of thoughtful deliberation, understanding, and passion to the issues affecting our neighbors. As a public employee of the U.S. Department of State and a member of the faculty at American University as the Diplomat in Residence and teaching a course on Latin America, I can bring a broad and reasoned perspective to concerns, including town-gown issues that are important for any neighborhood that surrounds a university.

ANCs are not about the Commissioners who serve on them. ANCs are about you. It is not about my voice. It is about yours. That is something that our ANC seems to have forgotten. As somebody who has had opportunities to work over the years with so many people who had a vision and a shared commitment to make the world a better place, I truly believe in the power of individuals to make a difference. That is what my career and my life has been all about. So, together, let's make a difference for our neighborhood. I hope I can count on your vote in the November 3 election.

Charles Elkins: “I have chosen not to make a candidate statement in your publication.”

ANC 3D02 – SPRING VALLEY**TONI A. GHAZI**

Dear Neighbors:

I am asking for your support and your vote in the November 3rd election to be your new representative on the Advisory Neighborhood Commission (ANC) 3D. First, I want to thank Troy Kravitz, our outgoing Commissioner, for all his work and support to our community for the last four (4) years.

PROFESSIONALLY, I have worked in Real Estate in the D.C. Metro Area for the last 7-years and Commercial Real Estate before that for another 8-years. As a realtor, I understand the value that my clients seek in a community and, as a Spring Valley resident, I take pride in what makes this community such a desirable place to live.

YOU MAY KNOW ME FROM an article in the June 24th ‘Style’ section of the *Washington Post* about my efforts to help find ‘Finn’, a Bernese mountain dog, that had gone missing in the neighborhood. My husband & I have five (5) rescued dogs of our own and there was something about Finn that captured my attention and my heart. After seeing a post on the *NextDoor* list serv, I, along MANY OTHERS in the community worked to get more people involved – to expand the search party. Our efforts were successful, and Finn was found. I am happy to have played a small role in bringing our community together to help unite a dog with his heartbroken owner. People who were strangers to one another came out of their COVID-19 bubbles to join AS-ONE and find Finn. It was a magical experience! You simply FELT the LOVE everywhere!

WHAT I ‘CONSCIOUSLY’ CHOOSE TO BRING TO THE ANC is a view of CONNECTENESS to each other despite our inability to see it. We all have LIGHT inside of us – we simply need to make a conscious choice to make it SHINE and at times, we need to be an example FOR OTHERS to be able to find their OWN-LIGHT. I am a deep believer of the Universe, Consciousness, Spirituality, Connectedness, Meditation and Channeling too.

I do NOT believe in the concept of wrong or right – NOR do I believe in the concept of good or evil. I am big fan of knowing that we ALL have choices to make in this existence and that the REACTION TO THOSE choices is what creates the reality that we live in. Ego & judgement will always be placed aside as I do in my daily/personal life to see things from the HIGHER-SELF & HEART-CENTERED perspective. One of my biggest inspirations is

Darryl Anka who channels a multidimensional-being named ‘Bashar,’ - he is one of my inspirations and how I choose to live life – with LOVE & LIGHT!

I pledge to bring LOVE & LIGHT to the ANC and to TRULY CALL ourselves a COMMUNITY!

AS YOUR ANC COMMISSIONER, I would like to help build an ANC that is committed to representing OUR COLLECTIVE interests; to create an environment on the ANC where residents feel welcome to express their views; and where your views will be respected and valued. BUT always committed to the UNIVERSAL message of LOVE & LIGHT.

I pledge to work with an open heart and mind with all neighbors and my ANC colleagues to find common ground. Thank you for considering me! If you would like to talk more with me, feel free to email me at toni@tonighazi.com or call my cell at 571-216-1075. I look forward to hearing from you.

Elizabeth R. Pemmerl: “Respectfully, I chose not to provide a statement.”

ANC 3D03 – SPRING VALLEY

Paige Ela: “Thank you for the offer. I respectfully decline your offer to submit a statement.”

ANC 3D07 – AMERICAN UNIVERSITY

Christian Damiana: “I have chosen not to submit a candidate statement.”

ANC 3D08 – WESLEY HEIGHTS

DOREEN MOSES

As a former ANC commissioner, I am excited about the opportunity to once again serve my neighbors and represent their needs. My three terms on the Dupont Circle advisory neighborhood commission were productive, intellectually absorbing, and, most of all, educational.

It was a time of growth for me. I learned to be political – in the best sense of the word. I learned to listen carefully to the views of all sides before reaching my own conclusions. I learned to balance commercial and residential interests, and I received an in-depth education

in zoning rules. I learned to set priorities, to oppose unnecessary developers who would have destroyed the historical integrity of the neighborhood.

How would lessons learned benefit our neighborhood? I am a fighter, unafraid of taking unpopular views. I would for example, oppose an effort underway to ban much of the street parking on New Mexico Ave. Considerable study would first be required if the needs of drivers are to be understood.

My career has been diverse. I was an award-winning teacher and documentary film maker. I worked for 15 years as an elementary school teacher in the DC, the last of which was in Ward 3. Through a Cafritz Foundation award as an Outstanding Teacher, I designed social studies curricula, developed literature programs, and implemented literacy programs.

As a filmmaker, I received numerous grants and awards and focused on the assimilation of immigrants into American society. My films were shown on PBS, at the Museum of Modern Art and the Natural History Museum in New York, at the Circle Theater in Washington, and several universities throughout the country.

To many residents here, the ANC has been virtually invisible and its powers, little understood. I would seek out ways to publicize important issues through local newsletters and websites and make available a special email address for constituent concerns. I commit to devoting all my energy to ensure that our interests are well represented.

Benjamin Bergmann: “Thank you for the invitation, but I choose not to provide a candidate statement.”

Reminder: Wear A Mask, But Say Hello

More and more neighbors, including children, are out every day walking, running, and biking on neighborhood streets. If you are driving in the neighborhoods, please slow down. **Masks are required when outside unless you are engaged in vigorous exercise. Social distancing also helps to protect each other. Thank you for wearing a mask.**

Neighborhood Update is a newsletter established by the **Spring Valley-Wesley Heights Citizens Association (SVWHCA)** (www.svwhca.org) and **Neighbors for a Livable Community (NLC)** to report news and information on issues of importance to residents of Spring Valley and Wesley Heights. You may send information appropriate for publication to Tom Smith at tmfsmith@rcn.com. No portion of this newsletter may be duplicated without written permission from the Spring Valley-Wesley Heights Citizens Association. This newsletter is distributed electronically. If you want to be on the distribution list, send your email to tmfsmith@rcn.com. Please share this with your own personal e-mail networks.
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