



# SHAW MAIN STREETS NEWS

WINTER 2012 - 2013

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# LETTER FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR: *SWEET SOUNDS*

Nature and the economy have a lot in common. When they suffer a serious injury, both take time to recover and return to their previous condition.

When I first moved to Shaw, the return of songbirds in the spring was a natural occurrence. Like clockwork, as the winter chill yielded to spring warmth, bird song would serve as a morning alarm clock, and a walk through the neighborhood meant being serenaded by avian friends that shared the blocks with us. Even the caw-caw-cawing of large ravens reminded us that the hood did not belong to us alone.

Then West Nile Virus decimated the District's bird population. It seemed that the only survivors were seagulls and starlings, apparently somehow unaffected. The 'silent spring,' reminiscent of Rachel Carson's prediction of the die off of bird life due to pesticide overuse in her 1962 book of the same name, did not go unnoticed, at least by me. The quiet was deafening, especially in the mornings. It took years for the bird populations to recover, but now, bird song is once again a harbinger of the rebirth that spring brings, along with tulips, cherry blossoms, and *Forsythia*.

Similarly, all the major development projects in Shaw, from CityMarket at O to Kelsey Gardens to Broadcast Center One, were all ready to move forward until the world economic crisis slammed the door on financing in September 2008. The sounds of jackhammers and pile drivers were not heard in the neighborhood for years.

Today, every major project that was on the brink of starting construction four years ago is back on track. Some developments, like Addison Square at Kelsey Gardens, have changed hands, with Jefferson Apartment Group acquiring the property and shovel-ready plans from Metropolitan Development. Others, like CityMarket, weathered the financial storm to obtain the private and public funding needed to begin construction, despite the fears and lamentations of many in the neighborhood that the project would never come to pass.

So now, not only are the birds back, but the construction crane is the official 'bird' of Shaw. The neighborhood's skyline is riddled with these towering giants, from Massachusetts Avenue to 7th and S Streets, NW. Like songbirds in spring, the cranes herald the long awaited construction that will fill many gaps in the neighborhood's fabric dating back to the April 1968 riots and the urban renewal era that followed. These construction projects will at last heal the largest wounds left behind by the anger and pain prompted by the loss of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., whose new memorial on the Tidal Basin likewise helps to heal a wound in our nation's collective life.

There was a time when a new development project in Shaw was a *rara avis*, a rare bird, so exotic that it deserved a double-take. Now construction fences, cranes, and the sweet sound of hammers, power tools, dump trucks backing up, and the like are so commonplace that they don't prompt a second thought. Like birds singing in spring.

Alexander M. Padro

# Shaw in Bloom

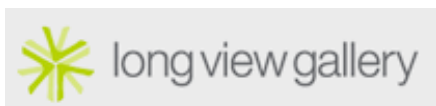


# Gala 2013

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Central European restaurant **Bistro Bohem** opened in March at 600 Florida Avenue, NW. Chef/Owner Jarek Mika's menu features his take on traditional dishes (Schnitzel, Goulash, Chicken Paprikash). Great cocktails (Becherovka Summer, Bistro Bohem's take on the Mojito; Bohemian Margarita; Absinthe Gin Fizz) and fresh pastries complete a trip to Europe without a passport. Outdoor seating adds to the European vibe. 202-735-5895 | [www.bistrobohem.com](http://www.bistrobohem.com)

**New York Avenue Beach Bar** opened in May. DC's first in-town beach, with 70 tons of sand, umbrellas, frozen margaritas, great food, and even a jet ski, was big hit during its first season. Owners Tom Brown (The Passenger), Karl Graham, and their team have created the perfect beach experience, six days a week. Wash down the food from rotating on-premises food trucks with an ice cold brew while listening to the steel drums. And they've got flip-flops if you forget to bring them. 645 New York Avenue, NW, 202-656-9229 | [www.newyorkavenuebeachbar.com](http://www.newyorkavenuebeachbar.com)

**A&D**, a neighborhood bar from SUNdeVICH and Seasonal Pantry co-owners Ali Bagheri and Dan O'Brien, opened in December. The dimly lit space, with exposed brick and pressed tin ceiling, is a perfect backdrop for the house cocktails (the Washington Post's Fritiz Hahn raved about The A&D, The 54th, and the 9th Street Coquito) and limited food menu (chicken pot pie, meatloaf sandwich, smoked chicken sandwich, potato chip poutine, pickled eggs). 1314 9th Street, NW, 202-290-1804 | [www.andbardc.com](http://www.andbardc.com)

The historic **Howard Theatre**, the Carnegie Hall of Washington's Black Broadway, reopened in April after being closed for three decades. The theater's façade has been restored to its original 1910 appearance, and a completely new 21st century interior with two bars, a full kitchen, and flexible seating has been hosting a diverse list of performers and equally diverse audiences, and a Sunday Gospel brunch. 620 T Street, NW, 202-803-2899 [www.thehowardtheatre.com](http://www.thehowardtheatre.com)

**Darryl Carter, Inc.**, opened its doors in November at 1320 9th Street, NW, which had been vacant for decades. After an extensive renovation of the building and carriage house, renowned interior designer Darryl Carter moved his design practice to Shaw and created white-walled spaces on three floors to house furnishing and products of his own design (furniture, lighting, paints, fragrances) and others, new, old, and hand crafted, that fit his minimalist aesthetic. 202-234-5926 | [www.darrylcarter.com](http://www.darrylcarter.com)

**Secret Lounge & Sports Bar** opened at 1414 9th Street, NW, in August. Owners Ephrem Ygirmay and Derege Daneale have created a hybrid sports bar and hookah lounge, with a private party room. There's no tobacco in the hookahs: you'll inhale fruit-flavored aromas, like apple, mango, orange, and mint. Add sandwiches, salads, Ethiopian food, breakfast dishes, and hot beverages and you're in on the secret. Ask about daily lunch and Happy Hour Secret Specials. 202-319-3505 [www.secretloungecd.com](http://www.secretloungecd.com)

## NOW OPEN!

By Alexander M. Padro



**Rahama African Restaurant** opened in March. All three of Charity Abusei and husband Usmanu Abubakari's restaurants of the same name ("mercy of God" in Arabic) feature authentic Pan-African cuisine (hearty goat, beef, lamb, fish and vegetable dishes and stews, Jollof rice, fish with fried plantains and beans, fufu and peanut butter soup)—just ask all the immigrants who eat there. Try their zesty, non-alcoholic ginger drinks made with oranges, lemons, and pineapples. 1924 9th Street, NW, 202-803-2371 | [www.rahama-african-cuisine.com](http://www.rahama-african-cuisine.com)

**Dove House Liquors** opened in June. Husband and wife owners Derege Daneale and Selam Adal have taken over the former Boston Wine & Spirits and expanded the store's alcoholic beverage offerings.

Wine tastings on Friday evenings will introduce customers to new additions to their selections. Stop by after dinner to pick up an Ethiopian red or honey wine or beer that you enjoyed at one of Little Ethiopia's restaurants. 1905 9th Street, NW, 202-745-0070.

**BicycleSPACE** relocated to 1019 7th Street, NW, from the Mount Vernon Triangle in March. Rated the best bike shop in DC by the *Washington City Paper*, Erik Kugler and Philip Koopman's should be your first stop whether you're looking to buy a foldable Brompton (a DC exclusive), want to get a bike you bought on Craigslist fixed up, or aim to join a group ride around town. (See article on Page 7 for more information.) 202-962-0123 | [www.bicyclespacedc.com](http://www.bicyclespacedc.com)

**Kafe Bohem**, a new coffee shop, opened in September, offering European style coffees, featuring products from Vienna-based Julius Meinl. Coffee manager Lenora Yerkes's team prepares coffees that are as lovely to look at as they are delicious to drink. Not to mention the fresh baked pastries, breakfast and lunch sandwiches, and salads. 600 Florida Avenue, NW, 202-735-5895

**Ordinary People Barber Shop** opened at 1513 7th Street, NW, in April. Owners Troy Arnold and Robert Mozie have created an old fashioned barber shop, bringing traditional services up to date. Think straight razor, hot towel shaves and free WiFi. Arnold, a 27-year veteran barber, leads a team of seven, serving men, women, and children. Ask about Tuesday and Wednesday specials. 202-241-6500.

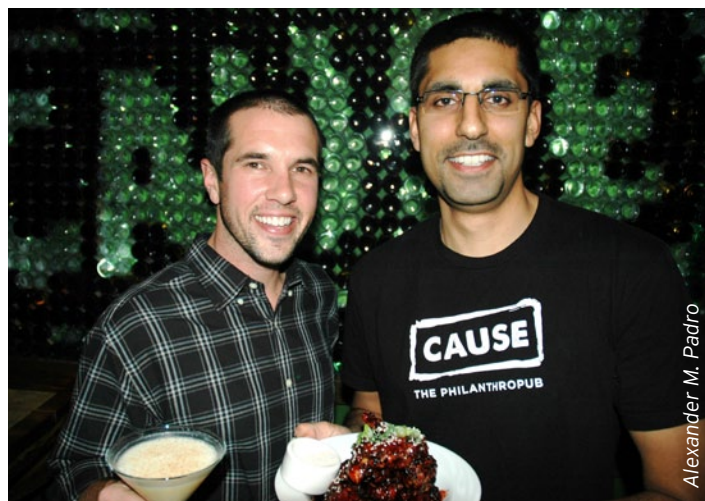
**Shaw's Tavern** opened under new owner Siyamak Sadeghi, new management and a liquor license in March, after opening briefly under the original owner was unable to obtain an ABC license. The comfort food menu, highlighted by flat bread pizzas, burgers, sandwiches and salads, plus entrees (pork tenderloin, ribs, catfish, salmon) is paired with a menu of cocktails deriving their monikers from the neighborhood's namesake and the Massachusetts 54th Regiment he commanded. Shaw's Tavern offers outdoor seating and events most nights (movies, trivia, live music). 520 Florida Avenue, NW, 202-518-4092 | [www.shawstavern.com](http://www.shawstavern.com)

**GNT Group** opened in April. Whether you need a cleaning service for your home or office, this new woman-owned business is ready to make your space shine. Owners Genet Mersha, Tirhas Welday and Ngisti Gebreyesus and their team can handle an entire office building or a one-bedroom condo with the same attention to detail. They're a DC Certified Business Enterprise and use environmentally-friendly products. 1503 9th Street, NW, 202-468-897 | [www.gntgroupdc.com](http://www.gntgroupdc.com)

**Chercher Ethiopian Restaurant & Market** opened in May. Chercher's chef emphasizes a lighter, healthier approach to Ethiopian cuisine, including 100% teff wheat injera and minimal use of oil. Owner Alemayehu "Alex" Abebe named his restaurant for a region in eastern Ethiopia famous for its agricultural production. Three varieties of Ethiopian coffee are available, in both bean and brewed form. Open for breakfast, lunch, and dinner. Spices, injera, and lentils are among the other items available in the market to bring a touch of Ethiopia to your home. 1334 9th Street, NW, 202-299-9703.

**The Brixton** opened in July at 901 U Street, NW. With two bars inside and another pair of bars on the large roof deck, this latest offering from the Hilton Brothers, the folks behind Marvin and The Gibson, brought back to life a building that was boarded up for decades. Named for a multi-ethnic neighborhood in London, The Brixton's menu features British-style pub fare (fish and chips, bangers, Scotch eggs, shepherd's pie) and dishes from across the Empire's former domain (curries, samosas, jerk chicken, Caribbean corn meal patties). 202-560-5045 [www.brixtondc.com](http://www.brixtondc.com)

**Off Road Indoor Cycling** opened in November, bringing the next generation in indoor cycling and strength training to Shaw. Owners Tali Wenger and Tammar Berger's two floor studio offers state of the art equipment and TRX and boxing classes, too. (See article on Page 7 for details.) 905 U Street, NW, 202-681-1319 | [www.offroaddc.com](http://www.offroaddc.com)




**Cause: The PhilanthroPub** opened in November at 1926 9th Street, NW. Founders Nicholas Vilelle and Raj Ratwani's concept: eat delicious food and drink great cocktails and part of your check goes to charity. Favorites from Executive Chef Adam Stein and Chef de Cuisine Adam Litchfield's menu: General Tso Wings and the Quentil (quinoa/lentil) Burger. Top selling cocktails: The Truth (Rye Whiskey, Apple Cider, Riesling, Housemade Grenadine, Tarragon) and The Harvey (Vodka, Crème de Banana, Light Cream, Orange-Vanilla Syrup, Nutmeg). 202-588-5220 | [www.causedc.org](http://www.causedc.org)

**Elbo Market** opened in August at 1731 7th Street, NW. Featuring Seattle's Best coffee and hand scooped Hershey's ice cream, owner Miftah Sherefa's convenience store has proved popular with Howard University students and neighborhood residents missing the O Street Market Giant during construction of the new store. 202-299-9868.

**Simon Vintage Furniture and Homegoods** opened at 1911 9th Street, NW, in December, offering furnishings and accessories, from Art Deco to Mid-Century and beyond. Owner Steven Cruse and Sean Reidy's shop, named for the dog pictured on the logo on the store's windows, is also a great destination for unique and timeless gifts that will transport recipients to yesteryear. 202-629-2517 | [www.SimonVintage.com](http://www.SimonVintage.com)

**Uptown Ethiopian Fusion Cuisine**, formerly Fasil Ethiopian Restaurant, opened in September with a new menu, adding items like a quesadilla made with injera instead of tortillas, and chicken wings and fries served with spicy Ethiopian sauces. Owners Sisay Tassew and Gebremeskel Kahassai also renovated and opened the second floor as a lounge. 1608 7th Street, NW, 202-232-1608 | [www.uptownshaw.com](http://www.uptownshaw.com)

**Hogo**, a new bar from the team behind The Passenger, opened in December offering rum drinks and Hawaiian cuisine. Menu will shift regularly as guest chefs take over the kitchen, as part of Temporary Works, a sort of culinary popup inside Hogo. 1017 7th Street, NW, 202-393-1313 





Alexander M. Padro

— Off Road Indoor Cycling's Tammar Berger and Tali Wenger sweat the details at their U Street cycling studio.

# IS SHAW BECOMING THE CENTER OF CYCLING IN DC?

By Alexander M. Padro

When **BicycleSPACE** moved to 1019 7<sup>th</sup> Street, NW, in March 2012, the shop was already a highly-visible presence on the DC bicycling scene. Forced out of its previous location on a less trafficked street by development, BicycleSPACE now was in the sights of thousands of pedestrians, drivers, and of course, bicyclists every day.

Then eight months later, when Off Road Indoor Cycling opened at 905 U Street, NW, these two cycling businesses virtually bookended the north and south edges of the Shaw Main Streets commercial district, with National Pedicabs in Blagden Alley in the middle.

"I taught myself to ride at four years old," recalls DC native Erik Kugler, co-owner of BicycleSPACE. He opened BicycleSPACE in February 2010 with business partner Philip Koopman, with the goal of creating a community bicycle shop for ordinary people. The business has grown to employ 18 people full time and six part timers, and has become much more than just a place to buy bikes, accessories, and get repairs made. BicycleSPACE's

## BICYCLESPLACE

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[www.bicyclespacedc.com](http://www.bicyclespacedc.com)

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group rides attract up to 1,000 participants, and weekly yoga classes and bicycle advocacy group meetings bring many more people to the block.

The shop is the exclusive DC retailer for a number of brands of bicycles, including the foldable Brompton, which DC planning director Harriet Tregoning owns and which fit

growing community,” Wenger recalls. They chose a long vacant building next to Dickson Wine Bar, and transformed two floors into a place where clients’ schedules and lifestyles could be accommodated, where they could provide flexibility not available from big gyms.

The result is the top-of-the-line in indoor cycling: the second floor studio features a



Alexander M. Padro


under a desk. The most popular repair service request? Fixing used bicycles purchased on Craig’s List and bikes retrieved from parents’ basements, often with sentimental value. The BicycleSPACE team are mainly professionals who have built bicycles elsewhere.

BicycleSPACE won Best Bike Shop honors in the *Washington City Paper*’s 2012 Best of DC poll, and was named one of the Top 100 Retailers in the country by Bicycle Retailer and Industry News. On December 7, 2012, BicycleSPACE received the coveted Liveable, Walkable “Brickie” award from Ward 6 Councilmember Tommy Wells.

**Off Road Indoor Cycling’s** Tammar Berger and Tali Wenger live in the neighborhood, so when they decided to open a studio focused on cycling and strength training, they knew they “wanted to be part of this vibrant,

10 foot screen and HD projector, with power meters for the bikes. The first floor space hosts TRX training and boxing classes, which elsewhere is often only available to gym members. All reservations are made online for single classes, three months (five to 10 classes), and monthly unlimited classes. “Members of other gyms can get their cycling in at Off Road,” Wenger advises.

Berger and Wenger are pleased that their team of 14 instructors is very hands on. ““It makes for an atmosphere where you want to stay and work out, where the receptionist knows your name,” Wenger explains. “If you come regularly, staff misses you when you skip a day.”

“We work out hard, but we have a lot of fun when we do it,” Wenger observes. “It’s a party every time you get on a bike.” 

└  
*BicycleSPACE’s Erik Kugler is not just a businessman: he’s one of the city’s most prominent bicycle advocates.*



Alexander M. Padro



Alexander M. Padro

Ali Bagheri and Daniel O'Brien, co-owners of SUNdeVICH, have fun creating their globally-inspired sandwiches.

Abdelilah Souada's homemade sauces make all Pizza D'oro's Italian dishes shine.

## BEST NEW SHAW BUSINESSES SHOW SHAW'S GOOD TASTE

By Alexander M. Padro

All three winners of the Best New Shaw Business of 2011 awards were food businesses, the first time that category has swept the awards.

The winners, chosen in an online poll from among businesses that opened during 2011, were announced at the Shaw Main Streets annual meeting on March 22, 2012 at Bread for the City.

**Seasonal Pantry** was crowned as Best New Business. Seasonal Pantry offers handcrafted gourmet provisions and meals ready





Nicolene Dutoit

Seasonal Pantry/Supper Club's Daniel O'Brien was recently, and briefly, a contestant on TV's Top Chef.

to take home. Handmade pastas, sausages, pates, whole roasted chickens, soups, pickled vegetables, sauces, and fresh baked goods have made Seasonal Pantry a regular stop for neighborhood residents. In addition, Seasonal Pantry also presents Supper Club, private dinners showcasing Chef Daniel O'Brien's creativity several nights each week. Supper Club received 2-1/2 stars from *Washington Post* food critic Tom Sietsema and was favorably reviewed by the *New York Times* in 2012.

**SUNdeVICH** (a nod to how some mispronounce sandwich) received First Runner Up honors. A sandwich shop featuring sammies named for the world cities their ingredients feature, like the Kingston's jerk chicken, has since spawned a popular food truck parked on downtown streets. The lines that snake down Naylor Court are a tribute to the locally sourced and house prepared meats and sausages that are addictive and keep customers coming back for more. SUNdeVICH won a 2012 *Washington Post* poll as Best Place for Sandwiches in DC over better-known delis like Taylor Gourmet. Soups, salads, sweets, and sodas complete the menu.

**Pizza D'oro** took the Second Runner Up nod. Besides the pizza, this Italian takeout spot (they have a few tables for dining on premises and also deliver) offers pastas and other specialties, all featuring house-made sauces. Open late, Pizza D'oro (golden pizza in Italian) is a natural for Howard Theatre and U Street patrons looking for a satisfying bite to eat before heading home. 🏠

## SEASONAL PANTRY/ SUPPER CLUB

1314-1/2 9th Street, NW  
202-713-9866  
[www.seasonalpantry.com](http://www.seasonalpantry.com)

## SUNDEVICH

1314 9th Street, NW, Rear  
(Naylor Court)  
202-319-1086  
[www.sundevich.com](http://www.sundevich.com)

## PIZZA D'ORO

717 T Street, NW  
202-588-1900  
[www.pizzadoroodc.com](http://www.pizzadoroodc.com)



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Douglas Jemal, Charlie Whitaker, Paul Millstein, and Matthew Jemal enjoying the scene at Long View Gallery.



Ward 6 Councilmember Tommy Wells congratulates Wanda's on 7<sup>th</sup> owner Wanda Henderson on the imminent return of her salon to 7<sup>th</sup> Street.

## SHAW IN BLOOM GALA: BIGGEST SMS FUNDRAISER YET

By Alexander M. Padro

Shaw Main Streets' second gala fundraiser, held at Long View Gallery on April 18, 2019, generated over \$80,000 to support the organization's commercial revitalization and historic preservation missions.

The name Shaw in Bloom celebrated both the National Cherry Blossom Festival's 100<sup>th</sup> anniversary and the rebirth of the Shaw community, demonstrated by the number of major development projects underway.

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Mayor Vincent Gray and American Classic Woman of the Year Deborah Ducre's smiles demonstrate the excitement in the room.



SMS Board Chair Ralph Brabham, Shaw Champion Award winner Henok Tesfaye, MC Paul Wharton, and SMS Executive Director Alexander Padro pause for an onstage photo op.

In keeping with the cherry blossom theme, the 5,000 square foot art filled venue was decorated with pink, orange, and white Japanese paper lanterns and blooming branches in vases. A punch created for the occasion by The Passenger, Jazz music by 1905 regulars Laissez Foure, and hors d'oeuvres by DC Taste kept the crowd of 150 neighborhood residents and movers and shakers' energy level high.


TV style guru Paul Wharton served as master of ceremonies for the event, which included presentation of awards to The Passenger–Shaw Gamechanger Business, Old City Green–Shaw Community Partner, and Henok Tesfaye–Shaw Champion.

Town DanceBoutique drag hostess Lena Lett conducted the live auction for items including dinners at Corduroy and Rogue 24, cooking classes from Beau Thai and Seasonal Pantry, tickets to see Neil Diamond and the Washington Nationals.

Mayor Vincent C. Gray, Councilmembers Mary Cheh and Tommy Wells, Office of Planning Director Harriet Tregoning,

and Department of Small and Local Business Development Harold Pettigrew were among the government officials who attended.

Event sponsors included Capital Community News, Capital Real Estate, CityCenter DC, Clark Construction, Douglas Development, Events DC, Giant Food/Ahold, JBG, Long View Gallery, Miller Copying, and Roadside Development, U Street Parking, and Wagtime. Other donors and supporters included Beau Thai, The Bitten Word, Bozzuto, Dantes Partners, DC Taste, Flint Hill Public House and Country Inn, Four Points, Goulston & Storrs, Holland & Knight, Inle Development, Councilmember Jack Evans, KBK, Council Chairman Kwame Brown, Lumsden Insurance Agency, The Passenger, Premium Title, Quadrangle/Capstone, Ristorante Tosca, Rogue24, Seasonal Pantry, and Warner Sessions.

The Shaw in Bloom gala was organized by SMS Board Secretary Susan Linsky and volunteers including Ralph Brabham, Gerry Coates, Arielle Linsky, Odette MacDonald, Drew Porterfield, Selam Samuel, and Matthew Thompson. 



Alexander M. Padro

Everyone immediately recognized who Arielle Linsky was costumed as: pop diva Katy Perry.

## HALLOWEEN BAR CRAWL HIGHLIGHTS NEW BARS AND RESTAURANTS

By Alexander M. Padro

A diverse crowd, costumed and otherwise, made its way, block by block, through the northern end of central Shaw during the second annual Shaw Main Streets Bar Crawl on October 27, 2012.

A zombie National's player Brice Harper, a gypsy and a team of scantily clad young superheroes were among the throng that made its way through a six hour tour of northern Shaw's watering holes, starting at Duffy's Irish Tavern at noon. Three venues with roof decks and outdoor seating, American Ice Company, The Brixton, and Nellie's Sports Bar, allowed the bar crawlers to enjoy the afternoon's wonderful weather.

Organized by SMS Promotion Committee Chair Matthew Thompson, Board Member Gerry Coates, SMS Intern Simone Ellison, and volunteers

Odette McDonald and Arielle Linsky, the event was a fundraiser to support the organization's Historic Fire and Police Call Box project, which will transform 13 antique cast iron fixtures in the neighborhood into public art projects and local historic markers.

New bars and restaurants participating in the crawl, all of which offered participants drink specials, included Shaw's Tavern and Bistro Bohem. Etete Ethiopian Cuisine offered a free buffet featuring some of their most popular dishes.

Raffles for prizes, with gift certificates for dinners and bar tabs from many venues in Shaw and beyond, were conducted at each stop on the crawl. 🏠



Alexander M. Padro

A pirate/gypsy couple enjoying the roof deck at The Brixton.



Douglas Development will be renovating and adding to 1216-1226 9<sup>th</sup> Street, NW.



# DEVELOPMENT FORUM REVEALS NEW ROUND OF PROJECTS

By Alexander M. Padro

New projects from JBG, Altus Realty Partners, CAS Riegler, Douglas Development, and Lincoln Westmoreland Housing are set to break ground in 2013, according to presentations made at the annual Shaw Main Streets Development Forum, held at the Watha T. Daniel/Shaw Library on November 15, 2012.

JBG's James Nozar presented the largest set of new development plans for the area, with four new buildings to start construction in 2013. Two residential and office buildings on the south side of the 700 and 800 blocks of Florida Avenue, NW, with 244 housing units and 30,000 square feet of retail, will be the first to break ground. They will be followed by 375 units of housing and 25,000 square feet of retail on two parcels at 8<sup>th</sup> and V Streets, NW, which will include a theater and live/work space for artists.

Charlie Kehler of Altus Realty Partners presented renderings for the two adjacent projects they're developing, 917 M Street, NW and 1212 9<sup>th</sup> Street, NW. The 9<sup>th</sup> Street building will include ground floor retail, while the M Street building will be all residential.



JBG's Florida Avenue West Building is one of two scheduled to rise on the south side of Florida between 7<sup>th</sup> and 9<sup>th</sup> Streets, NW.



Douglas Development's 655 New York Avenue, NW project will bring 400,000 square feet of office and retail to Square 450.




1212 9<sup>th</sup> Street, NW, will fill a long-vacant lot along Blagden Alley.



CAS Riegler will build 70 rental units and 8,200 square feet of retail as part of the 64,500 square foot development at 1250 9<sup>th</sup> Street, NW, and incorporate a historic building.

Douglas Development's Paul Millstein discussed plans for 655 New York Avenue, NW, an approximately 400,000 square foot office and retail complex occupying most of the block bounded by 6<sup>th</sup>, 7<sup>th</sup>, and L Streets and New York Avenue. 1216-1226 9<sup>th</sup> Street, NW, will include a combination of retail and office space. 1100 6<sup>th</sup> Street, NW is proposed as 16,000 square feet of retail and office space. Millstein also advised that the first tenants at the renovated and expanded 100,000 square foot Wonder Bread Factory at 641 S Street, NW, would be moving in by the end of the first quarter of 2013.

Robert Agus, representing Lincoln Westmoreland Housing, described the new residential building to be built next to the Lincoln Westmoreland highrise at 1730 7<sup>th</sup> Street, NW. The 56-unit, 54,000 square foot apartment house will include ground floor retail space. The development will use air rights from the adjacent WMATA pocket park, and public art will be installed in the park, which the developer will upgrade.

Susan Linsky of Roadside Development updated attendees on construction of CityMarket at O, with the new Giant Food store on schedule to open in November 2013. James Harper of Hensel Phelps Construction provided an update on the Marriott Marquis Washington Convention Center hotel, slated to open in May 2014. Jason Jacobson from Hines provided the latest construction schedule for CityCenter DC. 





# SHAW HISTORY: THE WICKEDEST PRECINCT

*The former Second Precinct Police Station now houses MPD's Traffic Safety Division.*

*By Pleasant Mann*

On March 14, 1954, the *Washington Post* started a series of articles covering the District's Second Police Precinct, which it termed "The Wickedest Precinct." Besides having the largest number of crimes in the city, the Second Precinct, headquartered at the station at the northeast corner of Sixth Street and New York Avenue, NW, was characterized by the *Post* as a general center of poverty and depravity. The boundaries of the Second Precinct were described as a "crude rectangle with a panhandle at the east end." The precinct was bounded by K Street on the south, 15<sup>th</sup> Street on the west, S Street and Florida Avenue to the north and 2<sup>nd</sup> Street, NE and the rail yards on the east. The *Post* said that its series was intended to "acquaint the city, by means of candid pictures and hard facts, with the worst aspects of its community life. The people have a right to know about the consequences that flow from the dens of iniquity, the rat-infested slums, the garbage-strewn alleys and beer joints of the Wickedest Precinct. Only by knowing the extent of the crimes and misery that are generated here can they hope to move towards remedies."

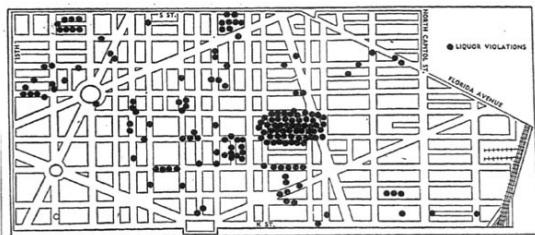
Crime and corruption was a constant concern in the District then. A 1950 article in *Collier's Magazine* declared

that what Chicago was to the gangster era of Al Capone, "Washington bids to become in the new era ... of the mugging and yoking, the street assault, the wanton murder, the rape and psychopathic crime." It noted that more aggravated assaults were committed in Washington over the past couple of years than in any other city in the nation. Congress needed to reverse this trend "by cleaning up the infectious sinks where crime is bred," and "by putting the cop back on the beat." The District police department had recently reached its authorized strength of 1,988 officers for the first time since the start of World War II, in a city that the Census claimed to have over 800,000 residents. Specialists argued that the city needed at least 2,500 officers to ensure proper protection at the beat level. The perception of a crime problem was not helped by a Congressional investigation into the possibility of senior police officials taking bribes from well-known gangsters involved in gambling and narcotics. By 1953, the Washington Criminal Justice Association reported that serious crime in the District had reached the greatest volume in the city's history.

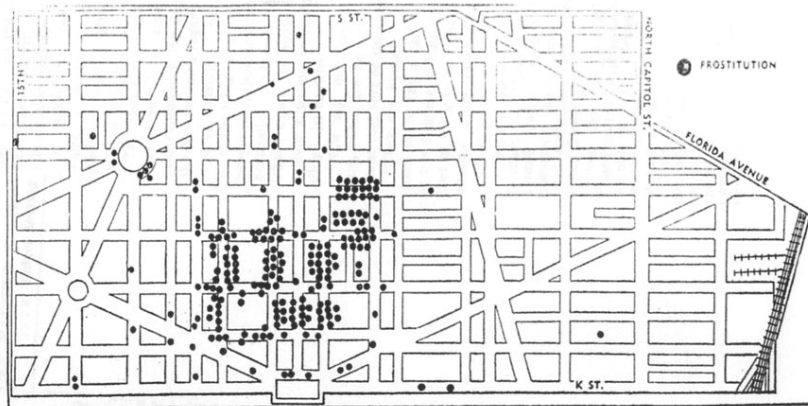
The Wickedest Precinct series, written

by crime reporter S.L. Fishbein, said that the Second Precinct had "more murders, robberies, aggravated assaults, housebreakings, concealed weapons cases, prostitution cases, liquor violations and drug violations than in any of the other 13 precincts. The Second Precinct, the smallest precinct in land area, accounted for 21.2 percent of all the District's crimes. The precinct, with 58,850 people, 43,974 blacks and 14,876 whites, it had a total of 3,081 crimes that year.

The Second Precinct was one of the District's commercial centers, its boundaries holding approximately 4,900 enterprises. The mix of businesses crossed from "smart hotels on the southwestern fringes" to "the broken down rooming houses in the middle reaches." The area was particularly important to the African American community, where "its streets have been swelled by Negroes drawn from outside the precinct by the jazzy taverns, blood and thunder movie houses, pawn shops, second hand stores, 'take out' lunch rooms and billiard parlors." The *Post* noted that "the appeal of the Second Precinct, however, is not strictly along racial lines" since "veteran prostitutes report



Washington Post



Washington Post

Maps showing alcohol and prostitution arrests in the Second District.

that a huge proportion of their clientele is white, including servicemen on liberty in Washington."

Fishbein declared that "the world's oldest profession has its Washington headquarters in the Second Precinct." Prostitutes "mill about in the night glare of the store fronts of the 1200 block of 7<sup>th</sup> Street and in the 600 block of O Street." On the 1500 block of 7<sup>th</sup> Street, women "hawk their wares in the taverns and restaurants and consummate their contracts in big rooming houses nearby." Conveniently, these areas were nearby the Polk Health Center at 7<sup>th</sup> and P Streets, which had a venereal disease clinic.

Perhaps the worst aspect of the Second Precinct was its alley dwellings. In an area that had Victorian mansions facing the street, such as the former home of banker William Stickney on the corner of Sixth and M, there were still 30 inhabited alleys in the area housing an estimated 3,700 people. These alleys, without connections to water, gas or electricity, were notorious for their poor health and living conditions. The Alley Dwelling Act would ban alley dwellings with outside toilets by 1955.

One health inspector considered Glicks Court, between 6<sup>th</sup>, 7<sup>th</sup>, Rhode Island Avenue and S Street as one of the worst in his territory. "If you can't get something illegal in Glicks Court it doesn't exist," he added. Fishbein reported that in Glicks Court, "the drunks gather day and night. Their bonfire glows so often beat policemen jokingly refer to it as the 'eternal flame.' School children see the sights as they go through the alley to Shaw Junior High School at 7<sup>th</sup> Street and Rhode Island Avenue despite continued efforts by school officials to steer the youngsters to other routes."

While the Second Precinct had been notorious for narcotics and illegal gambling, there had been a reduction in activity lately. With the recent dismemberment of the narcotics syndicate of Randolph "Catfish" Turner, centered on 7<sup>th</sup> and T Streets, the focal point of the dope traffic moved to 9<sup>th</sup> Street, "for years a favorite parade ground for the addict hordes." Police pressure on drug shooting galleries meant that "the old dope pads where the addicts gathered and took the needle and lazed about in their drowsy reveries" were now gone. A Senate investigation into the numbers rackets based at the Brass Rail Grill at 7<sup>th</sup> and S, owned by Roger "Whitetop" Simkins, also led to changes in police operations that sharply reduced gambling. Now the police said that "the Second Precinct no longer harbors gaming headquarters establishments with telephones, adding machines, tote boards, coin wrappers and other paraphernalia."

The Wickedest Precinct series had an immediate impact. In a letter to the editor of the *Post*, Patricia Roberts, apparently the civil rights attorney later known as Patricia Roberts Harris, pointed to "the inability of the Negro residents of the Second Precinct to obtain satisfying jobs which pay a decent wage and the ease with which they turn to more remunerative, though less legal, occupations such as bootlegging and prostitution" as the primary problem. Victor R. Daly, in an article entitled "Simple, Sure Way to End Crime in the Streets," noted the irony of looking "at the big construction jobs on the Howard University campus," devoted to the education of African Americans, "and see not one skilled Negro workman employed anywhere on the job."



The Wickedest Precinct series also spurred a renewed fight against crime. The District's Corporation Counsel started an effort to enforce vagrancy laws in the Second District. One new tool against vice was a clause in a recently passed Omnibus law that made it against the law to be found in an illegal establishment. Of course, the first court test of the law involved a Second Precinct establishment, a dope den at 1109 7<sup>th</sup> Street that charged addicts 50 cents to come in and shoot up. By the end of 1954, there was "a drop in major crime about four times as great as the average of Washington's heavy crime precincts." Police Chief Robert Murray credited the campaign to vigorously enforce the vagrancy laws and the effort to add additional police officers to the precinct when men became available. He also noted the help created by "the spotlight of publicity kept on the precinct that had alerted civic groups, community and church leaders to the crime and crime-breeding conditions in the area."

Perhaps the biggest impact of the *Post* series was on the faith community of the Second Precinct. As a result of the articles, the Rev. Dr. J. William Hastings of the National City Christian Church called together a meeting of neighborhood congregations to address the problems illustrated by the Wickedest Precinct series. He noted that it was the "first time white and Negro Protestant churches around have gotten together for any reason on a community-wide basis." The meeting had representatives from white congregations such as Luther Place Memorial Church and Fidelity Methodist Church while African American congregations included Shiloh Baptist Church, Metropolitan Baptist Church and New Bethel Baptist Church. The Rev. William Schiebel, a white pastor at the predominately African American congregation of Mount Olivet Lutheran Church, believed that the problems of the Second Precinct were not caused by the residents. "The problem is posed by outsiders who converge on the neighborhood and use the streets, alleys and houses as a 'stamping grounds.'" The Rev. Dr. Albert Shirkey, pastor of the Mount Vernon Place Methodist Church "publically called on Congress to either clean up the Second Precinct or provide a home rule government so the citizens could do it themselves."


The effort to fight crime continued to see some success in the Second Precinct. A 1956 review concluded that while "the city's smallest precinct is still the bloodiest, toughest and the most vicious of the lot," it noted that that since the original series of articles, "there have been steps upward toward decency." The number of known vice dens had shrunk from 250 in 1954 down to 130. "A housing law with teeth has routed out some of the back alley haunts and courts that nurtured vice and violence amid poverty and human frustrations. The police war of attrition has kept the pressure on vice operators. Community agencies have mobilized to



Washington Post

help the decent, respectable people living in the Second Precinct - and there are many - to clean out conditions that breed crime in their neighborhoods."

By the end of 1959, crime in the Second Precinct dropped enough to reach a milestone. Not only was the Second Precinct no longer the precinct with the largest number of crimes in the city, it had actually dropped behind two others in terms of recorded crimes. Police Chief Murray described a "sensational drop in crime" in the Second and attributed it to the tearing down of slums and more police manpower. In fact, the new wickedest precinct, the Ninth, explained its new status as the "crime precinct" was due to the fact that "it has drawn many low income families who have left the Second and Fourth Precincts."

While the Second Precinct was no longer known for crime, it was still notorious as a slum. It would take almost another decade of work before the Second Precinct, formerly the Wickedest Precinct, started to become referred to as a community: Shaw. 

Logo for Washington Post series on the Second Precinct.



Perennial Democratic Mayoral candidate Faith, and her trumpet, made the scene.

ANC Commissioner Rachelle Nigro, Dantes Partners Buwa Binitie, Roadside Development's Susan Linsky, and Lumsden Insurance's Barry Lumsden share the spirit of the season.

# HOLIDAY PARTY DRAWS LARGEST CROWD EVER

By Alexander M. Padro

Over 130 people jammed Shaw Main Streets annual holiday party, held at Old Dominion Brewhouse on December 4, 2012, kicking off the December holiday party season.

This was the second year in a row that this free holiday event was held in Old Dominion's private party space, decorated with fir wreathes and boughs, ribbons and bows, and Christmas tree balls. Live holiday keyboard music was played by Judah Project founder Ricco White.

A dinner buffet featuring Asian, Latin, Italian, Ethiopian, and Middle Eastern food was complemented by beer, wine, coffee, and a whisky punch from The Passenger.


The party came to a close after the crowd danced to "The Electric Slide," an SMS Holiday Party tradition.

Shaw businesses that provided the food and beverages for the event included Azi's Café, Corduroy Restaurant, Dove House Liquors, Kafe Bohem, Log Cabin Liquors, Nellie's Sports Bar, Old Dominion Brewhouse, The Passenger, Pizza D'oro, Queen of Sheba Restaurant, Rahama African Restaurant, Red Toque Café



The traditional dancing of the Electric Slide capped off a night filled with cheer.

Kabob Grill, Secret Lounge, Shaw's Tavern, and Uptown Ethiopian Fusion Cuisine. Decorations were provided by Convention Floral and Old City Green.

The 2012 SMS Holiday Party was organized by Promotion Committee Chair Matthew Thompson and SMS Intern Simone Ellison, with support from Board members Gerry Cates and Barry Lumsden, and volunteers Letha Blount, Robert Isard, Karen Keegan, Odette MacDonald, and Pleasant Mann. 

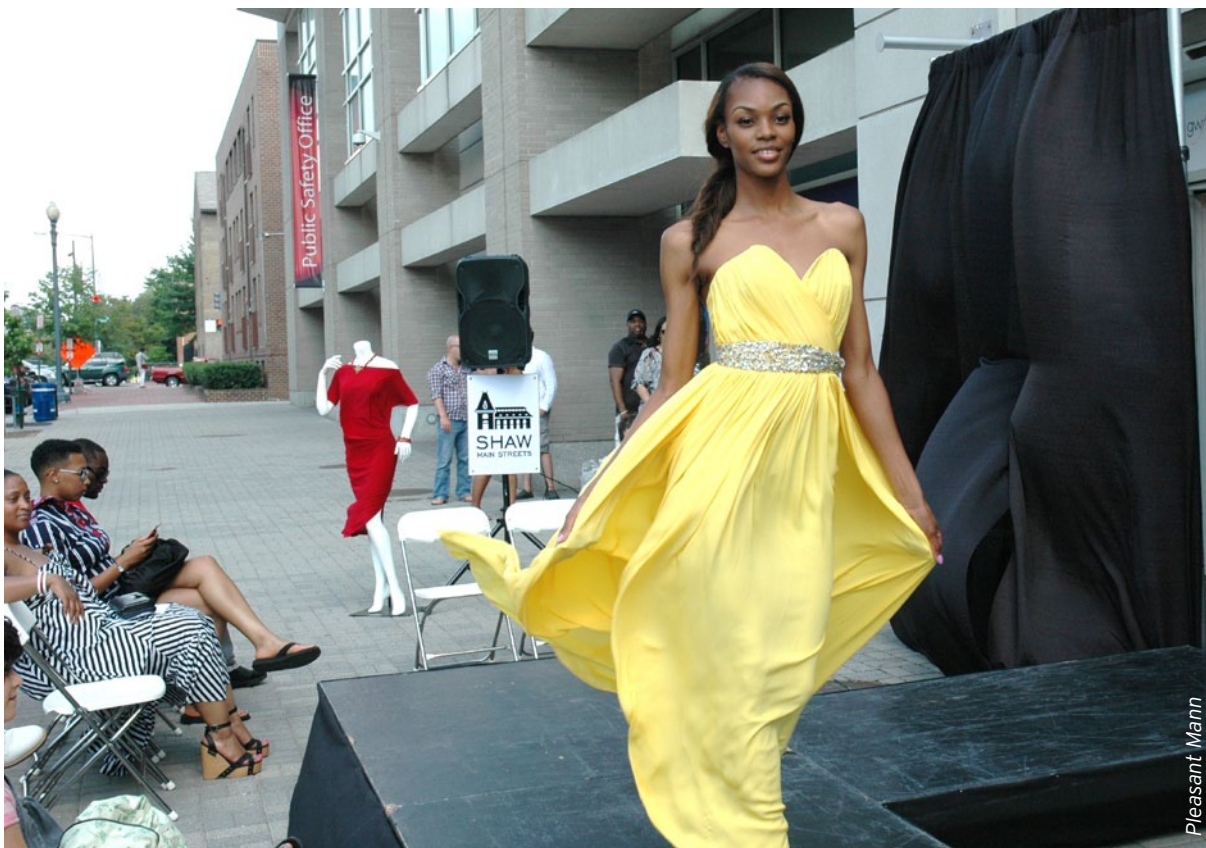


# SHAW SNAPSHOTS

Volunteers stripped and primed historic fire and police call boxes in preparation for painting by artists and the installation of neighborhood history plaques (September 9, 2012).



Mayor Vincent C. Gray joined owners of the New York Avenue Beach Bar and ANC Commissioner Rachelle Nigro for the ribbon cutting for the city's first in-town beach with real sand (May 25, 2012).



DC fashion was on display at Shaw Open House/Cultural Couture, with two outdoor runways and dazzling models and designs (June 23, 2012).



The city's first Cash Bomb, organized by Think Local First, deployed on Old City Green (March 24, 2012).



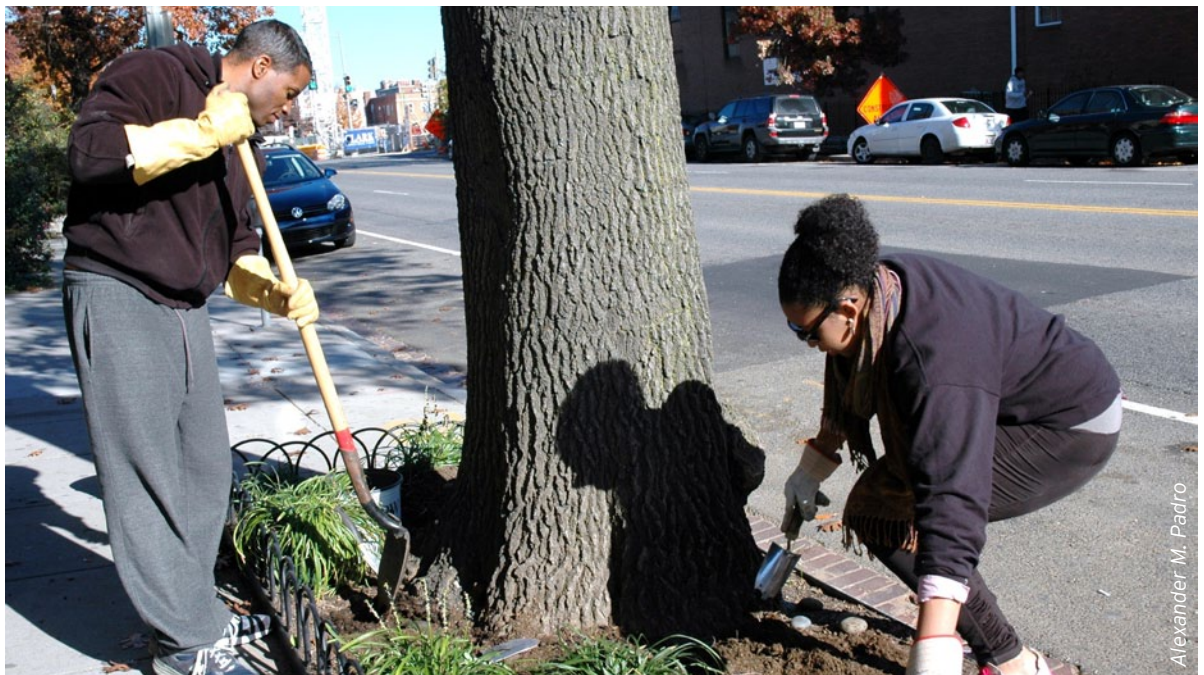
Pleasant Mann



Alexander M. Padro

A generous donation from Douglas Development made possible the delivery of Thanksgiving turkey dinners to residents of Second Northwest Coop and other apartment complexes throughout Shaw (November 17, 2012).

SMS Board members and staff planted Liriope in treeboxes on the 1300 block of 9<sup>th</sup> Street, NW (November 17, 2012).



Alexander M. Padro





Pleasant Mann



Alexander M. Padro

After being closed for decades, the Howard Theatre reopened as a performing arts venue, with a new statue of Jazz legend "Duke" Ellington watching over concertgoers as they line up to go inside (April 9, 2012).



Pleasant Mann

The first ever Shaw Art Walk featured a tour of the Walter E. Washington Convention Center's \$7 Million art collection and visits to neighborhood art galleries, ending with cocktails at The Passenger (February 8, 2012).

# ABOUT SHAW MAIN STREETS

Shaw residents and community leaders founded Shaw Main Streets, Inc. in March 2002 to promote the community-driven economic revitalization of central Shaw's 7th and 9th Street commercial corridors.

Shaw Main Streets' mission is to promote the economic development of Shaw's commercial corridors in a manner that meets the needs and desires of the community's residents and existing businesses and preserves the neighborhood's history and architecture. Shaw Main Streets is a nonprofit, community-based, volunteer driven organization that relies heavily on the time and talents of volunteers in the community and beyond.

Partial funding for Shaw Main Streets, Inc. is provided by the Department of Small and Local Business Development's DC Main Streets program.

The organization relies substantially on the tax-deductible donations and the generous time of volunteers like you. For more information or to make a contribution to support our efforts, contact:

## Alexander M. Padro Executive Director

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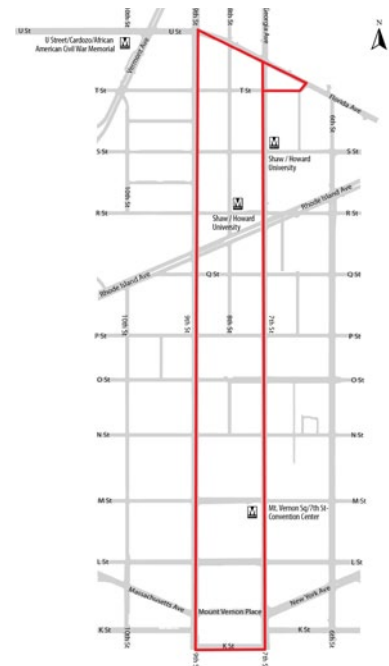
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Looking forward to a fabulous 2013!



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