



Where DC Comes Together

# SHAW MAIN STREETS NEWS

VOLUME 2, ISSUE 4

WINTER 2005-2006

## REVIVAL OF SHAW MUSICAL ARRIVES THIS SPRING

by Alexander M. Padro

Last produced in 1995, *Where Eagles Fly* is a theatrical exploration of Shaw's rich history and legacy, focusing on the soaring achievements of notable figures who have lived, worked, and played here, such as 'Duke' Ellington, W.E.B. DuBois, Thurgood Marshall, Mary McLeod Bethune, Dorothy Height, Paul Laurence Dunbar, Langston Hughes, Mary Church Terrell, and Dr. Charles Drew. All of these legendary men and women, and many more, are portrayed in the musical, which returns to the Lincoln Theatre from March 30 through April 19, 2006.

*Where Eagles Fly* grew out of an oral history project conducted in 1981. After a decade of work by playwright Carole Mumin, *Where Eagles Fly* premiered 10 years ago at Shaw's historic Lincoln Theatre and received accolades and rave reviews in the Washington Post and numerous regional and national publications. Its central theme is the importance of preserving and transferring the legacies of our communities from generation to generation.

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To receive this newsletter and updates electronically, send an e-mail message to [info@shawmainstreets.com](mailto:info@shawmainstreets.com).

Shaw Main Streets is partially funded by ReStore DC/DC Main Streets, Anthony A. Williams, Mayor



Theresa Watts, owner of Lettie Gooch Boutique, is proud to be part of the rebirth of the historic 1900 block of 9th Street, NW.

## SHAW GETS CHIC NEW BOUTIQUE OPENS IN LITTLE ETHIOPIA

by Alexander M. Padro

When her family would drive down 9th Street to get downtown from their home in Petworth when she was a child, Theresa Watts never dreamed she'd one day own a designer clothing and accessories boutique on the 1900 block. She remembers the block being unwelcoming back then. But in a few weeks, Watt's boutique, Lettie Gooch, named for her maternal grandmother, will be open at 1911 9th Street, NW.

Watts' path to opening a retail business was an unusual one. With a computer science degree from Hampton University, Watts started out in the corporate world, working for Anderson Consulting (now Accenture) and Oracle for 12 years. During that time, Watts recalls, "I started selling clothing and accessories at Eastern Market on Sundays, and went to trade shows in New York City to test my eye. I left Oracle to start Can U Imagine, providing image consulting, fashion styling, and life coaching services to help women feel good about themselves inside and out." Her corporate clients included PriceWaterhouseCoopers and the E and Style Channels. She also taught fashion styling classes at George Washington University.

(continued page 18)



*letter from the executive director*

## **TRADITIONS AND PERSPECTIVES: THE THINGS WE HAVE IN COMMON & THE ONES THAT MAKE US DIFFERENT**



One evening in December, Ilana Knopf, a neighbor on 8th Street, stopped by with a gift she had baked with her own hands: a cranberry walnut loaf. I was impressed with Ilana's old-fashioned neighborliness and holiday cheer. It made me think about the value of traditions.

The word tradition is derived from the Latin *tradere*, to hand down. According to the Merriam-Webster Online Thesaurus, tradition is "an inherited or established way of thinking, feeling, or doing." Some traditions, like presenting baked goods as Christmas gifts, are of long standing. But more recent ones can be equally important.

The brilliant history of accomplishment by African American Shaw residents and business owners continues to inspire. In March, a new boutique will open in a space that was once one of legendary Black millionaire entrepreneur Madame C.J. Walker's beauty schools. The young African American woman who owns the shop chose from among many places in Greater Shaw a place with a history of Black entrepreneurial success as the location for her business. Perhaps one day she'll be as well known as Walker.

Shaw Main Streets' Black History Month Celebration is an example of a new tradition. SMS first paid tribute to the neighborhood's rich African American heritage in February 2004 at the City Museum, and again in 2005 at the Phyllis Wheatley YWCA. In 2006, we paid tribute to Dr. Carter G. Woodson with an African American tea ceremony at Shiloh Baptist Church's Family Life Center.

Another incident in December made me think about how personal perceptions and preferences make each of us distinct. In an office I was visiting, I remarked on a calendar featuring a bright green and red tree frog. The frog's holiday colors provoked one person's "Ooh, how cute" and caused another to opine "Eeww, gross."

The Merriam-Webster Online Thesaurus defines perspective and point of view as "a way of looking at or thinking about something." Just as to some, a glass is either half empty or half full, the pace of revitalization in Shaw is either rapid, or it appears to be slow. To most longtime residents, Shaw's transformation has been miraculous. Streets are cleaner, there are more trees and flowers in treeboxes than anyone can remember, and crime is almost nonexistent compared to the drug wars of the 1980s and 1990s. There are more businesses along 7th and 9th Streets than there have been since the 1968 riots.

But more recent arrivals often focus on the challenges that remain: parking can be a problem, especially on Sundays when suburbanites descend on the neighborhood to attend religious services or attend convention center events; vacant buildings and empty lots are still more common here than in neighborhoods to the west; and the O Street Market is still a ruin, as is the Howard Theatre.

Neighborhoods east of the Anacostia, where the spark of revitalization has yet to be ignited, are reminders of how much progress we've made. Show newer neighbors the intersection of Martin Luther King, Jr. and Malcolm X Avenues, SE, and tell them that's what Shaw was like less than 10 years ago, and they will better appreciate our neighborhood as it is today.

Each of us has our own set of traditions and perspectives through which we filter our environment and experiences. The things we value and the points of view we share with others are what define a community. When we pass these to another generation, they become tradition. Let us hope that the next generation will inherit a sense of pride in our community, that it is a clean, safe, vibrant place to live, learn, work, shop, play, and pray, and a commitment to maintaining our neighborhood's diversity and culture. In the meantime, let's rededicate ourselves to making this a reality that we can all see in the near future.

Alexander M. Padro  
Executive Director

## LOOK WHO'S COMING TO SHAW!

by *Alexander M. Padro*

New openings and lease signings for retail businesses in the Shaw Main Streets commercial district continue at a breathtaking pace, and more are in the works. With 10 more dining options, Shaw will soon become the dining destination residents have long wished for. The two new additions to Shaw's apparel offerings are also notable, as they represent expansion of a type of retailing that was once common in the neighborhood. Here are some of the recent developments that could be confirmed at presstime:

**Breakwell's Coffee** will open at 900 M Street, NW, this spring. Owner Russell Breakwell is a DC food industry veteran who has owned the building at the southwest corner of 9th and M Street for many years. The coffee shop will feature pastries by Leon Baker, who was the pastry chef at Signatures Restaurant on Pennsylvania Avenue, NW until it closed in the wake of the Abramoff scandal. Breakwell plans to open at 6:00 AM and close at 9:00 PM, but is eager to get community input into the hours they'd like to see the shop open.

Cheryl Lofton's grandfather owned one of the few Black tailor shops in Downtown Washington. Now, Lofton is coming to Shaw to offer fine custom tailoring and alterations for men and women at **Cheryl A. Lofton and Associates**, 719 T Street, NW. Custom shirts are one of Lofton's specialties. For more information, visit [www.cheryllofton.com](http://www.cheryllofton.com). Until the shop opens this spring, Lofton can be reached at 301-318-6598.

**Lettie Gooch Boutique** is named for boutique owner Theresa Watts' grandmother, who inspired the former IT, sales, and marketing professional to leave the corporate world after a decade to start her own business. Watts began refining her eye for fashion selling clothing and accessories at Eastern Market and working as an image consultant. The boutique, located at 1911 9th Street, NW, a former location of one of the legendary Madame C.J. Walker's salons, will open in March. For more information, visit [www.lettiegooch.com](http://www.lettiegooch.com) or call 202-332-4242.



**Queen of Sheba owners and staff greet customers during the restaurant's soft opening.**

**Queen of Sheba Restaurant** was set to open at 1503 9th Street, NW, in February, offering Ethiopian, Italian, and American food. Specialties include goden tibs (prime short ribs sautéed with onions, tomatoes, garlic, and jalapeño), kitfo (very lean chopped beef warmed in spiced butter and served with cottage cheese), and misto (lamb prepared three ways), as well as vegetarian items, like the chopped salad with peanut butter dressing and the vegetarian combination (samples of four dishes from the vegetarian pages of the menu). The restaurant will also be open for breakfast, serving eggs, pancakes, and fowl (fava beans, chopped jalapeño, red onion, tomatoes, diced boiled eggs, and feta cheese), among other items. Freshly made smoothies, hamburgers, wings, and pasta are available for the less adventurous. Initial hours will be Monday through Thursday, 8:00 AM to 2:00 AM, Fridays and Saturdays, 10:00 AM to 3:00 AM, and Sundays and Holidays, 10:00 AM to 2:00 AM). For more information, call 202-232-7272.

**La Carbonara Italian Restaurant** is slated to open this spring at 1926 9th Street, NW. Owner Fikru Bekele says that the cuisine will be Central and Northern Italian, featuring traditional thin crust pizzas, seafood dishes, and of course, the restaurant's namesake spaghetti dish. The two-floor, 45-seat establishment will include hardwood floors and skylit bar and dining areas on the second floor. Hours of operation will be Sundays through Thursdays, 11:00 AM to 2:00 AM, and Friday and Saturday, 11:00 AM to 3:00 AM.



**A Taste of Carolina Southern Cuisine** will be opening this April in the space formerly occupied by Sodere Ethiopian Restaurant at 1930 9th Street, NW. The 70-seat restaurant will offer Carolinian dishes named for historic people and places, such as Orangeburg Fried Chicken, Myrtle Beach Whiting, and Spartanburg Barbeque Ribs. Owner and general manager Walter Bowman looks forward to welcoming customers to enjoy a wide variety of wines and drinks from the restaurant's two full bars. The second floor can be reserved for private parties. The restaurant will be open Mondays through Thursdays, 11:00 AM to 10:00 PM, Fridays and Saturdays, 11:00 AM to 3:00 AM, and Sundays, 12:00 PM to 6:00 PM. For more information, call 202-232-3566 or email [atasteofcarolina@yahoo.com](mailto:atasteofcarolina@yahoo.com).

**Nahom Records** opened at 1918 9th Street, NW, in December, offering African music CDs, as well as recording, duplication, and distribution services. According to executive producer Elias Fikru, Nahom's focus includes both traditional and modern Ethiopian music from songwriters and performers around the world. NRI has offices in the Canada, the United Kingdom, Australia, and Israel. For more information, visit [www.nahomrecord.com](http://www.nahomrecord.com) or call 202-667-2323.

**Heavenly Spa and Salon** opened at 705 Florida Avenue, NW in January. Owner Becky Washington, formerly owner of Visions Hair Salon on Georgia Avenue, says the salon's specialties include braiding, hairstyling, facials, waxing, massage, manicure, and pedicure. Services are provided for both men and women. The salon is open Mondays through Saturdays, 9:00 AM to 7:00 PM. For more information, call 202-265-1772.

**Be Bar**, a tavern/lounge catering to both neighborhood residents and convention visitors, is slated to open this summer at 1318 9th Street, NW, the former Salvation Army building. Owners Michael Watson and Thomas McGuire's vision for Be Bar is a place to 'be,' a "cool haven" with "warm, simple chic" décor for patrons to relax, enjoy candy-themed signature martinis, full bar, hors d'oeuvres, a live DJ, and dance floor. For more information, call 202-232-7450.

**Brown Sugar Southern Cuisine** opened at 928 U Street, NW in November. This takeout restaurant makes its own barbeque sauce and hickory smokes its meats in-house. Its smoked and grilled beef and pork ribs are the signature dishes, served with a choice of 14 sides and cornbread made from scratch. Owner Brandon Webb formerly operated Webb's Southern Fish & Ribs at 1361 U Street from 1989 to 1998. Brown Sugar will begin serving breakfast in March, but current hours are Sundays through Thursdays, 11:00 AM-11:00 PM, and Fridays and Saturdays, 11:00 AM-1:00 AM. For more information, call 202-462-2370.

**The Boutique** at International Lifestyles was scheduled to open in February at 1300 9th Street, NW. Owner Karen Cox describes The Boutique as a complete lifestyle experience, offering some of the world's most sought-after luxury designer goods not available elsewhere in the U.S. Clients can enjoy a private shopping experience with the entire space reserved to themselves while enjoying espresso and the concierge staff's attentions, or for busy customers, merchandise can be delivered to their home or hotel room. Online shopping will also be available. For more information, visit [www.international-lifestyles.com](http://www.international-lifestyles.com) or call 202-332-8060.

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## WETA FEATURES SHAW IN MINI DOCUMENTARY PREMIERE

by Cary Silverman

In an exciting new mini documentary series, WETA TV 26 is spotlighting neighborhoods throughout the Greater Washington area. When producers decided on which of DC's many remarkable neighborhoods to feature in the series premiere on January 2, 2006, they chose Shaw.

The segments, which also included LeDroit Park, featured Frank Love of Gregg's Barbershop (see the cover story of the [Fall 2005 SMS News](#) for an in depth article on Mr. Love by Virginia C. Lee). It also featured jazz icon Duke Ellington's old hangouts, Ben's Chili Bowl on U Street, and Dr. Anna J. Cooper, who witnessed the death of slavery and became the fourth African American woman to earn a doctorate degree.

The segments include an appearance by Shaw Main Streets Executive Director Alexander Padro, and other neighborhood leaders, including Advisory Neighborhood Commissioner Myla Moss (1B01) and businesspeople such as the co-owner of Ben's Chili Bowl, Kamal Ali, and residents like Brian Brown, who is restoring the Cooper house as his family's residence.

Shaw Main Streets held a screening of all five segments at Shaw Junior High School on January 12, 2006. If you missed the segments, you can view them online at [www.weta.org/community/neighborhoods/shaw/](http://www.weta.org/community/neighborhoods/shaw/) and contribute your neighborhood stories. The WETA website also includes links to other websites highlighting Shaw's history, business, and culture. In addition, *The Washington Examiner* carried a [print story](#) providing the highlights of the television segment in its January 2 edition. According to *The Examiner*, in the future, the local daily will publish stories on other aspects of Shaw and other WETA-featured neighborhoods. Future segments will look at Del Ray (Alexandria), VA, Bowie, MD, Southwest, DC, Glover Park, DC, Columbia Heights, DC, Shepherd Park, DC, Old Town Alexandria, VA, Poolesville, MD, Anacostia, DC, Palisades, DC, and Adams Morgan, DC. ♦



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Azi's Café owner Azib Desta, left, listens as Northern Ireland delegation members McCartan, Muldoon, and Fitzgerald describe some of the challenges faced by the communities they serve.

## NORTHERN IRELAND DELEGATION VISITS SHAW MAIN STREETS

A delegation of representatives from Northern Ireland visited Shaw Main Streets on January 9, 2006, to learn more about how organizations in our diverse community have been able to achieve cooperation on common goals despite the socioeconomic and ethnic differences in the community. Eamonn McCartan, chair of the Northern Ireland Community Relations Council, who is also the chief executive of Sports Council Northern Ireland, and Maura Muldoon, head of the Equality/Diversity Unit in the Police Service of Northern Ireland, were escorted by Tom Fitzgerald, vice president of media and government relations for the Northern Ireland Bureau in DC.

Shaw Main Streets Executive Director Alexander M. Padro arranged visits to Manna Community Development Corporation, where the visitors met with Executive Director Dominic Moulden; United Planning Organization Neighborhood Development Center No. 1, where they met with Branch Chief Priscilla Francis, staff, and participants in the Fatherhood Program's carpentry pre-apprenticeship training initiative; and concluded with a visit to Azi's Café, where neighborhood residents old and new come together. The delegation was impressed with collaborative efforts to address the needs of lower-income African American families while the community continues its renaissance. ♦

The **Promotion Committee** is looking for new members. There are many exciting opportunities to become involved:

- ★ **Newsletter:** Write articles on neighborhood businesses, assist with distribution.
- ★ **Website:** Help redesign and maintain our website. Technical assistance is particularly needed.
- ★ **Event Planning:** Help plan Shaw Main Streets Nights, A Taste of Shaw, and other events. These events highlight Shaw businesses to the community.

If interested, contact Promotion Committee co-chair Cary Silverman at [carysilverman@comcast.net](mailto:carysilverman@comcast.net).



is

**House and Garden Tour:** The Shaw Main Streets House and Garden Tour 2006 is tentatively set for Sunday, October 8 (Columbus Day weekend) and the neighborhood we plan to showcase roughly bounded by R, Westminster, 9th, and 11th Streets, NW. Bernard

Demczuk, founder of the French Street Neighbor's Association, and Deborah Ziska, past president of the Mount Vernon Square Neighborhood Association and current member of the Shaw Main Streets Board of Directors, have agreed to co-chair this effort. We are hoping to make this an annual event and showcase a different Shaw neighborhood each year, with tie-ins to our business community. Volunteers, new and old alike, are needed to make this a success! Our 2003 tour brought in some 200 visitors and funds to support SMS revitalization activities. Please let us know if you are interested and what you might like to do by sending an e-mail to [ziska@verizon.net](mailto:ziska@verizon.net). There are many ways to volunteer, including sponsor recruitment, ad sales, flyer/ad/ticket design, tour/program research and writing, printing, signage, publicity, house hosting, flyer distribution, registration, and more. ♦



## NEW BUSINESSES *(CONTINUED FROM P. 3)*

**Project 4 Gallery** was scheduled to open in February at 903 U Street, NW. This new art gallery will feature work selected by guest curators in a variety of media, including painting, video, photography, and sculpture, in a starkly modern, two-story space. The initial exhibition, "Afterwar: Veterans from a World in Conflict," features color photographs by Lori Grinker of veterans and victims of war, from World War I to the present. The images are included in a book of the same title. Hours are Saturdays, 1:00 PM to 8:00 PM, and by appointment. For more information, visit [www.project4gallery.com](http://www.project4gallery.com) or call 202-232-4340.

Debra Chatman will bring a bakery, a type of business long sought by Shaw residents, to 1239 9th Street, NW, at the Washington Convention Center. Seating will allow customers to enjoy **D'Vine Cravings'** cakes and pies with coffee, tea, and juices in a warm, inviting environment that Chatman says will almost be "like grandma's house," with a few added features, like WiFi access. Look for an opening by year's end. For more information, email [dvinecravings@aol.com](mailto:dvinecravings@aol.com).

**Euro Market Café** has also signed a lease for retail space at the convention center, at the northwest corner of 7th and L Streets, NW. This is the second District location for this store concept originating in Northern Virginia. According to store owner Erroll Brown, the café will offer five kinds of coffee, donuts, 12 different sandwiches, salads, fresh-made smoothies, and 26 flavors of ice cream and gelato, as well as books, newspapers, and magazines. Gourmet items and other staples will also be available, as will several computer terminals. Euro Market Café hopes to open by December. For more information, visit [www.freshlyroasted.com](http://www.freshlyroasted.com).

**Mesobe Restaurant** has been at 1853 7th Street, NW, for three years, but is renovating and expanding, opening a sit down restaurant on the second floor serving Ethiopian cuisine. The restaurant will be notable for making its own injera flatbread. On the ground floor, the carryout will feature Ethiopian influenced items, such as fried chicken breaded in teff flour, the grain used to make injera, and flavored with Ethiopian spices. Owners Samuel and Adis Adefrisew hope to open the expanded restaurant in March. Call 202-265-5282 for more information.

*(continued page 18)*

## Cooking with Jean-Claude in Shaw

Join Jean-Claude Le Lan, a native of La Rochelle, France, and the popular chef at **Le Refuge in Old Town Alexandria**, for entertaining and informative French cooking classes with complimentary recipes and brunch. Classes are held in Mt. Vernon Square and begin at 10:30 a.m. The cost is \$85 per class. To reserve your spot or to learn more, e-mail [ziska@verizon.net](mailto:ziska@verizon.net).

### Sunday, March 26

*(reserve by March 19)*

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WILSHIRE DC PARTNERS ▲ Playwright, Carole Mumin ▲ Director, Mike Malone



A Seventh Street streetcar on display in the *America on the Move* exhibit at the Smithsonian Institution's National Museum of American History.

## SHAW ON THE MOVE, PART II: MILESTONES IN SHAW TRANSPORTATION

by Virginia C. Lee & Cary Silverman

From the neighborhood's beginnings, public transportation has shaped Shaw's character. Explosive residential growth along the 7<sup>th</sup> and 9<sup>th</sup> Street streetcar routes characterized the decades between 1860 and 1880. By making connections to other streetcars, it was possible to get to most destinations in the city. Nearly a century and a half later, the boom has returned to Shaw, now served by subways, city bus lines, and circulator buses. From its days as a suburb to today's position in the city's center, Shaw has for most of its history been attractive for the neighborhood's proximity to work, shopping, and entertainment.

- 1860** A one-line horse-drawn omnibus, basically an urban stagecoach, becomes the first 'public' transit in the city. For over 100 years, all transit in DC was privately owned and operated. Most DC streets are unpaved.
- 1862** The Washington and Georgetown Railroad Company begins street railroad service along 7th Street from N Street, NW to the Potomac. The route is extended to Boundary Street (today's Florida Avenue) in 1863.
- 1870** Columbia Railway starts horse car service from south side of Mount Vernon Square to 15th and H Streets, NE.
- 1872** Metropolitan Railroad Company begins service on the 9<sup>th</sup> Street Branch, with a terminus at M Street, NW. The Boundary & Silver Spring line is acquired, and the route is extended to Boundary Street and east to what

is now Georgia Avenue. Streets in Shaw are paved as part of Territorial infrastructure improvements.

- 1875** Capitol, North O and South Washington Railway Company's circular route included one two-way track on O Street from 4th to 11th Streets, NW as its northernmost point. A P Street track was added in 1876 for westbound cars, leaving O Street for eastbound traffic. The route was extended to 11<sup>th</sup> and Boundary in 1881.
- 1888** Eckington and Soldiers' Home Railway Company, DC's first electric streetcar line, began operations from 7<sup>th</sup> Street and New York east to 4th Street, NE.
- 1890** The Washington & Georgetown Cable Car Co. began operation. Sixteen cars traveled on the route at 6 mph at three minute intervals, from 5am to 1am daily. The 7th Street line was one of the most popular. W&G merged with Rock Creek Railway to form Capitol Traction in 1895.
- 1893** The Brightwood Railway operated from Boundary Street, up Brightwood Avenue (now Georgia Avenue) to the District line. This route ran horse drawn, cable and electric cars. Maximum fare: five cents per passenger or six tickets for 25 cents. Congress mandates that there are to be no overhead wires or power poles in Washington City, forcing the establishment of electric conduit operations.
- 1898** Horse cars cease operation.
- 1899** The last cable car ceases service on July 23, 1899.
- 1928** Buses begin replacing streetcars on some routes.
- 1936** Route numbers introduced. By this time, Ninth Street cars had been rerouted to 11<sup>th</sup> Street.
- 1950s** The automobile rose in importance and popularity fostered by the growth of the suburban populations after WWII. Streetcar routes begin to be abandoned in favor of buses.
- 1955** Congress revokes Capital Transit Co. franchise effective August 1956 following a 45-day strike by car men, and passes a law requiring the new operator to provide an all bus system within eight years.
- 1960** Seventh Street/Georgia Avenue Line (70) discontinued and car barn closed. President Eisenhower signs National Capital Transportation Act establishing Nation Capital Transportation Agency to develop rapid rail service.
- 1962** The last streetcar pulls into the Navy Yard car house, ending 99½ years of street railway service in the nation's capital on January 28, 1962. Fare was 25 cents. Some DC trolleys ended up in service in Fort Worth,

TX, Barcelona, Spain, and Sarajevo, Yugoslavia. Others were kept as relics or scrapped.

- 1966 President Johnson signs bill establishing the Washington Metropolitan Area Transit Authority.
- 1973 WMATA purchases four private bus lines to create the MetroBus system. The red, white, and blue color scheme is adopted.
- 1976 Opening day for Metro rail, with a four mile length of Red Line track between Rhode Island Avenue and Farragut North going into service.
- 1991 Metro comes to Shaw with the opening of Green Line stations at Mount Vernon Square-UDC, Shaw-Howard University, and U Street-Cardozo. U Street was the last stop on the Green Line until 2000, when travel directly from Shaw to Greenbelt and back became possible with the completion of the Green Line.
- 1994 Metro initiates MetroAccess, providing door-to-door van transportation for persons who are physically unable to use regularly rail or bus service.
- 2005 The D.C. Circulator begins operation. The colorful, Belgian buses feature oversized windows to view the city streetscape. Both of the D.C. Circulator's initial routes pass through Shaw. The first route is a north-south loop between the Washington Convention Center and the Southwest Waterfront, crossing the Mall and Chinatown en route. The second route heads

west from Union Station, past the Convention Center, to Georgetown and back. Additional routes could be added in future years.

Despite more than a century and a half of development, we are still challenged to find efficient and affordable ways of keeping Washington, DC and Shaw on the move. ♦

*References: National Capital Trolley Museum, Washington Street Car Collection, Washington, D.C. Chapter of the National Railway Historical Society, DC Office of Historic Preservation, National Museum of American History, Smithsonian Institution, "100 Years of Capital Traction," and [www.wmata.com](http://www.wmata.com).*

## \*\*\* SAVE THE DATE \*\*\*

- March 21 SMS Annual Meeting, 7pm-9pm
- March 25 SMS Night @ Simply Fit, 2pm-4pm
- April 22 Keep Shaw Beautiful Day, 9am-2pm
- April 23 Walking Town DC Tours of Shaw, 10am & 1pm
- May 6 Debut of the Shaw Heritage Trail, 11am
- Upcoming Shaw Main Streets Nights at Vegetate Restaurant, Queen of Sheba Restaurant, and Lettie Gooch Boutique



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*Where Eagles Fly* opens at the Lincoln Theatre on March 30.

## WHERE EAGLES FLY

(CONTINUED FROM P. 1)

As the play unfolds, Ma Brown, a lifelong Shaw resident, is awaiting a decision from a city board as to whether or not she will be displaced from her house. Her granddaughter, a student at Howard University, is adamant about selling the family home and relocating from the “ghetto” to a more prominent community. But Ma Brown reminisces about the era when African-Americans had no other area in the District as exciting and prosperous as Shaw. Her granddaughter respectfully allows Ma Brown to chronicle the splendid panorama of Shaw’s history in the form of this award-winning musical.

### ADVERTISE IN SMS NEWS

Reach thousands of potential customers by placing an ad in *Shaw Main Streets News*. *SMS News* is hand-delivered to 4,500 residences in neighborhoods throughout Shaw, including Mount Vernon Square, Blagden Alley, French Street and LeDroit Park and is also available at various distribution points in the community and online.

#### Rates (Single Edition)

Full page	\$300	7.5” x 8.5”
Half page vertical	\$200	3.5” x 8.5”
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The highly anticipated three-week return of *Where Eagles Fly* is a must see for all DC residents, new and old, who will be able to better appreciate Shaw’s rich and diverse legacy and the neighborhood’s important place in American history and culture through the combination of music, dance and verse.

Mumin, a native Washingtonian, former White House communications aide and 25-year Shaw resident, and her husband, executive producer Ibrahim Mumin, have dedicated their lives to the improvement of the Shaw neighborhood and to bringing Shaw overdue recognition and respect. In addition to serving as the play’s creator, Carole is also the president and founder of the not-for-profit Organization for Training Others in Need (OFT/ON). The proceeds from *Where Eagles Fly* support OFT/ON, which provides DC residents with an extensive list of training, skills development, workforce preparation and conflict resolution services.

For more information, including group sales, visit [www.whereaglesflyllc.com](http://www.whereaglesflyllc.com) or call 202-939-0650. To order tickets, call the Lincoln Theatre box office at 202-328-6000 or Ticketmaster at 202-397-SEAT or [www.ticketmaster.com](http://www.ticketmaster.com). ♦

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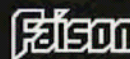
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## VOLUNTEER SPOTLIGHT:

### BARRY LUMSDEN



Volunteers are the life-blood of Shaw Main Streets' programs. Each edition of *SMS News* features one of the many volunteers that make our organization a success. Nominations may be submitted to Kate Damon at 202.667.1100 or [k8damon@kazedesign.com](mailto:k8damon@kazedesign.com). This edition profiles Barry R. Lumsden.

Lumsden opened the District's second Nationwide Insurance agency in November 2004 at 1525 9th Street, NW, the historic home and plumbing shop of Watha T. Daniel, our neighborhood library's namesake. He moved to the District from Pittsburgh, PA to open the office, at Nationwide's invitation. In addition to offering home and auto coverage, the agency has already partnered with Seaton Elementary School to present a safety day, at which free fire extinguishers were distributed to parents of Seaton students. Lumsden would like to extend an invitation to all residents and business owners to stop by 1525 9th Street NW or call him at 202-387-1160 to have a free insurance or financial review.

#### 1. Tell us about your business.

I am currently the agency principal for Lumsden Insurance Agency, a Nationwide Insurance agency. The agency staff consists of Rashawn Lumsden, licensed agent for property and casualty; Lanae Lumsden, licensed agent for property and casualty; sales support staff; and myself, Barry R Lumsden, LUTCF, licensed in property and casualty, life and health and Registered Representative of National Securities, Inc. We provide products and services for auto, home, life, commercial and financial products.

#### 2. What inspired you to open your business in Shaw?

I relocated to the Shaw neighborhood from Pittsburgh, PA, where I worked as a corporate insurance agent for Nationwide Insurance. I found my location in Shaw through a real estate agent. Shaw was also recommended to me by a former resident of DC who I knew in Pittsburgh. Shaw had a reputation for being an up coming area in the District. Once I signed my lease, the leasing company recommended that I should contact my neighborhood ANC Commissioner Alexander Padro. Alex was a great help informing me about the community and residents.

#### 3. Why did you get involved with the Shaw Main Streets organization?

I was recommended for the SMS Board by Washington Urban League Director Maudine Copper, who I had met through my

company. She was coming off the board and thought it would be an excellent opportunity for me as a new business owner.

#### 5. Favorite bit of Shaw history?

My favorite Shaw history is that Carter G. Woodson, who was my fraternity brother in Omega Psi Phi Fraternity and wrote much of the history of my fraternity, lived directly across the street from my office. His house will soon be a house museum operated by the National Park Service.

#### 6. Favorite spot in Shaw?

One of my favorite places in the Shaw neighborhood is Shiloh Baptist Church. I attend Sunday services there and will soon start attending their bible studies on Thursdays. The senior members have been very helpful in doing business with my agency and act as a resource for information about the District.

#### 7. What would you like to see change in the neighborhood during the next year?

One of the things I would like to see happen in Shaw is to have the vacant properties on the 1500 block of 9th Street redeveloped. Most of the properties are owned by Shiloh Baptist Church and they have made a commitment to begin rehabilitating them in the immediate future. This, along with the Carter G Woodson National Historic Site, would greatly enhance our neighborhood. ♦

### GET INVOLVED: JOIN A COMMITTEE!

Volunteers are the life-blood of Shaw Main Streets' programs. Join a committee and help in our efforts to promote economic revitalization in Shaw. For more information, contact the appropriate committee chair, email [info@shawmainstreets.com](mailto:info@shawmainstreets.com), or call 202.265.SHAW.

#### PROMOTION

*Cary Silverman, Chair* [202.247.5113, [carysilverman@comcast.net](mailto:carysilverman@comcast.net)]  
Meets third Monday of each month at 7:30 pm.

#### ORGANIZATION

*Gregory E. Thomas, Chair* [202.673-7203, [gregory.thomas@kas.dc.us](mailto:gregory.thomas@kas.dc.us)]  
Meets second Tuesday of each month at 6:30 pm.

#### ECONOMIC REVITALIZATION

*Tim Mack, Chair* [202.332-0846, [ir004286@mindspring.com](mailto:ir004286@mindspring.com)]  
Meets last Wednesday of the month at 6:30 pm.

#### DESIGN

*Alveraze Gonsonland* [202.730.2012, [agonsonland@madisonretail.com](mailto:agonsonland@madisonretail.com)]  
& *Brent Kruse* [202.588-0380, [brent@opxglobal.com](mailto:brent@opxglobal.com)], Co-chairs;  
Meets third Thursday of each month at 6:30 pm.

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**Home of Marthlu Bledsoe & Hal Davitt, 905 M Street, NW, after total façade renovation.**

## A HOUSE IS STILL A HOME A PROFILE OF 3 GRANT RECIPIENTS

by Virginia C. Lee

Over the past decade, the District has experienced a remarkable renaissance. At the same time the cost of purchasing and owning a home had risen as a result of this long overdue reinvestment in the city, including in the Shaw neighborhood.

To lessen the impact of this wave of reconstruction on long-time homeowners and businesses in the Shaw, Blagden Alley, and Mt. Vernon Square Historic Districts and preserve the distinctive and varied character of their landscape, a historic preservation fund was established as part of the agreement that allowed

the Washington Convention Center Authority (WCCA) to construct the new convention center. Part of the fund was used as a grant program, which was administered by the National Trust for Historic Preservation's Community Partners department, to make funds available to residents in the affected area so they could improve the appearance of contributing buildings in these historic districts. Homes and commercial buildings that possessed sufficient integrity to convey, represent or contain values and qualities that are judged significant were eligible for a Historic Preservation Fund grant.

There were over 500 inquiries about the grant program and 267 applications received. Ultimately, 73 grants totaling \$584,845 were awarded to Shaw property owners. Interviews of three Shaw grant recipients, Nancy Green Johnson, Marthlu Bledsoe and Hal Davitt, and Lynda Wright, explaining how the grants affected their homes, their lives, and their neighborhood can be found on the SMS website at [www.shawmainstreets.com](http://www.shawmainstreets.com). A complete list of properties that received Historic Preservation Fund grants, including before and after photographs, can be viewed online at [www.nationaltrust.org/DC\\_Initiatives/grant.htm](http://www.nationaltrust.org/DC_Initiatives/grant.htm). ♦

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**SHAW GETS CHIC** (CONTINUED FROM P. 1)

Her success at Eastern Market made her begin searching for a retail location and was attracted by Shaw’s history and renaissance. “I saw Wild Women Wear Red and knew I wanted to be part of what’s happening here,” Watts says. She came across the storefront that she ultimately chose and when the owner told her about its past history, Watts was sold. “This was part of Madame C.J. Walker’s empire,” referring to America’s first Black female millionaire, who made her fortune in the salon and beauty products business. “I knew this was a special place and wanted to be a part of this block and its history.”

With the renovations complete, the space doesn’t look anything like what it might have when it was a salon: exposed brick, original pine floors and pressed tin ceiling, golden yellow walls, and bronze and copper painted highlights set off with track lighting. All of which makes an inviting yet modern environment to display premium jeans by House of Dereon, Saltworks, and Ranahan Jeans (with the lipstick holder in the cuff), seasonal shoe selections, and funky imported accessories, like the colorful Ecoist bags handmade from recycled candywrappers by artisans in Mexico, and African amber and copper bead necklaces by J.P. & Mattie.

Undergarments like Spanx, Commando thongs and Low Beams nipple concealers help to accentuate women’s figures.

The first question everyone always asks Watts is the meaning of her store’s name. “My grandmother Lettie Gooch was a huge influence on me,” Watts explains. “She was born in Lexington, VA, was the oldest of 13 children, and was my only living grandparent when I was growing up. It was only natural that I honor her and give myself a standard to live up to by naming my boutique for her.”

With grandma Lettie and Madame Walker behind her, how could Watts go wrong?

**Lettie Gooch Boutique** is located at 1911 9th Street, NW. The shop will open in March. Business hours will be Tuesdays through Thursdays, 12:00 PM to 7:00 PM, Fridays and Saturdays, 12:00 PM to 8:00 PM, and Sundays, 12:00 PM to 5:00 PM (Closed Mondays). For more information, visit [www.lettiegooch.com](http://www.lettiegooch.com) or call 202-332-4242. ♦

**NEW BUSINESSES** (CONTINUED FROM P. 8)

Co-directors Michael Joseph and Barbara Wien run the Washington office of **Peace Brigades International/USA**, which moved to 1326 9th Street, NW, in October. The 25-year-old non-profit active in more than 15 countries provides nonviolent peacekeeping and unarmed protective accompaniment to individuals, organizations, and communities threatened with political violence and human rights violations. For more information, visit [www.peacebrigades.org/usa](http://www.peacebrigades.org/usa) or call 202-232-0142.

A fall opening is expected for a **Subway** sandwich shop at 1125 7th Street, NW, the space formerly occupied by Crimpz Inc. The 40-year-old chain is the world’s largest submarine sandwich franchise with over 25,000 restaurants in 83 countries. For more information on Subway, visit [www.subway.com](http://www.subway.com).

*Want to be kept up-to-date on the latest new business openings? Send a message to [info@shawmainstreets.com](mailto:info@shawmainstreets.com) and ask to be added to the Shaw Main Streets email list.* ♦



SMS Executive Director Alexander Padro surrounded by tour participants in front of the Washington Convention Center.

## SHAW ON TOUR

### RESIDENTS, VISITORS ENJOY FALL WALKS

As part of Cultural Tourism DC's citywide WalkingTown, DC, event on Saturday, October 1, 2005, Shaw Main Streets presented two free walking tours of Shaw, led by SMS Executive Director Alexander M. Padro. Nearly 100 people participated.

The morning tour focused on the area between K Street and Rhode Island Avenue. Participants learned about the area's earliest days, when the neighborhood consisted of woods and a few farms, through its time as a streetcar suburb, and some of the historic figures that lived or worked in the area, including explorer John Wesley Powell, African American US Senator Blanche K. Bruce, and historian Carter G. Woodson. Visits to two dramatic new spaces inside restored Victorian exteriors were included. Many participants then had lunch at Azi's Café.

The afternoon tour focused on the area between Rhode Island and Florida Avenues, and explored how entertainment has long been the focus there. From the Howard Theater to the pool hall where Edward Kennedy "Duke" Ellington decided to become a musician, this tour of places associated with entertainment ended at Habesha Market and Carryout, which was celebrating its grand opening.

These two tours will be presented again on Sunday, April 23, 2006. For more information, call 202-265-SHAW or email [info@shawmainstreets.com](mailto:info@shawmainstreets.com). ♦

## BREAKING NEW GROUND

### CONSTRUCTION BEGINS ON THE EXCHANGE

Shaw Main Streets held a groundbreaking ceremony for The Exchange, a new mixed-use (retail/office/residential) development at 1301-1309 9th Street, NW, on December 1, 2005. This long-awaited development of a corner immediately adjacent to the new Washington Convention Center finally began to move forward after over two years of zoning and historic preservation approvals.

Highlights of the event included remarks by Ward 2 Councilmember Jack Evans; the blessing of the project and construction workers by Father James Watkins of Immaculate Conception Church; music by the Shaw Junior High School Marching Band; and coffee, hot chocolate, and pastries from Azi's Café.

The project includes renovation of some of the oldest buildings in Shaw, with new construction at the rear. This project is an important one not just because it is adjacent to the convention center and will help continue the revitalization of 9th Street, but because it is an example of the commitment by Douglas Development to preserving our history. The buildings incorporated into the project were in such poor condition that most developers stayed away from them because of historic preservation restrictions.

For leasing information, visit [www.douglasdevelopment.com](http://www.douglasdevelopment.com) or call Norman or Blake at 202-638-6300. ♦



The first shovels of dirt for *The Exchange* were turned by Councilmember Jack Evans, ANC Commissioners, and representatives of Shaw Main Streets, Douglas Development, neighborhood churches, and civic associations.



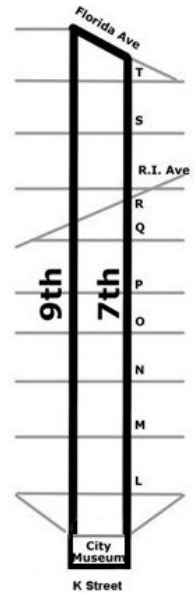
# SHAW MAIN STREETS NEWS

## 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 7<sup>th</sup> and 9<sup>th</sup> 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 non-profit, community-based, volunteer-driven organization that relies heavily on the time and talents of volunteers in the community and beyond.

The neighborhood served is bounded by New Jersey Avenue at the east, 11<sup>th</sup> Street at the west, K Street at the south, and Florida Avenue/U Street at the north. Partial funding for Shaw Main Streets, Inc. is provided by ReStore DC/DC Main Streets, Anthony A. Williams, Mayor. The organization relies substantially on 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**  
Shaw Main Streets, Inc.  
1426 9th Street, NW, Washington, DC 20001-3330  
Telephone: 202.265.SHAW; Fax: 202.265.7529  
E-Mail: [info@shawmainstreets.com](mailto:info@shawmainstreets.com)  
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## ABOUT THIS NEWSLETTER

This newsletter is published quarterly by Shaw Main Streets with the generous support of **Miller Copying Service**, 1111 7<sup>th</sup> Street, NW. Over 4,500 hard copies are distributed door-to-door and at various distribution points. The newsletter is also available on the web at [www.ShawMainStreets.com](http://www.ShawMainStreets.com) and via e-mail. Story ideas? Interested in writing? Comments or suggestions? Contact:

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202.247.5113, [carysilverman@comcast.net](mailto:carysilverman@comcast.net)

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