

# CITIZENS AWARE

# ALERT

November 2008 Vol. 3 No. 1

*Message From Citizens Aware President*

## **A Change That Started With the Local Community**

As I reflect on the results of the presidential campaign and its historical significance, I think not just on the amazing fact that an African-American man is now president-elect — even though that's a major part of my retrospection. I also think about how this all took root in a decision President-elect Obama made many years ago — to choose the path of community organizing instead of working for a prestigious law firm.

Yes, the change that has led to this historic event was rooted in a personal decision to work in the local community. As his wife Michelle told *U.S. News and World Report*, community organizing “helped him decide ‘how he would impact the world’ — assisting people in defining their mutual interests and working together to improve their lives.”

The *U.S. News* article went on to state that, “By Obama’s own admission, there were few big victories. But whether it was getting the city to fill potholes, provide summer jobs ... Obama encouraged residents to come up with their own priorities with the gentle admonition: ‘It’s *your* community.’”

Those words should be as inspiring to us as the word “Change.” We’ve just witnessed what a commitment to change can do. Just think what would happen if we took the words “it’s your community” as much to heart. And your community involvement does not have to be on Obama’s level. Just as your one vote — tallied with the rest — led to an historic election result, just a *little bit* of your time, combined with that of your neighbors, *can* make a huge difference. It *can* CHANGE your community, the nation, the world...

Peace and Blessings,

*Gwen Vample*

Citizens Aware President

## **Community News and Events**

**Hearing on OP’s Small Area Plan Set for Nov. 13.** After years of discussion, the Office of Planning has developed a “small area plan” for the Riggs Road/South Dakota Avenue corridor. To get community input, the Mayor’s office is holding a hearing on the plan on Nov. 13, from 6:30 to 8:30 p.m. at LaSalle Elementary School. The plan can be viewed at <http://www.planning.dc.gov/planning/cwp/view,a,1285,q,645648.asp> or at the Lamond-Riggs Library and the LaSalle school and community center. For more information on the hearing and how to provide comments (comment deadline is 5:00 p.m. Nov. 12), contact Op’s Ward 4 Planning Coordinator Malaika Abernathy at [malaika.abernathy@dc.gov](mailto:malaika.abernathy@dc.gov) or (202) 442-7600.

## **Citizens Aware Officers**

- **President:** Gwen Vample  
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- **Vice Presidents:** Rabihah Mateen  
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### **Other Community Reps**

**Ward 4 Councilmember:** Muriel Bowser  
([MBowser@dccouncil.us](mailto:MBowser@dccouncil.us))  
(202) 724-8052

**ANC4B08 Commissioner:**  
Yvonne Jefferson ([yjeffer@yahoo.com](mailto:yjeffer@yahoo.com))  
**Lamond-Riggs Citizens Assn. President:**  
Charon Hines ([charonhines@yahoo.com](mailto:charonhines@yahoo.com))

## **NEXT MEETING**

**Nov. 12**

- Guest Speaker: D.C. Dept. of Transportation (tentative)
- Community concerns

### **NEXT THREE MEETING DATES**

- December 10
- January 14
- February 11

### **LOCATION/TIME OF ALL MEETINGS**

Second Wednesdays of the month  
**7:30-9:30 p.m.**

**Christian Reformed Church**  
**5911 New Hampshire Ave. NE**  
in the basement meeting hall

**Want more community info? Join our list-serv: [citizensaware-subscribe@yahoogroups.com](mailto:citizensaware-subscribe@yahoogroups.com)  
And visit our website at <http://www.geocities.com/citizensaware>.**

## South Dakota and Riggs Road Development Update

We've heard the plans, we've seen the posted signs, but many may be asking: When will the corner of South Dakota and Riggs Road be redeveloped? The economy has slowed down progress. DDOT now expects to begin the intersection reconfiguration in the first half of next year. In the interim, pedestrian traffic signals have been added. The Fort Totten Square developers have a letter of intent with Shoppers Food for the former Tiger Mart site. The deputy mayor's office is working with the developers and Shoppers on financial incentives. Also, there is discussion about who will "foot the bill" for utility enhancements. The Lamond-Riggs Development Task Force is scrutinizing these issues. While we wait, to deal with graffiti along the wall of the old Dakotas Apartments site, Councilmember Bowser, Mural DC and the task force worked together to have local artists and youth paint a mural on that wall. We've also had an issue with homeless people using the Tiger Mart site; the developer and the police recently removed those persons and secured the site. Also, a truck periodically sells furniture on S. Dakota and Riggs. If you notice this activity, please call the police. Finally, the Cafritz Foundation has submitted a Planned Unit Development proposal for their property (generally, the area around the Riggs Plaza Apartments, behind Food and Friends) — to include senior citizens housing, a day care center, a Safeway, other retail and other housing.



### Get Ready for Holiday Party!

Mark your calendars now for our annual Holiday Party, Wednesday, Dec. 12 at 7:30 p.m. Watch for special flyers with more details.

### Congrats to LRCA For 60 Years of Service!

On Oct. 18, our "umbrella" organization, the Lamond-Riggs Citizens Association (LRCA), held a banquet to celebrate its 60th anniversary. Held at the Shiloh Family Life Center, the banquet featured not just a filling meal, but also remembrances of things past and forecasts of things to come. Well done, LRCA!

Also, congrats go to outgoing LRCA President Rodney Foxworth, honored by the D.C. Federation of Citizen Associations as President of the Year.

Finally, we welcome Charon Hines as LRCA's new president!

### Condolences

Citizens Aware offers its condolences to Willard Johnson of New Hampshire Ave. and his family. Mr. Johnson's brother passed away recently.



*Chef Willard Johnson*

### Thanks for a Great Yard Sale!

There was a slight chill in the air, but otherwise Citizens Aware had a beautiful day to hold a Yard Sale, on Sept. 20. The event met all of its goals: (1) as a fundraiser, as we were able to rent several "spaces" for people to sell their wares, and cooked and sold food; (2) as an opportunity to meet and greet neighbors; and (3) as a way to "give back" to the community, because, through a grant from ANC 4B, we were able to purchase 77 club car locks that we gave away to 4B residents as a public service (and thanks to Officer Heather Straker for her help with this project!). To the Yard Sale Committee and all others who helped organize and support this event (and to the Griffins, thanks for the use of your yard!), THANK YOU!

## IT'S TIME TO RENEW YOUR CA MEMBERSHIP!

### OCTOBER 2008-SEPTEMBER 2009 MEMBERSHIP YEAR

Yes, I would like to join Citizens Aware. Enclosed is my 2008-2009 dues check made out to *Citizens Aware* for **\$15 (per household)**.

NAME (last, first, MI):

\_\_\_\_\_

ADDRESS: (number, street, zip)

\_\_\_\_\_

PHONE NUMBER:

(h) \_\_\_\_\_ (w) \_\_\_\_\_ (c) \_\_\_\_\_

E-MAIL ADDRESS: \_\_\_\_\_

**Send Form/Payment to:** Yvonne Jefferson, Citizens Aware Treasurer  
6009 New Hampshire Ave. NE  
Washington, D.C. 20011  
(Or you can pay at our meeting.)