

Issue: August 2016
East Rock Creek Village
7838 Eastern Avenue, NW, Suite D
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NEIGHBORS HELPING NEIGHBORS
TO AGE WELL AND THRIVE
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EAST ROCK CREEK VILLAGE VOICE



Ms. Vernestine Laughinghouse presenting to a rapt crowd of 22 attendees on July 21, 2016

“HOW OR HOW NOT TO DECLUTTER—THAT IS THE QUESTION”: According to Ms. Vernestine Laughinghouse, the proprietor of Absolute Organizing Solutions, “Clutter is anything we don’t need, want, or use that takes our time, energy or space, and destroys our serenity.”

In order to declutter properly, Ms. Laughinghouse advises starting with a plan, sorting and purging similar items in categories together, such as clothes, and after discarding unwanted items, properly putting away those one wants to keep. She believes in starting small with as little as 15 minutes, and decluttering one space at a time. She recommended decluttering when your energy is good, and getting help from friends, family, and, of course, a professional organizer. She

also advised having boxes or bags set up in categories, such as “keep, donate, sell, not sure, trash, and recycle.” Successful decluttering involves decision-making about what to discard or give away and what to keep. The process of purging has to take place before buying containers or other organizing products to properly store possessions.

Ms. Laughinghouse’s decluttering don’ts include:

- Don’t agonize—get organized;
- Don’t try to do it all in one day!;
- Don’t jump around from room to room or space to space;
- Don’t put things in a storage space, like an attic or basement “for now”—they will be there 5 years later;
- Don’t be afraid to ask for professional help;
- Don’t try to organize clutter;
- Don’t organize when you are tired or hungry;
- Don’t start with large projects if you’re working alone;
- Don’t forget the small things such as drawers, jewelry, etc.; and
- Don’t put items in a “Miscellaneous” category.

For most of us, having acquired possessions over the course of a lifetime, the hardest part seems to be just getting started on the decluttering process. Many attendees shared their own tips, from donating books to local schoolchildren to donating larger items to charities, such as those that pick up at homes, such as A Wider Circle, Goodwill or the Salvation Army.

We will definitely invite Ms. Laughinghouse back. We also invite members to call the office at 202-656-7322 to schedule a pick-up of old appliances, computers, TVs, and hazardous waste for transport to the Ft. Totten Solid Waste Disposal Transfer Station for Saturday, August 6th.

EAST ROCK CREEK VILLAGE (ERCV) PROGRAMS: Our most popular program is the monthly meeting of the “Out-to-Lunch Bunch.” On July 15th, nine members enjoyed dim sum and other Chinese fare at the Oriental East Restaurant at Blair Park Plaza. Our next luncheon will be August 17th at noon at Mark’s Kitchen in nearby Takoma Park. Our next brunch will be Sunday, August 21st, at noon at La Ferme in Chevy Chase.



Our ERCV Book Club met on Thursday, July 28th, to discuss Ta-Nahesi Coates’ book, Between You and Me. The next meeting of the book club will be

Thursday, August 25th, from 3 to 4:30 pm to talk about Son of the Maya, an international thriller written by our very own member, John “Skip” McKoy.

ERCV RECRUITMENT OPEN HOUSE:

Current ERCV members are invited to bring a prospective member to a wine-and-cheese party at the ERCV offices on Thursday, August 25th, from 5 to 7 pm. We are also planning a “Meet Your Neighbor” backyard barbeque on Saturday, August 27th, from 4 to 7 pm at the home of Gloria Sulton. So please join us at either event to learn about the many advantages of Village membership—either as social or service members. Social members’ dues are tax-deductible and they help ensure that our Village is financially sound so that our volunteers can assist our service members.

SAVE THE DATE FOR OUR ANNUAL MEETING:

All 88 social and service members of East Rock Creek Village are invited to attend our first annual meeting at Tifereth Israel at 7701 16th Street, NW, on Sunday, September 18th, from 3 to 5 pm. A slate of new officers and directors will be up for election. Also, all Village members will hear about our progress and have input into the strategic direction, goals, and priorities for our Village for the coming year!



The dog days of August