

# THE NORTHWEST CURRENT

## Suit objects to killing park deer

By DEIRDRE BANNON  
Current Staff Writer

Five Northwest residents and the international animal protection organization in Defense of Animals filed a lawsuit in federal court last week against the National Park Service to stop its plan to use lethal methods this winter to control the deer population in Rock Creek Park.

The Park Service plans to deploy trained sharpshooters and archers to kill deer in areas of the park that are specifically closed off at night for this purpose, according to information on the agency's website.

Court documents filed Oct. 25 by the plaintiffs state that this will be the first time in Rock Creek Park's 120-year history that the National Park Service allows killing of any wildlife inside its boundaries. The lawsuit claims that the park's deer population hasn't changed dramatically in at least 10 years, with the number hovering around 315, and it states that the use of lethal methods to control the deer population is an "unwarranted" and "extreme approach."

The group is asking that the Park See **Deer**/Page 27

### FIGHTING LITTLE FIRES



Bill Petros/The Current  
**Stuart Mitchell, 3, came dressed as a firefighter to Saturday's Halloween party at Forest Hills Park. The event featured a costume parade and a performance by the Great Zucchini.**

## Dire predictions give way to minor damage

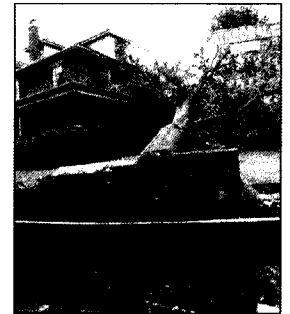
■ **Sandy:** Outages affect far fewer than in past storms

By BRADY HOLT  
Current Staff Writer

District residents expecting widespread damage and power outages from Hurricane Sandy instead found themselves with electricity to watch news reports about the brunt of the storm striking farther north.

In comparison to the June "derecho" storm or last year's Hurricane Irene, Sandy packed a relatively light punch in the D.C. region. Mayor Vincent Gray said at a news conference yesterday afternoon that the storm "turned out a whole lot better than expected" for the District. He said he knew of no fatalities or injuries from Sandy within the city.

"We were relatively fortunate,"



Matt Petros/The Current

**The city fielded 236 reports of tree damage.**

Ward 3 D.C. Council member Mary Cheh said in an interview yesterday. "We've had some trees down, some spot flooding and some power outages, but hardly what might have

See **Storm**/Page 7

## At-large candidates talk education issues at forum

■ **Council:** Some contenders differ on mayoral control

By KATIE PEARCE  
Current Staff Writer

A more focused conversation came out of the cluttered at-large D.C. Council race last week, with five candidates narrowing in on education issues as the Nov. 6 election approaches.

A forum Thursday night drew education advocates, teachers and even a handful of high school students, who waited in line to confront the candidates with pointed and sometimes emotionally charged questions about the direction of D.C. schools and the role the council should play on education.

The event may have been most important for long-shot candidates A.J. Cooper (independent) and Ann Wilcox (Statehood Green), who got

more of the spotlight than usual after the two incumbent at-large members, Vincent Orange (Democrat) and Michael A. Brown (independent), left early to make appearances elsewhere.

David Grosso (independent), whose campaign has won formidable attention and endorsements from outlets including The Washington Post, was also able to give more nuanced explanations of his views on education.

The two other at-large prospects, Mary Brooks Beatty (Republican) and Leon Swain Jr. (independent), didn't attend Thursday's forum, which was sponsored by a consortium of local advocacy groups including DC Voice.

The two incumbents, Orange and See **Council**/Page 26

■ **VOTERS GUIDE:** A look at candidates for shadow seats. Page 17.

## Ward 4 plans to create aging-in-place village

By DEIRDRE BANNON  
Current Staff Writer

Ward 4 residents east of Rock Creek Park are taking initial steps to form the area's first "aging in place" village, joining a national trend of creating neighborhood networks that help seniors stay in their homes as they get older.

At a gathering last week at the North Portal Estates home of Deborah Royster, who works as general counsel for the D.C. Office on Aging, approximately 70 residents met to hear information and brainstorm ideas about what the Ward 4 village could do.

"Far too many seniors in the

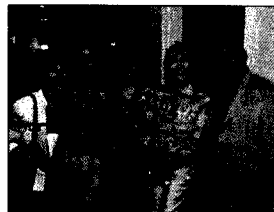


Photo courtesy of David L. Hamilton  
**Ward 4 residents gathered to brainstorm ideas for a village.**

District are going to nursing homes prematurely," said John Thompson, executive director of the Office on Aging.

Thompson said senior villages

can help decrease the influx to nursing facilities because they provide a myriad of services to help seniors stay safely in their homes and live independently as long as possible.

Services can include home health care, house modifications, help with yard work, transportation to church and other destinations, and social functions that stave off isolation, which can have a negative impact on health. Villages often provide meals and friendly visits, and they usually have buddy lists to make sure contact is made with members before and after big storms.

While there may come a point when a senior needs to relocate to an See **Village**/Page 24

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## NORTHWEST REAL ESTATE

### VILLAGE: Ward 4 looks to start senior network

From Page 1

assisted living facility or a nursing home, Thompson said villages help many seniors to "age in their communities."

There are several established senior villages in the District, with more in development. The groups vary depending on the needs and wants of the communities they serve.

Typically, villages create a non-profit organization that provides referrals, services and volunteer help to its members. Some villages require a fee to join and have paid staff members, while others provide services free of charge by relying on volunteers and grant funding. Villages tend to survey members to find out what services are needed.

In Ward 4, there are more than 16,000 residents over age 60, the second-highest senior population in the city after Ward 3, according to data from the 2010 Census. And aside from those few who live within the area served by Northwest Neighbors Village, whose boundaries include the Chevy Chase neighborhood, most don't have access to a

village group yet. But residents at last week's meeting expressed their goal to change that.

"Going into assisted living is a very expensive proposition — most people would like to stay in their homes if they can," Loretta Neumann, a longtime neighborhood activist, said in an interview. "It's economically better for them, and they can be a part of the community and around friends and their support system."

Neumann said she'd like to see membership in a Ward 4 village offered at no charge and open also to younger members with temporary or permanent disabilities. Ward 4 is more spread out, with many single-family homes, than some parts of the city, which may engender more isolation than for seniors living in apartments or condominiums. There also could be a greater need for help with transportation, yard work and home modifications, she said.

Neumann also said it's vital to maintain integrated neighborhoods — an effort she's been involved with for years, as a current board member and past president of Neighbors Inc.,

a nonprofit that formed in 1958 to fight racially discriminatory real estate practices and promote integrated neighborhoods in Ward 4.

"It's important to have people of all ages in our neighborhoods, just as it is to have racial and economic diversity," she said.

Neighbors Inc. is taking the lead in helping to form the Ward 4 village, along with the Office on Aging and other local civic groups.

"It dovetails well with our organization's history," said Neighbors Inc. president Shannon Cockett. Many of the group's members are also getting older, and Cockett said the board "heartily endorsed" the village idea.

The organizing groups will help residents form a steering committee of volunteers from around the ward and conduct a needs-assessment survey. Based on the experiences of other villages in the District, it could take about two years before the Ward 4 village is up and running.

Capitol Hill Village was the first village established in the District, becoming fully operational in 2007. It was modeled after the Beacon Hill Village in Boston, which started in 2002 as the first senior village in the nation. Today in D.C. there are villages in Dupont Circle, Georgetown, Palisades, Glover Park, Penn Quarter and Upper Northwest. Villages are being planned in Cleveland Park, West End/Foggy Bottom and wards 7 and 8.

To get involved in the new Ward 4 village effort or find more information, contact the Office on Aging at [dcda.dc.gov](http://dcda.dc.gov) or 202-724-5622 or call Neighbors Inc. at 202-341-7775.

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