



# The Penn Brancher

Newsletter Update for the Penn Branch Citizens Civic Association

**Next Meeting: Tuesday, May 14, 2019- 7:00 PM**

in the **Pennsylvania Baptist Church** basement community room, rear parking area

***Our Mantra: A Community That Comes Together Stays Together***

## **CONGRATULATIONS KELI HAMMOND!!!**

Ms. Keli Hammond, granddaughter of Anita Hammond and niece of Angela Hammond, both of Texas Avenue, has recently published a book. The book is entitled "CRAVED: THE SECRET SAUCE TO A HIGHLY-SUCCESSFUL STANDOUT BRAND." Keli recently had a book signing at Busboys and Poets in Brookland NE, DC and appeared in an interview on Good Morning America on April 12, 2019. Keli is a native Washingtonian and graduated from School Without Walls H.S. in DC. She has a Bachelors degree in Communications and Advertising from Temple Universtiy and holds a certification in Change Leadership (Change Management) from Cornell University. She is a 2X award winning marketing pioneer, a life coach and motivational speaker, and the founder of B Classic, LLC a marketing business in Washington, DC. Her book is available at Barnes and Noble, Walmart, and Amazon. You can also visit her website at: [Kelihammond.com](http://Kelihammond.com).

## **DC WATER BILLS ARE OUT OF CONTROL...but HELP IS ON THE WAY**

On December 18, 2018, the DC Council passed the DC Water Consumer Protection Amendment Act of 2018. The Bill was the culmination of years of efforts to improve the experience between DC Water and its customers frustrated by escalating water and sewer rates and charges attributed to critically needed infrastructure

improvements and repairs. The Bill became law on April 11, 2019. **The law authorizes the Office of the People's Counsel (OPC) to assist DC Water consumers in the following ways:**

1. To investigate complaints on water services, rates and billing
2. To represent DC Water consumers at administrative hearings on services
3. To advocate for DC Water consumers at its public hearing on rates
4. To represent DC Water consumers at proceedings before local and federal regulatory agencies and the courts
5. To advise and educate DC Water consumers about their legal rights and responsibilities

## **How OPC will work for you depends on the issues you are facing:**

Effective April 11, 2019, OPC is authorized to directly assist DC Water ratepayers with service issues. This means OPC's Water Services Division staff can independently begin an investigation of your complaint instead of referring it to DC Water. Since October 2018, OPC has been contacted by more than 200 DC Water consumers with complaints on a variety of issues that include:

- high bills
- payment problems
- disconnection of service
- difficulty contacting a DC Water representative
- difficulty negotiating a payment arrangement to resolve a billing issue
- water service and sewer line clogs

- leaks and other plumbing problems causing increased consumption and higher bills
- installation of submeters in apartment buildings, creating first time individual water payments for tenants

\*\*Extracted in whole from OPC's website.

If you have a dispute about your water bill or service level, you must contact DC Water first at 202-787-2000 (M-F 8 a.m. to 5 p.m.). If you are dissatisfied with the results, you are then encouraged to contact OPC's Water Division at 202-727-0371.

### **KEEPING ALL CURBLINES CLEAR OF DEBRIS HELPS DRAINAGE THROUGHOUT THE COMMUNITY**

PBCCA encourages all its residents to sweep their curbsides weekly. An excellent day would be the Thursday or the day before our weekly trash collection. This will allow water to flow down your streets in the curb line, where it will reach a catch basin that takes this water to the Anacostia River quickly. When the water in the community does not move swiftly it settles in your yards and can seep down into your basement causing damage to your homes over the long haul. If you do not have a 2019 sticker on the catch basin(s) in your block please call 202-612-3400 and indicate the address of the house closest to the catch basin and the date-stamp on the basin.

**ANOTHER FIRE HAS HIT THE PENN BRANCH COMMUNITY-** Our community has experienced four house fires between January and April 2019. Three fires have occurred on Texas Ave SE between the 3400 and 3500 blocks and one occurred on Pope Street SE. We encourage you to test your smoke alarm systems to see if they are in good working order. Contact the fire department to get free alarms if you need them. Submit a request on-line at: <https://fems.dc.gov/service/home-fire-safety-inspection>. Or call 202-727-1614 or 202-673-3331 with questions and concerns.

### **RADON GAS IN YOUR HOME**

Radon is a naturally occurring, invisible gas that comes from deposits of uranium in soil, rock and water. Prolonged exposure to elevated levels of radon can be harmful when found in homes. District residents can obtain a free radon test kit by calling the radon hotline at 202-535-2302 or by submitting a request on line at <https://doee.dc.gov/radon>.

### **UPCOMING EVENTS**

**Mother's Day Celebration** – Pennsylvania Avenue Baptist Church, May 11, 2019 from 11:00 am -2:00 pm, tickets \$20 each. Call 202-581-1500 for reservations. A great celebration for Mom.

**Bus Trip** - to Hollywood Casino at Penn National Race Course, June 4, 2019, Grantville, Pa. Day trip with one of Ward 7 communities, Benning Ridge Civic Assoc. Tickets are \$35. Rebate \$25 and Food Voucher \$5. Contact: Shanklin Browne at 202-494-8466 for details or to reserve a seat.

**Trip to Africa** -Journey to Ghana West Africa September 20, 2021. An orientation meeting will be held at Pennsylvania Avenue Baptist Church, Tuesday May 7, 2019 - 6:30 pm to 9:30 pm.

### **NEW NEIGHBOR: Congratulations! Mo and Tiff on your new baby girl "Zahar"**

**Reminder—"Of many we are One"** and we need your help to keep PBCCA informed about your neighbors who are either sick, shut-in or who have passed. Also, articles can be submitted 10 days prior to the next scheduled meeting to [elsonb13@gmail.com](mailto:elsonb13@gmail.com).

### **This publication and update has been brought to you by:**

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