



David Snider

East of the River's Heavy-Hitting Theater Advocate

BY MACEO THOMAS

East of the River can now claim one of the top advocates for theater in the Washington metropolitan area – the president of the League of Washington Theatres. Not only an advocate for theater and the arts, this neighbor is pushing theater into the schools as a developmental tool for children's writing and general creative skills.

Meet your neighbor – David Snider.

David has been the producing artistic director for the Young Playwrights' Theater since 2005. He and his wife share a charmingly decorated two-bedroom brick home on Texas Avenue. Together with his expertise on theater and love for his home neighborhood, David is looking to change the landscape of theater in the District to include more East of the River venues.

David talks about his home search in 2004, when he and his wife were living on Capitol Hill. "We started look-

ing East of the River and started to find real cool places that were affordable that had some land had some nice space in a nice neighborhood." As he found his home, he also found a new venue for theatrical productions.

"Since I started heading up YPT, one of the things I try to do is get more programming East of the River," he proclaims.

David describes YPT as "the only professional theater in DC dedicated entirely to arts education."

"Everything we do as a company is entirely for students and teachers," he explains. "We go into public schools and teach kids to write plays." He lists some of the schools off the top of his head – Kelly Miller in Ward 7, Bell Multicultural in Columbia Heights, Ferebee-Hope Elementary in Ward 8 and McFarlane Middle in Ward 4.

YPT works in Kelly Miller Middle School after school twice a week and will be providing programming all

summer. The organization has been at Bell Multicultural for the last 12 years and has served all of the 11th-graders for the last two years through English class. YTP is integrated in the English standards through a play writing curriculum.

"Every 11th-grader has us in their English class every Wednesday," he explains. "So we actually... integrate into the classroom; into the curriculum that we are in. We actually collaborate with the faculty and create a play-writing curriculum that addresses the English standards.

"So it's not an add-on, it actually is exactly what they are doing in those classrooms," he says, describing the added value education the students are receiving.

From the work at Bell this academic year, YTP worked with 165 students who completed 135 plays. During YTP's New Play Festival, the six best of the 135 were produced in a stage reading. The best five from the two years of 11th grade English were fully produced – professional actors, directors, costumes, props light and sound – and now tours for free at local venues, including schools and even recently at the Amphitheater at Marvin Gaye Park near Division and Nannie Helen Burroughs Avenues.

Since February, David has been serving as the president of the League of Washington Theaters. The League of Washington Theaters is a consortium of nonprofit theaters in the greater Washington area. The association promotes the growth of its member organizations and creates public awareness, appreciation and support for theater in

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Washington. There are over 40 members including such renown theaters as the National Theatre, Ford's Theatre, Studio Theatre and Woolly Mammoth Theatre, to name a few.

Last September, the League held its first "Free Night at the Theater" where 24 theaters donated more than 1,800 tickets. This spring, the League presented "Stages for All Ages." This presentation of theatrical production has been the ninth annual event to introduce young people to the richness and diversity of professional theater.

In the role as president, David finds himself now advocating for his theater colleagues to produce shows east of the river. He has plans to give tours to funders of the local theater sites.

"There's a lot of interest in the funding community right now for getting funding east of the river," David mentions while explaining the planned tour by a major arts funder. "A lot of people are excited about that. One of the things I'm trying to do is to hook people into that.

"There is so much potential. It seems like we are at a tipping point." And our neighbor, David Snider is pushing it in the right direction.

For more information about Young Playwrights' Theater, go to www.yptdc.org. For more information about The League of Washington Theaters, go to www.lwot.org.

If you have a neighbor you think should be considered for a feature in the Meet Your Neighbor column please e-mail a short description to meetyourneighbor@gmail.com. ■



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3	\$24,900
4	\$30,000
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6	\$40,200
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For an updated Event Calendar, please visit sixflags.com.

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2007 events

Saturday, June 9
Praise in the Park—
A Gospel Celebration
with Hezekiah Walker

Thursday, June 14
Marking
**THURSDAY NIGHT
CONCERT
Series** Every Thursday
June 21-August 9
6:00-10:00

Saturday, June 23
Higher Power—A Christian
Music Celebration
with Natalie Grant

Sunday, June 17
Marking
**FESTIVAL
LATINO**

coming this summer...

July 4 - 4th of Jazz Concert & Spectacular Fireworks
August 19 - Country Music Day with Blake Shelton

45 YEARS
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The District of Columbia Water and Sewer Authority (WASA) Invites Customers in the District to attend

A Public Hearing

on a Proposed 7.5% Rate Increase for Water and Sewer Services

6:30 pm Wednesday, June 13, 2007

at the
Metropolitan Council of Governments
777 North Capitol Street, N.E.
First Floor Training Room
(Within walking distance of Union Station)

The proposed rules were published in the February 23, 2007 edition of the DC Register, 54 DCR1690 and (54 DCR 1688) respectively.

The WASA Board of Directors makes every effort to keep rates as low as reasonably possible. Modest increases, however, are necessary to support a \$2.2 billion capital improvement program to maintain and upgrade the city's vital water and sewer infrastructure and to meet federally mandated water quality and environmental requirements.

Please plan to attend and take advantage of this opportunity to learn about water and sewer operations in the District and how the money you pay for service is used. If you are interested in providing comments, you may contact the WASA Office of the Secretary of the Board at (202) 787-2330 or you may e-mail your request to Lmanley@dcwasa.com no later than 5 pm Friday, June 8, 2007.

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