

Hi Neighbor!



Newsletter for friends and neighbors of the Rock Creek Woods, MD community

Young Rock Creek Woods ballerina shares her story

“I am Lucy Maeve Laphorn and I am 13 years old. I have an older brother named Quinn and a chihuamutt named Betty. I attend Silver Spring International Middle School, where I am in the French Immersion Program. My favorite subjects are French and Band—I am a percussionist in Advanced Band and I play drum kit in Jazz Band. (Quinn is a drummer and percussionist, too.)

I love ballet and have been taking classes since we lived in Brooklyn and I was two-and-a-half years old. I currently train at Maryland Youth Ballet (MYB) and I am in Pre-professional, Level 5. I just finished performing as The Bird in *Hansel and Gretel* and will perform in our year-end showcase in June. I've been lucky enough to have been cast in *The Nutcracker* at the Kennedy Center the past two seasons, so I was able to perform with Miami City Ballet and Kansas City Ballet. I especially enjoyed dancing with Miami City Ballet, as I love Balanchine's choreography and I was a Polichinelle, which is an exciting role. Recently I saw Aran Bell of American Ballet Theater as Romeo. I've been following his career since he was featured in the documentary *En Pointe*. That was a beautiful performance! This summer, I will be taking a five-week intensive at MYB, ending with performances of *The Little Mermaid* at Wolf Trap. I'm really looking forward to it! “



Lucy shown in last year's performance at Children's Theatre-in-the-Woods, Wolf Trap National Park for the Performing Arts in Vienna, VA. She performed the same role of The Bird en pointe in May 2023.

New Neighbors: Michael Kane and Toshimitsu Hamasaki

New neighbors Michael Kane and Toshimitsu (“Toshi”) Hamasaki moved into 3600 Spruell, former Helen and Cedric Beachem residence, last February. Toshi came to Washington, D.C. in 2019 to become Professor of Biostatistics and Bioinformatics in George Washington University’s School of Public Health. Previously he was with Japan’s National Cerebral and Cardiovascular Center in Osaka. Michael was born in Reading PA, graduated from Penn State with a BS in Marketing. In 2004, he came to Arlington VA to work for H & M Clothing, a Swedish based multinational company that focuses on fast-fashion clothing. Michael’s responsibility was visual merchandising, which concerns the layout of clothing in the stores.



Michael, interested in languages, joined an on-line group to study Japanese. There, he met Toshi who was improving his English. In January 2021, intrigued with each other, they met for dinner at Brasserie Liberté in Georgetown. This led to regular get-togethers. On May 1, 2021, Toshi proposed: “Can we become more than just friends?” Michael replied, “I hope so.” Soon Michael moved into Toshi’s home in Gaithersburg. Michael left H & M to work for Mom’s Organic Market in Gaithersburg and is now Assistant General Manager.

Wanting to live closer to Georgetown, they found the Beachem home. In addition to the house, they were taken by the neighborhood layout and the cherry trees. Toshi and Michael enjoy cooking and taking walks in Brookside Gardens. – Tom Klein



Photo by Siobhán White

May’s 103rd birthday celebrated

A very well-attended party with food, music by Adam Gonzalez, and tributes by friends was held for May Nakamura on Sunday, May 21 in the church picnic area. She and her family moved to 4010 Ingersol 61½ years ago.

May was born on a farm near Portland, Oregon. After high school she moved to Washington, D.C. to find work. She had a long career starting in the Office of Price Control and ending in 1991 at George Washington University Counseling Center. She married U.S. Patent Office attorney Joe Nakamura in 1949. They had two children, John and Jeanne. John is retired and lives with his mother. Jeanne is Associate Professor at Claremont Graduate University.

May was a great tennis player beating younger women in tournaments. Now she watches major meets on television. She also loves gardening and is a long-term member of Holiday Park Senior Center. Food and money were collected for her favorite charity, Mid-County United Ministries, which provides emergency food and assistance to people in crisis.

New Neighbors: Kelly George and Aurora Griffin

They tied the knot many months ago, but 3929 Rickover (former home of David and Nancy Roth) is their first residence as a married couple! The mid-20th century modern style with big windows that allows “nature outside to merge with nature inside” attracted Kelly and Aurora, but after several months in RCW, they find the lasting attraction is being part of our community.

Aurora, since 2020, has been working with her a family real estate business. She is the sixth generation of developers in her family, working with her father, uncles, and cousins to build housing, apartments, senior living, and shopping centers throughout the country. Before joining the firm, Aurora earned an MBA from Stanford Business School. Aurora was born in Los Angeles. Her intellectual interest has been theology. At Harvard Aurora, finding no undergraduate major in theology, majored in Classics (BA 2014). Awarded a Rhodes Scholarship, Aurora went on to Oxford (Trinity College) earning an MA in Theology. Having mastered Latin at Harvard, she could easily study original texts at Trinity. Back in the States, she worked for the US State Department for two years before attending Stanford. While now pursuing a business career, she feels that her 6-year liberal arts studies has permanently enriched her life and enables her to “think out of the box” in her present endeavors.

Kelly, a native of Chambersburg, PA, has lived in Ecuador, Ghana and Nepal. She is a PhD in Chemistry (University of Pittsburgh, 2018) and now focuses her scientific background on health policy and drug development regulations at Avalere Health in DC where she hopes to support scientifically grounded policies and a patient centric model. She is a passionate life-long learner who is currently dabbling in geopolitics, economics, and birdwatching.

Seeking life-time partners, Aurora and Kelly met on the Bumble dating app. Their first date was to go on an “appetizer hop” at restaurants in the DC Navy Yard area. A mutual affection quickly developed which led to a six-month, thirty-state road trip together, exploring National Parks and breweries across the west – an unusual expansion of “working at home.” Each day of driving and exploration ended with a workday at an Airbnb, Aurora and Kelly each pecking away on their laptops. Back in DC in June 2021, it was Aurora who observed that if they could stand 10 hours a day together in a car every week for six months they would be perfect marriage partners.

Wedding bells chimed August 27 last year in Bentonville Arkansas, one of Aurora and Kelly's favorite places they visited on their road trip. Family and friends came from across the country, though no one is based there, to a beautiful, glass-walled chapel in the woods and a reception at the Crystal Bridges Art Museum. The museum features one of the top American art collections, including a Frank Lloyd Wright House, which Aurora and Kelly now see as a preview of their mid-20th-century modern home they now love. – Tom Klein





Rock Creek Woods photos by Michael Hoyt



Cut ivy from trees

English ivy can choke – and kill beautiful trees that give our yards and neighborhoods shade and character. What *looks* like a lovely little green plant can strangle trees, accelerate rot, attract mosquitoes, and cause mature trees to fall during storms. Once ivy is in the tree canopy, it blocks sunlight from the leaves. Dense ivy cover deprives bark of normal contact with air and microorganisms and competes for nutrients and water. Use garden clippers to cut ivy at the bottom, leaving a margin around the entire trunk of all infested trees. Separating ivy vines from their source of nutrients in the soil will cause them to die. If the ivy is not dense, you can pull vines from the soil at the bottom of the tree with your hands, especially after it rains. On heavily infested trees with vines thicker than an inch, carefully saw through the vine and gently ease it away from the bark. Once cut, leave ivy on the tree. Pulling it off could harm the tree and ivy will gradually blend into the tree bark after it is cut. Check your trees each winter to be sure the ivy isn't regrowing.