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Gary & Diana Ditto's Newsletter

Fall 2017

Thiên Kim Barber Shop The Long Journey from Vietnam to Kensington

By Antoinette Kranenburg

Thiên Kim was giving a customer her full attention as she meticulously finished his haircut. The shop was spotless, neat as a pin. After her customer left, pleased with his smart haircut, she neatly swept up and sat to share some of her amazing life story.

Thiên Kim and her brother bought the barbershop on Metropolitan Avenue in December 2015, when the previous owner retired. Thiên Kim came to the United States in 2001, before September 11. She understands English well and is working on her pronunciation.

Thiên Kim was born in 1967 in her father's hometown in the Mekong Delta in the South of Vietnam, near Vinh Long, a city 3 hours south of Ho Chi Minh City, then called Saigon. Her older brother still lives there, working the small family rice farm.

She is the middle child of five and has three brothers and a sister.

When the Vietnam War ended on April 30, 1975, Thiên Kim was only 8 years old, in third grade. Her father, who had worked for the United States, disappeared, and her mother was left alone to care for their five children.

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— *Thiên Kim Continued*

Thiên Kim thought that her father had died. Actually, her father had left to hide in the jungle — “did not give up” — and was alive. Eventually he made his way to Thailand by boat and from there to the United States.

Nobody knew that her father was alive. She says that she still does not know much about what happened. If Thiên Kim’s mother knew, it was too dangerous to tell her children.

Her mother worked their tiny rice farm and worked for other larger farms, struggling to take care of the family. Food was scarce.

After Thiên Kim completed 4th grade, her mother decided that she had to quit school and work. Fortunately, her grandfather on her mother’s side took Thiên Kim in so that she could finish school. Her favorite subjects were biology, math, and chemistry, and she wanted to teach science and math. She graduated from High School in 1984.

“One thing was not good for me” — she could not go to university, because someone had found out about her father. Going to school to be a teacher or nurse was also not an option.

Her mother wanted her to learn from a tailor, so it would be better for her to go to America. Thiên Kim didn’t want to do that, but gave in. “No father, five children—that is why I listened to her.” She chuckles that she only wanted to do simple things like shirts and pants. She worked for the tailor for one year until she married.

Her mom told her to whom to marry. Her husband-to-be had been dating her cousin, but when he saw Thiên Kim he liked her. He was good looking and a small farmer, but Thiên Kim was not interested. He persisted, told his parents, and they talked with her mother. They were married in 1987.

“The culture is so different now, but that was how it was for my mom, too,” and the generations before.

Meanwhile by 1982, her father had made it from Thailand to the United States. Until then they thought he had died.

Her mother did not want to go to Thailand with her husband while her parents were still alive.

Thiên Kim’s second oldest brother went with her father in 1982. In the U.S., someone helped her Dad out and let him live there. Her father started with cleaning in restaurants, and by the time her retired he did maintenance, taking care of plumbing and electrical in a building.

By 2001, when Thiên Kim and her two sons came to the U.S., her dad lived in Aspen Hill and they all lived with him. She loves her dad very much, she explains, because her dad came alone and lived alone a long time. He and her mother were apart for nineteen years, from 1975 to 1994.

Her mother and her youngest brother, who was living at home, came to the U.S. in 1994. “My father is very good with my mom.” She stays at home and cares for the household.

Her younger brother worked as an electrician with his father until he was laid off after September 11, 2001. Then he went to barber school and became a barber.

Thiên Kim went to barber school in Bladensburg and got her barbering license in 2003. She worked at a barbershop in Olney until she and her brother bought the shop in Kensington together, when the previous owner retired.

This way she is her own boss. She takes good care of her customers and her clientele is growing.

Thiên Kim Barber Shop provides full service - all styles of haircuts, razor cuts, shaving, facial, massage.

The address is **10515 Metropolitan Avenue**, Kensington, MD 20895

Hours are 9-7 Monday to Friday; 9-6 Saturday; 10-5 Sunday.

Cell: 249-899-8994; phone 301-532-9151

PEP’s 17th Annual Noted Parenting Author Series

November 16 & 17

Bradley Hills Presbyterian Church
6601 Bradley Blvd, Bethesda

PEP – the Parent Encouragement Program – welcomes Dr. Michael Bradley and Dr. Lawrence Cohen.

- **Dr. Michael Bradley:** “Crazy-Stressed: Saving Today’s Overwhelmed Teens and Tweens.” Thurs, Nov. 16, 7:30 - 9 p.m.
- **Dr. Lawrence Cohen:** “The Opposite of Worry: Tackling Childhood Anxieties and Fears.” Fri, Nov. 17, 9:45 - 11:15 a.m.

Fee for each event is \$35. For information and to register, visit PEPparent.org or call 301-929-8824.



Villages of Kensington seeks Member Recruitment Consultant!

VoK wants to expand its membership – and provide services – especially to seniors at risk due to health status, social isolation, or financial challenges. VoK won a grant from Montgomery County to do just that, and is looking to contract with a Member Recruitment Consultant.

View the job description and download the document at www.VillagesofKensington.org. If you are interested, or know of someone who might be a good fit, please contact Donna Savage at president@villagesofkensingtonmd.org.

General questions about VoK can be addressed to VillagesofKensington@gmail.com, by calling 301-509-0191, or by visiting the website.



2017 Pumpkin Rock N' Roll!

Saturday, October 28, 2017 12 – 4 p.m.
Warner Circle Park, 10231 Carroll Place

Warner Circle Park will be transformed into a full-blown Halloween extravaganza. Participate in a costume parade and enjoy family-friendly attractions, including live musical performances, food trucks, inflatable rides and slides, and a hay maze.

The main event is The Pumpkin Roll, a derby race of Halloween pumpkins-turned-boxcars, not to be missed!

This fun event is free. Visit www.pumpkinrocknroll.com for details and to r.s.v.p.



Congratulations and a big THANK YOU to all who came out for the **Kensington Train Show** – the children, parents and grandparents who enjoyed the fabulous trains and the many volunteers – the National Capital Trackers, members of the Kensington Historical Society and the Noyes Library Foundation, railroad story teller and singer Matthew Dodd, the Dixie Land Express Band, JennyCakes Bakery, Scout Troop 439, the Town of Kensington and all who made the event possible.

Save the dates, September 8 and 9, 2018, the weekend after Labor Day, when this great show returns!

Kensington Arts Theatre presents

The Bridges of Madison County

Kensington Town Hall / Armory
3710 Mitchell Street, Kensington

The musical *The Bridges of Madison County*, based on the best-selling novel, brings together a beautiful Italian war bride, with a handsome photographer. While her family is away to the 1965 State Fair, he stops by her Iowa farm to ask for directions...

Performances are October 27, 28, November 3, 4, 5 (Sunday), 10, 11, 12 (Sunday), 17, 18. Friday and Saturday shows are at 8:15 p.m. and Sunday shows at 2 p.m.

For more information and to purchase your tickets please go to www.katonline.org.

E-Mail Updates from The Ditto Group –

Sign up for either or both of these updates:

- Our Monthly Sold Reports, sent via e-mail
- Our weekly “Open House” e-mail

You choose what to sign up for and you can always unsubscribe. Sign up on our home page:
www.thedittogroup.com.

For dates and news of more events, be sure to visit the Community Activities Calendar on the web site:

www.thedittogroup.com

Gary and Diana Ditto’s Newsletter welcomes ideas and news items from community members. We are grateful to Thiên Kim for sharig her story. The editor is Antoinette Kranenburg of Kensington, assisted by Cherry Wunderlich.

Help Buy a Fire Truck!

Spaghetti Dinner Fundraiser at the Firehouse

Sunday, November 5th 5 – 7 p.m.
Kensington Volunteer Fire Department
10620 Connecticut Avenue
Donation Adult /\$10, Child under 12/\$6.00.
(No advance ticket sales, 301-929-8000)



The British Players present

Beauty and the Beast

A Traditional British Pantomime

December 1 – 17, 2017

Kensington Town Hall, 3710 Mitchell Street
Tickets: 240-447-9863 • www.britishplayers.org

Traditionally performed at Christmas, with family audiences, British pantomime incorporates song, dance, buffoonery, slapstick, in-jokes, audience participation, and mild innuendo.

Children and adults alike enjoy the British Players’ productions of the live theatre form that’s called pantomime. The actors speak, sing, and act their roles, wearing colorful costumes and with the stage filled with memorable props.

The kids love to interact with the cast, and they get involved in a way that doesn’t happen with more conventional theatre.

Congratulations Ken-Gar!

Ken-Gar celebrated its 125th anniversary with a grand community gathering Saturday, September 16th, starting with an invocation, music, and remarks by numerous dignitaries.

Ken-Gar’s history, described in the printed program, dates to 1892, when “the 97 parcels making up the neighborhood were among the first in the county to be platted and recorded.” Part of the land that makes up Ken-Gar was deeded at the turn of the 20th century to a group of former slaves from Charles County, who settled Ken-Gar.

Photo collages submitted by Ken-Gar families were on display, honoring their long history in the community, going back generations. Some photos dated to the early 1900s.

The ceremonies were followed by food, fun, children’s entertainment, music, and dance – a lively reunion gathering. Months of planning and effort went into the wonderful day. It was a labor of love on the part of volunteers, who deserve a big thank you!

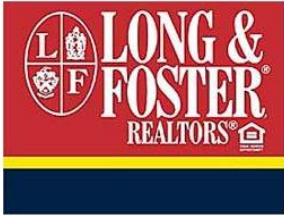


St. Paul’s Fall Apple & Yard Sales

Thursday, October 19 – Saturday, October 21, 2017
St. Paul’s United Methodist Church
10401 Armory Avenue, Kensington

Apples in several delicious varieties will be on sale in the Saint Paul’s Church parking lot. The Apple Sale starts on Thursday, October 19th at noon and goes through Food Truck Night. The Apple Sale continues on Friday and Saturday, the 20th and 21st, from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. or until supplies run out.

St. Paul’s Fall Yard Sale will be held indoors in Heavener Hall on Friday, October 20 (8 a.m. to 5 p.m.) and Saturday, October 21 (8 a.m. to 1 p.m.).

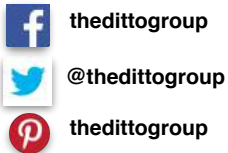


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The Ditto Group Real Estate Activity



4017 Glenridge Street
 Kensington - Chevy Chase View
 For Sale - \$ 1,149,000



10245 Parkwood Drive
 Kensington/Parkwood
 For Sale - \$ 764,000



4507 Traymore Street
 Bethesda/Parkview
 Under Contract
 List Price - \$ 695,000



4809 Flanders Avenue
 Kensington/Garrett Park Est
 For Sale - \$ 495,000



4418 Ambler Drive
 Kensington/Kensington Est
 Under Contract
 List Price - \$ 719,000



4014 Glenridge Street
 Kensington/Chevy Chase View
 SOLD - \$ 750,000
 September 2017



10907 Devin Place
 Kensington/Kensington Heights
 SOLD - \$ 410,000
 September 2017



10305 Mannakee Place
 Kensington/Homewood
 SOLD - \$ 551,000
 September 2017

Art & Craft Fair

sponsored by The Women's Club of Chevy Chase, MD

Saturday, October 14th
7931 Connecticut Avenue, Chevy Chase
10 am - 5 pm

40 Local Artisans
Exhibiting & Selling unique craft items:

Alpaca Fashions, Handmade Jewelry & Accessories, Fused Glass, Unique Clothing, Fine Art, Crafted Wood, Photography, Scarves & Pillows, Sweaters & Knits, Notecards, Soaps & Scents, Candles & Gifts and many more beautiful items.

Free Admission and Parking
A light breakfast and lunch will be served.

Proceeds go to local charities & building Preservation.
301-652-8480