



restoreing dc

A Monthly Update for Businesses and Consumers in the District of Columbia

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District of Columbia

Main Streets



Anthony A. Williams
Mayor

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WE'RE OPEN LATE

by Tom Litke

WELCOME

Welcome to reSTORE DC's latest issue, the place to find out about topics that concern the District's neighborhoods. We look to engage the neighbors and merchants as we cover the topics that encompass the District's renaissance, and what you can do to be a part of it. Commercial revitalization is the subject but quality of life is the vision. We discuss strategies that employ tools from the four corners of revitalization: economic development, community design, event promotions and community organizing.

THE NIGHT

Why hasn't anyone ever written a song about DC at night? For years, Washington has been known as a 9 to 5 city, where many workers shuttle in for the daytime, but race out like Fred Flintstone when the final whistle blows.

On November 15, 2003, suspicions were confirmed. When Mayor Anthony Williams brought together 3,000 residents at the Citizen Summit to identify and discuss the District's priorities, residents complained that their commercial district was merely a place of fast food, dry cleaning, and convenience stores with a minimal shopping experience. They were tired of seeing security grates rolled down as they headed home after work, with little opportunity to stop

in to pick up a few things, socialize at a coffee shop, or meet a neighbor and discuss community events.

Responding to the Citizen Summit's challenges, the District of Columbia, local organizations, businesses, and communities, are contributing to make exciting opportunities happen... at night.

Newly opened or renovated cultural centers like Gala Hispanic Theater in Columbia Heights, H Street Playhouse, Studio Theater at 14th and P and the spring opening of the Atlas Theater are already encouraging small businesses to stay open just a few more hours.

New destination restaurants like Café Belga on Barracks Row are banking on nearby businesses staying open late so that their customers will have a place to go while they are waiting for their table.

It's Late and I Need...

Here's a sampling of some of the District's late-night merchants and their Main Streets.

Candida's Books — Literature and Periodicals
1541 14th St. NW in 14th & U Main Street
Tue-Sat 10-10, Sun Noon-8

Modern Liquors — Wine and Beer
1200 9th Street, NW in Shaw Main Streets
Mon-Sat 10-8

Kobos — Clothing
2444 18th St. NW in Adams Morgan Main Street
Mon-Sat 11-7

Anita's Treasures — Gifts
18th and Kalorama in Adams Morgan Main Street
Mon-Sat 10-9, Sun 11-6

Hoopla Traders — Gifts
733 8th Street, SE in Barracks Row Main Street
Tues-Sat 11-7, Sun 11-5

Alvear Studios — Gifts
705 8th Street, SE in Barracks Row Main Street
Tues-Sat 11-7, Sun 12-5:30

Pfeiffer's Hardware — Dry Goods, Hardware
3219 Mount Pleasant Street, NW
In Mount Pleasant Main Street
Mon-Sat 9-7, Sun 12-5

La Threadz Couture — Clothing
1345 Good Hope Rd. SE
In Anacostia Main Street
Mon-Sat 10-7

Rock Creek — Clothing
2029 P Street, NW
In Dupont Circle Main Street
Mon-Fri 10-7, Sat 10-8, Sun 11-6

R & B Coffee — Coffee Shop
1359 H Street, NE on H Street Main Street
Sun, Tues & Wed 9-5, Thurs-Sat 9-9



And smart retailers like Candleman on Connecticut, Candida's Books on 14th Street, NW, and Modern Liquors on 9th Street, NW, are cashing in by staying open late and catching residents and visitors as they walk home from work, go to restaurants, and return to hotels.

To find out more, read on! In "It's Late and I Need" we'll share just a few of the retailers that are open late in DC's neighborhoods; In "Gimme a Reason" we will persuade business owners to stay open late; and for "In the Trenches," one of DC's newest retailers will explain why he stays open late and how the evening hours have worked for him.

Tom Litke works for reSTORE DC/DC Main Streets as an advisor to the DC Main Street programs. Prior to his work in DC, he directed a nationally-recognized Boston Main Street.



TOP 10 REASONS MERCHANTS SHOULD STAY OPEN LATE:

- 10 More dual income families often means more shopping takes place at night.
- 9 Increase in “weekend” or beach houses means more people away for weekends. Therefore, household tasks pushed into weeknights.
- 8 Parking and traffic congestion mean more people do more tasks in less traditional hours (people shopping at Home Depot at night rather than on Saturday mornings).
- 7 Parking and traffic congestion mean people do more tasks in bundles (3 stops in one car trip, rather than 3 separate trips). At night, congestion is relieved and people are more likely to get out and get things done.
- 6 Neighborhoods are more secure when there is activity in the streets. Criminals prefer to work on their own...without witnesses. It adds security to the neighborhood when there are more people active on the streets.
- 5 Certain purchases are frequently done last (flowers before arriving home, wine before going to a dinner party).
- 4 Certain purchases can be impulse buys. In order to capitalize on this, flower shops, for example, should stay open in the evenings and have a vendor cart outside their door.
- 3 A beautifully lit, open shop counteracts the security grates that make some neighborhoods look shut in.
- 2 Your lit storefront makes the neighborhood safer...keep in mind that you should keep your well-dressed storewindow lit even if you don't keep your store open!
- 1 Because the neighboring business is open.

IN THE TRENCHES | GETTING TO KNOW OUR MAIN STREET BUSINESSES

Lindsay Cobbs and Donald Kirk opened Candleman in Dupont Circle in early December 2004. Candleman is open from 11 AM–9 PM Monday through Saturday and 12–5 PM on Sundays. reSTOREing DC caught up with the proprietors recently to inquire about how they determined their hours of operation.

RDC: YOU ARE OPEN UNTIL 9 PM SIX NIGHTS A WEEK. WHY DID YOU DECIDE TO KEEP THESE HOURS?

LC: We feel that is important to be open when people need us. And we found that we have quite a few sales between 7 and 9 PM. In fact, during the holidays some of our larger sales were during those hours. We have even had a number of sales past 9 PM when we were closed but customers saw us in the store and thought we were open and we just couldn't turn potential customers away.

RDC: WILL YOU BE MAKING ANY CHANGES IN THE FUTURE?

LC: We may stay open later on Sunday nights. We came in late on a Sunday night a few weeks ago and a guy saw us in here. We let him in the store (and I am so happy when I let people in because they often buy something). The foot traffic was from a Church Service nearby.

DK: We may consider opening earlier on Sundays to take advantage of early morning traffic that comes from the Dupont Circle Farmer's Market.



RDC: I NOTICED THAT LUCKY JEANS IS OPEN UNTIL 9 PM AS WELL.

LC: That is very helpful to us because they are a destination. Often when people shop at Lucky Jeans, they will stop by our store as well.

RDC: DO YOU HAVE ANYTHING ELSE TO SHARE?

LC: This interview is very exciting because it means that someone is interested in helping the businesses in DC's commercial districts succeed after the traditional business hours. I don't know if someone would drive into Dupont Circle after work just to buy from Candleman ...

DK: ... but they might if they knew that there was a cluster of stores that they could go to and that they KNEW would be open.



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