

For Ann Hargrove, Nov. 15, 2014

Loretta Neumann

For those of us who live in the nation's capital, it's increasingly clear that our world is divided into two parts – between those people most concerned about the public good and those who care most about themselves.

I'm sure we would all agree on which side Ann Hargrove fell. She spent her life fighting for the public good and never did it with any idea of personal gain.

As many of you know, in the late 1960s, Ann fought a freeway that would have decimated our city – not only her neighborhood in Adams Morgan, but also mine in Takoma, and many others. Later, she was in the forefront of protecting DC's height limit law and keeping the low-rise beauty of our city. Ann saved many historic buildings and whole neighborhoods. She also helped stem the blight of billboards.

But I want to talk about the Ann Hargrove I've personally known for nearly 35 years. I met her when I first joined the Committee of 100 on the Federal City around 1979-80. I had a bit of a discussion with her several months ago about which of us had been a member the longest. As usual, she won the debate. But it didn't matter. What mattered was the continuing commitment Ann had to this organization, and it never wavered.

She was a member of the Board of Trustees of the Committee of 100 for many years, served as its chair, and instigated its endowment fund. Several years ago she was received the Committee's Vision Award for Lifetime Achievement in Public Service. And last year she received the District's Lifetime Achievement Award for Historic Preservation, presented to her by the Mayor.

To summarize, Ann had a brilliant, strategic mind coupled with an enormous capacity for hard work. She had an equally brilliant husband, Larry Hargrove, who is also a great strategist, and helped craft the legal language needed to carry out Ann's objectives. They were an amazing team.

Ann had other qualities that people may not know, as Anne Sellin has mentioned. She LOVED to entertain and she did it with gusto and elegance. For many years, she single-handedly arranged the food for the Committee of 100s annual Vision Awards reception. An amazing array of beautiful and delicious food. Some of which we are sharing in the repast after this service. Her salmon and cream cheese with capers; meatballs in a special tangy sauce; smoked fish pate; little sandwiches; sugared grapes; asparagus wrapped in ham; and lots of desserts. Yum.

In 2006, when my husband Daniel Smith and I were planning to get married, Ann took me under her wing. With that same indefatigable spirit, she helped me pick out my dress (she didn't like my original selection), and drove me out to the countryside to pick out flowers and baskets to put them in. She worked out all the decorations for our wedding reception. She even didn't go to our wedding so she could make sure that everything would be perfect afterwards for our guests. And, of course, it was.

Ann was also very generous. She and Larry gave us the most interesting presents. Spoons, for example, a whole collection of them that I use every day. A set of covers to protect credit cards when traveling. And most recently, just a few weeks before she died, she gave me a beautifully decorated Hispanic pot that I will treasure forever.

My father often told me that we should do good for others not because they will do something for us in return but with the hope that they will do good for someone else. That's the way Ann lived. She gave and gave, with great

generosity and good cheer. But although grateful, she always seemed surprised and bit embarrassed when someone did something for her. She would be overwhelmed with the outpouring of support that people have given today for her and for Larry. We all know they both deserve it.

I miss Ann already. Personally, for her wit and wisdom and friendship. But also more profoundly for the city, her passion for the nation's capital and its role as both a federal institution and a home with neighborhoods where all of us live.

Keeping Washington DC beautiful and livable was one of Ann's major goals and the legacy – indeed, the gift – that she has left us. We now must continue that work without her. We **must**.

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