

# ShoppTalk

May 8, 2009 • Vol. 35 • No. 9 Editor, Mario Iván Oña, x4-6803

## In Blogs We Trust A Guide to Post Web Logs

If you want to try out some tasty new recipes, there's a blog for that. Or find out how to save a pretty penny in this tough economy, there's a blog for that. Or get your "fix" of something other than politics, like classical music. There's even a blog for that. Yep, The Post has a blog for just about everything.

The Post has more than 80 blogs and counting. Post Digital Interactivity and Communities Editor **Hal Straus** says, "Generally our blogs provide readers with a more timely report—a post doesn't need to wait for the next day's paper—and, just as important, a place where they can engage with Post writers and other blog readers."

In the last few months, a few Post blogs have been created to confront the pressing issues of the day—the economy, real estate, the relationship between God and government. But there are also new

blogs to whet the appetites of food aficionados and strum the heart-strings of classical music lovers, who might otherwise be content-famished or information-deprived.

### Small Change

Small Change by **Ylan Q. Mui** and **Nancy Trejos** bargains itself as a place to get "advice on being frugal and surviving the economy." With practical, everyday, money-saving tips, Mui and Trejos deliver actionable journalism or journalism you can use.

"It's about the way we and our readers are living through the recession," Mui says. "Our blog chronicles the smaller changes that people are making, from bringing their lunch to work to clipping coupons. We wanted to give them helpful tips, but also let them know they're not going through this alone." Trejos says, "Ylan and I have teamed up to give our readers some ideas on how to save a buck or two. Every dollar counts these days."

The blog is updated online Monday through Friday, and also runs in the A section Tuesday through Saturday. Trejos says that beyond providing ways to save money, "We want to highlight people in our region who've come up with interesting strategies on coping with this economic downturn. We're all adapting here, so we might as well create a community where we

can offer each other ideas."

Not surprisingly, the responses have been positive, and both reporters, who are also Twittering (@ylanmui and @nancytrejos), say that they seem to be getting as many ideas from their readers as they are putting out. But they do encourage colleagues to visit the blog, be guest bloggers, make comments and offer their own money-saving stories or suggestions.

<http://voices.washingtonpost.com/small-change>

### The Hearing

Tracking the economy and its governing policies at a broader level, but in layman's terms, is The Hearing, which offers "decoding the economic policy debate with **Simon Johnson** and **James Kwak**."

Financial Day and Web Editor **Sara K. Goo**, who helped create and edits the blog, says, "The Hearing is a destination for ideas and debate

on economic policy. With all that's going on, we realized that The Post was a natural place for debate and for ideas on how the government is handling the crisis and how it's reshaping corporate America. We named it 'The Hearing' because of the many Congressional hearings each week, but also because it was a clever way to convey that the blog itself is a public hearing of sorts."

To create the blog, Straus worked closely with

then-Financial Assistant Managing Editor **Sandy Sugawara** and Johnson, an MIT professor and former IMF economist, who already had a popular blog on the subject.

"This has been fun and different, because we are not using Post staffers as the primary writers for the blog," Goo says. "It's a new way to approach information that we feel our core audience is interested in. The whole idea of where the government is going with its stakes in major companies, for example, is raising a lot of questions, so this a place where people can go deep."

Goo also edits several other Post blogs, including The Ticker with **Frank Ahrens**.

<http://voices.washingtonpost.com/hearing/>

### Local Address

Local Address by **Elizabeth Razzi** is about "buying, selling and



**Small Change:** Advice on being frugal and surviving the economy by **Ylan Mui** and **Nancy Trejos**.



**Local Address:** Buying, selling and owning a D.C.-area home by **Elizabeth Razzi**.

# Distinguished Educational Leadership Awards Ceremony

“A year ago this same month, my 20-year-old brother was fatally gunned down and Ms. Hayes Campbell ran to my family’s side,” Nathan Woods tells ShopTalk. “She didn’t hesitate a bit to give money, food, unconditional love and support in my family’s time of need. For her kindness and support, my family and I are in debt to her. She’s a phenomenal woman and deserves this recognition for all of her good deeds in D.C.”

Woods and his older sister, Erickia Woods, were special guests of Knowledge is Power Program (KIPP) D.C. Charter School Principal Sarah Hayes Campbell during the 2009 Distinguished Educational Leadership Awards ceremony at The Post on April 29. Hayes Campbell, representing charter schools, along with 18 other principals, representing 17 local school districts and one private school, were honored during the event hosted by Post Co. Chairman **Don Graham** and Publisher

## Katharine Weymouth.

Nathan Woods, who is no longer a student at KIPP, continues, “I met her when I was just 6 years of age. She taught my older siblings and became acquainted with my family in part because of her compassion towards kids. She took us to dinner, to see movies and to museums in order to get us away from all the drama and turmoil that was happening in my neighborhood in Southeast D.C. Ever since we’ve known her, Ms. Hayes Campbell has been a part of the family and we treat her as such.”

It’s not every year that a DELA recipient has a story as gripping as Hayes Campbell’s, but in many ways, she is exactly the type of educator that The Post has taken great pride in recognizing for the past 24 years.

Each year, The Post honors as many as 21 principals for going “beyond the day-to-day demands of the position to create an exceptional

educational environment,” as it is explained in the event program. The DELA program was started by Graham and former Post Vice President **Vincent E. Reed**, operates on the idea that much of the success of a school rests on its principal.

After being introduced by Weymouth during the ceremony, Graham spoke about each winner and shared excerpts from endorsement letters sent in by the winners’ students and teachers, and also the students’ parents.

Graham talked about Hayes Campbell, but he also talked about Mill Run Elementary School Principal Paul Vickers (Loudoun County, Va.), who arrived at a students’ house before the fire was out and who offered reassurance to his grieving community following the death of one of his kindergartners.

And Falmouth Elementary School Principal Gayle Thyrring, who rallied her school and community after a project to build a new school was scrapped. She told her community that the facilities are not important, and that it’s the people who make the difference.

And there were lighter moments, like Spring Ridge Middle School Principal Maureen Montgomery (St. Mary’s, Md.), who shocked students by driving her Harley motorcycle in to work, and Manassas Park Middle School Principal (Va.) Eric Neff, who got a Mohawk hair cut after he lost a bet when students did well on a standardized exam.

Following the ceremony, the principals and their guests enjoyed some food, drinks and an opportunity to network with fellow principals and other prominent educators.



From left, student Erickia Woods, Distinguished Educational Leadership Award winner and KIPP D.C. Principal Sarah Hayes Campbell and student Nathan Woods. Hayes Campbell helped the Woods siblings overcome the shooting death of their old brother last year, long after both students had moved on to another school.



Former Vice President **Vincent E. Reed** (seated), who founded DELA and several other staple Post educational programs, is greeted by Calvert County Public Schools Board of Education President Eugene Karol and Marketing Vice President **Candy Lee**. Behind Dr. Reed is his wife Frances Reed.



The Distinguished Educational Leadership Award-winning principals selected by their counties and regions receive a standing ovation from friends, family, students and fellow educators during the ceremony at The Post.



Beach Elementary School Principal Michael Shisler, representing Calvert County Public Schools in Maryland, speaks on behalf of all the 2009 DELA winners, as Post Co. Chairman **Don Graham** and Publisher **Katharine Weymouth** listen.

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owning a D.C.-area home." "It's also about keeping up with and enjoying a home," she says.

"I try to offer sound advice on personal finance matters related to the home, newsworthy developments and plenty of fun stuff, like remodeling trends, vacation homes and design," Razzi says. "It's a lot of ground to cover, but it reflects the unique nature of residential real estate."

The blog was spawned by Razzi's Local Address column in the Sunday Business section, and it aims to also create a community where readers can learn from each other. The blog is getting more visibility, as is evident by the amount of e-mails Razzi receives from people trying to get mentioned in the blog.

"It's always been true that if you don't get your housing decisions right, you stand little chance of getting the rest of your finances right. This little blog can help people get it right," Razzi concludes.

<http://voices.washingtonpost.com/local-address/>

**God in Government**

In a note to the newsroom from Managing Editor **Raju Narisetti**, he writes, "Today we debuted a new blog, 'God in Government,' anchored by religion reporters **Jacqueline L. Salmon** and **Michelle Boorstein**. It will be featured prominently on 'On Faith,' washingtonpost.com's very successful religion news and commentary page. We expect a rich assortment of news about the intersection of faith and public policy, and the initial postings are already generating strong reader interest."

Boorstein adds, "It aims to cover Obama's new faith-based office and what's going on with public funding to religious organizations. There seemed to be a surge of interest with the new administration and how Obama has changed the culture of discussion about religion and government, so we want to track that more carefully. We also want to be more reporting-driven, not opinion and

not simply linking to other news or blogs that cover religion, and government, policy and politics."

The blog generated a buzz right off the starting block. The day it started, the Religion News Service (the main religion wire) ran a story titled, "2 gals, 1 God and a whole lot of government." And its popularity continues to grow. According to Boorstein, On Faith producer **David Waters** says that the blog is getting a lot of attention and being linked to from other religion sites and blogs.

Post reporter **William Wan** will be stepping in, as Boorstein will be going on maternity leave in May. Boorstein says that more multimedia pieces will be woven in, and she encourages colleagues to visit the site and offer tips and contributions.

<http://newsweek.washingtonpost.com/onfaith/godingovernment/>

**The Classical Beat**

From the three things you're never supposed to talk about among friends—money, religion and politics—to a subject people have a hard time talking about because they don't feel they have the knowledge to discuss: classical music.

"The blog is a compendium of classical music news, reviews and my own musings—everything in the huge and active classical music world that doesn't fit in the paper," says Classical Beat blogger and classical music critic **Anne Midgette**.

"Ideally, I would also like it to serve as a kind of gathering-place where classical music fans can weigh-in with their own views. I've been encouraging readers to participate, with sometimes quite wonderful results. The debate over the opera 'Peter Grimes' was fantastic, for example."

"I've wanted to blog for years, because the model of a newspaper critic desperately needs to change," she explains. "The old idea of someone who sits in judgment and makes pronouncements in print is outdated—something evidenced by music critics and other arts critics losing their jobs left and right in these difficult financial times. Critics need to start thinking of themselves as leaders of a community rather than arbiters of taste. Blogs allow more of a give-and-take with readers and are a more flexible, spontaneous way to react to news and stories. Ideally, it can help establish the new model for criticism that we so badly need."

The reader response has been "extensive and shockingly polite," but Midgette says that there is more to write about than she can cover, which bodes well for the field and her blog. The blog gives her the opportunity to expand on stories

that she's written for the paper, but also serves as a "breeding ground for new material."

Midgette concludes, "Wow often have I spoken at a panel or luncheon of long-time music supporters and heard someone say to me, 'Well, I've been going to concerts for 25 years, but I don't really have a trained ear, so my opinion isn't worth much.' Classical music is still too often segregated or treated as if it

had to be approached with specialized knowledge. This music is for everybody, but the field needs to be democratized so that more people understand that classical music is vital, interesting and worth talking about. We need to empower the audience. I'd like the blog to be a step in that direction."

<http://voices.washingtonpost.com/the-classical-beat/>

**All We Can Eat**

Travel and Food Assistant Managing Editor **Joe Yonan** describes it like this: "All We Can Eat is a meeting place for the food-obsessed, a traffic signal at the ever-crowded intersection of politics, culture, aesthetics, desire and the dinner plate. It will explore questions of how government policy affects our food choices. It will help readers make the best use of the Post Food section's recipes, giving a behind-the-scenes look at our recipe testing and development process and providing a forum for questions and ideas. It will help connect readers to the best ingredients and ways to cook with them, offering recipes that haven't been published in our pages. It will help *locavores* learn to grow their own food, spot their favorite products at farmers markets and track the contents of other people's community-supported agriculture (CSA) boxes. And it will give wine lovers an early taste of our recommended bottles."

Unlike other blogs featuring one or two primary bloggers, All We Can Eat will feature Yonan, but also his staff and guest writers: Food Deputy Editor **Bonnie Benwick**, staff writer **Jane Black** and editorial aide **Leigh Lambert**, with regular contributions from Post gardening columnist **Adrian Higgins**, freelance wine columnist **Dave McIntyre**, freelance writer **Monica Bhide** and copy editor **Jane Touzalin**.

Yonan says that the blog, which reinforces A Mighty Appetite blog by **Kim O'Donnel**, is a way to have a more direct conversation with readers without being tied to a weekly publication schedule. "And to remind people that we're a source for good news any day of the week," he concludes.



**All We Can Eat:** The Food section serves up recipe tips, food trends and more.

<http://voices.washingtonpost.com/all-we-can-eat>

**Best Practices**

Though many try, not everyone makes it in the blogosphere. So what does it take to be a successful blogger and be one of the most popular blogs on washingtonpost.com (see list of Top 10 Post blogs below)?

During a recent blogging best practices session set up by the newsroom, political analyst and host of The Fix—the current most popular Post blog—**Chris Cillizza** explained that his blog provides "very granular information for a very niche audience." He said that the most successful blogs "don't try to be everything for everyone."

Straus says, "Blogs that are updated frequently tend to work better, as do blogs written with a consistently engaging tone or voice. A good example is Liz Kelly's *Celebrityology*, a top performer in a topic area that isn't perhaps as much in The Post's wheelhouse as politics or local sports. Her tone is provocative without being snarky. She includes a number of regular or 'furniture' posts designed to encourage readers to check back often."

For a full listing of all Post blogs, visit:

<http://blog.washingtonpost.com/>

*Editor's Note: Post employees will hopefully be compelled to visit some of these blogs, but also help get the word out by telling friends and family about them via e-mail, Facebook, Twitter, and help "sell" our content.*



**The Classical Beat:** Anne Midgette takes the measure of the classical music scene.

**Top 10 Post Blogs from April 2008 to March 2009**

- The Trail\*
- The Fix – Chris Cillizza
- White House Watch – Dan Frommkin
- Redskins Insider – Jason La Canfora
- On Faith – Jon Meacham and Sally Quinn
- PostPartisan – Post Opinion Writers
- Capitals Insider – Tarik El-Bashir
- D.C. Sports Bog – Dan Steinberg
- Celebrityology – Liz Kelly
- Soccer Insider – Steven Goff

For a full listing of all Post blogs, visit:  
<http://blog.washingtonpost.com/>

\*Active during the 2008 presidential campaign trail; Currently inactive

# Join the Race for the Cure Post Team

Message from Race for the Cure 2009 Post team captain **Alexandra McNair**:

Saturday, June 6, is a day when hope can shine down and together we can dress in our pink battle armor to fight for a cure for cancer. Join us for a walk or run in support of the Susan G. Komen Breast Cancer Foundation. This year, I will run for my friend, **Carrie Morse**, a cancer survivor and a fighter. These warriors are examples of strength and courage, and their determination motivates us to work harder at finding a cure. Without a cure, one in eight women in the U.S. will be diagnosed with breast cancer during their lifetime and about 74,000 Americans will be diagnosed with lymphoma in 2009.



The 2008 Race for the Cure Post Team.

The Post will once again be the community sponsor of this event—the largest 5K run/walk in the world. Team members will receive a free, specially designed Post team T-shirt in addition to the Race for the Cure T-shirt and the pre-race breakfast.

To register, simply send me your check for \$40, along with your name and address, and I can register for you. You can also register online (team name: TWP) at [tinyurl.com/d3njz3](http://tinyurl.com/d3njz3). If you register before May 24, your event kit (T-shirt and bib) will be mailed to you. If you register after May 24, you will need to pick it up. Online registration will close on June 4. You can contact me via e-mail at [mcnaira@washpost.com](mailto:mcnaira@washpost.com) or mail your check and information to:

**Alexandra McNair**  
1701 N. Kent St. Apt. 107  
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## PostScripts

### Springfield Plant Breaks Own Blood Drive Record

A 12-hour blood drive at the Springfield Plant on April 16 yielded a record-breaking 46 productive units. The previous record for Springfield was 33 units. Health Center supervisor **Vanaida Holder** would like to thank everyone involved in the drive, including **Joel Vlahos, Laura Metzker, Fred Hurd, Curtis Emerson, Mike Grant, James Harris, Kenneth Richardson, Veronica Bragg, Monte Fleming, Roc Hatcher, Michelle Marcellino** and also donors, employees, the plant's administration staff and the American Red Cross for its support. The Health Center plans to have a blood drive every eight weeks to assist in replenishing the Red Cross's critically low supply. For more information, contact Vannie at x6-2243. The next drive will take place on June 11 from 8 a.m. to 8 p.m. at Springfield.

### Sign Up for The Post Golf Tournament

The Post employee golf tourney, is open to all Post employees at the paper and Web site, their families and retirees. It will take place on Monday, June 8, at the Augustine Golf Club in Stafford, Va. See page 2 of the April 24 ShopTalk for the registration form and more information. Contact **Rich Martin** at x4-7531 with any questions.

### Do You Have Any Interesting Hobbies Or Extracurricular Activities?

When you punch out after a long day of work, do you rock or jazz out with a band? Run mara-

thons? Race cars? Fly helicopters? When you tell people about this extracurricular activity of yours, do their jaws drop or do they respond, "No freakin' way"? Are you guilty by association with a colleague who might be too busy *not* reading ShopTalk to respond? If you answered yes to any of these, send a quick e-mail to [onam@washpost.com](mailto:onam@washpost.com). ShopTalk will be doing a feature about some of our weekend warriors (re-enactors only, no vigilantes please), cowboys, pilots, rock stars, thespians, poets and so on.

### College Park and Springfield Plant Award Ceremonies Photos

Photos taken during the recent College Park and Springfield Plant's annual award ceremonies are now available for downloading at [flickr.com/twppcommunity](http://flickr.com/twppcommunity). Click on the photo gallery "2009 Plant Awards." Then, click on the photo you wish to download and select "All Sizes" above the photo. You can then click to download the photo. If you have any questions, e-mail [onam@washpost.com](mailto:onam@washpost.com).

### Looking for Post Hunt Volunteers

Mark your calendars. The second annual Post Hunt will take place on May 17 from noon to 5 p.m. (volunteers should arrive by 10 a.m.). If you missed last year's event, Post Hunt masterminds columnist **Dave Barry**, columnist **Gene Weingarten** and Post Magazine Editor **Tom Shroder** would probably tell you that you stink—er, feel sorry for you. If you would like to volunteer for this citywide, brain-scrambling, puzzle/scavenger hunt, contact **Julie Perlstein** at [perlstein-jm@washpost.com](mailto:perlstein-jm@washpost.com) or at x4-7244. This year's PostHunt ground zero will be Freedom Plaza on Pennsylvania Avenue between 13th and 14th streets. You are encouraged (really, really, really encouraged) to tell all your friends and family about the Hunt, but also to come out to volunteer.

### Pillow Drive

**Christine Haynes**, Advertising, is helping her 8-year-old daughter with a pillow/blanket/teddy bear drive for My Sister's Place—a shelter for battered women and children.

## In the Green Corner

### Fact:

The Post has eliminated old exterior lighting and replaced it with new, more energy efficient fixtures that use 75 percent less electricity.

### Green Tip:

Here's one of "10 Ways to Go Green and Save Green" from the Worldwatch Institute: "Wash clothes in cold water whenever possible. As much as 85 percent of the energy used to machine-wash clothes goes to heating the water." To read the other nine tips, go to [tinyurl.com/5szh3g](http://tinyurl.com/5szh3g).



You can either donate \$3 toward the purchase of pillows, blankets or teddy bears, or you can donate the items yourself. The items must be new and unisex, and blankets should be twin or double. Contact Haynes at x4-4053.

### Become a Post Fan on Facebook and YouTube

To become a Post Facebook Fan: <http://tinyurl.com/cu5rgf>. To become a Post YouTube Fan: <http://tinyurl.com/c3aksx>.

### Note to All Post Employees

It is imperative that all Post employees contact **Monica Williams** at the switchboard at x4-6000 or **Mary Robinson** x4-7880 to ensure that their contact information is up to date. If you are new at The Post, you absolutely need to call and provide your contact information. The information is used to reach you in an emergency, a crisis or if someone is trying to contact you from outside the building.

## Marketplace

**FOR SALE:** Looking for that perfect Mother's Day gift for your wife, girlfriend, sister, daughter or other special lady in your life? Choose from custom-made gift baskets, shoes, purses or other accessories. Contact **Vince Garrett** in Engineering or 202-415-4257.

**FOR RENT: OUTER BANKS VACATION RENTAL:** elegant, sunny three-bedroom, two bath condo just off the beach in Corolla. Available third week in June, last week in August, most of May and September. Wireless

Internet and all other conveniences. Two-minute walk to the waves and the splendid beach. Sleeps seven comfortably, though eight can fit. Great room with cathedral ceiling, loft, deck with beautiful ocean view, outside shower. Five-minute walk to supermarket and other shops. Tennis courts, small community pool, surf fishing, etc. Price varies from \$895 to \$1,295 per week, depending on the week. Cheaper weekend rates available in off-season. October is gorgeous. Call Mike: x4-7346.

### MARKETPLACE DEADLINE:

Close of business on Fridays. Please include your name, extension and phone number. Ads are for Post Media and Digital employees. E-mail ads to [shoptalk@washpost.com](mailto:shoptalk@washpost.com) or [onam@washpost.com](mailto:onam@washpost.com). Ads will run for two issues unless otherwise requested. ShopTalk reserves the right to publish and edit all ads.