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WELCOME

Dear Friends and Visitors...

Welcome to the Capitol Hill House and Garden Tour. For this year's tour, we have selected ten special houses, gardens, and public buildings that highlight the diversity of life and people on the Hill. Pay close attention. You will see the beloved art, mementos, and treasures that help define us and our interests, work, hobbies, and travel. These certainly is a wonderful collection of people and interests that make up all of us who call the Hill home.

In sponsoring this, the thirty-ninth annual House and Garden Tour, the Society seeks to share with its neighbors and friends a glimpse of the charm for which Capitol Hill is acclaimed. The Hill's pleasing architectural diversity, so well preserved for more than a century, is among those attributes that account for the continued vitality of our residential community.

I feel especially fortunate to chair this year's Tour. It has given me the opportunity to meet dozens of the diverse and remarkable people that make up our community.

It takes hundreds of people many months to arrange the Tour. I could never thank each of them enough. Many local businesses also take part in the tour by contributing goods or services, donating prizes, selling tickets, or purchasing advertisements. These businesses are an important part of our neighborhood, and I hope, like me, you will go a little out of your way to give them your business. I also want to thank the many individual donors—residents and businesses—who have supported the tour through monetary donations. Finally, I also want to thank each of you for coming to the Tour.

For the residents, you know what a wonderful place Capitol Hill is to live. For our visitors, we hope you take away with you a little bit of our delight at living on Capitol Hill—such a wonderful city within a city.

Sue Price
1996 Tour Chair

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For forty-one years, the Capitol Hill Restoration Society, the largest civic association on the Hill, has played a key role in helping to promote and protect the way of life we all enjoy here on Capitol Hill—a place where one can walk to work, school, stores, and restaurants; a neighborhood where our best friends live next door or around the corner; and our neighbors are diverse, stimulating, friendly, and caring people.

The Society has become an important force for the preservation of the Hill’s architectural heritage and the amenities of urban life. Our members, whose talents and interests comprise the diversity of Capitol Hill, share a common commitment to the continued vitality of our residential community. The Society believes that Capitol Hill should be a good place to live and work, and that restoring its fine old houses benefits all of us who have committed ourselves to the Hill’s future.

Over the years, the Society has fought to defend the residential and commercial character of the Hill and to oppose those without a commitment to life in the city—particularly those who want to exploit the existing residential base of the Hill while ignor-
LIVING ON CAPITOL HILL

Capitol Hill dates back to the 1790s and is one of the oldest and most architecturally diverse residential communities in Washington. The design of its streets and parks was developed by Pierre Charles L’Enfant in his 1791 plan for the city. Early development centered around boarding houses for transient congressmen clustered near the Capitol and homes for construction workers at the Navy Yard. Most of the rowhouses you see were built in the late nineteenth century to fill the demand for housing created by prosperity and the growth of the government after the Civil War.

Compared to its-town neighborhoods in other East Coast cities such as Philadelphia, New York, Charleston, and Savannah, Capitol Hill has a unique appearance: wide streets, bay fronts, front yards, red bricks, and a varied architecture including the Federal, Italianate, Second Empire, Romanesque, Queen Anne, and Classical Revival styles. The architecture reflects the early social diversity of the Hill, which has continued to the present. Elaborate ornamental pressed-brick structures were built adjacent to earlier and simple, undecorated frame buildings. The homes of current residents include former manor houses, stables, alley dwellings, small two-story frame structures, and grand four-story town homes complete with roof decks. Many townhouses were built with basement entrances, providing rental income for early and current owners.

A feeling of spaciousness is one of the key attractions of Capitol Hill. The L’Enfant plan for Washington envisioned wider streets than you see today. However, by 1870 it was clear that existing streets would not be widened to their limit. A law was enacted allowing residents to extend their houses out onto public space, creating room for the bay windows you see on many houses. In addition, front yards were extended to the sidewalks. The especially deep front yards on East Capitol Street and the many avenues on the Hill provide dramatic views of the Capitol, sky, and trees.

Capitol Hill’s many parks and government buildings with public spaces are another gift of the L’Enfant plan. These spaces contribute to the open feeling of our community and are in bloom throughout the spring and summer. They still provide a focal point for neighborhood gatherings of baby strollers, joggers, and dog walkers. Our favorites include Lincoln, Stanton, and Folger parks, the Union Station Plaza, and the many public spaces surrounding the Library of Congress, Supreme Court, and Congressional office buildings.

Capitol Hill also includes many fine commercial buildings, particularly along Pennsylvania Avenue and Eight Street SE. Landmarks in the neighborhood include Christ Church at 620 G Street SE (1806–07); the Old Naval Hospital at Pennsylvania Avenue and Ninth Street SE (1865–66); Eastern Market at Seventh and U Streets SE (1813) and 1929; the Folger Shakespeare Library at 201 East Capitol Street SE (1932); Friendship House at 619 D Street SE (1795–96); and the Marine Corps Commandant’s House at Eighth and G Streets SE (1801–04).
In the kitchen, the rear cabinets include a collection of blue and white Viéy & Boche kitchenware from the early 1900s, interspersed with egg cups from the 1950s. Nearby, notice the two French urns from about 1770. The bottom half of the island is from a French pastry shop. The chairs are post office stools.

Off the kitchen is a garden room. On the walls are Meudon tiles and the tiles are Italian from the 1920s. Treasures in the back family room include a painting (circa 1600) by Snyder’s Francesco from the Office gallery in Florence, a collection of Staffordshire and Magnelica on each side of the fireplace, and three Santos: the Madonna is South American from 1800, the angel is Italian also from about 1800, and the Christ child is German from the 1820s.

In the front bedroom is a 1853 Belgian painting of Idas. The walls of the room were stenciled by the owners using heraldic symbol designs they found in Germany. The middle bedroom has several photographs of Mr. Herchik’s parents. Also in the room are a stuffed fox and puppet, an original Varvas from Esquire magazine, and an adorably “Roach Profile” by Beverly Orr of Washington.

The original in the second-floor study was also stenciled by the owners. The morito in the center, written by the owners, reads: A man’s longest journey of his soulful heart begins with a single step toward home. The symbol set for the ceiling represents the four occupants of the house: a cat, a dog, a gardener, and an interior designer/chef.

The stained-glass door to the master bedroom is from a Mount Pleasant opportunity shop. Over the mantle in the bedroom is an 1833 double portrait by Thomas Sully. The paintings of the muses are from the Japanese embassy in Dublin. Still in progress is the master bath (through the right doorway at the front of the room), which is awaiting a marble floor, and a roof-top deck that will be accessed from the door to the left of the balcony.

Joe Purdy and Tony Pontorno bought the house on 531 Seventh Street NE five years ago in part because of the ample yard. But at the time, the self-taught gardeners had to imagine what could be done there. No longer. Today, the yard’s potential is realized in a series of different beautiful gardens that flow into one another along a pathway of old bricks dug out of the ground beside this pre-Civil War house.

Starting from the back gate, the garden is marked on the left by a colonial-style column. Running along the path is a low jungle of perennials and annuals, giving this part of the garden a varying look from year to year. On the right, a sweeping cedar shingles like a dancer and softens the hard edge of the brick garage. A crimson trumpet vine stands proudly upright on the left side, where the brick wall twists into the next garden. Here on both sides of the path, small green succulents (autumn joy sedum) vie for space with a riot of yellow and pink lilies.

A shrub is an unassuming fixture in the garden—the last pond. Flashes of white, gold, black, and red scales seem to echo the garden’s flowers. Behind the pond, hortus fills in underneath the purple beechn tree. A red maple buries down in one corner.

Beyond the pond toward the front of the house, the path broadens into a sitting area. Overhead, a 60-year-old willow oak and its 800,000 leaves provides ample shade. A treat now, but a curse come fall, say the owners.

The statues are spring and summer; their companion winter and fall are in the next portion of the garden, near the high hand-made fence that separates the garden from the front yard. A white picket fence marks the area where Avery and Elliott, the house’s two English cockers, spend their time.

Left of the path is a lone dogwood surrounded by pink and white azaleas. In the corner stands an unusual tree variety of red-tipped photinia. Clustered nearby is an acuba, with yellow and green leaves, and two andromedas, with their palm-shaped leaf clusters.

Past the gate is the front yard and a garden where no lawn mower is ever needed—part of the plan, according to Mr. Purdy. The overall effect of the front yard is subtle—primarily different shades of green and different textures of leaves, but if you look closely, the stems of the Blue Angel hollies, left of the path, are almost the tint of their name.

A showy stand-out is the towering magnolia; it was a mere six-foot five years ago when it was planted. The weeping white birch is a graceful sentry. It filters the sun and softens the brick houses across the street. In the winter, its branches are still graceful, though bare, and its bark peels in an intriguing way.

The final detail to notice and admire is the wisteria winding along the century-old porch.
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222 EIGHTH STREET NE
St. James Episcopal Church Rectory and Garden

3.
The Reverends Patricia and Richard Downing

The rectory was built in 1892 by
Henry Congdon for the church's
first minister, James Walters
Clark. The interior has many wood highlights
and fireplaces in every room, each with an un-
usual mantel. The front door opens onto a
large center hall. Immediately to the left
is the original "bread" door from when fresh pro-
duce was delivered daily.

The already light-filled sitting room is
made more so with yellow walls and drapes
with yellow trim. Furnishing are an interesting
mix of Federal and Victorian pieces.

The dining room has recently been
painted a strong red. There is a narrow pantry
with an original floor-to-ceiling oak storage
cabinet and shelves. This leads into the
kitchen. An original set-in brick stove is no
longer safe to use.

The library has green and gold wallpaper
and a beamed and coffered ceiling. Originally
the room was lined with bookcases, two of
which remain.

On the library is a powder room with
hand-designed tile in the shape of leaves
and berries in brilliant hues. Over the sink is a
lovely etched glass window—perhaps an alle-
gorical figure representing the fine arts.
Outside the library is a private courtyard.

The lovely garden was begun by Father
Plank, who arrived as pastor in 1931 with
degree in landscape architecture. In 1949 he
found help from a young acolyte, Raymond
Cogswell. Mr. Cogswell devoted all of his spare
time and his own funds in the development
and care of the gardens. The garden is dedi-
cated to Father Plank and to Raymond's
mother, Myrtle F. Cogswell.

Mr. Cogswell, his nephew Harr Jones,
and bricklayer Dave Farnham loaded in the
5200 bricks needed for the various walls
and walkways. A plan of continuous azalea bloom
from early April through mid-May from some
twenty species was developed. It begins with
early blooming Koenig's Silver Sword, two of
which flank either side of the church's red-
dotted front entrance. Other examples of
early blooming azaleas are Kameo Christmas
Cher, Kameo Coral Bells, and Indica Forestan.
In early May the azaleas bloom continue with
Glen Dale Apricot, Glen Dale Chum, and
Gable Orange Cible.

Interplanted with the azaleas are numer-
ous dogwoods, camellia bushes, and a dwarf
red leaf maple. Alberta spruce, grape holly,
English yew, and several mountain laurel com-
plete the selections under a canopy of old ev-
ergreen and deciduous trees.
In 1901, the McMillan Commission prepared a plan for the District of Columbia, which updated and extended the 1791 plan of the city that L'Enfant prepared. The McMillan plan consolidated the train stations serving Washington into one terminal. In 1903, Daniel H. Burnham, principal architect of the 1892 Chicago World's Fair, was chosen to design Union Station. He modeled the station in the monumental Beaux Arts style, after the Baths of Caracalla and Diocletian and the triumphal Arch of Rome.

The exterior of the station, with its white granite and classic lines, influenced the designs of many public buildings constructed later, including the Lincoln and Jefferson Memorials, the Supreme Court Building, the National Gallery of Art, and the Federal Triangle.

The huge front arches are meant to symbolize its primary function as a gateway. The station's Ionic columns, chiseled inscriptions, and allegorical sculptures add to the structure's immense presence. The figures in the niches in the facade of the main entrance represent law, education, agriculture, and mechanics. Each weighs 25 tons.

The station officially opened on October 27, 1907, at a cost of more than $25 million. In 1937, about 60,000 passengers used the station daily; however, as passenger train traffic declined in later years, the building fell into disuse, and maintenance efforts were neglected. By the nation's bicentennial in 1976, the passenger waiting area had been moved to a temporary structure located behind the station, and the main hall had been turned into a somewhat dark and understated National Visitor Center, which closed after two years.

In 1981, the Union Station Redevelopment Act provided for a joint government and private partnership to restore Union Station. The restoration process was completed in September 1988 and resulted in the marvelous interior you see today. The restoration cost $160 million and used over two acres of marble from the same quarry as the original and over 70 pounds of gold leafing. The building's main hall, originally the main waiting room of the station, is approximately 120 feet square and 100 feet high. Around the periphery of this great hall are 36 Roman legomenes.

The East Hall features elaborate Pompeian-style frescoes on the walls and ceilings. These frescoes are colorful, detailed scenes that are actually replications of the originals. As you depart, be sure to view the center plaza in front of the station, with its impressive Columbus Memorial Fountain sculpted in 1912 by Lorado Taft, as well as the replica of the Liberty Bell.
144 Constitution Avenue, NE
Sewall-Belmont House

Truly one of the treasures of Capitol Hill, the Sewall-Belmont House is a reminder of more than 300 years of American history. Before the nation was envisioned, this land on Jenkins Hill was part of the Cerne Abbey Manor, with a small brick farmhouse. In 1792, Robert Sewall bought the property and incorporated the eighteenth-century farmhouse into the house he built facing the Capitol, then under construction on Jenkins Hill. From 1803 until 1812, the house was rented by Albert Gallatin, secretary of the treasury under presidents Jefferson and Madison, both of whom visited Gallatin here because he used the drawing room as his office in order to avoid the twenty-minute carriage ride to the Treasury building.

The house’s next historic moment came in 1814, when, according to legend, shots were fired by Commodore Joshua Barney’s men from the second-story windows as the British marched by on their way to burn the Capitol. Legends are notoriously difficult to authenticate, but the British did set fire to the house, destroying the front two rooms before a thundertorm doused the flames. The house remained in the Sewall family for the next 100 years, changing from candlelight to gaslight as succeeding generations lived in and modified the house. In 1922, Senator Porter Dale of Vermont purchased the property, restoring the house and garden and adding to the drawing rooms the paneled walnut doors with silver hinges and door knobs from the home of Daniel Webster. The National Woman’s Party bought the Sewall house in 1925, renaming it the Beloit house for Alice Beloit, a benefactor of the party. It became the headquarters of the women’s drive for equality under the direction of Alice Paul. In 1974, Congress designated the house a National Historic Landmark as a monument to the women’s movement in the United States, maintained in cooperation with the National Park Service.

On the ground level adjoining the brick structure and enclosed garden, red doorbells will be served from 3:00 to 6:00 PM. The beautiful gardens are maintained year-round by the Capitol Hill Garden Club as a volunteer project. Docents will be available to talk about the house, its furnishings, and its residents.

Capitol Hill Restoration Society

218 Maryland Avenue NE
John Hunting

Philanthropist and environmentalist John Hunting was looking for a house he could renovate to showcase environmentally conscious, energy saving materials and systems. He wanted it to be near the Capitol so it could be used to hold fund-raisers for environmental causes and pro-environment candidates. He bought 218 Maryland Avenue NE five years ago and began the renovations incorporating up-to-date technology respectful of the history and elegance of a 130-year-old house.

Upon entering, note the stained glass window and Steinway piano, purchased from the manufacturer in 1917 by the owner’s grandmother. The beautiful bench, carved by William H. Fry of Cincinnati, was a present from the owner’s grandfather to his wife to celebrate the anniversary of their engagement on Easter Sunday.

Above the mantel is a portrait of Mr. Hunting’s mother, while on the wall opposite is the painting, “The Return of Liberty,” by local artist Thomas Mallory: it depicts native Americans watching as the statue is returned to the Capitol dome.

Another family portrait hangs in the library, this one painted by renowned American artist Ammi Phillips in 1829. In the dining room, the American-style walnut table was also carved by William Fry. Originally, it belonged to the owner’s grandparents, whose Pearl Soap company was sold to Procter and Gamble in the 1920s.

The kitchen and dining room were completely re-done in the renovation. Note that the cabinet fronts—rather than constructed of end-grain Bird’s Eye Maple—are fashioned from recycled and laminate-free material with a computer-designed finish grain. The kitchen also has a “worm drawer”—a natural garbage disposal and tiny indoor compost heap. Garbage is put in and digested by the worms, producing fertilizer for plants and gardening.

The whimsical kitchen sculpture is by local artist Jim Opaski, fashioned from recycled kitchen tools; it is entitled “Toast to the Victor.”

Heat radiates into the room through coils embedded under the slate floor, under the hearth the bathroom is a tank that collects rain from the roof and is connected to heat pumps providing most of the heating and cooling for the house. Hot water comes from solar panels on the roof, and solar cells power outdoor lighting and the fountain.

In the front second-story study, the desk is a reproduction of a Frank Lloyd Wright design and was manufactured by Mr. Hunting’s father’s office-equipment company. On the wall of the master bedroom is a hand-knotted Persian silk Tabriz prayer rug (circa 1880), and above the bed is a mobile called the “Vine Fairies.” On the outside deck is a rain shower from a system that also provides water to toilets and outside spigots. Other water- and energy-conserving fixtures and appliances have been installed throughout the house.

1996 Capitol Hill House and Garden Tour
CAPITOL HILL - OUR NATION'S NEIGHBORHOOD

Great Communities like Capitol Hill don't just happen.

All of us at Pardoe Real Estate thank the Capitol Hill Restoration Society for all of their efforts over the years to make our community such a great place to live and work!

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Patrick Murphy is a Washington insider, and his home is where the personal and professional converge. It reflects a way of living and entertaining that is Washington: Tuesday—dinner at home with key lawmakers; Wednesday—an impromptu bite to eat in the kitchen with colleagues and friends; Thursday—cocktails in the library with the Democratic Governors' Association. That's the routine here, a stone's throw from the Capitol. "This home is ideal for entertaining and provides me with a dramatic space to display my collection of sculpture, antiques, and family heirlooms," Murphy reports.

Built in 1889 by Capitol Hill builder Charles Fleming, the house and its facade give hint of the contemporary space within. Organized around an atrium, the interior celebrates verticality, light, and openness. Prized original architectural elements such as the walnut and chestnut staircase, mahogany and tiger-eye maple pocket doors, four fireplaces, and heart-pine floors provide historic context to the 20th century design.

Washington-based interior designer Marc Janoek updated the late 1970s renovation and combined the owner's art, furnishings, and long-held family possessions into a seamless motif. A Montana native, former Nevada state legislator, and Carter administration appointee, Murphy has acquired a diverse collection over the years, many from his family's 40,000-acre Montana homestead.

In the living room is an original white marble mantle surmounted by a 1850s French mirror. On its right is an interpretation of the Inferno by Dali and on the left a Picasso-inspired work by Peter Voss. The clock above the wet bar hung at the family ranch. Exposed on three sides of the dining area are the house's bare bluestone foundation walls. The circular mirror over the dining table was purchased for the family ranch by Mr. Murphy's great-grandmother.

The second-floor library is Mr. Murphy's place to relax. Nearby is a treasured lithograph of Portofino, Italy. The large silver tray in the library is a family piece. The den has a marble mantle, pocket doors, and ceramic nudes by French artist Andreau. The bathroom has remained virtually unchanged since its installation in 1910, with a copper-line toilet tank. The converted oil lamp came from the ranch. Outside the bath is a balcony and a shadow sculpture by Santa Fe artist Randy Cooper.

The third-floor master bedroom has an original marbelized slate mantle graced by Dali's "Centaur" and a sculpture of Mr. Murphy at age nine by his grandmother. The family branching trons, registered for over 70 years, rest beside the hearth. On his grandfather's reading table is the bust of a girl reading, a gift to his mother from her mother, a pioneer teacher in rural Montanta. President Clinton presented the cowboy to Murphy during the his 1992 campaign.

The nude above the bed is from Italy and is flanked by four lithographs by Trevor Scottby. The desk and the leather chair in the adjacent loft/study belonged to his grandfather, and the perfume bottles in the bookcase were his great-grandmother's.
9.

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The third floor was added to the house in 1989 and serves as Mrs. Weiker's office. It is also a grand sitting room filled with a truly eclectic collection. Ascending the stairs are photographs of wild animals taken by Mrs. Weiker on safari in Rwanda, Kenya, and Tanzania. At the top of the stairs, there is a doll carriage filled with a marvelous collection of her own dolls. Recognize the Ginny Doll? An unusual fireplace with a large mantel and light-filled windows frame one wall. Flanking the fireplace are two fine-foot tall Corinthian columns. Nearby is the household zoo: Sitting on the fireplace mantel is an out-sized prairie dog, and a large white plaster dog found in a Virginia junk yard sits on the floor in front of the fireplace. A Burmese temple rabbit bought in Thailand and bird cages collected from Kansas City complete the menagerie.

Note that the furniture is too wide to fit the stairs. Mrs. Weiker realized the problem shortly before completing construction, temporarily knocked out a window, purchased furniture from the Salvation Army, recovered it, and voila: This magnificent Cinderella home was completed.
Thanks to a refined eye, a zest for the unusual, and a penchant for local antique stores, Jerry Johnson has made his late 19th century Victorian look just as it should. In true Victorian fashion, Mr. Johnson, an art and antiques appraiser, has blended the old, the new, and the unusual. Adding to the sense of period are many original details, beginning with the stained-glass window that looks down on visitors from above the front door. The inner door, original to the house, holds a new stained-glass window crafted by Pat Robertson, from Kensington Glass Arts. It incorporates the texture and color of the original window and an image found throughout the house—the fleur de lis.

In the living room, the Victorian eclectic style is the strongest. The mahogany sideboard, the window table, and the side table are all American Empire from the mid-1800s. A collection of Zanesville, OH, brown-glazed pottery (circa 1895) sits atop the sideboard. Most notable is the Rookwood "Iris" vase (circa 1893) by artist M.A. Daly. The unusually shaped art nouveau chains are from the 1920s, and the small coffee table is modern Kenney, a treasure from Eastern Market. Over the sofa is an 1866 portrait of an English boy by artist L.F. Bird, while over the fireplace is a painting from the same period by an American itinerant painter. On the mantle is a Tibetan scorpion made of brass and yak bone and used to command thunderbolts. Note also the collection of Victorian girandoles. An antique lamp hangs from the ceiling. Note the frosted bulb shaped glass domes, acid etched in the interior.

In the dining room, the Empire style is continued with the cherry cupboard (purchased from Antiques on the Hill). In the center is an 1860 walnut Sheraton Valley and Country Sheraton form table rescued from a street vendor in Adams Morgan. An 1870 Victorian mirror helps reflect light as does the gold leaf ceiling and the stenciled floor de lis.

The fine details continue upstairs. Above the stair case is one of two original skylights, both of which open with a gentle pull; the other is in the master bedroom. Note the original pine floors and the beautiful curving walls of the upstairs hallway.

A notable treasure in the middle bedroom is a portrait of Mr. Johnson's family taken early this century. The boy on the far right is the owner's 83-year-old grandfather. The bearded gentleman, third from the left, is the owner's great, great, great grandfather.

The master bedroom contains countless treasures, including a contemporary Chinese painting of tropical birds. The painting's birds' eye view echoes the vantage point from the window. The desk (circa 1803) is Italian Renaissance in style, done by Flemish craftsmen in French walnut and purchased in Kentucky. The three figures represent the arts. The lamps on either side of the bed were once brass urns in a Gothic cathedral (circa 1850). The colored engravings over the bed are from England (circa 1850).
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Many thanks to the volunteers whose names do not appear above
but who contributed many hours of time to the 1996 House & Garden Tour

The very finest results soon often come from a combination of talents. An imaginative mind of the owner can be turned, with the help of a great designer, into a work of art.

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SPECIAL ACKNOWLEDGEMENT TO
Barbara Held/City Sites Real Estate for many years of continued support of the House & Garden Tour

Inclusion of a building on the Tour does not mean that it complies with the laws and regulations of the District of Columbia.

1996 CAPITOL HILL HOUSE AND GARDEN TOUR
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CAPITOL HILL RESTORATION SOCIETY

- Single $30
- Single-Sponsor $40
- Single-Patron $90
- Household $25
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