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Loose Lips Daily Politics

## The Peebles Precipice: Loose Lips Daily

Posted by **Mike DeBonis** on Dec. 4, 2009, at 12:26 pm

As much local politics as humanly possible. Send your tips, releases, stories, events, etc. to [lips@washingtontcitypaper.com](mailto:lips@washingtontcitypaper.com). And get LL Daily sent straight to your inbox every morning!

IN CASE YOU MISSED IT---'Happy Holidays from Mayor Fenty—and Don't You Forget It'; tweets galore!

Greetings all. A pair of stories stokes the mayoral rumor mill: In [Examiner](#), **Bill Myers** writes that **Vincent Gray** is 'giving serious thought' to a 2010 mayoral run, quoting Gray saying that he's 'encouraged' by poll results showing him ahead against Fenty head-to-head. Myers adds: 'Billionaire developer **Don Peebles**...has reportedly offered up to \$1 million in campaign cash for anyone willing to tackle Fenty. Gray said he hadn't talked to Peebles about cash, but didn't rule out the possibility of being bankrolled by him.' In [WaTimes](#), **David C. Lipscomb** has the juicier bit on Peebles, reporting that the Internet domains including 'peeblesformayor.com' and 'peeblesfordc.com' have been reserved; he also quotes a Peebles spokesperson saying that the man is 'inching' toward a decision. And: Peebles appeared on WTOP this morning taking up his impending decision.

LL'S 2010 INTEL---Peebles, make no mistake, wants to run himself---not serve as someone's bankroll---and if he makes a move, it will come before Dec. 15. He has to move fast because he, along with Gray and the Browns, are all smart men: They know none of them can beat Fenty in a split field. And for Peebles in particular, being the second entrant will raise spoiler charges. So while Gray dithers, Peebles will get in fast and make the case that he can win and that Gray can better serve the city by keeping his current position. Oh, and that million-dollar bankroll for Gray? Forget it. If Peebles runs himself, he's ready to spend \$5M---not Bloomberg money, but close enough for D.C.

AFTER THE JUMP---*Moneme out at WMATA due to budget cuts (?); charter schools want city to give up ex-school properties; developers drool over Franklin School; Pepco worker shot on the job by teen; Rubin calls CM's letter 'disrespectful'; Tai Shan is gone*

In WMATA shocker, **Emeka Moneme** is ousted as the transit system's chief operating officer as part of budget cutting. In [WaPo](#), **Lena Sun** points out that the former DDOT director played a key role in the safety snafu that kept inspectors from an independent oversight group off Metro tracks for months: 'Moneme was in charge of overseeing the safety office when officials barred independent monitors from live tracks in April,' and the system's safety chief told the WMATA board she had informed Moneme of the request. Also joining Moneme on the way out is operations exec **Jack Requa**, who is retiring. GM **John Catoe** called the moves 'barely budgetary, according to Examiner's **Kvtia Weir**. The

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Here's the new rendering:  
<http://philipkennicott.files.wordpress.com/2009/12/ward8-library-design-1.jpg>

The Advoc8te on Neighborhood Watch: Ward 8 Gets New Library, Wants to Give It Back:  
That is a picture of the OLD library design. It has seen been renovated in response to community fee...

cminus on Our Morning Roundup: The "Are You Insecure About Your Calves?" Edition:  
There are times when I think Comrade Al is Monkeyrotica with a reference copy of the Communist Manif...

Tom on Happy Holidays from Mayor Fenty—and Don't You Forget It:  
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staff moves were announced at a meeting where Metro continues to deal with a growing budget gap, now \$175M. Sun writes: 'The staff presentation to board members gave no specifics about fare increases under consideration. But officials are recommending that more than half of the gap, or \$92 million, be made up by raising fares.' The board clashed over whether such a drastic hike is warranted. [GGW covers the question](#) of raiding capital funds for operating dollars. Also [Examiner on cuts](#), [WAMU-FM](#), [WRC-TV](#), [WUSA-TV](#), [WTTG-TV](#).

ALSO---Old piers for new bridge on Dulles rail line will be tested extensively on orders of the Metropolitan Washington Airports Authority. **Lisa Rein reports in WaPo**. **Patrick Nowakowski**, executive director of the Dulles Corridor Metrorail Project, said the dispute over safety testing has evolved into a "public perception issue" and is "no longer an engineering issue."

WaPo's **Michael Birnbaum** covers the struggles of charter schools to find suitable homes---and the city's apparent unwillingness to let them occupy former schools. It's a drama that has occurred repeatedly in the District, and the 1869 Franklin School, at 13th and K streets NW, is just the latest instance. Because of the credit crunch, which makes it more difficult for charters to finance private projects, and space newly available thanks to the closure of more than two dozen D.C. public schools, charters are clamoring more than ever for public school buildings...."Why are charter schools being forced to take out expensive loans to go and convert commercial spaces, for example a warehouse, to send little children there?" asked **Barnaby Towns**, a spokesman for Friends of Choice in Urban Schools. He said it would be more prudent to take the public money that charters spend on facilities and channel it back to the city through leases on D.C. school properties....But the city said that it has to consider its needs, too, and that turning buildings over to charters isn't always the best way to use the old schools.' The centerpiece: Washington Yu Ying's search for a new home.

ALSO---WBJ's **Jonathan O'Connell** writes about the [downtown Franklin School](#), noting that 'residents and advocates have already begun mobilizing to retain the site as a school or university.' At a Wednesday showing of the building, more than 100---including developers **Elinor Bacon**, **Scottie Irving**, **David Mayhood**, and **Moddie Turay**---showed to 'tour the building, wandering hallways and classrooms badly blighted by water damage, animal excrement, peeling walls and years of decay.' The Coalition for Franklin School, meanwhile, is circulating a petition 'calling on Fenty "to support public use and ownership of Franklin School for the purpose of a model public school."' Also see [Housing Complex](#) on the matter.

Pepco worker is shot in neck by teen while on the job in Bloomingdale. The 52-year-old worker is 'seriously wounded,' but expected to survive. [WaPo reports](#): 'The worker was part of a crew that was repairing an underground line near First Street and Rhode Island Avenue, Pepco officials said. Shortly before 7 p.m., five teens began to hassle the workers verbally....The worker and at least one teen became involved in a shoving match, police said. The confrontation was quickly broken up by other Pepco workers...The teens, three males and two females, returned minutes later, and one of the males brandished a gun, police said. Words were exchanged again, and the weapon went off, striking the employee.' No arrests have been made. Also [AP](#), [WTTG-TV](#).

**Vincent Schiraldi** receives [an admiring sendoff](#) from the WaPo editorial board, citing '[d]ramatic improvements' at DYRS under his watch. His move to NYC 'caps a tumultuous five years in which Mr. Schiraldi was both hailed and vilified for his emphasis on rehabilitating, rather than confining, juveniles convicted of crimes.' The piece does acknowledge 'serious missteps' that have 'undermined confidence in the department's ability to protect the public.' Now, they write, is the time for a experienced manager to build on Schiraldi's 'strong foundation' and 'preserve and strengthen reform by coming to grips with some real weaknesses.'

**CP FOLKS**

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- Stephanie Mencimer
- Three Huge Guys
- Trey Graham
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**HOODS**

- Anacostia Diaries
- Bloomingdale
- Bloomingdale (for now)
- Borderstan
- eckington (way better than spotsylvania)
- Frozen Tropics
- inShaw
- Off Seventh (Shaw)
- Petworth News
- Prince of Petworth
- The Heights Life
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Best of D.C. 2009



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**THIS WEEK**



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introduced by the MBs---**Muriel Bowser** and **Marion Barry**. Under the 'work sharing' scheme, similar to those those now in 17 states, employers could reduce hours for their workers, and the District could pick up the slack with a check. [E]mployers avoid layoffs, low morale and lost skill sets, while the government continues to collect income taxes and employees are protected from lost wages, lost benefits and the stigma of unemployment.' The D.C. Chamber likes it; the Heritage Foundation and Cato Institute do not.

TAI SHAN IS GONE---The panda cub to be [sent back to China](#), perhaps as soon as April: 'The panda's return to China will end a four-year love affair between a town ruled by the blood sport of politics and a rotund, bamboo-munching black-and-white bear. Zoogoers have watched him grow from the squealing butter-stick-size infant to an almost 200-pound youth, and the focus of a kind of Pandamania. Since his debut Dec. 8, 2005, Tai Shan has been a superstar, drawing millions of visitors to the Northwest Washington zoo, and tens of millions of fans to the panda cams on the zoo's Web site. [Fenty] once called Tai Shan Washington's most important citizen,' WaPo writes. Also [WTOP](#).

Depositions in whistleblower case featuring Fire Chief **Dennis Rubin** are [released by Government Accountability Project](#)---including YouTubes. 'Chief Rubin's testimony about events as he sees them may be eye-opening to other D.C. government officials, the City Council and the public. For example, in his testimony, Chief Rubin refers to the actions of Councilmember **Phil Mendelson** as "disrespectful," voices displeasure at "a woman barking at me," and as a firefighter and officer with nearly 40 years experience, claims to be offended by profanities he alleges Cusick used.' WUSA-TV's **Dave Statter** [covers](#), natch.

Some 10,000 care packages were handed out yesterday to needy folks at the D.C. Armory. **Hamil Harris** [covers the event for WaPo](#). The giveaways included '26 tractor-trailer loads of food, clothes, personal items and toys' and was sponsored by Feed the Children, the NBA Players Association, and the Fenty administration, which, as LL pointed out yesterday, made sure that [everyone knew of his involvement](#). **Tony Sellers**, a spokesman for Feed the Children, said the two groups have partnered with the NBA for seven years to give food to needy families. "Every year we pick one city," Sellers said. "We decided to come to the nation's capital this year because we have a new administration in the White House and a new attitude."

Wilson SHS students will likely spend their 2010-11 school year on the UDC campus while a top-to-bottom \$70M renovation of the Tenleytown building is completed. **Bill Turque** [reports at D.C. Wire](#): 'There's no official word from school construction czar **Allen Lew**, but Council member **Mary Cheh** (D-Ward 3) and UDC spokesman **Alan Etter** said Thursday that negotiations for the school to occupy a campus property known as called "Building 52"---atop the Gold's Gym on Connecticut Ave---are nearly complete.' Meanwhile, Cheh continues to press for design changes on behalf of discomfited community members, pointing out, among other things, that 'the design leaves the campus with 17 different levels requiring eight elevators, five of which have no backups.'

**Harry Jaffe** [laments the District's business unfriendliness](#) in his Examiner column, noting this line from entrepreneurship study: 'Please note that the District of Columbia was not included in the studies on the states' liability systems, eminent domain legislation and highway cost efficiency, so D.C.'s last place score actually should be even worse.' The economist who conducted the survey says reducing or eliminating capital gains taxes and eliminate taxes on certain types of corporations. Jaffe's bottom line: 'The District would thrive with better public schools and a more friendly environment for private businesses....[But the] mayor and the city council have rarely seen a program they didn't want to fund. My prediction: We will be dead last next year, too. And the next and the next.'

Another piece on the [DYRS sex-abuse lawsuit](#) from WaTimes' **Jeff Anderson**. The 19-year-old at the center of the case, **Kenneth Agee**, is

records show that Kenneth's encounters with authorities became progressively more serious after he was committed to DYRS custody and eventually led to his residing in three different detention facilities across the country this year alone.' In Arizona, Agee fomented a melee and briefly escaped.

Congressional hearing on rededicating D.C.'s WWI memorial on the Mall as a national memorial [generates some fireworks](#): AP notes that **Paul Strauss**, 'a District of Columbia politician who advocates giving D.C. citizens a vote in Congress...objected to a national takeover of the local monument, saying it "diminishes an already disenfranchised population.'" He was matched up against last surviving WWI vet **Frank Buckles**, 108.

Employment nonprofits band together to find office space, [WBJ's O'Connell reports](#). 'About 10 groups have expressed interest in sharing a building, though they don't have a location and have not raised any money yet, said **Bob Wittig**, executive director of the Jovid Foundation, which is focused on antipoverty measures. The groups prefer a site in Ward 5, which includes the Brookland, Trinidad and Fort Totten neighborhoods in Northeast, where job skills are badly needed and many training providers already are located.'

On WTOP, **Cathy Lanier** notes year-to-year [rise in anti-gay hate crimes](#), from 30 to 35 this year.

God bless **Lou Chibbaro Jr.**: [At D.C. Agenda](#), he explains how at least one of the cars that ended up in the Anacostia last weekend got there. 'Two gay men...were [not] familiar with the warehouse district known as Buzzard's Point, where the gay entertainment complex Ziegfeld's/Secrets and a straight club named Crucible, are located.' One says he 'was driving the car and made a wrong turn onto a side street that he thought would take him out of the warehouse area and onto a main street. Acknowledging that he may have been distracted, he said he continued driving until it was too late to avoid going into the river.'

**Del Wilber** recounts one guy's bad day [at the excellent WaPo Crime Scene blog](#): **Tyrone D. Herring**, 45, was shot Tuesday and taken to Howard University Hospital, where 'technicians cut away his pants and found a large bag containing what turned out to be 31.4 grams of crack cocaine, enough to get Herring arrested on federal charges of possessing with the intent to distribute the drug.'

**Ingmar Guandique** has indeed [been charged three counts](#) for threatening a government witness, prosecutors announce. His lawyers deny the charges; arraignment is set for Dec. 15. Also [WaTimes](#).

More on carjacking of senator's daughter: 'D.C. police did not immediately release the suspects' names, saying only that both are adults. One lives in the 1700 block of Gales Street NE, the other in the 7600 block of Kipling Park Way in District Heights, Kamperin said. He said each was charged with possession of a stolen vehicle and unarmed carjacking,' **Paul Duggan** reports in [WaPo](#). Also [WaTimes](#), [NC8](#), [WUSA-TV](#).

[NYT letter writer](#): 'The City Council of the District of Columbia has just passed an equal marriage rights bill that should take full effect by spring. To all you gay and lesbian New Yorkers: Come on down! Hop on an Amtrak train and get married in your nation's capital. We'll gladly accept your money. Our hotels, our reception halls, our tourist bureau, our city treasurer and our cherry blossoms await you.'

To [U.S. News & World Report](#), **Harry Jackson** 'vow[s] political revenge' for marriage vote: 'In future races, religious people are going to start going after people's political careers. In D.C., some very vulnerable black councilmen went along with the city council, and some of these guys will not be sitting in those chairs in 2010 elections. Many in our coalition are wising up, looking for candidates. Political action committees are going to be formed. You're going to see a bloodletting that is going to mark a new

[NCS covers bag-fee prep.](#)

[WRC-TV, DCist cover Evans vanity plate bill.](#)

Should People's Counsel role expand to handle public challenges before Zoning Commission, Board of Zoning Adjustment, and Alcoholic Beverage Control Board? [Richard Layman makes the case.](#)

Raccoons infest Carver Terrace apartment, [WTTG-TV reports.](#)

Community vote favors oval design for Eastern Market Metro plaza, [Voth reports.](#)

D.C. Fiscal Policy Institute on potential [improvements to unemployment insurance.](#)

**Michelle Rhee set to speak** at Economist-sponsored World in 2010 festival at GWU.

[Reality show for David Von Storch?](#)

**Rick Rosendall fires back** at **Gary Imhoff** on gay marriage.

Notre Dame, UCLA among [possible EagleBank Bowl entrants.](#)

DID YOU KNOW?---[DCPS is why](#) there's a National Christmas Tree.

[OMG IT MIGHT SNOW!!!!!!](#)

TONIGHT---Big meeting with Rhee [at Hardy MS!](#)

TOMORROW---[Fenty birthday party/fundraiser!](#) Expect picketers!

D.C. COUNCIL TODAY---2 p.m.: Committee on Health roundtable on 'The Performance of the HIV/AIDS, Hepatitis, STD, and Tuberculosis Administration,' JAWB 500; Committee on Government Operations and the Environment hearing on B18-492 ('Clean and Affordable Energy Act Energy Efficiency Program Fund Balance Transfer Authorization Amendment Act of 2009') and B18-493 ('Residential Aid Discount Subsidy Stabilization Amendment Act of 2009'), JAWB 412.

ADRIAN FENTY TODAY---10:45 a.m.: remarks, DPW snow preparation announcement, Lot 8, RFK Stadium, 2400 East Capitol St. NE.



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[Neighborhood Watch: Hungry Parking Meters May Invade H Street NE](#)

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