

# NORTHWEST PASSAGES

THE PEOPLE AND PLACES OF NORTHWEST WASHINGTON

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## Teatro de la Luna hosts summer camp for niños

By **TERESA G. GIONIS**  
Current Correspondent

“Just watch this,” says Nucky Walder, co-founder and producer at Teatro de la Luna in Petworth, gesturing toward a performance area lined with dark velvet curtains, where six children, each with recently created puppets on one hand, stand in a spotlight.

The kids, low-key and reserved just moments before, come to life as they sing “Allegra Te (Be Happy)” and sway their puppets to the rhythm of the song. They seem well-coordinated, perfectly at ease ... and quite happy. Their instructors, Marcela Ferlito and Marisol Flamenco, give the kids well-deserved kudos as they finish.

“One of these little girls, she was so shy when she came here she would barely talk to anyone,” says Walder. “Look at her now. She has really enjoyed this program, and she is much more at ease.”

Located on Georgia Avenue, Teatro de la Luna offers weeklong bilingual theater camps in the summer, open to children ages 6 through 11. The program is taught primarily in Spanish, but it can accommodate those with even a basic knowledge of the language. Throughout the week, the participants sing, dance, act and make puppets. On the last day of each session, the children present what



they have learned to parents and friends.

“My favorite part is making and playing with the puppets,” says 8-year-old Samantha, as she adjusts a gold felt crown on her puppet king.

“This week, we’re doing a puppet show about a legend from a city in Paraguay,” says instructor Ferlito. “And they are also learning about flags and cities around the world.”

As the children work at their crafts, or receive guidance on their performances, all instruction is delivered in Spanish, with an occasional English translation thrown in.

“This is a good experience for



Bill Petros/The Current

**Teatro de la Luna’s summer theater camp is taught primarily in Spanish, but it can accommodate those with even a basic knowledge of the language, according to its instructors.**

continues, “is to teach culture, social studies, vocabulary and performance. Theater is an easy way to learn.”

Walder and her husband, Mario Marcel, founded the Spanish-language theater in 1991. In

addition to the children’s workshops (which run throughout the year), Teatro de la Luna offers at least two full-length plays for adults each year, which are performed at Gunston Hall in Arlington. In addition, the company runs the Experience Theater

program, a professional traveling group that performs for children.

Last school year, La Luna’s Experience Theater program served over 11,000 kids and delivered more than 50 performances at venues such as local elementary schools and libraries. All of the plays are performed in Spanish, with English translations available. Study guides and theatrical workshops are generally included in the school programs, which present such classics as “Hansel and Gretel,” “Pinocchio” and “Sleeping Beauty,” as well as a few original

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the kids,” says Walder. “They learn discipline, improve language and vocabulary, and learn how to work together, which is so important. In theater, your eyes, ears — even your skin — all must be ready react to those around you.”

“The big idea here,” she

## Free ways to spend the rest of summer

By **STEPHANIE KANOWITZ**  
Current Correspondent

Don’t let the back-to-school ads and fall clothing displays fool you; There’s plenty of summer fun left to be had. From movies and music under the stars to a nighttime owl prowl, area organizations offer something for everyone. And you can’t beat the price: free.

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### HOME & GARDEN

## Confused about color? You’re not alone

By **LINDA LOMBARDI**  
Current Correspondent

Choosing colors is an everyday task, but for some choices the stakes are higher: A clashing shirt and pants lasts one day, but mismatched hues in a kitchen remodel will haunt you for years. If you’re overwhelmed before you even stop by that huge display of color chips at the paint store, Kate Smith of Color for Your Home has some reassuring words.

“It’s not you,” she says. “It is challenging. There are so many things you don’t know that will trip you up.”

Just in considering those paint cards, she

says. “there are 10 reasons working against you, as the consumer, getting the color right.” To start, the colors on the cards are often ink, not the actual paint, so they’re not totally accurate. What’s more, looking at a small

chip on a card is problematic. It’s very difficult to look at a small square and understand what the color will look like in a room, and looking at the color in the context of the other colors on the card changes your perception. The difficulties are so predictable that Smith often says to her clients, “Show

me the swatch and I’ll show you what color to really buy.”

Fortunately, certified color consultants

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Bill Petros/The Current

### Kate Smith teaches classes on color.

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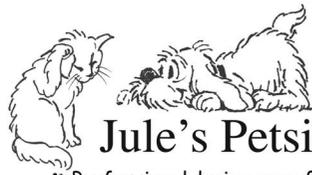
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## COLOR

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like the designers who took the workshop offered by Color for Your Home at the Washington Design Center last week can help you avoid an expensive mistake. Smith and partner Kiki Titterud passed on their expertise in an all-day class that started out with a review of the basics of color theory. You might think that you learned everything you needed to know about color in kindergarten, but workshop participants had no trouble spending half an hour talking about the color brown. Neutral colors like brown and beige might seem easy — beige goes with everything, right? On the contrary, these are hard even for professionals. "This is the biggest mistake designers make — with the neutrals," said Titterud.

The secret is that there are many different browns and beiges, and making the right choice depends on your color scheme. If you remember back to your finger-painting days, you know that when you mix very different colors together, the result is brown. But combinations of different complementary color pairs — say, blue and orange versus green and red — give you very different browns that will coordinate with different color schemes. Adding white, you get beiges with different undertones as well, and a beige with a blue undertone, for example, is the wrong choice for a red color scheme.

Interior designers have always needed to take a certain number of credits of continuing professional education as part of their licensing requirements, but courses in color are a new trend. Titterud says

there's only one other organization accredited to give a color certificate, and it hasn't offered its first class yet. Color for Your Home, which will be featured in the annual color issue of House Beautiful in September, has been offering its workshops since January and has certified more than 50 consultants.

For most designers, basic color theory is something they learned in school, although participants said the refresher lessons that start the day are useful — those courses were 10 and 20 years ago for most of them. But the workshop goes well beyond that, talking about psychology of color, cultural differences, special needs like clients who are colorblind, and how to work with a client. Titterud says the designers who take the workshop make color decisions every day, but mostly intuitively.

"They have the knack, but they don't know why they choose different colors," she says, and the workshops give them better tools to explain their recommendations and communicate with clients.

Titterud says sometimes all a client needs is "validation that they're on the right track," but even those who start with an idea or preference often need help turning it into reality.

Other times a consultant can open designers' eyes to ideas that they'd never have thought to use on their own: "Sometimes you'll show a client a color and they'll say they hate it, but you'll combine it with something else and they love it."

Kate Smith will present color workshops for non-professionals in September at Calico Corners stores in Northern Virginia; for updates see her Web site, [sensationalcolor.com](http://sensationalcolor.com).

**Kate Smith of Color for Your Home recommends these tips for choosing colors:**

- **Classic combos:** Tried and true color pairings like blue/yellow, hunter green/navy and olive/warm red have timeless appeal, and they are easy to work with.
- **Artful inspiration:** Choosing a wall color that is lighter or darker in value than a treasured painting or print and using accent colors pulled from the colors of the art create an instant focal point.
- **Play favorites:** Combine your favorite color with white or off-white and two

harmonizing colors, or use your favorite color as an accent with neutrals and your room will instantly reflect your personality.

- **Dream rooms:** Keep a file of pictures of rooms you like and then look at them to see what colors or kinds of colors (bright, muted, pale, et cetera) they have in common, since this can reveal what you might love in your own home.
- **Fabric focus:** Carry the colors from patterned fabric on your sofa or draperies throughout the room and don't obsess about matching. Rather, go with colors that work together when you step back and look at the room as a whole.

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## THEATER

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productions.

As part of its mission to promote Hispanic culture through theater, Teatro de la Luna also holds workshops for adults, organizes poetry marathons and produces an International Festival of Hispanic Theater each fall.

Back on stage at the summer camp, 11-year-old Alex, the only

boy enrolled this particular week, is flush from the excitement of performing "Allegra Te."

"This is my second year of going to camp here," he says. "And I have already been to a couple of sessions this summer. For me, I am learning so much — the singing, the dancing, the puppets ... it just keeps getting more and more fun."

For more information or to sign up for a camp or workshop, call 202-882-6227 or visit [teatrodela-luna.org](http://teatrodela-luna.org).