

Takoma Park

NEWSLETTER

"Never doubt that a small group of thoughtful, committed citizens can change the world. . ."

Margaret Mead (1901-1978)

Published by the City of Takoma Park

www.cityoftakomapark.org

April 2005

Columbia Union College Works With Neighbors On Its Big Rebuilding Plans

By Rick Henry

Columbia Union College plans to do some serious rebuilding the next few years, but CUC appears to be doing it in such a way that its skittish residential neighbors don't mind. The Seventh-day Adventist college at Flower and Carroll avenues immediately adjoins Washington Adventist Hospital, where plans for a major expansion have created serious controversy.

The college, which celebrated its 100th anniversary last year, hopes to construct three new buildings on campus. But Scott Steward, CUC's director of public relations, is quick to note, "Conceptually, this project really involves reclaiming our original campus, because over time we have lost four of our original buildings and have only replaced one."

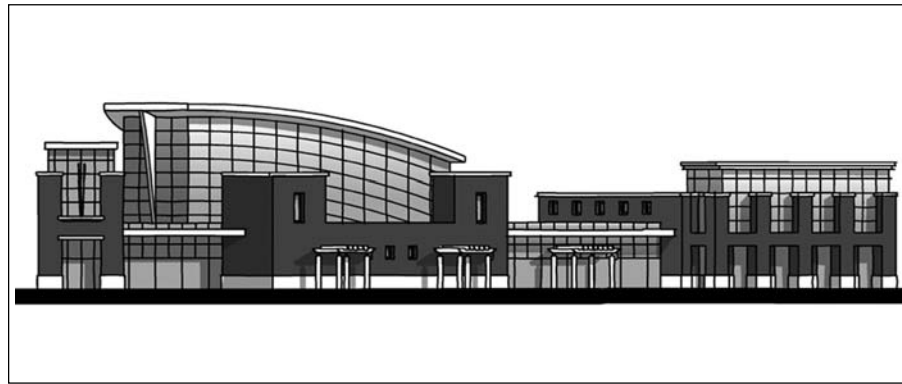
Three of those buildings — North, South and Central Hall — were condemned and torn down in the mid-to-late

'60s. The other, Columbia Hall, was lost to arson in 1970. Only Columbia Hall has been replaced.

But the proposed development isn't designed to just bring the college back to its original state. The plans address important current and future needs, especially for some of the college's signature academic programs. For example, a new Wellness and Health Sciences Center would house the college's nursing, respiratory care, physical education and future allied health programs, as well as classrooms, offices, gymnasiums, a pool, indoor running track and health club.

"Nursing is our largest program," Steward said. "And it is one of the areas Montgomery County has identified as having the biggest shortage, so we feel that this would not only be good for us, but for the citizens of Takoma Park and Montgomery County as well."

Citizens in the community would be able to use the Wellness Center facilities, as



Architectural elevation by Ellerbe Becket

Proposed Performing Arts Building

well as the other two proposed buildings, a Learning Pavilion and Library and a Performing Arts Center, Steward said.

The Learning Pavilion and Library is scheduled to be the first building constructed and will be located at the heart of the 19-acre campus, near the site of the school's existing library. It will house the Center for Learning Resources, which

will be home to the CUC's academic support and advising services, student and career counseling, cooperative education, testing services and Information Technology Department. Space for meetings and conventions is also proposed, as is a café, lounges and a museum.

"Just as they can now, members of the

Continued on page 10

City Seeks State Support For Community Center



Lawrence Abell & Associates Ltd.

Computer rendering of Community Center

Following a procedure that has worked before for the City, Takoma Park officials went to Annapolis March 19 to testify in favor of state support for the City's Community Center now under construction.

grants, though matching funds are required from the receiving entity — a requirement the City has already met.

Continued on page 4

High Property Taxes? Low Income? Rebates Can Help

By Diana Hoover

For some homeowners in Takoma Park, a combination of high property taxes and low income presents a real problem. As Mayor Kathy Porter said at the Sept. 27, 2004, City Council meeting, "We have some folks who bought their homes many, many years ago when they were much more modestly priced, and who now find themselves in a home that is worth a great deal of money, but they'd like to remain in that home. Many of them have already paid off their mortgages, and property taxes are basically their biggest expense."

Fortunately, there's something the City of Takoma Park can do about that. In fact, Porter was speaking in favor of a doubling of the City's tax rebate funding for low-income homeowners. The measure passed.

The Council had earlier raised the City's budget line from \$25,000 to \$50,000 for the property tax rebates for the current 2005 fiscal year. That may not seem like much, but when the City's rebate is added to similar state and county programs, it can make a difference.

Designed to help citizens on low and fixed incomes, the rebates have been helping qualified Takoma Park homeowners have been eligible since 1992. They've been able to get a City rebate of 15 percent of their state property-tax credit. Now, these same homeowners will be able to receive from the City 30 percent on top of their state tax credit. In FY04, there were 112 Takoma Park residents who received the City property tax credit.

How to Do It

Here's how the program works: Stop at the Finance window at the City of Takoma Park offices at 7500 Maple Ave. to pick up the state Homeowners' Property Tax Credit form and instructions. You can also download the form at www.dat.state.md.us/sdatweb/htc.html if you have Internet access. The deadline for submission for the newly expanded program is Sept. 1.

Your application should be filed with the State of Maryland Department of Assessments and Taxation (SDAT). The amount of the tax credit is based on the

Continued on page 12

Inside this Issue

Preventing Identity Theft: Some Useful Hints

Page 5

Como prevenir el robo de identidad (en español)

Keep Your License Plates On Your Car

Page 9

Use inexpensive locking fasteners to stop tag theft.

Save Retaining Walls from "Frost Heave"

Page 10

Something there is that doesn't love a wall

The "Stencil-A-Drain" Campaign

Page 12

Get out your spray paint to reduce stormwater pollution

POSTAL CUSTOMER

ECRWSS

Mayor & Council
7500 Maple Ave.
Takoma Park, MD
20912

PRE-SORT STANDARD
U.S. POSTAGE
PAID
TAKOMA PARK, MD
PERMIT NO. 4422

CITY COUNCIL
CALENDAR

- MONDAY, MARCH 28 - PRESENTATION, REGULAR MEETING & WORKSESSION
- WEDNESDAY, MARCH 30 - Residents' Committee on Tax and Service Duplication Issues, 7 p.m., (Columbia Room, 2nd Floor of Wilkinson Hall, 7600 Flower Ave. at Columbia Union College)
- MONDAY, APRIL 4 - PRESENTATION & WORKSESSION
- MONDAY, APRIL 11 - PRESENTATION, REGULAR MEETING & WORKSESSION
- TUESDAY, APRIL 12 - Facade Advisory Board, 7 p.m. (6 Grant Ave.)
- WEDNESDAY, APRIL 13 - Ethics Commission, 7:30 p.m. (Municipal Building Administration Office)
- THURSDAY, APRIL 14 - Safe Roadways Committee, 6:30 p.m. (Municipal Building Council Chambers)
- MONDAY, APRIL 18 - PRESENTATION & WORKSESSION
- TUESDAY, APRIL 19 - Arts and Humanities Commission, 7:30 p.m. (Municipal Building)
- MONDAY, APRIL 25 - PRESENTATION, REGULAR MEETING & WORKSESSION
- THURSDAY, APRIL 28 - Public Safety Citizens Advisory Committee, 7:30 p.m. (Municipal Building Administration Office)
- MONDAY, MAY 2 - PRESENTATION & WORKSESSION



To receive a copy of the legislation or to learn more about a particular resolution, contact Cathy Waters, the City Clerk, at 301-891-7206 or cathyw@takomagov.org.

- February 14 - Regular Meeting**
Resolution 2005-6 was adopted, approving Elements of the Gateway Wayfinding Sign System (VOTING FOR: Porter, Austin-Lane, Barry, Elrich, Mizeur, Seamens, Williams)
- Resolution 2005-7 was adopted, authorizing the Mayor to sign a municipal aggregation letter of interest (VOTING FOR: Porter, Austin-Lane, Barry, Elrich, Mizeur, Williams, Seamens)
- The Consent Agenda was adopted (VOTING FOR: Porter, Austin-Lane, Barry, Elrich, Mizeur, Williams, Seamens)
- A. Resolution 2005-8, appointing Linda Gunter to the Nuclear Free Takoma Park Committee.
- B. Resolution 2005-9, appointing Emily Schabacker to the Ethics Commission
- February 22 - Special Session**
Resolution 2005-10 was adopted, to proclaim February 26 as "Takoma Park Equality Day" (VOTING FOR: Porter, Austin-Lane, Barry, Elrich, Mizeur, Seamens, Williams)

- February 28 - Regular Meeting**
Ordinance 2005-4 was adopted, authorizing execution of a contract with Adriana Baler for the Carroll Ave. Sidewalk Public Art Project (VOTING FOR: Porter, Austin-Lane, Mizeur, Seamens, Williams; ABSENT: Barry, Elrich)
- Resolution 2005-11 was adopted, reaffirming appointments to the Citizens Liaison Committee to the Community Center (VOTING FOR: Porter, Austin-Lane, Mizeur, Seamens, Williams; ABSENT: Barry, Elrich)
- Resolution 2005-12 was adopted, adopting the FY2005 Nuclear Free America, Inc. Listing of Parent Companies of U.S. Nuclear Weapons Systems Contractors (VOTING FOR: Porter, Austin-Lane, Barry, Mizeur, Seamens, Williams; ABSENT: Elrich)
- Ordinance 2005-5 was accepted at first reading, authorizing a contract with Charron Construction Consulting, Inc. for construction management and consulting relating to the Community Center Project (VOTING FOR: Porter, Austin-Lane, Barry, Mizeur, Seamens, Williams; ABSENT: Elrich)
- Resolution 2005-13 was adopted, approving the emergency procurement of a sewage pump (VOTING FOR: Porter, Austin-Lane, Barry, Mizeur, Seamens, Williams; ABSENT: Elrich)
- March 7 - Special Session**
Resolution 2005-14 was adopted, expressing condolences to the family and friends of Robert Dawson Williams (father of Councilmember Bruce Williams) (VOTING FOR: Porter, Austin-Lane, Barry, Elrich, Mizeur, Seamens, Williams)
- Ordinance 2005-6 was adopted, authorizing the execution of a contract with Architectural Graphics, Inc. for Phase I of the City of Takoma Park signage system (VOTING FOR: Porter, Austin-Lane, Barry, Elrich, Mizeur, Seamens, Williams)

Committee Vacancies

- Arts and Humanities Commission.** The Arts and Humanities Commission. The commission serves in an official advisory role to the City Council on all matters related to the arts and humanities which promote, coordinate and strengthen public programs to further cultural development of the city. (Three vacancies.)
- Emergency Preparedness Committee.** The committee was established to provide community input to and assist in the City's planning and preparations for emergency operations and to involve residents in providing appropriate assistance during emergency operations. Applicants should have some professional background in emergency preparedness or operations and be available to perform committee duties during the day when required. (Four vacancies.)
- Facade Advisory Board.** The 7-member board provides design and historic advisory assistance for building and business owners located in the commercial areas of Takoma Park and provides recommendations to the Montgomery County Historic Preservation Commission regarding permit applications. (One vacancy.)
- Noise Control Board.** The 7-member board is charged with assisting and advising the City on noise control issues, including administration and enforcement of the Noise Control Ordinance, and adjudicating noise disturbance complaints. (Three vacancies.)
- Personnel Appeal Board.** The 5-member board is charged with hearing employee appeals pursuant to Chapter 4.04 "Personnel" of the Takoma Park Code. (One vacancy.)
- Public Safety Citizens Advisory Committee.** The 12-member committee is charged with providing input and advice to the Council and the City's public safety agencies about how the City can better meet the ongoing needs and concerns of residents in the area of police services and public safety. (Four vacancies.)
- Safe Roadways Committee.** The Safe Roadways Committee advises the City on transportation-related issues including, but not limited to, pedestrian and bicycle safety, traffic, and transit services. (Two vacancies.)

Interested applicants are encouraged to send a letter of interest and resume or statement of qualifications to City Clerk Cathy Waters at 7500 Maple Ave., Takoma Park, MD 20912 or via e-mail to CathyW@takomagov.org. Further information is available by contacting the City Clerk at 301-891-7206.

Citizens Liaison Committee for the Community Center
City residents are invited to participate in the Citizens Liaison Committee for the Community Center. The committee serves to foster communication among interested parties and the Council in the ongoing process for the development of a community center. Information about the committee is available on the City Web page. If you are interested in serving on this committee, contact your City Councilmember (or the City Clerk's Office) to request appointment.

Proposed Regulation
Regarding Noise Control
Board Bylaws

A proposed regulation providing written bylaws to set forth the Noise Control Board procedures (in accordance with Ordinance 2002-35, adopted by the City Council on December 2, 2002) was advertised in the March edition of the *Takoma Park Newsletter*.

Pursuant to the requirements of the "Administrative Regulations Ordinance" (Authority: Chapter 2.12 "Administrative Regulations," of the Takoma Park Code), notice of the City's intention to adopt an Administrative Regulation must be publicly noted, allowing citizens the opportunity to comment on the proposal. Copies of the regulation are available upon request. Please contact the City Clerk's Office at 7500 Maple Ave., Takoma Park, 20912.

No public comments were received following the notice of intent to adopt the regulation. The final proposed regulation will be presented to the City Manager and Council for review. Notice of the final action will appear in the next issue of the *Takoma Park Newsletter*.

Please direct any comments or concerns to City Clerk Catherine Waters in writing by mail to the above address, by e-mail to cathyw@takomagov.org or by voice message at 301-891-7206.

Speak With the Mayor
Tuesdays: 9:00-11:00 a.m.
Wednesdays: 7:30-9:30 p.m.

Call Peggye Forster to set up an appointment
301-891-7230

Municipal Building,
7500 Maple Avenue.

Arbor Day Celebration April 9

The City of Takoma Park will have its annual Arbor Day celebration this year on Saturday, April 9 from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. As in past years, seedlings will be given away to all visitors who want them. The species of seedlings this year include: northern red oak, willow oak, white oak, swamp white oak, flowering dogwood, redbud, sassafras, sycamore, indigobush and pawpaw. There will also be approximately 20 larger trees (7-10 feet tall) given away as part of a free raffle. Some of those species include: black gum, redbud, northern red oak, tulip poplar, willow oak, red maple, sweetbay magnolia, white oak and sycamore.

Several organizations will be represented. Among them are the Takoma Park Tree Commission, Takoma Park Committee on the Environment, Takoma Park Horticulture Club, Montgomery County Master Gardeners program, a forester from PEPCO, a certified energy manager from Capital Sun Group and Friends of Sligo Creek.

The City will receive a Tree City USA award for the 21st year in a row and a Tree City USA Growth Award for the 4th year in a row.



Drawing by Richard Thompson

The event will be held by the City Library in the lawn area between the Library and Philadelphia Ave. If you have any questions, please contact City arborist Brett Linkletter at 301-891-7612 or email to BrettL@takomagov.org.

So mark your calendars and bring your kids!

Proposed Regulation Regarding Control Of Noxious Growths and Undesirable Trees

A Regulation is being proposed to provide guidance for compliance with and enforcement of Takoma Park Code, Title 12. The intent is to protect residents from allergenic plants and protect manmade structures and the urban forest from damage from the overgrowth of invasive plant species. The intent of the proposed regulation is to promote the health of the urban forest by facilitating the removal and replacement of undesirable trees, with trees that will make a valuable addition to the urban forest.

Pursuant to the requirements of the "Administrative Regulations Ordinance" (Authority: Chapter 2.12 "Administrative Regulations," of the Takoma Park Code), notice of the City's intention to adopt an Administrative Regulation must be publically noted, allowing citizens the opportunity to comment on the proposal. Copies of the regulation are available upon request. Please contact the City Clerk's Office at 7500 Maple Avenue, Takoma Park, 20912

Please direct any comments or concerns to City Clerk Catherine Waters in writing by mail to the above address, by e-mail to cathyw@takomagov.org or by voice message at 301-891-7206 before the close of business on Monday, April 18, 2005.

DEPARTMENT OF CORRECTIONS

An article about the Safe Roadways Committee in the March *Newsletter* incorrectly stated that the committee was especially concerned about safety on Philadelphia Ave. since an incident in which a girl who had "just gotten off a schoolbus" was struck by a car. In fact, the girl was crossing in the crosswalk where a Ride-On bus was embarking passengers.

In Takoma D.C., Planners Seek Higher Density, Retail Uses

The D.C. Office of Planning is working on what's called an "overlay zone" that would encourage retail uses in the parts of Takoma, D.C., near the Metro station. The streets covered by this proposed set of zoning rules include Cedar, Carroll, Blair and Fourth.

The goal seems to be a streetscape that would encourage pedestrian traffic and somewhat high-density buildings with retail space on the ground floor. For example, it specifies that sidewalks must be a minimum of 13 feet, and that ceilings on the first floor of buildings be 14 feet high – enough to accommodate retail, office and service uses. Such buildings will be allowed to be 55 feet high, to provide enough resident population density to support retail and other uses.

According to a statement from Ward 1 Councilmember Joy Austin-Lane, who represents the adjoining Takoma Park neighborhoods, "Without the overlay zone, the existing provisions allow uses and site designs that are not desirable" (such as the suburban-style CVS). Austin-Lane adds, however, "I believe there needs to be a stepping down in height, as well as landscape buffering to lessen the impact of commercial development on residential areas," and plans to discuss those concerns with D.C. planners.

The overlay would supplement the Takoma Central District Plan, approved by D.C. in 2002. For more information, see http://dcoz.dc.gov/services/zoning/schedule/info/PHN04-16_01-24-05.pdf

Fire Chief Jimmy Jarboe Recovering from Surgery

Fans of the Takoma Park Firehouse Report may note that the regular feature of the *Newsletter* is missing this month. That's because Jimmy Jarboe, the volunteer fire chief of the Takoma Park Volunteer Fire Department, had heart surgery last month and is home recuperating.

He reports that he is recovering reasonably well, and hopes to be back at the job next month – at least well enough to write his monthly article. In the meanwhile, the best wishes of the City staff and representatives, as well as the broader community, go out to Jimmy and his family.

In addition, Jimmy wants to remind you that the time of the year you change your clocks' settings for Daylight Saving Time – such as April – is also a good time to change the batteries on your smoke alarms.

Takoma Foundation Accepting Grant Applications

The Takoma Foundation is accepting applications for small grants of between \$500 and \$1,000 for local groups. Grant applications for the spring round of semi-annual grant-giving program are due April 11. They will be evaluated the same month and funds will be distributed in May.

Takoma Foundation grants are geared toward building a vibrant and healthy Takoma Park community by meeting the diverse needs of the community. For example, the foundation supports activities such as neighborhood cleanups, providing opportunities for disadvantaged youth, sports leagues, arts and recreation, parade, providing aid to local residents in need, and other school or community-based action.

Non-profit organizations can get application forms and guidelines from the foundation's Web site, www.takomafoundation.org. Application forms are also available at the City's Municipal Building and the Takoma Park Library. If you have questions, contact the Grants Committee chair, Bruce Baker, at Bruce.L.Baker@verizon.net or 301-589-3633.

Deadline for Submissions:
April 11
Next Issue:
April 22

Editor
Bob Guldin

Copy Editor
Carol E. Smalls

Writers
Rick Henry
Diana Hoover
Virginia Myers Kelly
Kate Konschnik

Photography
Clyde Lassell

Layout & Production
Sligo Computer Services, Inc.

www.cityoftakomapark.org
Vol. 44, no. 7

The *Takoma Park Newsletter* is published 11 times a year as the official publication of the City of Takoma Park, www.cityoftakomapark.org.

The *Newsletter* does not accept commercial, classified or political advertisements.

Unsolicited materials by Takoma Park residents, including reports by community groups and articles that may contain opinion, will be considered for publication. Name, address and telephone number must accompany all submitted material.

Pursuant to City Council Resolution No. 1992-36 of June 8, 1992 that sets forth the editorial guidelines of the *Newsletter*, the Editor reserves the right to edit all submitted copy for length, clarity, style, spelling and grammar.

Published material containing opinions does not necessarily reflect the views of the *Newsletter* or the City of Takoma Park.

The City of Takoma Park is an equal opportunity employer and does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, religion, ancestry or national origin, sex, age, marital status or physical or mental disabilities that are unrelated in nature and extent to job performance. The *Newsletter* is printed on recycled-content paper.

To contact the editor e-mail: tpnewseditor@takomagov.org

Rent Stabilization Allowance Increases to 2.1%

All landlords owning two or more rental units in Takoma Park are subject to Rent Stabilization. The City sets the Rent Stabilization Allowance which reflects the maximum annual rent increase that is allowed on an occupied rental unit subject to rent stabilization. Effective July 1, 2005 through June 30, 2006, the rent stabilization allowance will increase from 1.9% to 2.1%. Section 6.20.020 of the Takoma Park Code and the departmental regulations requires that the Allowance be set as follows:

The Rent Stabilization Allowance shall be equal to 70 percent of the percent change in the U.S. Department of Labor Bureau of Labor Statistics, Consumer Price Index, All Urban Consumers, Washington, DC-MD-VA, All Items 1996=100 (hereinafter "CPI-U") for the 12-month period ending in January of the current year from the average CPI-U for the 12-month period ending in January of the previous year (CPI-U figures for the Washington, DC-MD-VA, All Items, are published every other month).

The method of computing the Rent Stabilization Allowance CPI-U figures are as follows:

Current Year CPI-U	
March 2004	118.1
May 2004	118.9
July 2004	120.2
September 2004	120.8
November 2004	120.9
January 2005	121.3
Average Current Year CPI-U (3/04-1/05)	120.0
Previous Year CPI-U	
March 2003	115.9
May 2003	115.7
July 2003	116.8
September 2003	117.2
November 2003	116.7
January 2004	117.1
Average Previous Year CPI-U (3/03-1/04)	116.5
Index Point Change	
Average Current Year CPI-U	120.0
Less Average Previous Year CPI-U	116.5
Equals Index Point Change	3.5
Percent Change	
Index Point Difference	3.5
Divided by Average Previous Year	116.5
Equals	0.03
Results Multiplied by 100	0.03 x 100
Equals Percent Change in CPI-U	3.0%
70% of the Percent Change in CPI-U	3.0% x 70%
Equals Rent Stabilization Allowance	2.1% (July 1, 2005 - June 30, 2006)

There will be a 30-day comment period whereby Housing and Community Development will accept written comments regarding the calculation of the Rent Stabilization Allowance. Please send your comments either by mail to Housing and Community Development, 7500 Maple Avenue, Takoma Park, MD 20912 or to SaraD@takomagov.org. by April 25, 2005.

City Seeks State Support For Community Center

Continued from page 1

Previously, the City has received three grants of \$500,000 each and one grant of \$300,000 from Maryland bond bills for Community Center construction.

The mayor testified before both the State Senate Budget and Taxation Committee and the House Appropriations Committee. Accompanying Porter were Ward 1 Councilmember Joy Austin-Lane and the City's Community and Government Liaison, Suzanne Ludlow.

Porter told the *Newsletter* that the City is fortunate to have three state legislators – Sen. Ida Ruben, Del. Sheila Hixson and Del. Peter Franchot – who each have substantial seniority and influential com-

mittee positions and who have been supportive of funding for Takoma Park's Community Center.

Sen. Ruben told the *Newsletter* March 21 that she was working with the delegates on possible funding. But, she cautioned, "There are so few dollars this year. We won't know until the last week-end of the session, April 11."

The Community Center – now visibly under construction at Maple and Philadelphia avenues – is a rebuilding and expansion of the City's Municipal Building into a recreational, educational and meeting space for local residents.

— Bob Guldin

Home Buying Class Starts May 3

The City's Departments of Housing and Community Development and Recreation have partnered with the Consumer Credit Counseling Service to sponsor a no-cost training on Buying a Home. The Home Buyers Club is available to first-time home buyers and it's a sure thing that participants will be knowledgeable about the process of buying a home after taking this year-long course. Some of the topics to be discussed are:

- Can I Really Afford to Buy a Home?
- Increase Your Buying Power
- Shopping for a Home
- County and State Programs Available to First-Time Home Buyers
- Negotiating the Cost of Your Home

An evaluation of your credit report and FICO scores is included. A commitment to attend each class is strongly recommended. The class will meet the



first Tuesday evening of each month, 7 p.m. - 9 p.m., starting on May 3. The class is limited to 50 participants. Low- to moderate-income residents are encouraged to register. Takoma Park residents will be given preference in registering. To register, see the City Recreation Department Spring Class Guide inside this *Newsletter* or for further information on the class, you may contact 301-891-7222.

¿Quiere Comprar Una Casa? Clase Empieza el 3 de Mayo

El Departamento de Vivienda y Desarrollo de la Comunidad y Recreación de la Ciudad tiene una asociación con el servicio de consulta de crédito al consumidor para patrocinar entrenamiento para comprar su hogar a no costo. El club está disponible para quienes por primera vez compran una casa y es de seguro que los participantes obtendran conocimiento acerca del proceso para comprar una casa, después de tomar este curso por un año.

Alguno de los puntos a discutirse son:

- Puedo Realmente ser Capaz de Comprar una Casa?
- Aumentes tu Capacidad de Comprar una Casa.
- En Búsqueda de una Casa.

- Programas del Condado y el Estado Disponibles para Compradores de Casa por Primera Vez.
- Negociando el Costo de su Casa

Una evaluación de su reporte de crédito y puntaje de FICO están incluidos. Un compromiso para asistir a cada clase es firmamente recomendado. La clase se reunirá cada primer martes del mes por la noche de 7 p.m. a 9 p.m. Empezando el 3 de Mayo, el espacio es limitado a 50 participantes. Se recomienda que se registren personas de bajo o moderado ingreso económico. Los residentes de Takoma Park tendrán preferencia al momento de inscribirse. Para registrarse, vea la guía del clase de primavera incluido en este periódico, o para mayor información puede llamar al 301-891-7222.

Housing Mailbox

Remedies for a Broken Stove

By Moses A. Wilds, Jr.
Landlord-Tenant Coordinator

Q: A tenant indicates that her stove has been inoperative for two weeks. She has called and written her landlord regarding this problem. Her certified letter to the landlord was sent the day after her stove stopped working. She wants to know what her rights are in this matter.

A: Defective Tenancy is defined in the Takoma Park Housing Code as any condition in a rental facility that constitutes a violation of the terms of the lease, the Landlord-Tenant Relations Law, or the Property Maintenance Code. Section 6.16.170 A (Formerly Section 6-416) of the Landlord-Tenant Relations Law indicates that a tenant who has reason to believe that a defective tenancy exists in the rental unit or the common areas of the rental facility after giving the landlord written notice of the problem and if the problem has

not been corrected by the landlord (or a good-faith effort made to correct the problem) within one week of the landlord receiving notice may file a complaint with the Commission on Landlord-Tenant Affairs (COLTA). If the tenant is able to prove by testimony or other evidence that the landlord had actual notice of the problem it is not necessary for the tenant to provide a written notice to the landlord.

In this situation the tenant has provided the landlord written notice of the problem and has not received a response within a week. She may accordingly file a complaint with the Commission indicating that a defective tenancy situation exists. Her remedy options requested from COLTA could be (1) requiring the landlord to fix or replace the stove immediately; (2) possibly seeking a reimbursement from the landlord for a reduction in service and (3) possibly seeking a reimbursement for having to eat out during the time the stove was broken.

Preventing Identity Theft

By Linda Walker
Affordable Housing Manager

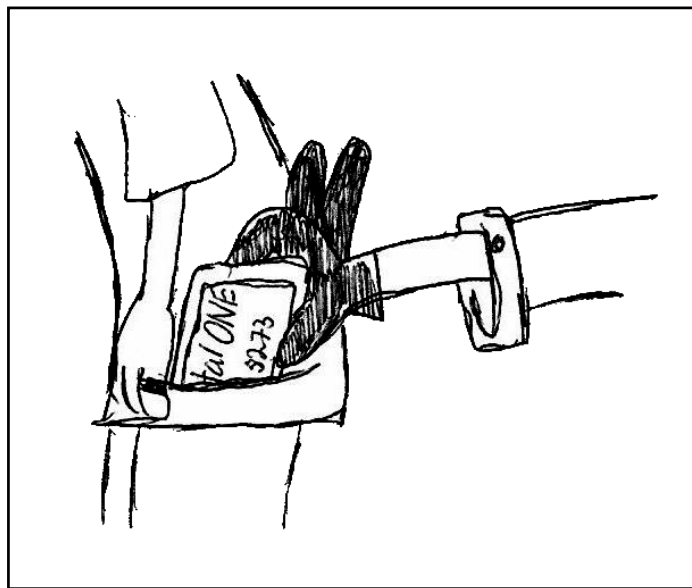
"My wallet was stolen in December 2002. There's been no end to the problems I've faced since then. The thieves used my identity to write checks, use a debit card, open a bank account with a line of credit, open several store credit cards, obtain cell phones..." and unfortunately this story goes on and on. Those are the words of a victim of identity theft.....when someone obtains and uses your name, Social Security number, credit card number, bank account number or other personal identifying information to commit fraud. The havoc that was created on this victim's personal accounts took years to straighten out.

You don't have to have your wallet stolen, however, to become a victim of identity theft. There are many ways to obtain someone's personal information. While identity theft is a crime that can be prosecuted, the person committing the fraud is difficult to track. The Federal Trade Commission reported that the number of identity theft complaints from 2002 to 2003 increased approximately 33 percent (from 161,836 to 214,905) and the numbers are escalating each year. Here are a few tips on how to prevent identity theft.

- Closely monitor your banking and credit card statements. Immediately contact the financial institution if you see any unauthorized withdrawals or charges or if you don't get a statement on time. Thieves have been known to steal mail or change mailing addresses in order to misuse financial accounts.
- Protect your mail by using a locked mailbox for incoming mail and a Post Office or Post Office collection box for outgoing mail.
- Shred sensitive papers which includes account information, social security numbers, etc. Never throw out credit card promotions without first shredding the offers. They could be picked up and used by thieves who will use your personal information to obtain new credit cards.
- Never respond to an unsolicited phone call or e-mail that asks for bank account information or your social security number. When conducting transactions on the Internet, choose reputable companies and look for signs that show that the transactions are protected through secure transmissions.
- Update security patches offered by your computer's operating system and software vendors to thwart hackers.
- Closely monitor your business transactions when paying at a store or restaurant with a debit or credit card. A place of business is dependent on the honesty of its employees. Keep your receipts so you can compare them to your statement when you receive your bill.
- Do not carry credit cards that you rarely use in your wallet or purse. If you should lose or have your personal information stolen, it is easier to deal with just a few companies.
- Most important, obtain a copy of your credit report from each of the three major credit reporting companies once a year. Stagger the requests throughout the year and follow up on any errors that you find in the reports. Equifax (800)685-1111, www.equifax.com; Experian (888)397-3742, www.experian.com; Trans Union (800) 888-4213, www.transunion.com.

If you suspect you are a victim of identity theft, it is important to act quickly so that you can minimize the damage to your credit history.

- Report in writing and call the fraud units of the three credit reporting companies about the theft of your credit cards or numbers. Ask that your file be flagged with a fraud alert. You can ask to have a statement added to your file that will say that you want to be contacted by phone if anyone puts in an application for additional credit.
- Report the fraudulent activity to your local police department. Get a police report and give the report on it to your creditors and others who may need this verification.
- Report the activity to your financial institutions if your debit card or checks



Drawing by Bryan Smalls, Age 12

Don't let this happen to you — protect your identity.

are stolen. Cancel your savings and checking accounts and put stop payments on any check that is outstanding. New accounts should be issued to you.

- File a complaint with the Federal Trade Commission and other law enforcement agencies that prosecute identity theft www.consumer.gov/idtheft
- If you suspect mail is being taken from your mailbox or someone has filed a change of address with the post office or has used the mail to commit credit or bank fraud, notify the U.S. Postal Inspection Service (For Maryland, call the DC office at 202-636-2300).
- If someone is using your driver's license as identification on bad checks, call the Maryland Motor Vehicle Administration at 1-800-950-1682 to see if you qualify to be issued a new number. Check to see if a replacement license has been issued in your name and ask to have a fraud alert put on your license.

Consult an attorney if you are finding that creditors or credit bureaus are not working with you to remove fraudulent charges. Repairing your credit can take a long time, but assistance is available to help you deal with this trauma. For information on attorneys specializing in consumer law you can call the Lawyer Referral Service of the Bar Association of Montgomery County, 301-279-9100.

Most of the information for this article was obtained from the Maryland Office of Attorney General and the Federal Trade Commission. For further information, contact them at www.oag.state.md.us and www.consumer.gov/idtheft or 1-877-FTC-HELP.

Para Prevenir el Robo de Identidad

Por Linda Walker y traducido por
Sofia Francisco

"Mi billetera fue robada en Diciembre del 2002. No hay un fin a los problemas que he tenido que enfrentar desde entonces. Los rateros usaron mi identidad para escribir cheques, usaron mi tarjeta de banco, habrieron una nueva cuenta en el banco con una línea de crédito, habrieron varias tarjetas de crédito en varias tiendas, adquirieron teléfonos celulares" y desafortunadamente esta historia continua. Esas son las palabras de una víctima de robo de identidad. Cuando alguien obtiene y usa su nombre, número de seguro social, número de tarjeta de crédito, número de cuenta bancaria o cualquier otra información personal está cometiendo fraude. Tomó años el reparar el daño que fue causado en las cuentas personales de la víctima.

Sin embargo Ud. no tiene que tener su billetera robada para convertirse en una víctima de robo de identidad. Hay muchas formas de obtener información personal de cualquier persona. Mientras que el robo de identidad es un crimen que puede tener procección, es difícil de rastrear a la persona que lo comete. "The Federal Trade Commission" (La comisión de Comercio) ha reportado que el número de quejas de robo de identidad desde el 2002 al 2003 a aumentado aproximadamente 33 por ciento (de 161,836 a 214,905) y los números están aumentando cada año.

Aquí hay algunas advertencias para prevenir el robo de identidad.

- Vigile cercanamente su cuenta bancaria y estados de cuenta de su tarjeta de crédito. De inmediato contacte la institución financiera si Ud. ve retiros no autorizados o cargos si Ud. no recibe su estado de cuenta a tiempo. Los rateros son conocidos por robar correo o cambio de correo postal para usar mal las cuentas financieras.
- Proteja su correo usando candados de cajas postales para el correo que llega y caja de colección de correo para el correo que sale.
- Desmenuzar papeles importantes que incluyan información de su cuenta, número de seguro social, etc. Nunca tire ofertas de tarjetas de crédito sin antes desmenuzar las ofertas. Ellas puedan ser recogidas y usadas por los rateros quienes usaran su información personal para obtener nuevas tarjetas de crédito.
- Nunca responda a llamadas de oferta de ventas o por correo electrónico que pida información de su cuenta bancaria o número de seguro social cuando haga transacciones en la net, escoja compañías de respeto y busque por señas que muestren que las transacciones están protegidas a través de transacciones seguras.
- Actualize los parches de seguridad que su sistema de operación que su computadora ofrece y sistema de paro de anuncio de ventas para detener a los piratas de la net.
- Vigile cercanamente sus transacciones de negocios cuando use su tarjeta de crédito o tarjeta de cargo. Un lugar de negocios depende de la honestidad de sus empleados. Guarde sus recibos

para que compare su estado de cuenta con su factura.

- No lleve en su cartera o billetera tarjetas de crédito que use muy raramente. En caso Ud. los perdiera o sus documentos personales son robados es más fácil de tratar con menos compañías.
- Más importante, obtenga una copia de su reporte de crédito de las tres más importantes compañías de crédito, por lo menos una vez al año. Pida varias veces un reporte durante el año y compárelos con sus recibos para comprobar que no hay errores.

E q u i f a x (8 0 0) 6 8 5 - 1 1 1 1 , www.equifax.com; Experian (888)397-3742, www.experian.com; Trans Union (800)888-4213, www.transunion.com

Si Ud. Sospecha que usted siendo víctima de robo de identidad, es importante que actúe rápidamente para reducir el daño a su historia de crédito.

- Llame y reporte por escrito a la unidad de fraude de las tres compañías de reporte de crédito, el robo de sus tarjetas o números de identificación. Pida que su record sea marcado con alerta de fraude. Usted puede pedir que se añada una declaración a su record que diga que usted quiere que lo contacten por teléfono si alguien pide alguna aplicación para crédito adicional.
- Reporte la actividad fraudulenta a su departamento de policía local. Obtenga el reporte policial y de el reporte a sus acreedores o otros quienes pueden necesitar esta verificación.
- Reporte esta actividad a su institución financiera si su tarjeta de cargo o cheque ha sido robado. Cancele su cuenta de ahorro y de cheque y ponga un alto al pago de cargos en cualquier cheque pendiente. Nuevas cuentas deben ser dadas a Ud.
- Presente una queja con la Comisión Federal de Negocios y otras agencias de ejecución de la ley que sancione el robo de identidad www.consumer.gov/idtheft
- Si usted sospecha que estan usando su correo de su caja postal o alguien ha aplicado por cambio de dirección con la oficina postal o ha usado su correo para cometer fraude de crédito o cuenta bancaria, notifique al servicio de Inspección de Correo Postal de US (En Maryland llame a la oficina de DC al 202-636-2300)
- Si alguien está usando su licencia de conducir como identificación para cheques malos, llame a la Administración de Motores y vehículos de Maryland (MVA) al 1-800-950-1682 para ver si usted califica a que le den un nuevo número. Verifique si un reemplazo de licencia ha sido emitido en su nombre y pida que pongan una alerta de fraude en su licencia.
- Consulte con un abogado si usted descubre que sus acreedores o agencia de crédito no trabajan con usted para retirar los cargos fraudulentos. El reparar su crédito puede tomar bastante tiempo, pero hay asistencia disponible para ayudarlo a tratar con este trauma.

Para información en abogados especializados en leyes del consumidor, usted puede llamar a "Lawyer Referral Service" de la Barra de asociación del Condado de Montgomery al 301-279-9100.

Bastante del material de este artículo fue obtenido de las publicaciones de la Oficina General de Abogados de Maryland y de la Comisión Federal de Comercio. Para evaluar su riesgo de convertirse en una víctima de robo de identidad visite www.consumer.gov/ncpw o www.consumer.gov/idtheft.

RECREATION

Takoma Park Tennis Clinic

Sign up for the Takoma Park Recreation Department Tennis Clinic. Topnotch instruction will be provided by a qualified Recreation Department staff member. Please bring your own racket and water bottle. In case of rain, classes will be made up, if possible. If you do not own a racket, the Recreation Department will provide one for the clinic. Five weeks.

Grades	1 - 3	
When:	Mondays, April 11 - May 9	
Time:	Session I:	3:45 - 4:45 p.m.
	Session II:	4:45 - 5:45 p.m.
Fee:	T.P. City Resident	\$15 per session
	Non-Resident	\$20 per session
Rain date:	May 16	

Grades 4 - 5		
When:	Wednesdays, April 13 - May 18	
Time:	Session I:	3:45 - 4:45 p.m.
	Session II:	4:45 - 5:45 p.m.
Fee:	T.P. City Resident	\$15 per session
	Non-Resident	\$20 per session
Rain date:	May 25	
No program April 20.		

Grades 6 - 8		
When:	Fridays, April 15 - May 13	
Time:	Session I:	3:45 - 4:45 p.m.
	Session II:	4:45 - 5:45 p.m.
Fee:	T.P. City Resident	\$15 per session
	Non-Resident	\$20 per session
Rain Date:	May 20	
Location:	Takoma Park Middle School Outdoor Courts, 7611 Piney Branch Road	

Takoma Park Tennis Tournament

Ages 10 and up

Lace up your Tretorn shoes and put on your finest izod lacoste right away. Enter the Takoma Park Tennis Open and compete for fabulous prizes. We all have our dreams...

When:	Saturday and Sunday, April 30 - May 1	
Location:	Takoma Park Middle School Courts	
Time:	To Be Announced (matches will start at 9 a.m. Saturday)	
Fee:	T.P. City Resident	\$15
	Non-Resident	\$20

Men's and Women's Divisions.

Tournaments may be canceled if sufficient registration is not met.

Age divisions:	10 - 13
	14 - 17
	Open (18 - 34)
	Adult* (35 - 54)
	Senior* (55 & up)

*These divisions may play ADULT or OPEN division

Takoma Park 6 v. 6 Outdoor Soccer Clinic

Grades 1 - 5

Learn the fundamentals of this beautiful game every Tuesday and Thursday at Hodges Field, behind Takoma Park Elementary. In case of nasty weather, this program will be canceled. Bring a water bottle, please. Five weeks.

When:	Tuesdays and Thursdays, April 12 - May 12	
Time:	3:45 - 4:45 p.m.	Grades 1 - 3
	4:45 - 5:45 p.m.	Grades 4 - 5
Location:	Takoma Park Elementary School, 7511 Holly Ave.	
Fee:	T.P. City Resident	\$15
	Non-Resident	\$20

No program April 21.

Adult Coed Softball League

Ages 16 and up

Have fun, play long ball and get some exercise all at the same time playing in the venerable Takoma Park Coed Softball League - it could be the glory of your times!

Team registration only

Sunday Doubleheader Schedule

Roster limit 25

Roster must consist of at least 50% T.P. residents to qualify for Resident entry fee. Registration limited to eight teams, on a first-come, first-serve basis. Registration closes Friday, April 1. Team captains will receive game information by Thursday, April 14. Coaches meeting on Friday, April 15 (7 p.m. Municipal Building). Individuals interested in joining a team should call the Recreation Department to be put on a list for teams that need extra players.

When:	Sundays, April 17 - July 17	
Time:	9 a.m. - 1 p.m.	
Location:	Ed Wilhelm, Lee Jordan and Green Meadows Fields	
Fee:	T.P. City Resident Team	\$450
	Non-Resident Team	\$550

Please submit full payment with team roster to the Recreation Department.

No program May 8, May 29 and July 3.

Double-elimination tournament July 10 and 17

Writing Your Own Script – Level II

April 6, 13, 20, 27

This workshop will build on the "Writing your own script - Level I" class. Write a script for a one-act play using the storylines and character descriptions from the previous workshop. Minimum 8, maximum - 20 students.

All classes are held from 4-6 p.m. in the Council Chambers of the Municipal Building, 7500 Maple Ave.

Teacher: Francesca Jandasek, illustrator, dance instructor, composer, musician.

Fee: \$40, resident and \$50 Non-resident for each 4 week workshop.

Kindermusik Village

Ages newborn - 1 ½

This class is for lap babies, crawlers and walkers accompanied by a parent or care giver. "In the Rhythm of My Day," the theme for this session of Kindermusik, encourages parents and care givers to sing and play with their babies as they go through their daily routines through a variety of songs, chants and movement. A required \$27.95 materials fee to be paid to instructor on the first day of class. Materials include a baby's literature book, baby's home journal, home CD, art banners, and storage/carry bag. Eight Weeks. Limited to twelve children, minimum of four.

When:	Tuesdays, April 5 - May 24	
Time:	1 - 1:45 p.m.	
Fee:	T.P. City Resident	\$80
	Non-Resident	\$85

En Garde! ...Fencing

Ages 9 & up

Learn foil techniques from former Olympian, Ms. Gitty Mohebban as she teaches the form and technique which catapulted her into the international spotlight of the Olympic Games. A \$30 materials fee is due to the instructor at the first session. Equipment provided includes: foil, mask, and jacket. Ten weeks.

When:	Tuesdays, April 12 - June 14	
Time:	Beginners I	5:30 - 6:30 p.m.
	Beginners II	6:30 - 7:30 p.m.
Location:	Takoma Park Elementary School Gym, 7511 Holly Ave.	
Fee:	T.P. City Resident	\$78
	Non-Resident	\$88

"Rock the Block Ward Party"

We are planning a fabulous day for you and your children including moon bounces, a traveling skate park, street hockey rink, playground games, contests, music, refreshments, giveaways and demonstrations by instructors of our programs! Call 301-891-7290 for more info.

Ward 5

Location: Sligo Creek Parkway at the end of Houston and Kennebec

When:	Sunday, May 1 (Rain date: May 8)
Time:	12:00 - 4:00 p.m.
Fee:	Free!

Please Note Corrected Date

Look for the Spring-Summer 2005
Program Guide,
Including Summer Camps
inserted in this issue!

White Water Rafting on

The Shenandoah River

(Class II-III Rapids) Ages 8 - 60*

Join the Takoma Park Recreation Department as it once again is ready to tame the mighty Shenandoah River. With the help of the expert river guides, Blue Ridge Outfitters, we will embark on the final section of the Potomac, in Harper's Ferry, WV. Class II and Class III white water runs. NO experience is needed. All necessary equipment will be supplied by the outfitters. Limited space. Trip length 6 miles: 3 - 4 hours depending upon river level.

When:	Sunday, April 17	
Departure:	The van will depart at 12:00 p.m. from the Municipal Bldg, 7500 Maple Ave.	
Return:	7:30 p.m. (Approximately)	
Fee:	T.P. City Resident	\$50
	Non-Resident	\$55

Registration Deadline: Friday, April 1

*All participants under the age of 18 must be accompanied by an adult.

Dungeons & Dragons

Grades 4 - 12

Use your imagination and storytelling ability in this classic fantasy role-playing game set in medieval times. Dave Burbank of course is your leader. He is your guide on this amazing journey using your mind. Five weeks.

When:	Thursdays, April 7 - May 12	
Time:	4 - 6 p.m.	
Location:	Takoma Park Municipal Bldg, 7500 Maple Ave.	
Fee:	T.P. City Resident	\$25
	Non-Resident	\$30

No class April 28.

Infant and Child CPR

16 and Up

Infant and Child CPR will teach you the skills needed to render aid in breathing and other emergencies involving infants and children until advanced medical personnel arrive and take over. Six total hours of class time are required for this course. Upon successful completion of class requirements, you will earn an American Red Cross Infant and Child CPR Certificate, good for one year. Instructor: Steve Cavallo

When:	Tuesday, April 12	12 - 3 p.m.
	Wednesday, April 13	10 a.m. -1 p.m.
Location:	Takoma Park Municipal Building, 7500 Maple Ave.	
Fee:	T.P. City Resident	\$25
	Non-Resident	\$30

Abs and Stretch Class

16 and Older

Are you interested in training your abdominal muscles? This class will help guide you on your journey to getting that ultimate six-pack! Beginner, intermediate and advance exercise circuit as the class progresses. Eight weeks.

Instructor: Amy Rutland

When:	Tuesdays & Thursdays, April 12 - June 2	
Time:	7 - 7:45 p.m.	
Location:	Takoma Park Recreation Center, 7315 New Hampshire Ave	
Fee:	T.P. City Resident	\$30
	Non-Resident	\$35

Yoga

16 and older

A class that practices a gentle flow focusing on increasing strength, flexibility and balance. All levels of practitioners are welcomed! Wear comfortable clothing. Co-Sponsored by the Montgomery County Department of Recreation. Ten weeks.

When:	Tuesdays, April 12 - June 14	
Time:	6 - 7 p.m.	
Location:	Takoma Park Recreation Center, 7315 New Hampshire Ave.	
Fee:	T.P. City Resident	\$60
	Non-Resident	\$65

Upcoming Fun Day Trip

Trip:	#10.	
Date:	Friday, April 8	
Time:	9 a.m. - 5 p.m.	
Cost:	MD Science and Public Works Museum	
	Baltimore, MD	
	T.P. City Resident	\$20
	Non-Resident	\$25



It's Not Too Late! Call for Poems for the 7th Favorite Poem Evening

The Seventh "Favorite Poem" evening in April, sponsored jointly by the English Department of Columbia Union College and the Takoma Park Maryland Library, will be celebrated on Thursday, April 21, at 7:30 p.m. Though traditionally held in the Council Chambers, this year's reading may be held in the Children's Room of the Library.

Members of the community are heartily invited to share with their neighbors and friends a poem that has been meaningful to them in their lives. Some of the previous Favorite Poem evenings can be viewed on videotape available to be borrowed from the Library.

If you are interested in participating in this year's event, choose a poem you have read and admired by a published poet (other than poems written by you

and your friends.) Please include an English translation for any poems written in a language other than English. Send a copy of the poem you have chosen, and your name, address, phone number and occupation (in generic terms) to Takoma Park Maryland Library, Attn: Ellen Arnold-Robbins or to the English Department, Attn: Wendy Ripley, Columbia Union College, 7600 Flower Ave., Takoma Park, MD 20912. You may also email your submissions to wripley@cuc.edu. Please submit your poems by April 8.

Questions may be directed to Wendy Ripley at 301-891-4068 or to Ellen Arnold-Robbins at 301-891-7259. As before, the Friends of the Takoma Park Maryland Library will sponsor a reception following the readings.

Socratic Inquiry : Yet Another Evening with Chris Phillips

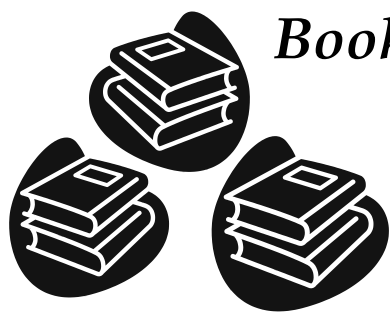
Chris Phillips, the peripatetic teacher of philosophy for children, returns to the Takoma Park Maryland Library on Monday, April 11 at 7:15 p.m. Phillips will lead adults and children ages 8 and up in an evening of philosophical discussion using the elenctic, or indirect mode of inquiry, that Socrates used.

Chris and his wife Cecilia have visited the Takoma Park Maryland Library on many occasions to lead these discussions. Each time there has been a new crowd with no way to anticipate which way the discussion will go! But each

adventure into philosophical inquiry has been fascinating.

Information about the Society for Philosophical Inquiry (SPI), founded by Chris and Cecilia Phillips, and the associated gatherings for philosophical discussions, can be found at www.philosopher.org. Phillips' most recent book, *Six Questions of Socrates*, has joined his previous books, *Socrates Café* and the children's book *The Philosophers' Club* in the collection of the Takoma Park Maryland Library.

Please join us!



Books for Gardeners

Thanks to the generosity of the Takoma Horticultural Club, the Library is ushering in spring with a colorful profusion of new gardening books for our patrons.

Taunton's Backyard Idea Book by Lee Anne White and the *Backyard Idea Book* by Jeni Webber are rich with illustrations and photographs, and give information on ground covers, driveways, paths and steps, foundation plantings, outdoor kitchens, fireplaces, pools and spas, sheds, storage and more.

The American Woodland Garden is a special treat, synthesizing ecology, philosophy, aesthetics and horticulture with thoughtful text and exquisite photographs. Author Rick Darke "makes a bold call to readers to observe and appreciate the essence of the deciduous forest and to celebrate it in designed landscapes."

In *Designing with Plants*, author Piet Oudolf draws on his extensive experience designing gardens and public parks throughout Europe, and his own

garden and nursery in Holland. Departing from the conventional colour-themed border, his approach gives as much emphasis to form, texture, light and movement. In chapters entitled "light," "harmony," "control," "the sublime" and "mysticism" he shows how to create and sustain a particular feeling or atmosphere with year-round plantings.

In *The Encyclopedia of Hydrangeas*, C. J. van Gelderin and D.M. van Gelderin capture the unparalleled beauty of more than 1,000 of these classic garden shrubs, known for their variety and durability, and demonstrate why they are now enjoying a renaissance in today's gardens.

The Color Encyclopedia of Hostas by Diana Grenfil and Michael Shadrack is a true reference resource, presenting a full description and color photograph for more than 750 plants, "equipping hosta lovers to judge aesthetic merit and to choose the right plant for a particular situation."

These titles are all available in the Library to consult or to borrow. We will let our readers know about more gardening books from the Takoma Horticultural Club, given through the Friends of the Library, in the Spring and Summer months ahead!

LIBRARY

Library Programs in April

A Socratic Evening with Chris Phillips

Adults and children 8 up

Monday, April 11, at 7:15 p.m. (see story)

7th Annual Favorite Poem Celebration

Thursday, April 21, 7:30 p.m. (see story)

Tentative location: Children's Room of the Library

Spring Session of the Twosies

Wednesdays at 10 a.m.

April 6, 13, 20, 27

For two-year-olds and parent/caregivers

Pre-registration required: group-size limited

Neighborhood Circle Time

Open to all preschoolers & their adults each Tuesday at 10 a.m.

Informal sing-alongs, poetry, finger games, and nursery tales, with participant-leadership welcomed.

All ages; no preregistration required!

Call 301-891-7259 to preregister for programs or for more information.



Photo by Debra Haidunen of the Recreation Department

Workers begin modifying the Library building as they begin building a linking structure between Library and Community Center.

New Swimming Pool Opens in Takoma, D.C.

A new swimming pool (actually two pools) have opened at Third and Van Buren streets, N.W. not far from Takoma Old Town. The two full-size indoor pools and a kiddie pool are on the site of a former D.C. outdoor pool.

The hours of operation are generally 6:30 a.m. to 9 p.m. Monday through Friday, Saturday and Sunday 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. The phone number for the pool manager is 202-576-9284, and for the overall recreation site 202-576-7114.

The fees for non-D.C. residents \$2 under age 6, \$3 ages 6-17, and \$5 for adults. You can save money by buying a 10-swim pass or season pass. The pool also offers classes.

Long Weekend Or Vacation?



Takoma Park Police will check your house daily for signs of suspicious activity. Call 301-270-1100 to register for a House Check or talk with your Beat Officer at 301-891-7101.

THE CRIME REPORT

The following report is excerpted from the blotter of the Takoma Park Police Department, prepared by Lt. Richard Cipperly. It is not intended to include all reported crimes and arrests.

Robberies

New Hampshire Ave., 7600 block: On Feb. 26 at 10:15 p.m., a strong-arm robbery occurred. An adult male was driving through a parking lot accompanied by an adult female and their child when a vehicle approached and blocked their path. A subject exited the vehicle and approached the victim who had also exited his vehicle. A second subject remained in the vehicle. The subject displayed what appeared to be a gold police badge and demanded to see the victim's identification. The victim handed his wallet to the subject believing he was a police officer. The suspect took the victim's wallet, returned to his vehicle and drove off with the victim's property. No weapons were displayed and no one was injured. The suspect vehicle is described as a Ford Expedition, 4-door, red in color, displaying possible North Carolina registration SXT-6885.

New Hampshire Ave., 7400 block: On Feb. 13 at 11:10 a.m., an attempted armed robbery occurred. The victim, an adult female who was at work, was approached by a subject who displayed a knife and made demands which were not understood by the victim. The suspect fled when the victim screamed. The victim was not injured and no property was taken.

University Blvd., 1300 block: On Feb. 22 at 2:34 a.m., an armed robbery occurred. An adult male was approached by two subjects in a black Jeep. The subjects exited the vehicle, produced handguns and demanded money. After taking the victim's property, the subjects fled in the vehicle. The victim was not injured.

Merrimack Drive., 900 block: On Feb. 28 at 5:30 a.m., an attempted armed robbery occurred. A subject asked an employee of the store for a pack of cigarettes and then tried unsuccessfully to snatch them out of the employee's hand. The subject implied he had a gun, then fled the scene. The victim was not injured and no property was taken.

Wabash Ave. and Flower Ave.: On Feb. 28 at 3:40 p.m., a strong-arm robbery occurred. The victim, an adult female, was walking when she was hit twice from behind by a subject. A second subject then grabbed her purse and both subjects fled on foot. The victim was not injured.

Auto and Related Theft

Elm Ave., 900 block: On Feb. 11 at 10 p.m., a 2002 Toyota Camry was stolen.

Garland Ave., 7300 block: Between Feb. 27 at 10:30 a.m. and Feb. 28 at 9:30 a.m., a 1987 Olds Cutlass was stolen.

Maple Ave., 7600 block: Between March 2 at 10:30 p.m. and March 3 at 7:15 a.m., a 1997 Honda Accord was stolen.

New Hampshire Ave., 6800 block: Between March 4 at 11 p.m. and March 5 at 11 a.m., a 1999 Toyota Camry was stolen.

New Hampshire Ave., 7600 block: On March 7, between 11 a.m. and 11:30 a.m., unknown suspected attempted unsuccessfully to steal an unlocked 1988 Toyota Camry. The ignition was damaged in the attempt.

Burglaries

Carroll Ave., 6900 block: Between Feb. 12 at 5 p.m. and Feb. 13 at 10 p.m., two attempted commercial burglaries occurred. The front door locks of two offices were damaged in the attempts.

Takoma Ave., 7600 block: Between Feb. 26 at 2 p.m. and Feb. 28 at 6 a.m., a commercial burglary occurred. A padlock to a storage trailer on a construction site was broken in order to gain entry. Property was taken.

Minter Place, 7200 block: On March 4, between 11:40 a.m. and 10:15 p.m., a residential burglary occurred. A glass pane of a basement door was broken in order to gain entry. Property was taken.

Flower Ave., 8200 block: On March 11, between 8 a.m. and 6:30 p.m., a residential burglary was attempted. The front door was damaged in the attempt.

Alleged Sex Offender Arrested After Chase

Takoma Park Police have charged an Adelphi man in relation to an assault Monday evening, March 21, in the 7000 block of Carroll Ave. The man was apprehended in the 7300 block of Willow Ave. within minutes of the emergency report.

The suspect has been charged with attempted first and second degree rape, attempted second and fourth degree sex offences, and second degree assault. The victim, from Washington, D.C., sustained non-life threatening injuries and declined treatment at a local hospital.

The woman was at her car, near the

intersection of Laurel and Carroll avenues, at about 8:10 p.m. when the man assaulted her, without speaking.

Pedestrians intervened and the man fled. While some witnesses aided the victim and called police, another followed the suspect, providing guidance to responding officers.

The suspect was chased from Park Avenue, through yards, to Willow Avenue where he was apprehended at about 8:20 p.m. The man, 26 years old of the 1800 block of Metzert Road, is being held in Montgomery County detention, without bond.

ARRESTS

Carroll Ave., 6900 block: On Feb. 12 at 1 p.m., an adult female was charged with two counts of passing a forged check, theft under \$500 and attempted theft under \$500.

Prince George's Ave. and New Hampshire Ave.: On Feb. 13 at 5:21 p.m., an adult male was charged with theft under \$500 and resisting arrest.

University Blvd., 1300 block: On Feb. 17 at 2:15 a.m., an adult male was charged with driving under the influence of alcohol.

Piney Branch Road, 7600 block: On Feb. 19 at 1:25 a.m., citations were issued to an adult male for driving under the influence of alcohol, exceeding the maximum speed and driving on a suspended license.

University Blvd., 1100 block: On Feb. 20 at 6:15 p.m., criminal citations were issued to an adult male for theft under \$500 and possession of CDS (drug) paraphernalia.

Maple Ave., 7500 block: On Feb. 21 at 6:30 a.m., an adult male was charged with attempted rape, 1st degree assault, 2nd degree assault and false imprisonment, for an assault that occurred in the 8100 block of Hammond Ave. the previous day.

Elm Ave., 300 block: On Feb. 23 at 10:26 p.m., an adult female and an adult male were charged with possession of CDS paraphernalia.

Flower Ave., 8600 block: On Feb. 26 at 12:48 a.m., an adult male was charged with driving under the influence of alcohol and failure to display headlights in unfavorable visibility conditions.

Flower Ave., 7600 block: On Feb. 27 at 4:20 a.m., an adult male was charged with driving under the influence of alcohol and driving without tires in safe operating conditions.

Hudson Ave., 700 block: On Feb. 28 at 6:45 p.m., a juvenile female was charged with 2nd degree assault.

Maple Ave., 7500 block: On Feb. 28 at 3:40 p.m., an adult male was served with an outstanding warrant charging him with 2nd degree assault, carrying a dangerous weapon with intent to injure and reckless endangerment stemming from an incident that occurred in Takoma Park in December 2003.

Maple Ave., 7500 block: On March 4 at 7:45 p.m., an adult male was arrested on an open warrant from Prince George's County charging him with a violation of probation and possession of CDS with intent to distribute.

Maple Ave., 7500 block: On March 7 at 1:19 p.m., an adult male was arrested on a warrant applied for by Takoma Park Police for a burglary that occurred on Nov. 27, 2004.

Lockney Ave., 7900 block: On March 9 at 11:38 a.m., an adult male was arrested for a violation of a protective order and 2nd degree assault.

New Hampshire Ave., 7200 block: On March 11 at 10:14 p.m., an adult male was charged with driving under the influence of alcohol, driving while impaired by alcohol and several traffic-related offenses.

Spruce Ave., 7200 block: On March 15 at 3:32 p.m., four juvenile males were arrested and charged with two counts of burglary each after officers responded to a call for a burglary in progress. The juveniles were also charged with a burglary committed on March 11 at the same address.

New Hampshire Ave., 7400 block: On March 15 at 10:24 p.m., an adult male was arrested on an open warrant from Montgomery County for failure to appear in court on a felony theft charge.

Carroll Ave., 7800 block: On March 17 at 11:50 a.m., an adult male was arrested on an open warrant for failure to appear in court on a charge of possession of CDS.



Sat., Mar. 19 Emergency Preparedness meeting.

PSCAC members and session organizers, Gayle Fisher-Stewart, Buddy Daniels, Andy Kelemen and Steve Cavallo watched from the sidelines (left). Asst. Chief Jim Resnick, MCFRS (at right below) spoke with a resident after his presentation.



Firehouse Report will be back next month. See article about Fire Chief Jimmy Jarboe on page 3.

Protection from Tag Theft

It only takes a minute to steal a car's license plate. More than 60 Takoma Park residents learned that last year when they found the tags taken from their vehicles. It doesn't take much longer to protect license plates from criminals who steal them. The cost to the owner of a stolen tag is the time to make the police report, a wonderful visit to MVA (Motor Vehicle Administration), and the \$20 replacement charge for the plates. The cost of protection is \$3 - \$10 for a simple set of screws called locking fasteners.

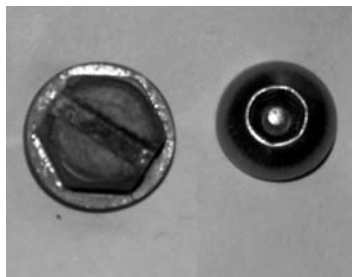


The screws come with a special tool which must be used to install and remove the fasteners. Although not a guarantee that tags won't be stolen, they are a deterrent, which might make potential thieves move on to easier prey.

"I can't believe how easy and fast it was to take the plates off," exclaimed Lakiya Coles, a police civilian employee, as the factory screws came out with a plain screwdriver. "I put the locking fasteners in just as easily and I feel a little more secure now."



Plates are stolen for a variety of reasons: for use on an unregistered vehicle, for use on a stolen vehicle, or to camouflage a vehicle used in other crimes. The fastening lockers used in these photos can be purchased from local auto parts shops. Similar items are also available via the Internet.



Protect Your Car From Crime

The 2004 Uniform Crime Report (UCR) crime figures in Takoma Park showed a second year of declining crime reports, after a near-record high in 2002. Despite that good news, everyone agrees that too much crime remains and would like to see a continued downward trend. Every resident can take property protection steps to contribute to lower property theft reports.

Although crimes against persons decreased 18 percent, the drop in property crime was just 10 percent. Theft of and from vehicles remains significant. The number of license plates stolen off parked vehicles increased by one-third.

Tips for property protection related to cars and trucks:

- Almost half of thefts from auto (valued at less than \$200) are the theft of license plates. A set of \$3 locking fasteners (screws) can deter these thefts.
- CD players and CDs are popular prey. Never leave portable players or discs visible in a vehicle.
- Among items stolen from cars last year were wallets, purses, construction tools, cell phones and laptop computers. Such valuables should never be left in unattended vehicles.
- Owners should record identifying information, including serial numbers, of items that cannot be removed from vehicles. This information can aid in recovery of stolen property and prosecution of the thieves.
- The city has steering wheel locking devices on sale for \$10, one-third the retail cost. These can be purchased at the Police Department and, when used, can deter auto theft.
- Report suspicious activity at 301-270-1100.

POLICE NEWS

Click It or Ticket! City Police Join Seatbelt Enforcement Drive

One person dies in a vehicle collision every 13 minutes nationwide. One is injured every 14 seconds, according to a federal transportation safety agency. In Maryland, 47 people die monthly in vehicle crashes. Seat belt use, however, not only could save lives, but also reduce injuries and associated health care costs.

The Takoma Park Police will join 90 other Maryland law enforcement agencies in a two-month campaign to encourage Maryland residents use seat belts and child safety restraints. The annual campaign of educational efforts and focused seatbelt enforcement seeks to raise compliance to 88 percent from the 85 percent reported last year.

Sgt. Kurt Gilbert, coordinator of this year's City campaign, invites businesses

and organizations to become involved through a variety of programs, such as sharing informational brochures with clients or employees. A special Pacesetters program will recognize an organization whose members demonstrate 88 percent use of seatbelts. Details on the Pacesetter program is available by calling him at 301-270-7124.

Motor vehicle accidents are the largest cause of death for children and young people. Teens are the least likely group to use seatbelts and have a higher collision rate for the miles driven. Unrestrained children are 10 times as likely to die in a collision than those properly belted in a seat. Most child safety seats are improperly installed, resulting in less protection.

Safety Restraint Laws, Guidelines & Fines

Drivers and front seat passengers must be buckled. Fine: \$25. Police may stop motorists for failure to wear a belt; no other reason needed. Children under 16 years old must be restrained. Fine: \$25. Children, six years or younger, or 40 pounds or less, must be in a safety seat or belt-positioning booster seat. Fine: \$48. More than one child in a single seatbelt. Fine: \$48.

Child Restraint Guidelines

Infants, up to one year or 20-22 pounds, in a rear-facing child seat. Children, older than one year and under 40 pounds, in a front-facing child seat. Children, six years or younger, or 40 pounds or less, must be in a safety seat or belt-positioning booster seat. Children may safely use an adult lap and shoulder belt system after they are at least 4'9" and 80 pounds.

Citizens Learn How to Survive The First 72 Hours of an Emergency

A presentation on "How to Survive the First 72 Hours," sponsored by the City's Public Safety Citizens Advisory Committee, brought residents together March 19 in the City Council chambers to consider how people can prepare themselves for emergency situations. (See photos, page 8.) Speakers from fire departments and the Red Cross urged residents to plan and prepare themselves as individuals and families to meet their own basic needs during the early hours of a disaster, whether natural or manmade.

Tom Horne of the Takoma Park Volunteer Fire Department said people should know basics, such as how to turn off a residence's utilities (water, gas and electric) and should keep a functioning communication device. The ideal is a National Weather Service radio, but a battery-operated AM/FM radio is acceptable.

Assistant Chief Jim Resnick of the Montgomery County Fire Rescue Service explained the workings of the Emergency Management Group, but emphasized the

importance of citizen readiness. He encouraged community groups, such as churches, to have emergency supplies ready for "sheltering in place" during a disaster. An example would be maintaining bottled water supplies that could be used occasionally at non-emergency events but then replaced so the church maintains a fresh useable stock.

The time span of 72 hours was identified as the period in which individuals and communities might have to function independently in a serious emergency before governmental assistance could be expected.

Gayle Fisher-Stewart of the advisory committee also encouraged families to make their own readiness plans, including evacuation kits.

Residents can also receive a free publication, "Are You Ready? A Guide to Citizen Preparedness" through the FEMA Publications warehouse (1-800-480-2520). This comprehensive book details preparation for natural and manmade disasters.

Columbia Union College

Continued from page 1

community will be able to get a card and use the library and the computer labs," Steward said.

Similarly, the community would benefit from the proposed Performing Arts Center which would feature a 600-seat concert hall, a 250-seat recital hall and a 125-seat "black box" theater. The center would be home for the college's instrumental and choral groups, as well as the academic departments of music, communication and journalism and documentary filmmaking.

That college administrators want citizens to utilize and benefit from the facilities isn't surprising given the degree of cooperation and input the local community has had in the planning process.

In the spring of 2002 college planners began working with a citizens advisory committee to discuss the college's vision and development plans.

"The citizens committee really talked through the process with Columbia Union officials and identified some areas of concern. The college used that input to come up with their plans," said Suzanne Ludlow, community and government liaison for the City of Takoma Park.

Among the concerns were issues such as underground parking and creating a green edge along the perimeter of campus, concerns the college addresses in its design plan. The proposed plans call for a green edge around the campus and underground parking for approximately 400 cars. The underground parking would replace the current above-ground parking lots.

Andrew Strongin is a member of Sensible Growth, a neighborhood association that has been wrestling for years with the expansion plans of nearby Washington Adventist Hospital. Strongin was one of the original advisory committee members. When the initial process began, Strongin lived on Greenwood Ave., adjacent to the softball field on campus. He has since moved to another part of

Takoma Park, but he praised college officials' approach to the committee and surrounding community.

"I had a conversation with the college president [Randal Wisbey] early in the process and liked what he wanted to do," Strongin said. "I found them to be acting in good faith and with the best of intentions."

Keith Berner, president of the Between the Creeks Neighborhood Association, which represents the area housing the college, agreed.

"They [college officials] have done a great job including us in the community in the conversation," Berner said. "We in the community feel good about the college."

Both Berner and Strongin stressed that the college's plans don't exist in a vacuum, however. This is especially true in regard to the proposed expansion of Washington Adventist Hospital, which could well have a substantial effect on the area.

"What happens with the hospital's plans will certainly affect how much development the community can undertake," Berner said.

A key difference between the hospital and the college is that CUC's plans are aimed largely at replacing previously existing buildings and would not dwarf other structures in the neighborhood. The hospital's plans have called for a 1,000-space parking structure and a six-story office building. Those plans are still being negotiated.

"Sensible Growth has not taken a position on CUC," said Strongin, "But, we think it's important that the development of the hospital and the college be considered together in terms of the overall impact."

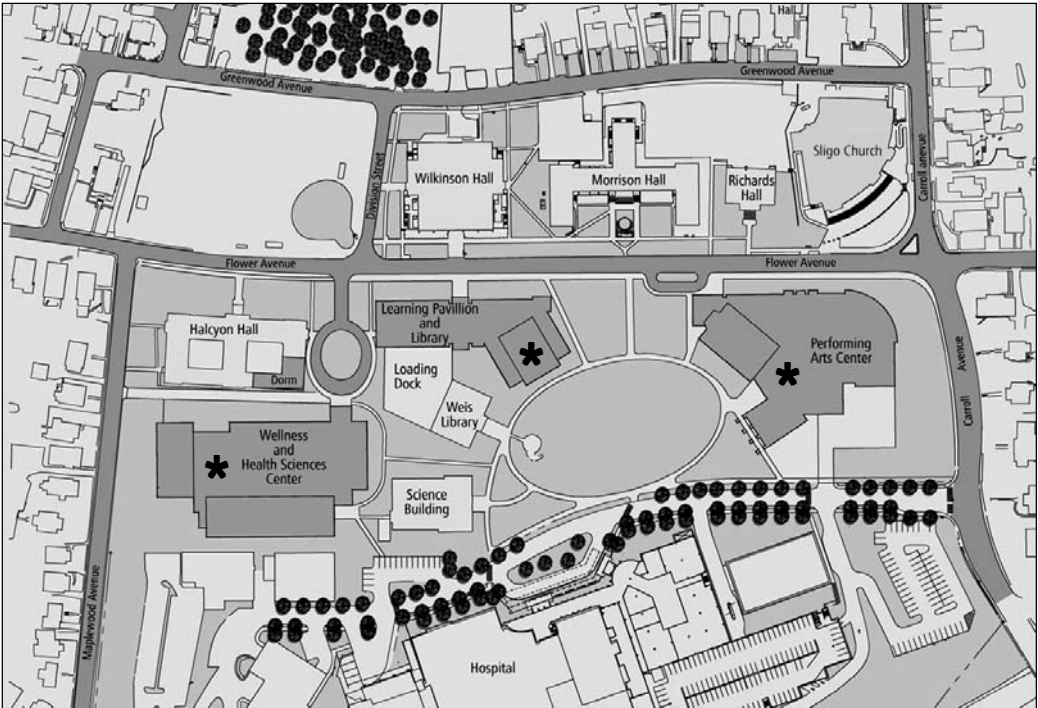
"Current community reaction has to do with what the hospital does," said Berner. "If things come to a nice win-win situation with the hospital and the college contin-

ues to communicate with the community as they have, I'm optimistic about their plans and community reaction."

While formal plans haven't been and won't be introduced until the college secures the funding for the project, President Wisbey briefed the Takoma Park City Council on the development plans Oct. 24, 2004. (Information on CUC's plans can be viewed on the City's Web

Steward told the *Newsletter*, "We're hoping to have 50 percent of the necessary pledges for funding by this summer for the Library and Learning Pavilion, the first facility we need to build."

At that point, the college will submit updated studies regarding stormwater, forestation, traffic and core testing for the library's parking garage. Steward adds that CUC will not begin building until it



Partial campus site plan by Ellerbe Becket

Three proposed buildings on CUC campus are marked with asterisks (*).

site at www.cityoftakomapark.org; go to "Current issues," then to "Columbia Union College Development Plans.")

The project cost is estimated to be \$50-60 million, with each facility estimated to cost between \$17 million and \$20 million. Construction is expected to be in phases as the college acquires the money to build each building. The college received a matching grant of \$2.25 million from the Maryland State Legislature towards the cost of the Learning Pavilion and Library, which is scheduled to be the first building constructed. Steward said the school began its "silent phase" of fundraising in 2002 and has currently secured between 50 and 75 percent of the funds for the library.

has raised all the necessary funds, which could be well into the future.

Once they have secured the money, the college will then have to submit formal plans, said Ludlow.

"Because they are an educational institution, they don't have to go through as many reviews, but nevertheless, we will still take a fairly rigorous look at their plans," she said. "We advised them that as soon as they know their plans to start the process."

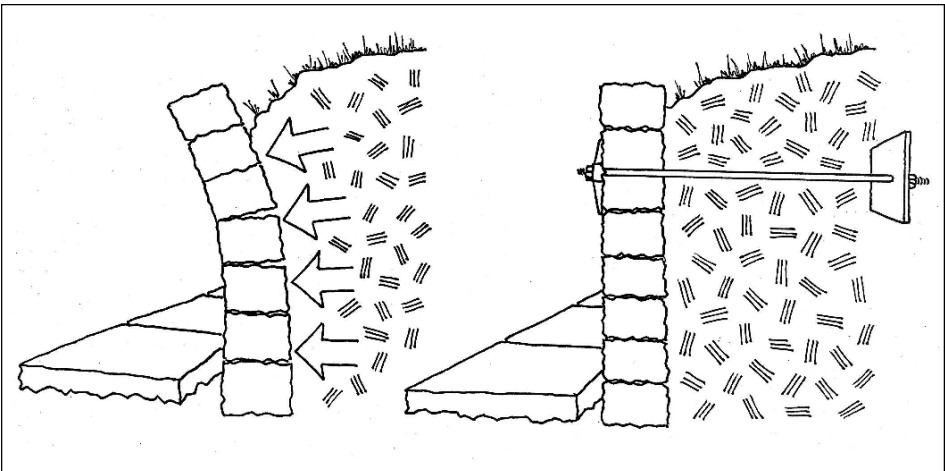
The City Council recommended reconstituting a citizens advisory committee once the college is ready to pursue the actual design.

Something There Is That Doesn't Love a (Retaining) Wall

By Walt Rave
Tool Librarian

Here and there around Takoma Park can be seen retaining walls slowly giving way to what is called "frost heave." This is a process where winter rain seeps down through the soil, usually by day, and freezes and expands by night. The expansion caused by freezing is so powerful that it can crush the hull of a ship. Occurring over and over, year after year, this freeze expansion can take a perfectly vertical wall and cause it to lean out over the sidewalk and/or crack apart. In either case, replacement is required. It is possible that you may be able to get by without any wall but the majority of retaining walls in this town are needed.

So how do you surmount this problem? One thing that helps is to provide



Drawing by Walt Rave

drain holes to allow excess water to escape out onto the sidewalk, although this may not be the entire answer. The most effective approach would be in the use of a "dead man." This consists of an

object located some distance away from the wall and buried deep in the dirt that the wall is retaining. There is a connection between it and the wall, usually in the form of a long steel rod; however, a

chain or pipe could also be used.

On the outside of the wall a metal plate is used to dissipate the pressure over a larger area than a regular washer would provide. In the old days, they used an iron star. Perhaps now you remember seeing them. The buried anchor or weight can be a steel plate of at least a square foot and of adequate thickness not to be deformed by the pull of the wall that it is resisting. The material of this weight or anchor might also be aluminum, iron, or masonry.

Effectiveness requires that it be positioned to best oppose its attempted migration through the ground that it is buried in. If it is done to do that, then your wall will never move. Several of these may be required depending on the length of the wall. An interval of six to ten feet should be optimal.

Local Filmmaker's Documentary To Screen at Arlington Festival

Takoma Park documentary filmmaker Liz Smith will have her first film screened at this year's Rosebud Film and Video Festival in Arlington, Va., on April 9 and 10. "Sipay Khorlo: The Wheel of Life" follows a Buddhist monk as he practices the art of Tibetan sand painting with the residents of Helena, Montana. Smith, 25, directed this film as part of her MFA in Science and Natural History Filmmaking at Montana State University. Taking a fellowship as a producer at the NASA Goddard Space Flight Center, Smith moved to Takoma Park last April and,

she says, doesn't plan on leaving anytime soon. On April 17, Arlington Independent Media will announce the five finalists and best of show at the awards ceremony at the Clarendon Ballroom in Arlington.

"Sipay Khorlo" is one of 20 films in the festival. It will be shown at the Rosslyn Spectrum Theater Saturday, April 9 at 3:43 p.m. and Sunday, April 10 at 2:54 p.m. The full program is shown on both days of the festival. For more information on the Rosebud festival, go to www.rosebudact.org.

'Fishing,' an Original Play At Montgomery College

The original production of "Fishing," a play written, produced, directed and designed by Montgomery College Professor Perry T. Schwartz, will premiere on Friday, April 8, at 8 p.m. in the Black Box Theatre at Montgomery College's Takoma Park campus. The show will also run April 9, 15, 16, 22 and 23 at 8 p.m., as well as April 10 and 17 at 2 p.m. Admission is free and open to the public, but reservations are required.

"Fishing" is a bittersweet story of friendship adapted from the short story, "The Story I'm Pitching," by Robert Day. Incorporated into this play will be a multimedia production, featuring projected slides, video shot and edited by filmmaker Edmund Baxter, and original music by local composer Roger Coleman. To make reservations for "Fishing," call 301-650-1368.

Multimedia Art Exhibit At Montgomery College

An exhibit by interdisciplinary artist Sophia Isajiw, entitled "Take This Longing from My Tongue," will be on display in the Gallery of the Pavilion of Fine Arts at Montgomery College's Takoma Park Campus from April 4 to May 7. The installation uses wood, bronze, glass, rope, audio, incense and snail shells to explore insatiable longings, invisible desires and mourned losses.

The artist will discuss her work on Monday, April 4 at 1 p.m. in the Student Lounge of The Commons building on the Takoma Park campus. An opening reception will follow in the Gallery of the Pavilion of Fine Arts from 2-3 p.m. Gallery hours are Monday-Friday 7:30 a.m.-4 p.m. For more information, call 301-650-1368.

IMT Presents American and Welsh Folk Music Traditions

The Institute of Musical Traditions, the presenting arm of Takoma Park's House of Musical Traditions, presents two concerts in the folk tradition in April.

On April 11, folksinger and social historian Joe Glazer will appear with Mary Cliff, WETA-FM's longtime Saturday night host and purveyor of the folk tradition. Glazer has been collecting, composing, recording and singing songs of workers, protest, politics and social commentary for more than 50 years. With more than 30 albums, CDs and cassettes to his credit, Joe's latest recording, "The Music of American Politics," highlights American political history as told through its campaign songs. Mary Cliff will guide listeners through a retrospective of his music, while coaxing Joe to tell the stories behind his fascinating life.

On April 18, IMT will host Robin Huw Bowen, with Moch Pryderi - two voices of the little-heard Welsh musical tradition. Robin Huw Bowen's in-

fluence on the worlds of Welsh folk music and harping has been far-reaching. Recognized internationally as the foremost performer of the Welsh triple harp, he has been a member of the Welsh folk groups Mabsant, Cusan Tan and Crasdan and, since 1983, has toured North America, Australia and Europe as a solo performer.

Moch Pryderi is Welsh for "Pryderi's Pigs," which explains why one of the band's CDs is titled "Dancing in the Pigsty." Since 1998, the Virginia-based Welsh group has been performing the exciting and haunting Brythonic music of Wales and Brittany, with occasional excursions into the other Celtic nations of Galicia, Cornwall, Ireland and Scotland.

Both concerts will be 7:30 p.m. at Saint Mark Presbyterian Church, 10701 Old Georgetown Road, Rockville. The Joe Glazer concert is \$12 in advance, \$15 at the door; the Welsh concert is \$14/\$17. For more information, contact 301-754-3611 or www.imtfolk.org.

Takoma Park City TV Events in April 2005

City TV leaps into spring with more new performances for you to enjoy. Two Jazz Band Brawl tapes are now playing: the first features this year's winner, Post-Modern Blues. The second program features Flutevision, and Halley Shoenberg Jazz Quartet. Also airing in April is the Folkfest Showcase. Rock with Street Festival musicians with newly released footage of the Billy Coulter Band, plus Melanie Mason.

Be sure to tune in to Channel 13 to catch all the action from the YES League basketball championship game.

You can watch replays of "How To Survive: The First 72 Hours in an Emergency," sponsored by the Public Safety Citizens Advisory Committee on March 19. Replay times may be found on the Cable page of the City Web site. City TV will be busy in April covering a various local events, including Arbor Day.

Takoma Snapshots in April includes the following segments:

- Community Oriented Policing: Raccoons and Rabies
- National Crime Awareness Month

Visit our Web site at www.cityoftakomapark.org/cable to access show listings and times and other specific programming information.

Community and neighborhood groups may submit non-commercial notices regarding meetings or special events to City TV for inclusion on the bulletin board.

All Council meetings and Snapshots episodes are available for patron checkout at the Takoma Park Maryland Library. VHS tapes of these shows, as well as other Takoma Park City TV events, may be purchased for \$15 (pickup) or \$18 (mail). Some programs are now available in DVD. Call 301-891-7118 or send an email to cabletv@takomagov.org for more information.

Takoma Park City TV April 2005 Programming Schedule

	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday	Sunday
7:00 AM	Community Bulletin Board	Community Bulletin Board	Takoma Park City TV Local Events	Community Bulletin Board	Takoma Snapshots	Community Bulletin Board	Community Bulletin Board
8:00 AM	Takoma Park Snapshots	PreSchool Power!		Takoma Park Snapshots	Community Bulletin Board	Takoma Park Folk Festival	Takoma Park Snapshots
9:00 AM	Takoma Park Folk Festival	Takoma Park Snapshots	National Gallery of Art	Coffeehouse	NASA Programming		Haiti a Suivre
10:00 AM		Coffeehouse	Takoma Park City Council Meeting (Replay)	Music da camera	Government Focus	Takoma Park Snapshots	Coffeehouse
11:00 AM	Takoma Park City TV Local Events	CaribNation		Takoma Park Folk Festival	National Gallery of Art	Takoma Park City TV Local Events	Media Watch on Hunger
NOON		Community Bulletin Board			Takoma Park City Council Meeting (Replay)		
1:00 PM	Earth Café	Takoma Park City TV Local Events	Takoma Park Folk Festival	Takoma Park City TV Local Events		Media Watch on Hunger	Takoma Park Folk Festival
2:00 PM	Media Watch on Hunger						
3:00 PM	Takoma Park Snapshots	NASA Programming		Music da camera			Takoma Park City TV Local Events
4:00 PM	PreSchool Power		Takoma Park Snapshots	Coffeehouse	Takoma Park Folk Festival	Haiti a Suivre	
5:00 PM	Music da camera	Takoma Park Snapshots	Government Focus	Haiti a Suivre		Takoma Snapshots	
5:30 PM	Chinese News						
6:00 PM		Community Bulletin Board	Chinese News	Community Bulletin Board	Takoma Park Snapshots	Community Bulletin Board	Community Bulletin Board
7:00 PM		National Gallery of Art		Takoma Park Snapshots	Takoma Park City TV Local Events	Coffeehouse	Takoma Park Snapshots
7:30 PM	Takoma Park City Council Meeting (LIVE)	Coffeehouse	Takoma Park City Council Meeting (Replay)	Takoma Park Folk Festival		Takoma Park City TV Local Events	Takoma Park Folk Festival
8:00 PM		Takoma Park City TV Local Events			Takoma Park Folk Festival		
9:00 PM				Haiti a Suivre		Haiti a Suivre	Coffeehouse
10:00 PM		CaribNation		Takoma Park City TV Special Events	Coffeehouse	Takoma Park Folk Festival	Takoma Park City TV Local Events
11:00 PM	Takoma Park Snapshots	NASA Programming	Takoma Park Snapshots		Haiti a Suivre		
12:00 Midnight							

Programming subject to change without notice.

Takoma Park City TV
7500 Maple Avenue
Takoma Park, MD 20912
301-891-7118

Email: cabletv@takomagov.org
Web: www.cityoftakomapark.org/cable

Property Tax Help May Be on the Way

Continued from page 1

homeowner's income in relation to the amount of the property tax he or she owes in a given year. Once you've applied to the state for these tax credits, the state will automatically send you the form the next year.

By filling out the state form, you are automatically applying for the county and City tax rebates as well. Just send the form to the state; they'll take care of the rest.

The eligibility rules are a bit complicated, but here's some useful information. The highest income you can have and still qualify for the Montgomery County program is \$34,000 per year. For the state and City program, it's \$26,000.

Additional criteria for the property tax credit include (1) the homeowner must own and reside in the property as a principal residence, and (2) the homeowner's net worth (exclusive of the house) must not exceed \$200,000. An additional limitation to the program is that only the taxes resulting from the first \$150,000 of assessed valuation of your house are eligible for the tax credit.



Photo courtesy of Historic Takoma, Inc.

Property tax rebates can help low-income or fixed-income homeowners hold onto their homes.

The application form explains how the state computes the tax credit. The instructions provide an example: If your combined household income is \$16,000, you see from the chart that your tax limit is \$480. You would be eligible to receive a credit for any property taxes above \$480. If your actual property tax bill were \$990, you would receive a tax credit in the amount of \$510 from the state, which is the difference between the actual tax bill and the tax limit. The county tax for low-income property owners uses a different system, which is based on percentage reductions from your total tax bill. In the case stated above, you would receive a \$230 tax rebate from the county. From Takoma Park, you would receive a tax rebate of 30

percent of the \$510 state rebate, which is \$153. This leaves you paying a total of \$97 in property taxes to the state, county, and City from an original bill of \$990, which is a considerable reduction. However, if your house is assessed at above \$150,000, you receive the rebate on only the assessed value up to that amount. Above \$150,000, you are responsible for that portion of

your property taxes without any credits.

Once completed, you need only submit one form, but you must submit it to the state, not to Takoma Park City offices. Once you send in the form to Maryland, the information is then passed on to the county and to the City of Takoma Park for applicable tax credits. State, county and City taxes must be paid in full, and you will receive tax rebates mailed to your home if you qualify.

The City will be looking at ways to expand the program, and Montgomery County is too. Bruce Williams, councilmember from Ward 3, said back in September, "I'd like to pass this [ordinance] and look at various strategies for increasing the effectiveness of what we can do in this area. I think these are folks who really need the help, and it's the right thing to do to try and keep, in many cases, longtime neighbors and residents of the city in the city and be able to afford it."

A possible area for expansion may be raising the limit for reimbursable assessed value above \$150,000. Many single-family homes in Takoma Park are worth much more than that now, leading to higher property taxes that may be hard to pay for people on fixed incomes.

During January discussions of Community Center financing, Porter again spoke in favor of having the City lobby to raise the reimbursable home value over \$150,000, as well as putting more City funds into the tax rebate program.

One person who may benefit from the rebate program is Takoma Park resident Dorothy Barnes, who agreed to be interviewed for this article. Barnes, 81, is also the historian for Historic Takoma. She was actually born in her Takoma Park home. Barnes said, "If they keep raising real estate taxes, I won't have enough money to pay them!" She receives a government retirement check and a small Social Security check each month.

Residents with specific questions about the program can contact Cathy Waters, City Clerk, at 301-891-7206.

Participate in the City's 'Stencil-A-Drain' Campaign

By Ali Khalilian, P.E.
City Engineer

Stencil-A-Drain seeks to curb stormwater pollution through hands-on service learning techniques like storm drain stenciling. Storm drain stenciling is the act of labeling storm drain inlets with messages that remind people not to dump anything down the drain. It is a worthwhile educational program designed for 5th through 12th grade students, adults, local youth groups and community or church groups.

Volunteers can help us reach our goal of reaching more than 600 storm drain inlets citywide.

Where does the pollution come from?

Storm drain inlets, located near curbside and streets, act as a conduit to local waterways, including Sligo Creek, the Anacostia River, the Potomac, and eventually the Chesapeake Bay. Unlike household drains that discharge directly to a wastewater treatment plant, storm drains travel underground and funnel directly to our waterways untreated. And when water is contaminated with pollutants, it creates stormwater pollution, which seriously impacts our natural water resources.

What are catch basins or storm drain inlets?

Catch basins and storm drain inlets are curbside receptacles whose sole function is to catch surface water runoff from rainfall and deliver it to the storm drain system, where it eventually flows to local creeks and rivers.

What is storm drain stenciling?

Painting a message on to the inlet, reminding people not to put trash or pour liquid like oil into the inlet. Volunteer help is vital for the Stormwater Management Program to meet its goals of stenciling all storm drain inlets in the city.

How can I help reduce pollution?

Stenciling storm drain inlets is a great way for concerned citizens to participate in helping reduce stormwater pollution. By stenciling a message on neighborhood storm drain inlets that flow ultimately into the Chesapeake Bay, you can help to educate others that only rain should go down the storm drain. For more information about the stenciling program, contact the Department of Public Works at 301-891-7633 or the City engineer, Ali Khalilian.

Is storm drain stenciling difficult?

No. In fact it's easy. The City of Takoma Park provides stenciling kits to individuals and groups who want to participate. These kits include all supplies necessary to stencil storm drains, such as stencils, paint, maps and gloves.

How many people can participate?

Is there an age limit?

Stenciling teams must consist of two or more people, with at least one adult over 18 years of age. No minor less than ten years of age will be allowed to participate unless supervised by his/her parent or legal guardian.

What's in the stenciling kit?

Stencil kit contains:
Five gallon bucket to hold equipment
Stencil
Whisk broom
Traffic cone
Roll of masking tape
Large plastic trash bag
Cans of spray paint
Gloves
Safety vests
Dust masks
Safety goggles
Paper towels for cleanup



Student-stenciled sewer drains adjacent to Takoma Park Middle School.



Photos by Robert Smalls, Jr.

