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 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 community 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.

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Save Retaining Walls from “Frost Heave”
**The “Stencil-A-Drain” Campaign**

**Never doubt that a small group of thoughtful, committed citizens can change the world.**
Margaret Mead (1901-1978)

High Property Taxes? Low Income? Rebates Can Help

By Diana Hoover

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.

As of much, but when the City’s rebate is added to similar state and county programs, it can make a difference.

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 when 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.

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/hc.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

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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

City Council Briefs

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, Elich, 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, Elich, Mizeur, Seamens, Williams)

The Consent Agenda was adopted (VOTING FOR: Porter, Austin-Lane, Barry, Elich, Mizeur, Seamens, Williams)

A. Resolution 2005-8, appointing Linda Gunter to the Noise Control Board.

B. Resolution 2005-9, appointing Emily Schabarum 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, Elich, Mizeur, Seamens, Williams)

Committee Vacancies

Arts and Humanities Commission. The Arts and Humanities Commission serves in an official advisory role to the City Council on 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 email to CathyW@takomagov.org. Further information is available by contacting the City Clerk at 301-891-7206.

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, yellow-poplar, indigobush and pawpaw.

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.

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 Brett.L@takomagov.org.

So mark your calendars and bring your kids!

Proposed Regulation Regarding Control Of Noxious Growth 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.

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 613 feet wide and that buildings 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://econs.dc.gov/services/zoning/schedule/info/PHN04_16_01-24-05.pdf.

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.
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 (herein after “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:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Current Year CPI-U</th>
<th>Previous Year CPI-U</th>
<th>Percent Change</th>
<th>Index Point Change</th>
<th>Equals Rent Stabilization Allowance</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>March 2004</td>
<td>March 2003</td>
<td>118.1</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>May 2004</td>
<td>May 2003</td>
<td>118.9</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>July 2004</td>
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<td>120.2</td>
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<tr>
<td>September 2004</td>
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<td>120.8</td>
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<td>November 2004</td>
<td>November 2003</td>
<td>120.9</td>
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<tr>
<td>January 2005</td>
<td>January 2004</td>
<td>121.3</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Average Current Year CPI-U</strong></td>
<td><strong>Average Previous Year CPI-U</strong></td>
<td><strong>3.5</strong></td>
<td><strong>Index Point Change</strong></td>
<td><strong>Equals Rent Stabilization Allowance</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>120.0</td>
<td></td>
<td>2.1% (July 1, 2005 - June 30, 2006)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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@takomapark.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 I 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 committee 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 delegation on possible funding. But, she cautioned, “There are so few dollars this year. We won’t know until the last weekend of the session, April 11.”

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

– Bob Guidin

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
- Cottage 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 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.

¿Quieres 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 un costo. El club está disponible para quienes por primera vez compran una casa y es de seguro que los participantes obtendrán 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?
- Aumente su Capacidad de Comprar una Casa.
- En Búsqueda de una Casa.

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–Tenant Agreement. It is also the State Legislature's way of specifying a landlord’s legal responsibility to provide a tenant with a suitable living environment.

Several factors are relevant in determining whether a lease–tenant agreement constitutes a defective tenancy situation.

1. Existent or Imminent Danger: This is the foremost concern and includes conditions that are hazardous to life or limb. If a landlord has reason to believe that a defective tenancy exists in the rental unit or in 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 for 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). 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 replace the stove immediately; (2) possibly seeking a reimburse ment 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. To become a victim of identity theft is a crime that can be prosecuted, but the person committing the theft is difficult to catch. 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:

- Close your mail and credit card statements immediately. If you receive 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 include account information, social security numbers, etc. Never throw out credit card promotions or first-shipping 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 mail that asks you for your 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.
- Close 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 statements when you pay 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, you would be handy 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’s important to act quickly, so you can minimize the damage to your credit report.

- Report in writing and call the fraud units of the three credit reporting companies about the theft of your credit cards or accounts. 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 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 filled 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 for 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, MD 203-9719.

Most of the information for this article was obtained from the Maryland Law 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 on 1-877-FTC-HELP.

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

Prevent El Robo de Identidad

Por Linda Walker y traducido por Sofía 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 débito para hacer una nueva cuenta con el banco con una línea de crédito, habrían tenido varias tarjetas de crédito en varias tiendas, habrían hecho llamadas de teléfono celulares y tenían desafortunadamente esta historia continua. Eran las palabras de una víctima de robo de identidad. Cuando un ladronzón obtenía y usaba su nombre, número de seguro social, número de cuenta de tarjeta de crédito, número de cuenta bancaria o cualquier otra información personal están cometiendo fraude. Tomó años el reparar el daño que fue causado en las cuentas personales de la victima.

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 protección, es difícil de rastrear a la persona que lo comete. “The Federal Trade Commission” (la Comisión de Comercio) ha reportado que el número de actividades de robo de identidad desde el 2012 al 2013 aumentó 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 pueden usar su tarjeta de débito para cambiar de correo postal para usar mal las cuentas financieras.
- Proteja su correo usando cajones de correo para el correo. Sugiero que suja una caja de colección de correo para el correo que sale.
- Desempeña papeles importantes que incluyan información de su cuenta, número de seguro social, etc. Nunca tire ofertas de tarjetas de crédito sin antes desmembrar las ofertas. Ellas pueden ser recogidas y usadas por los rateros quienes usarán su información personal para obtener nuevas tarjetas de crédito.
- Nunca responda a llamadas de ofertas de ventas o por correo electrónico que pida información de su cuenta bancaria o número de seguro social cuando haga transacciones en la red, escoja compañías de correo seguro y busque que muestren que las transacciones están protegidas a través de transacciones seguras.
- Actualice los parches de seguridad que su sistema de operación que su computadora ofrece y sistemas de paro de anuncio de ventas para detener a los piratas de la red.
- Aliste anualmente sus transacciones de negocios cuando use su tarjeta de crédito o tarjeta de pago. Un lugar de negocio puede depender de la honestidad de un empleado para tomar sus pagos.

Por lo tanto, 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 escriba en el nombre de fraude de las tres compañías de reporte de crédito, el robo de su tarjetas o números de identificación. Por favor verifique que su nombre y número de teléfono en este caso sean conservado y cancelado en la oficina de fraude. Ud. puede pedir que se declare el robo de identidad que diga que usted quiere que lo contacten por teléfono si alguien pide alguna aplicación de crédito.
- Reporte la actividad fraudulenta a su departamento de policía local. Obtenga el reporte policial y deténgase a reportar a sus acreedores o otros quienes puedan necesitar esta verificación.
- Reporte esta actividad a su institución financiera así su tarjeta de crédito o cuenta bancaria que ha sido roban. Cancele su cuenta de débito y de cheque y póngalo un alto al pago de cargos en cualquier cuenta que sea 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 Ud. sospecha que está usando su de su caja postal o correo electrónico que pida información de su cuenta bancaria o número de seguro social en una oficina postal para el correo su caja de correo postal para el correo que sale.
- 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 Ud. sospecha que está usando su de su caja postal o correo electrónico que pida información de su cuenta bancaria o número de seguro social en una oficina postal para el correo su caja de correo postal para el correo que sale.
- 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.
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- 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.
**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 25
  - No program April 20.

**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 20
- Location: Takoma Park Middle School Outdoor Courts, 7611 Pinchey Road

**Takoma Park Tennis Tournament**

**Ages 10 and up**
Lace up your Tretorn shoes and put on your finest izod lacoste and movement. A required $27.95 materials fee to be paid 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 is due to the instructor at the first session. Equipment provided includes: foil, mask, and storage/carry bag. Eight Weeks. Limited to twelve children, minimum of four.

- Age divisions: 10 - 13, 14 - 17
- Open (18 - 34)
- Adult* (35 - 54)
- Open (18 - 34)
- Non-Resident $20

-Men’s and Women’s Divisions.

Tournaments may be canceled if sufficient registration is not met.

**Takoma Park 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, 7711 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.

- **Team registration only**
- **Sunday Double Header Schedule**
- **Roster limit 25**

Roster must consist of at least 50 T.P. residents to qualify for Residency 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 (5 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 4:45 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 - 3½**

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 is due to the instructor at the first session. Equipment provided includes: foil, mask, 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 bounce, a traveling skate park, street hockey rink, playground games, contests, music, refreshments, giveaways and demonstrations (limited by instructors of our programs) Call 301-891-7290 for more info.

**Ward**

**Please Note Corrected Date**

**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!
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 (generic terms) to Takoma Park Maryland Library, Attn: Ellen Arnold-Robbins or to the English Department, Attn: Wendy Riple, Columbia Union College, 7600 Flower Ave., Takoma Park, MD 20912. You may also email your submissions to wripple@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 Cafe 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 color-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 beauty of more than 1,000 of these classic garden shrubs, known for their

Open 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.

Society for Philosophical Inquiry
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.

**Robbyries**

**New Hampshire Ave., 7600 block:** 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 suspect. The victim fell and the suspect fled. The victim was not injured.

**Auto and Related Theft**

**Elm Ave., 900 block:** On Feb. 11 at 10 a.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.

**New Hampshire Ave., 7600 block:** On March 2 at 10:30 p.m. and March 3 at 7:15 a.m., a 1997 Honda Accord was stolen.

**New Hampshire Ave., 4600 block:** Between March 4 at 11 p.m. and March 5 at 11 a.m., a 1999 Toyota Camry was stolen.

**University Blvd., 600 block:** On March 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 Avenue, the previous day.

**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 2:45 p.m. and Feb. 28 at 6:30 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., 7600 block:** On March 11, between 8:45 a.m. and 10:15 p.m., a residential burglary occurred. 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 was charged with attempted first and second degree rape, attempted second and fourth degree sexual offenses, 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 9:20 p.m. The man, 28 years old, was 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.

**Pinetree 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, exceed 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 Avenue, the previous day.

**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.

**University Blvd., 1300 block:** On Feb. 20 at 6:15 p.m., 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 Avenue, the previous day.

**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 2:45 p.m. and Feb. 28 at 6:30 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., 7600 block:** On March 11, between 8:45 a.m. and 10:15 p.m., a residential burglary occurred. The front door was damaged in the attempt.

**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 took place March 19, at 2:30 p.m., in the 7000 block of Spring Grove Road.

**Elm Ave., 900 block:** On Feb. 11 at 10 a.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.

**New Hampshire Ave., 7600 block:** On March 2 at 10:30 p.m. and March 3 at 7:15 a.m., a 1997 Honda Accord was stolen.

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**Flower Ave., 7600 block:** On March 11, between 8:45 a.m. and 10:15 p.m., a residential burglary was attempted. The front door was damaged in the attempt.

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.

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. Seatbelt 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 seat belt 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 are 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 Home 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.

Resident 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.

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 its 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 resisting 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 continuing 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 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.

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

By Wall 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 drain holes to allow excess water to escape out of 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 the 2005 Arlington 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 any time 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.

‘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.

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. 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, folk singer and social historian Joe Glazer will appear with Mary Cliff, WETA-FM’s longtime Saturday night host and purveyor of the Welsh triple harp, at the Takoma Park Community College’s Folk Festival. Glazer will be accompanied on the harp by a new musician, his wife, who has studied the instrument. The Glazers’ performance will be followed by a slide presentation showing the history and geography of Wales. Joe Glazer concert is $12 in advance, $15 at the door; the Welsh concert is free.

On April 20, IMT will host Robin Huw Bowen, with Moch Pryderi – two voices of the Welsh music and harping tradition. Robin Huw Bowen’s influence 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 Mabans, Cusan Tan and Crasdant and, since 1983, has toured North America, Australia and Europe as a solo performer.

Moch Pryderi is Welsh for “Pryderi’s Pig,” 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.

Concerts will be 7:30 p.m. at Saint Mary Presbyterian Church, 10701 Old Georgetown Road, Rockville. The Joe Glazer concert is $12 in advance, $15 at the door; the Welsh concert is free. For more information, call 301-754-3611 or www.imtfolk.org.
Property Tax Help May Be on the Way

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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 $900, 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 if 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.