Funds Sought for Gym Construction

By Virginia Myers Kelly

Takoma Park is getting used to the ins and outs of the new community center – which door leads where? Can you direct me to the Azalea Room? And how about the elevator labels: B=1, 1=2, 2=3? The computer learning center is busy with seniors navigating log-ons and web sites, the art room fragrant with clay and pastels, city staff is settled in to new offices and the police are consolidated on the first floor. The transformation of the old administrative offices into a dance studio, teen room and a game room is underway.

But when might the city have the much-touted gym? The controversial gymnasium – left off the initial phase of construction because of expense – is still right there on the center’s master plan, snuggled into the northwest corner of the building near Grant Avenue, but several steps must be taken before it becomes a sure thing. City Council has not formally voted to pursue construction, though members did authorize $13,310 for technical studies in September. The studies include soil borings to indicate viability of construction on that portion of the site and underground utility location surveys. City manager Barbara Matthews says she expects results any day now. Also, construction drawings have not yet been prepared.

But the biggest hurdle is funding. To address this largest stumbling block, State Delegate Peter Franchot and Senator Ida Ruben, with co-sponsor delegates Sheila Hixon and Margaret Ruhle, last month introduced a $1 million bond bill at the state level. The bill, a kind of matching grant, is one of many coming from all over the state considered by the legislature each year, and involves hearings that are expected to take place in early March. Decisions about bond money are made in May.

Community and government liaison Suzanne Ludlow says it is rare for projects to get full funding through bond bills, and she doesn’t expect the full $1 million dollars to come through. In fact, legislators have been introducing bond bills on a regular basis; Franchot remembers 11 years ago securing $650,000 for the gym in the firehouse, but it was structurally unsound and the money was never used. So far, the city has received $2,350,000 for the community center from the state, says Ludlow.

Most of it that has been spent, she adds, and there is no money at this time to approach the challenge of home ownership.

Enter the condo conversion. Here’s how it works: a landlord decides to maximize revenue by selling units to tenants, or to anyone else who wants to buy on the currently hot housing market. With single family houses or townhouses in Montgomery County averaging $429,000 last October, anything that sells for less is likely to be snapped up quickly. Tenants who can’t afford market prices – in one recent conversion, one-bedroom units were going for $190,000 to $200,000 – are out of luck, and out of a home, though there is some protection in terms of the time tenants have to move out and possible moving costs paid by the owner.

In another scenario, much better for tenants, the landlord sells the entire building. The Tenant Opportunity to Purchase Law then requires that tenants be notified, and they get first right to match a contract on the property.
Committee Vacancies
Committee on the Environment, the seven-member board is charged with assisting and advising the City on environmental issues; conducting citizen surveys on environmental issues; convening and providing advice on environmental issues; convening citizen surveys on environmental issues; and conducting public hearings on environmental issues. For further information, contact the City Clerk at 301-891-7267.

Notice of Public Hearing - Traffic Calming Request - 6400 Block of Sligo Mill Road
The City Council will hold a public hearing on Monday, March 13, 2006, at 7:45 p.m. (or as soon thereafter as possible) on the request to install one or more speed humps or other traffic calming devices on the 6400 block of Sligo Mill Road. The hearing will take place in the Community Center Auditorium (Council Chambers), 7500 Maple Avenue, Takoma Park, MD 20912, and will be made part of the public record. For further information, contact the City Clerk at 301-891-7267 or e-mail JessieC@takomagov.org.

Notice of Public Hearing - Traffic Calming Request - Allegheny Avenue
The City Council will hold a public hearing on Monday, March 13, 2006, at 7:45 p.m. (or as soon thereafter as possible) on the proposed installation of one or more speed humps or other traffic calming devices on the 6400 Block of Allegheny Avenue. The hearing will take place in the Community Center Auditorium (Council Chambers), 7500 Maple Avenue, Takoma Park, MD 20912, and will be made part of the public record. For further information, contact the City Clerk at 301-891-7267 or e-mail JessieC@takomagov.org.

Notice of Public Hearing on Proposed Charter Amendment
Pursuant to Section 502 (c) of the City Charter, the Council of the City of Takoma Park will hold a public hearing to consider a Charter amendment providing for an instant runoff voting system to be used in City elections for Mayor and Councilmembers and permitting greater flexibility in the City’s nominating caucus and the date Councilmembers are duly sworn and take office.

Place of Hearing: Auditorium (Council Chambers), Takoma Park Community Center, 7500 Maple Avenue, Takoma Park, MD 20912
Date and Time: March 27, 7-4:55 p.m.

All interested persons should attend the public hearing. Written comments may also be submitted to the City Clerk, 7500 Maple Avenue, Takoma Park, MD 20912, or sent via e-mail to clerk@takomagov.org. The full text of the proposed amendment will be posted to the City’s web page by March 8, 2006.

C. Resolution 2006-5, Appointing
Maxine Hillary to the Montgomery County Cable Advisory Commission
January 23, 2006 - Regular Meeting
Resolution 2006-6, Recognizing CASA of Maryland, was adopted (VOTING FOR: Porter, Austin-Lane, Barry, Clay, Williams; ABSENT: Elrich, Seamens).

Resolution 2006-7, Recognizing the Spanish Catholic Center, was adopted (VOTING FOR: Porter, Austin-Lane, Barry, Clay, Elrich, Seamens, Williams).

Resolution 2006-8, Supporting the Abolition of the Death Penalty in Maryland (VOTING FOR: Porter, Austin-Lane, Barry, Clay, Elrich, Seamens, Williams).

Ordinance 2006-1, Amending the Takoma Park Code, Ch. 2, to Reflect the Name of the Municipal Complex as the “Takoma Park Community Center - Sam Abbott Citizens’ Center,” was adopted by roll-call vote (VOTING FOR: Porter, Austin-Lane, Barry, Clay, Williams; ABSENT: Elrich, Seamens).

Resolution 2006-2, Appointing Melanie Fosnaught to the Tree Commission, was adopted (VOTING FOR: Porter, Austin-Lane, Barry, Clay, Williams; ABSENT: Elrich, Seamens).

The Consent Agenda was adopted (VOTING FOR: Porter, Austin-Lane, Barry, Clay, Williams; ABSENT: Elrich, Seamens).

A. Resolution 2006-3, Appointing Enoch J. Bevel to the Commission on Landlord-Tenant Affairs, was adopted (VOTING FOR: Porter, Austin-Lane, Barry, Clay, Williams; ABSENT: Elrich, Seamens).

B. Resolution 2006-4, Appointing Patricia Murphy to the Ethics Commission, was adopted (VOTING FOR: Porter, Austin-Lane, Barry, Clay, Elrich, Seamens, Williams).

For updated schedule information, check the City’s web page at http://www.takomagov.org. For more information contact the City Clerk, 301-891-7267.

Additional information, call Jesse Carpenter at 301-891-7267.
Is a three-month deposit legal?

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

A tenant contacted the Mailbox and provided the following scenario: She had moved into a rental unit approximately two months before but had not received a written lease. She had provided the landlord with three months’ security deposit. The tenant also questioned if the landlord had a rental license, if the monthly rent she was paying was legal and what her rights are regarding a notice to vacate she received from the landlord.

Answer: The Housing Mailbox is always pleased to address questions encompassing a myriad of issues as this one does. The Takoma Park Landlord-Tenant Law at Section 6.15.160 describes the requirements of a written lease. The city law does not preclude landlords and tenants from entering into verbal leases though such arrangements are not recommended since there is no written document which describes the responsibilities of the parties nor provides written confirmation of the amount of the security deposit. Where the lease is verbal and has an effective date subsequent to April 2003 the presumption is that it is a one year lease (although should the tenant wish to vacate it may be viewed as a month-to-month lease) and the tenant is responsible for maintaining documentation of the amount of security deposit that is paid.

The amount of the security deposit that was allegedly paid in this situation exceeds the two months maximum amount noted at 6.1.120(b)(1) of the city law, which incorporates the state security deposit law by reference. The tenant should request that the landlord return one of the three months security deposit and/or file a complaint with the Commission on Landlord-Tenant Affairs (COLTA) if the landlord refuses.

Whether the landlord has a valid rental license is a question for the city’s Department of Housing License Unit (301-891-7234). Landlords who have complied with city rental housing license requirements have a license issued for an annually renewable one year period of time.

The tenant’s question regarding whether she is paying a legal rental amount may be generally answered by determining if the rental unit is subject to the city’s Rent Stabilization Law (RSL). This law is applicable to all rental property owners who own two or more separate rental units in the city. If this landlord’s property is covered by the RSL, he/she can only charge the amount permitted by the law. If the RSL does not apply, Unit (301-891-7216) should be contacted regarding this part of the tenant’s question for further information.

Regarding the Notice to Vacate, the verbal lease as noted earlier is presumed to establish a one year tenancy. Pursuant to the city’s Landlord-Tenant Law, tenants having a one-year lease may only receive a one-month written notice to vacate if the tenant has breached a lease term. Since in this situation the tenant does not have a written lease, the landlord will have difficulty providing the required written advisement to the tenant regarding what specific lease term(s) has/have been broken. It should be noted that at the end of her 12-month (annual) lease term the landlord may issue this tenant a two-month, no-reason, no-fault Notice to Vacate. A landlord can give a two-month (no-reason/no-fault) written Notice to Vacate, but it cannot be given except at the end of the one-year term.

The tenant might request assistance from the Landlord-Tenant Unit which, with the tenant’s permission, could contact the landlord regarding the Notice to Vacate and other city Landlord-Tenant Law issues raised in this scenario.

City tenants and landlords having questions regarding leases, security deposits and notices to vacate should direct them to the Housing Department’s Landlord-Tenant Unit by calling 301-891-7215.

Metro Development Workshop

Washington Metropolitan Area Transit Authority (WMATA) is sponsoring an all-day planning workshop for the community from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. Saturday, March 4 at Trinity Episcopal Church, 7005 Piney Branch Road, NW, in Washington, DC.

All are welcome to attend and lunch will be provided.

The workshop will involve examining the area around the Takoma Metro that is being considered for townhouse development, and will give people an opportunity to talk about issues and concerns regarding what should happen at the site. That feedback will be shared with the WMATA board.

To attend, RSVP to 202-962-2677 or skubby@wmata.com.

Maintenance Technician - Performs various routine maintenance work such as mowing grass, repairing pot holes, painting curbs, plowing snow. Req HS diploma or GED and six months to one year related exp. and valid driver’s license. Salary Range $12.69 - $14.28 per hour negotiable depending on qualifications. Excellent Benefits. Position open until filled. Send completed city application and resume to HR, City of Takoma Park 7500 Maple Ave, Takoma Park, MD 20912 or fax 301-270-8794. Equal opportunity employer.

Motor Equipment Operator - Operates heavy equipment such as: backhoe, trash truck, bobcat, tub grinder and operates other duties as assigned. Req HS diploma or GED and three to six months related exp. and Valid CDL (Class B).Salary Range $15.11 - $17.01 per hour negotiable depending on qualifications. Excellent Benefits. Position open until filled. Send completed city application and resume to HR, City of Takoma Park 7500 Maple Ave, Takoma Park, MD 20912 or fax 301-270-8794. Equal opportunity employer.

New Poetry Series Underway

Poets have a new venue in Takoma Park, with the newly launched Takoma Park Poetry Series. The city’s poet laureate, Don Berger, and poet Kaye Meza Lee kicked off the monthly series, which Berger organized, on Feb. 23 with a reading in the third floor atrium of the community center. Next will be Brian Gilmore and Kathleen O’Toole, on Thursday, March 16 at 7 p.m. The monthly readings, each set for 7 p.m., are listed below. Poets were culled from a pool of applicants who sent their work to Berger for selection. A reception will follow each reading. For more information, contact the Arts and Humanities Commission, abe@takomagov.org or 301-891-7224.

Thursday, March 16

Brian Gilmore and Kathleen O’Toole

Thursday, April 6

Greta Ehrig and John Peacock

Thursday, May 18

Open Reading: features anyone who would like to read.
Will include Martin FitzPatrick, Terra Greene, T.J. Mathews, Annette Dexter Sawyer

Thursday, June 8

Anne Dykers and Alan Rubenstein

Thursday, July 13

Open Reading, including Robert Ginsberg
Volunteer to Stencil-A-Drain

By Ali Khalilian, P.E.

Spring is right around the corner and we are ready to do it again. Thanks to volunteers participating in our “Stencil-A-Drain” campaign, last year we were able to stencil more than 150 drain inlet tops. Positive messages such as, “Drains to Chesapeake Bay” accompanied instructional ones like, “Do Not Dump.” We have kits available for a new round of stenciling. Please help protect water resources.

Volunteer!

Stencil-A-Drain seeks to curb stormwater pollution through hands-on service learning techniques. The stenciling labels storm drain inlets with messages that remind people where the storm run off winds up and urges them not to dump anything down the drain that is not storm run off. Designed for 5th through 12th grade students, adults, local youth groups, and community or church groups, this is a worthwhile, educational program.

Volunteers can help us reach our goal of stenciling all storm drain inlets citywide. In addition, volunteers help distribute flyers describing the nature, source and fate of household pollutants and tips for helping to reduce the same. Call DPW or the city engineer at 301-891-7620 to volunteer.

Where does the pollution come from?

Storm drain inlets, located near curbside and streets, act as a conduit to local waterways: Sligo Creek, the Anacostia River and 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 run-off from rainfall and deliver it to the storm drain system, where it eventually flows to Sligo Creek.

How can you 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 neighboring 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.

Storm drain stenciling is not difficult. The City of Takoma Park provides stencil kits and plastic stencils to groups who want to participate. Groups of two more more people, with at least one adult over 18 years of age, are given kits that include all supplies necessary: stencils, paint, brushes, gloves, and more. No minor less than ten years of age will be allowed to participate unless supervised by his/her parent or legal guardian.

Funds sought

Continued from front page

For the gym, with the exception of the promised $750,000 from Adventist HealthCare, an amount expected to come to the city in yearly increments over five years, once plans are finalized.

County politicians are pushing for funding as well. Ludlow says County Councilmember Steve Silverman is asking the county executive to include $500,000 for the gym in his proposed budget, due out in mid-March. Even if the executive does not include it, residents should lobby county councilmembers to insert the budget as they consider and eventually approve it. City staff is also combing criteria for federal funds, but has not yet found a grant or program that matches the gym project.

The total cost of the gym is estimated by city manager Matthews to be $2.5 million to $3 million, based on discussions with James F. Knott Construction about the prior gym design—but she says she’d want to have more work done for a more accurate estimate.

Meanwhile, kids play pickup basketball in chilly winter parks and the recreation department organizes activities in heavily booked gyms at the elementary and middle schools and in the small recreation center on New Hampshire Avenue. Local kids who play in county and other leagues use facilities all over the county and in Prince George’s County and D.C. One 12-year-old basketball player, Blake

Leaf Mulch Delivery Available

The Public Works Department has leaf mulch available for pick up and delivery again this year. The mulch is made by grinding leaves collected each fall in the City’s vacuum leaf collection program. The mulch can be used as a soil amendment or a top dressing around plants and trees. Mulch is available at the Public Works Yard, 31 Oswego Avenue. You can self-load mulch at any time. Loading of trucks is done for a fee and scheduled by calling 301-891-7633. The City also delivers mulch to your home for the prices listed below.

Mulch prices:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Price</th>
<th>Outside the City</th>
<th>Price</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>3 yards delivered</td>
<td>$45</td>
<td>3 yards delivered</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7 yards delivered</td>
<td>$65</td>
<td>7 yards delivered</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10 yards delivered</td>
<td>$65</td>
<td>10 yards delivered</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Your dump truck can also be loaded for a fee of $20 for a small truck and $30 for a large truck. Call Public Works to schedule loading at 301-891-7633.
Montgomery College Continues Expansion

The sounds of construction are competing with the roar of metro trains as the building continues on the Takoma Park campus of Montgomery College. First the Health Sciences Center, facing Georgia Avenue in Silver Spring, opened in January 2004, with 98,000 square feet for the college’s health sciences programs, business training center, and a health center operated by Holy Cross Hospital. The long-awaited pedestrian bridge across the train tracks connects the building to the Takoma Park campus.

Still under construction is the Student Services Center, slated to open this year at New York Avenue and Fenton. It includes admissions, registration, computer labs, a cafeteria and bookstore. An art gallery, studios and offices will go into the converted Giant bakery at King Street and Georgia Avenue. It is expected to open in 2007, and is designed to serve the community as well as the college.

Finally, a Cultural Arts Center will be installed at Georgia and East West Highway some time in 2008. This center will include a 500-seat theater, another theater with 125 seats, and a glass-walled dance studio. It, too, will invite community use, possibly providing a draw that will bookend Silver Spring, with the downtown area at the other end of the commercial district. Groundbreaking on this last phase of the expansion is expected late this year.

Condo conundrum

Continued from front page

They. In turn can partner with a developer to convert, which often leads to better insider prices significantly lower than the market rate. According to Linda Walker, Takoma Park’s affordable housing coordinator, the average insider price for a one-bedroom unit is $130,000; new units in Silver Spring currently sell for $300,000 to $400,000.

The only hitch to the insider price story is that once the renter buys, he or she can later sell at market price. “It’s affordable for the first time condo owner,” explains Walker, “but then the price once sold is not going to attract a low-to-moderate-income person.”

The conclusion, for those anxious to keep housing affordable, might be to keep rentals available and to develop more programs to maintain affordable condo units over time.

At Hampshire Towers, 7333 and 7401 New Hampshire Avenue, tenants have the best of both worlds: half the units will be rental, the other half owner. Tenants, notified their building was on the market, are working to expand those protections to a larger percentage of tenants.

Finally, a Cultural Arts Center will be installed at Georgia and East West Highway some time in 2008. This center will include a 500-seat theater, another theater with 125 seats, and a glass-walled dance studio. It, too, will invite community use, possibly providing a draw that will bookend Silver Spring, with the downtown area at the other end of the commercial district. Groundbreaking on this last phase of the expansion is expected late this year.

Regulating conversion

At Hampshire Towers, renters can stay—but others are not so lucky. Walker sees plenty of renters desperate to find a new place when a landlord decides to convert. Some protections are in place for low-income elderly or disabled people, but they are limited.

Currently, extended leases are available by law for 20 percent of the occupied units in the building; only those who meet the income limitation of 80 percent of the median income for the local area and are elderly or handicapped qualify, and the rule does not apply unless the building has 10 or more units.

Montgomery County legislators, with support from the City Council, are working to expand those protections to a larger percentage of tenants. Suzanne Ludlow, Takoma Park’s community and government liaison, says tenant veto of a condo conversion is another consideration: in Washington, D.C., if 51 percent of the tenants don’t want the conversion, it cannot occur. To address these and other issues, five bills have been introduced in the state house and senate (see http://www.takomaparkmd.gov/clerk/agenda/items/2006/022106-6.pdf for brief descriptions).

The city council voted to support Rent Stabilization Discussions

City Council is continuing its review of rent stabilization. Residents may participate in the process by listening in and/or commenting.

• Monday, March 6
  Worksession, continued discussion of capital improvement rent increase petitions (tentative)

• Monday, March 20
  Worksession, hardship rent increase petitions (tentative)

• Monday, March 27
  Public Hearing, opportunity to comment on current rent stabilization ordinance (tentative)

• Monday, April 3
  Worksession, discussion of comments received at the public hearing (tentative)

• Monday, April 10
  Worksession, wrap-up discussion; provide direction to staff (tentative)
Recreation Department Updates:

Our offices are temporarily located behind the new community center in Trailer #1 and Trailer #2. Trailer #1 is where you can register for all programs and receive information. Office hours are 8:30 a.m.-5 p.m. Phone number is 301-891-7290. Bear with us as we excitedly await the completion of phase two! Drop off: Checks or money orders only - NO CASH - Front desk of Community Center from 5-10 p.m. M-F, 10 a.m.-6 p.m. Saturday.

Montessori Morning 1

Ages 1-2/2

You’ve heard about the benefits of the Montessori approach for your young children, now experience it! A certified Montessori teacher with several years’ experience will guide exploration of sensory, fine motor, pre-reading, pre-writing, and pre-math Montessori materials and activities. Parent education materials will be provided with each session. There is a $20 materials fee paid to the instructor the first day of class. Maximum 10, minimum 4. Six weeks. Instructor Alicia Sar.

When: Thursdays, March 9 - April 20
Time: 9:45 - 10:45 a.m.
Location: Azalea Room - T. P. Community Center, 7500 Maple Avenue
Fee: T.P. City Resident $60
Non-Resident $70
No class April 13.

Montessori Morning 2

Ages 2-3

Experience the benefits of the Montessori approach as a certified Montessori teacher guides exploration of sensory, fine motor, pre-reading, pre-writing, and pre-math Montessori activities. Parent education materials will be provided at each session. There is a $20 materials fee paid to the instructor the first day of class. Maximum 10, minimum four. Six weeks. Instructor Kristen Sandier-DeSilva.

When: Thursdays, March 9 - April 20
Time: 11 a.m. - 12 noon
Location: Azalea Room - T. Community Center, 7500 Maple Avenue
Fee: T.P. City Resident $60
Non-Resident $70
No class April 13.

Arts Alive

Ages 1 1/2 - 3 1/2

Discover exciting ways to bring your local museums alive. An educator with several years of experience in museum-based early childhood classrooms will guide you and your child through fun hands-on museum related activities that will enhance your child’s creativity and imagination. Three metro-accessible museum trips are planned to explore topics such as animals, transportation, and dance. Parent materials will be provided each session. There is a $10 materials fee due to the instructor the first day of class. Maximum 10, minimum four. Six weeks. Instructor Kirsten Kraft.

When: Fridays, March 10 - April 21
OR Saturdays, March 11 - April 22
Time: 10 - 11 a.m.
Location: Rose Room - T. P. Community Center, 7500 Maple Avenue
Fee: T.P. City Resident $60/session
Non-Resident $70/session
No class April 14 and 15.

Fun Day Program

Grades K-5

The Fun Day Program offers exciting field trips on scheduled whole day closings and activities on scheduled half day closings. Participants will meet at the Community Center, 7500 Maple Avenue. Trips, activities, and performers are subject to change. They may also be cancelled if minimum registration is not met. Children must bring a lunch. Space is limited, sign up early.

When: Friday, March 31
Location: African American History Museum and National Aquarium
Time: 9 a.m. - 5 p.m.
Fee: T.P. City Resident $20
Non-Resident $25

Belly Dancing

Ages 18 and up

Come learn the foundations of this ancient Middle Eastern art form. Suitable for all shapes and sizes, belly dance provides an aerobic workout that’s gentle on the body and exhilarating for the spirit! No previous dance experience necessary. Dance instructor will be flexible to tie around your hips. This dance may be performed barefoot, or with soft dance shoes, if desired. Taught by director of local dance troupes, Maya Taahira. Maximum 25, minimum six. Eight weeks. For more information about belly dancing e-mail instructor at mayat@bodylovebellydance.com.

When: Tuesdays, March 7 - April 25
Time: 7:30 - 8:30 p.m.
Location: Auditorium - T. P. Community Center, 7500 Maple Avenue
Fee: T.P. City Resident $80
Non-Resident $90

Design Your Own Poncho

Adult

If you know how to knit and purl you can design. Choose your yarn, we’ll discuss and design stylish, stitch patterns, sizing, gauge and learn about fitting and finishing. Suitable for beginners who can cast on, knit and purl. Materials not included. Three weeks. Instructor Amy O’Neill Houck.

When: Saturdays, March 18 - April 1
Time: 10:30 a.m. - 12:30 p.m.
Location: Forsythia Room - T. P. Community Center, 7500 Maple Avenue
Fee: T.P. City Resident $70
Non-Resident $80

Drawing and Portfolio Development

Ages 16 - 18

This is for those students interested in improving their drawing from observation. The subjects of landscape, portrait, self portrait, figure and interior will be offered on a rotating basis. Katie Dell Kaufman will instruct in graphite, charcoal, conte crayon, oil and chalk pastels and will give demonstrations, critique and individual instruction appropriately to each student’s level. All materials will be provided for students and a materials/ model fee of $35 paid directly to the instructor, will be due on the first day of class. Maximum of 12, minimum of six. Six weeks.

When: Thursdays, March 9 - April 20
Location: Art Room - T. P. Community Center, 7500 Maple Avenue
Time: 3 - 5:30 p.m.
Fee: T.P. City Resident $170
Non-Resident $190
No class April 13.

Drawing

Ages 16 and up

The sessions will alternate between black and white materials (charcoal, conte crayon, black and white pastels) and color materials (colored pencils, oil pastels, and chalk pastels.) Subject matter will include figure, portrait, self portrait, still life, and interior.

This class is suitable for beginners as well as more experienced students. Katie Dell Kaufman will provide demonstrations, individualized instruction, group critiques and all drawing materials. Materials/model fee of $35, paid directly to the instructor, will be due on the first day of class. Maximum 12, minimum seven. Six weeks.

When: Thursdays, March 9 - April 20
Location: Art Room - T. P. Community Center, 7500 Maple Avenue
Time: Noon - 2:30 p.m.
Fee: T.P. City Resident $200
Non-Resident $220
No class April 13.

Annual Egg Hunt 2005

Ages 2 and under; 3 - 4; 5-6; 7 - 8

Look over there! Oh look, there’s another one. Wow, there are so many eggs. They are everywhere! Come join us for an exciting eggstravaganza. Bring your baskets and a great eye. There are prizes in those eggs.

When: Saturday, April 8
(Rain Date: April 15)
Time: 11 a.m. Sharp
Location: Ed Wilhelm Field, 7510 Maple Avenue
(behind Piney Branch Elementary)
Fee: Free

Drawing, Painting, and Collage

Ages 12 - 15

This class will include instruction in black and white and color drawing from observation, watercolor painting and collage. The class offerings will be rotating group of assignments - different each term - and students will use line, shape, and materials techniques. Materials/model fee of $25, paid directly to the instructor, will be due on the first day of class. Maximum of 12, minimum of six. Six weeks. Instructor: Katie Dell Kaufman.

When: Wednesdays, March 8 - April 19
Location: Art Room - T. P. Community Center, 7500 Maple Avenue
Time: 3 - 4:30 p.m.
Fee: T.P. City Resident $125
Non-Resident $135

No class April 12.

Looking for Donations for Music/Videolab

The Rec. Dept. seeking donations for music/videolab.

Portable piano keyboards

Camcorders (analog or digital) blank camcorder tapes or DVD-RW discs

Please call Becky at 301-891-7290.

Annual Egg Hunt 2005

Ages 2 and under; 3 - 4; 5-6; 7 - 8

Look over there! Oh look, there’s another one. Wow, there are so many eggs. They are everywhere! Come join us for an exciting eggstravaganza. Bring your baskets and a great eye. There are prizes in those eggs.

When: Saturday, April 8
(Rain Date: April 15)
Time: 11 a.m. Sharp
Location: Ed Wilhelm Field, 7510 Maple Avenue
(behind Piney Branch Elementary)
Fee: Free

Program Assistants and Leaders for Afternoon Addition, needed for after school program. PT role, responsible for assisting in planning and conducting programs in art, sports, drama and other activities for children. Applicant must be a high school graduate.

Experience with children and CPR and First Aid cert. a plus. $8.10/hr. depending upon experience.

Takoma Park Summer Camps are looking for kid-loving, fun individuals to work this summer. PT role, responsible for assisting in planning, assisting and conducting programs in art, sports, drama and other activities for children. Experience with children and CPR and First Aid cert. a plus. $6.10/hr. up to 40/hr/week depending upon experience.

To apply: Application 301-270-8784 or send it to 7500 Maple Avenue, Takoma Park, MD 20912. Attn.: Recreation Department. Deadline: open until filled.
**Book Club Gathering**

The next meeting of the Friends of the Library bi-monthly book club will be held on Wednesday, April 5, at 7:30 p.m. in the Takoma Park Community Center.

All are invited to participate in a discussion of the novel *Housekeeping* by Marilynne Robinson. It tells the story of Ruth and her younger sister Lucille—both grow up haplessly, first under the care of their competent grandmother, then of two comically bumbling great-aunts, and finally of Sylvie, the eccentric and remote sister of their dead mother. The family house is in the small town of Fingerbone in the Far West on a glacial lake, the same lake where their grandfather died in a spectacular train wreck and their mother drove off a cliff to her death. Fingerbone is a town “chastened by an outsized landscape and extravagant weather, and chastened again by an awareness that the whole of human history had occurred elsewhere.” Ruth and Lucille’s struggle toward adulthood illuminates the price of loss and survival.

Copies of the book are available for checkout at the Takoma Park Maryland Library. Please join us for a lively literary discussion!

**Festive Friends Meeting Scheduled**

Please join us on Tuesday, March 28, as the Friends of the Library hold their annual meeting and elect new members to the Board of Directors.

There will be musical entertainment by Don Bridges, refreshments and opportunities to meet new friends and greet old ones at this event, scheduled to begin at 7:30 p.m. in the Library.

The Friends are the major promotional and fund-raising arm of the Library. They have contributed more than $15,000 in gifts, including public computer workstations and software, special performances and programs, furnishings, reference tools, bi-lingual and ESL materials, and more than 1,000 lanyards for children’s library cards.

Positions open for re-election this year include president, vice president, secretary, and two members-at-large. Members of the Friends whose dues are current are eligible to serve on the Board and vote in the election. New and renewed memberships will be accepted at the meeting. If you are interested in finding out more about the Friends or in being part of the Library’s future by serving on its Board of Directors, contact nominating committee member Karen Petersen at 301-891-2588 or by e-mail at kkpeters@earthlink.net.

Meanwhile, all are invited to join us on March 28. Bring family and friends!

**Library Programs for March**

**Classically Different Adventures** with Storyteller/Performer Arianna Ross

Monday, March 6, 7:30 p.m. (see story)

Socrates Café with Chris Phillips

Tuesday, March 7, 7:30 p.m. (see story)

Friends of the Library Annual Meeting (in Library)

Tuesday, March 28, 7:30 p.m. (see story)

**Winter Session of the Twosies**

For two-year-olds and parent or caregiver

Pre-registration required: group-size limited

Four Wednesdays at 10 a.m.

Beginning March 1 (last of four programs)

**Spanish Circle Time with Lupe Marks**

Each Thursday at 10 a.m.

Spanish immersion for children 18 months to five years

No pre-registration required

More information from the Library or from Lupe Marks at 240-899-7468

**Neighborhood Circle Time**

Open to all preschoolers and 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.

**Voter Registration at the Library**

Representatives from the Montgomery County Board of Elections will be at the Library to register voters on the following Saturdays: March 11 and March 25 from 11 a.m. to 2 p.m.

They will return in Spring and late Summer before the election primaries, date to be announced.

**Civil Discourse and Philosophical Discussion With Chris Phillips**

Chris Phillips, the peripatetic teacher of philosophy for children, returns to the Takoma Park Maryland Library on Tuesday, March 7, at 7:30 p.m. Phillips will lead adults and children ages 5 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, most recently in October. 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.


Please join us! Call 301-891-7259.

**“Classically Different Adventures” with Arianna Ross**

Arianna Ross is a storyteller/performer who grounds her storytelling in traditional tales intertwined with her international experience living and story-gathering in countries as diverse as Egypt, Ireland, Indonesia, and Spain. She will be returning to the Library on Monday, March 6, at 7:30 p.m.

Ross has developed an array of programs, a repertoire she calls “Tapestries.” In this program she takes a classic folktales like Thumbelina and explores it from the perspective of other cultures.

Arianna Ross has trained in theatre, dance, voice, and photography in the United States. She has spent three years studying acrobatics, music, martial arts, and performing with Banski Kaul’s troupe Rang Vidushak all over India. She is deeply concerned about nurturing the bonds that connect us all in her storytelling.

Her programs allow for active participation from the audience and are suitable for the whole family. Please join us. Call 301-891-7259 to pre-register. And thanks, as always, to the Friends of the Takoma Park Maryland Library for supporting these family programs.

**Come and Share Your Favorite Poem!**

The Eighth annual “Favorite Poem” evening, sponsored jointly by the English Department of Columbia Union College and the Takoma Park Maryland Library, will be held on Thursday, April 20, at 7:30 p.m. Modeled after the national event begun by Poet Laureate Robert Pinsky, this event has attracted poetry lovers of all ages and occupations to come together and share a poem that has been meaningful to them at some point in their lives.

If you are interested in participating in this year’s event, choose a poem that you have read or admired by a published poet (other than poems written by you or your friends). Please include an English translation for poems written in a language other than English. Inspiration may be found in the hundreds of books of poetry available at the Takoma Park Maryland Library.

So that we may include the names of the poems, the poets, the readers and their occupations in a program to be distributed at the event, please submit this information by April 10 to the Takoma Park Maryland Library, Attn: Ellen Robbins, or to the English Department, Attn: Wendy Wripley, Columbia Union College 7600 Flower Ave., Takoma Park MD 20912, or by e-mail to wripley@cu.edu.

Questions may be directed to Ellen at the Library at 301-891-7259. This year’s event will be held in a location to be announced in the April Newsletter. As in previous years, the Friends of the Library will sponsor a reception following the readings.

**Got Books?**

The Friends of the Library are accepting donations of gently used books at the Library for their Spring book sale. Please bring your donations of books of some general interest and in good condition to the Library during open hours. Donations of more than five books must be boxed.
The Firehouse Report

Serious Fire Hits Home

On the evening of Friday, February 10, a home in the 6400 Block of Kansas Lane suffered major fire damage. There was approximately $100,000 in loss to the home, but no injuries. The cause of the fire: A space heater too close to window coverings.

Could It Happen to You

Statistics show that, on average during our lifetime, each of us can expect to be involved in two or three fires serious enough to call the fire department. Whether your fires occur at home, in a hospital, or a hotel, the same principles for survival apply. People who have planned in advance what to do in a fire emergency and have the determination to survive are most likely to do so. Those who dread the danger, feeling that fire will never happen to them, are most apt to succumb. Listed are a few safety tips that will help you survive a fire.

- Install smoke alarms on all levels of the home. Test them monthly and change the batteries twice a year when you change your clocks.
- Have a fire escape plan for your family. Make sure you know two ways out of each room, especially the bedrooms. Review and practice regularly.

A Few Fire Safety Tips

- Never leave cooking unattended.
- When using the fireplace, make sure there is a screen installed.
- Space heaters need to be at least 36 inches away from any objects.
- Never smoke in bed and keep matches and lighters up high and out of reach of children.

Thanks for Blood Drive

On behalf of the Takoma Park VFD and the Takoma Park Lions Club, we want to thank all of you that donated during our recent Blood Drive. A special thanks to our emergency family for donating: Chief Cindy Creamer, Cap. Ed Coursey, TLPD, Steve Novik and Stan Herrmann, TPVFD. And to our helpers: Mike Hall, Ray Messick and Keith Van Ness, TPLC, Doris Messick and Pat Van Ness, SSLC. Note: Our next Blood Drive will be in April.

Volunteering... Can Be An Experience of a Lifetime!

Have you ever thought of being a firefighter or EMS provider? Serve your community by providing emergency fire and rescue service. Take a few minutes to stop by the station and talk to the volunteers about what it is like to be a volunteer member. For further information call 301-270-8209.

Need a speaker?

We will be glad to provide your group or organization with a speaker to talk on any subject relating to the fire department or fire and injury prevention.

If you are interested, please contact the fire station at 301-270-8206.

The Crime Report

Robberies

On January 13 at 8:45 p.m. in the 7300 block of New Hampshire Ave., an armed robbery was attempted. An adult male and adult female were entering an apartment building from the parking lot when a suspect, who had pointed a handgun at them and demanded their belongings. One victim yelled something while pointing behind the suspect in order to distract him and when he turned away, the victim ran off. Neither victim was injured and no property was taken.

On January 14 at 6:30 p.m. at the intersection of Flower and Erie Ave., an attempted armed robbery occurred. An adult male walking alone was approached by three subjects. One grabbed the victim in a choke hold and put a knife to his side while the others searched the victim’s pockets, taking the contents before releasing the victim who then walked away.

On January 15 at 7:12 p.m. at the intersection of West Dallas and Flower Avenues, an adult male walking alone was suddenly approached by four subjects who beat him and removed his wallet and cell phone from his pockets before fleeing on foot. The victim was furnished treatment for minor injuries.

On January 19 at 10:26 p.m. in the 100 block of Lee Ave., an attempted armed robbery occurred. An adult male walking alone was approached by two subjects. One implied he had a gun in his pocket, the other demanded the victim’s wallet. The subjects fled without taking any property when another citizen opened a window nearby. The victim was not injured.

On January 23 at 7:30 p.m. in the 1100 block of University Blvd., a strong arm robbery occurred. An adult female waiting at a bus stop was approached from behind; the subject grabbed her book bag and after a brief struggle ran off with the bag. The victim was not injured.

On January 29 at 7 p.m. in the 6800 block of New Hampshire Ave., an armed robbery occurred. An adult female employee of a business was approached by a subject with a handgun demanding money. When the victim opened the cash register, the subject reached over the counter, removed cash, then fled on foot. The victim was not injured.

On January 31 at 8:10 p.m. in the 6500 block of New Hampshire Ave., an armed robbery occurred. An adult male walking alone noticed two subjects exit a blue Ford Aerostar Van pulled up to the intersection of Wildwood Drive and Jackson Ave., an armed robbery was attempted. An adult male was riding his moped when he noticed a car behind him. When the victim stopped at the intersection, the car cut in front of him, knocking the moped over. The passenger in the vehicle pointed a handgun at the victim and demanded his money. The victim ran off without giving the subject anything and the vehicle left. The victim was not injured.

On February 3 at 6:30 p.m. in the 7500 block of New Hampshire Ave., a strong arm robbery occurred. An adult male making a purchase at the window of a gas station observed two men and was struck and knocked to the ground by a third man. He and a third stood by. After striking the victim several times, a subject removed property from the victim’s pocket then all three fled in an older model small grey car.

ARRESTS

On January 13 at 12:42 p.m. in the 1300 block of University Blvd., an adult juvenile was arrested and charged with theft under $500 after a merchant reported shoplifting.

On January 15 at 11:47 a.m. in the 7400 block of New Hampshire Ave., an adult female was arrested on an open Montgomery County Warrant for unauthorized use of a motor vehicle.

On January 15 at 4:55 p.m. in the 1300 block of University Blvd., an adult male was arrested on an open Montgomery County warrant for failure to appear in court on a charge of theft over $50.

On January 17 at 11:3 p.m. in the 1100 block of University Blvd., an adult male was arrested and charged with theft under $50 after a merchant reported a shoplifting.

On January 21 at 1:04 a.m. in the 6900 block of Woodland Ave., an adult male was arrested on an open Montgomery County Warrant for forgery, fraud, and theft less than $100.

On January 23 at 3:17 p.m. in the 7500 block of Maple Ave., an adult male was arrested on an open Montgomery County warrant for failure to appear in court on a charge of driving an uninsured vehicle.

On January 28 at 3:52 p.m. in the 8400 block of Flower Ave., an adult male was arrested on an open Montgomery County warrant from Howard County for failure to appear in court on a violation of probation charge.

On January 28 at 4:20 p.m. in the 6700 block of Conway Ave., an adult male was arrested and charged with possession of CDS and possession of CDS paraphernalia.

On January 31 at 12:10 p.m. in the 1100 block of University Blvd., an adult female was arrested and charged with theft under $500 after a merchant reported shoplifting.

On February 1 at 10:40 p.m. in the 7500 block of Maple Ave., an adult male was arrested on an open warrant from Montgomery County for Failure to Appear in Court.

On February 3 at 11 a.m. in the 1100 block of University Blvd., an adult male was arrested for theft under $50 when a store employee reported shoplifting.

On February 6 at 11 p.m. in the 6900 block of New Hampshire Avenue, an adult female was arrested on an open Montgomery County warrant for Possession of CDS Paraphernalia.
Thieves Run with Running Car

Given the frequency of vehicle theft in this metropolitan area, a vehicle should never be left running unattended. Not for a few minutes. Not at any time of day. Leaving a car running and unattended is not only a dangerous practice, it is a violation of state law.

The truth of the danger was made clear when an armed robbery occurred. A man pulled into a driveway in the 6700 block of Cokkerille, exiting to drop something off on the home's porch. When he turned around he saw two suspects entering his 1994 Camry and pulling out into the street. As officers were responding to that call for service, a report was radioed for a vehicle stolen four blocks away.

The same thieves spied newer and better prey. They stopped the Camry and proceeded to 2001 silver Sequoia which had been left running, unattended in the 6400 block of Fifth Avenue.

A handgun and the door unlocked by reaching through a broken window. Property stolen. The ignition was damaged in the process.

An officer later observed that earlier that morning a resident had been upset with the officer who was investigating the citations for leaving his vehicle obstructing traffic on New York Avenue, also running, keys in the ignition, and unattended. The officer notes many residents have gotten into the bad habit of leaving their vehicles running while they use an ATM or while picking up coffee in a shop.

As one element in an attempt to decrease vehicle thefts, Takoma Park officers will be strictly enforcing the state law regarding unattended vehicles.

Transportation Section 21-1101a statements...a person driving or otherwise in charge of a motor vehicle may not leave it unattended until the engine is stopped, the ignition locked, the key removed and the brake effectively applied.

The fine associated with this violation is $60 and one point.

Emergency: Who You Gonna Call?

During emergencies, residents should call 9-1-1 using their home phones. Using a cell phone, however, is a different story. The Takoma Park Police have encouraged anyone making an emergency call for police assistance from a cell phone to dial the TPPD dispatcher directly at 301-270-1100, which should be programmed into a resident’s cell phone.

The advantage of 9-1-1 is that if a call is interrupted, or disconnected, the address from which the call was made can be identified and officers can be dispatched.

At the 6500 block of New Hampshire Avenue, an armed robbery occurred. An adult male standing in a parking lot was approached by two subjects. One pointed a handgun and demanded the victim’s wallet and phone. The victim complied and the suspects fled in a green four-door Honda Accord. The victim was not injured.

Burglaries

On January 13 at 9:50 p.m. in the 7600 block of Flower Avenue, a dorm room door was left open by the victim and property taken.

Between January 19 at 7:45 p.m. and January 20 at 8:15 a.m. in the 7500 block of New Hampshire Avenue, a lock and door were damaged in an attempted commercial burglary.

Between January 20 at 11 p.m. and January 21 at 5:30 a.m. in the 7600 block of Lockney Avenue, a small window pane beside a residence’s back door was broken and the door unlocked by reaching in through the broken window. Property taken.

On January 23, between 8:15 a.m. and 4:30 p.m. in the 7100 block of Maple Avenue, a glass pane in the back door of a residence was broken to gain entry. Property taken.

Between January 27 at 3 p.m. and January 28 at 11:30 a.m. in the 6000 block of Elm Avenue, a lock of a detached shed was pried off. Property taken.

On February 3, between midnight and 4:30 p.m. in the 7400 block of Glenside Drive, a residential burglary occurred. It is unknown how entry was gained. Property taken.

Between February 3 at 11:01 p.m. and February 6 at 3:32 p.m. in the 1000 block of University Blvd., a window in the rear of a building was broken to gain entry. Property taken.

Between January 15 at 5 p.m. and January 17 at 12:20 p.m. in the 1100 block of Holton Lane, a 1998 Plymouth Voyager minivan was stolen by unknown method.

On January 28, between 11:30 a.m. and 12:15 p.m. in the 7600 block of New Hampshire Avenue, a 1990 Toyota Camry was stolen by unknown method.

Between January 27 at 5:05 p.m. and January 28 at 3 a.m. in the 1200 block of Elson Place, a 1994 Plymouth Voyager was stolen by unknown method.

On January 30, between 12:30 p.m. and 1:15 a.m. in the 7100 block of New Hampshire Avenue, a 1997 Honda Accord was stolen by unknown method.

Between January 20 at 4:45 p.m. and January 30 at 8 a.m. in the 600 block of Elm Avenue, the driver’s side door lock of a 2004 Ford Expedition was damaged in an attempted auto theft.

Between February 1 at 4 p.m. and February 2 at 7:30 a.m. in the 7000 block of Westmoreland Avenue, a 2002 Mini Coupe was stolen by unknown method.

Between February 3 at 12:01 p.m. and 8:40 p.m. in the 800 block of Colby Avenue, a witness saw four people tampering with a 1996 Jeep Cherokee and scared them off. The ignition was damaged in the attempted theft.

On February 6, between 7:30 p.m. and 8:10 p.m. in the 7500 block of Maple Avenue, a victim’s keys were stolen from a gym locker by an unknown suspect, who then drove the victim’s 1999 Toyota Camry a short distance before hitting a tree and abandoning the car.

On February 6 at 9:30 a.m. and February 7 at 8:10 a.m. in the 6700 block of Conway Way, a 2002 Chrysler Sebring was stolen by unknown method.

Reminders from School Crossing Guards

School children, pedestrian parents and motorists are reminded that school crossing guards offer the direction for when to stop or proceed at intersections.

Takoma Park guards have noted that some parents disregard the guards’ directions and cross according to their own decision. This practice can be dangerous and confusing to motorists.

It may establish bad habits for children who may later follow the adult’s example.

The guards also report that many motorists attempt to go around stopped trash trucks, Metro buses, and other vehicles on Maple and Pennsylvania Ave.

Motorists are reminded that crossing a double yellow line is always prohibited, except when making a left-hand turn.
The Takoma Park Police Department continues to monitor and manage crime data to provide an accurate and transparent view of crime trends. In 2005, there were significant decreases in property crimes across the board. Homicide, rape, robbery, assault, burglary, and vehicle theft all showed decreases, with some categories seeing double-digit percentage drops. Other crimes such as larceny and property theft also saw decreases, although not as pronounced as the major property crimes.

Property Index Crimes:
- Burglary: 2005 had the second lowest total reports in 11 years. With a total of 875 UCR Part One crimes in 2004, which had recorded the lowest numbers in 11 years. With a total of 875 UCR Part One crimes, last year registered the second lowest total reports in 11 years.
- Robbery: 2005 had the eighth lowest total reports in 11 years. With a total of 875 UCR Part One crimes, last year registered the second lowest total reports in 11 years.
- Vehicle Theft: 2005 had the second lowest total reports in 11 years. With a total of 875 UCR Part One crimes, last year registered the second lowest total reports in 11 years.

Burglary, vehicle theft, and robbery are offenses that are often targeted by criminals due to their perceived lack of consequence. However, the data shows that these crimes are being addressed and reduced in Takoma Park, which is a positive trend for the community.

Register for Alerts:
Residents can register for TP Alert on the city’s worldwide web page home page, www.takomaparkmd.gov to receive no- in addition to selecting the class alerts. In addition to selecting the class number of crimes. With a total of 875 UCR Part One crimes, last year registered the second lowest total reports in 11 years. Property crimes (burglary, larceny and vehicle theft) increased by 12 percent and personal crimes (homicide, rape, robbery and aggravated assault) by 1 percent. Takoma Park detectives are investigating a homicide with the MNCPTC Montgomery Police after a body was discovered in October 2005 on park property located within the city of New Hampden Road Avenue, but in Park jurisdiction for recording purposes.

Rape showed the greatest percentage increase, with the number increasing from two to six. None of these sexual assaults involved a stranger. Investigation of several rapes ended with the determination that the complaints were unfounded. Vehicle theft grew 15 percent over 2004. For most of 2005, vehicle theft reports had decreased, an encouraging trend that began in 2003, but the final quarter was a different story. From January to September, vehicle theft reports were 4 percent lower than the same period in 2004. The final three months of 2005, saw vehicle theft reports at 76 percent higher than the end of 2004.
New Web site and Webstream Launched

City staff invite you to visit the City’s newly redesigned website at www.TakomaParkMD.gov. Web visitors have access to a wealth of information about City services, programs, contact information, and more. The updated City Code is available and the entire site is searchable. Visitors may view - and post - the City calendar and message boards, establish an RSS feed from the Police Bulletins page, and download current and archived City Council Agendas and background materials. Patrons may pay parking tickets online or download City application for employment.

The site is fully searchable and has links to many community resources. It should be noted that City Staff email addresses will not change.

Starting with the March 6 Council meeting, web visitors will be able to watch live, on-line video of City Council meetings. These meetings will be the same video viewers watch on Takoma Park City TV-13. Following the meeting, all Council meeting and packet items will be archived and keyword searchable. Windows Media Player 9 or higher is required to view the streaming video, but this application should be compatible with Mac and Linux operating systems. Web site visitors be compatible with Mac and Linux operating systems. Web site visitors should go to TakomaParkMD.gov and click on links to “online video.” Visitors will be able to view council meetings live, or view specific portions of archived council meetings by clicking on selected agenda items. Citizens can also use keyword searches to view items of interest, or view by selected meeting date. In time, documents such as maps associated with related agenda items will also be linked to the videos. All staff background materials are already available on the City web site (on the City Clerk’s page) but they will also be linked to video streaming pages.

The City’s technology partner in this endeavor is Granicus Inc., of San-Francisco. Granicus specializes in working with municipalities to provide streaming video services. Takoma Park is the first municipality in Maryland to utilize Granicus’ unique agenda-based solution. “We have wanted to web-stream Takoma Park City Council TV programming for a long time,” says Lonni Moffet, the City’s Communications Manager. ‘The Granicus application provides searchable, on demand access to Council meetings and other City TV programming on the web. This is a great resource for anyone who is interested in what’s happening in City government.”

“Granicus improves internal and external access to public meetings and public documents,” adds City Clerk Jessey Carpenter. “The searchable archiving will allow the Clerk’s office to provide a greater level of customer service on legislative matters.”

Live streaming will begin with the March 6, 2006 Council meeting. Other City TV programs will be available online starting at the beginning of March.

Takoma Park-Silver Spring Babe Ruth League

Girls and boys ages 6-18 can sign up for the 2006 season of Takoma Park-Silver Spring Babe Ruth League baseball and softball. To register online, go to www.takomabaseball.org. To register by mail, print out registration forms provided on the website and mail in as directed.

Walk-in registration can be completed at the Takoma Park Community Center, 7500 Maple Avenue, on the following dates:

- Friday, February 24 (6 - 8:30 p.m.),
- Saturday, February 25 (10:30 a.m. - 1 p.m.),
- Friday, March 17 (6 - 8:30 p.m.),
- Saturday, March 18 (10:30 a.m. - 1 p.m.),
- Friday, April 7 (6 - 8:30 p.m.),
- or Saturday, April 8, (10:30 a.m. - 1 p.m.).

We coordinate our schedules with Takoma Park Soccer so your child may play both sports. Scholarships are available for players in the free school lunch program. Accommodations are available for kids with disabilities or unpolished skills. For more information, call 301-270-0100.

Takoma Park City TV

March 2006 Programming Schedule

City TV will be showcasing some of the area’s finest performers as we play music from Takoma Park’s Jazz Fest, Taste of Takoma, Street Festival and other events. Other Special Local Events will include the YES League Basketball Championships and the City’s annual Martin Luther King, Jr. Birthday Celebration from January. Newly released Folk Festival performances from the 2005 festival include Ruthie & The Wranglers, plus The Usual Suspects; and Oscar Brand with Billy Kemp plus Joe Hickerson. Other new releases since the beginning of 2006 include Lori Kelley and Cletus Kennelly plus The Jones Family.

Takoma Snapshots in March includes:

- Community Oriented Policing - Alternative Weapons
- A Winter Visit to Memorial Park
- Clare Christopher’s “Once Upon Takoma”

Visit our Web site at www.takomaparkmd.gov/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 check out 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 (pick up) or $18 (mail). Some programs are now available in DVD. Call 301-891-7118 or send an email to: cabletv@takomav.org for more information.

Takoma Park-Silver Spring Babe Ruth League

Girls and boys ages 6 - 18 can sign up for the 2006 season of Takoma Park-Silver Spring Babe Ruth League baseball and softball. To register online, go to www.takomabaseball.org. To register by mail, print out registration forms provided on the website and mail in as directed.

Walk-in registration can be completed at the Takoma Park Community Center, 7500 Maple Avenue, on the following dates:

- Friday, February 24 (6 - 8:30 p.m.),
- Saturday, February 25 (10:30 a.m. - 1 p.m.),
- Friday, March 17 (6 - 8:30 p.m.),
- Saturday, March 18 (10:30 a.m. - 1 p.m.),
- Friday, April 7 (6 - 8:30 p.m.),
- or Saturday, April 8 (10:30 a.m. - 1 p.m.).

We coordinate our schedules with Takoma Park Soccer so your child may play both sports. Scholarships are available for players in the free school lunch program. Accommodations are available for kids with disabilities or unpolished skills. For more information, call 301-270-0100.
Folk Fest Sponsors T-shirt Design Contest

The Takoma Park Folk Festival is launching its 2006 TPFF T-shirt Design Contest. Organizers want you to get inspired and produce a design that brings to mind the most wonderful aspects of Takoma Park and the Folk Festival—and will look great on a T-shirt. Winner will receive $100 and a T-shirt. Up to three Honorable Mention selections will be made. Deadline for entries is May 1. For contest rules and an application form see www.tpff.org.

There are few restrictions on the entries. Artwork can be color or black-and-white, and in almost any media—painting, drawing, a computer-generated image, clay, fabric, and so on. The image can incorporate the words “Takoma Park Folk Festival,” but that is not required. Everyone is welcome to participate: kids and adults, professionals and amateurs. Several people can even combine on a single design.

For more information about helping to plan this year’s Festival, go to www.tpff.org or call 301-589-0202. The Festival will be held on Sunday, September 10, at Takoma Park Middle School on Piney Branch Road.

Takoma Foundation Accepting Grant Proposals

The Takoma Foundation is accepting applications for grants of $500 to $1,000 to be distributed this spring to local groups working to meet the cultural, civic, economic, environmental, and educational needs of residents of Takoma Park and surrounding neighborhoods. The grants, said Foundation treasurer Bruce Baker, “are geared toward building a vibrant and healthy Takoma Park community by meeting the diverse needs of its people.”

The grants are intended to empower neighborhood and community groups to engage in projects that they might not otherwise be able to afford. “We want to match the energy of neighborhood groups with resources to bring people together in activities that build a better community,” Baker said.

The semi-annual grant-giving program funds a broad range of activities, from neighborhood cleanups to opportunities for disadvantaged youth, from sports leagues, arts, and recreation, to residents in need, and the Independence Day parade. Organizations interested in applying for grants can get forms and guidelines at www.takomafoundation.org or pick up applications at the Takoma Park community center or library. For questions, contact Bruce Baker, Bruce.L.Baker@verizon.net or 301-589-3633.

The deadline for grant applications is April 3, 2006. Grants will be reviewed during April, and decisions will be made in time for funds to be distributed in mid-May 2006.

Contributions to assist the Foundation in making grants can be made by check to: Takoma Foundation, c/o Montgomery County Community Foundation, 8720 Georgia Avenue, Silver Spring, MD 20910.

Established in 1988, the Takoma Foundation has provided more than $20,000 to local charities, PTAs, civic associations, and other nonprofit and social service groups to support initiatives and events in the community. Recipient organizations are located in Takoma Park as well as nearby Silver Spring and Takoma DC.

Among last year’s grants: $800 to Passion for Learning, Inc. for an after-school homework club at Piney Branch Elementary School; $1,000 to Rolling Terrace Elementary School for a writer/artist-in-residence; $1,000 to Takoma Park Boys and Girls Club, Inc. to subsidize sports equipment costs; $500 to Friends of the Takoma Park Library for the Takoma Park Film Festival; $500 to Career Transition Center Inc. for Arts on the Block; and $500 to Manna Food Center to distribute food to needy residents of Takoma Park’s Franklin Apartments.

Picture This: Local Photographers Exhibit

The main atrium of the new Community Center hosts an exhibit of local photographers’ work starting the last week of February, and continuing through the month of March. Come to the opening reception from 6 to 8 p.m. Friday, March 10 and meet the seven Takoma Park photographers whose work will be on display. The exhibit, called Photography is Alive and Well and Takoma Park, includes artists Dasent, Shelly Jones, T.J. Mathews, Don Olson, Rob Rudick (who is curating the show), Nicholas Sechler, and Ken Wyner. The show is the first in a series of art exhibits sponsored by the arts and humanities commission.

Left: Ken Wyner’s photo of the East Wing of the National Gallery of Art appeared on the cover of the American Institute of Architects directory, to celebrate the 25th anniversary of architect I.M. Pei’s design.

Right: Rob Rudick’s photo of a shining car won a grill at the Takoma Park Folk Festival. The winning design will be included in the exhibit.