VFW Landmark Goes On the Market

By Rick Henry

One of Takoma Park’s most notable properties is on the market.

The VFW Post 350 property, located at the intersection of Fourth and Orchard Avenues in the Pinecrest area of the city, is for sale, with the current asking price set at $2.9 million, according to listing records.

While on the surface this might appear to be another case of an established property owner chasing the real estate boom, the reality is much different, says Post Commander Richard Fales. In this case, the VFW (Veterans of Foreign Wars) club would prefer to stay right where it is.

But faced with an ever-decreasing membership base and revenue stream, the property simply has few other options, Fales says.

“The veterans aren’t getting any younger. Many of them are dying off or becoming unable to make it out and we are not getting any new members in,” he says. “We’ve been operating at a deficit for a while.”

Fales says the members had been talking about the sale for more than a year before deciding to list the property. The property was originally put on the market in January. It was listed with Weichert Realtors at an asking price of $3.5 million. However only one offer, for approximately $2 million, was made on the property — an offer the Post’s leaders quickly rejected.

“We received that [$2 million] offer from a church,” says Fales.

Fales says the property is worth substantially more than that offer and that the leaders gave the church the option of presenting another, more substantive offer, which the church declined to do.

When no additional offers came through, the Post decided to solicit another realtor to take on the project, a process that was still ongoing at the time of publication.

One of the issues that could make selling the property difficult is zoning. According to Ilona Blanchard, associate planner with the City, the property is zoned for residential use.

“If the city wanted to buy it that would be great. We’d love to sell it to them.” Fales says.

By Tim Male

The old VFW building, currently up for sale, could be replaced by new development.

Keeping Mercury Out of The Environment

Just about anyone in Takoma Park who has rented, bought or sold a house is familiar with Montgomery County’s lead paint regulations, which are meant to reduce exposure to this dangerous ingredient of old paint. However, another well-known neurotoxin — mercury — gets less attention than it should.

Mercury’s potential risks to children and pregnant women are just as worrisome, and now City Council has passed a resolution to help protect the population from at least one source of mercury: automobile switches in lights and braking systems. Although seemingly far from the food chain, these items, when discarded, leak mercury into air and water, which then contaminate fish destined for human consumption.

Council is supporting House Bill 1597, which would require the Maryland Environmental Protection Agency to develop regulations for the recycling of these mercury-containing items.

Mercury is a problem that’s ignoring political borders, says Tim Male, Chair of the Takoma Park Mercury Advisory Committee. Although some mercury occurs naturally, it’s also a by-product of power plants and industrial processes that is released into the air.

“Takoma Park is a community of communities,” says Male, “and we have the opportunity to make a difference.”

Inside this issue

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Routing Rats from the City
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Trash Collection Schedule

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**City Council Calendar**

(Do not note that due to construction in the Community Center, meeting schedules may change during April and early May. Call the City Clerk at 301-891-7267 for information.)

**Monday, April 3** - Interviews and Worksession of the City Council, 7:30 p.m. (Community Center Auditorium)

**Monday, April 10** - Presentation, Regular Meeting and Worksession of the City Council, 7:30 p.m. (Community Center Auditorium)

**Tuesday, April 11** - Meeting of the Facade Advisory Board, 7 p.m. (Location TBA)

**Tuesday, April 11** - Meeting of the Tree Commission, 6:30 p.m. (Room TBA)

**Monday, April 17** - Worksession of the City Council, 7:30 p.m. (Takoma Park Middle School)

**Tuesday, April 18** - Meeting of the Safe Roadways Committee, 7 p.m. (Helfner Park Community Center)

**Thursday, April 20** - Meeting of the Emergency Preparedness Committee, 8:30 a.m. (Location TBA)

For updated schedule information, check the City’s web page at http://www.takomaparkmd.gov or contact the City Clerk. If you would like to receive a weekly e-mail of the City Council agenda, or if you would like to receive a weekly agenda by U.S. Mail, contact the City Clerk at 301-891-7267.

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**Committee Vacancies**

**Citizens Liaison Committee for the Community Center.**

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

**Committee on the Environment.**

This committee is charged with advising the City Council on all environmental issues, including but not limited to tree protection, open space conservation, biodiversity, watershed function, energy use and conservation, and recycling; reviewing and providing advice on City actions that affect environmental quality; educating Takoma Park residents, businesses, and government on environmental issues; conveying citizen views on environmental issues to Council and City staff; and working with City staff on environmental issues and projects.

**Facade Advisory Board.**

The seven-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.

**Health Services Impact Committee.**

The City Council is establishing a committee to evaluate the impact on health services in the community resulting from the proposed relocation of Washington Adventist Hospital. The Council seeks individuals with diverse backgrounds and interests to serve on the committee, including professionals in the public health field and residents who are dependent upon WAH for health services.

To apply to serve on the committee, send a cover letter and resume and/or statement of qualifications by April 15, to Jessie Carpenter, City Clerk, City of Takoma Park, 7500 Maple Avenue, Takoma Park, MD 20912 (or via e-mail to JessieC@takomagov.org). Applications will be reviewed by the City Council. For additional information, call Jessie Carpenter at 301-891-7267.

**Noise Control Board.**

The seven-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.

**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.

**Safe Roadways Committee.**

The Safe Roadways Committee advises the City Council on transportation related issues including, but not limited to, pedestrian and bicycle safety, traffic, and transit services.

Interested applicants are encouraged to attend committee meetings prior to applying to serve. Contact the City Clerk for further information. To apply, send a letter of interest and resume or statement of qualifications to the City Clerk, City of Takoma Park, 7500 Maple Avenue, Takoma Park, MD 20912 or via e-mail to JessieC@takomagov.org. Further information is available by contacting the City Clerk’s Office at 301-891-7267.

**City Council Briefs**

**February 13 - Regular Meeting**

Ordinance 2006-4 was adopted, authorizing the City Manager to execute an indefinite quantities contract for street repairs and improvements (VOTING FOR: Porter, Austin-Lane, Barry, Elrich, Seamens, Williams; ABSENT: Clay).

Ordinance 2006-5 was adopted, awarding a contract for uniform rental and cleaning (VOTING FOR: Porter, Austin-Lane, Barry, Elrich, Seamens, Williams; ABSENT: Clay).

Ordinance 2006-6 was adopted, awarding a contract for customer service training (VOTING FOR: Porter, Austin-Lane, Barry, Elrich, Seamens, Williams; ABSENT: Clay).

Ordinance 2006-7 was adopted at first reading, approving FY06 Budget Amendment No. 4 (VOTING FOR: Porter, Austin-Lane, Barry, Elrich, Seamens, Williams; ABSENT: Clay).

Ordinance 2006-8 was adopted at second reading, awarding a contract for restoration of the damaged area of the Police Department (VOTING FOR: Porter, Austin-Lane, Barry, Elrich, Seamens, Williams; ABSENT: Clay).

Ordinance 2006-9 was adopted at second reading, awarding a contract for restoration of the damaged area of the Police Department (VOTING FOR: Porter, Austin-Lane, Barry, Elrich, Seamens, Williams; ABSENT: Clay).

Ordinance 2006-10 was adopted at first reading, authorizing a contract for financial and accounting services (VOTING FOR: Porter, Austin-Lane, Barry, Elrich, Seamens, Williams; ABSENT: Clay).

Ordinance 2006-11 was adopted at second reading, awarding a contract for a wash survey and compensation study (VOTING FOR: Porter, Austin-Lane, Barry, Elrich, Seamens, Williams; ABSENT: Clay).

Ordinance 2006-12 was adopted at second reading, expanding the membership of the Emergency Preparedness Committee (VOTING FOR: Porter, Austin-Lane, Barry, Elrich, Seamens, Williams; ABSENT: Clay).

Ordinance 2006-13 was approved, authorizing a contract for City cell phones (VOTING FOR: Porter, Austin-Lane, Barry, Clay, Elrich, Seamens, Williams).

Resolution 2006-1 was adopted, awarding a contract for the sale of City-owned property known as 8425 Piney Branch Road, Takoma Park, Maryland (VOTING FOR: Porter, Austin-Lane, Barry, Clay, Elrich, Williams; ABSENT: Seamens).

Resolution 2006-11 was adopted, awarding a contract for the sale of City-owned property known as 8425 Piney Branch Road, Takoma Park, Maryland (VOTING FOR: Porter, Austin-Lane, Barry, Clay, Elrich, Williams; ABSENT: Seamens).

**February 27 - Regular Meeting**

Ordinance 2006-9 was adopted at first reading, authorizing a transfer of land to Montgomery County for the Fire Station near parking area (VOTING FOR: Porter, Austin-Lane, Barry, Elrich, Seamens, Williams; ABSENT: Clay).

Ordinance 2006-7 was adopted at second reading, awarding a contract for restoration of the damaged area of the Police Department (VOTING FOR: Porter, Austin-Lane, Barry, Elrich, Seamens, Williams; ABSENT: Clay).

Ordinance 2006-11 was adopted at first reading, awarding a contract for financial and accounting services (VOTING FOR: Porter, Austin-Lane, Barry, Elrich, Seamens, Williams; ABSENT: Clay).

Resolution 2006-12 was adopted, establishing a Health Services Impact Committee (VOTING FOR: Porter, Austin-Lane, Barry, Clay, Elrich, Seamens, Williams).

March 6 - Special Session

Resolution 2006-11 was adopted, commenting on the proposed East Hampsire Development Plan (VOTING FOR: Porter, Austin-Lane, Barry, Clay, Elrich, Seamens, Williams).

Resolution 2006-12 was adopted, establishing a Health Services Impact Committee (VOTING FOR: Porter, Austin-Lane, Barry, Clay, Elrich, Seamens, Williams).

Notification of Public Hearing on Rent Stabilization

Takoma Park City Council Chambers
7500 Maple Avenue, Takoma Park, Md.

March 27, 2006 • 7:30 p.m.

The Takoma Park City Council will continue its review of rent stabilization by having a Public Hearing on March 27, 2006 in the Council Chambers.

Those wishing to comment on the Rent Stabilization law can do so at this time. We encourage you to come to this meeting and be a part of this discussion.

You may also submit your comments in writing to the City Clerk at 301-891-7267.

For more information, please contact Linda Walker (301-891-7222) or Sara Anne Daines (301-891-7224).
The appeal process is available to allow property owners the opportunity to dispute the value determined by the department. Appeals can be filed at the following times: 1) upon receipt of an assessment notice, 2) by a petition for review and 3) upon purchase of a property between January 1 and June 30. The assessment reflects the market influence and other conditions affecting the property from the time of the last assessment.

Property owners can call the department at any time to request a copy of their most recent assessment worksheet, which will explain how the assessment decision was reached. Only one copy can be requested a year. If you decide to appeal, you must do so within 45 days of the date of the notice. Petitions for appeal are available at 830 Roanoke Avenue (2006-4L) or by calling 301-891-7215 or by e-mailing MosesW@takomagov.org.

The City of Takoma Park, an equal opportunity employer and does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, religion, ancestry, national origin, sex, age, marital status or physical or mental disabilities that are unrelated in nature and extent to job performance.
The Promise of a Rain Garden

By Ali Khalilian, P.E., City Engineer

Nature recycles rain. And rain gardens may be the best place to see this recycling regime at work. A “rain garden” is a man-made landscaped depression in the ground used to improve the quality of surface runoff before it reaches local streams and other bodies of water. Forming a bioretention area by collecting water runoff and storing it, the rain garden filters water and allows it to be slowly absorbed by the soil. This bioretention concept is based on the hydrologic function of forest habitat, where the forest produces a spongy litter layer that soaks up water and allows it to slowly penetrate the soil layer.

Without rain gardens, stormwater runoff from developed areas increases flooding, in addition to crowding pollutants but it can be controlled. People world over are discovering the benefits of collecting stormwater in rain barrels, on green roofs, and especially in rain gardens. This re-use of rainwater is simple, inexpensive and environmentally friendly, and it mimics the natural absorption and pollution removal abilities of a forest, meadow, or prairie.

Rain gardens in particular have been shown to reduce the concentration of fertilizers, oil, and particulate pollution reaching storm drains. Researchers from the University of Connecticut, reporting in the journal Environmental Science and Technology, show that a shallow depression in a garden containing bark mulch and shrubs can remove up to 99 percent of toxins from runoff water. Along with filtering pollutants, other benefits of rain gardens include keeping runoff on site, flood prevention, and provision of habitat for butterflies.

Mercury

continued from front page

When mercury is released into the air, it quickly settles back to earth and becomes coated with dust. It then returns to water bodies, either in lakes or streams. Mercury contamination can quickly spread from one ecosystem to another and can be highly toxic. Mercury levels are dangerous to fish. When fish eat contaminated fish, mercury can move up the food chain, putting human health at risk. Mercury’s effects on human health are widely recognized and can include neurological damage.

The Committee on the Environment is encouraging concerned residents to contact state representatives and indicate support of mercury-limiting legislation. This is because mercury is a serious health hazard and the Committee believes people can do to protect themselves from mercury in the environment.

Mercury poisoning can cause severe health problems, affecting the central nervous system, liver and kidneys. In 2002, the National Academy of Sciences estimated that 60,000 infants born each year are at risk of neuro-developmental problems caused by exposure to mercury while in the womb.

The United States Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) and the Food and Drug Administration (FDA) have established maximum levels for mercury in seafood, but no guidelines have been proposed for mercury in food. The FDA could have required the supermarket to remove it from sale. The Takoma Park Silver Spring Food Coop also pulls mercury warnings near its seafood freezers. California law requires supermarkets to post warnings of the kinds of seafood that contain mercury, but consumers should still be aware of the risks.

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Making wise choices at the supermarket can help reduce exposure. The Food and Drug Administration (FDA) has a maximum exposure level from seafood, but different kinds of seafood have different mercury risks. The Turtle Island Restoration Network has a handy online tool – www.turtleisland.org – to help you know your consumption of different fish is exposing you or your children to dangerous levels of mercury. The Monterey Bay Aquarium http://www.mbsaqua.org/cr/cr_seafoodwatch/download.asp has a seafood guide for Northeastern states that you can take to the supermarket with you. Fish consumption can have lots of other positive effects on your health and these tools allow you to maximize benefits while minimizing mercury exposure from the seafood you eat.

State governments are beginning to legislate reductions in the amount of mercury that gets into the environment – and our diets – in the first place.

Takoma Park Public Works will strategically locate a rain garden in our neighborhood community. Takoma Park Department of the Environment has issued mercury-based warnings in the Takoma Park Silver Spring Food Coop. The Takoma Park Department of the Environment has issued mercury-based warnings in the Takoma Park Silver Spring Food Coop. The Takoma Park Department of the Environment has issued mercury-based warnings in the Takoma Park Silver Spring Food Coop. The Takoma Park Department of the Environment has issued mercury-based warnings in the Takoma Park Silver Spring Food Coop.

You can take simple steps in your own life to help keep mercury out of the environment.

If you have home thermostats containing mercury, if you replace mercury-containing thermostats or other switches, or if you have used fluorescent light bulbs or batteries, take them to household hazardous waste days instead of throwing them out. Help keep our environment clean!

The first of two rain gardens at Forest Park was recently installed by Friends of Sligo Creek with help from the neighborhood community. Takoma Park Public Works will continue to work with Friends and community associations to expand on this environmentally beneficial endeavor.

Notification of Proposed Increase in Rent Stabilization Allowance To 2.8 percent effective July 1, 2006

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, 2006 through June 30, 2007, the rent stabilization allowance will be increased from 2.1 percent to 2.8 percent. Section 63.0(20) of the Takoma Park Code and the departmental regulations requires that the Allowance be set as follows:

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

The Consumer Price Index is a measure of the average change in prices over time. It is based on the prices of food, clothing, shelter, transportation, medical care, and other goods and services that people buy for day to day living. In calculating the index, price changes for these items are averaged together with weights that represent their importance in the population group’s spending. Thus an index of 133.5 is 1.063 times higher than an index of 125.6 (133.5/125.6=1.063); in other words prices increased 6.3 percent.

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

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<tr>
<th>Current Year CPI-U</th>
<th>Previous Year CPI-U</th>
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<tr>
<td>March 2005 127.7</td>
<td>January 2004 120.2</td>
<td>7.5 percent</td>
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<tr>
<td>May 2005 123.6</td>
<td>January 2003 120.1</td>
<td>3.8 percent</td>
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<tr>
<td>July 2005 125.0</td>
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<td>4.1 percent</td>
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<tr>
<td>September 2005 126.7</td>
<td>December 2005 125.4</td>
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The frequency and intensity of required maintenance is generally a function of the plants selected. It is, however, very important to pull weeds and water the garden three times a week for the first two weeks and during dry spells. Fertilizers are undesirable since they promote weed growth and alter the filtering characteristic of the soils. Hardwood shredded mulch should be replenished as necessary. The rain garden should be maintained and cared for as the normal and valued landscaping feature that it is.

A properly designed and maintained rain garden will not be a breeding ground for mosquitoes since it will not pond water between rainfalls. In permeable soils, it should drain within 72 hours, whereas mosquitoes need at least seven days standing water for hatching. The cost of a do-it-yourself rain garden is approximately $3 to $5 per square foot; professionally installed gardens cost about $10 to $14 per square foot. It is a good idea to help keep our environment clean!

You can take simple steps in your own life to help keep mercury out of the environment.

If you have home thermostats containing mercury, if you replace mercury-containing thermostats or other switches, or if you have used fluorescent light bulbs or batteries, take them to household hazardous waste days instead of throwing them out. Help keep our environment clean!

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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 the Office on Landlord-Tenant Affairs, 7500 Maple Avenue, Takoma Park, MD 20912 or the City’s website at www.takoma.gov by April 25, 2006.
Sligo Creek Tiles—A Signature Art

By Joa Jones

John Hume takes inspiration right out of the neighborhood and fires it up in a kiln. The result: Sligo Creek Tile Company, Takoma Park’s homegrown ceramic tile company, found in Humes’ home right on Carroll Avenue. John and Lynne Hume in 1997, Sligo Creek Tile Company specializes in ceramic tile that is right in tune with Takoma Park aesthetics. That is many of their themes from nature, animals and folk literature, Sligo Creek Tile Company also works with clients to create one-of-a-kind, original tiles that have special meaning for the customer.

The Humes’ interest in ceramic tile began years ago when they started learning about and collecting American Art and Crafts-style pottery and tile. When John and Lynne took a class in tile making and design at the former Maryland School for the Arts, they knew they were hooked. They eventually left their previous careers—John was a construction engineer and Lynne in finance—and formed their company. As the business has evolved, Lynne handles the business side of things while John is in charge of the creative side of production.

"I look at tile making as a calling," says John. "As a craftsman, my job is to make the best possible product for my customer, and with the quality of my work, also do justice to myself as an artist. It’s a great honor to know our tiles become permanent installations in people’s homes.

Ceramic tile is actually clay that is fired to a very high (2200 degrees F) temperature and then treated with a variety of glazes to achieve a desired result. Ceramic tiles are strong, lightweight and easy to clean, making them ideal for both practical and decorative uses, including fireplace surrounds, backsplashes, borders, tree ornaments, and trivets. The medium readily lends itself to carving, so the variety of images that can be worked into a tile is infinite.

"It can be drawn, it can be carved in clay," says Hume.

Indeed, the Company’s designs reflect Hume’s considerable skill as an artist and carver. Natural objects lend themselves to depth and three-dimensional work, says Hume, and so Sligo Creek Tile Company has an extensive array of exquisitely carved and glazed flower, leaf, herb, tree and other plant designs. Hume often sketches from his own garden and from natural settings right in Takoma Park, capturing the delicacy of local dogwood blossoms, irises, and clematis. These designs sell well in Takoma Park, where homeowners are keen on nature and thrilled to have designs that not only reflect their natural surroundings but also fit well into the individual historic character of their homes.

Some of the Company’s most popular designs, however, are whimsical cats. Cat designs are often modeled on Willie, Sophie, and Lila, the Humes’ three current cats and a former beloved feline named Pete. Hume carves the best cat whisks in the business, and says that cat makes perfect subjects as they are naturally dramatic and will also sit still for long periods. Another product line is based on old-timey characters from the "Slovenly Peter" and "Tom Bogus" children’s books written in 1840 by H. Hoffman. The stories, many of which teach kids the perils of eating too many sweets, or girls rough housing with boys, are comical takes on old-fashioned values.

Sligo Creek Tile Company also makes inspirational and architectural tiles and gladly works with designers and architects to meet customer needs.

The Humes showcase their wares at four to six venues a year, including arts and crafts shows in Pennsylvania, Michigan, Minnesota, and most important, the Takoma Park Folk Festival. John Hume can’t say enough about the phenomenal support the Company has gotten from Takoma Park residents and businesses. Jan Schwartz of the former Finewares (now American Craft) on Carroll Avenue in Old Takoma was their first distributor and the store continues to be one of Sligo Creek Tile Company’s best retailers, as the sole Maryland seller. Their first designs flew off the shelves as holiday gifts and now American Craft is the Company’s largest East Coast retailer.

John Hume says he is proud of Sligo Creek Tile Company as a Takoma Park business and is grateful for the local support. He notes that people here take a special pride in producing locally and buying locally, and he intends to continue seeking ideas from Takoma Park residents and customers. He likes sketching and creating tiles featuring subjects important to his local customers, whether it’s a favorite blossom or the family pet, and helping residents use ceramic tile to solve their design and decorative needs.

"Here in Takoma Park," says John Hume, "people appreciate handmade, limited-production goods that are individual and personal to the customer. I am left with a great deal of joy from the stories people tell us about where they put our tiles and in knowing that our tiles can last long enough to become a legacy."

Contact Sligo Creek Tile Company, at www.sligocreek.com to view the extensive online catalogue and for ordering information.

Rat Poison Requires Care

Christine Garcia at the University of Maryland emphasizes that while poison can be effective, it must be used carefully, only where pets and children can’t get at it. Pets or children can eat bait, and bait pellets that are put into a rat burrow may be kicked out by the rats. Ciccone, pointing to the environmental hazards of poison, recommends that it be used only by trained professionals. She also recommends that neighbors with rat problems work together to limit food sources or jointly hire a pest control company.

Spring-loaded traps, which look like an oversized mousetrap, can be effective, but they should be used only in a controlled situation (like a locked shed). Garcia points out that the animal dies quickly and humanely in such a trap. But that kind of trap can hurt a child or a pet (or an adult foot) if they touch it.

Probably the most effective way to get rid of rats is by placing poison dust in a rat burrow. The powder is picked up in the animals’ fur, and because rats groom all the time, they ingest a toxic dose. The trade name for the most commonly used powder is diphenacine, usually used at 2 percent. But this rotenicide is not available to homeowners—only to certi-

Who You gonna Call?

• Montgomery County Department of Health and Human Services Licensure and Regulatory Service 240-777-3986

• Note: the county is the main agency for rat control

• Marjorie Ciccone Takoma Park Housing and Community Development Code Enforcement 301-891-7255

Haynes recommends a number of steps that can make a home less inviting to rats:

• Eliminate bird feeders that can spill seed.
• Do not compost food debris.
• If you do compost, use a rootproof bin, not plastic that rats (and squirrels) can chew through. This also applies to garbage cans containing food waste.
• Do not outproof, garbage cans or anything else, use a galvanized metal quarter-inch mesh called ratwire or hardware cloth. This can be found at hardware stores. Then make sure trash cans are sealed well.
• Pick up dog droppings – rats eat dog food.
• Do not feed pets outside. Rats will feed from an untended food dish.
• If you have fruit trees, pick up the fruit. Don’t let it rot on the ground.

While you can try rodent-proof your house, Haynes says that for older houses, that is almost impossible. Rats need only a half-inch space to get into a house. But you can place ratwire mesh around holes for pipes and similar openings, which can help.

Beyond the control of the individual homeowner is the community DSP. When apartment buildings, restaurants and fast food vendors use dumpsters, there’s often spillage, especially when the dumpster is emptied.

Routing Rats from the City

By Bob Guldis

As many residents know, rats have made themselves at home in the backyards and streets of Takoma Park. What they may not realize is that they are putting your home at risk of these reviled rodents. Unsecured trash, dog feces, pizza boxes, birdseed, and compost create an alluring feast that helps rats prosper in our environment.

“We make it so perfect for them,” says Christine Garcia, an urban biologist at the University of Maryland. “We make food available in the form of waste. Rats eat pretty much anything you like to eat – they like French fries and leftover pizza.” Populations tend to peak as the weather turns warmer this month.

As many residents know, rats have a bad reputation, especially with those who live around them. The rodent is considered one of the worst pests in households. However, there are different strategies to control rats.

“We’ll work with property owners, providing information on how to address the problems,” says Lynn Humes in Takoma Park. “We don’t have any money budgeted for rat abatement.” Marjorie Ciccone, the City’s code enforcement staffer, will go out and inspect property and offer advice, as time permits, but her primary responsibilities are property maintenance complaints, commercial inspections, and similar enforcement duties.

Stephen Haynes, a Montgomery County Department of Environmental Health specialist, says the county will investigate rat problems and advise property owners on how to control them. The key to rat control, he says, is eliminating food sources. Beyond that, you can get rid of rats by using poison. “The county will not place traps but will give advice,” he says.

The county can also enforce standards by citing residents who fail to get rid of conditions that cause rat infestations, Haynes says, but they prefer not to do that. “We give people numerous chances; we only write a ticket if you’ve gotten fair warning.”

Haynes recommends a number of steps that can make a home less inviting to rats:

• Eliminate bird feeders that can spill seed.
• Do not compost food debris.
• If you do compost, use a rootproof bin, not plastic that rats (and squirrels) can chew through. This also applies to garbage cans containing food waste.
• Do not outproof, garbage cans or anything else, use a galvanized metal quarter-inch mesh called ratwire or hardware cloth. This can be found at hardware stores. Then make sure trash cans are sealed well.
• Pick up dog droppings – rats eat dog food.
• Do not feed pets outside. Rats will feed from an untended food dish.

John Hume says he is proud of Sligo Creek Tile Company as a Takoma Park business and is grateful for the local support. He notes that people here take a special pride in producing locally and buying locally, and he intends to continue seeking ideas from Takoma Park residents and customers. He likes sketching and creating tiles featuring subjects important to his local customers, whether it’s a favorite blossom or the family pet, and helping residents use ceramic tile to solve their design and decorative needs.

“Here in Takoma Park,” says John Hume, “people appreciate handmade, limited-production goods that are individual and personal to the customer. I am left with a great deal of joy from the stories people tell us about where they put our tiles and in knowing that our tiles can last long enough to become a legacy.”

Contact Sligo Creek Tile Company, at www.sligocreek.com to view the extensive online catalogue and for ordering information.
Recreation Department Updates:

Our offices are temporarily located behind the new community center in Trailer #1 and Trailer #2 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 9 - 10 p.m. M-F. 10 a.m. - 8 p.m. Sat, 9 a.m. - 5 p.m. Sun.

Spring Break Camp

Grades K-6 Join us as we discover Korea, the Land of the Morning Calm — a country which is more than 4,000 years old. Storytelling and Korean literature by company adventurers who wander around the history of the Three Kingdoms wearing a handbook. Young naval strategists will make a “turtle boat” and those ensnared by the wind will fly kites. Cairn temporal and royal palaces in the morning and then practice Taekwondo in the afternoon. Learn about Asian Hip Hop and break dancing. The Embassy of Korea has invited the young diplomats to their Embassy to see artifacts hundreds of years old and taste kimchi and bee-bim bop! Come along and explore!

When: Monday-Friday, April 10 - 14
Time: Before Care 7 - 9 a.m. Camp 9 a.m. – 4 p.m. After Care 4 - 6 p.m.
Location: Takoma Park Community Center, 7500 Maple Avenue
Fee: T.P. City Resident $95 Non-Resident $105 Before Care: $20 After Care: $20

Spring Biking

Ages Middle – High School Students

Spring Biking is a host of activities from April 10 to 17 that will encourage the students to get out and be active over the April 10 to 17 that will encourage the students to get out and be active over the

Trip: Callinburg, Harpers Ferry, WV
For grades 6-8
When: Monday, April 10
Time: 7 a.m. – 5 p.m.
Fee: T.P. City Resident $5 Maximum number of participants 13.

Adult Coed Softball League

Ages 16 and up

Calling all Sultans of Swat, Bronx Bombers, players. Please bring your

When: Sunday, April 23 - July 16
Time: 9 a.m. - 1 p.m.
Location: Cherry Hill Field, Takoma Park Elementary School
Fee: T.P. City Resident $75 Non-Resident Team $120

Montessori Morning 1

Ages 1-2 – 2

You’ve heard about the benefits of the Montessori approach for young children, now experience it! This class is designed as an introduction to the Montessori environment. 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. There is a $20 materials fee paid to the instructor the first day of class. Maximum 12, minimum 5. Six weeks. Instructor Alicia Sar.

When: Tuesdays, April 25 - May 30
Time: 9:45 - 10:45 a.m.
Location: Azalea Room, T.P. Community Center, 7500 Maple Avenue
Fee: T.P. City Resident $65 Non-Resident $75

Montessori Morning 2

Ages 2 – 3-1/2

Experience the benefits of the Montessori approach for young children, now experience it! This class can be an introduction to the Montessori environment or an extension for those who have attended Montessori Morning 1. 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 12, minimum 5. Six weeks. Instructor Alicia Sar.

When: Tuesdays, April 25 - May 30
Time: 11 a.m. – noon
Location: Azalea Room, T.P. Community Center, 7500 Maple Avenue
Fee: T.P. City Resident $65 Non-Resident $75

1. 2, 3 Cooking Up Math with Me

Ages 3-3/2 – 3-1/2

Continued on page 12

Taku Park N e w s l e t t e r

Recreation

Annual Egg Hunt 2006

Would you like your child to have a more “egg-citing” experience for the Annual Egg Hunt? Look over there! Oh, look, there’s another one. Wow, there are so many eggs. They are every-where! Come join us for an ex-perience of Maximal of 15, minimum of eight. Experience necessary. Professional actor, teacher and director, Peggy Yates will help you uncover hidden talent and strengthen artistic muscle. Eight weeks. Maximum of 15, minimum 8.

When: Fridays, April 21 - June 9
Time: 3:30 - 5:30 p.m.
Location: Takoma Park Community Center, 7500 Maple Avenue
Fee: T.P. City Resident $100 Non-Resident $120

White Water Rafting on the Shenandoah River

This information has been continued on page 12
At Home With Poetry Forms
From haiku to villanelle, from litany to sentina, poets may choose to write in forms to enhance meaning and communication. Even free verse is not completely free. “At Home With Poetry Forms” is Rosanne Singer’s intriguing concert which playfully explores poetic forms in a Library program Tuesday evening, April 11, from 7 to 8:30 p.m.

Whether you are an experienced poet or interested newcomer who enjoys playing with words, help celebrate National Poetry Month by joining us for this evening tour de force. Rosanne Singer, a long-time Takoma Park resident, has been a Maryland Poet-in-the-Schools for 15 years, teaching the art of doing residencies with students kindergarten through middle school. She is also a certified poetry therapist who works in a therapeutic home for teenage boys, using poetry as a tool for healing and self-expression.

Each summer Singer collaborates with other artists, teachers and principals during the Maryland Artist/Teacher Institute (MATI) at the University of Maryland, finding ways to use poetry, dance, theater, music and visual art to enhance the teaching of reading and literacy. Her poetry appears in literary journals such as Atlanta Review, Wisconsin Review, Slant, Asphodel, and Mangrove, among others. She was granted an Individual Artist Award from the Maryland State Arts Council and a Fellowship for Literature, Language and Linguistics from the Arts and Humanities Council of Montgomery County. She has given readings throughout the area, including the Kensington Row Bookshop series, the Miller Cabin Series, the Hirshhorn Museum and the Maryland Institute College of Art.

Please join us for this special program, an ideal preparation for enjoying the 8th annual Favorite Poem Evening on April 20 at 7:30 p.m.

Dungeons & Dragons for The Uninitiated
What’s going on with all those kids, huddled in small groups, rolling dice, and spinning intricate adventure stories? It must be Dave Burbank’s popular ongoing Dungeons & Dragons program, sponsored by the City’s Recreation Department.

For the fifth year in a row Library Assistant Dave Burbank will “DM” a quick adventure for parents and educators (and other interested folks) to introduce them to the concepts of this fantasy storytelling game called Dungeons & Dragons. This program will be held in the Library. Parent and kid teams welcome. Wednesday evening, April 19, beginning at 7 p.m. Please call the Library to preregister.

Note: During Community Center construction in April, the regular D & D sessions will be held in the Library Thursday afternoons, 4-6 p.m.

The Takoma Park Arts and Humanities Commission is proud to present the

1st Solo Art Show of Artist Catherine Miller
April 1 through April 30, 2006
At the Atrium Gallery
Takoma Park Community Center
7500 Maple Avenue, Takoma Park MD
Opening Reception
Saturday, April 1, 2006 • 3:30 pm - 5:30 pm
Refreshments served
The exhibit features the work of
Ms. Catherine Miller, a member of the Takoma Artists Guild and the New Barn Studio. Drawing from her years of experience in working with children in a preschool environment, Ms. Miller’s paintings are colorful and feature landscapes, children, pets, and allegorical abstracts.

Employment Opportunity
The City of Takoma Park is inviting applicants to apply for the position of Coordinator for Children’s and Youth Services at the Takoma Park Maryland Library, on or about July 1, 2006.

Under general guidance of the Library Director, this individual is responsible for planning, developing, and implementing Library collections, programs, and services for children to age 14. This position entails significant responsibilities in the areas of collection development, programming for children of all ages, budget administration, cataloging, outreach, and administrative work in the areas of interviewing, hiring and training, assigning and directing work, and appraising performance.

The position requires a Bachelor’s degree from an accredited four-year college or university, supplemented by a Master’s degree in Library Science from an accredited college or university, and two to four years of progressively responsible related experience, or an equivalent combination of education, training, and experience. The established pay rate is $27.17 to $30.58/hr., or $56,511 to $63,603 annually, depending on qualifications. Full benefits are included.

Interested individuals should send a resume and letter of interest to Library Director Ellen Arnold, Director of Takoma Park Library 101 Philadelphia Ave., Takoma Park, MD 20912. This position is open until filled. —EOE

Friends of the Library Book Sale
The next Friends’ Book Sale will be held on Saturday, May 27 from 10 a.m. to 3 p.m. on the Library lawn. These semi-annual book sales have become legendary in Takoma Park because of the exceptional quality of their books and their bargain prices. They are also a key means of raising funds to support Library programs. Volunteers to help out on the day of the sale are welcome, and should contact Ellen Robbins at 301-891-7258. Community service hours are available to students who wish to work two or more hours on the day of the sale. Book donations are being accepted at the Library during open hours until May 23. They must be boxed, in good condition and of some general interest. Large donations must be coordinated in advance with the Library staff.

Share your favorite poem!
There is still time to choose a poem that has special meaning for you to share at the Favorite Poem Evening on Thursday, April 20. This year’s event will be held in the Library at 7:30 p.m., and will be hosted by Takoma Park Poet Laureate Don Berger.

Participants need only choose a poem that they have read and admired by a published poet (other than themselves), and submit the name of the poem, its author, the name of the reader and his or her generic occupation to Ellen Robbins at the Library or Wendy Ripley at wripley@uc.edu. This information will be included in a printed program to be distributed at the event.

The Friends of the Library will sponsor an informal reception following the readings. This annual event has always been both intimate and fascinating. Elected officials, students, parents, children, professionals, and poetry lovers of all interests and persuasions have read poems in many languages over the years. We invite all to join us, whether to read or listen.

Computer room changes
People now need to use their Takoma Park library cards to sign on to use the public Internet computers in the Library and the Computer Learning Center. Users log on by using the bar code number on the back of their card, and a four-digit pin number. Any patron in good standing with a valid card who is eight or older may use the computers, but anyone under 16 has filtered access. The second computer room has now been opened, and the center’s hours are being extended to 8 p.m. Monday through Thursday, with assistance from new staff member Wiraphon Trepinski.

Library Programs for April

FTPML Reading Group
Discussion of Housekeeping by Marilynne Robinson
Wednesday, April 5, 7:30 - 9 p.m.
Atrium, Community Center, all welcome

“At Home With Poetry Forms” with Rosanne Singer
Tuesday, April 11, 7:30 p.m. (See story)

D & D for the Uninitiated
Wednesday, April 19, 7 p.m.

8th Annual Favorite Poem Evening
Thursday, April 20, 7-9 p.m.
At the Library - Don Berger hosts (see story)

Spring Session of the Twosies
For two-year-olds and parent or caregiver
Pre-registration required: group-size limited
Four Wednesdays at 10 a.m. • April 19, 26, May 3, 10

Spanish Circle Time
with Lupe Marks • Each Thursday at 10 a.m. beginning Feb.2
Spanish immersion for children 18 months to five years
No preregistrations required!

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
All ages; no preregistration required!

Call 301-891-7259 to preregister for programs or for more information.
Prepared by: Lt. Richard Cipperly

**Robbery**

On February 11 at 10:39 p.m. in the 100 block of Lee Ave., an armed robbery was attempted. An adult male was trying to make a withdrawal from a bank, and he was approached by two men who asked for money. The suspect held up the victim's wallet and demanded money. The victim had no money with him and told the suspect that he was not going to give him any money. The suspect then demanded the victim's wallet and took it. The victim was not injured.

On February 20 at 8:10 p.m. in the 7400 block of Columbia Ave., an armed robbery occurred. The victim was approached by a subject who claimed to be a police officer and demanded his wallet and keys. The victim gave the suspect his wallet and keys, and the suspect fled the area. The victim was not injured.

On February 25 at 1:03 a.m. in the 7600 block of Piney Branch Rd., an armed robbery occurred. The victim was approached by a subject who demanded his wallet and keys. The victim gave the suspect his wallet and keys, and the suspect fled the area. The victim was not injured.

**Escape Considerations for Mature Adults and the Disabled**

Many mature adults and disabled persons live with their families. Because they are older, they may have mobility limitations, which can limit their ability to escape a fire. They may also be at risk if there is a fire in the home. The following tips can help them plan a safe escape plan.

- **If you are a mature adult or a disabled person:**
  - Develop a fire escape plan.
  - Practice the plan at least once a year.
  - Make sure everyone in your household knows how to escape from your home.
  - Choose two escape routes from each room in case one is blocked or unsafe.
  - If a fire starts in your home, you should be able to escape within three minutes.
  - If you have a medical condition or disability that could make it difficult for you to escape a fire, you should talk to your doctor about what you can do to prepare for a fire.

- **If you are a mature adult or a disabled person:**
  - Practice the plan at least once a year.
  - Make sure everyone in your household knows how to escape from your home.
  - Choose two escape routes from each room in case one is blocked or unsafe.
  - If a fire starts in your home, you should be able to escape within three minutes.
  - If you have a medical condition or disability that could make it difficult for you to escape a fire, you should talk to your doctor about what you can do to prepare for a fire.

If Fire Breaks Out

If a fire breaks out in your home, you should do the following:

- **Avoid panicking:**
  - Stay calm and think clearly.
  - Call your local emergency services immediately.
  - If you have a fire alarm, it will sound and alert you to the fire.
  - If you do not have a fire alarm, it is important to know the location of all escape routes and exits.
  - If you do not have a fire alarm, it is important to know the location of all escape routes and exits.

- **Evacuate immediately:**
  - Leave your home as quickly as possible.
  - Do not re-enter your home until it is safe to do so.
  - If you have a fire alarm, it will sound and alert you to the fire.
  - If you do not have a fire alarm, it is important to know the location of all escape routes and exits.
  - If you do not have a fire alarm, it is important to know the location of all escape routes and exits.

- **Use a safe exit:**
  - Use the nearest exit, even if it means going through a window.
  - If you must use a window, break the glass with a rock or a piece of furniture.
  - If you must use a window, break the glass with a rock or a piece of furniture.

- **Go outside and stay outside:**
  - Once you are outside, go to a safe place and call 911 or your local emergency services.
  - If you do not have a fire alarm, it is important to know the location of all escape routes and exits.
  - If you do not have a fire alarm, it is important to know the location of all escape routes and exits.

- **Never go back inside:**
  - Never go back inside your home unless you have been told it is safe to do so.
  - If you do not have a fire alarm, it is important to know the location of all escape routes and exits.
  - If you do not have a fire alarm, it is important to know the location of all escape routes and exits.

**Welcome New Members**

At the Takoma Park Volunteer Fire Department March 8th membership meeting, the following were voted into membership:

- **Dugger, Michael**
  - Address: 3101 7th St. NW, Apt. 206
  - Phone: 202-232-6011
  - Email: mjdugg57@gmail.com

- **Higgins, Brandon**
  - Address: 3101 7th St. NW, Apt. 206
  - Phone: 202-232-6011
  - Email: bjhiggins@gmail.com

**Contact Information**

If you are interested in joining, please contact the fire station at 301-270-8209.
Buckle Up: It’s the Law

The statewide Childs’ Challenge, which emphasizes safety restraint enforcement, begins in April. More than 90 law enforcement agencies statewide will be conducting education and enforcement campaigns to increase seatbelt and other restraint compliance.

Seatbelt and safety guidelines

- **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: $48.
- Children, six years or younger, or 40 pounds or less, must be in a safety seat or belt-positioning booster seat.

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.**

Making Room for Stations of the Cross

On Friday, April 14, from about 12:30 - 3 p.m., intermittent road closures, detours, and delays will occur in association with the “Stations of the Cross” procession. Most of the closures will be short in duration but the potential for delays is likely. The sponsors, St. Camillus and Our Lady of Sorrows, anticipate 2,500 to 3,000 participants in the annual Good Friday event. The procession will begin about 12:30 p.m., following a mass at Our Lady of Sorrows, at New Hampshire Avenue and Larch. The route will include New Hampshire Avenue, In Takoma Park affected side streets will be Glenside and Wildwood Drive. The procession will begin about 12:30 p.m., following a mass at Our Lady of Sorrows, at New Hampshire Avenue and Larch. The route will include New Hampshire Avenue, In Takoma Park affected side streets will be Glenside and Wildwood Drive.

Tasteful Festival Scheduled at College

Tastes of Takoma at Columbia Union College is a free, family-oriented festival for the Takoma Park community and surrounding areas, organized by Columbia Union College students. Each year the Tastes of Takoma offers a fun opportunity to discover new and established businesses, non-profit organizations, bands, restaurants, and the talent of local craft vendors.

Free health screenings, the Acro-Airs acrobatic team routines, and fun for the little ones are included.

Anticipate street closures at Flower and Carroll on April 9 from midmorning until 6 p.m. as a result of the festival.

Arrest Made in Death Resulting from Home Burglary

Takoma Park Police arrested an 18-year-old Washington, D.C. man on numerous charges related to a nighttime home burglary in which a resident died. The suspect was charged with first degree homicide, armed robbery, two counts of first degree burglary, and assault. Death which results from commission of a burglary or robbery can be classified as murder.

Police allege that during the course of a burglary in the 7100 block of Maple Avenue, the suspect encountered several residents, showing a weapon and demanding property. The suspect reportedly struck the resident, who followed the fleeing suspect through the house.

The medical examiner ruled that James Saloma, 62, suffered a heart attack, aggravated by an assault, after confronting the suspect in the home at about 3 a.m., March 2. Officers, responding to an emergency summons, found Saloma unconscious and began CPR. Fire rescue personnel continued treatment and transported the victim to the hospital, where he was pronounced dead.

Within five minutes of the initial call, Takoma Park officers, from Sgt. Richard Bowyer’s Squad One, detained the suspect about two blocks away from the home. One officer was working on Eastern Avenue, near the Takoma Metro, at the time of the call. He responded establishing a watch at Maple and Carroll, directing another responding officer to the suspect on Laurel. Montgomery County canine and Metropolitan Police helicopters then responded to canvass the area for other possible suspects, with negative results.

The suspect was interviewed by Takoma Park detectives, who brought charges late that afternoon after consultation with the States Attorney Office. The investigation suggests the suspect, acting alone, entered the home at least twice during the night, through an unsecured door. During the second burglary, he awoke the residents.

Investigation has identified the suspect as the perpetrator of at least four of the five other burglaries in that block over the past five months. In several of those burglaries, the suspect encountered residents in their homes. One event took place after midnight, one in the morning and one in the afternoon. In all but one crime, entry to the homes was made through unsecured doors or windows.

A March 9 citizen meeting in the Old Takoma neighborhood discussed crime and safety issues including what residents can do for safety and the possibility of instituting a C-SAFE type initiative between Takoma Park and the District of Columbia.

Chief Cindy Cramer reiterated police services available to residents including home security surveys, Operation Identification, and the Neighborhood Safety Contact programs. In the area of vehicle theft protection, the Department offers low-cost steering wheel locks and the free Watch Your Car program.

Information on any of these is available from the COP Team at 301-891-7124.
RIP Out Invasives

Help is needed. The Removing Invasive Plants Program, RIP, needs general supporters, college students, retirees, or others with a few extra hours to fill on their weekends of choice. On-the-job training.

Event Coordinators

Outdoor types are needed to lead volunteers at plant removal events. Knowledge of plants unnecessary, but must be willing to learn. Work involves contacting the section leader, helping to lead the two-hour event, and reporting briefly afterward. Up to four events can be taken on per weekend.

Events will be held on many weekends from April to July and may be rescheduled in fall. Dates and times somewhat flexible. A good opportunity for those interested in environmental science, outreach, and community organizing, or in just helping the local environment. $15/hour.

Door-to-Door Representatives

Door knockers are needed to talk to, listen, and inform Sligo residents about the RIP project, and encourage participation. A friendly, outgoing personality is helpful. No knowledge of plants is needed. Late March to June; timing flexible. $10/hour. May be rescheduled in fall.

We would especially like to hire residents of the Sligo watershed. Please consider these local, help-the-environment jobs and pass the information to others. You’ll be doing the Park a favor! Reply to Sally Gagné, RIP Director. sgagne@erols.com 301-588-2071.

Elements in Crime

Removing Opportunity from the Equation

Means, motive and opportunity. These are the elements of any crime and may provide some clues to residents regarding crime and safety in Takoma Park.

Means: Does the suspect have the means, or method, to commit an act? For example, a suspect who possesses a master key or the knowledge of how to hot wire a vehicle has the means, or way, to steal a car. If a criminal steals property, does he or she have a way of converting it into cash?

Motive: Does the suspect have a motive for criminal activity? The motive, or reason, might be to support a drug habit, a craving for excitement, a desire to control others, or simply wanting money.

Opportunity: Is there an opportunity to commit the crime? Are conditions favorable not only to commit the crime, but to do so successfully?

As the community and police seek to be proactive in preventing crime, the most immediate impact can be found in one element of the three-part equation: opportunity. Everyone has some ability to limit the opportunities for successful crimes. Rehabilitating a criminal’s motive can be more complex and take longer, as can addressing underlying social problems.

A car running with keys in the ignition offers even the most inept criminal a chance to succeed in a vehicle theft. The thief’s lack of skill is balanced by the easy opportunity. As additional security is used, the opportunity decreases and the potential thief’s means must be greater. Locking a car is better than nothing and using a steering wheel lock (“the Club”) is even better.

In homes, an unsecured door or window offers great opportunity. Recently, a burglar told a Takoma Park detective that his target homes didn’t have curtains so all he had to do was look in and see if there was something he wanted. Unlocked doors made the entry easy and he returned to the same block several times.

Serial crimes can occur when the criminal’s motives are satisfied, as in that serial burglar’s case. Reducing opportunity is easier in property crimes, such as auto theft, burglary, and larceny. Theft of property from vehicles, a serious concern over the past year, can be reduced by owners not leaving valuables in vehicles.

Local experience suggests that in sequential crimes, such as street robberies, usually one suspect (or group) is responsible for numerous crimes rather than several different suspects each responsible for one crime. The suspect(s) returns to a crime and area in which they have been successful. Thus, a felon who has successfully robbed a pedestrian, sometimes returns repeatedly to the same locale to rob other similar individuals. The targets could be laborers walking in the Crossroads area or professionals commuting from the subway.

Reducing opportunity can be more difficult in robbery. The police will increase patrol in target areas when a crime pattern develops. While a suspect probably will not commit a crime in direct view of an officer, he or she can delay acting until the police cruiser leaves the block. (Commercial armed robberies have been committed within a block of where officers are running speed enforcement details.) Residents can help reduce robbery opportunities by using well-lighted, populated routes and paying attention to their surroundings.

Trash and Recycling Collection Schedule for 2006

Listed below are the remaining City Holidays that will affect collection. Please keep this so you will have easy reference throughout the year.

This schedule is also posted on the City’s website.

Memorial Day Monday, May 29
No yard waste collection
Monday recycling routes will be collected Tuesday.

Independence Day Tuesday, July 4
Tuesday trash and recycling routes will be collected Tuesday.

Labor Day Monday, September 4
No yard waste collection
Monday recycling routes will be collected Tuesday.

Veteran’s Day Friday, November 10
Friday’s trash and recycling routes will be collected Thursday.

Thanksgiving Thursday, November 23
Thursday’s routes will be collected on Wednesday.

Friday, November 24
Friday’s routes will be collected on Saturday.

Christmas Monday, December 25
No yard waste collection
Monday recycling routes will be collected Tuesday.

New Year’s Day Monday, January 1
No yard waste collection
Monday recycling routes will be collected Tuesday.

Co-op Celebrates 25th with Earth Day Event

Takoma Park Silver Spring Food Co-op celebrates its 25th anniversary at its annual Earth Day Festival

April 22
Free Food • Drinks • Games • Raffles
Moon Bounce • Balloons • Local Entertainment
Guests Speakers
Mayor Kathy Porter • Paul Hazen
Yard Sale 8 a.m. - 11 a.m.
Celebration Noon to 5 p.m.
201 Ethan Allen Ave
Play Ball! Sports Camps Gear Up for Summer

Celebrating its tenth year in Takoma Park, the home grown Takoma Sports Camps will again roll baseball, softball, and basketball into one summer with its one-sport-per-week formula for fun. With a focus on plenty of practice and lots of playing time, the camps are designed for kids who want to have a great time and improve their ball skills, too. The Sports Camps grew out of the Babe Ruth Baseball program, and carry on the tradition of a “rec” camp—any kid who likes to play is welcome, regardless of skill level. The goal here is to provide a local place for kids to be active, learn more skills, and have fun. Most senior staff are MCPS High School Coaches, and junior staff consists largely of college and high school players who attended the camps and played in the TPS Babe Ruth League.

Takoma Park Babe Ruth Baseball Camp... (co-ed) 
Monday-Friday, June 19 - 23 
June 26 - 30

Takoma Park Basketball Camp... (co-ed) 
Monday-Friday, July 30 - 31

Takoma Softball Camp... (girls) 
Monday-Friday, July 3 - 7 (no camp July 4)
July 10 - 14
July 17 - 21

Hours of Operation: 9 a.m. to 3:30 p.m.

Aftercare

Until 4 p.m. when Takoma Park Recreation Department’s aftercare program begins at Piney Branch Elementary School. A staff member escorts campers to Piney Branch Elementary School. Campers who will attend that Takoma Recreation Department program must also register with the Recreation Department: 301-891-7290.

Location

Takoma Park Middle School • 7611 Piney Branch Road • Takoma Park, Maryland

Ages: for baseball and softball camps: 6 (by Jan. 1) - 14 • for basketball camp: 7 - 14

Players are divided into groups by age for skills stations and games.

Fees: $170 per week for Baseball or Basketball camp $140 for Softball camp

After May 15 add $15 late registration fee

Activities

Mornings include warmups, skills stations, and games. After lunch and video, campers and staff challenge each other with sports trivia or “Stump the Coach.” Afternoon games are part of a week-long tournament. Every player competes in each of Friday’s Olympics as well as Tournament playoff games.

Camp Staff

Director Louis Hoelman teaches physical education and is the head varsity fastpitch softball coach at Montgomery Blair High School. He has also coached junior varsity basketball, cross country and field hockey at Blair. He taught physical education at Piney Branch Elementary School from 1993 to 1999, and was athletic director for the Silver Spring Boys and Girls Club from 1987 through 1993.

Director Sue Immerman is past commissioner of Takoma Park Babe Ruth Baseball and one of the founders of the Takoma Softball League. She is currently the administrator of Takoma Softball. In the off-season she is a cabi maker.

Financial aid

Takoma Sports Camps provides scholarships so that many kids can attend camp even if their families cannot pay. Approximately 15 percent of campers attend on scholarship.

Registration

Registration is accepted on a first-come, first-served basis. Download and print a registration form to mail in at: www.takomasports camps.org

Contacts

Camp information: Sue Immerman, 301-270-0534; sue@takomasports camps.org

Baseball Registration! Act Now - !

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 our registration form 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:

Friday, April 7 • 6 - 8:30 p.m.
or Saturday, April 8 • 6 - 8:30 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.

Speak with the Mayor

Have a meeting with Mayor Porter and let her know your issues and concerns. Meeting hours are every Wednesday, 11 a.m. to noon by appointment; and from 7:30 p.m. to 9:30 p.m. Walk-ins are welcome for the evening hours only. To schedule a meeting, contact Executive Assistant Peggy Forster at 301-891-7230 or peggyf@takomagov.org.

Takoma Park City TV

Events in April 2006

City TV will be releasing several new Folk Festival performances from the 2005 festival in April including The Wayfarers, plus ILYami. City TV crews taped the annual Jazz Band Brawl, held on “snow day” March 5 and will be releasing performances from that event by the end of the month. Also in the City TV edit room is the YES League Junior Varsity Championship which should be airing near the end of the month.

City TV crews will be covering the April 9 Taste of Takoma event held on the campus of Columbia College. We’ll also be sending crews to Arbor Day, Egg Hunt, Earth Day and Favorite Poem events, all wonderful Takoma Park celebrations of Spring!

Two new programs are added to the Special Events lineup. In recognition of Victim Assistance Month, a Spanish language program will air about the Montgomery County VASAP (Victim Assistance and Sexual Assault Program) featuring interviews with therapists and victims and describing services provided by this agency.

City TV will also air the documentary “Vortex I, A Biodegradable Festival of Life,” produced by the Clackamas County, Oregon government access channel. Vortex I was a rock festival held at McIver State Park in Clackamas County in August of 1970. At the height of the Vietnam era, President Richard Nixon was scheduled to speak at the American Legion convention to be held in Portland. Hoping to avoid a confrontation between thousands of anti-war protesters and those attending the convention, a group of anti-war activists and the state of Oregon orchestrated a way to keep the two groups separate: the late Governor Tom McCall ordered McIver Park to be used as a free rock festival.

Takoma Snapshots in April includes:

• Community Oriented Policing. Careers After Law Enforcement
• Jazz Band Brawl Highlights
• Takoma Park Poetry Series: Poems of Brian Gilmore and Kathleen O’Toole
• Honoring Lee Jordan: Montgomery County Office of Human Rights

Inducts Lee Jordan Into the Hall of Fame

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. Some City TV programming, including Council meetings, Snapshots and the bulletin board, is now available on the website as a live and archived webinar. All Council meetings and Snapshots episodes are also available for patron checkout at the Takoma Park Maryland Library. VHS Tapes of these shows, as well as other Takoma Park City TV events, may be purchased for $15 (pick up) or $18 (mail). Some programs are now available in DVD. Call 301-891-7118 or send an email to: cabletv@takomagov.org for more information.

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Recreation Continued from page 6

Non-Resident $75

Art and Crafts

Bright Minds

Science for Young Explorers

Ages 1 1/2 - 3 1/2
Sciences are the gift to the lab, it can come alive for your child everyday. Introduce your young child to basic science concepts in this fun and hands-on class. Children will explore cause and effect, how colors change, the magical properties of cornstarch and much more! The best way to ensure hands-on safe experiences that will help your child explore the marvels of our world. Come ready for a fun and messy time. Parent resources will be provided to continue the exploration at home. There is a materials fee of $15 due to the instructor the first day of class. Maximum 12, minimum five. Six weeks. Instructor Kirsten Sandberg-DaSilva.

When: Fridays, April 22 - June 3
Time: 10 a.m.
Location: Azalea Room, T. P. Community Center, 7500 Maple Avenue
Fees: T. P. City Resident $65
Non-Resident $75

“First School” Choice

Looking for the right preschool for your child’s first learning experience? Wondering what makes a good preschool? This class will help you answer these and many other questions. The class will be designed to help you find the best preschool for your child. While we have a lot of experience and knowledge about preschools, our goal is to help you find the best match for your child. When: Fridays, April 22 - June 3
Time: 10 a.m.
Location: Azalea Room, T. P. Community Center, 7500 Maple Avenue
Fees: T. P. City Resident $65
Non-Resident $75

Supporting Social Development

We all want our children to play well with others, but how do we create positive group experiences for our young children? This session will provide information about age-appropriate expectations and ways to successfully group and teach children. This session will be led by Dr. Karen M. Diskin and Dr. Mark D. Ritter, with assistance from Kirsten Sandberg-DaSilva.

When: Wednesday, March 29
Time: 7:30 - 8:30 p.m.
Location: Community Center, 7500 Maple Avenue
Fees: T. P. City Resident $25
Non-Resident $30

Jazzercise

Jazzercise is a great mix of jazz and combined with the artistic expression of jazz dance. Each 60/70 minute class includes easy to follow, fun aerobics and Jazz dance movements for muscle strength, and stretching exercises. A warm-up precedes the aerobics and a cool-down follows. It is a great way to beat the heat and prepare for the up coming spring/york.

When: Fridays, Mondays, Saturdays beginning April 3 (ongoing)
Fees: T. P. City Resident $25
Non-Resident $30

Active for Life® Coming to Takoma Park!

Active for Life®, an easy, enjoyable, 13-week program to help less active but healthy adults ages 50 and older increase physical activity, is coming to the Takoma Park Community Center on Mondays, April 3 - July 20, 2006, 10:30 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. to room. Active for Life® is an alternative to exercise classes and gyms for midlife and older adults who have difficulty finding time for physical activity, have tried other methods without success, do not like exercise classes or gyms, and need motivation, direction, and accountability.

Participants must be at least 50 years old with no maximum age; generally healthy adults who increase walking substantially and are not currently engaged in moderately intensive physical activity more than two days a week. For more information and to see if you qualify, please call the Active for Life® Center of the National Capital Region at 301-255-4025.

Children's Ceramics Classes

Ages 6 - 12
This class is for those seeking to learn the basics of ceramic art. Students will be introduced to hand building or throwing on the potter’s wheel. Space is limited. $75 for the potter’s wheel sign up only. All students will learn about wheel correct tools and controls and the use of tools for making this difficult decision about which school to pick. Instructors Ali- cus Sar and Kirsten Sandberg-DaSilva.

When: Wednesday, April 5
Time: 7:30 - 9 p.m.
Location: Community Center, 7500 Maple Avenue
Fees: T. P. City Resident $125
Non-Resident $150

Beginning Ceramics

Ages 16 and older
This class is for those seeking to learn the basics of ceramic art. Students will be introduced to hand building or throwing on the potter’s wheel. Space is limited. $75 for the potter’s wheel sign up only. All students will learn about wheel correct tools and controls and the use of tools for making this difficult decision about which school to pick. Instructors Ali- cus Sar and Kirsten Sandberg-DaSilva.

When: Wednesday, April 5
Time: 7:30 - 9 p.m.
Location: Community Center, 7500 Maple Avenue
Fees: T. P. City Resident $125
Non-Resident $150

Community Center Construction to Temporarily Disrupt Meeting Locations

By Suzanne Ludlow, Community and Government Liaison

Between approximately April 11 and May 5, Community Center construction activities will change some ways to ac- cess the building and cause a number of public meetings to move, including City Council meetings.

Phase II construction activities are coming to a close and it is necessary to bridge the previously completed areas with the areas currently under construc- tion. The center of this work is the old City Hall lobby where the elevator is located. During this time period, neither the Community Center Auditorium (where the City Council meets) nor the elevator will be available for public meetings to be moved.

The Takoma Park City Council will meet at the Takoma Park Middle School on the first Thursday of each month for its meetings of April 17, April 24, and May 1. Most Board, Committee and Commission meetings will be held in rooms in the Community Center as the Auditorium will also be moved during the construction period. Please contact the City Clerk at 301-891-7267 for meeting location information.

Handicapped accessibility restricted

Because the Grant Avenue entrance to the building will be closed and the eleva-