

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

# Takoma Park

## NEWSLETTER

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April 2006

## 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 city 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 post 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.

"Anyone who came in and wanted to put in a business would have to petition to have it rezoned," she says.

The property is zoned R-60, which means that any new lot on the property would have to be a minimum of 6,000 square feet. Given that the property's total square footage is 33,846, the maximum number of lots on the property would be five. Across the street, besides a row of relatively new townhomes, a new commercial development is underway, and city council is considering development along New Hampshire Avenue just a block away.

The zoning restrictions make a strong candidate to purchase the VFW property a church, nonprofit or another community organization.

The latter would make the most fitting replacement given the VFW's history, according to Nellie Moxley, longtime resident and president of the Pinecrest Community Association.

"How could anyone think about it being anything but a nonprofit or community resource?" she asks, noting that the VFW was always willing to help the neighborhood and the city.

Moxley has worked in tandem with the VFW in many configurations over the years. For many years, the Post has served as the site for the monthly meetings of the Pinecrest Community Association and has been actively involved with other community organizations, as well.

"They have been instrumental in the Takoma Branch cleanups, neighborhood activities, [community] awards. They have represented us and marched in the parades," Moxley says.

Fales echoes Moxley's theme. "We used to present the Firefighter of the Year, gave awards to police officers, lots of things. We have always been very active in the community," he says.

That activity extended beyond financial assistance. The building itself has served as kind of a community center over the years. In addition to the monthly community association meetings, the first Monday of each month the building turns into a concert hall, hosting the monthly jam session of the DC Bluegrass Union.

In fact, music at the venue has been one of its greatest contributions. Over the years, the Post has hosted many barbecues, crabfeasts, Fourth of July events and the like, almost all featuring live music —



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

bluegrass to blues to soul.

"It's a relic and a resource and it's got a lot of past," Moxley says.

Barring unexpected events, it's unlikely the VFW will be able to remain in the location it has called home since 1966. Selling and purchasing a less expensive building somewhere else seems like the only option at this point.

"If we could get a lot of new members, we could generate enough revenue to stay," Fales says. But he isn't counting on it.

"We sent out hundreds of letters to eligible members, including Korean War veterans who are now eligible, and we



Post Commander Richard Fales relaxes at the VFW, a gathering place for veterans.

didn't generate any interest," he says.

Resigned to selling, Fales has an ideal buyer in mind.

"If the city wanted to buy it that would be great. We'd love to sell it to them." Stay tuned.

*Editor's note: Author Rick Henry lives across the street from the VFW.*

## Keeping Mercury Out of The Environment

By Tim Male  
Takoma Park Committee  
on 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 mer-

cury: 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, and Senate Bill 1006 providing for removal of mercury-containing light and brake switches from vehicles being scrapped.

Although some mercury occurs naturally in the environment, about two-thirds of mercury results from human activity. It is released by coal-burning power plants and industrial incinerators and is used in thermometers, dental fillings, fluorescent light bulbs, and batteries. In Maryland, approximately 2,300 pounds of mercury were emitted into the air in 2002. Coal-fired power plants in Maryland are the state's top source of mercury pollution. The Maryland Conservation Council states that just by installing the best available control technology, Maryland could reduce mercury emissions from power plants by 90 percent.

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

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

ECRWSS  
 POSTAL CUSTOMER

Photos by Rick Henry

## CITY COUNCIL CALENDAR

(Please 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)

**Tuesday, April 18** - Meeting of the Arts and Humanities Commission, 7:30 p.m. (Location TBA)

**Thursday, April 20** - Meeting of the Noise Control Board, 7:30 p.m. (Location TBA)

**Monday, April 24** - Regular Meeting and Worksession of the City Council, 7:30 p.m. (Takoma Park Middle School)

**Wednesday, April 26** - Meeting of the Public Safety Citizens Advisory Committee, 6:30 p.m. (Location TBA)

**Thursday, April 27** - 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.

## 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 web page. If you are interested in serving on this committee, contact your City Council member 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](mailto: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](mailto:JessieC@takomagov.org). Further information is available by contacting the City Clerk's Office at 301-891-7267.



For further information, or to receive a copy of the legislation, contact the City Clerk's office, 301-891-7267 or e-mail [clerk@takomagov.org](mailto:clerk@takomagov.org).

### 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 accepted at first reading, authorizing FY06 Budget Amendment No. 4 (VOTING FOR: Porter, Barry, Elrich, Seamens, Williams; AGAINST: Austin-Lane; ABSENT: Clay).

**Ordinance 2006-8** was accepted at first 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 2006-3** was adopted at second reading, awarding a contract for a wage survey and compensation study (VOTING FOR: Porter, Austin-Lane, Barry, Elrich, Seamens, Williams; ABSENT: Clay).

**Ordinance 2006-2** was adopted at second reading, expanding the membership of the Emergency Preparedness Committee (VOTING FOR: Porter, Austin-Lane, Barry, Elrich, Seamens, Williams; ABSENT: Clay).

### February 21 - Special Session

**Resolution 2006-10** 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 8435 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 accepted at first reading, authorizing a transfer of land to Montgomery County for the Fire Station rear parking area (VOTING FOR: Porter, Austin-Lane, Barry, Elrich, Seamens, Williams; ABSENT: Clay).

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

**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 2006-10** was accepted at first reading, authorizing a contract for financial and accounting services (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).

### March 6 - Special Session

**Resolution 2006-13** was adopted, commenting on the proposed East Hampshire Development (VOTING FOR: Porter, Austin-Lane, Barry, Clay, Elrich, Seamens, Williams).

**Ordinance 2006-11** was adopted, authorizing a contract for City cell phones (VOTING FOR: Porter, Austin-Lane, Barry, Clay, Elrich, Seamens, Williams).

## Notification of Public Hearing on Rent Stabilization

Takoma Park 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

7500 Maple Avenue, Takoma Park MD 20912

or by email at [Clerk@takomagov.org](mailto:Clerk@takomagov.org).

For more information, please contact

Linda Walker (301-891-7222) or Sara Anne Daines (301-891-7224)

Mark Your  
Calendar!

## ARBOR DAY

Saturday, April 8, 2006

10:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m. on the Library grounds

Annual Tree Seeding Give-Away!

For more information, contact the Public Works Department at 301-891-7633.

## COLTA's Corner



By Jean Kerr, Housing Specialist

The Commission on Landlord Tenant Affairs (COLTA) recently approved several capital improvement petitions for rental properties in Takoma Park. COLTA also decided on an objection filed on an approved capital improvement petition. The following appear in order of their petition numbers:

### Capital Improvement Petitions

#### 7106-7108 Maple Avenue (2005-95L)

On February 16, 2006, a capital improvement petition was approved for a rent increase of \$6.18 on one unit. The improvement included replacing the kitchen faucet.

#### 7106-7108 Maple Avenue (2006-1L)

On February 16, 2006, a capital improvement petition was approved for a rent increase of \$78.33 on one unit. The improvements included install-

ing subflooring, new vinyl flooring, and replacing the toilet.

#### 8309 Roanoke Avenue (2006-4L)

On February 22, 2006, a capital improvement petition was approved for rent increases ranging from \$8.18 to \$12.59 on three units at the property. The improvements included installation of new electrical panels and a/c receptacles.

All increases are in addition to the annual Rent Stabilization Allowance in effect at the time the increases are taken.

### Objection resolved

#### 700 Chaney Drive (2005-45L)

On February 13, 2006, COLTA issued a decision on objections filed by a tenant on a Preliminary Administrative Decision (PAD). The landlord filed a capital improvement rent increase petition and sought a rent increase to recover the cost of installing 56 replacement windows and dedicated circuits for the air conditioning units. COLTA granted the landlord a monthly rent increase of \$162.69 for the windows and \$51.91 for the electrical upgrades, both of which were allocated between the apartments in the property based on square footage. A tenant filed objections to the decision that the allocation of the windows and electrical upgrades were unfair and inconsistent with the

Commission's regulations. The tenant further suggested different methods of allocating the rent increase for the windows that would be more accurate than the square footage method applied by the Rents Analyst. COLTA found that the Rents Analyst's allocation of the rent increases for the windows and electrical improvements based on square footage of each apartment was consistent with the Code and the Commission's Regulations. COLTA further found that the facts of this case do not warrant utilizing a different method of allocating the cost of the windows. COLTA ordered that the decision is affirmed and that the landlord shall serve a copy of the order upon the tenants of each unit within 10 days of the date of this order along with a notice of the amount of back rent accrued, if any, since the effective date of the rent increase awarded pursuant to the PAD. COLTA also ordered that each tenant either pay the back rent accrued since the effective date of the rent increases awarded for his or her unit or commence making monthly payments of at least \$50 toward the back rent accrued on his or her apartment during his or her tenancy until the accrued back rent is paid in full.

**Deadline for Submissions:**  
**April 10**  
**Next Issue:**  
**April 21**

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

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

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

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

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To contact the editor e-mail:  
[tpnewseditor@takomagov.org](mailto:tpnewseditor@takomagov.org)

## Housing Mailbox

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

*A landlord wants to know what the Takoma Park Landlord-Tenant Law says about rent that is paid late. The landlord also wants to know if a pet fee may be charged to a tenant who acquired a dog after the lease was signed?*

Answer: The assessment of late fees is governed by Section 6.16.190 of the city Landlord-Tenant Law which indicates that a late fee may be charged if the rent is received ten days after the rent due date. The late fee may not exceed 5 percent of the rent due for the rental period. Late charges are considered as additional rent and acceptance of such payment does not constitute a waiver of the requirement

that rent is usually due on the first day of the month. The landlord retains the right to initiate legal proceedings for rent, damages and/or repossession of the rental unit for nonpayment of any installment of rent when it becomes due and payable. **The ten day late period is not a grace period.**

In instances in which the lease is silent about pets the prevailing view is that a tenant may have one without being charged a pet fee. Where the lease indicates that pets are allowed for an additional fee such a fee may be charged by the landlord. The city has established pursuant to Administrative Regulation Number 03-06, III that the maximum monthly pet fee for a dog or cat may not exceed \$25 per month. Regarding the pet acquired after the lease was signed Section 6.16.100 of the city law indicates that a pet fee may be assessed to a tenant in the event

the pet is obtained following the signing of the initial lease or lease renewal if the lease indicates such a fee will be charged for allowing a pet. Some landlords impose a pet deposit instead of a monthly pet fee and may indicate in their lease that the pet deposit is refundable at the end of the tenancy. The prevailing view is that a refundable pet deposit is treated like the rental security deposit and accrues interest (3 percent per year) over the term of the tenancy. Like the rental security deposit the pet deposit plus accrued interest would be returned to the former tenant within 45 days after the tenancy ends if no pet damage to the rental unit has occurred.

Questions about the city Landlord-Tenant Law should be directed to the Housing Department's Landlord-Tenant Unit by calling 301-891-7215 or to [MosesW@takomagov.org](mailto:MosesW@takomagov.org).

## Properties Due for Tax Assessments

By Linda Walker  
Affordable Housing Manager

Many City of Takoma Park homeowners are scheduled to have their properties re-assessed this year. The Maryland State Department of Assessment and Taxation assesses one-third of all properties in Montgomery County each year. These new assessments are then phased in over the following three years.

Property owners sometimes feel that the department's estimate of their property value is wrong. The assessment 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 work-

sheet, 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.

Homeowners and renters who have limited incomes may also want to see if they qualify for the State's Property Tax Credit Programs. The programs must be applied for each year by the homeowner or renter and information regarding gross household income for the previous calendar year has to be submitted. The tax credit does not cover the full

amount of the property tax, but is a credit against the property tax owed. Persons receiving a State tax credit automatically receive a credit on County and City taxes as well. The deadline for submitting an application for 2006 is September 1, 2006. Applications can be obtained at [www.dat.state.md.us](http://www.dat.state.md.us) or by calling Linda Walker at 301-891-7222. For further information on the property assessment process, you may contact the State of Maryland Department of Assessments and Taxation at 300 W. Preston Street, Baltimore, Maryland 21201, 410-767-1199 or at [www.dat.state.md.us](http://www.dat.state.md.us).

# 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 carrying 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 gar-

dens. 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.

Generally planted with water-absorbing native plants capable of withstanding periods of flood and drought, a typical rain garden is a shallow four- to eight-inch depression over permeable soils capable of draining quickly. An effective garden is strategically located to collect, filter, and

infiltrate runoff from hard surfaces like driveways, streets, or roofs.

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,



Photo by Ali Khalilian

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.

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. The return is the satisfaction of having done your part to protect water resources as well as an attractive addition to your property and the community.

## Mercury

continued from front page

When mercury is released into the air, it quickly settles back to earth and finds its way into water. Once there, it moves up the food chain to fish and eventually to people. For comparison, it takes about 0.002 pounds of mercury to make the fish in a 24-acre lake unsafe for human consumption. The Maryland Department of the Environment has issued mercury-based recommendations on limiting the amount of fish consumed from all rivers and lakes in Maryland.

This issue hits close to home -- scientific testing by the Mercury Policy Project reported enough mercury in one sample of swordfish bought at a Whole Foods supermarket in Anne Arundel County that the FDA could have required the supermarket to remove it from sale. The Takoma Park Silver Spring Food Coop also posts mercury warnings near its freezers. California law requires supermarkets to post warnings of the kinds of fish pregnant and nursing women and young children should not consume.

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 neurological problems caused by exposure to mercury while in the womb.

The Committee on the Environment is encouraging concerned residents to contact state representatives and indicate support of mercury-limiting legislation. But there are other things people can do to protect themselves from mercury in the environment.

Making wise choices at the supermarket can have a big impact in reducing exposure. The Food and Drug Adminis-



Manager Bob Atwood stands beside mercury warnings at the Co-op fish case.

tration (FDA) has set 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.gotmercury.org](http://www.gotmercury.org) -- to gauge whether your consumption of different fish is exposing you or your children to dangerous levels of mercury. The Monterey Bay Aquarium [http://www.mbayaq.org/cr/cr\\_seafoodwatch/download.asp](http://www.mbayaq.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. Maine, Arkansas, and New Jersey have all passed mercury legislation requiring that mercury in old cars be recycled before they are melted down for scrap. Mercury switches have been phased out of new cars, but a 1995 study estimated that up to 200 tons of mercury is in older cars still on the road. The committee is hoping the proposed legislation and an awareness in the community will help address this continuing problem.

## 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 6.20.020 of the Takoma Park Code and the departmental regulations requires that the Allowance be set as follows:

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

The 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:

### Current Year CPI-U

March 2005 .....	122.7
May 2005 .....	123.6
July 2005 .....	125.0
September 2005 .....	126.7
November 2005 .....	125.4
January 2006 .....	126.3

### Average Current Year CPI-U (3/05-1/06) .....

124.9	
Previous Year CPI-U	
March 2004 .....	118.1
May 2004 .....	118.9
July 2004 .....	120.2
September 2004 .....	120.8
November 2004 .....	120.9
January 2005 .....	121.3

### Average Previous Year CPI-U (3/04-1/05) ....

120.0

### Index Point Change

Average Current Year CPI-U .....	124.9
Less Average Previous Year CPI-U .....	120.0
Equals Index Point Change .....	4.9

### Percent Change

Index Point Difference .....	4.9
Divided by Average Previous Year .....	120.0
Equals .....	0.04
Results Multiplied by 100 .....	0.04 x 100
Equals Percent Change in CPI-U .....	4.0 percent
70% of the Percent Change in CPI-U .....	4.0 percent x 70 percent
Equals Rent Stabilization Allowance .....	2.8 percent

(July 1, 2006 - June 30, 2007)

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.SaraD@takomagov.org](http://www.SaraD@takomagov.org) by April 25, 2006.

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

If you have home thermometers 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!



# Routing Rats from the City

By Bob Guldin

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 out a veritable welcome mat for these reviled rodents. Unsecured trash, dog feces, pizza boxes, birdseed, and compost create an alluring feast that helps rats survive and multiply.

"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 left-over pizza." Populations tend to peak in the spring and fall, she says, so keep an eye out as you prepare your yard for warmer weather this month.

Both the City of Takoma Park and Montgomery County offer some help to residents with rat problems – but both insist that the primary responsibility for rat control rests with the property owner. "We'll work with property owners, providing information on how to address their rat concerns as well as referring people to the county," says Sara Daines, director of economic and community development for the City. "Unfortunately, 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 environmental health specialist, says the county will investigate rat problems and advise property owners on abatement. 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 ratproof bin, not plastic that rats (and squirrels) can chew through. This also applies to garbage cans containing food waste.
- For ratproofing 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 these.
- 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 to 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 commercial dumpster. When apartment buildings, restaurants and fast food vendors use dumpsters, there's often spillage, especially when the dumpster is emptied.

## 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 oversize 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 diphacinone, usually used at .2 percent. But this rodenticide is not available to homeowners – only to certified pest control companies. If you do have a bad problem, especially with rats inside your home, you may want to call in professional help.

*This article originally appeared in the Oct 2004 newsletter. It was edited for current use.*

## 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**

# Sligo Creek Tiles — A Signature Art

By Joy 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 home-grown tile design and production company, found in Humes' home right on Carroll Avenue.

Started by John and Lynne Hume in 1997, Sligo Creek Tile Company specializes in ceramic tile that is right in tune with Takoma Park aesthetics. Taking 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 Arts and Crafts-style pottery and tile. When John and Lynne took a class in tile making and design at the former Maryland Art Institute, they knew they were hooked. They eventually left their previous careers – John was a construction engineer and Lynn in finance – and formed their company. As the business has evolved, Lynne handles the business side of things while John is in charge of design and 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 waterproof, making them ideal for both practical and decorative uses, including fireplace surrounds, backsplashes, borders, tree ornaments, and trivets. The clay medium readily lends itself to carving, so the variety of images that can be worked into a tile is infinite.

"If 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 whiskers in the business, and says that cats make 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, meant to teach kids the perils of eating too many sweets, or girls roughhousing 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



John Hume holds his cat, Lila, in front of a collection of historic files.

Photo by V.M. Kelly

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. Lynne and I get 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](http://www.sligocreek.com) to view the extensive online catalogue and for ordering information.

# RECREATION

## 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.

## 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 will accompany adventurers who wander around the history of the Three Kingdoms wearing a hanbok. Young naval strategists will make a "turtle boat" and those entranced by the wind will fly kites. Paint temples and royal palaces in the morning and then practice Tae Kwon Do 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 Hours 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 Bling

### Ages Middle - High School Students

Spring Bling is a host of activities from April 10 to 17 that will encourage the students to get out and be active over the break. Each event is on a first come first serve basis. Priority given to T.P. residents. Signed permission slips and waiver forms required. All trips will meet in the T. P. Community Center, 7500 Maple Avenue.

Trip: Caving in Shepardstown, WV for grades 6-8  
When: Monday, April 10  
Time: 8:30 a.m. - 5 p.m.  
Fee: T.P. City Resident \$5  
Maximum number of participants 13.  
Trip: White Water Rafting, Harper's Ferry, WV for grades 9-12  
When: Tuesday, April 11  
Time: 8 a.m. - 5 p.m.  
Fee: T.P. City Resident \$5  
Maximum number of participants is 13.  
Trip: Movie Day  
When: Wednesday, April 12  
T.P. Recreation Center,  
7315 New Hampshire Avenue  
Time: Grades 6 - 8 10 a.m. - 12:30 p.m.  
Grades 9 - 12 Noon - 3 p.m.  
Fee: T.P. City Resident Free  
Non-Resident \$5  
Maximum number of participants 50.  
Trip: Pool Party  
When: Thursday, April 13  
Time: 11 a.m. - 5:30 p.m.  
Where: P.G. Sports & Learning Complex  
Fee: \*\$3 for same day registration  
Middle and High School Students  
\*Free if registered by 5 p.m. on 4/12  
Maximum number of participants is 40.  
Trip: Ocean City, MD for grades 9-12  
When: Friday, April 14  
Time: 8:30 a.m. 8 p.m.  
Fee: T.P. City Resident \$5  
Maximum number of participants is 12.

**Please Note:** This information has been updated and replaces the information printed in the Spring-Summer Guide.

## Takoma Park Tennis Clinic

Net cord! Think deep. The sanctity of deuce. Learn what these seemingly random phrases mean as you perfect your backhand at the Takoma Park Recreation Department Tennis Clinic. This program is for beginning

and intermediate players. Please bring your own racket and water bottle. In case of rain, classes will be made up, if possible. If you do not own a racket, the Recreation Department will provide one for the clinic. Five weeks. Instructor, Alex McDonnell.

### Grades 2-3

When: Mondays, April 24 - May 22  
Time: Session 1 3:45 - 4:45 p.m.  
Session 2 4:45 - 5:45 p.m.  
Location: Takoma Park Middle School  
Outdoor Courts, 7611 Piney Branch Road  
Fee: T.P. City Resident \$20/session  
Non-Resident \$30/session

### Grades 4-5

When: Wednesdays, April 19 - May 17  
Time: Session 1 3:45 - 4:45 p.m.  
Session 2 4:45 - 5:45 p.m.  
Rain date: May 24.

### Grades 6-8

When: Fridays, April 21 - May 19  
Time: Session 1 3:45 - 4:45 p.m.  
Session 2 4:45 - 5:45 p.m.  
Rain Date: May 26

## Takoma Park 6 v. 6 Outdoor Soccer Clinic

### Grades 1-5

Kick the ball into the net. Run around with your shirt over your head. Learn the fundamentals of this beautiful game every Tuesday and Thursday at Hodges Field, behind Takoma Park Elementary. In case of nasty weather, this program will be canceled. Bring a water bottle. Five weeks.

When: Tuesdays and Thursdays,  
April 18 - May 18  
Time: Grades 1-3 3:45 - 4:45 p.m.  
Grades 4-5 4:45 - 5:45 p.m.  
Location: Takoma Park Elementary School,  
7511 Holly Avenue  
Fee: T.P. City Resident \$15  
Non-Resident \$20

## Adult Coed Softball League

### Ages 16 and up

Calling all Sultans of Swat, Bronx Bombers, Gashouse Gangs, Big Red Machines and Little Blue Bicycles: Have fun, play long ball and get some exercise all at the same time playing in the venerable Takoma Park Coed Softball League. Team registration only. Roster limit 25. Sunday Doubleheader Schedule. Roster must consist of at least 50 percent T.P. residents to qualify for Resident entry fee. Individuals interested in joining a team should



## Annual Egg Hunt 2006

### 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.

### Saturday, April 8

(Rain Date: April 15)

### 11 a.m. Sharp

Ed Wilhelm Field - 7510 Maple Ave.  
(behind Piney Branch Elementary)

Free

call the Recreation Department to be put on a list for teams that need extra players. Deadline for registration is April 7.

When: Sundays, April 23 - July 16  
Time: 9 a.m. - 1 p.m.  
Location: Ed Wilhelm, Lee Jordan and Green Meadows Fields  
Fee: T.P. City Resident Team \$475  
Non-Resident Team \$575

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

No program May 14 and May 28.

Double-elimination tournament July 9 and 16.

## The Actors Workshop

Directed by Peggy Yates, is a training program geared for beginning actors of all ages. It is designed to encourage artistic growth and confidence in a supportive setting.

## Take the Stage

### Grades 2-5

Are you ready for a fun filled theatrical adventure? Learn the fundamentals of acting by playing games, improvising, scene work, monologues and creating an ensemble with your fellow actors. No experience necessary. Directed by the founder of the Actor's Workshop, Peggy Yates, a Helen Hayes Award nominated actress with over 20 years experience on stage and screen and ten years of teaching experience. Seven weeks. Maximum of 15, minimum of eight.

When: Mondays, April 24 - June 12  
Time: 3:30 - 5:30 p.m.

Location: Auditorium,  
T.P. Community Center, 7500 Maple Avenue  
Fee: T.P. City Resident \$90  
Non-Resident \$100  
No class on May 29.

## Make a Scene

### Grades 6-10

Calling all actors! Come collaborate on bringing a scene to life. You will work with published text as well as original material and discover your performance potential. No

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 of eight.

When: Fridays, April 21 - June 9  
Time: 3:30 - 5:30 p.m.  
Location: Auditorium, T.P. Community Center, 7500 Maple Avenue  
Fee: T.P. City Resident \$100  
Non-Resident \$110

## White Water Rafting on the Shenandoah River

### (Class II-III Rapids) - Ages 8 - older\*

Join the Takoma Park Recreation Department as it tames the mighty Shenandoah River. With the help of the expert river guides from the Blue Ridge Outfitters we will embark on the final section of the river before it merges with the Potomac. No experience is needed. All necessary equipment will be supplied by the outfitters. Limited space. Trip length six miles: three to four hours depending upon river level.

When: Sunday, April 9  
Departure: The van will depart from the T. P. Community Center, 7500 Maple Avenue at noon.  
Return: 7:30 p.m. (Approximately)  
Fee: T.P. Residents \$50  
Non Residents \$60

Registration Deadline: Friday March 31.  
\*All participants under the age of 18 must be accompanied by an adult.

## Montessori Morning 1

### Ages 1-1/2 - 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 with each session. There is a \$20 materials fee paid to the instructor the first day of class. Maximum 12, minimum five. 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 as a certified Montessori teacher guides exploration of sensory, fine motor, pre-reading, pre-writing, and pre-math Montessori activities. This class can be an introduction to the Montessori environment or an extension for those who have attended Montessori Morning I. 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 five. 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 1-1/2 - 3-1/2

Combine a young child's love for hands-on cooking with age appropriate pre-math skill building activities. Measuring, sorting, proportion and counting are some of the concepts that we will explore as we cook up fun and tasty foods. Parent resources will be provided each session. 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: Wednesdays, April 26 - May 31  
Time: 10 - 11 a.m.  
Location: T.P. Community Center, 7500 Maple Ave.  
Fee: T.P. City Resident \$65

Continued on page 12



With guidance from Alice Sims and Melinda Furch, seniors in Arts for the People make ceramic tiles to be installed in the community center art room.

Photos by: O. Disent

## At Home With Poetry Forms

From haiku to villanelle, from litany to sestina, 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 conceit 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 form. Rosanne Singer, a long-time Takoma Park resident, has been a Maryland Poet-in-the-Schools for 15 years, travelling the state 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 literary. 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 on-going 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.

# LIBRARY

## 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@cuc.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.

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.

## 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, 7-8:30 p.m. (See story)

### D & D for the Uninitiated

Wednesday, April 19, 7 p.m.

### 8th Annual Favorite Poem Evening

Thursday, April 20, 7:30 p.m.,  
At the Library - Don Berger hosts (see story)

### Spring Session of the Twosies

For two-year-olds and parent or caregiver  
Preregistration 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.



### 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, plus two to four years of progressively responsible related experience, or any 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-Robbins at the Takoma Park Maryland Library 101 Philadelphia Ave., Takoma Park, MD 20912. This position is open until filled. —EOE

# THE CRIME REPORT

This blotter is not intended to be inclusive of all crime and arrests reported to the Takoma Park Police Department

Prepared by: Lt. Richard Cipperly

## Robbery

**On February 11 at 10:19 p.m. in the 100 block of Lee Ave.,** an armed robbery was attempted. An adult male was trying to make a food delivery to an apartment when the apartment occupant told him no one there had ordered food. As the victim walked out two subjects, one armed with a handgun, accosted him. The victim was able to re-enter the building and the subjects fled on foot. The victim was not injured.

**On February 15 at 10:42 p.m. in the 7100 block of Maple Ave.,** an armed robbery occurred. A juvenile male walking alone noticed a group of males walking behind him and another group a short distance ahead of him. Both groups surrounded the victim. One subject implied he had a gun then others began punching the victim and kicked him after he fell to the ground. The subjects pulled the victim's coat off then fled. The victim refused medical treatment for minor injuries.

**On February 15 at 8:40 p.m. in the 6500 block of New Hampshire Ave.,** an armed robbery occurred. An adult male was in the parking lot behind his business preparing to close when a subject approached him, put a gun against the back of his head and demanded money. When the victim told the subject he didn't have any money on him, the subject took the victim's keys and ordered him to get cash from inside the business while he waited outside, which the victim did. The subject walked away after the victim handed over cash. The victim was not injured.

**On February 16 at 3 p.m. in the 6400 block of 5th Ave.,** an armed robbery occurred. A male juvenile was approached by subjects in a light red car. Two subjects got out of the car, one demanded the victim's wallet while the other implied he had a gun. A third subject remained in the car. When the victim told them he did not have a wallet, they took his cell phone, got back in the car and drove off. The victim was not injured.

**On February 16 at 3:03 p.m. in the 6700 block of Poplar Ave.,** an armed robbery occurred. An adult male standing outside his house was approached by two subjects who ran up to him and demanded his wallet while one implied he had a gun. The two then got into a burgundy four-door Acura where a third subject waited and fled. The victim had seen these subjects and vehicle in front of his house earlier, looking at another parked vehicle before leaving the scene. He was able to get a tag number of the suspect vehicle which was found to have been reported stolen in DC during an armed car jacking. The victim was not injured.

**On February 18 at 7:20 p.m. in the 8400 block of Flower Ave.,** a strong arm robbery occurred. An adult female was walking when she was approached by three subjects. One pushed her to the ground, grabbed her purse, and fled on foot with the other two. The victim refused medical treatment for a minor injury.

**On February 27 at 9:05 p.m. in the 6500 block of New Hampshire Ave.,** an armed robbery was attempted. An adult male leaving his workplace in his car was approached by a subject who attempted to

open the passenger side door. When he could not open the door, he approached another employee taking trash out, displayed a handgun and demanded money. When the first victim saw what was happening, he tried to run over the subject with his car, but the subject jumped out of the way and fled on foot. Neither victim was injured, no property was taken.

**On March 3 at 5:35 p.m. in the 6400 block of Fifth Ave.,** an armed robbery occurred. Two out of four suspects approached an adult male, displayed a handgun and demanded property. The suspect vehicle was described as a Ford Crown Victoria displaying unknown DC registration.

**On March 8 at 12 p.m. in the 400 block of Elm Ave.,** an attempted armed robbery occurred. An adult female walking down the street was approached by a black jeep with tinted windows. Two of four suspects exited the vehicle, displayed handguns, and demanded property. The suspects were unsuccessful obtaining property and fled in the vehicle, described as a black Jeep Cherokee with tinted windows.

**On March 11 at 9 p.m. at the intersection of Columbia Ave. and Pine Ave.,** an armed robbery occurred. An adult male walking down the street was approached from behind by two suspects. One struck the victim with an unknown object and stole property. The victim did not require any medical attention.

## Burglary

**On February 17, between 12:30 a.m. and 5 a.m. in the 500 block of Elm Ave.,** a residential burglary occurred. Entry was

made through an unlocked window. Property was taken.

**On February 17 between 12:30 a.m. and 6:30 a.m. in the 6900 block of Woodland Ave.,** a residential burglary occurred. Entry was gained through an unlocked window. Property was taken.

**Between February 18 at 8:30 p.m. and February 19 at 12 p.m. in the 6800 block of New Hampshire Ave.,** a commercial burglary occurred. Entry was gained by breaking a window. Property was taken.

**On February 20, time unknown,** a commercial burglary was attempted. A door and lock were damaged in the attempt.

**On February 28 between 8 a.m. and 4 p.m. in the unit block of Tulip Ave.,** a

*continued on next page*

## ARRESTS

**On February 10 at 11:47, in the 1100 block of University Blvd.,** a juvenile male was arrested and charged with theft under \$50 after a store employee reported a shoplifting.

**On February 16 at 10:07 a.m. in the 1300 block of University Blvd.,** an adult male was arrested and charged with trespassing.

**On February 20 at 8:10 p.m. in the 7400 block of New Hampshire Ave.,** an adult female was arrested on an open Montgomery County warrant charging failure to appear in court on a charge of driving while suspended.

**On February 21 at 11:45 a.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 two charges of trespassing.

**On February 25 at 1:03 a.m. in the 7600 block of Piney Branch Rd.,** an adult male was arrested and charged with driving under the influence of alcohol and driving while impaired by alcohol.

**On February 25 at 8:28 p.m. at the intersection of Sligo Creek Pkwy. and Maple Ave.,** an adult male was arrested and charged with failure to stop at a stop sign, driving without a license, driving under the influence of alcohol, and driving while impaired by alcohol.

**On February 28 at 5:51 p.m. in the 7500 block of Maple Ave.,** an adult male was arrested on an open warrant from Montgomery County for 1st and 2nd degree assault.

**On March 1 at 10:53 a.m. in the 7600 block of Piney Branch Rd.,** a juvenile male was arrested and charged with deadly weapon on school property (knife).

**On March 2 at 11:08 p.m. in the 7700 block of Maple Ave.,** two adult males were charged with trespassing.

**On March 3 at 12:53 a.m. at the intersection of New Hampshire Ave. and Erskine St.,** an adult male was arrested and charged with auto theft, theft over \$500 and possession of CDS paraphernalia. Another adult male who was a passenger in the vehicle, was arrested on an open Montgomery warrant.

**On March 4 at 11:01 p.m. in the 7400 block of New Hampshire Ave.,** an adult male was arrested on a warrant for a strong armed robbery that occurred on February 24 in the 7300 block of New Hampshire Avenue.

**On March 7 at 9:08 a.m. in the 7400 block of New Hampshire Ave.,** an adult male was arrested and charged with possession of CDS paraphernalia, disorderly conduct, and trespassing.

**On March 12 at 10:36 p.m. in the 8600 block of Flower Ave.,** an adult male was arrested and charged with disorderly conduct.

## The Firehouse Report

As of Feb. 28, the Takoma Park Volunteer Fire Department and the personnel of the Montgomery County Fire and Rescue Service assigned to the Takoma Park station have responded to 171 fire-related incidents. The department handled or assisted with 386 rescue or ambulance-related incidents for a total of 557 incidents this year. Totals for 2005 were 163 and 437, respectively, for a total of 600, representing a decrease of 43 incidents.

### Escape Considerations for Mature Adults and the Disabled

Many mature adults and disabled persons live with their families. Because these people's strength and mobility can be limited, they may not be able to save themselves the way others in the house can. Their safety therefore needs special consideration in your fire escape plan.

- Mature adults and disabled family members should have unimpeded access to escape routes. Doors should be easy for them to open and close, and openings should be wide enough to accommodate any equipment they use, such as wheelchairs and walkers.

- If possible, mature adults and disabled individuals' bedrooms should be located on the first floor of the home, close to exits. If not, make sure they are able to get downstairs quickly and safely. Emergency wheelchairs built especially for use on stairs are commercially available.

- Practice helping mature adults and the disabled safely escape in the event of smoke filling the house. If they are unable to get down on the floor and crawl to safety, they can be dragged along the floor while lying on a blanket. Even heavy persons can be transported relatively easily along smooth floors in this manner.

Let's keep in mind, that unattended cooking and smoking materials are still two of the leading causes of home fires.

### Tips for safe candle use

- Use sturdy candle holders that won't tip or burn.
- Burn candles on sturdy, uncluttered surfaces.
- Keep lit candles at least one foot away from curtains, mattresses, and other combustibles.
- Trim candle wicks to one-quarter inch before lighting.
- When lighting candles, keep your hair and clothing away from the flame.
- Extinguish candles when they burn to within two inches of their holder.
- Be careful not to splatter hot wax when extinguishing a candle.

Avoid using candles during power outages. Have flashlights, batteries, and battery-powered lighting on hand for emergency lighting.

Candles are dangerous night lights...we discourage the use of candles in bedrooms and other areas where people may fall asleep.

Place candles away from windows or doorways or anywhere where drafts could affect the flame.

### Supervise Children

Store candles, matches, and lighters high and out of children's sight and reach, preferably in a locked cabinet.

Never leave a burning candle unattended, and never leave a child alone with

### Welcome New Members

At the Takoma Park Volunteer Fire Department March 8th membership meeting, the following were voted into membership...Michael Dugger and Brain Higgins. Congratulations to both! Should you be interested in joining, please contact the fire station at 301-270-8209.



### If Fire Breaks Out

If a fire starts in your home, you must be able to respond. You cannot assume that everyone in the family will know what to do unless you have planned for it.

Be sure. Create a safe escape plan and practice it at least twice a year. Include these points:

- Identify two exits from each room.
- Choose a meeting place a short but safe distance from your home.
- When the smoke alarm sounds, immediately head for the exits. Do not stop to investigate or to gather possessions.
- Crawl with your head 12-24 inches above the ground to stay under the smoke. Move quickly.
- Test doors for heat using the back of your hand. If you feel any heat, don't open the door. Use your backup exit.
- If doors are cool, open them carefully, checking for smoke and flames.
- Go directly to the safe meeting place.
- Once you are out of a burning building, never go back inside for any reason!
- One person should go to a neighbor's house to call the fire department.



## Buckle Up: It's the Law

The statewide Chiefs' 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 seat belt and other restraints.

### 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.
- More than one child in a single seatbelt. Fine: \$50.

### 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

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residential burglary occurred. Entry was gained through a window that was already broken and covered with cardboard. Property was taken.

**On March 11 between 1 and 9:25 a.m. in the 7300 block of Piney Branch Rd.,** a residential burglary occurred. Unknown suspect cut screen to window, opened unlocked window, reached in and removed property.

**On March 10, between 5 p.m. and 12 a.m. in the 900 block of Davis Ave.,** a theft occurred. Unknown suspect(s) removed property from under porch.

**On March 13 at 12:41 a.m. in the 200 block of Hodges Lane,** an attempted burglary occurred. Unknown suspect(s) cut bottom portion of screen in attempt to gain entry.

**On March 13 between 7 a.m. and 5:10 p.m. in the 7400 block of New Hampshire Ave.,** a burglary occurred. Unknown suspect entered room by unknown means and stole property.

**On March 14 at 2:06 a.m. in the 7500 block of New Hampshire Ave.,** a commercial burglary occurred. Unknown suspect(s) forced entry through rear door with an unknown object and stole property.

**On March 14 at 1:26 p.m. in the 7600 block of Flower Ave.,** a theft occurred. Unknown suspect(s) entered an office and removed property.

**On March 14 at 6:45 p.m. in the 500 block of Albany Ave.,** a residential burglary occurred. Unknown suspect(s) used an unknown tool and pried open the back door, entered residence and stole property.

**On March 14 at 12:10 p.m. in the 7600 block of Carroll Ave.,** a theft occurred. Unknown suspect entered an office and stole property.

### Auto and related theft

**On February 10, between 10 a.m. and 5 p.m. in the 900 block of Ethan Allen Ave.,** a 1994 Nissan Altima was stolen by unknown method.

**On February 14 at 1:06 p.m. in the 6900 block of Laurel Ave.,** an aggravated assault and auto theft occurred. An adult male was walking to his parked 2001 Dodge Stratus when he saw a subject driving the car toward him. The victim attempted to stop the subject from driving away but the car continued moving toward him and struck his leg. The victim noticed a red car following the stolen vehicle closely as they sped off. The victim refused treatment for a minor injury.

**On February 16 at 3:04 p.m. in the 6400 block of 5th Ave.,** an auto theft occurred. A silver 2001 Toyota Sequoia that was left running and unattended was driven off by unknown subject(s).

**Between February 20 at 8 p.m. and February 21 at 6:50 a.m. in the 7800 block of Kennewick Ave.,** an auto theft was attempted. A vent window of the 2000 Toyota Corolla was broken in the attempt.

**On February 25, between 3:15 p.m. and 4:05 p.m. in the 7300 block of Wildwood Dr.,** a 1999 Jeep Cherokee was stolen by unknown method.

**On February 25 at approximately 7 p.m. in the 7000 block of Carroll Ave.,** a 2004 Jeep Liberty was stolen by unknown method.

**On February 28, between 6 p.m. and 8:30 p.m. in the 7600 block of Takoma Ave.,** an auto theft was attempted. It is unknown how entry to the 1994 Dodge Caravan was gained. The ignition was damaged and property from inside the vehicle was taken.

**Between March 2 at 8:15 p.m. and March 3 at 9:30 a.m. in the 7300 block of Flower Ave.,** a 1998 Ford Windstar minivan was stolen by unknown method.

**On March 5, between 1:30 p.m. and 2:19 p.m. in the 6800 block of New Hampshire Ave.,** a 2003 Dodge Caravan minivan was stolen by unknown method.

**On March 5, between 1:30 p.m. and 2:19 p.m. in the 6800 block of New Hampshire Ave.,** a 2003 Dodge Caravan minivan was stolen by unknown what method.

**Between March 9 at 10:05 p.m. and March 10 at 12:55 p.m. in the 600 block of Houston Ave.,** a 2005, Chevy Blazer was stolen by unknown method.

**Between March 12 at 9 p.m. and March 13 at 7 in 7200 block of 13th Place,** a theft from auto occurred. Unknown suspect(s) entered a white Honda Accord by unknown means and removed property.

**On March 15 at 5:47 p.m. in the 7200 block of Carroll Ave.,** a theft from auto occurred. Two suspects were observed stealing property from a 1995 Mercury Villager.

**Between March 15 at 3 p.m. and March 16 at 12 p.m. in the 7400 block of Baltimore Ave.,** an attempt auto theft occurred. Unknown suspect(s) gained entry into unlocked 2004, Jeep Liberty and damaged ignition while attempting to steal the vehicle.

### Vandalism

**On March 12 between 12:30 a.m. and 8:45 a.m. in the 7100 block of Maple Ave.,** a vandalism occurred. Unknown suspect(s) spray painted a design and letters in a front yard. At this time there is no indication that the incident is gang related, but it is under investigation.

**On March 12 at 1 a.m. in the 7400 block of Carroll Ave.,** a vandalism/graffiti occurred. Investigation is continuing to determine if gang related.

## POLICE NEWS

### 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 home.

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 Bowers'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 Creamer 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.

### 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 from East-West Highway to Metzert Road, University Boulevard from Merrimac Drive to 14th Avenue, and nearby smaller streets in Takoma Park and Langley Park. It concludes at St. Camillus near Southampton Drive and New Hampshire.

In Takoma Park affected side streets will be Glenside and Wildwood Drive and Anne Street.

The route of the procession takes advantage of side streets and service roads wherever possible but some delays on the major thoroughfares are inevitable.

### Tasty 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.

*Police News continued on page 10*

Police News continued from page 9



**Two new officers were sworn in March 13: From left, Matthew L. Barber and David M. Quante, Jr.**

## 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.

## 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 resumed 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

Doorknockers 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 resumed 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](mailto:sgagne@erols.com) 301-588-2071.

## 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.

<b>Memorial Day</b>	<b>Monday, May 29</b> No yard waste collection Monday recycling routes will be collected Tuesday.
<b>Independence Day</b>	<b>Tuesday, July 4</b> Tuesday trash and recycling routes will be collected Wednesday.
<b>Labor Day</b>	<b>Monday, September 4</b> No yard waste collection Monday recycling routes will be collected Tuesday.
<b>Veteran's Day</b>	<b>Friday, November 10</b> Friday's trash and recycling routes will be collected Thursday.
<b>Thanksgiving</b>	<b>Thursday November 23</b> Thursday's routes will be collected on Wednesday. <b>Friday, November 24</b> Friday's routes will be collected on Saturday.
<b>Christmas</b>	<b>Monday, December 25</b> No yard waste collection Monday recycling routes will be collected Tuesday
<b>New Year's Day</b>	<b>Monday, January 1</b> 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 TPSS Babe Ruth League.

- Takoma Park Babe Ruth Baseball Camp ... (co-ed)** June 19 - 23
- Takoma Park Babe Ruth Baseball Camp ... (co-ed)** June 26 - 30
- Takoma Softball Camp ..... (girls)** July 3 - 7 (no camp July 4)
- Takoma Basketball Camp ..... (co-ed)** July 10 - 14
- Takoma Basketball Camp ..... (co-ed)** 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 videos, 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 event 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 cabinetmaker.

### Financial aid

Takoma SportsCamps 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.takomasportscamps.org](http://www.takomasportscamps.org)

### Contacts

**Camp information:** Sue Immerman, 301-270-0534; [sue@takomasportscamps.org](mailto:sue@takomasportscamps.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](http://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:

**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 Peggye Forster at 301-891-7230 or [peggyef@takomagov.org](mailto:peggyef@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 ILYAmy. 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 Union 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 avert extreme violence 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](http://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 webstream. All Council meetings and Snapshots episodes are also 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@takomagov.org](mailto:cabletv@takomagov.org) for more information.

## Takoma Park City TV April 2006 Programming Schedule

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

Programming subject to change without notice.

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

**Email:** [cabletv@takomagov.org](mailto:cabletv@takomagov.org)  
**Web:** [www.takomaparkmd.org/cable](http://www.takomaparkmd.org/cable)

**Recreation** *Continued from page 6*

Non-Resident	\$75
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**Arts Alive****Ages 1-1/2 - 3-1/2**

Discover exciting ways to bring your local museums alive: dance with Degas' "Little Dancer," catch Renoir's train and hunt for wild animals on Gauguin's exotic islands. 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 12, minimum five. Six weeks. Instructor Kirsten Sandberg-DaSilva.

When:	Thursdays, April 27 - June 1
Time:	10 - 11 a.m.
Location:	Azalea Room, T. P. Community Center, 7500 Maple Avenue
Fee:	T.P. City Resident \$65 Non-Resident \$75

**Bright Minds – Science for Young Explorers****Ages 1-1/2 - 3-1/2**

Science is not just for the lab, it can come alive for your child everyday. Introduce your young child to basic science concepts in this fun hands-on class. Children will explore cause and effect, how colors change, the magical properties of cornstarch and much more. Each session will feature 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 28 - June 2
Time:	10 - 11 a.m.
Location:	Azalea Room, T. P. Community Center, 7500 Maple Avenue
Fee:	T.P. City Resident \$65 Non-Residents \$75

**"First School" Choice**

Looking for the right preschool for your child's first learning experience? Wondering what school will best meet your child's unique needs? Your child's first formal learning experience will shape his or her future learning. This session will provide guidance on how to find the school that will provide the best fit for your child and family as well as the tools for making that difficult decision about which school to pick. Instructors Alicia Sar and Kirsten Sandberg-DaSilva.

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

**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 play skills. Instructors Alicia Sar and Kirsten Sandberg-DaSilva.

When:	Wednesday, April 26
Time:	7:30 - 8:30 p.m.
Location:	T.P. Community Center, 7500 Maple Avenue
Fee:	T.P. City Resident \$25 Non-Resident \$30

**Jazzercise**

Jazzercise is the art of Jazz combined with the science of exercise physiology. Each 60-70 minute class includes easy to follow, fun aerobic-dance routines, weights for muscle strength, and stretching exercises. A warm-up precedes the aerobics and a cool-down follows the exercise. All to the beat of great music, from oldies to Jazz to the newest pop tunes.

When:	Mondays, Wednesdays, Saturdays beginning April 3 (ongoing)
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Time:	7 - 8 p.m. Mondays, Wednesdays 8 - 9 a.m. Saturdays
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Location:	Takoma Park Recreation Center, 7315 New Hampshire Ave
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Fee: Various packages available on site from Jazzercise representative, ranging from 8/day, \$20/month (with \$20 joining fee) or special plan for automatic withdrawal from your checking account.

No class on May 27 and 29.

**Acrylic Painting****Ages 8-12 and 12-16**

Develop an awareness of your surroundings through drawing and painting. Composition and all the elements of art will be emphasized during this six-week session. Subject matter will include nature and the still life. Instruction is individualized for each student's personal needs. Materials fee of \$15 to be paid to the instructor at the first class. Bring sketchbook to first class. Maximum 10 students. Minimum four. Six weeks.

When:	Saturdays, April 22 - June 3
Time:	12:30 - 2:30 p.m. Ages 8 - 12 3 - 5 p.m. Ages 12 - 16

Location:	Art Room, T. P. Community Center, 7500 Maple Avenue
Fee:	T.P. City Resident \$125 Non-Resident \$135

**Drawing and Painting****Adults**

Explore your creative self. The elements of art (line, texture, shape, value, and color) will be emphasized in this class with the still life as the subject matter. Possible media include charcoal, pencil, pen and ink, pastels, acrylics, and watercolor. Materials are supplied by the student. Instruction is individualized for individual need. Critiques will take place each week. Bring sketch book and pencil to first class along with your chosen media. Maximum 10 students. Minimum four. Six weeks.

When:	Wednesdays, April 19 - May 24
Time:	7 - 9:30 p.m.
Location:	Art Room, T.P. Community Center, 7500 Maple Avenue
Fee:	T.P. City Resident \$160 Non-Resident \$180

**Painting Class****Adults**

"A picture should be the expression of the will of the painter," said Robert Henri. Devote 24 hours to your creative self and see what develops! Emphasis will be on still life and landscapes. Composition, color theory, techniques, and materials will be covered. Possible media are pastels, acrylics, and watercolor — no oils please. Instruction is individualized for student need. Critiques are an important part of the process and will take place each week. Bring sketch book and pencil to first class along with your chosen medium. Maximum 10 students. Minimum 4. Six weeks.

When:	Fridays, April 21 - May 26
Time:	10 a.m. - 2 p.m.
Location:	Art Room, T.P. Community Center, 7500 Maple Avenue
Fee:	T.P. City Residents \$175 Non-Residents \$195

**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 for the potter's wheel so sign up quickly. All students will learn about wedging, correct use of tools, and glazing. Those students who elect to learn on the wheel will learn all the basics of throwing and trimming. The hand-building group will learn about techniques such as pinching, coil building, and slab building. Make sure you wear clothes that you don't mind getting dirty. Price includes instruction, one 25-lb bag of clay, and open studio time on Sundays from 2 - 5 p.m. Seven weeks. Instructor: John Baker.

Session I:	Mondays, April 17 - June 5
Session II:	Thursdays, April 20 - June 1
Time:	7 - 9 p.m.
Location:	Art Room, T.P. Community Center, 7500 Maple Avenue
Fee:	T.P. City Resident \$135/session Non-Resident \$145/session

(Fee includes all materials.)

No class on May 29.

**Children's Ceramics Classes****Ages 6 - 12**

Do you like playing with clay? Come join us at Takoma Park Community Center for Saturday morning ceramic classes. Students will learn to make pots and of their own creation using several methods, including hand-building techniques such as pinching, coil building, and slab building. Class will include instruction in correct use of tools, and demonstrations in glazing. Parents are encouraged to stay and help their young ones. Make sure to wear clothes you don't mind getting dirty. The price includes instruction, one 25-lb bag of clay, and open studio time on Sundays from 2 - 5 p.m. Six-week session. Instructor: John Baker.

When:	Saturdays, April 22 - June 3
Time:	10:15 a.m. - 12:15 p.m.
Location:	Art Room, T.P. Community Center, 7500 Maple Avenue
Fee:	T.P. City Resident \$115 Non-Resident \$125

No class on May 27.

**Day Trips**

We will meet in the parking lot at the rear of the Takoma Park Community Center, 7500 Maple Avenue, one half hour before departure. Most trips are free unless otherwise

noted. RSVP to 301-891-7280 no later than one week before trip.

Date:	Thursday, April 6
Location:	"Kenwood" Cherry Blossoms
Time:	10 a.m.
Food:	Bring money for lunch

**Video Blogging Class**

Did you ever want to have your own television show? You can create your own video blog on the Internet for free. Learn all you need to know in this video blogging basics class from a teacher with 10 years experience in video. The class will be taught on Macs, but techniques work on Windows as well. Intermediate level computer skills required. Four weeks. Instructor, Phil Shapiro, Instructional Assistant at TP Computer Lab. Phils@takomagov.org. Maximum eight.

**Grades 6-12**

When:	Saturdays, April 29-May 20, 2006
Time:	1 - 2:30 p.m.
Location:	Media/Video Lab T.P. Community Center, 7500 Maple Avenue
Fee:	T.P. City Resident \$15 Non-Resident \$30

**Adults**

When:	Tuesdays, April 25 - May 16, 2006
Time:	7 - 8:30 p.m.
Location:	Media/Video Lab, T.P. Community Center, 7500 Maple Avenue
Fee:	T.P. City Resident \$30 Non-Resident \$50

**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 better increase physical activity, is coming to the Takoma Park Community Center on Mondays, April 3-July 10, 2006, 10:30 a.m. to noon. 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 options 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 and able to increase walking substantially; and 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 301-255-4205.

Through a grant to the Active for Life® Center from The Robert Wood Johnson Foundation®, everything is free — free tuition, textbook, program notebook with weekly handouts, and an Active for Life® step counter.

**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 access 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 construction. 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 use.

**Public meetings to be moved**

The Takoma Park City Council will meet at the Takoma Park Middle School on Piney Branch Road for its meetings of April 17, April 24 and May 1. Most Board, Committee and Commission meetings normally held in rooms in the Community Center 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-

tor will not be available, the City will be making special accommodations for those with mobility difficulties. The Library, Senior Room and Computer Learning Center will continue to be accessible as they are now. Police services will continue to be accessible from the front parking lot of the building. All other City services offered at 7500 Maple Avenue will be brought to handicapped patrons in the Police Department lobby, in the Computer Learning Center, or at the reception desk in the Community Center atrium. Persons with mobility difficulties who wish to pay bills, have passport services, or conduct other City business may come into the Police Department lobby, Community Center atrium, or the Computer Learning Center and request assistance. City staff will then serve the patrons at that location.

Please bear with us as we get through these final weeks of construction. We are looking forward to a June opening of the teen lounge, dance studio, game room, an additional meeting room and the new Recreation Department offices. At that time, two hallways will connect the Computer Learning Center and Library with the rest of the Community Center, and the main entrance from the rear parking lot will reopen. We are all looking forward to these new community facilities!