

## GYPSY MOTH SPRAY

Coming late April  
Contact Montgomery  
County DEP.

# Takoma Park NEWSLETTER

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

**¡EN ESPAÑOL!**  
Seminario Para  
Quien Compra  
Casa Por Primera  
Vez (pagina 4)

Published by the City of Takoma Park

www.takomaparkmd.gov

APRIL 2008

## Residents Urge Legal Action:

### Metro Development Opposed

**O**n Wednesday, March 19, a community workshop was held to discuss the question, "What should the Takoma Park City Council do now that WMATA has approved the sale of land at the Takoma Metro station for a townhouse development?" Approximately 60 people and all seven city councilmembers, attended the workshop.

A large majority of those who spoke at the hearing urged the City Council to oppose development at the property, and many urged the City to take legal action to prevent the development. The Council will be considering revising the City's position, which currently only focuses on preserving transit access, through the spring.

The workshop was facilitated by the firm, Justice and Sustainability Associates, who worked to help gain community comment at this phase of the controversial project. In addition to the people who attended the workshop, more than 200 others submitted completed questionnaires on the issue. The surveys, and the facilitator's report, will be shared with the Council and posted on the City's web page, at [www.takomaparkmd.gov/documents/metro](http://www.takomaparkmd.gov/documents/metro).

The prospect of development at the Takoma Metro Station has been under consideration for the past 10 years. Plans for a mix of commercial and townhome-residential have stirred numerous discussions, and eight City Council resolutions, expressing concern over transit access, safety and density. Much of the controversy's history can be seen at [www.takomaparkmd.gov/documents/metro](http://www.takomaparkmd.gov/documents/metro).

## Earth Day Celebrations Expand

By VIRGINIA MYERS

**T**akoma Park celebrates Earth Day all month this year with new events as well as old favorites. All are designed to help residents celebrate nature, encourage conservation and educate about energy use and environmentalism.

Although it is not directly related to Earth Day events, the Takoma Horticultural Club **presentation on invasive weeds** certainly fits with the theme of the month, and it is the first event on the calendar. Betty Marose, Extension Educator and Weed Science Specialist in the Department of Entomology at the University of Maryland, will discuss the ecology and management of invasive weeds, using integrated approaches, Wednesday, April 16 at 7:30 p.m. in the Community Center Azalea Room. Participants are invited to bring their "favorite" weeds for identification and advice on control strategies.

The annual **Arbor Day Celebration**, sponsored by the City of Takoma Park, April 19 from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. on the Library lawn, includes pruning demonstrations and lessons, information tables from organizations like the National Wildlife Federation Backyard Habitat project and Friends of Sligo Creek, and activities for the kids. The annual tree giveaway will make a variety of species available to residents for planting, including black cherry, chestnut oak, white oak, swamp white oak, persimmon, white ash, black walnut, bald cypress, catalpa and white pine. International Society of Arborist members will be on hand to show off their climbing rigs, and may even let visitors give them a try themselves. Plus, City Arborist Todd Bolton will be available to answer your



**Leo Blain emerges from his hunt for trash to "surf" on the port-o-potty door he and his father, Mike Blain, found in Sligo Creek during the 2006 Sweep the Creek event. This year the annual clean-up, sponsored by Friends of Sligo Creek, is April 26 from 9 to 11 a.m. at various locations along the creek. See [fosc.org](http://fosc.org) for more information.**

Photo: Courtesy of FOSC

questions about the trees in your yard, or in the city. (For related story on pruning, see page 7.)

To help beautify the City, you can participate in **Main Street Takoma's Spring Clean Up**, Saturday, April 19 from 9 a.m. to noon. Volunteers will pick up litter, mulch tree boxes and plant flowers. Gathering points are at Laurel Avenue by the clock tower, Morris Park at Takoma Junction, and Triangle Park, at 4th Street NW in the District. Members of Main Street Takoma will be on hand at each location to provide gloves and bags for trash removal, and mulch and plantings for the

gardening work. Those who want to help are encouraged to bring their own gardening gloves and tools.

There will be a big bash at the Takoma Park-Silver Spring Co-op **Earth Day Celebration** Sunday, April 20 from 10 a.m. to 7 p.m., coordinated in part with Junction Day. The celebration, held in the parking lot next to the co-op, will include two popular bands, Magpie (from 11 a.m. to 1 p.m.) and Afrofunk dance band Chop-teeth (at 4 p.m.). In between, a drum circle will gather – bring your own drum, or

**EARTH DAY**  
continues on page 7

## Construction Begins on New Takoma Park Firehouse

**E**xactly 81 years after it was first built, and more than a decade of wrangling over complicated plans to rebuild, the Takoma Park Fire Station is about to be rebuilt. Since the project to replace the aging building began, planners have had to address the demolition of an existing residential property, possible eviction of aging tenants, transfer of land ownership from City to County, and plans to shift an entire fire station to temporary quarters. There are also smaller-scale issues, like asbestos abatement that must precede demolition.

Needless to say, firefighters are cheering the onset of physical progress. The first step, the construction of a temporary station on the parking lot adjacent to the existing facility, is expected to begin this month. The temporary quarters will involve trailers and tents that will accommodate career and vol-

unteer firefighters and their equipment. The station will continue to operate at full scale during construction and after it moves into the temporary quarters some time this fall.

Fire officials say the current firehouse is too small and decrepit to properly accommodate modern firefighting requirements. Its replacement, which is costing about \$11 million, should be ready for occupancy in 2010.

As the project progresses, the house at 7135 Carroll Avenue will be demolished to make room for the expanded firehouse. Its next door neighbor, 7133, at one point targeted for a similar fate, is being spared. The residences were a difficult stumbling block during the planning process. The County wound up purchasing 7135 from its elderly owner, renovating the house next door and moving the owner to that property, which

was purchased from the absentee owner. The tenant at 7133 had county assistance finding alternative housing.

Construction on the new firehouse is expected to begin in the fall, and take about a year and a half to complete.

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ECRWSS POSTAL CUSTOMER

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CITY COUNCIL  
AND COMMITTEE

CALENDAR\*

**Wednesday, April 2** - Health Services Impact Committee meeting, 7 p.m. (CC Hydrangea Room)

**Monday, April 7** - City Council meeting, 7:30 p.m. (CC Auditorium)

**Tuesday, April 8** - Committee on the Environment meeting, 7:30 p.m. (CC Forsythia Room)

**Tuesday, April 8** - Commission on Landlord Tenant Affairs hearing, 7 p.m. (CC Auditorium)

**Tuesday, April 8** - Tree Commission meeting, 6:30 p.m. (CC Atrium Room)

**Tuesday, April 8** - Facade Advisory Board annual business meeting, 7 p.m. (CC Hydrangea Room)

**Wednesday, April 9** - Recreation Committee meeting, 7:30 p.m. (CC Hydrangea Room)

**Thursday, April 10** - Board of Elections meeting, 7 p.m. (CC Hydrangea Room)

**Monday, April 14** - City Council Meeting, 7:30 p.m. (CC Auditorium)

**Tuesday, April 15** - Commission on Landlord Tenant Affairs hearing, 7 p.m. (CC Auditorium)

**Thursday, April 17** - Emergency Preparedness Committee meeting, 8:30 a.m. (CC Hydrangea Room)

**Monday, April 21** - City Council meeting, 7:30 p.m. (CC Auditorium)

**Tuesday, April 22** - Arts and Humanities Commission meeting, 7:30 p.m. (CC Hydrangea Room)

**Wednesday, April 23** - Public Safety Citizens Advisory Committee meeting, 6:30 p.m. (CC Atrium Room)

**Monday, April 28** - City Council meeting, 7:30 p.m. (CC Auditorium)

\*For the most up to date information, check [www.takomaparkmd.gov](http://www.takomaparkmd.gov). Most meetings are held in the Takoma Park Community Center – Sam Abbott Citizens’ Center, 7500 Maple Avenue (CC). Individuals interested in receiving a weekly Council agenda and calendar update by e-mail should contact the City Clerk at 301-891-7267 or [clerk@takomagov.org](mailto:clerk@takomagov.org).

The City of Takoma Park is committed to ensuring that individuals with disabilities are able to fully participate in public meetings. Anyone planning to attend a Takoma Park public meeting or public hearing, and who wishes to receive auxiliary aids, services, or accommodations is invited to contact the City Clerk at 301-891-7267, at least 48 hours in advance, at the telephone number listed in the notice or through the Maryland Relay Service (1-800-735-2258 TTY/Voice).

City Council Action

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 11, 2008 - Regular Meeting**

**Second reading Ordinance 2008-1 was adopted by roll-call vote, as amended,** making technical amendments to Takoma Park Code, Chap. 9.04, Rights of Non-U.S. Citizens in Takoma Park.

**Resolution 2008-11 was adopted,** expressing condolences to the friends and family of the late Montgomery County Councilmember Marilyn Praisner.

**Resolution 2008-12 was adopted,** offering condolence and support for the City of Kirkwood, Missouri after a gunman stormed a Council meeting there.

**The Consent Agenda was adopted by roll-call vote.** It consisted of:

- **Single Reading Ordinance 2008-8,** awarding a contract for purchase of two trucks for Public Works and rescinding Ordinance 2007-60
- **Resolution 2008-13,** extending the term of the Health Services Impact Committee for one additional year.
- **Resolution 2008-14,** appointing Sally Brucker to the Arts and Humanities Commission.
- **Resolution 2008-15,** appointing Nicolien van Schouwen to the Tree Commission.
- **Resolution 2008-16,** appointing Robert Anderson to the Ethics Commission.
- **Resolution 2008-17,** appointing David Borden to the Public Safety Citizens Advisory Committee.

**February 19, 2008 - Special Session**

**Resolution 2008-18 was adopted,** urging Montgomery County to reopen the Piney Branch Pool and fund necessary improvements.

**February 25, 2008 - Regular Meeting**

**Second reading Ordinance 2008-4 was adopted by roll-call vote,** establishing the Recreation Committee as a statutory committee.

**Resolution 2008-19 was adopted,** encouraging Montgomery County to divest from Sudan.

**The Consent Agenda was adopted by roll-call vote.** It consisted of:

- **Single Reading Ordinance 2008-9,** awarding a contract for an aerial lift boom and trailer.
- **Single Reading Ordinance 2008-10,** awarding a contract for flood mitigation planning.
- **Resolution 2008-20,** appointing Stephane Janin to the Arts and Humanities Commission.

**March 3, 2008 - Special Session**

**Resolution 2008-21 was adopted,** supporting Maryland House Bill 857, Annexation of Small Parcels.

**Resolution 2008-22 was adopted,** commenting on the “Green Area” Amendment to the County Zoning Ordinance.

**March 10, 2008 - Regular Meeting**

**Single Reading Ordinance 2008-11 was adopted by roll-call vote,** awarding a contract for community health needs focus groups and survey.

\*Only negative votes and abstentions are noted. For additional information, contact the City Clerk at [Clerk@takomagov.org](mailto:Clerk@takomagov.org).

**NOTICE OF COMMITTEE FORMATION**

### Washington Adventist Hospital Land Use Committee

The City Council is establishing a committee to advise the Council on matters related to the future use of the property currently occupied by Washington Adventist Hospital. The Council seeks individuals with diverse backgrounds and interests to serve on the committee, including persons familiar with land use planning, economic development, or health services or persons who live in areas that might be affected, directly or indirectly, by development on the site.

The committee is envisioned to be in existence for a two-year period. The committee would meet monthly or as needed.

**To apply to serve on the committee, send your application by April 30, 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. See [www.takomaparkmd.gov](http://www.takomaparkmd.gov) for more information.

Volunteers Needed

*to serve on council appointed boards, committees, and commissions*

There are positions available on many City boards, commissions, and committees. Please consider volunteering to serve. Additional information can be found at [www.takomaparkmd.gov](http://www.takomaparkmd.gov) or contact the City Clerk for more information (301-891-7267 or [Clerk@takomagov.org](mailto:Clerk@takomagov.org)).


Arts and Humanities Commission	Facade Advisory Board	Personnel Appeal Board
Board of Elections	Health Services Impact Committee	Police Employees Retirement Plan Committee
Committee on the Environment	Montgomery College Neighbors Advisory Committee	Public Safety Citizens Advisory Committee
Emergency Preparedness Committee	Noise Control Board	Recreation Committee
Ethics Commission	Nuclear Free Takoma Park Committee	Safe Roadways Committee

Speak with the Mayor

**SPEAK UP!**

Mayor Bruce Williams welcomes community input and invites you to meet with him during his regular office hours on Tuesdays, 2-5 p.m. (by appointment only) and 5 -7 p.m. (for walk-ins), in the third floor Council Conference Room of the Takoma Park Community Center.

Walk-ins are requested to check in at the reception desk on the main floor. For appointments, contact Peggye Washington, 301-891-7230 or [peggyew@takomagov.org](mailto:peggyew@takomagov.org).





# Reading with our Daughters

*Mother-Daughter Book Club Turns the Page, from "Sarah, Plain and Tall" to "Hell's Angels"*

By ROSANNE SINGER

Nida Vidutis sat on a stool in our dining room and implored the other teenage girls, "You've got to read 'The Secret History'!" There were some groans when they heard it was more than 500 pages, but Nida, 16, said it read quickly. No decision was made, and we continued the Friday dinner meeting of our mother/daughter book group. Afterwards I kept remembering Nida's eyes as she made a case for the book. This is what a passionate reader looks like, I thought. Maybe our group had a little something to do with fostering that.

Takoma Park resident Janet Douglas thought about forming a mother/daughter book group ten years ago after meeting Smithsonian Institution colleague, Shireen Dodson, the author of "The Mother-Daughter Book Club: How Ten Busy Mothers and Daughters Came Together to Talk, Laugh and Learn Through Their Love of Reading." At the time Janet's daughter Rose was in third grade, and Janet began talking with other mothers whose daughters were strong, engaged readers. That's when my daughter Marie and I joined. Thus began the first incarnation of our Takoma Park mother/daughter book group, a collection of about five mother/daughter pairs.

Our first book was "Sarah, Plain and Tall," by Patricia MacLachlan. Most of us had also seen the movie with Glenn Close and Christopher Walken. When the girls were in elementary school, we read standards like "Ella Enchanted," "Misty of Chincoteague" and "Island of the Blue Dolphins." I remember the restlessness of some of those early meetings—girls running around, eager to get to an art project connected with the chosen book. How do you encourage eight-year-olds to talk about a book — articulate what they like, what confuses them, who they relate to? We all had to learn.

The group was fluid in those days, with mothers and daughters trying it out. Some decided they couldn't commit to a monthly book and meeting, others moved out of the area. By the start of middle school though, we had a consistent group of six mothers and six daughters. Now the girls are seniors in high school, about to head off to college.

Even though four of the girls attend Montgomery Blair High School, they may not see each other from day to day. A fifth daughter has gone to school in Switzerland for junior and senior year. Nida attends Stone Ridge School of the Sacred Heart in Bethesda. When the girls meet for our monthly to bimonthly gatherings, they have a lot to say to one another. Book group is our chance to catch up, reconnect.

I think about some of the books that have angered, inspired, and bored the girls. They couldn't plow through the archaic language of Robert Louis Stevenson's classic, "Kid-



**This group of mothers and daughters has met for the past seven years as a book club. Back row, from left, Sarah Lynch, Diana Vidutis, Nida Vidutis, Caitlin Schneiderhan, Claire Wernstedt-Lynch, Courtney Burtraw, Rose Douglas, Janet Douglas; front row, Kate Cook, Rosanne Singer, Marie Mencher, and Barbara Glenn.**

Photo by Diana Vidutis

napped." Jane Eyre offended them when she became involved with a married man, Mr. Rochester, never mind the extenuating circumstance of a dangerously mad wife locked in the attic. "The Rules: Time-Tested Secrets for Capturing the Heart of Mr. Right" outraged all the girls. Who would want a relationship based on game playing and artifice? My own daughter looked horrified when I said I wished I had employed a few of those rules myself. But the girls also spent some eye-opening, thought-provoking time reading "The Kite Runner," "The Good Earth," and the graphic novel "Persepolis: The Story of a Childhood."

Although we usually read novels, we have also discussed poetry—Pablo Neruda's "Odes to Opposites"; gonzo journalism—Hunter Thompson's "Hell's Angels"; and a play—"The Cherry Orchard." The girls have been pretty game. I'm glad that as they have matured, they've let us know what they wanted and were ready for. I might have wanted to protect my daughter from the sex, drugs and profanity of "Hell's Angels," but I found out I didn't need to.

The girls used to chomp at the bit to run off to a private space to chat before putting together a skit or video

sequence about the evening's book. I loved those creative projects and got to see my sometimes-shy daughter caught up in the theater of the moment. In the past year, however, I think the daughters and mothers have spent more time together during meetings, lingering at the dinner table to talk.

Nida recently commented that all the mothers in the book group are interested in what each girl is doing. I was touched that she'd noticed. We've been gathering to talk about books and have gotten to watch six girls become strong young women.

Nida did persuade us to read "The Secret History" by Donna Tartt. She was right—the girls loved this dark, troubling novel about privileged college students on a New England campus in the 1980s. One called it enthralling. "Hell's Angels" might have paved the way, but this time the sex, drugs, alcohol and even murder felt a little closer to home. Nida brought out a research paper she had written on the tug between Dionysian abandon and Apollonian rationality in the book. The other girls really listened. So did the mothers.



## THE TAKOMA PARK NEWSLETTER

Editor: Virginia Myers  
Production: Electronic Ink  
www.takomaparkmd.gov  
Vol. 47, No. 4

The Takoma Park Newsletter is published 11 times a year as the official publication of the City of Takoma Park, www.takomaparkmd.gov.

The Newsletter does not accept commercial, classified, or political advertisements. Unsolicited materials by Takoma Park residents, including reports by community groups and articles that may contain opinion, will be considered for publication. Name, address and telephone number must accompany all submitted material. Pursuant to City Council Resolution No. 1992-36 of June 8, 1992 that sets forth the editorial guidelines of the Newsletter, the Editor reserves the right to edit all submitted copy for length, clarity, style, spelling and grammar.

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

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



Photo by Lonni Moffet

## Ireland Comes to Takoma Park

On March 11, a dozen professional community advocates from Ireland toured Takoma Park to learn about community dynamics in a diverse city. Funded by the International Fund for Ireland (IFI), their visit was part of a program that involves annual tours to various cities in the U.S. This year's trip focused on the relationship between government and community regarding youth, and in particular best practices addressing race relations, revitalization and collaboration. Takoma Park staff, accompanied by staff from Governor O'Malley's office, showed the delegation programs at the Community Center, the County's Crossroads Youth Opportunities Center in the Takoma-Langley Crossroads area, and revitalization plans for the New Hampshire Avenue corridor. They seemed impressed that nearly one-third of Takoma Park residents was born outside of the United States. Members of the delegation enjoyed talking to young people in the Teen Room and looking at the Ethiopian Art Exhibit in the Community Center Atrium.

"They were interested in local issues, such as Takoma Park's status as a Sanctuary City, and asked a number of questions about the death penalty in the United States," said Deputy City Manager Suzanne Ludlow. "The visit was much too short," she added. "The delegates brought a wealth of insight and knowledge from their home communities and I wish we'd had more time to learn from them."



## Housing Department Offers Free Courses

Don't delay ... registration is limited for the following classes offered by the Department of Housing and Community Development. If you are interested, please call Linda Walker at 301-891-7222 or e-mail at LindaW@takomagov.org

### First Time Home Buyer Seminar (English)

Buying a home is one of the most important decisions you will make in your lifetime. Here is an opportunity for you to do it right, with all of the knowledge of the process. Class limited to 20 people. A nonprofit affordable housing organization will conduct the seminar that will include information on:

1. The importance of pre-purchase counseling
2. Establishing credit, maintaining good credit, facts about the credit scoring system
3. How to obtain a mortgage loan — understanding the terms of the loan
4. The role of the real estate agent
5. Information on Montgomery County and Maryland home loan programs

**When:** Saturday, April 12, 8:30 a.m.-1:30 p.m.

**Where:** Takoma Park Community Center  
7500 Maple Avenue

### Español

### Seminario Para Quien Compra Casa Por Primera Vez (Español)

El comprar una casa es una de las decisiones más importantes que tomará en su vida. Esta es una oportunidad para que usted lo haga correctamente con toda la información del proceso. La Cooperación del Desarrollo Económico del Latino (LEDCE), una organización a beneficio para quienes quieren comprar una casa por primera vez, dará un seminario el cual incluirá información como:

1. La importancia de tener consejo profesional antes de comprar una casa.
2. Establecer su crédito, mantener su crédito y sistema de mantener record de su crédito.
3. Cómo obtener un préstamo y entender los términos del préstamo.
4. El papel del agente de ventas
5. Información acerca de los programas de préstamo en Maryland y el Condado de Montgomery

**Fecha:** Sábado, May 10, 8:30 a.m. - 1:30 p.m.

**Donde:** Takoma Park Community Center  
7500 Maple Avenue

### Foreclosure Prevention

Are the costs for owning and maintaining your new home, whether it be a condominium or a single family house, escalating? Is your loan about to readjust? Here is a class to help you get a handle on your situation. Learn what state programs currently exist and how to possibly avoid foreclosure.

**When:** Wednesday, May 14, 7 - 8:30 p.m.

**Where:** Takoma Park Community Center  
7500 Maple Avenue

The Commission on Landlord Tenant Affairs (COLTA) recently approved two hardship rent increase petitions for rental properties in Takoma Park. They appear in order of their petition numbers:

#### 8312 Roanoke Avenue (2007-51H)

On February 18, 2007, a hardship rent increase petition was denied because the adjusted petition year net operating income (NOI) was greater than the adjusted base year net operating income (NOI). On a hardship petition, a landlord must show that the petition year NOI is lower than the adjusted base year (1990) NOI in order to be granted rent in-



## COLTA's CORNER

BY JEAN KERR,  
HOUSING SPECIALIST

creases above the Rent Stabilization Allowance.

#### 8316 Roanoke Avenue (2007-59H)

On February 15, 2007, a hardship rent increase petition was approved for rent increases ranging from \$34.64 to \$54.35 on all three units at the property.

If a rent increase exceeds 15 percent, the increases will be phased in over a term of more than one year until the full increases have been taken (e.g. 20 percent approved increase would be divided as 15 percent the first year and 5 percent the second year).

## Your Rights Under the Fair Housing Act

BY MOSES A. WILDS, JR.,  
LANDLORD-TENANT COORDINATOR

April 2008 will mark the 40th anniversary of the passage of the Fair Housing Act, adopted as Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1968. The Fair Housing Act covers a broad range of housing-related transactions such as rentals, sales, mortgage lending, homeowners insurance, zoning, appraisals, tax assessments and advertising. It also makes it illegal to coerce, intimidate, threaten or interfere with someone exercising their fair housing rights and provides for civil remedies and criminal penalties for doing so.

In 1974 Congress added a prohibition of discrimination based on sex making it illegal for housing providers to impose different conditions on women than on men. The 1988 Fair Housing Amendment Act added two new protected classes: handicap and familial status, the latter being the presence or anticipated presence of children under the age of 18 in a household. It also extended the statute of limitations for filing federal lawsuits from 180 days to two years and eliminated the prior \$1,000 punitive damages cap.

Although a record number of fair housing complaints (10,328) were received in FY2006 by HUD and Fair Housing Assistance Program agencies, there is general belief that the number of filed complaints remain well below the actual number of instances of housing discrimination.

HUD studies suggest a number of reasons for the under-reporting of housing discrimination. First, discrimination is not readily identifiable by consumers as it is rarely blatant. Second, many people believe that it is not worthwhile to report housing discrimination. A 2002 study showed that less than 20 percent of individuals who believed they had been discriminated against took some action. Third, large segments of the public were not aware of fair housing protections, especially for people with disabilities and families with children.

### Montgomery County Fair Housing Law/Program

The Montgomery County Office of Human Rights is the certified government agency in the county that investigates fair housing complaints. The Fair Housing Program, which is a part of the Office of Human Rights, also carries out an array of outreach and monitoring activities. Its educational activities include training for landlords, real estate professionals, property managers, lenders and other housing professionals as well as information to and training for the general public. The Fair Housing Program also has a comprehensive program of testing for discrimination in the sale or rental of housing, home mortgage financing and compliance with architectural guidelines.

Chapter 27 of the Montgomery County Code makes it illegal to discriminate in the sale or rental of housing on the basis of race, sex, marital status, physical or mental disability, color, religion, national origin, ancestry, presence of children, source of income, sexual orientation or age.

One such fair housing complaint recently was addressed in November 2007, when the Montgomery County Fair Housing law was upheld in a decision issued by the Maryland Court of Appeals. This ruling upheld a previous decision that an apartment complex landlord, Glenmont Hills Associates, was in violation of the County's housing discrimination ordinance when it refused to rent to applicants solely because they received rental assistance through federal Section 8 vouchers. County Executive Isiah Leggett commented that the "decision was gratifying for all who seek to protect the rights of residents to find affordable housing."

### Montgomery County's Fair Housing Complaint Process

Confidential complaints may be filed with the Montgomery County Office of Human Rights by individuals who demonstrate they may have been discriminated against in their housing choice or in receiving real estate services. Complaints on behalf of victims of discrimination may also be filed by concerned individuals.

The complaint filing process begins with a personal, confidential interview which is held to determine the nature of the complaint and whether the Office of Human Rights (OHR) has legal jurisdiction to investigate. Mediation between OHR staff and both parties may occur at this point and complaints may be settled and often are as a result of the mediation process.

Complaints that are not resolved by mediation are fully investigated by OHR staff. When the investigation confirms that discrimination has occurred, the OHR proposes a voluntary agreement to end the discrimination and provide relief for the complaining party. If the voluntary agreement fails, a public hearing is required by law to resolve the complaint. If the public hearing results in a finding of discrimination the OHR may order a plan to correct the discriminatory practice and order appropriate relief for the complaining party. Relief may include housing, housing services and/or monetary compensation for expenses and/or humiliation.

Montgomery County residents who think they have been the victim of housing discrimination should contact the Office of Human Rights, 110 North Washington Street, Suite 200, Rockville, MD 20850. The OHR phone number is 240-777-8450 and the TTY phone number is 240-777-8480.



## COLTA's CORNER CASES

BY MOSES A. WILDS, JR.,  
LANDLORD-TENANT COORDINATOR

### Landlord-Tenant Decision Summary

#### Cooke v. Lee Avenue Apts, LLC

On February 8, 2008 COLTA issued a decision regarding a tenant's complaint alleging that the landlord was responsible for a defective tenancy because her apartment was infested with bedbugs. Tenant sought a rent rebate and compensation for discarded furniture and medical treatment.

COLTA, in issuing a decision for the tenant, found that (1) the landlord caused a defective tenancy by leasing the tenant an apartment infested with bedbugs and failed to make timely and good faith efforts to eradicate the infestation; (2) the bedbug infestation made sleeping in the apartment physically and psychologically traumatic and constituted a constructive eviction; (3) the bedbug infestation reduced the value of the tenancy by at least 56 percent from the time the tenant moved in (June 1, 2007) until the time she vacated (November 30, 2007); (4) the landlord was responsible for the cost of replacing the tenant's infested furniture based on the purchase receipts she provided; (5) the tenant was awarded a rent rebate of \$3,150 based on a 56 percent reduction of her monthly rent of \$925 to \$525 for the six-month period June 1, 2007 to November 1, 2007 and \$2,806.33 for replacing her furniture.

## Noted Economist and Environmentalist Delivers First Crossroads Lecture

Lester R. Brown, internationally-acclaimed economist and environmentalist, will deliver the first annual Crossroads Lecture in Takoma Park on April 16. All proceeds from ticket sales will help operate the Crossroads Farmers Market during the coming season. The lecture will be held at the Takoma Park Presbyterian Church.

Brown will discuss "Plan B 3.0: Mobilizing to Save Civilization," the latest version of his book outlining what must be done to save the planet before it's too late. "We are trapped between a set of economic indicators telling us that things have never been better and a set of environmental indicators warning us that the economy is heading for decline and collapse," Brown said. "The warning signs are in rising temperatures, shrinking forests, expanding deserts, collapsing fisheries, falling water tables, melting glaciers, rising seas and declining species."

Brown proposes an all-out effort to cut carbon emissions 80 per cent by 2020.

He is the founder and president of the Earth Policy Institute, a non-profit environmental research organization based in Washington, D.C. In 1974, he founded the Worldwatch Institute, which he continued to head for 26 years.

Brown has been called "one of the world's most influential thinkers." He has authored or co-authored more than 50 books, which have appeared in some 40 languages.

The Crossroads Farmers Market opened last year as part of an effort to give residents of the Takoma-Langley area access to fresh, local fruit and vegetables. Together with the Takoma Park Farmers Market, it became the first farmers market in Maryland authorized to accept Food Stamps. The Crossroads Farmers Market also established an innovative micro-loan program to help immigrant, minority and new farmers participate in direct marketing.

Tickets to the Crossroads Lecture will cost \$20 for adults and \$10 for students. A reception for Brown will be held at 6:30 p.m. in the Assembly Room, before the lecture. The



Lester Brown

Photo: Courtesy Earth Policy Institute

lecture begins at 7:30 p.m. in the sanctuary. Tickets to the reception will cost \$75.

Tickets to the lecture are available on Sundays at the Takoma Park Farmers Market. Tickets may be reserved by email at [crossroadslecture@gmail.com](mailto:crossroadslecture@gmail.com) or by calling 540-631-5611. Credit and debit cards can be used at the market and at the door.



**Takoma Park Arts & Humanities News**  
*celebrating the creative spirit of our community*

The following events are brought to you by the Takoma Park Arts and Humanities Commission in partnership with the community.

### Kittner displays "block" buster art

Artist Bobbi Kittner's current show emerged from a love of banging wooden blocks together with her kids. Her mixed media creations; "The Jester," "Big Star" and "Fluffy, the performer," composed of found objects and old Playskool blocks, can be seen this month in Gallery Three, on the third floor of the Takoma Park Community Center. Kittner's studio is located in Old Town Takoma.



"Whistle Boy" by Bobbi Kittner

### Poetry for Families Workshop April 12

Anne Becker, Takoma Park Poet Laureate, will offer a series of free poetry workshops for families — parents and their children — beginning on Saturday, April 12 and continuing on April 26 and on May 3. The workshops will be held in the Hydrangea Room at the Takoma Park Community Center from 10 a.m. to 11:30 a.m. Participants will write

their own poems, read them to the group and receive feedback to deepen and enlarge their own understanding of what they have written. The poems generated by the workshop will be gathered into an anthology and published by the Arts and Humanities Commission. To register, please call 301-891-7224.

### Public Art Presentations Tuesday, April 1

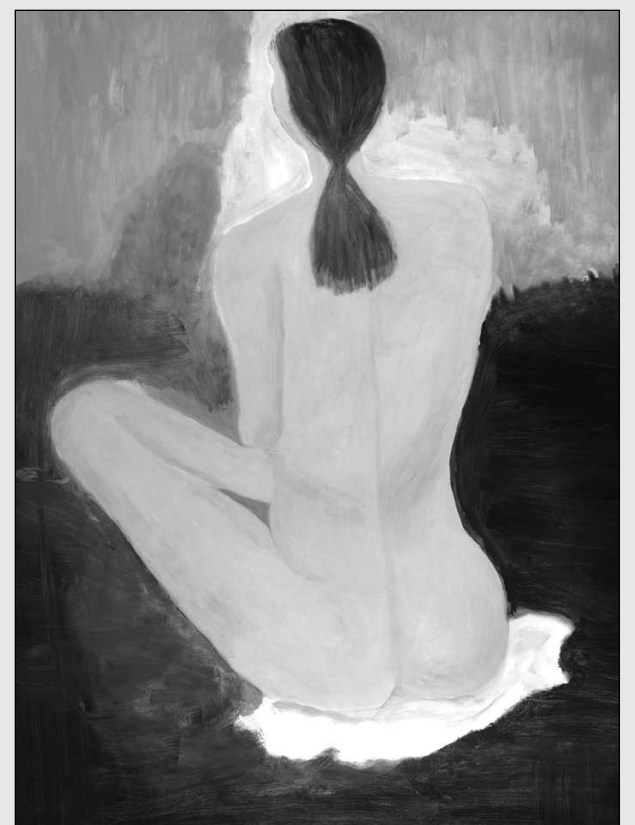
Are you interested in learning more about the 13 proposals submitted to the Arts and Humanities Commission in response to its Call for Public Art? If so, please join the Commission on Tuesday, April 1 at 7:30 p.m. in the auditorium when each of the artists will be given an opportunity to present their proposals to the community. Additional opportunity to review each of the proposals is available online at [www.takomaparkmd.gov](http://www.takomaparkmd.gov).

### Third Thursday poetry reading April 17

The poetry of Kathy Richey, Kathy Williams and Hayes Davis will be featured at this month's "third thursday" poetry reading. The reading will be held on Thursday, April 17 at 7 p.m. in the auditorium at the Takoma Park Community Center.

### "The Human Concept" Opening Reception April 5

Please join us at the Takoma Park Community Center on Saturday, April 5, at 2 p.m. as we celebrate "The Human Concept," an exhibit of the work of local artists Cheryl Edwards and Susan Crane. The exhibit demonstrates the inner parts of human beings through color and light and shadow, which the artists hope will encourage the viewer



"Solitude" by Cheryl Edwards

to look at humans other than on the simple physical level. The exhibit will be on display throughout the month of April.

Additional information on these and other upcoming events can be found on the City's website at [www.takomaparkmd.gov](http://www.takomaparkmd.gov) or by contacting the Arts and Humanities Commission at 301-891-7224 or by email at [ahc@takomagov.org](mailto:ahc@takomagov.org).



# APRIL

## A C T I V I T I E S

**Date:** Mon., April 7  
**Activity:** Shopping in Hagerstown  
**Time:** 10:30 a.m. - 5 p.m.  
*REGISTER BY APRIL 4*



EARTH DAY

continued from page 1

borrow one that will be made available. The co-op will also offer food, children's activities (including a moon bounce), planting demonstrations and tables with Old Town merchants interspersed with community and environmental information.

Across the street on the same day, April 20, city merchants are celebrating at **Takoma Junction Day** from noon to 4 p.m. with face painting, a juggler, balloon sculptures, and Greg's Summer Delights ice cream truck. Stores will display their wares on the sidewalk and residents can welcome the new Bikram yoga studio, and The Pajama Squid children's store, that opened last month.

On Wednesday, April 23, from 7 to 9 p.m. in the Community Center auditorium, the Montgomery County Sierra Club will present an information session on **home energy audits**. A question and answer period will allow residents to ask professional auditors about how they might reduce home energy use, and whether an audit will help them save money and reduce their carbon footprint.

To celebrate nature out-of-doors, you can grab a trash bag Saturday, April 26 and join Friends of Sligo Creek (FOSC) to clean up the creek. **Sweep the Creek** invites organized groups like scout, civic and religious groups as well as individuals to join in from 9 to 11 a.m. at various locations. There are also some Sunday alternatives and, if you know of a section that is not listed in those already targeted for cleanup, you can include it by contacting Wendi Schnauffer (wschnauffer3703@comcast.net). For locations or more information, see [www.fosc.org](http://www.fosc.org).

To see what other folks have done to their homes to make them more energy efficient, you can check out a **Green Homes and Garden Tour**, sponsored by the Takoma Park Green Building Group. The Sunday, May 18 event runs from noon until 3 p.m., and involves a number of local residences that incorporate sustainable building practices like green-minded insulation (different types, and different methods), energy-efficient appliances, efficient heating and cooling systems, efficient lighting, energy-saving windows, passive and active solar design, alternative energy sources like biodiesel and corn stoves, and sustainable materials like reclaimed, recycled and non-toxic wood, countertops, paints, and more.

Men in Trees Trim TP:  
Keeping the Canopy Healthy

Have you seen men in trees around Takoma Park lately?

That's because the City is nurturing its tree canopy by pruning dead wood and diseased areas.

The methodical tree trimming program, reinstituted recently by City Arborist Todd Bolton, now utilizes two companies to carry out a five or six-year rotation for maintenance pruning on all street and park, public, trees in the City.

"These trees we are celebrating this Arbor Day need care to stay healthy and grow straight and strong," says Bolton. He adds that he is grateful to the City Council for increasing his budget and making available the resources necessary to keep the canopy healthy.

During the second year of the pruning rotation, Bolton expects that significantly less work will be required, so that each year the number of trees that can be pruned will increase. According to the Davey Resource Group Tree Management Plan, developed along with a street tree inventory in 2001, a maintenance pruning cycle, over time, helps create a healthy urban forest and reduces the number of removals required annually.

Pruning work has included dead wooding, crown cleaning, crown reduction, and hazard removals. There have also been several trees found to be in such poor shape that they were removed rather than pruned. Bolton hopes to replant some of the areas where trees were removed, or where diseased trees are scheduled for removal.

To learn more about pruning your own trees, you can attend Arbor Day festivities on the lawn of the Library, April 19 from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. See related article, page 1.

Takoma Park  
Earth Day Events

Home Energy Audit  
Presentation

April 23, 7 to 9 p.m.  
Community Center auditorium  
Sponsored by the Sierra Club  
Presentation, with Q&A, on home  
energy audits. E-mail david.  
hauck@maryland.sierraclub.org  
for more information.

Weed Discussion

Wednesday, April 16, 7:30 p.m.  
Community Center Azalea Room  
Betty Marose, University of Mary-  
land on integrative management  
of invasive weeds

Arbor Day

April 19, 10 a.m. to 2 p.m.  
Takoma Park, Maryland Library  
lawn (rain location, Takoma Park

Community Center)  
Tree giveaway, information  
tables, kids' activities, pruning  
demonstrations and lessons

Main Street Takoma Spring  
Clean-Up

Saturday, April 19, 9 a.m. to  
noon  
Locations throughout Old Town  
[www.mainstreetakoma.org](http://www.mainstreetakoma.org) for  
more information

Earth Day Celebration  
at the Co-op

Sunday, April 20, 10 a.m. to 7  
p.m.  
Takoma Park-Silver Spring Co-op,  
at 410 and Carroll Avenue  
Live music, food, kids' activities,  
merchants, and community and  
environmental info tables

Junction Day

Sunday, April 20, Noon to 4 p.m.

Sidewalk sale, face painting,  
a juggler, balloon sculptures,  
and Greg's Summer Delights ice  
cream truck  
Open house at Bikram yoga  
studio and the Pajama Squid  
children's store

Sweep the Creek

Saturday, April 26, 9-11 a.m.  
Creek Cleanup  
Various locations along Sligo  
Creek (Sponsored by Friends of  
Sligo Creek) visit [www.fosc.org](http://www.fosc.org)  
for more information

Green Home and Garden Tour

May 18, Noon to 3 p.m.  
Various locations, Takoma Park  
Tour homes that showcase sus-  
tainable building practices  
Sponsored by the Takoma Park  
Green Building Group. See  
[saveoursky.com/hoursetour08.aspx](http://saveoursky.com/hoursetour08.aspx)  
for more information.



MAKE A DIFFERENCE  
PLANT A TREE

Discount Trees Available to Beautify Yards, Save the Canopy

The season is right to plant trees, and in Takoma Park that means you could be saving the aging tree canopy in the City. If you're interested in replacing old growth in your yard, or adding to greenery outside your door, you can save through the City's bulk buy tree sale.

Acting as a purchasing agent with Stadler Nurs-

ery, the City is making a number of species available at wholesale prices. Residents can purchase black gum, sweet gum, scarlet oak, red maple, white oak or sycamore — all native shade trees that usually retail for about \$400 — for \$240 to \$295, installed. Sale dates run through May 2, with installation toward the end of the month.

ORDER FORM

Please include check written to City of Takoma Park and be sure to draw a map of the property and locations for installation. Submit to Todd Bolton, Takoma Park Department of Public Works, 31 Oswego Avenue, Silver Spring, MD, 20910 by close of business May 2. Someone will be in touch regarding installation dates.

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

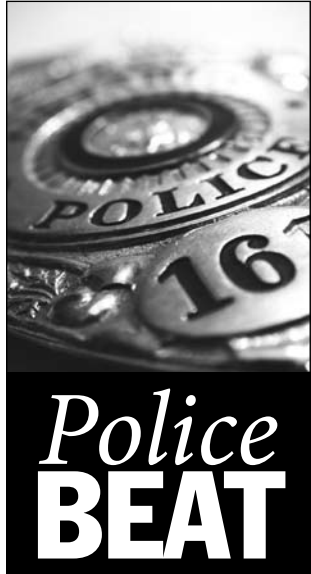
Daytime Phone \_\_\_\_\_

Include map of property with tree  
locations on separate piece of paper.

Species	Price	Quantity	Total
Sweet Gum (2")	\$275 x	_____	= _____
Black Gum (1.5")	\$250 x	_____	= _____
Scarlet Oak (2")	\$300 x	_____	= _____
Red Maple (2")	\$240 x	_____	= _____
White Oak (2")	\$295 x	_____	= _____
Sycamore or London Plane (2")	\$270 x	_____	= _____
Tax 5%			_____
Total enclosed			\$ _____



## Analyst Increases Crime Prevention and Control



### Police BEAT

By CATHERINE PLEVY

**W**ouldn't it be great to be able to know when and where the next crime will occur? Kyleen Luy thinks so, and so does the Takoma Park Police Department. Luy, hired just this year as the first crime analyst in the Takoma Park Police Department, is already on her way to making such predictions with precise methods and analyses.

Crime analysis can serve law enforcement agencies in many ways, but it primarily addresses crime prevention and control, apprehension and the recovery of stolen property. The crime analyst's job is to establish a set of

systematic, analytic processes that ferret out crime patterns and trends. This information then serves police officers and staff as they work through the investigative process, and hopefully helps them apprehend criminals and clear cases.

As the first crime analyst for Takoma Park, Luy dedicates the majority of her time to collecting, analyzing and disseminating information concerning crime patterns and trends. The idea is to implement a proactive, rather than reactive approach to crime. To that end, Luy generates community and in-house summaries each week, documenting crime and arrests throughout Takoma Park. In addition, she composes community advisories, which identify particular crime patterns or illegal activity to increase citizen awareness.

Generally, analysts focus efforts on those offenses that occur in large numbers with discernible patterns and trends. In Takoma Park these include both robberies and residential burglaries. Last month, for example, Luy tracked citizen robberies in Takoma Park and bordering Prince George's County, and was able to link at least eight different robberies in the two districts to two suspects. As a result, detectives were able to close several cases and provide the State's Attorney General with valuable information. In December, she tracked a string of burglaries in the Woodland and Sycamore neighborhood, which resulted in increased patrol and awareness and, ultimately, a citizen report of a burglary in progress.



Kyleen Luy

Luy, a civilian employee of the department, has a BA in criminal justice from Lycoming College in Williamsport, Pa., where she also worked in the county public defender's office; she is also working on her M.S. from Michigan State University, and has certificates in homeland security and law enforcement intelligence analysis. To improve her skills, Luy recently attended a Crime Analysis Applications training conducted by the Alpha Group Center for Crime and Intelligence Analysis, which instructs the Federal Bureau of Investigation, Royal Canadian Mounted Police, California Department of Justice, and state and local law enforcement agencies throughout the United States and Canada. The course covered operational and statistical processes involved in designing and maintaining a successful crime analysis program. The most beneficial tactic Luy learned at the training, she says, was how to identify a crime series (a crime pattern where there is reason to believe the same person or persons committed the crimes). She also picked up information about methods used to forecast future criminal occurrences.

Because Takoma Park is affected by nearby county and city borders, Luy maintains routine contact with neighboring jurisdictions and receives important information from their analysts, investigators and patrol officers. This cross-jurisdictional work is a great help in identifying suspects, linking crimes and ultimately solving and preventing criminal activity in the city.



## Speed Cameras Coming to Takoma Park

**I**n an effort to slow speeding traffic on two of Takoma Park's busiest streets, the City Council voted March 3 to go forward with the installation of two speed cameras, one in the 7400 block of New Hampshire Avenue and the other in the 500 block of Ethan Allen Avenue.

These two locations were chosen after traffic surveys of 13 Takoma Park locations showed them to be the spots where speeding most frequently occurs. Cameras will be placed in both directions on each roadway, where the speed limit is 25 miles per hour. In Montgomery County, according to Takoma Park Police Department Public Information Officer Catherine Plevy, speed cameras are usually set to "catch" drivers who go 11 miles per hour or more over the speed limit; Takoma Park has not yet determined at what speed the new cameras will activate.

Tickets for speeding will be set at \$40, says Plevy; that money is expected to pay for the cameras (though \$16.25 of it goes to ACS). The program was made more accessible through a piggyback arrangement with the county, she adds. Gaithersburg, Rockville, Chevy Chase Village and Takoma Park are all part of the contract already in place between Montgomery County and ACS State and Local Solutions, so the municipalities needn't spend time and money putting out bids. Plus, under this same contract, the cameras throughout the area will be uniform.

The cameras already operating throughout the county have reduced speeding by 10 percent, according to ACS statistics. If they prove successful in Takoma Park, Council will consider installing more.

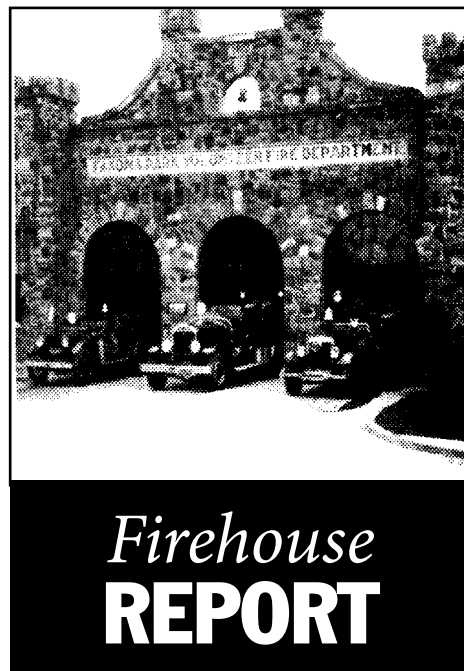
As of Feb. 29, the Takoma Park Volunteer Fire Department and the personnel of the Montgomery County Fire and Rescue Service assigned to the Takoma Park station have responded to 93 fire-related incidents. The department handled or assisted with 488 rescue or ambulance-related incidents for a total of 581 this year. Totals for 2007 were 154 and 443, respectively, for a total of 597, representing a decrease of 16 incidents.

### Another Serious Fire Hits Takoma Park

On Friday, March 14 at 8 p.m., a fire occurred at 601 Hudson Avenue. The fire did approximately \$50,000 in damage to one of the apartment units. No injuries. The cause: cooking left unattended. As I have reported many times, COOKING is still the number one cause of home fires. It's a must...when you leave the kitchen with something cooking on the stove, you must turn the stove off. That's with any type of cooking.

### Safe Escape Tips

\* About 75 percent of house fire deaths are caused by smoke, not by flames. You must crawl under smoke, with



## Firehouse REPORT

By JIM JARBOE

your head 12-24 inches above the floor.  
\* It takes 10-15 minutes to burn through a wooden door. Sleep with doors shut.  
\* Use the back of your hand to touch the

door or doorknob. If you feel heat, use your second exit; if you don't, open the door slowly. If you see thick smoke or flames, shut the door. Use another exit.  
\* If you are trapped, stuff clothing under the door. Telephone the fire department (9-1-1) to tell them your location. Wait at a window and signal with a flashlight or light-colored cloth.  
\* Remember: Once out of a burning building, NEVER go back into the building for any reason. Your defense against fire...working smoke alarms on all levels of your home and a fire escape plan for the entire family.

### Starting Date Change for Baby Sitters Class

The Takoma Park Volunteer Fire Department Baby Sitters Class, will start on Monday, April 14. The sessions will be held for six Monday nights, from 7 to 9 p.m. at the Takoma Park Community Center. Contact the City Recreation Department to register. Ages: girls and boys 11-13 years old. Topics to be covered: fire safety, infant and child care, personal safety, CPR and first aid. Special note: Minimum number to have the class is 12.

### Kids Corner

When It Comes To Safety...Are You Just As Smart As Your Big Brother or Sister?

- I always cross the street at a marked crosswalk or corner.
- I always look both ways before crossing the street.
- I always wear my seat belt when riding in a car.
- I always wear a helmet when I ride my bicycle.
- I always wear safety pads and a helmet when riding my skateboard.
- I never go swimming unless there's an adult or life guard is present.
- I never touch matches or lighters. If I find them, I'll tell a grown up.
- I never play in the street.
- I always wear a life jacket when riding in a boat.
- I never play in, under, or around vehicles.
- I never talk to strangers or get into their car.

It's a fact, if you do all of the above ... you are as smart and you will be a lot safer.



# Chief Ricucci Marks First Year in Takoma Park

By VIRGINIA MYERS

It's been a year since the Takoma Park Police Department welcomed Ronald Ricucci as its new chief, and already he has made a difference. "I think we're more responsive to the community and I think the community has regained confidence in the department and its leadership," says Ricucci. Indeed, residents and City Council members have praised the new attitude at the department. Ricucci says the big difference is that he's held officers and civilian workers accountable for their work in a way that has shifted the department to the good.

Ricucci insists officers "walk, talk and smile," so they become more a part of the community. Residents are more aware of crime, and police activity designed to deter it, thanks to frequent email dispatches from a new public information officer who also keeps information flowing out to the media. The communications division has a supervisor now, as well as all new modern equipment. There's a new crime analyst, a new evidence clerk and the bike patrol has been reactivated. Cross-jurisdictional relationships with Ricucci's former department, Montgomery County Police – especially the Silver Spring district – as well as the fourth district in D.C., and the first district, Hyattsville, in Prince George's County have helped coordinate crime prevention and detective work that crosses county and city lines. The force has a full complement of officers for the first time in ten years, and includes a plainclothes unit, or "tactical unit" that has "made a major impact on crime," says Ricucci. Perhaps most significant, the crime rate is down for the first six months of 2007, compared to the first months of 2006.

These are just the accomplishments that are fairly common knowledge. Those working in the department also appreciate the new computers installed in the police cruisers, and the upgrade in firearms – officers now carry M-16 rifles in their cars. They are also equipped with tasers.

It's a long list of improvements, but Ricucci has more in mind. He has frequently spoken of a citizens' academy that would expose residents to police work through informational meetings and even ride-alongs, effectively training them in crime prevention. A youth academy would work in a similar way, and keep young people on the right side of the law. He has begun to revitalize the citizens' patrol – the orange vest-wearing groups of residents who patrol their own neighborhood streets, coordinating with police officers who are available when they call in suspicious behavior and potential criminal elements. "I think we're headed in the right direction but there's still a lot of work to be done," says Ricucci.

And it hasn't been all roses for the new Chief. His request



**Chief Ronald Ricucci has made accountability the buzz word among his staff and officers, and he believes that has made a significant improvement in overall service from the Police Department. Here he addresses an administrative staff meeting.**

Photo by Catherine Plevy



that the City suspend its sanctuary law, which prohibits officers from researching resident status on immigrants they encounter during their work, was refused. Ricucci reasoned that the information about immigrants in this country illegally could help officers find those who had committed crimes, but City Council disagreed.

Similarly, Ricucci opposed a \$25,000 expenditure – from

his own departmental budget – that would fund Safe Takoma, a citizen group that works on safety issues around the Metro station area. He told City Council he would prefer to hire a community specialist within his department – someone who would report to him – and have the person cover more territory than just the Metro. City Council disagreed, and if Ricucci wants such an employee, he'll have to request additional funds in his FY09 budget (to be presented in May to City Council). He notes that he works well with Safe Takoma, but wants to address crime throughout the city rather than in one area.

These are relatively small blips in the Chief's short career in the City. Most important, he says, is a change in attitude among those who think seriously about police work in Takoma Park. "I've seen a change in attitude both with citizens and with the officers," he says. "I think we're coming together. I think we may have been diametrically opposed when I got here [but] and I see us coming together as a community police department. That's what community policing is."



## LEAVE THE LIGHT ON

Leaving your porch or garage light on is one of the most effective things you can do to prevent a break-in. Police recommend keeping the light on all night to turn crime away from your doorstep.

*For more information on home safety, or for a free home safety audit call 301-270-1100*

## Safe Kids Week Kicks Off

Kick off Safe Kids Week with "Gear Up For Safety," a Community Health and Safety Fair in Takoma Park on Saturday, April 26 from 10 a.m. to 3 p.m. at the Community Center, 7500 Maple Avenue, Takoma Park.

Families can participate in fun and games to learn about bike and pedestrian safety, police, fire and rescue services, car seat safety, and much, much more.

There will be product displays and special activities for kids ages 10 to 14. The event is sponsored by the Montgomery County Safe Kids Coalition and Takoma Park Safe Routes to School.

*For more information, contact [lucyn@takoma.gov.org](mailto:lucyn@takoma.gov.org).*





## LIBRARY Briefs

### It's Not Too Late for Favorite Poems

There is still plenty of time to choose a poem to read at this year's Favorite Poem Evening, scheduled for Thursday April 24 7:30 p.m. in the Library.

Sponsored jointly by the Library and the Friends of the Library, these annual events are modeled after the public readings begun by national Poet Laureate Robert Pinsky. Pinsky believed that poetry has meaning for virtually everyone at some point in their life, and his poetry evenings held around the country typically brought together people of all ages and all walks of life who came together to share their choices.

Those who wish to participate in this year's event should choose a poem by a published poet, and send the title and author together with their name and generic occupation to Ellen Robbins at the Takoma Park Maryland Library, or by e-mail to [ellenr@takomagov.org](mailto:ellenr@takomagov.org). The deadline for all submissions is Friday April 18.

Readers are encouraged to bring friends and family to this tenth annual public celebration of poems, with refreshments provided by the Friends of the Library. This year's event will be hosted by Takoma Park's Poet Laureate Anne Becker.

### Reading Group to discuss Graham Swift

The Friends of the Library Reading Group will meet on Wednesday, May 14 at 7:30 p.m. in the Takoma Park Community Center for a discussion of "Last Orders" by Graham Swift.

Winner of the Booker Prize in 1996, this widely acclaimed novel tells the story of "four men – friends, most of them, for half a lifetime" —[who] gather in a London pub. They have taken it upon themselves to carry out the last orders of Jack Dodds, master butcher, and deliver his ashes to the sea. As they drive towards the fulfillment of their mission, their errand becomes an extraordinary journey into their collective and individual pasts."

The "Washington Post Book World" called this novel "resonant, distinct, irresistible...both convincing and extraordinarily intimate..." and "The New York Review of Books" praised Swift's writing: "Swift has involved us in real, lived lives...Quietly, but with con-

LIBRARY BRIEFS continues on page 11

# Book Clubs Come in All Ages

BY KAREN MACPHERSON

There are plenty of people interested in reading – and, as it turns out, plenty of parents and kids interested in forming clubs to read together. As some 30 people learned at a recent library gathering, there are all kinds of ways to create a parent-child book club that works.

Those gathered included representatives of six different local parent-child book clubs, whose kid members – both boys and girls – range in age from 6 to 18. Most of the groups meet monthly, with members taking turns hosting at their homes.

In some of the book clubs, the parents choose the books to read. In others, it's a rule that kids make the selections. Some clubs are structured, and the members have specific questions they answer to keep the discussion flowing. Others are more free-wheeling and let the discussion range where it will. One group connects the book selection with a craft. Another compares a book to its movie version.

Still, there are a few similarities among these parent-child book clubs.

Most keep membership small (6-8 members) as a way to make sure everyone has a chance to participate. And many clubs include food as a way to fuel the discussion.

"Food definitely helps," said Nida Vidutis.

Nida and her mom, Diana Vidutis, have been part of a mother-daughter book group for nine years. The club began when the girls were in the third grade; they're heading to college next year (see related story, page 3).

Patti Mallin and her daughter Camden Roberts hope their book club will last that long. Created just a few months ago, their book club is composed of moms and girls mostly in first grade. The girls typically do a craft related to their book – recently, they decorated a notebook that they can use to write or draw about the book under discussion. And there's one other vital ingredient: "We always allow time for the girls to play," Mallin said.

Time for play also is built into two book clubs composed of moms and sons. One of the book clubs was started two years ago by Surabhi Dabir as a way to encourage her son, Arjun Blum. The

group, composed of 4th grade boys, has been written up in *The Washington Post's KidsPost*.

"We do try to empower the boys," Dabir says. "They definitely pick the book – that makes a difference. And it's morphed over time from being very structured to ... a more free-flowing discussion." The group also has gone on book-related field trips and even done some cooking together.

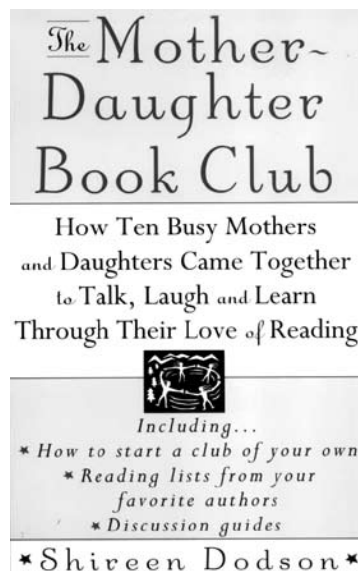
In the book club of which Laura DiCurcio and her 4th grade daughter Eva are members, the moms make the book selections, and the format is fairly structured. "Whoever is hosting writes enough questions for each girl," DiCurcio said. "It does generally keep the conversation going."

Annemarie Stroud's group does things a bit differently. Composed of boy and girl homeschoolers ranging in age from 6-12, the group focuses on books, such as "Mary Poppins" by Mary Travers, that have been made into movies. The group, now in its third month, reads the book and then gathers to watch the movie.

"It's amazing how they embrace the book and not the film," Stroud said.

## Library Resources for Parent-Child Book Clubs

- "The Mother-Daughter Book Club" by Shireen Dodson
  - "The Kids Book Club Book" by Judy Gelman and Vicki Levy Krupp
  - "Reading Raps" by Rita Soltan.
  - "100 Best Books for Children" by Anita Silvey
  - "500 Great Books for Teens" by Anita Silvey
  - "The Essential Guide to Children's Books and Their Creators" by Anita Silvey
  - "Book Crush" by Nancy Pearl
  - "Great Books for Girls" by Kathleen Odean
  - "Great Books for Boys" by Kathleen Odean
  - "The New York Times Parents' Guide to the Best Books for Children" by Eden Ross Lipson
  - "Best Books for Kids Who (Think They) Hate to Read" by Laura Backes
- Participants at our March Parent-Child Book Club event provided lists of the books they read. Copies are available on the librarian's desk in the Children's Room, as well as on our Children's Room blog, which can be accessed off the library's main web page ([www.cityoftakomapark.org/library](http://www.cityoftakomapark.org/library)).



## TAKOMA PARK LIBRARY CALENDAR

APRIL 2008

### Neighborhood Circle Time

Every Tuesday  
Two times: 10 a.m. OR 11 a.m. at the Library.

### Lapsit program for babies through 12 months of age

Wednesdays, 10 a.m. at the Library.  
Space is limited, so you must register. Call 301-891-7259 or email [libraryprograms@spambob.net](mailto:libraryprograms@spambob.net). (Please put lapsit in the subject line).

### Spanish Circle Time

Every Thursday  
10 a.m. at the Library  
Sponsored by the Friends of the Takoma Park Maryland Library

### Drop Everything and Read (D.E.A.R.)

Friday, April 11  
4 p.m. at the Library  
Celebrate (a day early) the birthday of "Ramona" creator Beverly Cleary. We'll listen to audio versions of Cleary's books while creating bookmarks.

### Bedtime Story Time

Monday, April 14  
7 p.m. at the Library  
Bring your teddy bears (or other stuffed favorites). Pajamas, pillows and blankets are welcome.  
Note: This program is aimed at babies, toddlers and preschoolers and their grown-ups.

### Dia de los Ninos/Dia de los Libros Multicultural Storytelling Celebration

Saturday, April 19  
10:30 a.m.- Noon at the Library  
Come celebrate Dia — a national event

highlighting multicultural storytelling. Diane Macklin will tell stories, and we'll follow with more stories, songs and crafts. Please register by calling 301-891-7259 or by emailing [libraryprograms@spambob.net](mailto:libraryprograms@spambob.net) (put "dia" in the subject line, please). Sponsored by the Friends of the Takoma Park Maryland Library

### Spring Dreams — Poetry Fun!

Monday, April 21 at the Library  
7 p.m.  
Join local poets Rosanne Singer and Liz Rees in creating poems about spring things.  
Please register by calling 301-891-7259 or emailing [libraryprograms@spambob.net](mailto:libraryprograms@spambob.net) (put "spring" in the subject line, please). Sponsored by the Friends of the Takoma Park Maryland Library

### Favorite Poem Evening

Thursday, April 24

7:30 p.m. in the Library  
Come read a favorite poem and listen to others do the same.  
(See story for more information).

### T(w)een Book Club

Friday, April 25  
4:40-5:30, Rose Room at the Community Center  
Come eat pizza and discuss "Storm-breaker," the first volume in the series by Anthony Horowitz, starring Alex Rider, teenage spy.  
Note: This program is for middle-schoolers only. You must register, and you must read the book before the program. Copies of the book are available for check-out at the front desk. Register by calling 301-891-7259 or emailing [libraryprograms@spambob.net](mailto:libraryprograms@spambob.net) (put "t(w)een" in the subject line, please). Sponsored by the Friends of the Takoma Park Maryland Library.



# CITY TV PROGRAMMING SCHEDULE - MARCH 2008

	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	Déjà vu: Takoma Music Revisited
8:00 AM	Takoma Park Snapshots	PreSchool Power!		Takoma Park Snapshots	Community Bulletin Board	Takoma Park Folk Festival	
9:00 AM	Takoma Park Folk Festival	Takoma Park Snapshots	National Gallery of Art	Coffeehouse	NASA Programming	Takoma Park Snapshots	
10:00 AM		Coffeehouse	City Council Meeting (Replay)	Music da camera	Government Focus		Takoma Park Snapshots
11:00 AM	Takoma Park City TV Local Events	CaribNation		Takoma Park Folk Festival	National Gallery of Art	Takoma Park City TV Local Events	Media Watch on Hunger
NOON		Community Bulletin Board	Takoma Park Folk Festival				City Council Meeting (Replay)
1:00 PM	The Road to Recovery	Takoma Park City TV Local Events		Takoma Park City TV Local Events	Media Watch on Hunger		
2:00 PM	Media Watch on Hunger		NASA Programming			Music da camera	Takoma Park Folk Festival
3:00 PM	Takoma Park Snapshots	Takoma Park Snapshots		Government Focus			
4:00 PM	PreSchool Power		Takoma Park Snapshots		Takoma Park Folk Festival		
5:00 PM	Music da camera	Takoma Park Snapshots	Government Focus	Government Focus	Takoma Park Folk Festival	Déjà vu: Takoma Music Revisited	
5:30 PM	Chinese News						
6:00 PM	City Council Meeting (LIVE)	Community Bulletin Board	Chinese News	Community Bulletin Board	Takoma Park Snapshots	Takoma Snapshots	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		Coffeehouse	City Council Meeting (Replay)	Takoma Park Folk Festival	Takoma Park City TV Local Events	Takoma Park City TV Local Events	Takoma Park Folk Festival
8:00 PM							
9:00 PM		Takoma Park City TV Local Events	Government Focus	Takoma Park Folk Festival	Takoma Park Folk Festival	Coffeehouse	
10:00 PM		CaribNation					
11:00 PM	Takoma Park Snapshots	City Council Meeting (Replay)	Takoma Park Snapshots	Takoma Park City TV Special Events	Déjà vu: Takoma Music Revisited	Takoma Park Snapshots	Takoma Park City TV Local Events
1:00 AM	Road to Recovery	Community Bulletin Board					



## Pajama Squid, Bikram and Pizza at the Junction

**A**mid the hoopla of the Earth Day celebration on April 20 at Takoma Junction (see story, page 1), three new businesses are being welcomed to the community. The Pajama Squid, a children's store with clothing, toys and books; Bikram Yoga Takoma Park; and Pizza Roma, a Halal carryout replacing Pizza Palace. Their impact is expected to reach far beyond the day's festivities.

In fact, Bikram Yoga Takoma Park, at 7324 Carroll Avenue, could improve your health. Stephen Pleasant, the owner of the studio, offers classic Bikram-style classes: a 90-minute series of 26 yoga postures performed in a room heated to as high as 105 degrees Fahrenheit. The heat works to decrease muscle resistance, increase

flexibility and prevent injury, and the practice, overall, strengthens muscle, increases flexibility, and develops balance. Classes are offered throughout the week, with an introductory seven-day pass priced at \$25. For more information, see [bikramyogatp.com](http://bikramyogatp.com).

Just down the street is the Pajama Squid, at 7320 Carroll Avenue. This playful store features quality books, toys and clothing for families and especially children. Takoma Park resident and owner Tiffany King is offering a number of products that support women in developing countries, and others incorporating natural and eco-friendly materials. She named the store for her "favorite squid," an actual species of squid called "pajama squid" that she encountered watching a docu-

mentary about sea creatures.

To learn more about the Pajama Squid, or to shop online starting April 1, see [www.ThePajamaSquid.com](http://www.ThePajamaSquid.com).

At 7322 Carroll Avenue, the Pizza Palace is undergoing renovation at the hand of Abdul Baig, who expects to re-open as Pizza Roma in May. Baig's existing Pizza Roma in College Park, near REI at the intersection of Rhode Island Avenue and Edgewood Road, is known for its cheese steak subs, pizzas and gyros. Baig's sandwiches and pizzas use turkey ham and bacon, beef sausage and Halal pepperoni so he can serve "anything and everything" and still keep Halal (many Muslims eat Halal, much as Jews eat Kosher). Baig expects to open in May.



### Hunting, Takoma Park Style

The Annual Egg Hunt sponsored by the Recreation Department once again drew excited youngsters to the field behind Piney Branch Elementary School, where they ran pell-mell across the grass trying to gather as many eggs as they could find. The fun wasn't limited to little people, either — there were a few four-legged friends on hand, and proud parents observing from behind.

Photo: Debra Haiduven



## NEWS Briefs

### Annual House and Garden Tour May 4

The 35th Takoma Park House and Garden Tour, sponsored by Historic Takoma, will take place from 1 - 5 p.m. Sunday, May 4, rain or shine. Its theme, "First Stop Takoma!" focuses on more than a dozen houses, gardens and other buildings in the Takoma D.C. neighborhood. The tour includes historic homes, as well as the first branch of the DC Public Library. Advance tickets, \$15, are available at the Takoma Park Silver Spring Coop, American Craft, Now and Then, Mark's Kitchen and the Culture Shop. Tickets the day of the tour, \$20, are available at the D.C. Public Library, 416 Cedar Street NW, where advance ticket holders can also get a brochure with property locations and descriptions for the self-guided tour. Locations of the properties on the tour and an informative description. See [www.historictakoma.org](http://www.historictakoma.org) or call 301-270-2831 for more information.

### Sign Up For the Parade

The Takoma Park Independence Committee, Inc. is encouraging neighborhoods, civic associations, businesses, churches, organizations, families, schools and anyone interested in celebrating the Fourth of July to build a float, decorate a bike, a wagon, carriage, form a kazoo band, a musical group, form a neighborhood marching unit, dress up in your native dress, form a dance group. Use your imagination and join the fun. The theme this year is "Unity in Diversity."

For further information visit our web site [www.TakomaPark4th.org](http://www.TakomaPark4th.org) or call 301-270-6876.

### Free Mulch Available

Springtime has arrived, and neighbors are out sprucing up their gardens. Remember, the City of Takoma Park has plenty of mulch available for your yard projects. You can:

- Have it delivered: \$45 to \$65, depending on load size (\$65 to \$105 for non-residents). Call 301-891-7633 to schedule a delivery. Deliveries are made on Fridays; payment must be received at Public Works by Thursday afternoon.
- Load up your truck: pull up to the pile and Public Works will load your truck with mulch for \$20 or \$30, depending upon truck size. Or, you can load it yourself for free. You'll find the mulch at the Public Works yard, 31 Oswego Avenue in Takoma Park.
- Bring your own bags. Better than paying for pre-bagged mulch, you can fill bags of mulch and haul them away in the back of the car.

For more information, call 301-891-7633.

### Recycle your Electronics

Plan on toting your old electronics over to the Takoma Park, Maryland Library parking lot for recycling on Saturday, May 10 at the annual E-Cycle Event. The City's Department of Public Works sponsors the collection to be sure the hazardous metals in many of these devices — like cadmium, lead, and mercury — stay out of the Montgomery County incinerator. Takoma Park will be accepting computer-related equipment, telephones, cell phones, cameras, radios, TVs (non-console type), stereos, tape players, scanners, copiers, fax machines, surge protectors and CD players for recycling. The E-Cycle Event will run from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. Saturday, May 10. The library parking lot is located at the corner of Maple Avenue and East-West Highway/Philadelphia Avenue. For more information, contact Public Works at 301-891-7633.

### Azalea Awards April 26

The annual recognition of Takoma Park's thriving volunteer spirit, the Azalea Awards, comes around this spring on Saturday, April 26. Sponsored by the Takoma Foundation and the "Takoma Voice," the festive event celebrates those volunteers who have made an especially significant impact on the community as they work with youth, environment, education, business, music, art, activism and more. For more information on the event, see <http://www.takomafoundation.org/awards.html>.