Residents Urge Legal Action:
Metro Development Opposed

On 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 council members 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.

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.

Earth Day Celebrations Expand

By Virginia Myers

Takoma Park celebrates Earth Day all month this year with new events as well as old favorites. All are designed to help residents celebrate environmental stewardship, 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 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 projects 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 climb them themselves. Plus, City Arborist Todd Bolton will be available to answer your 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, 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. In addition to events 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

Exactly 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 volunteer 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. 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. 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. 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. 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. 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. 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. 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. 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. 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. 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. 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. 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. 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. 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. 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. 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. 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. Its replacement, which is costing about $11 million, should be ready for occupancy in 2010.
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.

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 condolences 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 resounding 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.

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).

Applications will be reviewed by the City Council. For additional information, call Jessie Carpenter at 301-891-7267. See www.takomaparkmd.gov for more information.

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 peggye@takomagov.org.

Volunteers Needed

Volunteers are available on council appointed boards, committees, and commissions. Please consider volunteering to serve. Additional information can be found at www.takomaparkmd.gov or contact the City Clerk for more information (301-891-7267 or Clerk@takomagov.org).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Arts and Humanities Commission</th>
<th>Board of Elections</th>
<th>Ethics Commission</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Facade Advisory Board</td>
<td>Health Services Impact Committee</td>
<td>Nuclear Free Takoma Park Committee</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Personnel Appeal Board</td>
<td>Police Employees Retirement Plan Committee</td>
<td>Safe Roadways Committee</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Committee</td>
<td>Public Safety Citizens Advisory Committee</td>
<td>Recreation Committee</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Montgomery College Neighbors Advisory Committee</td>
<td>Noise Control Board</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Reading with our Daughters
Mother-Daughter Book Club Turns the Page, from “Sarah, Plain and Tall” to “Hell’s Angels”

By Rosanne Singer

Ida 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 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 bi-monthly 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, “Kidnapped.” 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 outraged them and were ready for it. 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 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.

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 Womstedt-Lynch, Courtney Burtraw, Rose Douglas, Janet Douglas; front row, Kate Cook, Rosanne Singer, Marie Mencher, and Barbara Glenn. Photo by Diana Vidutis

THE TAKOMA PARK NEWSLETTER

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

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

Takoma Park Newsletter is printed on recycled-content paper.

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 opinions, 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 procedure 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.

Pursuant to City Council Resolution No. 1992–36 of June 8, 1992 that sets forth the procedure 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.

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 were 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.”

Photo by Loren Mohot
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 Linda.W@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

**Seminario Para Quien Comprara 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 Coopera- ción del Desarrollo Económico del Latino (LEDC), una organización a beneficio para quienes quieren comprar una casa por primera vez, dara 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, Mayo 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 increases 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

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 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. Media- tion 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’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.

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 Isaiah 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 Law/Program

The Montgomery County Office of Human Rights is the certified government agency in the county that investig- ates fair housing complaints. The Fair Housing Pro- gram, 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 and training for the general public. The Fair Housing Program also has a comprehensive program of testing for discrimi- nation in the sale or rental of housing, home mortgage financing and compliance with architectural guidelines.

By Moses A. Wilds, Jr., LANDLORD-TENANT COORDINATOR

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 Isaiah Leggett commented that “the decision was gratifying for all who seek to protect the rights of residents to find affordable housing.”

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.

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’s Fair Housing Complaint Process

Confidential complaints may be filed with the Mont-gomery County Office of Human Rights by individu-als who demonstrate they may have been discriminated against in their housing choice or in receiving real estate services. Complaints on behalf of victims of discrimina- tion 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. Media- tion 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 240-777-8430 and the TTY phone number is 240-777-8480.
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 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 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 or by calling 540-631-5611. Credit and debit cards can be used at the market and at the door.

**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.

**Third Thursday poetry reading April 17**

The poetry of Kathy Richy, 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 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 or by contacting the Arts and Humanities Commission at 301-891-7224 or by email at ahc@takomagov.org.
Family Rock Climbing
Carderock National Recreation Area
Ages 8 and older
Bring the family for this awesome day on the rocks. Rock climbing is a great way to explore the natural world, push your limits and have fun. No experience is necessary; this trip will be catered to beginners. All equipment, transportation and guides are included. Wear comfy clothes and bring a bag lunch. All children under 12 require a chaperone. Please contact Jon McLaren at 301-891-7225 or jonm@takomagov.org for more information.

When: Sun., April 6
Time: 8 a.m. - 6 p.m.
Location: Meet at T.P. Com. Ctr., 7500 Maple Ave.
Fee: T.P. City Res. $40 (up to 4 people); $15 each extra
Non-Res. $45 (up to 4 people); $20 each extra

Rock Climbing at Great Falls National Park
Ages 12 and older
Rock climbing is a great way to explore the natural world, push your limits and have fun. No experience is necessary; this trip will be catered to beginners. All equipment, transportation and guides are included. Wear comfy clothes and bring a bag lunch. Please contact Jon McLaren at 301-891-7225 or jonm@takomagov.org for more information. Instructor Jon McLaren.

When: Sun., April 13
Time: 8 a.m. - 6 p.m.
Location: Meet at T.P. Com. Ctr., 7500 Maple Ave.
Fee: T.P. City Res. $40
Non-Res. $45

Adult Coed Softball League
Recreational fun for adults. Team registration only, rosters must consist of at least 50 percent men/women ages 18 and older.

When: Fri., April 4
Time: 9 a.m. - 5 p.m.
Location: T.P. City Res. (behind Takoma Park Elementary School)
Fee: T.P. City Res. $20
Non-Res. $25

“First Annual” Adult Tennis Tournament
Men/Women Ages 18 and older
When: Apr. 26 - Apr. 27
Time: 10 a.m. - 3 p.m.
Location: Takoma Park Middle School Tennis Courts
Fee: T.P. City Res. $5
Non-Res. $10
REGISTER BY APRIL 23

MusicaliTennis Silver Foxes Trip
Musical performance with complimentary tea and light fare. Trip requires advance registration. Please come to the Community Center and fill out a registration form by R.S.V.P. date. Limited space available.

When: Thurs., April 10
Time: 10 a.m.
Location: Music Center at Strathmore, Bethesda, MD
Fee: Free
RSVP: 4/3/08

TGIF
Ages 13 - 18
Takoma Park Recreation invites teens to participate in “TGIF,” a series of safe, fun Friday night events for teens to socialize outside of school.

Date: Fri., April 4
Activity: Ice cream social
Date: Fri., April 11
Activity: Movie Night Out
Date: Fri., April 18
Activity: Game Room Tournaments

Roadtripz
Ages 13 - 18
“Roadtripz” takes teens on adult-supervised trips to local destinations.

Date: Fri., April 11
Activity: Movie Night Out
Time: 6 - 9 p.m.
Transportation provided from T Zone at the Takoma Park Community Center and from the Takoma Park Recreation Center on New Hampshire Avenue
Fee: Varies by trip
REGISTER BY APRIL 19

Teen School Daze Out
Ages 12 - 16
School Daze Out offers exciting and educational field trips on scheduled whole day school closings.

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 tree audit. 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 (wschnaufer3703@comcast.net). For locations or more information, see 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 4 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.

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.haucek@maryland.sierracub.org for more information.

Weed Discussion
Wednesday, April 16, 7:30 p.m.
Community Center Azalea Room
Betty Marose, University of Maryland 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.mainstreettakoma.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 for more information

Green Home and Garden Tour
May 18, Noon to 3 p.m.
Various locations, Takoma Park Tour homes that showcase sustainable building practices
Sponsored by the Takoma Park Green Building Group. See saveoursky.com/housetour08.aspx for more information.

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, reinstated 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.

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 Nurseries, 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 Osweago Avenue, Silver Spring, MD, 20910 by close of business May 2. Someone will be in touch regarding installation dates.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Species</th>
<th>Price</th>
<th>Quantity Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Sweet Gum (2”)</td>
<td>$275 x</td>
<td>=</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Black Gum (1.5”)</td>
<td>$250 x</td>
<td>=</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Red Maple (2”)</td>
<td>$240 x</td>
<td>=</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>White Oak (2”)</td>
<td>$295 x</td>
<td>=</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sycamore or London Plane (2”)</td>
<td>$270 x</td>
<td>=</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tax 5%</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Total enclosed $
Analyst Increases Crime Prevention and Control

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 are disseminated information concerning crime patterns and illegal activity to increase citizen awareness.

General 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.

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 were caused by smoke, not by flames. You must crawl under smoke, with 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 door knob. 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.

---

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 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.

**Safe Escape Tips**

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

**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 mark cross walk 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 never 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 information 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 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."

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.

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
**Library Resources for Parent-Child Book Clubs**

- "The Mother-Daughter Book Club" by Shireen Dsdson
- "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 Teen's" 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
- "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 for checkout at the library. As well as on our Children's Room blog, which can be accessed on our Children's Room blog, which can be accessed on our children's room blog.
City TV Features Taste of Takoma and Energy Star

Join City TV on April 13 as it covers the day-long festival, “Taste of Takoma” on Sunday, April 13 on the campus of Columbia Union College. City TV will also televise the 2008 Azalea Awards on Saturday, April 26 starting at 7 p.m. in the Community Center Auditorium. Repays this month will include Energy Star for Small Businesses presentation from March 11, and the Takoma Metro Community Priority Setting Workshop held on March 19.

New music this month will include more releases from the various fall festivals. We’ll also be releasing the performance of the 2008 Jazz Band Brawl winner “Little Falls Quartet.”

**Takoma Snapshots in April will include:**

- Community Oriented Policing: Chief Speaks Out
- Ethiopian Art Exhibit

Community and neighborhood groups may submit non-commercial notices regarding meetings or special events to City TV for inclusion on the bulletin board.

City TV is carried on Channel 13 on Comcast and RCN, and Channel 28 on the Verizon system. Many programs, including Council meetings and Snapshots, are available for on-demand viewing from the City website as well. Be sure to visit City TV’s award-winning webpage at www.TakomaParkMD.gov/cable for specific program information.

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 also available on DVD. Call 301-891-7118 or send an email to: cabletv@takomagov.org for more information.

---

**Spring Dreams — Poetry for Kids**

Spring has sprung and we’re going to celebrate by working with young poets to create poems of “spring dreams” on Monday, April 21 at 7 p.m. in the Library. Our program will be led by local poets Rosanne Singer and Liz Rees, who will help kids create poems written from the point of view of spring things, such as flowers, rain, rabbits, bees, etc. We’ll also have art materials so young poets can create the shape of their spring thing after they write their poems.

“Spring Dreams” is sponsored by the Friends of the Takoma Park Maryland Library. The program is best for children ages 5 and up. To register, call 301-891-7259 or email library-programs@spambob.net (put “dia” in the subject line, please).

**D.E.A.R. Day with Ramona**

April 12 is the birthday of Beverly Cleary, author of the “Ramona” and “Henry Huggins” books, among many others. To celebrate the birthday of this American treasure, libraries and bookstores are hosting the second annual “Drop Everything and Read” (D.E.A.R.) day.

At the Takoma Park Maryland Library, we’ll celebrate D.E.A.R. one day early. On Friday, April 11, we’ll gather in the Children’s Room at 4 p.m. and listen to audio versions of some of Cleary’s books while we create bookmarks. All are welcome. No need to register — just come and have some listening fun!

**Tweens Club News**

Our T(ween) Book Club will meet on Friday, April 25 from 4:30-5:30 in the Community Center’s Rose Room to discuss “Stormbreaker” by Anthony Horowitz. This novel is the first in the popular series starring teenage spy Alex Rider. After we discuss the book, we'll have pizza and soda.

The club is for middle-schoolers only and is limited to 12 participants, who must read the book before the April 25 meeting. Thanks to the Friends of the Takoma Park Maryland Library, we’ll have multiple copies of the book available for check-out at the Library’s main desk. To register, please call 301-891-7259 or email library-programs@spambob.net (put “tween” in the subject line, please).

**Books for Twosies**

Our popular “Twosie” program, for two-year-olds and their grown ups, will take place on four Wednesday mornings in May from 10-10:30. We focus on a different theme each week, as we read stories, sing songs and finish with a simple craft. Come join us! To register, call 301-891-7259 or email library-programs@spambob.net (please put “twosies” in the subject line).

**P.J.s Welcome**

Wear your p.j.s, bring your teddy bear or other stuffed favorite and head to the library for “Bedtime Stories” on Monday, April 14 at 7 p.m. We’ll sing a few songs, do some rhymes and fingerplays and read some stories. No need to register — just come!
Pajama Squid, Bikram and Pizza at the Junction

Amid 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 class. Classes are offered throughout the week, with an introductory seven-day pass priced at $25. For more information, see 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 documentary about sea creatures.

To learn more about the Pajama Squid, or to shop online starting April 1, see 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 sandwhiches 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.

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 or call 301-270-2831 for more information.

Sign Up For the Parade

The Takoma Park Independence Committeee, 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, carryage, 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 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 Thurs-day 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), stereo 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.