

ANNUAL SPRING EGG HUNT APRIL 4

See Page 6
for details

Takoma Park NEWSLETTER

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

NO TRASH HOLIDAYS

TRASH COLLECTION
ON SCHEDULE
THIS MONTH

Published by the City of Takoma Park

www.takomaparkmd.gov

March 2009



Abigail Greenberg, 2, and her grandmother, Karen MacDonald, join in the fun during the popular Neighborhood Circle Time on Feb. 17 at the Takoma Park, Maryland Library. The weekly gathering attracts as many as 85 children and their parents and caregivers for stories and circle games. For more on Library activities, see page 10.

Photo by Patrick Rittenhouse

City Council Proposes Strategic Plan

BY VIRGINIA DODD MYERS

What began as concepts and priorities written on 3x5 index cards and passed around for consideration amongst City Councilmembers, has become a final draft of the Council's proposed five-year Strategic Plan for Takoma Park, ready for resident review at a public hearing this month.

The plan, intended to provide direction, vision and values to guide City staff, establish priorities, and guide the annual budget process, is divided into three general policy areas: sustainability; livable community; and engaged, responsive and service-oriented government. It will be reviewed annually and is viewed as a flexible document. "I don't think we're trying to come up with the tablet that gets put in stone in front of the building and that's that," said Mayor Bruce Williams at a review of the plan during the Feb. 9 City Council meeting.

Stated within the strategic plan, the

Council's intention is that Takoma Park be a "forward-thinking, inclusive community," that will "attract and retain a wide range of residents who are interested in being active participants in an integrated community that is diverse in cultures, ideas, and means." The report goes on to commit to listening to all stakeholders – residents, officials, and staff – who would work together toward the prioritized goals.

The 17-page document outlines assumptions, both fiscal and environmental; strategies, which are broad goals; specific priority projects, with timelines for stage-by-stage accomplishment and tasks broken down by City department; and key indicators that could measure successful completion of goals in each of the three areas of concern. The document will be available March 6 in its entirety on the City's web site, takomaparkmd.gov, or can be obtained from the

STRATEGIC PLAN
continues on page 12

Crime Declines in Takoma Park

BY VIRGINIA DODD MYERS

Crime continues to decline in Takoma Park, according to the Takoma Park Police Department 2008 Annual Report. Statistics released last month comparing the incidents of 2007 and 2008 "Part 1" crimes – homicide, rape, robbery, assault, burglary, larceny and auto theft – show a decrease of 11.3 percent, with the greatest decrease, 24 percent, in auto theft.

Every category of Part 1 Crime in Takoma Park decreased from 2007, with the exception of rape, which remained steady. There were no homicides in the City last year (there was one in 2007), and no change in the number of rapes (four each in 2007 and 2008). Robbery went down 4 percent,

Year	Homicide	Rape	Robbery	Assault*	Burglary	Larceny	Auto Theft
2008	0	4	80	38	135	383	99
2007	1	4	83	43	140	432	130
% Change	-100%	0	-4%	-22%	-4%	-22%	-24%

from 83 incidents to 80. Assaults went from 43 to 38, a decrease of 22 percent. Burglaries decreased by 4 percent, from 140 to 135; larceny went down 22 percent, from 432 incidents to 383; and auto thefts went from 130 to 99.

Reflected in these numbers is a decrease in robberies involving victims walking from the Metro, noted Police Chief Ronald Ricucci at his presentation to the City

Council in January. "We didn't have a robbery on someone walking from Metro Monday through Friday during normal business days, from August on," he said. Ricucci also noted that robbery is up in Montgomery County, but criminals have reported they avoid Takoma Park because

CRIME DECLINES
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Change of Venue Shuts Old Town Business

BY JOY LAWSON JONES

In tough economic times businesses have to be both pragmatic and creative, and Kathy Brooks, owner of American Craft, is determined to be just that. The bad news is that after a lackluster sales year and a disastrous 2008 holiday season, American Craft will close its Carroll Avenue store at the end of March, 2009. The good news is that American Craft will reincarnate in

May as an online boutique for fine craftware.

American Craft has been in Takoma Park for decades (first as Finewares), and has always been a showcase for local artists, especially crafters and artisans who weren't carried by larger outlets like Appalachian Spring. According to Brooks, American Craft sales were down 50 percent overall in 2008, and even though the store did not purchase new inventory and

had decent sales in January 2009, it has not been enough to justify keeping the store open. "It was a hard, sad decision to make," says Brooks, owner since 2005, "but I just couldn't survive in this economy. For shops like ours that don't necessarily advertise in or pull business from the District or the rest of Montgomery County, neighborhood customers and sales are just critical. When

VENUE CHANGE
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Experimental Theater Page 3

Free Swim Page 11

Tree Sale Page 12

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

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

ECRWSS POSTAL CUSTOMER

CITY COUNCIL AND COMMITTEE CALENDAR*

Monday, March 2 - City Council meeting, 7:30 p.m. (CC Auditorium)

Thursday, March 5 - Police Employees' Retirement Plan Committee meeting, 8:30 a.m. (CC Hydrangea Room)

Monday, March 9 - City Council meeting, 7:30 p.m. (CC Auditorium)

Tuesday, March 10 - Facade Advisory Board meeting, 7 p.m. (CC Hydrangea Room)

Tuesday, March 10 - TP Board of Elections meeting, 7 p.m. (CC Council Conference Room)

Tuesday, March 10 - Committee on the Environment meeting, 7:30 p.m. (CC Forsythia Room)

Tuesday, March 10 - Tree Commission meeting, 6:30 p.m. (CC Atrium Room)

Monday, March 16 - City Council meeting, 7:30 p.m. (CC Auditorium)

Monday, March 16 - Public Safety Citizens Advisory Committee meeting, 6:30 p.m. (CC Room TBA)

Tuesday, March 17 - Washington Adventist Hospital Land Use Committee meeting, 7:30 p.m. (CC Hydrangea Room)

Thursday, March 19 - Emergency Preparedness Committee meeting, 8:30 a.m. (CC Hydrangea Room)

Monday, March 23 - City Council meeting, 7:30 p.m. (CC Auditorium)

Tuesday, March 24 - Arts and Humanities Commission meeting, 7:30 p.m. (CC Hydrangea Room)

Thursday, March 26 - WSSC public forum, 7:30 p.m. (CC Auditorium)

Monday, March 30 - City Council will not meet (fifth Monday)

*For the most up to date information, check 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.

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).

Volunteers Needed

TO SERVE ON COUNCIL APPOINTED BOARDS, COMMITTEES AND COMMISSIONS

There are positions for Takoma Park residents available on many City boards, commissions and committees. 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).

Arts and Humanities Commission (vacancies)	(vacancies)
Commission on Landlord-Tenant Affairs (vacancies - tenants are encouraged to apply)	Nuclear-Free Takoma Park Committee (vacancies)
Committee on the Environment (vacancies)	Public Safety Citizens Advisory Committee (vacancies)
Facade Advisory Board (one vacancy)	Safe Roadways Committee (vacancies)
Noise Control Board	Takoma Park Board of Elections (one vacancy)

City Council Action*

*Only negative votes and abstentions are noted. For additional information, contact the City Clerk at Clerk@takomagov.org.

January 26, 2009 - Regular Meeting

The consent agenda was adopted. It consisted of:

Resolution 2009-5 appointing Harry W. Lawrence III to the Ethics Commission

Resolution 2009-6 Recommending Appointment of Johnathan Edmund as the City's Representative to the Montgomery County Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.

Commemorative Committee

Resolution 2009-7 appointing Jennifer Kurtinitis and Lawrence Hawkins to the Emergency Preparedness Committee

Resolution 2009-8 appointing Drew Sommers and Mary Beth O'Quinn as non-voting members to the Washington Adventist Hospital Land Use Committee

NOTICES

PUBLIC HEARING TO RECEIVE COMMENTS ON THE CITY OF TAKOMA PARK STRATEGIC PLAN

Monday, March 16, 2009 - 7:30 p.m.

Takoma Park Community Center - Sam Abbott Citizens' Center Auditorium

The City Council will hold a public hearing to accept comments on the City of Takoma Park Strategic Plan. All interested persons may attend the public hearing and sign up to speak. A full copy of the plan will be available for review by March 6 in the City Clerk's office or at www.takomaparkmd.gov.

Written comments may be sent to the City Clerk, 7500 Maple Avenue, Takoma Park, Maryland 20912, faxed to 301-270-8794, or e-mailed to Clerk@takomagov.org.

NOTICE OF FINAL ACTION

Administrative Regulation Establishing Bylaws for the Takoma Park Board of Elections (AR-2009-01)

The December 2008 edition of the Takoma Park Newsletter included notice of the City's intention to adopt an administrative regulation establishing bylaws for the Takoma Park Board of Elections. The notice was published in accordance with the require-

ments of the "Administrative Regulations Ordinance" (Authority: Chapter 2.12, Administrative Regulations, of the Takoma Park Code) to allow citizens the opportunity to comment on the proposal. An exact copy of the proposed regulation was posted on the City's web page. No comments have been received by the City Clerk's Office. Regulation AR2009-01 will become final on March 10, 2009.

NOTICE OF FINAL ACTION

Administrative Regulation Regarding Registration of Tenant Associations (AR-2009-02)

The January 2009 edition of the Takoma Park Newsletter included notice of the City's intention to adopt an administrative regulation to provide a formal process for registering a tenant association in the City of Takoma Park. The regulation supplements Section 6.16.030 of the Takoma Park Code. The notice was published in accordance with the requirements of the "Administrative Regulations Ordinance" (Authority: Chapter 2.12, Administrative Regulations, of the Takoma Park Code) to allow citizens the opportunity to comment on the proposal. An exact copy of the proposed regulation was posted on the City's web page. No comments have been received by the City Clerk's Office. Regulation AR2009-02 will become final on March 10, 2009.

Public Meetings

WSSC Forum for Resident Feedback

Residents are invited to attend a public forum with representatives of the Washington Suburban Sanitary Commission (WSSC) on Thursday, March 26, in the Community Center Auditorium, from 7:30 - 9 p.m. The meeting will be sponsored by the District 20 Delegation, County Council Member Valerie Ervin, and the Takoma Park City Council to provide an opportunity to give input to WSSC on projects and to allow WSSC to let residents know what is being done to address their concerns.

Ride On Is Proposing Changes to Bus Routes 3, 15, 17, 18 and 25

A public forum is scheduled for Tuesday, March 24 at 6:30 p.m. in Rockville. Sign up to speak by March 17. For information, contact Suzanne Ludlow at 301-

891-7229 or go to www.takomaparkmd.gov/rideon.

Flood Mitigation Plan—Community Meeting

The second public meeting to discuss the Flood Mitigation Plan for Takoma Park is scheduled for Wednesday, March 4, 2009 at 7:30 p.m. in the Community Center.

The purpose of the meeting is to review the final Flood Mitigation Plan. The Plan identifies areas in the City that are potentially vulnerable to flooding in a severe storm event. The plan also includes mitigation strategies to prevent floods, protect vulnerable property and natural resource protection and provide public information.

The City received a grant from the Maryland Emergency Management Agency to produce the plan. A consulting team of Deepa Srinivasin, from Vision Consulting and Dr. Michael Scott from Salisbury University were hired and worked with City Departments and a steering committee to develop the plan.



Speak with the Mayor

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 Peggie Washington, 301-891-7230 or peggyew@takomagov.org.

Spooky Action Theater Creates Local Niche

By VIRGINIA DODD MYERS

One of Takoma Park's best-kept secrets is about to go public.

For two years, theatergoers in the know have been trooping to a hidden nook on the Takoma Park campus of Montgomery College for provocative theater, exploring everything from family dysfunction to the politics of revolution. When Artistic Director Richard Henrich's cell phone rings minutes before curtain, he knows a newbie is trying to find his way to the door as well. Henrich's cell phone doubles as the box office for Spooky Action Theatre.

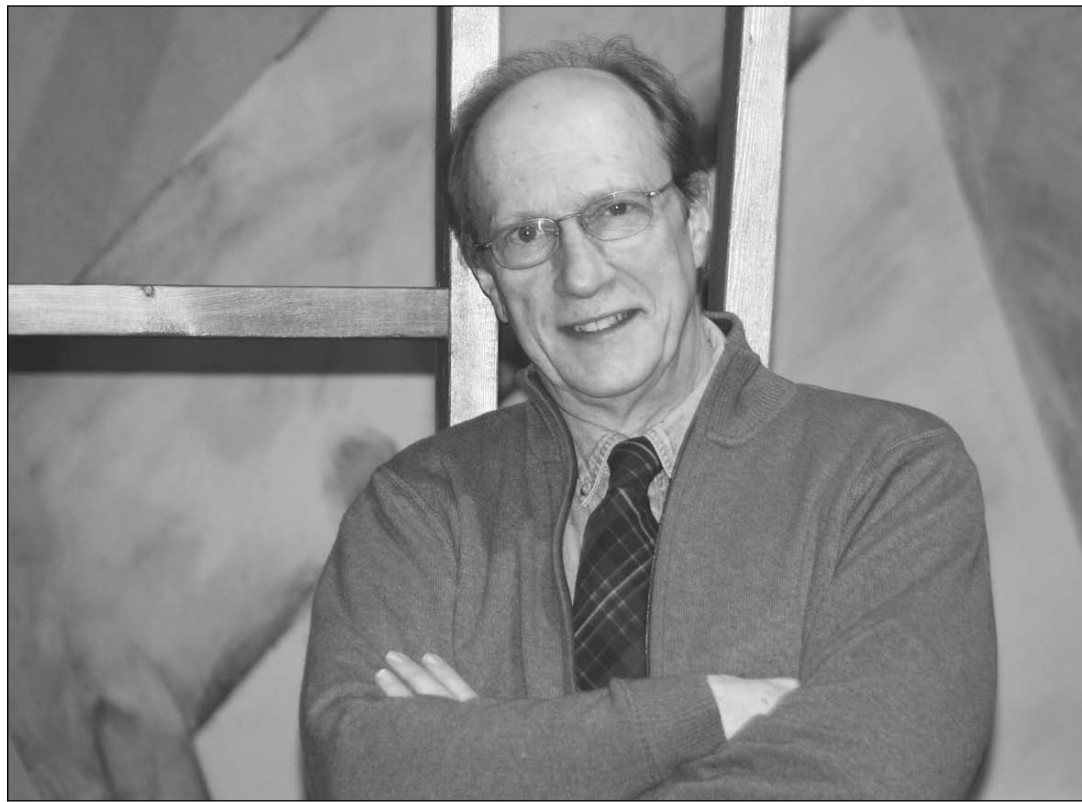
But all that is about to change. While fans and newcomers alike have the rest of the season to enjoy the edgy obscurity associated with experimental theater, by fall 2009 the company will move from The Black Box Theatre in the Communication Arts Building to the soon-to-be-completed Cultural Arts Center at the corner of Georgia Avenue and East West Highway. The gleaming, glass and steel structure will showcase all sorts of performing arts, including music, dance and theater, with two theaters and a dance studio, and it will place a brighter spotlight on Spooky Action. That's not to say Spooky Action will lose its edge – it will continue to produce intellectual, but accessible plays in a new black box theater located near the main stage. It will just be easier to find.

"I'm hoping that we can create a niche as the theater for Takoma Park and Silver Spring," says Henrich, a Takoma Park resident and artistic director for Spooky Action. "Takoma Park has a very strong artistic component and it's not the traditional arts. People are more experimental, more individualistic, more anti-establishment. Our company is... a little bit anti-establishment... Being small and keeping our costs down we can afford to try something that could completely blow up in our faces."

Henrich has been involved with theater since his years at Philips Exeter Academy boarding school, through Yale, and for two years post-college before he gave up trying to make a living in this difficult field. He turned to carpentry and development, converting New York City lofts into residential space in the 1970s and '80s, but his interest in theater continued. Henrich even joined the ex-patriot theater scene in Bangladesh, when his then-wife's work brought him there. When he moved to D.C. in the 1990s, he became involved with D.C.'s Shakespeare Theatre, Ford's Theatre, Delaware Theatre Company, and others. He created Spooky Action in 2004.

Currently, the company is presenting *Heart of a Dog*, Feb. 13 through March 8. The play, written by Mikhail Bulgakov and adapted by Frank Galati, was banned for 60 years in Russia for satirizing the communism – though one doesn't need to know that to appreciate the absurd hilarity of using surgical transplants to transform a stray dog into a human.

Spooky Action has walked the edge with other plays as well. *Dizzy Miss Lizzie's Roadside Revue Presents The Oresteia*, shown at D.C.'s Capital Fringe Festival last summer, is described as a "rowdy, raucous, loud and literate" combination of the great Greek Aeschylus, Led Zeppelin and Woody Guth-



Richard Henrich, Artistic Director of Spooky Action Theatre, poses on the set of *Heart of a Dog*, playing through March 8.

Photo: Patrick Rittenhouse

rie. *The Marriage of Bette and Boo*, last June, used irony and sharp humor to present a family stewed in divorce, alcoholism and madness. Upcoming shows include two workshops, preparation for the fall season: *Dreams of Women Dancing*, by Baltimore playwright Mike Stang, about a mad art critic inhabited by the spirit of Degas, April 25 and 26; and an open rehearsal of a play on the life of experimental theater legend Alfred Jarry, May 10. "As wacky as his plays are, his life was weirder," says Henrich, who wrote the script.

Spooky Action — which consists of Henrich and a group of floating techies and actors — began in the District in 2004, at the Flashpoint creative arts lab. "We thought of ourselves as a downtown funky theater group," remembers Henrich. When they outgrew their space, they planned to move to a church at 16th and S Streets NW, but the deal fell through.

Perry Schwartz, Artistic Director of the Cultural Arts Center and former chairman of the Montgomery College, Takoma Park, Communication and Performing Arts Department, teamed up with the company in 2007, after the school's own theater program had begun to lose participants. "When the opportunity presented itself to partner with a professional theater it seemed a good idea since the quality of productions would go up," he says. "We feel that we need to offer our students and the community a live theater experience... as part of our liberal arts education mission." Schwartz is a producing partner for Spooky Action shows, and has directed some of them himself.

Henrich couldn't be happier with the arrangement. The current theater, he says, "has a very intimate feeling, but it has enough stage space to do a pretty good size show, and it seats 90 which is perfect for us," he says. "We don't need to have over 100 seats because the kind of theater we do is a bit experimental. We don't usually have huge audiences." The new black box theater will duplicate that intimacy. (The old space will be used primarily as a classroom.)

"The kind of theater that I find most effective happens in smaller spaces with more

contact between the actor and the audience," he says. "I'm looking to stay small... What we're interested in is less spectacle and more a hard-to-define experience that happens in the minds and the hearts of the audience."

HEART OF A DOG

By Mikhail Bulgakov, adapted by Frank Galati

Directed by Patrick Torres

A satire set in communist Russia

March 6-8, Fri/Sat 7:30 p.m.,
Sat/Sun at 2

The Black Box Theatre,
Montgomery College

Corner of Philadelphia (East
West Hwy) and Chicago Avenues

\$15/\$5 for students at the door

Tickets: 800-494-TIXS or online
at www.spookyaction.org

Info: 301-920-1414

Admittedly, such theater – any live theater – will always draw smaller audiences than, say, the Cineplex down the street. Henrich recalls actor Carter Jahncke, who has worked with him on several productions, referring to theater makers as "the

book people," like those reading renegades in Ray Bradbury's book, *Fahrenheit 451*, all but extinct and certainly out of the mainstream. Henrich doesn't think it's quite so grim but admits that theater is a bit risky. "The problem in our contemporary society is people have so many different options," he says. Theater requires more effort. "You have to open up to the material and add your own imagination to fill in whatever's on stage. It's not a film, you don't get a complete picture, you get suggestions and your brain has to fill in the blanks."

For people like Henrich, it's an "addictive" experience. "There is this feeling that we have of being carried away to some other place, [of] being part of something bigger than ourselves," he says. He certainly doesn't do it for the money – he receives no salary. Shows are bankrolled by individual donors (patrons can donate online) and the college donates the space.

Schwartz expects several artistic partners to join Spooky Action at the new arts center: CityDance, the Friday Music Club Orchestra, the Institute of Musical Traditions and Class Acts Arts among them. Other possibilities include Hexagon and the Bach Sinfonia.

The 2009/2010 performance season will begin in September at the Cultural Arts Center. Meanwhile, Spooky Action remains at the old Black Box Theatre. See spookyaction.org for details.



THE TAKOMA PARK NEWSLETTER

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The Newsletter does not accept commercial, classified, or political advertisements. Unsolicited materials by Takoma Park residents, however, are welcome and will be considered for publication: Reports from community groups, articles that contain opinion, and letters to the editor may be sent to tpnewseditor@takomago.org or to Newsletter, City of Takoma Park, 7500 Maple Ave., Takoma Park, Md., 20912. Name, address and phone number must accompany all submitted material. Editor reserves the right to edit all submissions for length, clarity, spelling and grammar. Published opinions do not necessarily reflect the views of the Newsletter.

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The Commission on Landlord Tenant Affairs (COLTA) recently issued an Opinion and Order on a rent increase petition for a rental property in Takoma Park.

Capital Improvement Petition

7517-7521 Maple Avenue (2006-55L)

On December 8, 2008, an Opinion and Order was issued on objections filed by the landlord to a Supplemental Preliminary Administrative Decision (PAD) for rent increases ranging from \$145.90 to \$243.17 (7.5 percent - 12.5 percents) for all the units (10) at the property. In the PAD, COLTA ordered that the landlord was entitled to a rent increase to recover costs, however, not until all the rents collected in excess of the lawful rents from the tenants were refunded. COLTA also ordered that the rent for each unit be reduced to the lawful rent.

The landlord filed a Motion for Reconsid-



COLTA's CORNER

BY JEAN KERR,
HOUSING SPECIALIST

eration of the Opinion and Order dated December 8, 2008. Upon consideration of the Motion, COLTA issued an Opinion and Order on January 23, 2009 and vacated the Opinion and Order dated December 8, 2008. COLTA also ordered that the tenants pay to the landlord any rent amount withheld pursuant to the Opinion and Order dated December 8, 2008.

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

Loan Deals Available for Exterior Home Improvement

How many years have you been thinking about replacing your roof or the windows on your home? What about that driveway that is sorely in need of repaving? Now may be an opportune time to consider having this long overdue work done. The City has recently partnered with Montgomery County's Department of Housing and Community Affairs to offer low- to no-interest loans to residents of Takoma Park who want to improve the exteriors of their homes.

The program's rehabilitation specialists will help homeowners determine the best way to solve the problems, select the most suitable program from which to fund the repairs, assist with obtaining a responsible contractor to perform the work and

inspect to make sure that work is done in compliance with specifications.

To qualify, applicants must

- Be income eligible (see www.takomarkmd.gov for income limits)
- Reside at the property, and
- Have code violations, need general improvements for livability or have significant deferred maintenance.

The loan terms are low monthly payments based on your ability to pay. In some cases, payments may be deferred until the sale of the house. Interest rates generally are 3 percent or less.

To request an application to be considered for this program, please call Linda Walker at 301-891-7222.

Home and Apartment Insurance: Do You Really Need It?

By LINDA WALKER
MANAGER, OFFICE ON
LANDLORD-TENANT AFFAIRS

It's not going to happen to me. Nobody is going to fall and injure themselves on my property or in my apartment. There isn't going to be a bathroom leak in my house or in the apartment upstairs that causes damage to my personal property and the unit itself. A tree is not going to fall on my house and cause severe damage to the structure.

Yes....these are the things that people tell themselves and the likelihood that something is going to happen is probably not high...but what if it does happen?

The Office on Landlord-Tenant Affairs receives many calls from both landlords and tenants and one of the many complaints we hear pertains to damage to personal property. Many tenants feel that a landlord should pay for damage that is caused by a broken pipe or a tenant accidentally leaving a faucet on, but, is the landlord really responsible for the cost of the

damage to your possessions?

The Office on Landlord-Tenant Affairs has recently received copies of a handbook that has some answers. Published by the Maryland Insurance Administration, *A Consumer Guide to Homeowners Insurance* provides general information about insurance-related issues and state programs and services.

Also outlined in the handbook are recent legal developments in Maryland on the subject of insurance for condominiums. As a condominium owner, do you have sufficient insurance on your individual unit? In April 2008, a decision in the Maryland Court of Appeals (Anderson vs. Council of Unit Owners of the Gables on Tuckerman) stated that condo associations are not required to provide coverage for individual units damaged as a result of a casualty loss. These are just some of the topics that are covered in this very informative publication. For a free copy, please call Linda Walker in the Office on Landlord-Tenant Affairs at 301-891-7222.

Free Classes

Sponsored by the City of Takoma Park
Pre-Registration is Required
Call 301-891-7222

Your Rights as a Tenant in Takoma Park

Thursday, March 12, 2009
7-8:30 p.m.

Takoma Park Community Center
7500 Maple Ave., Takoma Park, Md.

Can a landlord charge me for repairs in my apartment? What can I do if the manager of my building enters my apartment without giving me notice? My landlord kept my entire security deposit when I vacated. He said I damaged the unit, but that damage was there before I moved in. My rent was increased by \$60 but I thought my apartment was under rent stabilization. These are just some of the issues that will be discussed during this workshop on your rights as a tenant. Learn more about city and county resources available to tenants and how you can form a tenant association to better deal with problems in your building

First Time Home Buyer Class (English)

Saturday, April 25, 2009
8:30 a.m. - 1:30 p.m.

Takoma Park Community Center
7500 Maple Ave., Takoma Park, Md.

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 home buying process. Class size is limited to 30 people. You will receive a certificate which can be used as proof of your attendance at a certified First Time Home Buyer class. Topics to be discussed include:

- Importance of pre-purchase counseling
- Establishing credit, maintaining good

credit, facts about the credit scoring system

- How to obtain a mortgage loan and understanding the terms of the loan
- The role of the real estate agent
- Information on Montgomery County and Maryland home loan programs

Clase Para Quien Compra Casa Por Primera Vez (First Time Home Buyer Class, Spanish)

Sabado, 16 Mayo 2009
8:30 a.m.-1:30 p.m.

El Centro de Comunidad de Takoma Park
7500 Maple Ave., Takoma Park

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 Corporación 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:

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

A tenant contacted the Mailbox and stated that she moved into a rental unit a week ago and has since found a number of repairs that need to be done. Although they are not major, she doesn't want to be held liable for them at the end of her tenancy.



HOUSING Mailbox

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

Section 6.16.120 of the Takoma Park Landlord-Tenant Law, incorporated by reference from the Maryland Real Property law is the section of the code that outlines the rights and responsibilities a tenant and landlord have in regard to the return of a security deposit and also includes language confirming the tenant's right to ask for the entrance and exit inspections. This section also states that a written receipt must be given to a tenant at the beginning of the tenancy outlining the rights pertaining to the security deposit. Most often, rights in regard to a security deposit are included in your lease which is considered your "receipt" of this information. In the Takoma Park standard lease, it is included in Section 12 of the agreement.

In addition to the fact that your landlord is required to give you this information,

this section of the law also states that a tenant has a right to have his/her rental unit inspected by the landlord in the tenant's presence for the purpose of making a written list of damages that exist at the beginning of the tenancy if the tenant requests the inspection by certified mail within 15 days of occupying the rental unit.

If the landlord fails to do an inspection following a certified mail

request, the tenant should contact the Montgomery County Code Enforcement Division, (which inspects rental properties on an annual basis and also addresses complaints) at 240-777-3785. A county inspector will perform the inspection and document the code violations. In this way, the tenant is doing everything he/she can do, to protect against being charged for damage that was in the unit prior to occupancy. The inspector will require the landlord to abate the problems, if the issues are code violations, usually within a month after the violation notice is sent to the landlord.

Tenants or landlords having questions regarding the city's Landlord-Tenant Law are requested to call 301-891-7215 and/or contact me at MosesW@takomagov.org.

Shadowplay Project Explores Borders With Photography, Poetry

What does it mean to live on a border, to break through a boundary, to be pushed to the edge? Who has the right to mark or enforce a border? Do good fences make good neighbors? What does border mean to you? The Takoma Park Arts and Humanities Commission is presenting a festival/series of events exploring these concepts.

On Saturday, March 21, at 8 p.m., ShadowPlay I: Borderlands Photography Festival will be an evening of art and celebration. Curated by Allison Shelly of the *Washington Times*, the show features a variety of photographers and live music from Bolivian singer/guitarist Marco Ovando and indie songwriter Maybarduk.

For a more participatory experience, you can share your meaning of "border" and the impact of borders in our lives by contributing pictures, words and voices to a public art installation, to be displayed throughout the festival. Opportunities include the Borderlands Poetry Workshop,

Saturday, March 14 from 1:30 to 4:30 p.m. at the Takoma Park Community Center. Led by Takoma Park Poet Laureate Anne Becker, the session will help participants use poetry to share their thoughts and inspirations on the theme of borders.

At the Borderlands Image Crafting Workshop on Friday, March 20 from 7 to 9 p.m., leaders Nicole Salimbene and John Borstel will help create art from images participants bring with them. To participate: email up to four 72 dpi jpeg RGB images (longest side no more than 1000 pixels) with the subject as "Installation" to TKPKshadowplay@gmail.com, upload and post your photos to Shadowplay I: BORDERLANDS group at <http://www.flickr.com/groups/shadowplay-borderlands/> or turn your image into a postcard or other mail-able item and send to BORDERLANDS c/o CMA Medeiros, Takoma Park Community Center, 7500 Maple Avenue, Takoma Park, MD 20912. Mail submissions cannot be returned.

Or bring your image to the Takoma Park Community Center and have it scanned at the computer center between 6 and 8 p.m., Monday through Friday.

All ShadowPlay I: Borderlands events will be held at the Takoma Park Community Center, 7500 Maple Avenue, Takoma Park, Md. Events are free and open to the public.

ShadowPlay is an ongoing series of events, each with a different theme, created by the Takoma Park Arts and Humanities Commission. For more information, please contact the Commission at 301-891-7224 or by email at TKPKshadowplay@gmail.com. Additional information is available online at www.takomaparkmd.gov.



Takoma Park Arts & Humanities News

celebrating the creative spirit of our community

Portraits of Life Exhibit

Portraits of Life: Student Experiences is a tribute, in words and photographs, to Montgomery College students' experiences of resilience, transformation and inspiration. Curated by David Fogel. Photography by William Tata and Daniel Merino. Exhibition Design by Jane Knaus with narrative assistance from Professors Jean Freedman, Shelley Jones, Melissa McCeney and Laurie White. Atrium Gallery, Main Level, Takoma Park Community Center, 7500 Maple Avenue.

Opening reception on Friday, March 6 from 6 - 8 p.m.

Poetry Reading

This month's "third thursday" poetry reading features the work of the participants of "Writing a Village," a poetry workshop led by Takoma Park Poet Laureate Anne Becker. Please join us at 7:30 p.m. on Thursday, March 12 in Gallery 3 on the third floor of the Takoma Park Community Center. The reading is free and open to the public. A short reception follows the reading.

ShadowPlay I: Borderlands Photography Festival

Join us at Takoma Park's first ever projected photography festival this month, on Saturday, March 21 at 8 p.m. The evening of art and celebration, curated by Allison Shelley, staff photographer at the *Washington Times* and co-founder of Women Photojournalists, features the work of 12 local and international photographers and live music from Indie songwriter Maybarduk and Bolivian singer/guitarist Marco Ovando. Each reflects on borderlands.

What does it mean to live on a border...to break through a boundary, to be pushed to the edge? Who has the right to mark or enforce a border? Do good fences make good neighbors? What does border mean to you? Bring your thoughts and inspiration with you to the following ShadowPlay Borderlands workshops:

Borderlands Poetry Workshop - Saturday, March 14 (1:30 to 4:30 p.m.)

Borderlands Image Crafting Workshop - Friday, March 20, 7 - 9 p.m.

All ShadowPlay events are free and will be held at the Takoma Park Community Center, 7500 Maple Avenue.

Call for Proposals - Exhibits

The Arts and Humanities Commission is seeking proposals from visual artists and craftspeople interested in exhibiting their work at the Takoma Park Community Center. If selected, the work would be exhibited in one of four galleries: the Atrium Gallery, the Richard Dempsey Memorial Gallery, Gallery 3, or The Corridor. Exhibits may feature the work of a group of artists or craftsmen or the work of an individual.

For more information on these and other activities sponsored by the Takoma Park Arts and Humanities Commission, please contact Sara Anne Daines at 301-891-7224, by email at ahc@takomagov.org or check online at www.takomaparkmd.org.

Hold Your Water:

Session Shows How Rain Gardens Make a Healthier Sligo Creek

What's your first reaction when you have standing water in your yard, or worse, in your basement? Get it out into the street as fast as possible, right? The Friends of Sligo Creek (FOSC) want to help you rethink that for a solution that helps Sligo Creek rather than hurting it.

Rain gardens, rain barrels, more native plants and trees and less grass, and perhaps some permeable pavement or terracing are all possible water solutions that could be in your future, should you choose to help protect the creek.

What's a rain garden? It's simply a hole in the ground dug out and replaced with a sandy soil mixture and native plants. It helps hold rainwater in your yard, allowing it to soak in slowly and feed the groundwater and the creek (and limit your need to water). This helps restore healthy watershed functioning. More than that, it's the start of a process of change in peoples' stormwater management practices and a visible symbol of a change to more native plantings and less grass. In tree-rich Takoma, it's a concentrated way to help manage rain in a Sligo Creek- and Chesapeake Bay-friendly way.

The Takoma Community Meeting: Saving Sligo Creek While Addressing Your Runoff Issues, at the Takoma Park Community Center - Sam Abbott Citizens' Center, at 7:30 p.m. on March 19, will address why and how you can change your stormwater practices to limit flooding in your yard, down the street and into Sligo Creek. The Stormwater Committee of Friends of Sligo Creek has received a generous grant from the Takoma Foundation, in conjunction with CASA de Maryland, and working with the Takoma Park Committee on the Environment and Audubon Naturalist Society, to do this presentation, as well as presentations to Takoma Park neighborhood associations. FOSC intends to help Takoma Park residents and neighbors site and build rain gardens and suggest other fixes to local flooding issues.

All residents are welcome to the meeting March 19. Or, residents can contact Kit Gage at kgage@verizon.net to set up a rainwater information meeting with your neighborhood association this spring. FOSC recommends residents call soon, as there is limited meeting time available and the sessions are first come, first served.

Landscaping with Exotics Is Easier Than You Think

If you dream of a lush tropical paradise, come to The Takoma Horticultural Club March meeting to learn how to create the tropics in your own backyard. On

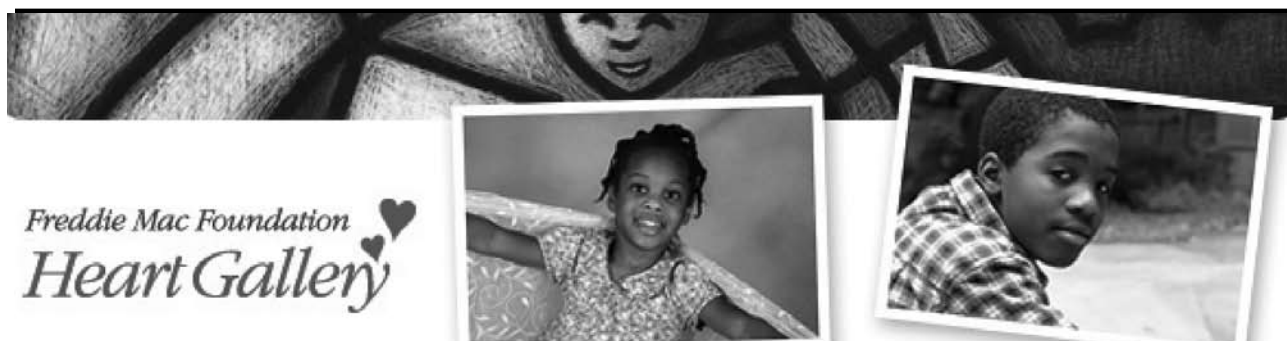
Wednesday, March 18 at 7:30 p.m., THC hosts Joe Seamone (aka Boca Joe), who will discuss tropical plant selection, care and over-wintering. Boca Joe has many years experience growing hardy palms and

bananas, and other exotics like elephant ears and gingers.

The meeting will be held in auditorium of the Takoma Park Community Center; 7500 Maple Ave. Takoma Park, Md. We suggest that you park in the back of the Community Center, off East West Highway. Bring a recycled nametag or we can supply one. This event is free and open to the public. Drink will be provided and snack contributions are welcomed.

Please bring a check for \$12 if you wish to join the Takoma Horticultural Club or renew your 2009 membership. Check our website, <http://www.takomahort.org/> for THC information and events.

Takoma Horticultural Club March Meeting
Wednesday, March 18
at 7:30 p.m.
Takoma Park Community Center



Freddie Mac Foundation
Heart Gallery

The Freddie Mac Foundation Heart Gallery features compelling portraits of children in foster care who are waiting to be adopted. The moving photos capture the spirit of these children - all of whom are hoping to find a loving, permanent family of their own. The children featured in the exhibit are from Washington, D.C. and the surrounding areas. To date, since the development of the Heart Gallery in November of

2005, 44 of the children featured in the exhibit have been adopted.

The Heart Gallery can be viewed March 9 to March 27 in Gallery 3 on the third floor of the Takoma Park Community Center, 7500 Maple Avenue, Takoma Park. The gallery is open Monday through Friday, from 8:30 a.m. to 5 p.m.

R E C R E A T I O N

MARCH ACTIVITIES

Alternative Games

Ages 11 and older

For D&D veterans: What if you were trapped in New York City when the zombie hordes took over the world? Or what if you were a gang of goblins playing poker on a bridge when those darned adventurers came wandering by? Free-flowing, fast and furious, the game is a mix of role-playing and tabletop strategy games, depending on players' interests. Instructor Dave Burbank. Maximum 12, minimum five. Four weeks.

When: Sat., March 7, 21, 28, April 4
Time: 2:30 - 4:30 p.m.
Location: Auditorium, T.P. Com. Ctr.
Fee: T.P. Res. \$45/session
 Non-Res. \$50/session

Spring Break Camp - Back to Nature Grades K - 6

The sky is the limit when it comes to exploring animals and the environment they live in. Learn how an animal camouflages itself to protect itself from danger. Go on a nature scavenger hunt finding nature's little secrets. Find out what you can do to protect Sligo Creek and the Chesapeake Bay. Don't forget to pack your bathing suits for a trip to the pool. Arts and crafts, sports and games, and outside time round out the camp experience.

When: Mon. - Fri., April 6 - 10
Before Care: 7 - 9 a.m.
Camp Hours: 9 a.m. - 4 p.m.
After Care: 4 - 6 p.m.
Location: T.P. Com. Ctr.
Fee: T.P. Res. \$30
Before Care \$30
Camp \$110
After Care \$30

Non-Res.
Before Care \$35
Camp: \$120
After Care \$35

Fun Day Program Grades K - 5

The Fun Day Program offers exciting field trips on scheduled whole day school closings and activities and performances on scheduled half day closings. Participants will meet at the Community Center, 7500 Maple Avenue. Bring a snack! Trips, activities and performers are subject to change. Space is limited, sign up early.

When: Mon., March 30
Trip: Udvar Hazy Air and Space Museum and IMAX
Time: 9 a.m. - 5 p.m.
Fee: T.P. Res. \$25
 Non-Res. \$30

Community Service Learning Spring Break Ages 13 - 18

Learn about local agencies in need of volunteers, and hear a motivational message on the importance of community outreach. Each day (Mon. through Thurs.), a service project is arranged for students who wish to volunteer in the community. Volunteers will complete five hours of service each day. Students need to bring a lunch each day. After lunch, supervised youth will be transported to a local agency for an afternoon of community service. All



Children enrolled in Afternoon Addition had a great time putting on a performance late last year. On opposite page, top, a young observer shows how loud those basketball games can be; and bottom, a new ball player brings it on court.

Photos by Debra Haiduven

Annual Egg Hunt

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

Get your baskets ready and join Takoma Park Recreation for an "egg" citing time. There are four age categories and the hunt begins at 11 a.m. SHARP!!!

When: April 4
 Rain date April 11
Time: 11 a.m. SHARP!
Location: Ed Wilhelm Field,
 7510 Maple Avenue,
 Behind Piney Branch Elementary
Fee: FREE!

transportation for volunteers to and from service sites is provided. A special outing, which is covered in the fee, is planned for the last day. Space is limited, register early.

When: Mon. - Thurs., April 6 - 9
Time: 10:30 a.m. - 4:30 p.m.
 Friday, April 10, Special Trip
 10:30 a.m. - 8 p.m.
Location: T Zone - T.P. Community Center
Fee: T.P. Res. \$25
 Non-Res. \$30

Beginning Dog Training - Level 1 Ages 16 and older

Clicker-training is a gentle, fun way to train your dog. Train your dog to have good manners, and walk on a loose lead. Learn how to teach your dog behaviors such as sit, down, come and stay, as well as "stupid pet tricks." Best of all, learn how to build a relationship with your dog that will make him an eager learner throughout his life. Must have proof of a rabies vaccine. Not appropriate for aggressive dogs. Instructor Ann Riley. Six weeks.

When: Wed., March 11 - April 15
Time: 7 - 8 p.m.
Location: Heffner Com. Ctr., 42 Oswego Ave.
Fee: T.P. Res. \$85
 Non-Res. \$95

Beginning Dog Training - Level 2 Ages 16 and older

This is a more advanced class for dogs that already have some obedience training. Learn how to use clicker training to build on the skills you and your dog already have whether you plan to compete in dog sports (obedience, agility, rally) or would like your pet to be a more polite companion. Behaviors we will work on include the sit and down stay, sitting quietly for petting by a stranger, walking quietly on a leash around other people and dogs, working with distractions and tricks. Prerequisite: Beginning dog-training Level 1 or any basic/introductory obedience class or permission of instructor. Instructor Ann Riley. Six weeks.

When: Wed., March 11 - April 15
Time: 8:15 - 9:15 p.m.
Location: Heffner Com. Ctr., 42 Oswego Ave.
Fee: T.P. Res. \$85
 Non-Res. \$95

Cardio Fusion Mix Ages 16 and older

A complete workout for the entire body. Kick up your energy levels and decrease body fat through an infused mix of hi/lo cardiovascular conditioning and resistance training. Exercise modifications ensure effectiveness for any fitness level. Bring three- to eight-pound hand weights. Instructor Denise Pullet. Maximum 20, minimum eight. Six weeks.

Days: Mon. and Wed.
When: March 2 - April 8
Time: 7 - 8 p.m.
Location: Dance Room, T.P. Com. Ctr.
Fee: T.P. Res. \$60
 Non-Res. \$65

Takoma Park Recreation Department Summer Camps

Start planning now! It is never too early to start thinking about summer, especially when it is still cold outside. Camp dates are June 17 - August 7 for the following camps: Tremendous Trips for 1-5, Camp Takoma for grades 1-5 and Extreme Horizons. Extreme

RECREATION
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RECREATION

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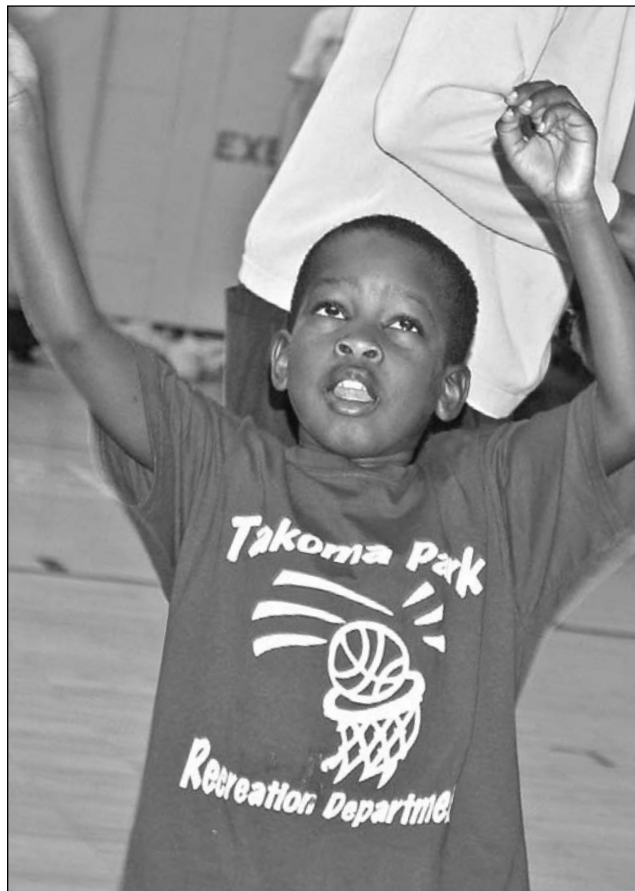
Horizons is a camp for 6 - 8 graders who go on many adventures during the summer (rafting, mountain biking, volunteer, rock climbing, amusement parks, etc.). Register early. No camp on July 3. Please call 301-891-7290 for more information.

Drawing and Watercolor

Ages 11- 14

Have fun learning to draw with black, white and colored drawing materials, paint with watercolors, use pen and ink and explore mixed media approaches to representational imagery. Subjects will include still life, portrait, landscape and floral studies. Focus of class appropriate for students interested in developing a portfolio for entry into the Visual Art Center at Albert Einstein High School. Materials/model fee of \$25, paid directly to the instructor, will be due on the first day of class. Maximum 12, minimum seven. Instructor Katie Dell Kaufman. Six weeks.

When: Tues. , March 3 – April 21
Time: 3 - 5 p.m.
Location: Art Studio, T. P. Com. Ctr.
Fee: T.P. Res. \$135 /session
 Non-Res. \$145/session
 No class on March 31 and April 7.



Painting for Adults

Ages 18 and older

Enhance your creative spirit with other working artists! Artists are encouraged to supply their own subject matter but instructor will always provide weekly still life set-ups for inspiration. All elements of art are presented with special emphasis on value studies and color relationships. Instruction is individualized for each student's needs. Weekly critiques are a valuable part of each session. Bring sketch book and pencil to first session along with desired medium. Questions? Call instructor Joan Samworth, 301-270-6367 or e-mail samworthj@aol.com. Six classes.

When: Fri., March 6 – April 17
Time: 10 a.m. - 2 p.m.
Location: Art Studio, T. P. Com. Ctr.
Fee: T.P. Res. \$205
 Non-Res. \$225
 No class on April 10.



Bone Builders

Bone Builders consists of three parts: balance exercises, weight and discussion concerning diet, safety and exercise. The program uses trained RSVP volunteers to lead the classes with supervision by a certified trainer. The program is in partnership with Montgomery County. Registration required.

When: Tues. and Fri.
Time: 10:30 – 11:30 a.m.
Location: Dance Studio, T.P. Com. Ctr.
Fee: Free

Beginning Chess

Intended for senior students with little or no prior knowledge of chess. The instructor, Charles Edelman, will introduce students to the basic rules, concepts and beginner strategies in order to play a full game. Class lessons will involve teacher-led demonstrations, history lessons and facilitation of games between participants. Former players with an interest in keeping active minds are welcome. Registration is required to participate in this six-week class.

When: Tues., March 3 - April 7
Time: 1:30 - 3 p.m.
Location: Lilac Room, T.P. Com. Ctr.
Fee: T.P. Res. \$10
 Non-Res. \$15

Teen Happenings

Ages 13 - 17

Step Competition - Road Trip
 Join us for a road trip to the Potomac Senior High "Prestige" step competition.

When: Sat., March 14
Time: 3 p.m.
Location: Teen Lounge, T.P. Com. Ctr.
 (heading to Arlington Virginia)
Fee: \$6

"Got Jokes"

Bring your best jokes and engage in a friendly jokes competition. The winner will be selected from a panel of teen judges to win a \$25 iTunes gift card. Jokes must be clean and non racial.

When: Fri., March 6
Time: 4 p.m.
Location: Auditorium, T.P. Com. Ctr.
Free event

Fashion Design

It's great to be different! So come join Stephen and learn different ways of how to design your own outfit or maybe even jazz up a pair of jeans or a shirt. It will be your design...your creation.....your new look! You may need to bring supplies.

When: Thurs. March 5 - 19
Time: 4 p.m.
Location: Rose Room, T.P. Com. Ctr.
Fee: Free

Sign up to play baseball or softball

The Takoma Park – Silver Spring Youth Baseball and Softball Leagues are now accepting registrations for the Spring 2009 season. The Baseball League is open to boys and girls ages 6 to 13. The Girls' Softball League is open to girls in second through eighth grades. Because we coordinate our schedules with Takoma Park Soccer, kids can play both softball/baseball and soccer. Scholarships are available for players in the free and reduced meals school program. We also make accommodations for kids with disabilities, or unpolished skills so all kids can learn and enjoy the game.

There are three ways to register. Register online at www.tpssbasball.org or www.takomasoftball.org. You can also mail in a registration form. Forms are available on the website and should be mailed to Baseball and Girls' Softball, P.O. Box 5475, Takoma Park, Md. 20913-5475. We will also have walk-in registration opportunities:

March, 7 – 10:30 a.m. to 1 p.m., Takoma Park Community Center

March 28 – Noon to 3 p.m., downtown Silver Spring Plaza (Ellsworth Dr.) at the 'Play Ball in the Plaza' event, co-sponsored by the Takoma Park – Silver Spring Thunderbolts baseball team.

Registration deadlines for the 2009 season are: Majors 60/70 (Baseball ages 10 -13) – Apr. 1; Rookies/ Machine Pitch/Minors/Girls' Softball – Apr. 27.

Have questions? Visit our web site for lots of valuable information. If you don't find your answer on the web, please send an e-mail to the League:

info@takomabaseball.org or call our League

hotline: 301-270-0100.

Sign up today to play ball this Spring!

Please note: This program is not affiliated with the Takoma Park Recreation Department. For information, call 301-270-0100.

Soccer Season Sign Up Begins

Girls and boys from nursery school through high school can sign up now for the spring season of Takoma Park Soccer. Games begin the weekend of March 21-22 and end the weekend of May 9-10. Go to www.takomasoccer.org to register on-line, or come to walk-in registration at the Takoma Park Community Center (7500 Maple Ave.) — 10 a.m. to Noon, on Saturday, February 21.

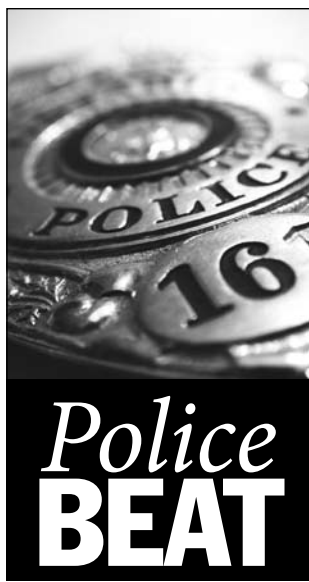
Nursery schoolers and kindergarteners play only on weekends. First-graders and older have one practice during the week and play games on the weekends. The fee is \$50, but scholarships are available for all children in the federal school lunch program. Families without access to the Internet can use computers at the Community Center or contact Howard Kohn — 240-461-6921 (kohn@erols.com).

Please note: this program is not affiliated with the Takoma Park Recreation Department. For information, call 240-461-6921.

Police Nurture Cross-Jurisdictional Relationships

Upon taking the job as Police Chief in Takoma Park two years ago, one of my first goals was to improve the cooperation between the police departments that border us. I believe today we have improved and have established excellent working relationships with Montgomery County Police, Prince George's County Police, Metropolitan Police, Metro Transit Police and the three municipalities, Chevy Chase, Rockville and Gaithersburg.

I spent 26 years as a Montgomery County police officer, which has allowed me to have long term relationships with all of the Montgomery County Chiefs. We have reached out to the 4th District in Washington, D.C. and the Hyattsville District in Prince George's County. We



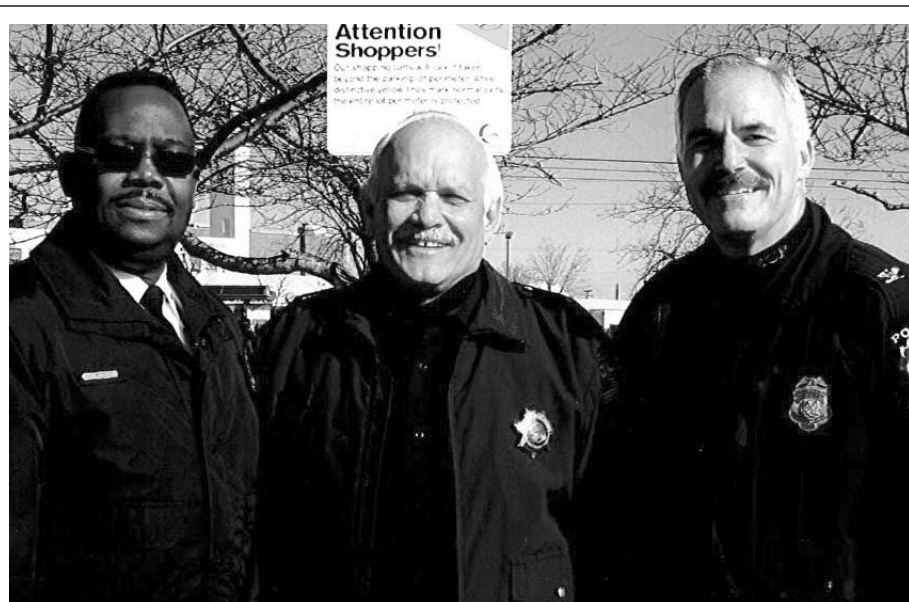
Police BEAT

BY CHIEF RONALD RICUCCI

have established a working relationship with Prince George's County's new chief, Roberto Hylton. We worked hand-in-hand with Metro Transit during the inauguration. We meet periodically to exchange information and discuss mutual problems.

Our improved relationship with Montgomery County has led to more training, mutual aid assistance, better exchange of information and a much better and more cooperative relationship. Montgomery County Chief J. Thomas Manger and I have an excellent working relationship. All of these relationships played an important part in our reduction in crime and the increase in arrests and closed cases in Takoma Park.

tion in crime and the increase in arrests and closed cases in Takoma Park.



Takoma Park's Chief Ronald Ricucci, flanked by Chief Roberto L. Hylton of Prince George's County, left, and Chief J. Thomas Manger from Montgomery County attended a pedestrian safety event together last year. The event showcases how the three jurisdictions are working together to prevent and address crime in the area.

Photo by Gretchen Hilburger

CRIME DECLINES

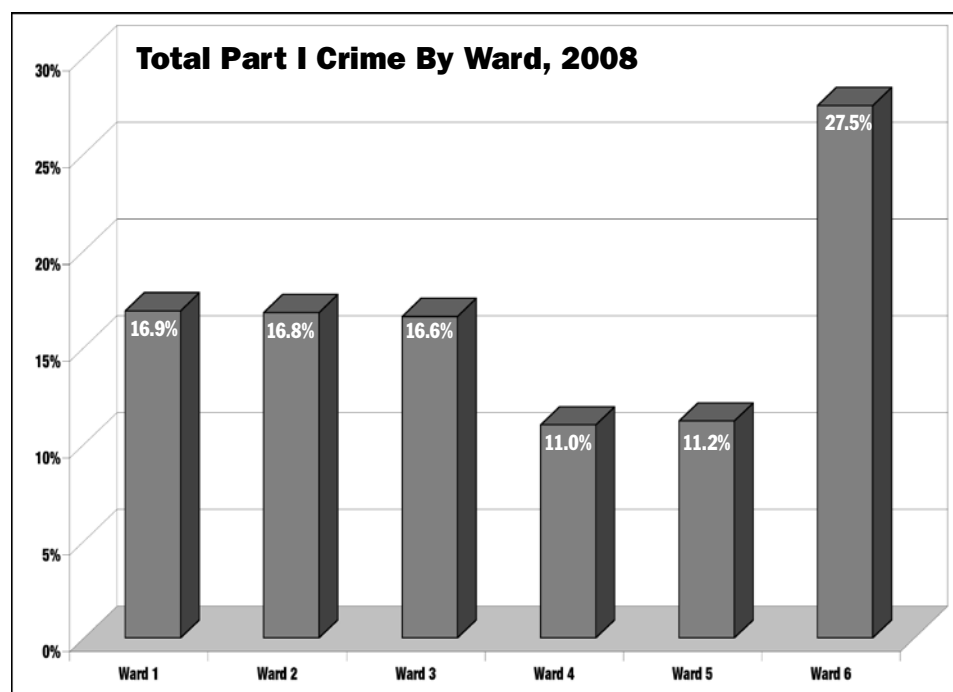
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the word is out: enforcement in the City is more threatening.

Ricucci attributes the improvement to special burglary and robbery details, plainclothes patrols, crime prevention, cross-jurisdictional cooperation and crime analysis that has helped track criminals and lead to arrests. While he is pleased with the statistics, which have showed steady improvement since he took his position as chief two years ago, he said, "it's only the beginning." And he credited his troops "for responding to a chief who doesn't give up very easy and is very demanding."

The annual report also separates crime by ward. Ward 6, the area bordered by University Boulevard, New Hampshire Avenue, Carroll Avenue and Glenside Drive/Garland Avenue, had the highest percentage of the City's crime, at 27.5 percent. The area experiencing the lowest percentage of City crime was Ward 4, the smallest ward, between Piney Branch and Maple along Ritchie, where 11 percent of the City's crime occurred.

The department's annual report notes several changes that may have contributed to improved crime statistics. Some, like the newly launched, 10-member Crime Scene Unit, help solve crimes once they are committed. Others, like the Red Ribbon Launch, where students, teachers and parents at Takoma Park Middle School pledged to be drug and alcohol free, and attended an informational session on underage drinking, use prevention to decrease crime. Other notable programs were the Gear Up For Safety Fair, where officers disseminated safety information and gave away 40 free bikes and helmets to children in the community; the Click It or Ticket campaign, which resulted in 315 seatbelt violation tickets; and the National Night Out, with family-friendly activities to familiarize the community with police ser-



vices. Police also participated in a pedestrian safety initiative with CSAFE at the Crossroads, and in the Two-County Turning Point Mural Project with Arts on the Block – a project that resulted in the public mural at the corner of New Hampshire Avenue and Piney Branch Road.

To create a more efficient department, a computer-generated court calendar was developed, and promotion processes put in place; two officers were promoted to sergeant, and three to corporal. A number of grants were spent for crime analysis and victim assistance training, 11 new in-car videos, tasers, and an additional K-9 "officer." Communications equipment and electronics like digital photography gear and voice recorders as well as equipment for the TP Alert system, satellite phones and video teleconferencing for emergency management were also purchased with grant money.

In the Criminal Investigations Division (CID), a record case closure rate of 47 percent was accomplished. That's above the national average of 40 percent, and an im-

provement of 14 percent over the Takoma Park closure rate in 2007. Of the 324 cases assigned for investigation in 2008, 1,199 were closed, 34 exceptionally cleared, 171 suspended, 76 arrests were made, 43 arrest warrants were obtained and 15 search warrants were obtained and executed. Much of this closure is attributed to the new position of crime analyst, filled by Kyleen Luy.

Takoma Park's Tactical Enforcement Unit, which experienced its first full year of operation in 2007, seized a record \$21,000, the largest amount in the last 22 years of law enforcement in Takoma Park. TEU initiated 112 cases, 105 of which resulted in arrests.

Among other changes in the department, bike patrol increased by 692 hours, and foot patrol by 2,000 hours; officers made 28 percent more DWI arrests due to saturation patrols; and the beginnings of an Emergency Response Team promise an operational unit for area-wide emergencies.

For the full report, go to www.takoma-parkmd.gov/police/annualreport.

Free Classes from Safe Takoma

Safe Takoma, a nonprofit community group supported by both the City of Takoma Park and the District of Columbia, is offering two free programs in March and April. For more information, contact Ronnie Miller at 202-722-7122 or rkm3@comcast.net or go to SafeTakoma.org.

Job Skills For 18 - 25 Year-Olds

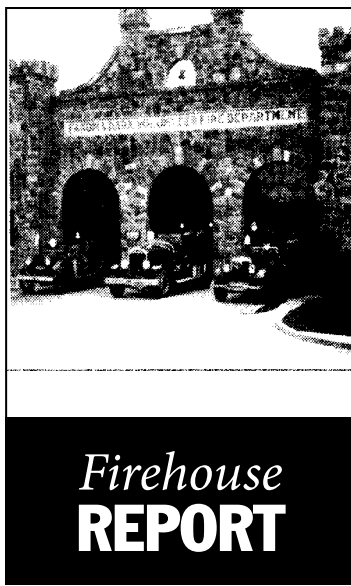
For dates, call 202-722-7122 or email rkm3@comcast.net.

- Resume writing, interview techniques and more
- Graduation from this six-week program (meets a few hours per week) could lead to a paid apprenticeship with the Carpenters' Union, but all 18-25 year olds from Takoma MD and D.C. are invited.

Life Skills: Learn To Resolve Problems Without Violence - All Ages

- April 17-18 and April 24-25
- Teens and adults are invited to an interactive, intergenerational program that uses entertaining games and other techniques to help prevent physical violence, teasing, harassment and other destructive behavior. Those who complete this program can go on to earn certification to teach others. Call or write to learn more.

As of Jan. 31, 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 71 fire-related incidents. The department handled or assisted with 211 rescue or ambulance-related incidents, for a total of 282 this year. Totals for 2008 were 43 and 254 respectively, for a total of 297, representing a decrease of 15 incidents.



By JIM JARBOE

FIRE SAFETY FOR SENIOR CITIZENS

Did you know that people over the age of 65 are twice as likely to die or be injured in a fire as the population at large? By age 75 that risk increases to three times, and by age 85, four times.

Those are scary numbers, but you don't have to become another statistic. Just follow these important fire safety tips.

- **SMOKE ALARMS** - A working smoke alarm can more than double your chances of surviving a fire. * Be sure to have a smoke alarm on every level of your home and in all sleeping areas.
- Make sure everyone in your home is

awakened by the sound of the smoke alarm. If someone is hearing impaired, contact the fire department for a free smoke alarm that uses flashing lights.

- Test your smoke alarms once a month. If this is difficult for you, ask a neighbor or family member to assist you.

- Change your smoke alarm batteries twice a year. A good rule of thumb to follow: change your clocks; change your smoke alarm batteries.

- Put your plan to the test and practice it.

TIPS FOR SMOKERS

Do you know what is the leading cause of fire deaths among Americans 65 years and older? It's careless smoking!

- Never smoke in bed.
- Do not smoke if you are feeling drowsy, if you are drinking or if you are taking medication that may make you drowsy.
- Use large deep ashtrays and never leave smoking materials unattended.
- Empty your ashtrays frequently, but never throw hot ashes in the garbage. Wet the contents of the ashtray and then dispose of them.

KITCHEN FIRE SAFETY

Cooking fires are the leading cause of fire injuries among older adults.

- Never leave your stove unattended! Always be sure to closely watch what you are cooking. Keep your pot and pan handles turned inward.
- Do not reach above the stove for anything while cooking. This may require reorganizing your things in your cupboards so the items you need for cooking are not stored directly above the stove.
- Keep your curtains, oven mitts, pot holders, and towels away from the stove.
- If you have an oven fire, turn off the oven and keep the oven door closed.
- Keep your kitchen clean to cut down on grease buildup.

- Do not wear loose or frilly clothing while cooking.
- Never use water on a grease fire. Smother the fire with a lid.
- Never use your stove as a heating device.
- Always turn your stove off when you are finished cooking.

WHAT TO DO IF THERE IS A FIRE -

A home fire is an experience no one would like to have. But if one does happen to you, if you are prepared, you can survive!

- When the smoke alarm sounds, get out of bed and stay low to the floor.
- Feel the door. If it is cool, open it slowly and get to the nearest exit. If the door is warm or hot, don't open, follow your alternate escape route.
- Do not stop to collect valuables or pets. Most pets will find their own way out.
- If you are unable to leave your room, call the fire department and be sure to tell the dispatcher that you are trapped. Then you can try to seal the door with wet towels, duct tape, etc.
- When you get out, stay out! Never re-enter a burning building.

New Members to TPVFD

At the Takoma Park Volunteer Fire Department membership meeting held on February 11, 2009, two new members were added, Tina Willey and son Andrew. Congratulations to both!

VENUE CHANGE

continued from page 1

local customers are hurting economically, it can be fatal for a small business like American Craft."

American Craft is not the only business feeling the strain. According to Jude Garrett, owner of Now and Then, fourth quarter 2008 was rough on everyone in business. Garrett observes that Takoma Park has become "a lot younger, with young families, who maybe can't afford to buy quality American handcrafts, or for whom hand-crafted art is too much of a luxury right now." She also says that every empty storefront makes the area less appealing to both shoppers and potential business owners.

Garrett, who has been in Old Takoma for more than 25 years, is saddened by the closing of American Craft, pointing out that even with strong support from the Old Town Business Association, because the neighborhood doesn't have the restaurants that would make Old Town Takoma a destination point, local stores must rely almost exclusively on neighborhood sales and support. Of course, that will soon change, as two new restaurants are opening on Carroll Avenue in a matter of weeks - Roscoe's, for wood-fired pizza, and Avenue Oven, for locally-renowned chef Gillian Clark's take on Eastern European cuisine. A third restaurant is under construction on John Urciolo's Laurel Avenue property.

Merchants continue to band together to promote local business, participating in street festivals, special events like holiday window decorating contests, coordinated beautification efforts, a shared web site (takomaonline.com) and more.

And Kathy Brooks is not giving up just yet. Her new business plan calls for establishing American Craft as an online boutique that appeals to the customer who appreciates fine crafts. The online venue will carry best-sellers from the store, and will continue to feature some of the better-known local artisans like Sligo Creek Tile. Brooks' long-time assistant, Betsey Broughton, will remain with American Craft, helping Brooks establish the new

venture. As the online store takes off, says Brooks, American Craft will be able to add artists and new inventory as sales become more viable.

American Craft will be open for business through the end of March. Brooks, who is also a professional photographer, and her colleague Michelle Avant will stage a joint exhibit of their photography at the store, and Brooks hopes to see many of her Takoma Park customers before the doors

officially close. And although American Craft will no longer be a physical presence in Old Town, Brooks enthusiastically urges Takoma Park customers to support the local businesses that remain to offer the goods and services that make Takoma Park unique.

American Craft is located at 7042 Carroll Avenue, Takoma Park MD, 20912 (301) 270-3138

SAVE THE DATE

PINEY BRANCH ELEMENTARY SCHOOL ROLLING TERRACE ELEMENTARY SCHOOL
SAFE ROUTES TO SCHOOL • PINEY BRANCH ELEMENTARY SCHOOL ROLLING TERRACE
ELEMENTARY SCHOOL • TAKOMA PARK SAFE ROUTES TO SCHOOL • PINEY BRANCH ELEMENTARY
SCHOOL • EAST SILVER SPRING ELEMENTARY SCHOOL • TAKOMA PARK SAFE ROUTES TO SCHOOL
ELEMENTARY SCHOOL • EAST SILVER SPRING ELEMENTARY SCHOOL • TAKOMA PARK

SUNDAY, MAY 3, 2009

Register online at
[HTTP://WWW.SIGNMEUP.COM/63932](http://www.signmeup.com/63932)
or pick up a mail-in registration form
at the Takoma Park Community Center
or one of the elementary schools.

Contact:
Lucy Neher, Coordinator
City of Takoma Park
Safe Routes to School
lucyn@takomagov.org
www.takomaparkmd.gov/safe_routes



Brought to you by:

Takoma Park Safe Routes to School and the Parent Teacher Associations at Rolling Terrace, Piney Branch, Takoma Park and East Silver Spring Elementary Schools



SafeRoutes





LIBRARY Briefs

Newbery winner returns by popular demand

On Tuesday March 31, Takoma Park Library friends, neighbors, and supporters will gather to enjoy a repeat performance of *Good Masters! Sweet Ladies!* by Laura Amy Schlitz.

In a project funded by Friends of the Takoma Park, Maryland Library, middle school students under the direction of local poets Elizabeth Rees and Rosanne Singer, brought the 2008 Newbery medal winner to life in a series of workshops, culminating in a performance at the Library in December. The students were costumed to reflect the medieval setting of the story, and were joined by students musicians led by Wendy Lanxner.

The book's author, a librarian in a private Baltimore school, wrote the book as a way to allow all of her fifth grade students to perform in a play. To give each student an equal part, she created 21 different monologues and dialogues; her book is subtitled "Voices from a Medieval Village." While medieval history won't interest every reader, Schlitz' ability to create short, engrossing character sketches make *Good Masters! Sweet Ladies!* a book that will appeal to many.

The performance created with the help of Singer and Rees takes Schlitz' book and expands on it. The students discussed medieval history and the characters in the book. They read Schlitz' monologues and dialogues, chose characters and then worked to create their own poems in contemporary language.

The poet actors featured in the presentation will be Jordan Dewar, Eleanor Harris, Jessica Miller, Ryan Miller, Katherine Murtha and Alanna Natanson. Musicians led by Wendy Lanxner include Roslyn Brehl, Anna van Niekirk, Henry Speaker and Langston Taylor.

Following the program, refreshments will be served and there will be an opportunity to vote for positions on the Friends of the Library Board. Open positions in 2009 include treasurer and one or more members-at-large. All are invited to attend the program and annual meeting. Members of the Friends whose dues are current are eligible to serve on the Board and vote in the election. New and renewed memberships will be accepted at the March 31 meeting. Those interested in serving on the Friends Board may contact Ellen Robbins at 301-891-7258 or by e-mail at ellenr@takomagov.org for information.

Session Improves Resume Writing

Learn how to put together an effective resume with an expert from MontgomeryWorks. Bring your resume, if you have one, and find ways to improve it to make it stand out from others. Practice the key ingredients of effective cover letters. Well-written resumes are an important way of competing in today's tight job market.

Workshops will be held on the first Wednesday of each month during the spring, from 1:30 to 4:30 p.m. in the Hydrangea Room of the Community Center. Register for one of the following dates: March 4, April 1 or May 6. Space is limited. Go to www.takomapark.info/library/registration.html or call the Library for more information.

The Takoma Park Library has many books that can help in the development of effective resumes and cover letters. Some titles are: *Cover Letters that Knock 'Em Dead*, *Gallery of Best Resumes*, *Real U Guide to Your First Job*, *Resumes for Computer Careers*, *Resumes for Re-entering the Job Market*, and *Expert Resumes for Teachers and Educators*.

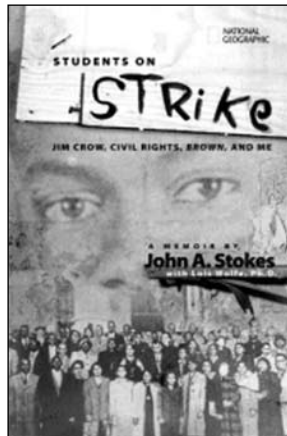
Tween Writing, French Circle Debut with Special Programs

We're offering several special programs this month at the Library, thanks to the generosity of the Friends of the Takoma Park Maryland Library.

On March 16 at 7:30 p.m., the Friends are sponsoring a program featuring John Stokes, a former Prince George's County principal who, as a Virginia high school student, was one of the plaintiffs in *Brown v. Board of Education*. Stokes, now a resident of Lanham, Md., will speak of his experiences with that landmark case, which he details in a new children's book, *Students On Strike* (ages 10-14). Please register for this event.

Three other programs sponsored by the Friends will be regular parts of the Library's monthly schedule: the Tween Writing Club; French-English Circle Time, and Comics Jam.

The Tween Writing Club will be taught by Sue Katz-Miller, a former *Newsweek* reporter and high school English teacher. The club's first meeting will be March 18,



7-8:30 p.m. Katz-Miller says the group will tackle all kinds of writing — poetry, fiction, and creative non-fiction. Each club meeting will begin with some writing games to warm up. Then, tween writers will read from their own work, and Katz-Miller will lead supportive group discussions. "No assignments, no grading, no rubrics, just writing for the sheer joy of it," she says.

Registration is required, and club membership is limited to ten. Bring some of your writing to the first class. The club will meet on the third Wednesday of each month through May.

Our just-launched French-English Circle Time will take place on Saturday, March 28, from 10:30-11 a.m. The program will be led by Belgium native Marie Defeche Mackler, a former preschool teacher.

Mackler will lead the group in simple French nursery rhymes and songs and read a simple book or two. No registration is necessary for this program, which is aimed at babies, toddlers and preschoolers. Older children are, of course, most welcome as well.

If you like comics, come to our next Comics Jam, which will take place on Friday, March 20, from 4-5 p.m. Using the new "ELMO" projector purchased for the Library by the Friends, library assistant and graphic novel expert Dave Burbank will lead participants in reading aloud comics and parts of graphic novels. No registration necessary.

TAKOMA PARK LIBRARY CALENDAR

MARCH 2009

Registration required for some events, as indicated in listing. For a few events, it is encouraged, but not required, as noted. You can register online by going to www.takomapark.info/library/registration.html or by calling **301-891-7259**. Events take place in the Library unless otherwise noted.

Neighborhood Circle Time
Every Tuesday
Two times: 10 a.m. OR 11 a.m.

Spanish Circle Time
Every Thursday, 11-11:30 a.m.
Come sing songs, do rhymes and hear stories in Spanish and English in this program led by Senora Maria.

Baby Time
A program for children 12 months and under and their grown-ups.
Wednesdays in March, 11 a.m.
Registration required.

Bedtime Stories

Monday, March 2, 7-7:30 p.m.
Come in p.j.s, bring your teddy bear or other stuffed favorites as we read some stories and sing some songs and rhymes. Perfect for babies, toddlers, preschoolers and their grown-ups.

Resume Writing Workshop
Wednesday, March 4, 1:30-4:30 p.m.
Community Center Hydrangea Room.
Registration required.
(See brief for more information).

Friends Reading Group
Thursday, March 12, 7:30 p.m.
War and Peace
Community Center Atrium Room

John Stokes and Civil Rights
Monday, March 16, 7:30 p.m.
Registration encouraged.
(See briefs for more information)

Tween Writing Club
March 18, 7-8:30 p.m.
Community Center
Registration required.
(See article for more information).

Comics Jam
Friday, March 20, 4 p.m.
Come read comics with us

Bring your favorites; we'll share ours as well.

Circle Time
Saturday, March 21, 10:30-11 a.m.
Ages: Babies, toddlers and preschoolers.

Banned Books Club
For kids grades 6 and up.
Monday, March 23, 7:30 p.m.
One Day in the Life of Ivan Denisovich. Copies are available for check-out, thanks to the Friends of the Takoma Park Maryland Library.
All welcome; registration required.

French Bilingual Circle Time
Saturday, March 28, 10:30 a.m. – 11 a.m.
Come join us for stories, songs and rhymes in French and English.
Ages: Babies, toddlers and preschoolers.

Friends of the Library Annual Meeting
Tuesday, March 31, 7:30 p.m.

Resume Writing Workshop
Wednesday, April 1, 1:30-4:30 p.m. Community Center Hydrangea Room. Registration required.

Dreaming of Becoming Mayor?

Deadline for the writing contest, "If I Were Mayor, I Would...", sponsored by the Maryland Municipal League (MML) and the Maryland Mayors' Association (MMA), is April 1. Fourth grade students throughout Maryland are invited to write an essay about what they might do if elected mayor of their municipality. The theme for the contest: How to en-

courage citizens to go green.

For essay forms, see www.mdmunicipal.org. Mail entries to MAYORS' CONTEST, Maryland Municipal League, 1212 West Street, Annapolis, MD 21401. To increase your chances of winning, the Mayors' Contest Study Guide can be downloaded from www.mdmunicipal.org. For more information call MML at 800-492-7121.

The Piney Branch Pool is Now Open!

**OPEN HOUSE—FREE community swim times to celebrate:
Sundays, March 1, 8 from 3-5 p.m.**

Will there be swim lessons?

Yes! Eight-week swim lesson sessions will run on Thursday evenings from March 5-April 23. There will be classes for ages six months to adults. Signups start February 17. Private lessons are also available. Free trial class for water aerobics will be on March 11 from 6:30 p.m.-7:30 p.m. You must sign up in advance for this free trial class. You can sign up at the pool, or contact Aquatics Director Veronica Barnaby at 301-613-9837 or vbarnaby@aol.com.

Will my child be allowed in the deep end?

Children will be asked to take a swim test. If they pass the test, the lifeguards will record the child's name and they will be allowed in the deep end, which has two water slides!

Do I have to go in the water with my child?

If your child passes the swim test, you do not have to go into the water with your child. You can stay on the pool deck.

Can my swim team or club rent lanes for private use?

Yes! Contact Veronica (see contact info above).

How old do you have to be to swim without an adult at the pool?

High schools students can swim without an adult if they present a school ID.

Now that the pool is open, what are the plans for the future?

The County provided funding through this fiscal year, which ends at the end of June. Pool advocates hope those who enjoy the pool will work to keep it open by writing County officials to thank them for opening it, and asking that it stay open. They also encourage swimmers to buy pool passes and to use the pool frequently, to show that the facility can cover some of its own costs, and that is being used by the community.



More than 150 people showed up to the Open House at the Piney Branch Pool on Sunday, Feb. 15. The pool will be open, free of charge, for two more Sundays in March.

Photo by Susan Katz Miller

Jazz, Poetry Highlight City TV Programming

City TV will feature performances from the Jazz Fest's Jazz Band Brawl held February 7, as well as the February third Thursday poetry reading. On March 19, City TV will broadcast the raingarden event discussed on page 5.

The next edition of Takoma Snapshots will feature:

- What's In It For Me? Takoma Park Maryland Library Children's Librarian
- Community Inaugural Events
- Art Exhibit
- Piney Branch Pool Reopens
- Jazz Band Brawl Highlights

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

Many City TV programs, including



Council meetings and Snapshots, are available for on-demand viewing from the City website. Much of City TV program-

ming is streaming live on the website as well. Be sure to visit City TV's award-winning webpage at www.TakomaParkMD.gov/cable for more information.

All Council meetings and Snapshots episodes are also available for patron check out at the Takoma Park Maryland Library. Dubs of Takoma Park City TV events may be purchased on VHS or DVD. Call 301-891-7118 or send an email to: cabletv@takomagov.org for more information.

FYI: Piney Branch Pool

Pool Hours

Sunday 8 a.m.-8 p.m.

Monday - Friday 6:30 a.m.-8:30 a.m.

Monday - Thursday 4 p.m.-10 p.m.

Swimming Fees

Children under 18, \$2.50 (county resident); \$1.25 (low-income); \$3.50 (non-residents)

Adults 18-54, \$3.50 (county); \$1.75 (low income); \$5 (non-resi-

dent)

Seniors 55 and older, \$3 (county); \$1.50 (low income); \$4 (non-resident)

Qualification for the low-income discount based on participation in the MCPS free lunch program or proof of a housing subsidy for adults.

Discount passes for 12 swims for the price of 10 are also available at the pool.

Lane swimming available during all hours.

Contact person: Vee Akehurst at Adventist Community Services, 301-585-6557, vakehurst@acsgw.org

Los Pollos Restaurant Opens on New Hampshire

Another option for authentic ethnic food has opened up in Takoma Park.

About a mile south of the Crossroads on New Hampshire Avenue, just past East West Highway at 6842 New Hampshire Avenue, Los Pollos Deli-Restaurant-Carryout opened last month. Peruvian owner Mario Begazo brings 25 years of restaurant experience to Los Pollos, with lots of ideas to create a successful business of his own. He is still serving breakfast and lunch, to satisfy customers of the Deli-Grill, which formerly operated there, and has added dinner, Sunday brunch, a self-serve coffee bar and additional menu items. The restaurant is in a newly renovated space



Los Pollos owner Mario Begazo opened his new restaurant in February, and will be serving breakfast, lunch and dinner just south of East West Highway on New Hampshire Avenue.

Photo by Melanie Isis

he revamped with his brother, Rico, installing new equipment, drywall, tiled floors, bathrooms, lighting, HVAC, a walk-in freezer, and more.

Begazo plans to serve a mix of ethnic cuisine at Los Pollos, with fish and chips, salads and sandwiches alongside Latin American dishes presented as daily specials. The place is kid-friendly, with a children's menu, and an environment that is warm and welcoming. Los Pol-

los is open Monday through Friday from 6:30 a.m.-9 p.m., Saturday 7 a.m.-9 p.m., and Sunday 9 a.m.-8 p.m. For information, call 301-270-9220.

CITY TV PROGRAMMING SCHEDULE - March 2009

	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday	Sunday
7:00 AM	Community Bulletin Board	PreSchool Power!	Takoma Park City TV Local Events	PreSchool Power!	Takoma Park Snapshots	Community Bulletin Board	Deja vu: Takoma Music Revisited
8:00 AM	Takoma Park Snapshots	Takoma Park Folk Festival		Takoma Park Snapshots	Takoma Park Folk Festival	Takoma Park Folk Festival	
9:00 AM	Takoma Park Folk Festival	Takoma Park Snapshots		Coffeehouse			Takoma Park Snapshots
10:00 AM		Coffeehouse	Takoma Park City Council Meeting (Replay)	Takoma Park Folk Festival	Takoma Park City TV Local Events	Takoma Park Snapshots	Coffeehouse
11:00 AM	Takoma Park City TV Local Events	Takoma Park Folk Festival				Takoma Park City TV Local Events	Takoma Park Folk Festival
NOON					Takoma Park City Council Meeting (Replay)		
1:00 PM		Takoma Park City TV Local Events		Takoma Park City TV Local Events			
2:00 PM	EDTV		Takoma Park Folk Festival			Media Watch on Hunger	
3:00 PM	Takoma Park Snapshots						Takoma Park City TV Local Events
4:00 PM	Preschool Power	National Gallery of Art	Takoma Park Snapshots	Coffeehouse	Takoma Park Folk Festival	Preschool Power	
5:00 PM	Takoma Park City TV Local Events	Takoma Park Snapshots	Takoma Park City TV Special Events	Takoma Park City TV Special Events		EDTV	
6:00 PM		Takoma Park Folk Festival			Takoma Park Snapshots	Takoma Park Snapshots	National Gallery of Art
7:00 PM				Takoma Park Snapshots	Takoma Park Jazz Friday	Coffeehouse	Takoma Park Snapshots
7:30 PM	Takoma Park City Council Meeting (LIVE)						
8:00 PM		Coffeehouse	Takoma Park City Council Meeting (Replay)	Takoma Park Folk Festival		Takoma Park City TV Local Events	Takoma Park Folk Festival
9:00 PM		Takoma Park City TV Local Events					
10:00 PM							Coffeehouse
11:00 PM				Takoma Park City TV Special Events	Coffeehouse	Takoma Park Folk Festival	Takoma Park City TV Local Events
12:00 Midnight	Takoma Park Snapshots		Takoma Park Snapshots		Deja vu: Takoma Music Revisited		
1:00 AM	Takoma Park Folk Festival	Deja vu: Takoma Music Revisited	Takoma Park Folk Festival			Deja vu: Takoma Music Revisited	

STRATEGIC PLAN

continued from page 1

City Clerk by dropping by the Community Center, third floor City offices, by calling 301-891-7267 or by emailing jessiec@takomagov.org. Resident input is encouraged at the public hearing, March 16 at 7:30 p.m. in the Community Center, 7500 Maple Avenue, Takoma Park.

Here is a listing of strategies and priorities for each policy area taken directly from the plan; indicators and assumptions can be found in the complete report. Please note, these are abbreviated; for clarification and detail, please see the complete report. Also note some goals are a continuation and/or strengthening of existing services.

Sustainability Strategies

- Support development and redevelopment to expand tax base and increase services and products available. Focus on retail, commercial and denser residential development near transportation, with scale and design appropriate to surrounding neighborhoods.
- Coordinate with planning agencies in surrounding jurisdictions over comprehensive development.
- Advocate with the county Housing Opportunities Commission and non-profit housing organizations for affordable housing.
- Support organizations that help implement redevelopment, such as business and community associations and events like the Folk and Street Festivals.
- Regularly review tree ordinance and storm water management requirements for environmental protection.
- Advocate for increased mass transit.
- Implement environmental policies to reduce energy use, including vehicle and fuel use, facility efficiency, use of green and alternative products, and review of alternative work schedules for City staff.
- Establish environmental awareness programs to help community reduce greenhouse gas emissions.
- Resolve tax and service duplication issues and negotiate better rebates from County.
- Use longer term planning and budgets for longer term goals.
- Re-evaluate the level and mix of services during budget planning to consider such solutions as revenue enhancements, privatization of services and asset shedding.

Priority Projects

- Resolve tax and service duplication issues through county task force and lobbying.
- Create a plan and enact redevelopment at the New Hampshire Avenue Corridor and the city-owned parking lot at Takoma Junction.
- Create and enact a five-year environmental plan for reducing greenhouse gas emissions and revise reduction goals to be consistent with state, county and Council of Government plans.
- Develop a five-year plan for stormwater management, including infrastruc-

PUBLIC HEARING

What: City Council Strategic Plan

When: Monday, March 16, 7:30 p.m.

Where: Takoma Park Community Center Auditorium

- ture improvement, new water quality projects, and incentive programs for residential stormwater management projects like rain gardens and turf reduction.
- Charge the Committee on the Environment with recommending programs and policies to advance sustainability goals.
 - Enact the Affordable Housing Plan with homeownership programs and by identifying funding.
 - Develop funding for long-term sustainable financing of city infrastructure, special projects, facilities and ongoing operations, with a five-year project expenditures budget.

Livable Community Strategies

- Advocate with county and state to encourage high quality social services.
- Use community policing to partner with residents.
- Foster cross-jurisdictional cooperation with other police departments.
- Ensure accessibility of high quality recreation programs.
- Capitalize on City's assets as a family-friendly place with interests in arts, culture and the environment, welcoming to people at all stages of life.
- Optimize the use of volunteers.
- Support redevelopment through community-centered processes.
- Coordinate between City recreation, police and local schools to improve health, education and safety.
- Proactively perform code enforcement.
- Educate public about City code.
- Keep police force strong with walking and bike patrols, plain clothes units, crime analysis, full staff, crime prevention programs, professionalism, and identifying safety issues for each neighborhood with plans to improve.
- Provide creative, diversified, safe recreation programs and services by maximizing use of City-operated recreation facilities, increased participation from each ward, partnerships with schools, PTAs, the library, police and other volunteer groups, and through City presence at community events.
- Maintain all City facilities.

Priority Projects

- Study and identify need for additional sidewalks and develop a way to fund them equitably.
- Prioritize improvements for the bike

- transportation enhancement plan.
- Improve physical appearance of private and public properties, beginning with the back of the community center; use legal and social services for problem properties.
 - Ensure utilities and other governmental agencies maintain facilities, for example PEPCO light outage response, WSSC infrastructure maintenance, State Highway right-of-way maintenance, and telecommunications company infrastructure maintenance.
 - Reach out to underserved segments of the community to engage them in city activities.

Engaged, Responsive, and Service-Oriented Government Strategies

- Use key indicators for each department as objective measure of performance, tied to budget goals, activities and functions of the department.
- Refine employment policies to attract, hire and retain top talent.
- Use alternative formats and locations for Council meetings to engage in conversation with City residents.
- Maximize resources through public-private partnerships and volunteers.
- Develop synergistic and collaborative relationships among City employees, especially across departmental lines.

- Use appropriate and/or multiple modes of communication such as the *Newsletter*, City TV, email and web, to reach target audiences with City information, and use them in an interconnected way. Explore use of new media.
- Use Council committees to recommend strategies and for outreach to the community.
- Have Council attend committee events.

Priority Projects

- Track service requests and questions, and implement regular customer service training.
- Improve City services with credit card and online payment options, online scheduling for services like facility rental, trash pick-up and permit services and providing varied hours for in-person services.
- Via a five-year plan, establish performance-based budgeting for each department.
- Ensure effective communication through up-to-date, user-friendly web site, City TV expansion, branding and communication about what residents get for their tax money, and exploring the use of new media.
- Use Council committees to reach out to community, and ensure they are a diverse representation of the community.

MAKE A DIFFERENCE PLANT A TREE

Discount Trees Available to Beautify Yards, Replace 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 Arbor Landscapers, the City is making a number of species available at wholesale prices. Residents can purchase black gum, sugar maple, white ash, red oak, or swamp white oak -- all native shade trees that usually retail for about \$350 -- for \$125 to \$195, installed. Sale dates run through April 11, with installation towards the end of the month.

Order Form

Please include check, including tax, written to City of Takoma Park and be sure to draw a map of the property and locations for installation (see order form). Submit to Todd Bolton, Takoma Park Department of Public Works, 31 Oswego Avenue, Silver Spring, MD, 20910 by close of business April 11. Someone will be in touch regarding installation dates.

Name _____

Address _____

Phone _____

Map of property/tree installation locations

Species	Price	Quantity	Total
Sugar Maple (2")	195		
White Ash (2")	195		
Black Gum (1.5")	125		
Swamp White Oak (2")	195		
Red Oak (2")	195		
6 % Sales Tax			

Total amount enclosed _____