

EN
ESPAÑOL:

Aviso de Costo de
Vida, Pagina 2

Takoma Park

NEWSLETTER

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

**TRASH
HOLIDAY:**

Memorial Day
Monday, May 25
No yard waste
collection; trash,
recycling picked up
Tuesday

Published by the City of Takoma Park

www.takomaparkmd.gov

MAY 2009



The Takoma Mosaic Project has been underway for months, and on April 18 artists finally began to install the work on the wall of the Takoma Park, Maryland Library. Here, a few artists linger after the first day's work is finished; inset shows some of the vibrant color in a flowing design that includes flowers, a rainbow and a central sun. Participating artists have included different groups of school children, seniors and residents who are simply interested in contributing to a piece of community art. For more information, or to participate, see <http://takomamosaic.org>.

Photos by Laurie Stepp

Budget Proposal Reflects Hard Times

By Virginia Dodd Myers

With mostly status quo recommendations, no modification of the tax rate and a continued focus on the City's strategic plan, this year's City budget proposal, currently under consideration by the City Council, presents no one dramatic change. But with the nation's economy on everyone's minds and state and county revenue dwindling, council members and City staff are looking carefully for places to trim expenses, and bracing themselves for tough times.

City Manager Barbara Matthews proposes a total budget of \$28.3 million – exactly \$28,309,748 – with revenues of \$26.9 million (\$26,956,084). The variance – spending \$1,353,664 more than revenues would allow – is made up with bond proceeds, the equipment replacement reserve, speed camera revenues and the allocation of general fund balance, she explained to City Council at its first budget meeting on April 6. Figures are

BUDGET

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Community Gardens Begin to Blossom

By Rick Henry

If it's good enough for the White House, it's good enough for Takoma Park.

There was much fanfare recently when first lady Michelle Obama planted the first vegetable garden at the White House since Eleanor Roosevelt's victory garden in World War II. In that spirit, Montgomery County's first organic community garden will be established at Sligo Overlook Park at the intersection of Orchard Avenue and Sligo Mill Road in the Pinecrest section of Takoma Park, in Ward 3.

Montgomery County Councilmember Valerie Ervin is the driving force behind the project, having introduced the concept to the Montgomery County Department of Parks last November. Ward 3 Councilmember Dan Robinson then recommended the Sligo site to Ervin after she told the Council she was interested in bringing a garden to the City.

"I supported it and wanted it," Robinson said. "There had been several other things talked about for that spot, but the community will be well-served with a garden."

Once Robinson mentioned the site, Park and Planning assessed the property to see if it met the criteria for hosting a community garden.

According to Ursula Sabia-Sukinik, community garden coordinator for Park and Planning, any proposed area must



Aaron Lavallee is ready to plant his starter vegetables and flowers at Takoma Park's new community garden, slated for a May 16 groundbreaking.

Photo by V. Myers

meet all of the following requirements:

- The site cannot be next to an environmentally sensitive area, such as a stream bed.
- The area must average eight hours of sunlight per day.
- The area must be large enough for a minimum of 15, 400-square-foot plots.
- There must be a water source available.
- The spot cannot be used for another

purpose, such as a soccer field or a dog park.

"That's why it has been difficult to get community gardens off the ground," she said. "There are very few open spaces that aren't being used for recreational purposes."

COMMUNITY GARDENS
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PRE-SORT STANDARD
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CITY COUNCIL AND COMMITTEE CALENDAR*

Monday, May 4 - City Council meeting, 7:30 p.m.
(CC Auditorium)

Monday, May 11 - Public Hearing on FY 2010 Budget, 7:30 p.m. (CC Auditorium)

Monday, May 11 - City Council meeting, 7:30 p.m. (CC Auditorium)

Tuesday, May 12 - Tree Commission meeting, 6:30 p.m. (CC Atrium Room)

Tuesday, May 12 - Committee on the Environment meeting, 7:30 p.m. (CC Lilac Room)

Tuesday, May 12 - Facade Advisory Board meeting, 7 p.m. (CC Hydrangea Room)

Tuesday, May 12 - Committee on Landlord Tenant Affairs meeting, 7 p.m. (CC Room TBA)

Monday, May 18 - City Council meeting, 7:30 p.m. (CC Auditorium)

Monday, May 18 - Public Safety Citizens Advisory Committee meeting, 6:30 p.m. (CC Rose Room)

Tuesday, May 19 - Washington Adventist Hospital Land Use Committee meeting, 7:30 p.m.
(CC Hydrangea Room)

Thursday, May 21 - Emergency Preparedness Committee meeting, 8:30 a.m. (CC Hydrangea Room)

Monday, May 25 - City offices closed for the Memorial Day holiday

Tuesday, May 26 - City Council meeting, 7:30 p.m. (CC Room TBA)

Tuesday, May 26 - Arts and Humanities Commission meeting, 7:30 p.m. (CC Hydrangea Room)

*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)
Committee on the Environment (vacancies)
Facade Advisory Board (one vacancy)
Noise Control Board (vacancies)
Nuclear-Free Takoma Park Committee (vacancies)
Public Safety Citizens Advisory Committee (vacancies)
Safe Roadways Committee (vacancies)
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.

March 16, 2009 - Special Session

Single Reading Ordinance 2009-8 was adopted, awarding a contract for an environmental assessment of Sligo Mill/Poplar Mill

Single Reading Ordinance 2009-9 was adopted, awarding a contract for replacement of a stormwater outfall behind 519 New York Avenue

March 23, 2009 - Regular Meeting

The Consent Agenda was adopted. It consisted of:

- * **Single Reading Ordinance 2009-10**, authorizing the purchase of portable and mobile radios for the Police Department
- * **Single Reading Ordinance 2009-11**, authorizing the purchase of two vehicles for the Police Department
- * **Resolution 2009-10**, designating April 11, 2009 as Arbor Day in Takoma Park

Second Reading Corrective Ordinance 2009-7 was adopted, amending Ordinance 2008-53 authorizing a PILOT (Payment in Lieu of Taxes) agreement for 7610 Maple Avenue

Resolution 2009-11 was adopted, authorizing execution of a memorandum of understanding with Historic Takoma, Inc.

April 6, 2009 - Special Session

Resolution 2009-12 was adopted, regarding proposed Montgomery County Ride On route changes

Single Reading Ordinance 2009-12 was adopted, awarding a contract for Public Works facility design services

The Consent Agenda was adopted. It consisted of:

- * **Single Reading Ordinance 2009-13**, authorizing a contract for provision of video engineering and integration services
- * **Single Reading Ordinance 2009-14**, authorizing execution of a contract for landscaping improvements
- * **Single Reading Ordinance 2009-15**, authorizing execution of a contract for streetscape amenities

Single Reading Ordinance 2009-16 was adopted, authorizing execution of a contract for fabrication and installation of identity signage (voting no - Councilmember Seamens)

PUBLIC NOTICES

FY 2010 Living Wage Rate Established

Ordinance 2007-55, amending the City Code to require the payment of a living wage by certain City contractors, became effective January 1, 2008.

Each year on April 1, the City Manager establishes the living wage rate, which shall be equal to the Montgomery County living wage rate established and published by Montgomery County pursuant to Section 11B-33A of the Montgomery County Code and any applicable regulations, as amended from time to time.

The current living wage rate is \$12.40 per hour. Effective July 1, 2009, the rate will be \$12.95 per hour.

A full copy of the Living Wage Ordinance may be found at www.takomaparkmd.gov.

Tasa de Costo de Vida fue Establecido para el Año Fiscal 2010

Ordenanza 2007-55 enmendando el Código de la Ciudad para requerir el costo de vida actual para ciertos contratistas de la Ciudad, fue efectiva el 1 de enero de 2008.

El 1 de abril de cada año, el Administrador de la Ciudad establece la tasa de costo de vida, el cuál será equivalente a la tasa de costo de vida establecida por el Condado de Montgomery de acuerdo a la sección 11B-33A de el Código del Condado de Montgomery y cualquier regulación aplicable.

Actualmente, la tasa de costo de vida es \$12.40

por hora. Efectivo el 1 de julio de 2009 la tasa será \$12.95 por hora.

Para obtener una copia de la ordenanza de costo de vida visite la página web www.takomaparkmd.gov

Notice of Public Hearing FY10 Proposed Budget

The City Council will hold a public hearing at 7:30 p.m. on Monday, May 11, 2009 to hear comments on the proposed FY 2010 budget. The public hearing will be held in the Community Center, 7500 Maple Avenue. Persons wishing to comment may attend the public hearing and sign up to speak, or comment in writing to City Clerk Jessie Carpenter, 7500 Maple Avenue, Takoma Park, MD 20912, or by e-mail to Clerk@takomagov.org, or fax comments to 301-270-8794. The proposed budget is available at the Community Center customer service desk and online at www.takomaparkmd.gov.

Attest: Jessie Carpenter, City Clerk

Finance Office Temporarily Closes for Training

The City's Finance Office will be closed on Monday, May 11 and Tuesday, May 12 from 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. for an employee training. Residents who need counter services in order to pay tickets, license fees or stormwater fees can come between 8:30 and 9 a.m., or 4 and 5 p.m., or come on another day. The Police Department will be handling tickets while the Finance Office is closed.



Historic photos show the firestation in the early 20th century, in the 1970s, and under construction today.

Top left, from Portrait of a Victorian Suburb; top right, 1972 City Newsletter; bottom, by V. Myers.



Takoma Park Firestation: Back to the Future?

By JOY LAWSON JONES

New development doesn't always go down easily in Takoma Park, especially when a landmark like the Takoma Park Firestation is at stake. Meshing the treasured history and nostalgia of 82 years of community service with current and future needs for function and community connection is a tall order, but it is the guiding ideal driving the construction of the new firehouse at Philadelphia and 7201 Carroll Avenue.

The new firehouse is expected to be completed in May 2010, with all the (literally) bells and whistles that a second-millennium, 15,200 square feet, \$11 million firestation needs to have. But to understand everything that is planned for the future, it's worth a trip to the past.

The original firehouse was built in 1927-28 at cost of \$45,000 by volunteer firefighters to meet the needs of a growing community, more than 30 years after a disastrous neighborhood fire almost destroyed what was then the Takoma Park commercial district. John Firmin, now 96 and still living in Takoma Park, recalls the first major renovation, circa 1955.

"I was working for the Victor Judson Company then," he says. "We had the job of cleaning and restoring all the front stonework and reinforcing the floors with concrete. It really was a nice building...the original rocks had come from Sligo Creek, and it was a big job getting the building in shape."

As Takoma Park continued to grow, the firestation became a touchstone for the community. Between 1955 and 1990 the station was in its heyday as a gathering place. Volunteer Chief Jim Jarboe, whose family name has been synonymous with the Takoma



Park Volunteer Fire Department since 1956 (altogether eight Jarboes have served over the years), recalls those decades.

"In the late 1950s and into the 1960s, 1970s and 1980s, the Takoma Park Recreation Department was housed at the station, and all us firefighters, career and volunteer alike, took an active part in many of the activities," he recalls. "There was a full gym so we had basketball for highschoolers and adults, and plenty of board games and afterschool activities for the younger kids during the week. And all the afterschool activities were free. One of the volunteer firefighters in particular, Jack Ellis, kept a strict eye on everything, but it was easy because everyone just came to enjoy themselves. The big draw of course was the indoor rollerskating -- the crowds were huge on the weekends because it was something all ages and families could enjoy. Can you imagine? We had hundreds of pairs of roller skates [to loan] in all different sizes!"

In 1964, Jim Jarboe started the still-run-

ning babysitters' training program at the firehouse. The program is an opportunity for local youth to learn CPR and First Aid and get a certificate from the Takoma Park Volunteer Fire Department documenting their skills.

Matt Corley worked for the Takoma Park Recreation Department from 1982-1987 and also recalls the days when the Recreation Department was housed at the firehouse. "The rollerskating was the big thing, but we also had community dances and adult volleyball in the gym," he says. "The firehouse also served as a Halloween haunted house for kids. Later I started an indoor soccer league in the gym for second to sixth graders that became pretty popular as more kids got into the game."

What Jarboe and Corley remember most however, is that the Takoma Park firestation was the proverbial neighborhood drop-in spot. Even though there was hardly any parking and the building was in need of yet another renovation by the

1980s, Jarboe and Corley agree that the firestation brought out the best of small-town, hometown Takoma Park: a place where the majority of residents, from Boy Scouts to business owners, knew they were safe and welcome to participate in all that was offered by way of service to the community.

And that, says Elmer Hamm, current president of the Takoma Park Volunteer Fire Department, is exactly what he and other old-timers want the new firestation to be. The old firehouse by the late 1980s had become unstable and unsafe, not only for the firefighters and their trucks and equipment but for the community at large. The old floors and beams could not support heavy apparatus, there was inadequate living space for firefighters and there were no sprinkler and security systems. The façade and floors were overhauled and re-strengthened in 1984, but time was gaining on the old building. For safety, the Recreation Department moved to other quarters.

After several usage and feasibility studies by the City and County, planners concluded that a new firestation was needed, paid for with County funds in exchange for ownership of the land and the building transferring to Montgomery County. Initial issues involved deciding on relocation vs. rebuilding (there was no immediately available vacant land for relocation) and acquiring adjacent property via eminent domain. In the end, an elderly couple who owned 7135 Carroll Avenue was given a newly renovated home at 7133 Carroll and demolition and construction began in spring 2008. Montgomery County contracted with architects Bignell Watkins Hasser Architects for the design of the station and Milestone Con-

FIREHOUSE
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THE TAKOMA PARK NEWSLETTER

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The Takoma Park Newsletter is published 12 times a year as the official publication of the City of Takoma Park, www.takomaparkmd.gov.

The Newsletter does not accept commercial, classified, or political advertisements. Unsolicited materials by Takoma Park residents, including reports by community groups and articles that may contain opinion, or letters to the editor will be considered for publication if sent to tpnewseditor@takomagov.org or Newsletter, City of

Takoma Park, 7500 Maple Avenue, Takoma Park, MD 20912.

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

Published material containing opinions does not neces-

sarily reflect the views of the Newsletter or the City of Takoma Park.

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

The Newsletter is printed on recycled-content paper.

HOUSING Briefs

First Time Home Buyer Class in Spanish, Saturday, May 16 – 8:30 a.m. – 1:30 p.m.

Yes, you can! Buy a house or condo, that is. Learn more about the home buying process now by taking this class. Takoma Park is sponsoring the First Time Home Buyer class in Spanish on Saturday May 16. Don't wait to find out what you need to do to prepare yourself for home ownership. The class will be held at the Takoma Park Community Center, 7500 Maple Avenue from 8:30 a.m. – 1:30 p.m. Although there is no charge for the classes, pre-registration is required. Continental

breakfast will be served. For further information or to register, call Linda Walker at 301-891-7222.

Are You Eligible for a Tax Credit?

Homeowner and Renter Tax credit applications are now available for the 2009 tax year. The deadline for filing is September 1, 2009, however if you file before May 1, the credit may be applied directly to your tax bill. The tax credit programs are designed to help low income home owners and renters by limiting the amount that they must pay in property taxes. To receive the tax credit, an application and all supporting documentation must be sent to the Maryland Department of Assessments and Taxation no later than

September 1 of each year.

The maximum property assessment eligible for credit is \$300,000, but even though your home may be assessed for a larger amount, its only the first \$300,000 of its assessed value that will be counted for this credit.

To obtain an application for the home owners' or renters' tax credit programs, you can call the State of Maryland at 1-800-944-7403, access it on their website, www.dat.state.md.us/sdatweb/taxcredits.html#htcrtc or call Linda Walker at 301-891-7222.

Is There A Vacant or Abandoned Property in Your Neighborhood?

Montgomery County's Department of

Code Enforcement is maintaining a list of vacant and/or abandoned properties in the county. The purpose of the list is to monitor these neglected properties to prevent them from becoming eyesores in the neighborhoods.

Although it is anticipated that most of these properties will eventually be sold, the maintenance and upkeep of the properties is a concern to the city and the county governments. If you know of a single family or multifamily property that is vacant or abandoned, please call 301-891-7119 and give the address of the property. Reports of vacant properties can be done anonymously. Thank you for your participation in this program.

New Rent Increase Allowance: 0.4 Percent Effective July

Takoma Park's law (City Code Chapter 6.20 Rent Stabilization) maintains the affordability of rental units in the community by limiting the number and amount of rent increases that may be charged for a specific rental unit. Generally the rent may be increased only once in a given 12-month period and rent increases are limited to the annual increase in the Consumer Price Index. The rent stabilization allowance is calculated on an annual basis and applies to all licensed multi-family rental facilities and to all licensed condominium units.

The 2009-2010 rent stabilization allowance is 0.4 percent and will be in effect beginning July 1, 2009 through June 30, 2010. Landlords required to comply with Takoma Park's rent stabilization laws cannot increase the rent on occupied units any

Rent Stabilization Allowance (Annual Rent Increase) 0.4 percent

EFFECTIVE:

July 1, 2009 - June 30, 2010

higher than this allowance.

Multi-family rental properties and individually-owned condominium rental units are normally subject to Takoma Park's rent stabilization laws, however the following units may be exempt from many of the requirements of rent stabilization. The exemption is not automatic and is subject to the approval of the City.

Exceptions:

- Accessory apartments certified by

Montgomery County;

- Rental units leased to tenants under the Housing Choice Voucher Program;
- Any rental facility that is subject to a regulatory agreement with a governmental agency that controls the rent levels of one or more rental units so that they are available only to low- and moderate-income tenants;
- Newly-constructed rental units for a period of five years after construction;
- All rental units in a building with two dwelling units where the owner occupies one or more of the units as his/her principal residence.

If you have any questions about the rent on your unit or Takoma Park's rent stabilization law, please contact Jean Kerr at 301-891-7216.



COLTA's CORNER

BY JEAN KERR,
HOUSING SPECIALIST

The Commission on Landlord Tenant Affairs (COLTA) recently approved a fair return rent increase petition for a rental property in Takoma Park.

Fair Return Rent Increase Petition

7106 and 7108 Maple Avenue (2008-23L)

On March 20, 2009, a fair return rent increase petition was approved for 4.44 percent (ranging from \$56.67 to \$62.11) for all three units at the property because the landlord showed that the net operating income (NOI) was larger in the base year, after adjusting for inflation, than the NOI in the current year.

All rent increases for a fair return 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. 35 percent rent increase awarded, the rent increase would be divided as first year, 15 percent; second year, 15 percent; and third year, 5 percent).

Residents help neighbors with emergency assistance fund

You can make a difference, right here in Takoma Park. The Takoma Park Emergency Assistance Fund, created by the City Council in 2001, helps residents who are experiencing a crisis such as a health issue, a pending eviction or a notice of a utility cut off. These circumstances are often due to loss of employment.

Last year, through the generosity of many Takoma Park residents, more than \$8,500

was contributed to the Takoma Park Emergency Assistance Fund. Thirty-three families received financial support, which helped pay for prescriptions, rent and utility costs.

Donations are tax-deductible and are sent by the City to a designated non-profit organization which distributes the money, based on the availability of funds and the present need. Since 2003, the city has maintained

an agreement with the Adventist Community Services of Greater Washington, Inc. to administer the program.

Now, you can help by sending a donation, no matter what the amount. You may use the form provided below to mail in your contribution. A letter acknowledging your donation will be sent to you. City staff thank you for supporting this program and the service that it provides to the community.

Please detach and send to City of Takoma Park Emergency Assistance Fund, Finance Office, 7500 Maple Avenue, Takoma Park, Maryland, 20912. For questions, call 301-891-7222.

I wish to donate \$_____ to the Emergency Assistance Fund. Check should be made payable to "City of Takoma Park."

Name and Address of Contributor: _____

You will receive a letter acknowledging your donation within 30 days of receipt.

Maple Ave. Closed

Philadelphia Ave. to Sligo Creek Pkwy.
May 3, 7:50-10:15 a.m.

Safe Routes To School
Takoma Park 5K Challenge
Lee, Grant, Lincoln, Hilltop, Sherman
& Ritchie will be barricaded
Sligo Creek Parkway closed to vehicular
traffic at 8 a.m. instead of 9 a.m.



Folk Festival 2009 Celebrates Seeger's 90th

This year's Takoma Park Folk Festival will join in the worldwide celebration of the 90th birthday of folksinger Pete Seeger. TPFF's "For Pete's Sake" events will include Seeger tribute performances at several stages, a sing-along of Seeger's most familiar songs and an exhibit about Seeger's visit to TPFF in 1986. The 31st annual Takoma Park Folk Festival will be held on Sunday, Sept. 13 at Takoma Park Middle School. Applications are still being accepted for crafters, food vendors and community tables at www.tpff.org. Above, Rick and Audrey Engdahl perform at TPFF 2006, joined by Mark Sylvester on upright bass.

Photo by Lonni Moffet

FIREHOUSE

continued from page 3

struction was awarded the construction contract to bring this project in on time and on budget by May, 2010. Upon completion, although the building will belong to Montgomery County, the City of Takoma Park will lease it for 99 years for use by the Takoma Park Volunteer Fire Department.

The new building will be state of the art, not only retaining some of the old firehouse in its physical form, but also aiming to establish itself as a new focus of Takoma Park community life, just as it was in the old days. Hamm says that although the construction is a major inconvenience, what is coming will be worth it.

"Our new firehouse will be something we can all be proud of," says Hamm. "First of all we are keeping one of the original walls of the old station, the wall closest to the Healey Surgeon [auto repair] building. People should also know that we are sending the stonework from the front of the old firehouse to a quarry for restoration and cleaning and it will be brought back and used in the façade of the new building. We may be losing most of the old building, but we don't want to lose that Old Town Takoma feeling that's so important to so many of us."

According to Hamm, the new building will include more up-to-date sprinkler systems, air pressurizing and exhaust and venting systems designed for the safety of the career and volunteer firefighters who will live and work out of the station. Magnetic locks, 24-hour monitoring and other



Back in the day, the firehouse gymnasium was a popular spot to gather for basketball and roller skating. Construction on the new facility, which retains some of the historic façade, should be completed in May 2010.

Photos: top, 1971 City Newsletter; bottom, V. Myers

new technology will ensure security, while new living quarters, administrative offices, training and meeting space and expanded parking will offer the best in Class II (this capacity) firehouse facilities.

But as Hamm emphasizes, all of these amenities are also designed to help bring the public back into the firestation, just like in the glory days. "We want people to keep thinking of the firehouse as belonging to them, as one of the real centers of the community. We'll keep offering the babysit-

ters training and CPR, and we'll still be there for the Fourth of July open house celebrations and community meetings as needed. It'll be a real treat when we have a building that is safe and school children can come back for tours. We'll also be open to any new ideas that will help us stay connected with the people we serve here in Takoma Park."

For more information on the Takoma Park Volunteer Fire Department, call 240-773-8954.



Sheila Blake's Takoma Park

Rediscover the neighborhoods of Takoma Park, through the paintings and pastels of Sheila Blake. Atrium Gallery, Main Level, Takoma Park Community Center, 7500 Maple Avenue. Exhibit can be viewed through the month of May.

Third Thursday Poetry Reading

Please join us on Thursday, May 14 to hear the work of local poets Mark Tarallo, Martin FitzPatrick and Katherine J. Williams. The reading begins at 7:30 p.m. and will be held in Gallery 3 on the third floor of the Takoma Park Community Center, 7500 Maple Avenue. A reception follows the reading. The next reading will be held on Thursday, June 18.

Call for Proposals - Exhibits

The Arts and Humanities Commission is seeking proposals from visual artists and crafts people 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 crafts people 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.

Takoma Langley Crossroads Sector Plan



Community Meeting! Guiding Future Investment

Wednesday, May 13, 7:30 PM

Takoma Academy
8120 Carroll Avenue

Learn about and discuss
plan recommendations

The Takoma Langley Crossroads Sector Plan is a M-NCPPC planning project in partnership with the City in preparation for the Purple Line. It will guide future redevelopment and public investment. For more information, see www.montgomeryplanning.org/community/takoma_langley_crossroads or call (301) 891-7205.



MAY RECREATION

Tremendous Trips

Grades 1 - 5 (as of September '09)

Each day offers a different experience. Sign up for one trip or pre-register for them all. Minimum enrollment must be met. Trips are subject to change. Meet in the Azalea Room, TP Community Center, 7500 Maple Ave.

When: Wed., June 17
Trip: Splashdown Water Park, Manassas, Va.
Time: 8:30 a.m. - 5 p.m.
Fee: TP resident \$25
 Non-resident \$30

When: Thurs., June 18
Trip: Port Discovery, Baltimore, Md.
Time: 8:30 a.m. - 5 p.m.
Fee: TP resident \$25
 Non-resident \$30

When: Fri., June 19
Trip: Water Park and Mini Golf, Gaithersburg, Md.
Time: 8:30 a.m. - 5 p.m.
Fee: TP resident \$25
 Non-resident \$30

Camp Takoma

Grades 1 - 5 (as of September '09)

Join us on a new adventure each week with plenty of opportunities to discover arts and crafts, games, swimming, nature activities, special events and trips to various fun locations. The fee includes all field trips, special events and a camp T-shirt. No camp on July 3.

When: Mon. - Fri., June 22 - Aug. 7
Time: 9 a.m. - 4 p.m.
Before Care: 7 - 9 a.m. (additional fee)
After Care: 4 - 6 p.m. (additional fee)
Location: TP Community Center
Fees: **Weeks 1, 3-7:**
 TP resident \$110/week
 Non-resident \$125/week
Week 2:
 TP resident \$95/week
 Non-resident \$110/week

Special offer! Get week two FREE if enrolling for all seven weeks.

Jason Miskiri's Basketball Camp

Ages 7 - 17

Be a part of something big this summer! Join Ta-



Dancers, taught by Mama Eltsah, perform during the Afternoon Addition program, held every weekday after school at the Community Center.

Photo by Leicia Monfort

koma Park native Jason Miskiri, who attended Montgomery Blair High School, Montgomery College and George Mason University, and then moved on to the Charlotte Hornets. In partnership with the Takoma Park Recreation Department, Miskiri's co-ed camp focuses on building strong skills for everyone regardless of experience. Registration forms are available in the Recreation office and at www.miskiricamp.com. For more information call 202-369-7116 or email jmiskiri@hotmail.com. Choose one or two weeks. Cost includes t-shirt, awards and prizes. Bring your lunch. Before and after care are not offered for this camp.

When: Mon. - Fri.
Session 1: June 22 - 26
Session 2: June 29 - July 3
Time: 9 a.m. - 3 p.m.
Location: Blair High School, 51 University Blvd. East, Silver Spring, Md.
Fees: \$175/week or \$330 for both weeks

Digital Bridge - Technology Camp

Ages 13 - 17

Learn how to shoot and edit videos and upload them to YouTube. Create videos with still photos, music

and voice. Research and purchase a domain name and create your own website. Learn how to take digital photos and transfer images to t-shirts, mugs, write and post stories on web. For more information or if you have any questions contact Digital Bridge, Martha Ocheing at 301-598-0604 or 240-330-7857. Co-sponsored by Montgomery County Recreation Department.

Session 1: Mon. - Fri., June 22 - 26
Session 2: Mon. - Fri., Aug. 10 - 14
Time: 8:30 a.m. - noon
Location: TP Rec Center, 7315 New Hampshire Ave.
Fee: \$75

Extreme Horizons

Grades 6 - 8 (as of September '09)

Try your hand at rock climbing, horseback riding, mountain biking and swimming. Each week will have a trip to a theme park. Fee includes a camp t-shirt, all field trips and special events.

When: Mon. - Fri., June 22 - Aug. 7
Time: Camp hours: 9 a.m. - 4 p.m.
Before Care: 7 - 9 a.m. (additional fee)
After Care: 4 - 6 p.m. (additional fee)
Location: TP Community Center
Fee: **Weeks 1, 3-7:**
 TP resident \$180/week
 Non-resident \$200/week
Week 2:
 TP resident \$165/week
 Non-resident \$185/week

Visual Arts Camp

Ages 11 - 14

Two hours of drawing in the morning using graphite, pen and ink, colored pencils, pastels or conte crayon, etc. followed by two or more hours of painting and/or collage and assemblage in the afternoon. Media such as watercolor, painting, sumi-e, mixed media painting, texture and found-object assemblage

RECREATION
 continues on page 7



Silver Foxes enjoy lunch and a talk about the history of Columbia Union College as part of a Takoma Park tour led by Diana Kohn.

Photo by Paula Lisowski

Remember, you can register Online: Visit activenet.active.com/takomaparkrecreation

RECREATION

continued from page 6

will be explored. Trips to the pool, art related movies, access to the game room during the day and outdoor art adventures are all included. All materials are included in fee. Maximum 12, minimum nine. Instructor Katie Dell Kaufman. No camp on July 3.

CHECK SESSIONS TIMES, DAYS

Session 1:	Mon. -- Thurs, June 29 – July 2
Time:	9 a.m. - 4 p.m.
Location:	Art Room, TP Community Center
Fee:	TP resident \$240
	Non-resident \$260
Session 2:	Mon. – Fri., July 6 – 10
Time:	9 a.m. - 4 p.m.
Location:	Art Room, TP Community Center
Fee:	TP resident \$300
	Non-resident \$320

RoadTripz

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

Date:	Sat., May 2
Activity:	Movies and Mall
Time:	6 - 10 p.m.
Date:	Fri., May 29
Activity:	Outdoor “Games and Goodies” Cookout
Time:	4:30 - 8 p.m.
Date:	Fri., June 12
Activity:	End of school celebration “Battles and Paddles”
Time:	4 - 8 p.m.
Location:	T Zone - TP Community Center
Fee:	Varies by trip

Poetry II - Finding the Form

Ages 18 and older
Look at different forms of poetry and discuss what defines them and what rules are common to each. Each session starts with free (stream of consciousness) writing. Then share the results and try to help each writer determine the best form for developing each piece. Supplies: a notebook, pen and a folder for sharing work. Maximum 10, minimum six. Instructor Judy Neri.

When:	Thurs., May 28 – June 25
Time:	7 – 9 p.m.
Location:	Rose Room TP Community Center 7500 Maple Avenue
Fee:	TP resident \$60
	Non-resident \$65

No class on June 11

T-Ball Program

Grades K – 1
Come out and learn all the fundamentals of T-Ball. Participants will be assigned to individual teams after registration and will be called by the league director or coach after team assignments are made. All participants will meet at Ed Wilhelm Field, behind Piney Branch Elementary on Sat. May 30 at 9 a.m.

When:	Sat., May 30 - July 25
Time:	9 a.m. - noon
Locations:	Jequie Park, Spring Park
Fee:	TP resident \$35
	Non-resident \$40

No program July 4.

Y.E.S. Basketball Program

Grades 5-6, 7-8, 9-10, 11-12
Come out and join the one and only Takoma Park “Youth Exposed to Success” Basketball League!

Teams will be guaranteed eight games, and every player will receive a Y.E.S League jersey. Trophies will be handed out to the playoff champs. Every player must attend one workout in order to be drafted.

NO REGISTRATIONS WILL BE ACCEPTED AFTER THE LAST WORKOUT.

<i>Grades 5 - 6</i>	
Workout Date:	Mon., May 11
Time:	6 - 8 p.m.
<i>Grades 7 - 8</i>	
Workout Date:	Tues., May 12
Time:	6 - 8 p.m.
<i>Grades 9 - 12</i>	
Workout Date:	Wed., May 13
Time:	6 - 8 p.m.
Location:	Piney Branch Elementary School 7510 Maple Ave.
Fee:	TP resident \$25
	Non-resident \$35

Beginning Electronic Keyboard

Ages 5 – 10
Get individualized one-on-one lessons with a small class of three to five students. Learn to play the keyboard: how to manipulate its functions and how to incorporate this with the traditional elements of music. Maximum five, minimum three. Instructors from the Piano Adventure School of Music. Four weeks.

When:	Thurs., May 21 - June 11
Time:	5 – 6 p.m.
Location:	Lilac Room, TP Community Center
Fee:	TP resident \$90
	Non-resident \$100

Beginning Voice

Ages 10 and older
Focus on the fundamentals of vocal production with an emphasis on breathing, tone quality, range extension and vocal stamina. Students will learn how to use their voices in a healthy way and how to sing without stress. Maximum seven, minimum three. Instructors from the Piano Adventure School of Music. Four weeks.

When:	Fri., May 22 - June 12
Time:	6:15 – 7:15 p.m.
Location:	Lilac Room, TP Community Center
Fee:	TP resident \$90
	Non-resident \$100

Collage

Ages 18 and older
Instruction will be given in using supports, priming and preparing surfaces and using water-based adhesives to adhere various collage materials. This class is suitable for beginners as well as more experienced students. Basic materials will be provided (some personal or found collage elements may be required in addition to materials provided). A materials fee



Ping pong champion John Anderson poses with Recreation Department competitors at the ping pong tournament in the Community Center game room.

Photo by Debra Haiduven

of \$30, 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., May 5 - June 9
Time:	11 a.m. - 2 p.m.
Location:	Art Studio, TP Community Center
Fee:	TP resident \$205/session
	Non-resident \$225/session

Drawing and Watercolor

Ages 11- 14
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., May 5 - June 9
Time:	3 - 5 p.m.
Location:	Art Studio, TP Community Center
Fee:	TP resident \$135 /session
	Non-resident \$145/session

Family Fun Day – Sheep and Wool Festival

Walk around the Howard County Fairgrounds and taste lamb, take in the entertainment and enjoy the many presentations and exhibits, as well as opportunities to buy finished goods, materials and supplies. Pet sheep and alpacas and see how spinners take sheep wool and convert it to yarn. We will meet in the parking lot of the TP Community Center, 7500 Maple Avenue. Advance registration is required. Minimum enrollment must be met by RSVP date. Bringing snack or lunch is recommended.

When:	Sat., May 2
Time:	10:30 a.m. - 3 p.m.
Fee:	Free



May 5 **Osteoporosis**
June 2 **Mental health**
July 7 **Skin cancer**
August 4 **Nutrition**
September 1 **Cholesterol**

WAH also conducts free blood pressure checks in the Senior Room every fourth Thursday.

Other senior-focused recreation programs offer everything from free weekly line dancing to coffee socials, board game sessions, bingo, computer classes and buffet lunches.

For more information about senior programs at the Recreation Department, see the Recreation Department Program Guide (available at the Community Center), go to www.tprecreation.org or call 301-891-7280

Get to Know Your City Budget for 2010

continued from page 1

expected to change during the budget reconciliation process. A final budget is expected to pass in late May.

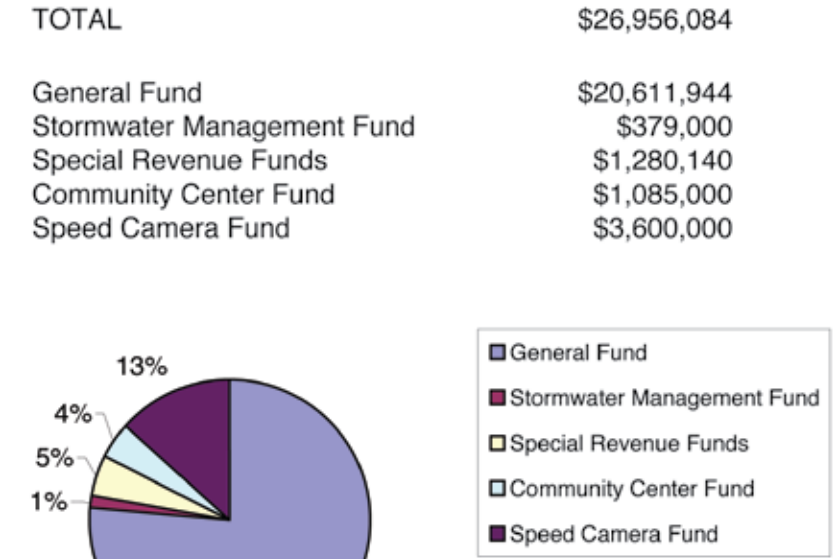
Proposed expenditures are about \$3.6 million more than FY09; revenues are up by about \$4.2 million.

Where the money comes from: tax rates

Increased revenues are in large part due to an increase in the real property base – i.e., the increased value of homes and commercial properties and the subsequent tax revenue collected on them. Although housing prices are falling across the country as the economy slumps, in Takoma Park housing values still register as higher than last year: The net real property base is projected to increase by approximately \$163.4 million, or 9.8 percent. The increase in the real property base may be affected by the State Homestead Property Tax Credit, which caps the increase in taxable assessments each year to 10 percent. If the home's value increased more than that, the excess is advanced into the following year. This means that dramatic value increases experienced in the past may still be influencing tax bills this year. Also, home assessments, on which taxes are based, are conducted every three years; the last assessment was conducted before the downturn in the housing market.

To keep taxes from rising, the City would have to adopt the “constant yield tax rate,” of 55 cents per \$100 of assessed value. However, because of increased City operating expenses — including union contracts requiring cost of living increases, equipment maintenance needs and other essentials —Matthews has proposed that the tax rate remain at 60.5 cents per \$100 of assessed value, the same as last year. Since property values are higher, total tax collected will be higher despite keeping the same rate. Again, to protect homeowners from excessive increases, the state limits taxable assessments each year to 10 percent — in other words, if a home is assessed higher than that, the homeowner will only be taxed

FY10 Budget Combined Revenues by Fund



on a 10 percent increase.

City staff caution that when property assessments register next year they may be lower, and subsequently tax revenues may dip considerably. Matthews suggested City Council begin talking to constituents now to get a read on what is most important to them, in preparation for what may be tough budget decisions required for next year.

Property tax funds represent the bulk of general fund revenues, at 53.6 percent. Other revenue sources are less predictable. Income tax, for example, is a slippery figure that was difficult to determine as this budget proposal was drawn up, as the state legislature was still working toward decisions that would affect the 17 percent of the county's income tax collected within Takoma Park. State highway user revenues were equally unpredictable, and wound up coming in about \$57,000 lower

than first anticipated; figures will be adjusted during reconciliation. Other revenues include funds paid to the City by Montgomery County for services the county doesn't have to provide, such as police protection, road maintenance, parks and crossing guards. These “tax duplication funds” have remained steady since 2007, due to an ongoing review by a task force assigned to determine a county contribution that would more accurately cover these City expenses.

Some revenue also comes in from City fees, fines and forfeitures, charges for services, licenses and permits.

Where the money goes: expenditures

The City budget is divided into five separate funds: the general fund, which covers

How Do You Want Your Money Spent?

Budget Hearing and Comment Opportunities

Public Hearing
Monday, May 11, 7:30 p.m.
Community Center

Public Comment Period
All City Council meetings
7:30 every Monday night (except holidays)
Community Center

Written Comments
City Clerk
City of Takoma Park
7500 Maple Avenue
Takoma Park, Md. 20912

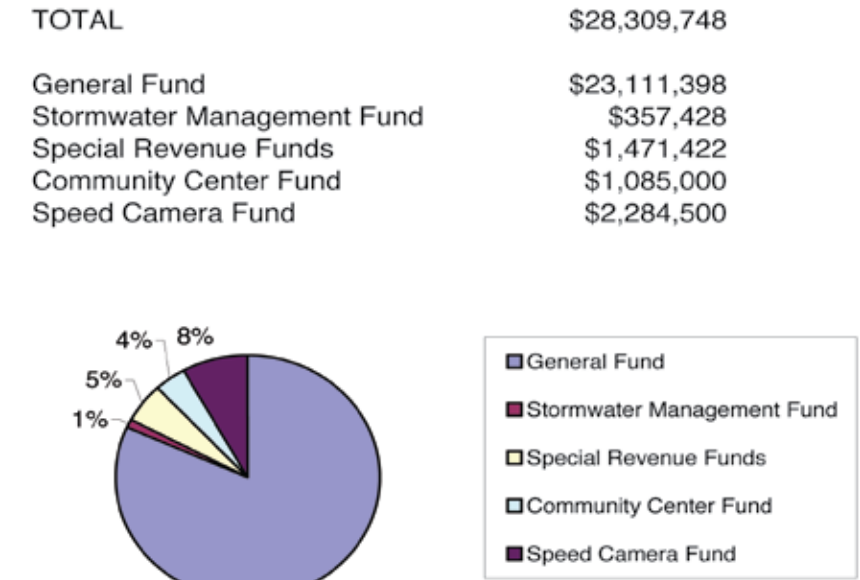
More information
City Clerk
301-891-7267
JessieC@takomagov.org

day-to-day operational activities such as police protection, snow removal and general administration; the stormwater management fund; the special revenue fund, to manage projects that involve federal, state and county grants; the community center fund; and the speed camera fund, which is new this year.

As a service-based enterprise, the City's primary expense is personnel. The proposed budget anticipates a 3.1 percent market adjustment increase in employee compensation, and an 11 percent increase in the cost of employee health insurance. Another significant personnel expense involves the police employees' retirement plan, which carries a high rate of disability awards.

Matthews told City Council that staff has been “very cautious” about adding new positions, instead realigning staffing as vacancies have occurred. Over the years, the full time employee count has remained relatively constant. This year, the recreation coordinator position will be dropped (with part-time staff utilized to meeting programing needs),

FY10 Budget Combined Expenditures by Fund



and one full time employee is proposed to manage the speed camera program, which involves pedestrian safety as well as citation management. A few other personnel changes occurred mid year, and are carrying over to FY10: the evidence officer hours increased from 20 to 32; the senior service coordinator in the Rec Department went from 30 to 40 hours; and the police executive assistant/public information officer had slightly reduced hours.

Other significant expenditures proposed this year include \$2.26 million for design and renovation of the Public Works facility (\$1.5 million of which will be financed through bonds), and \$1.085 million for renovation of the Community Center auditorium. This project will involve funds from the national and state governments plus a contribution from Washington Adventist Hospital.

The proposed contribution to the Equipment Replacement Reserve has increased to \$750,000; and \$335,826 is slated for bridge repair on Maple Avenue and Flower Avenue, over Sligo Creek. The proposed budget assumes that the County provides matching funds for the bridge project in the amount of \$168,000, either through stimulus funding or from another funding source.

Other proposed expenditures include \$15,000 to increase the City's purchase of wind power from 25 to 50 percent (though Ward One Councilmember Josh Wright has proposed that figure be raised to 100 percent); \$50,000 for the preservation and creation of affordable housing; and \$30,000 to support Main Street Takoma, an advocacy group that promotes business in Old Town. Main Street Takoma was vigorously supported by testimony at the public hearing on the budget April 13. Also in the proposed budget is \$10,000 for the Crossroads Farmer's Market, at the Takoma –Langley Crossroads; \$40,000 for a second survey of City residents (the last was conducted in 2008); \$357,428 for construction, maintenance and repair of storm drains, inlets, channels and ditches; and \$20,000 for a

small community grant program that would facilitate City partnerships with community organizations to reach goals set forth in the City's recently adopted strategic plan.

Signs of the times

In an attempt to avoid excessive borrowing, Matthews has proposed that the City dip into its reserve fund to cover part of the renovation at Public Works. She also notes that although several departments have demonstrated the need for additional staff, no additional positions have been proposed.

These are just two indications that the City has been affected by the national economic downturn. More painful was the announcement, at the April 20 City Council meeting, that the Montgomery County Executive's office does not intend to share any of the county's federal transportation stimulus money with the municipalities. The City had hoped for help on bridge repair, and will lobby the county to change its stimulus fund policy.

There was more bad news when the state reduced highway user revenues by \$57,000, and the renewal rate for employee health insurance came in at a 19.8 percent increase, while the City manager had anticipated an 11 percent increase. City staff will be working to try and reduce that figure.

The City Council will continue to discuss budget details and make decisions regarding City spending during workshops scheduled over the next two months. Public comment is encouraged at a public hearing on Monday, May 11 at 7:30 p.m. in the Community Center and at any City Council meeting during the public comment period; meetings are held every Monday night beginning at 7:30 p.m. in the Community Center. Residents can also register their opinions and recommendations about the budget in writing sent to Jessie Carpenter, City Clerk, City of Takoma Park, 7500 Maple Avenue, Takoma Park, Md. 20912.

For a complete copy of the budget, go to takomaparkmd.gov or call 301-891-7267.

TAKOMA PARK CITY BUDGET At A Glance

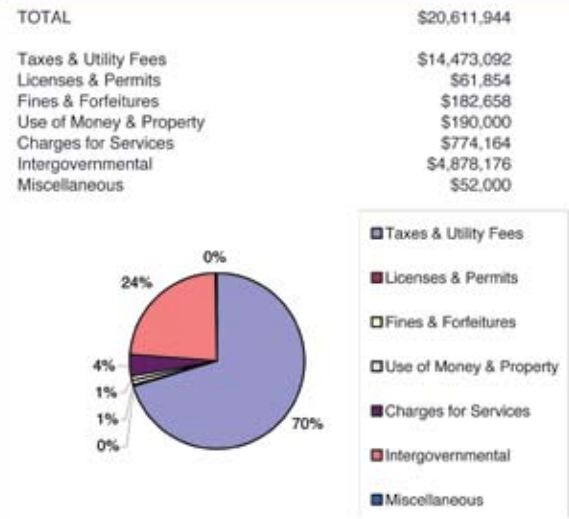
Total revenues (all funds) \$26,956,084
Total expenditures (all funds) \$28,309,748
Total General Fund revenues \$20,611,944
Total General Fund expenditures \$23,111,398

Details:

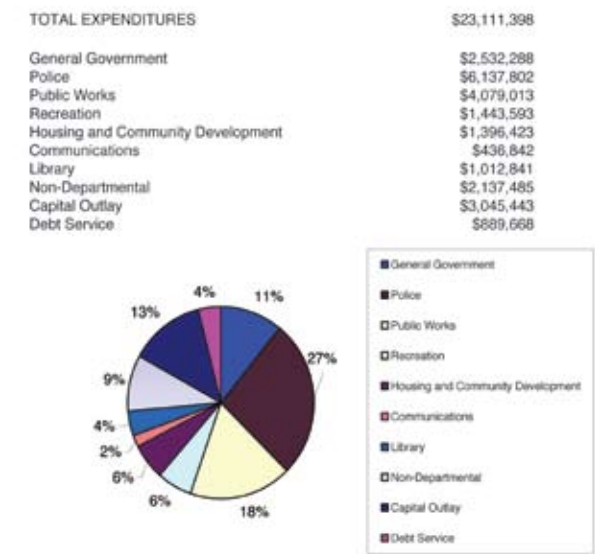
- Assessable real property base (net) projected to increase by approximately \$163.4 million or 9.8 percent from FY09
- Continuation of real property tax rate of \$0.605 per \$100 of assessed valuation
- Real property tax revenues increase by \$1,070,808 compared to FY09
- Tax duplication payments unchanged from FY09 level. County-Municipal Task Force reviewing
- Addition of 1.0 FTE for Speed Camera Fund. Elimination of full-time position in Recreation Department; will utilize part-time staff
- Additional part-time hours in Recreation and Communications for operation of the renovated auditorium
- Increase in worker's compensation insurance cost of \$103,330
- Increase for Police Employees' Retirement Plan due to higher actuarial contribution rate and employee salaries, with impact of approximately \$131,000
- \$2.26 million for Public Works facility design and renovation
- \$1.085 million for auditorium renovation
- \$750,000 to the Equipment Replacement Reserve
- \$168,358 for street improvements
- \$335,826 for maintenance repairs to the two bridges within the City limits
- Additional funding to increase wind power purchase from 25 to 50 percent
- Continued financial support for Main Street Takoma and the Crossroads Farmer's Market
- Funding for second survey of City residents.
- \$20,000 for the Small Community Grant Program
- \$357,428 for the construction, maintenance and repair of storm drains, inlets, channels, and ditches
- \$1,471,422 in the Special Revenue Fund for various grant-funded projects
- \$3,600,000 from speed camera revenues; \$2,284,500 expenditures include payment to program contractor, sidewalk design and installation, installation of neighborhood traffic calming measures, and program staffing

All numbers are from the proposed budget and subject to change during budget reconciliation.

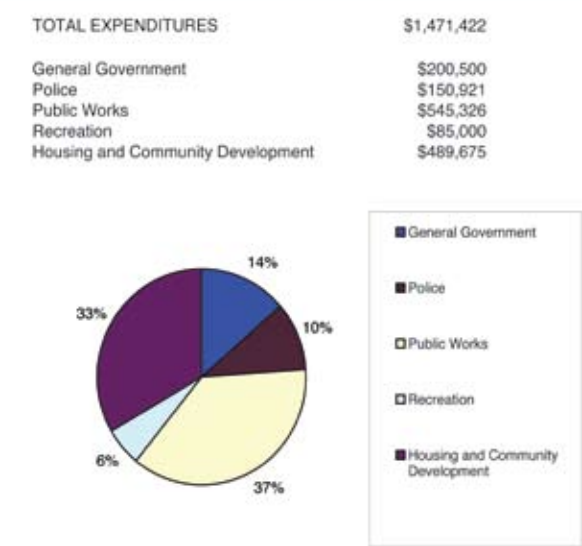
FY10 Budget General Fund Revenues by Type



FY10 Budget General Fund Expenditures by Department



FY10 Budget Special Revenue Funds Expenditures by Department



Thunderbolts bring baseball, kids' camp to town

'Tis the season, and baseball is back in the area with the tenth anniversary year for the Silver Spring-Takoma Thunderbolts. The team plays in the Cal Ripken, Sr. Collegiate Baseball League, a wooden bat league composed of eight teams in the D.C. area. Top college players are recruited to play for the team. Their season begins in early June, and runs through July, with all home games played at Montgomery Blair High School. Players from outside the area stay with host families in Takoma Park and Silver Spring. If you are interested in hosting a player, call 301-270-0794.

The team also runs summer baseball camps in June and July for boys and girls ages 8 to 15. Instruction is from Jason Walck, TBolts head coach. He will be assisted by TBolts players and coaches.

This is a camp for baseball players; kids have fun, and they learn the game of baseball. Emphasis is on: fundamentals, baseball, values and discipline, conditioning and healthy lifestyle choices. After camp in the evenings, campers can attend TBolts games where they can cheer on their coaches!

We provide bats, balls and equipment. Campers bring their own gloves and lunch. Each camper gets a Junior TBolts T-Shirt.

Camps are June 29-July 3; July 6-10, July 13-17, and July 20-24, from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. each day at Nolte Local Park, 200 Denver Ave., Silver Spring. The cost is \$195 per week. Go to the TBolts website, www.tbolts.org, for sibling and multi-year discount information, refund policy and application forms, or call 301-270-0794.

THUNDERBOLTS 2009 SEASON HOME SCHEDULE

Home games are at Montgomery Blair Baseball Stadium 51 East University Boulevard, Silver Spring, Maryland in the Four Corners Area

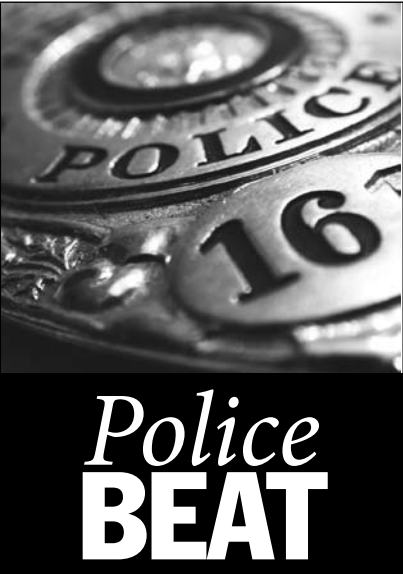
AdmissionPrices: Adults, \$5; children under 18, \$2 Youth baseball and softball players in uniform and children under age 5 get in FREE

Mon.-Sat. games start at 7 p.m.; Sunday games start at 6 p.m.

June 7 doubleheader starts at 5:30 p.m.

DAY	DATE	OPPONENT
Saturday	6/6	Alexandria Aces
Sunday	6/7	Bethesda Big Train / DH
Thursday	6/11	Maryland Redbirds
Friday	6/12	Youse's Orioles
Sunday	6/14	Rockville Express
Monday	6/15	Bethesda Big Train
Wednesday	6/17	College Park Bombers
Saturday	6/20	Herndon Braves
Wednesday	6/24	Youse's Orioles
Friday	6/26	Maryland Redbirds
Sunday	6/28	Alexandria Aces
Wednesday	7/1	Herndon Braves
Friday	7/3	College Park Bombers
Sunday	7/5	Youse's Orioles
Saturday	7/11	Alexandria Aces
Monday	7/13	Rockville Express
Thursday	7/16	College Park Bombers
Friday	7/17	Herndon Braves
Sunday	7/19	Rockville Express
Friday	7/24	Maryland Redbirds

Why We Don't Jaywalk: Staying Safe in Traffic



By Catherine Plevy

When it comes to crossing the streets of Takoma Park, police are saying, "look both ways" may not be enough.

That's because statistics regarding pedestrian accidents are still frightening. According to the National Safety Council, some 5,900 pedestrians are killed by automobiles every year; 84,000 suffer nonfatal injuries. Almost one-third of these victims are children under age 15.

Jaywalking – walking across a street outside of marked crosswalks and not at a corner, and/or against a signal light -- is often the culprit in pedestrian-related accidents. And even if there is no accident, if police find you jaywalking when there is vehicle traffic or where there are clear markings indicating a safe and legal place to cross, they can charge you with a traffic misdemeanor subject to a fine of \$40 in the State of Maryland. If someone is injured because of jaywalking, the jaywalker may even be charged with "contributory negligence."

Most important, however, is keeping pedestrians safe on the streets.

Pedestrian Safety by the Numbers

The following pedestrian accident statistics for the United States are from the National Highway Traffic Association (NHTA) and the Insurance Institute for Highway Safety:

- Pedestrian fatalities account for 11 percent of motor vehicle fatalities.
- Pedestrians comprise the second largest category of motor vehicle accident deaths following occupant deaths.
- On average, a pedestrian is injured in a traffic accident every eight minutes.
- On average, a pedestrian is killed in a traffic accident every 111 minutes.
- A pedestrian has an 85 percent chance of death when involved in a motor/vehicle collision at 40 mph, a 45 percent chance of death at 30 mph, and a 5 percent chance of death at 20 mph.

- Young children and the elderly are the most vulnerable for pedestrian accident-related injuries. Based on population, children under 16 are most likely to be struck by motor vehicles. Elderly pedestrians, although struck less frequently than children, are more likely to die after being struck by a vehicle. This group accounts for 16 percent of all pedestrian fatalities and 6 percent of all pedestrian injuries. Young children and the elderly have always held the highest risks of pedestrian death and injury.
- When a pedestrian is involved in a motor vehicle accident he or she is at risk for countless serious injuries. Often, pedestrians endure extreme bodily injuries such as:
 - Traumatic brain injury
 - Spinal cord injury
 - Paraplegia
 - Quadriplegia
 - Coma
 - Fractured bones

- Fail to yield the right of way to pedestrians at marked crosswalks.
 - Disregard traffic control devices.
- Some people get angry with the police who issue citations for jaywalking. They wonder if officers don't "have better things to do with their time." In fact, the police believe that jaywalking and protecting the citizens from possibly fatal situations are just as important as drug busts or drunk driving arrests. In a time of cell phones and text messaging, drivers' attention is not always on the task of driving safely. People are busy and in a hurry to get to their destinations, and pedestrian safety is increasingly important to the police department.
- One highly publicized jaywalking case serves as a tragic reminder of how important these laws can be. On a summer afternoon in Hollywood, Calif., 2001, nine-year-old Jorge Cruz, Jr., on his way home from school, was crossing the street in the middle of the block, jaywalking far from the nearest



- Pedestrians who are jaywalking and are hit by a vehicle, regardless of their injuries, are, in some instances, at partial or complete fault. It is so important to use crosswalks and always follow the direction of the crosswalk lights. Special attention should also be paid to vehicles, as they may not always follow the rules of the road. As a pedestrian, the heaviest burden is on you to protect yourself and to teach your children to protect themselves. Police can educate, but ultimately, you are responsible for your own safety.
- ### How it Happens
- There are numerous common factors that contribute to pedestrian accidents. Negligence is one of the most common. Motorists have a responsibility to adhere to the laws of the road and drive in a safe and observant manner at all times, but pedestrians are killed every day due to driver negligence. Drivers can often:
- Be inattentive or pre-occupied.
 - Fail to observe posted speed limits, adding to the severity of a pedestrian/motor vehicle accident.

- crosswalk. A number of cars stopped for him, but when actress Rebecca Gayheart drove up behind them, apparently not understanding why the cars were stopped in the middle of the block, she pulled into the two-way left turn lane in the middle of the street to go around the stopped traffic. Traveling at approximately 40 mph in a 25 mph zone, she apparently never saw Cruz. Her car struck the boy, who died the next morning of the injuries he sustained in the accident.
- Simply: Jaywalking is dangerous, interrupts traffic flow and potentially results in injury or death to the jaywalker. Don't become a statistic. Be safe. Be responsible.
- The following tips will help you protect yourself and your children from becoming pedestrian accident statistics.
- Teach children to look left-right-left before crossing streets.
 - Cross only at designated crossings. Entering traffic mid-block or from between parked cars is dangerous.
 - Teach children to never dart out into traffic.

Prepare for Emergency with a Car Kit

BY THE EMERGENCY
PREPAREDNESS COMMITTEE

We all carry stuff (not junk surely!) around in our car. Some of us, who have a long history of commuting or vacationing by car, may even have accumulated items that were intended to help out in a weather or other everyday road emergency. It is worth noting that most such items are a good start for a car kit suitable for special emergencies. The following expands on a short list from the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) of what such a kit should contain.

While a complete family emergency kit should be packed into the car only when there is a need to evacuate, the following items are useful to have in a car at all times, for general emergencies.

According to FEMA, an emergency car kit should contain:

- food and water
- first aid supplies
- flares
- jumper cables, and
- seasonal supplies

Note that the car itself is a major piece of emergency equipment. It provides shelter, a radio, and a battery that may be used to supply power for various pieces of equipment. Try to have half a tank of gas in the car at all times.

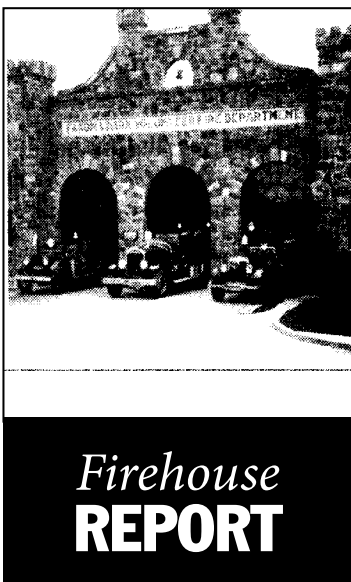
Below are suggestions under the FEMA headings as they relate to everyday emergencies.

- Food – carry a large jar of unsalted peanuts (unless you have nut allergies) and a couple of energy bars (food for 72 hours or more should be included with evacuation supplies not described here)
- Water – some for the passengers, but mostly should the radiator need water to avoid overheating
- First aid supplies for people and car
- Standard (commercial) first aid kit for people
- oil and brake fluid for the car
- tools for minor repairs you are accustomed to making yourself, including fuses, replacement bulbs, work gloves etc.
- Flares – electronic or regular

- reflecting caution triangle
- strong flash light
- blinking red signal LED light
- emergency whistle
- Jumper cables
- Cell phone charger

Seasonal and other supplies

- 10-pound bag of cat litter for ice and an entrenching shovel for snow
- emergency blankets (reflecting foil) for driver and passengers
- rain gear (poncho)
- heavy sweater
- overshoes
- sun hat
- Entertainment: the recorded book you always wanted to hear



Firehouse REPORT

BY JIM JARBOE

As of March 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 195 fire-related incidents. The department handled or assisted with 685 rescue or ambulance-related incidents, for a total of 880 this year. Totals for 2008 were 139 and 691 respectively, for a total of 830, representing an increase of 50 incidents.

Home Fire Prevention Checklist

Smoke materials

- Do you encourage smokers to smoke outside?
- If anyone smokes in your home, do you have large, deep, sturdy ashtrays?
- Are matches and lighters locked up high, out of sight and reach of children?

Hazardous materials

- Are paints, gasoline, and other flammable liquids stored away from flames and sparks?
- Is gasoline stored outside the home in a separate shed or garage?



Babysitting Graduates

On March 30, 12 girls completed a Babysitters Training Class – back, left to right, Sabareeshini Asari, Sophia Galvan, Scarlett Thorpe, Leanne Klock, Eliza Adler, Abby Weissman and Taylor Sobota; front, left to right, Vanessa Martinez Penn, Luisa McGarvey, Amanda Wessel, Isabella Albamonte and Alanna Natanson. Assisting with the class were Sandy Egan, Cpl. Gregory Wolff of the Takoma Park Police Department, and EMTs Mike Livingston and Tom Horne of the TPVFD. Next class will start on April 27. If interested, please contact the Recreation Department, 301-891-7280.

- Is your storage area clean - no oily rags or used paint?

Kitchen tips

- Does an adult stay in the kitchen when frying, grilling or broiling food?
- Is your stovetop clean - no grease, no spills, no clutter?
- When you cook, do you turn pot handles in toward the back of the stove?

Keeping your family safe from fire

- Do you have smoke alarms installed on every level of your home and outside each sleeping area?
- For the best protection install interconnected smoke alarms in each bedroom and throughout the home. When one sounds, they all sound.

- Do your smoke alarms work? (Do you test them at least once a month and replace batteries at least once a year? Consider installing smoke alarms with a "long-life" (10-year) battery. These alarms must also be tested at least once a month.)
- Does everyone in your home know the sound of your smoke alarms?
- Do you have alarms with flashing lights for people who are deaf or hard of hearing?
- Are any smoke alarms in your home more than 10 years old? If so, replace them.
- Does your family have a home fire escape plan, and do you practice it every six months?
- Consider installing an automatic fire sprinkler system in your home. Sprinklers can contain or put out a fire in less time than it takes the fire department to arrive. **Be safe, be prepared!**

COMMUNITY GARDEN

continued from page 1

Having met all of the requirements and passed all of the environmental tests, the project is moving forward rapidly. There will be 25 plots on the site: nine 400-square-foot (10' x 40') plots ("perfect for sharing," according to Robinson) and 16 200-square-foot (10' x 20') plots. Gardeners will pay a \$45 annual fee for the 400-square foot and \$25 for the 200-square foot. Park and Planning will supply the water for the garden. Gardeners get to keep everything they produce.

"The fact that gardeners get water and land for that price is pretty amazing," Sabia-Sudinik said.

Water and land are not the only benefits Park and Planning is providing. They are updating and increasing signage on the property and setting up a kiosk where tips on gardening and community announcements will be posted. They are also setting up a website and listserv that will allow gardeners to share information and advice and ask questions.

Aaron Lavalley of Eastern Avenue will serve as the volunteer coordinator for the garden, monitoring the website, staffing the kiosk and serving as a liaison between the gardeners and the community. An experienced community gardener in his previous neighborhood in New Hampshire, he was thrilled when he heard about the community garden.

"When I moved to Takoma Park, I assumed they had a community garden and I was surprised they didn't," Lavalley said. He called the City and eventually connected with Paul Grenier, the City planner who has helped shepherd this project along. In addition to moderating the website and monitoring the garden, Lavalley plans to provide important feedback to Park and Planning.

Interest in the garden is high. As of the first week in April, 55 people had applied for the slots. Both Robinson and Sabia-Sudinik expect more applications to come in. People in the immediate community are given priority, with 70 percent of the gardeners being selected from within a one-mile radius of the garden.

Interested applicants can apply until April 28 by calling 301-650-2635 or visiting the designated website, <http://www.mcp-communitygardens@montgomeryparks.org>. There will be two lottery drawings held on April 30 to determine who receives the slots. The first drawing will select the 70 percent from within the community. The second lottery will determine the rest. Selected gardeners will be notified on May 1.

Ground will be broken (and seeds planted) at an Open House event from 10 a.m. – 2 p.m. on Saturday, May 16. The public is invited.

Lavalley, for one, can't wait.

"I love to garden, but more importantly, I love being a part of a community garden," he said. "It goes beyond gardening. It's about meeting your neighbors."



LIBRARY Briefs

KIDS: COME MAKE A GIFT FOR MOM, Grandma or other special women in your life on Monday, May 4, from 6:30-8 p.m. We'll have the materials to make a couple of simple gifts; just bring your creativity! Registration is required so we can be sure to have enough craft materials for all. You can register online by going to www.takomapark.info/library/registration.html or call us at 301-891-7259. Thanks to the Friends of the Takoma Park Maryland Library for sponsoring this program.

REGISTRATION BEGINS MAY 1 FOR THE JUNE SESSION OF OUR POPULAR "LAPSIT" PROGRAM for babies 12 months and under and their grown-ups. Each Wednesday in June, from 11-11:30 a.m., we'll gather to sing songs, do fingerplays and read some simple stories. Space is limited, so please sign up at www.takomapark.info/library/registration.html or call us at 301-891-7259.

TEACHING ARTISTS FROM THE WASHINGTON NATIONAL OPERA WILL PRESENT "MADAMA BUTTERFLY," a free workshop for children ages 4-10 and their families, on Saturday, May 23, from 10:30-11:30 a.m. During the workshop, families will be introduced to the story and music of opera by exploring how music communicates plot, character and emotion. Children participate through doing crafts and creative music activities. All families will receive a take-home family opera guide. Space is limited, so registration is required. To register, please go to www.takomapark.info/library/registration.html or call us at 301-891-7259.

CHILDREN'S BOOK WEEK IS MAY 11-17 and we're celebrating by inviting kids to make their own bookmarks. Just ask at the Library's main desk for our "Make a Bookmark" materials. In addition, we're once again asking kids and adults to share their favorite children's books with us. Just ask at the main desk for a form where you can tell us why a particular book is such a favorite. At the end of the week, we'll post the list of favorites on our Children's Room Blog (and also make printed copies available). Last year, we ended up adding several books to our collection based on reader's recommendations!

Reading Group Discusses Argentinean Desaparecidos

Joyce Kornblatt's *The Reason for Wings* is set in Argentina after the Dirty War of the 1970s. During the 1970s and early '80s, thousands of Argentineans were persecuted, tortured and "disappeared." Kornblatt's narrator, grandmother (abuela in Spanish) Rachael Silvers, tells the story of her family's survival amidst a century of cataclysm in Europe and then in Argentina. The story is a gift to the granddaughter who was born in an Argentinean torture camp, given away in an illegal adoption, and whom Rachael has never met. If Marcella ever discovers her true identity, she will have as a legacy this powerful narrative written for her by her abuela.

"Kornblatt's lyrical narrative blends Singer's magic realism with Wiesel's sorrowful morality and Borges's

READING GROUP continues on page 13



Francoise Mouly of *The New Yorker*, and Art Spiegelman, who wrote *Maus*, shown here with their children. The parents created TOON books to engage early readers looking for material that would hold their interest.

Photo by Sarah Shatz

Speigelman, Mouly Promote Early Reader Comics

BY KAREN MACPHERSON

In my role as the children's book reviewer for Scripps Howard News Service, I recently interviewed Francoise Mouly, the publisher of a new line of beginning readers. Here's the story that resulted:

When Francoise Mouly's son, Dash, was a first-grader and struggling to learn to read, his teacher suggested he practice at home with books for beginning readers. Mouly, however, was aghast at the lack of interesting stories and visual clues in most beginning-reader books.

"Those early readers nearly killed his love of reading," Mouly said in a recent telephone interview. "It was really a blow to what had been, until then, a bonding moment."

So Mouly, who grew up in France, decided instead that her son would learn to read with her large collection of French comics. "I spent the next few months reading those with my son, which meant that reading time remained a pleasure."

Dash is now a teenager, but Mouly, art director of *The New Yorker*, never forgot that experience. And so, last year, she and her husband, Art Spiegelman (famous for his Pulitzer Prize-winning graphic novel *Maus*), launched TOON Books, a line of hardcover comic books aimed at beginning readers.

TOON Books published six books last year; one of them, *Stinky*, written and illustrated by Eleanor Davis, was named a Theodore Seuss Geisel Honor Book for beginning readers. Spiegelman also contributed one book, *Jack In the Box*, to the first line of TOON Books. Two more books were published this year: *Luke On the Loose*, by author/artist Harry Bliss, and *Benny and Penny in the Big No-No!*, by

author/artist Geoffrey Hayes. Mouly plans to expand the line of beautifully designed, brightly-colored hardcover editions into non-fiction.

Unlike typical beginning readers, where the text is most important, in the TOON books, illustrations are the focus. In a non-comic book, Mouly explained, "the text is written first. All of the story and clues to meaning are in the text. Pictures add to it, but they gild the lily." In comics, however, "the narrative flow is sketched out first, then the text is filled in. If you don't understand the words, then you still get the gist because the sense is in the pictures."

Mouly has worked with teachers and reading experts to ensure that the books have a vocabulary that works for beginning readers at various stages. The books also are rated for various reading systems used in schools — "lexile levels," "guided reading levels" and "reading recovery levels" — although that information isn't contained in the books but on the TOON Books' Web site (www.toon-books.com).

"The books are very specifically graded for kids learning to read," Mouly said. "But we didn't want to put the level information in the books because we didn't want to discourage kids."

Unlike many new publishers, TOON Books received attention from the start, partly helped by Mouly's *New Yorker* position and Spiegelman's *Maus* fame. But there were other factors that boosted TOON Books' initial profile, such as the general lack of satisfying beginning-reader books and the growing market for graphic novels aimed at kids.

The most recent sales figures, compiled by ICv2, a comics industry trade group, show a 134 percent growth rate in graphic novels for kids from 2007 to

2008. Graphic novels for kids accounted only for 3 percent of the \$395 million 2008 graphic-novel market, but their share is expected to grow.

Yet confusion persists over just what to call these books for kids. Mouly prefers to call them "comics."

"I think it's confusing to call them 'kids' graphic novels,'" she said. "They're great books, but not novels. They are comics and that is starting to be OK."

In fact, it was Mouly and Spiegelman who promoted the term "graphic novel" in trying to raise the literary profile of the form when *Maus* was published nearly 25 years ago. At the time, "comics" were regarded as something for kids.

"Art and I have always been advocating that comics are not just for kids. It led us into a land where comics are now accepted in museums and in libraries and bookstores. Then we turned around after all this accomplishment and said, 'Wait, but we didn't mean to say that comics aren't also okay for kids!'"

Mouly and Spiegelman first stepped into the kids'-comics arena in 2000, when they published a compendium of comics for young readers in a volume titled *Little Lit*. Still, when Mouly tried to convince publishers to put out her beginning-reader comics, she found lots of interest but no takers because the books "crossed boundaries." So Mouly decided to publish them herself.

"There's an enormous industry of those very boring readers for kids," she said. "But we must give kids something that gives them a taste of how pleasurable reading is."

The Library has several copies of all of the TOON books. Look for them in our beginning reader bookshelf.

Library Book Sales Returns

The Friends of the Library will hold its semi-annual book sale on the Library lawn from 10 a.m. to 3 p.m. on Saturday, May 16.

Thousands of books donated during the past six months will be offered to the public at bargain prices. They include children's books in good condition, literary fiction, cookbooks and much more.

Book sales are a major source of revenue for the Friends. All proceeds go to the Library in the form of gifts. The Friends fund many Library programs, including Spanish and French Circle Time, the Tween Writing Club, poetry programs, special holiday and craft programs and guest performances. They also provide books for two Library book clubs, lan-yards for children's Library cards, and

many other contributions. During the past year, gifts from the Friends totaled more than \$12,000.

Volunteers are needed to help at the book sale, and community service hours are available for high school students who wish to provide assistance. Adults are welcome, too. We need strong helpers who can lift and carry heavy cartons of books before and after the sale, and others to sell them. The book sales have become an enjoyable community event for buyers and participants alike, and the selections are great. Join us on May 16.

We will be accepting donations of gently used books of general interest until May 8. For information, or to help out at the sale, contact Ellen Robbins at the Library, 301-891-7258.

READING GROUP

continued from page 12

elegant storytelling. Inventive in language and storytelling, Kornblatt conveys the ways by which one family survives, continually reimagining itself, unearthing the painful past so that the newest heir

may honor, and remember, her remarkable ancestors." -- *Publishers Weekly*

The Friends Reading Group discussion will be held in the Community Center Rose Room on May 21 and is open to all. Copies of the book are available at the Takoma Park Library and are provided by the Friends of the Library.

Monday, May 11, 7:30 p.m.
The Great Gilly Hopkins and *Bridge to Terabithia* by Katherine Paterson.
Copies are available for check-out, thanks to the Friends of the Takoma Park Maryland Library
All welcome; registration required

Bedtime Stories

Monday, May 18, 7 p.m.
Come in p.j.s, bring your teddy bear or other stuffed favorites
Stories, songs and rhymes in a half-hour program
Babies, toddlers, preschoolers and their grown-ups

Saturday Circle Time

Saturday, May 16, 10:30 a.m.-11 a.m.
Babies, toddlers and preschoolers

Friends of the Library Book Sale

Saturday, May 16, 10 a.m. – 3 p.m.
Library lawn
(See article)

Friends Reading Group

Thursday, May 21, 7:30 p.m.
The Reason for Wings by Joyce Reiser
Kornblatt
Rose Room
(See article)

Madama Butterfly

Saturday, May 23, 10:30 a.m. – 11:30 a.m.
Washington National Opera workshop
Ages 4-10 and their families
Registration required
(See article)

French Bilingual Circle Time

Saturday, May 30, 10:30 a.m. – 11 a.m.
Stories, songs and rhymes in French and English
Babies, toddlers and preschoolers

City TV's Archival Music Brings Back the Bands

The City TV program schedule has been spruced up for spring, and staff have been busily adding many favorite performances from the last five years to the playback server. Look for Jazz Band Brawl and Jazz Fest performances from 2002, 2003 and 2004 in the new Takoma Jazz Night series, Tuesdays at 11 p.m. and Fridays from 7-11 p.m. Revisit favorite performances from Daryl Davis, the Neal-Anderson Quartet, the Harry Wilson Quintet and others. Also watch replays of this year's Azalea Awards held April 25.

New releases this month will include Taste of Takoma performances from Billy Coulter, Jelly Roll Mortals and the Acro-Airs.

The newest edition of Takoma Snapshots will feature:

- What's In It For Me? Library Collection and Services
- Taste of Takoma Highlights



- HB1182 Keep Cable Local
- Mock Election in Takoma Park

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 programming 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.

CITY TV PROGRAMMING SCHEDULE - May 2009

	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday	Sunday
7:00 AM	Community Bulletin Board	PreSchool Power!	Education TV	PreSchool Power!	Takoma Park Snapshots	National Gallery of Art	Deja vu: Takoma Music Revisited
8:00 AM	Takoma Park Snapshots	Takoma Park Folk Festival	Takoma Park City TV Local Events	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				Road to Recovery	Takoma Park Folk Festival
NOON				Takoma Park City TV Local Events	Takoma Park City Council Meeting (Replay)	Takoma Park City TV Local Events	
1:00 PM	Education TV	Takoma Park City TV Local Events					
2:00 PM	NASA 360		Takoma Park Folk Festival			Media Watch on Hunger	Music da Camera
3:00 PM	Takoma Park Snapshots	Music da Camera		Road to Recovery			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	NASA 360	Takoma Park City TV Special Events		Education TV	
6:00 PM		Takoma Park Folk Festival	Takoma Park City TV Special Events		Takoma Park Snapshots	Takoma Park Snapshots	National Gallery of Art
7:00 PM				Takoma Park Snapshots	Takoma Jazz Night	Coffeehouse	Takoma Park Snapshots
7:30 PM	Takoma Park City Council Meeting (LIVE)	Coffeehouse	Takoma Park City Council Meeting (Replay)	Takoma Park Folk Festival		Takoma Park City TV Local Events	Takoma Park Folk Festival
8:00 PM		Takoma Park City TV Local Events					Coffeehouse
9:00 PM							
10:00 PM							
11:00 PM		Takoma Jazz Night		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		Takoma Park Folk Festival			Deja vu: Takoma Music Revisited	

New Service!

Get On Line with the City

My TKPK handles requests like special trash pickups, provides information about City hours and operations services and programs and answers questions you submit – all online!

http://www.takomaparkmd.gov/customer_service/index.html

TAKOMA PARK LIBRARY CALENDAR

Registration required for some events, as indicated. For a few events, it is encouraged, but not required, as noted. 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.
Songs, rhymes and stories in Spanish and English with Señora Maria

Twosies

Children 24 months through 36 months and their grown-ups
Wednesdays in May, 11 a.m.
Registration required

Mother's Day Crafts

Monday, May 4, 6:30-8 p.m.
Gifts for mothers, grandmothers or other special women
Registration required
(See article)

Resume Building

Wednesday, May 6, 1:30-4:30 p.m.
In conjunction with MontgomeryWorks
Currently full, call to be put on waiting list

Comics Jam

Friday, May 8, 4 p.m.
Read comics with us!
Bring favorites; we'll share ours

Banned Books Club

Grades 6 and up.

CITY BRIEFS

Mock Election - Oak and Owl Win in Instant Runoff

The City held a mock election on Saturday, April 11, to test voter flow and usability of the Scantegrity voting system proposed for use in November's City Election.

Ninety-five voters participated in the mock election, in which voters were asked to select their favorite tree and forest animal. In the first round of counting, cherry and oak were tied with 29 votes each. Maple received 25 votes. Elm received only four votes and was eliminated. Voters for elm (four votes) and those who wrote in a tree (eight votes), had their first choice eliminated. If they indicated a second choice, those votes were redistributed in the second round.

In subsequent rounds, each ballot was counted as one vote for that ballot's highest ranked advancing candidate, until one tree received a majority of valid votes. In the third round, the oak tree was declared

the winner, barely edging out the cherry tree, 46 - 45.

In the race for favorite forest animal, owl did not receive a majority of votes in the first round, but had a strong lead with 42 votes. The owl was declared the winner in round two, with 51 votes, defeating squirrel, rabbit, and a number of write-ins.

In other races, 33 voters indicated that they have six to 10 trees on their property, 24 have three to five trees, 19 have more than 10 trees, 13 have one to two trees, and five voters have no trees. In response to the question about use of paper products, a majority of voters (61) indicated that they use fewer paper products than they did 10 years ago.

The Takoma Park Board of Elections learned much about voter preferences – what worked well and what didn't – over the course of the day. The Board will consider the results of the exercise as it works over the next several months to ensure that City residents will have a positive voting

experience in the November 3, 2009 election of Mayor and City Council. For additional information about City Elections, go to www.takomaparkmd.gov or contact the Board of Elections at TPElections@takomagov.org.

The mock election was conducted and funded by Scantegrity, and was part of a research project that spanned several universities.

Free Compost Bins in Takoma Park

Montgomery County compost bins are now available from the Takoma Park Public Works Department. The plastic "Gebobin" can hold 20 cubic feet of yard waste. The bin is made of flexible plastic that can be bolted together to form a cylinder. The bin comes with a Backyard Composting Guide.

Bins are available at Public Works, 31 Oswego Avenue from 8:30 a.m. to 5 p.m.,

Monday through Friday. Call 301-891-7633 to confirm availability. Montgomery County provides these at no cost for County residents.

Takoma Park Lions Donate Eyeglasses

The Takoma Park Lions Club would like to thank the citizens and businesses throughout the area for their help in donating used eyeglasses and hearing aids to its annual drive. During 2009 the club collected more than 2,000 pairs of glasses. All eyeglasses are forwarded to the Lions Eye Bank where some will be recycled and others will be sent to developing countries. Used eyeglasses and hearing aids may be donated and dropped off at the Takoma Park Library or the Takoma Park Fire Department.

To make a financial donation, send a check to the Takoma Park Lions Club, P.O. Box 11226, Takoma Park, MD 20913.

ARBOR DAY

Can You Beat the Reigning Tree Champs?

The Tree Commission kicked off the 2009 Champion Trees contest at the City Arbor Day celebration on April 11. Champion trees are recognized as among the largest examples of their species, as measured by their height, the spread of their branches (that is, their "canopy"), and the circumference of their trunk.

Last year's contest identified some magnificent trees and awarded the Champion status to two species: a white oak on Woodland

Avenue that was 110 feet tall, with a canopy spread of 92 feet and a trunk circumference of 148 inches; and a beech on Elson Place that was 90 feet tall, with a canopy spread of 90 feet and a trunk circumference of 150 inches.

This year, nominations will be accepted for Takoma Park trees from four species: white oak (*Quercus alba*), beech (*Fagus americana*), sycamore (*Platanus occidentalis*), and tulip tree (*Liriodendron tulipifera*). Residents can go online

to <http://takomaparkmd.gov/publicworks/arborist/index.html> or contact the City arborist at 301-891-7612 or 31 Oswego Ave., Silver Spring, Md. 20912 to obtain a nomination packet.

Champion Tree nominations will be accepted until Labor Day (September 7), and the winners will be announced at the Tree Commission display at the Takoma Park Street Festival on Sunday, October 4.



City Arborist Todd Bolton helps Beth Knox choose a pine seedling at the City's Annual Arbor Day celebration April 11. Despite damp weather, about 250 tree seedlings were given away. Persimmon and paw paw were the favorite choices with 50 of each disappearing quickly. Bolton, who organized the event, thanks PEPCO, Montgomery County Division of Solid Waste Services, Friends of Sligo Creek, Arbor Care Tree Service and the Committee on the Environment for participating.

Photo by V. Myers



This white oak on Woodland Avenue was a 2008 champion in Takoma Park's Champion Tree program. Standing at 110 feet tall, its girth is 148 inches and its canopy spread 92 feet – so big two photos were stitched together to show it.

Photo by Nicolien van Schouwen

Safe Routes Race Is On

By Lucy Neher

The Safe Routes to School Takoma Park 5K Challenge is May 3, with three events starting at the Takoma Park Community Center, 7500 Maple Avenue. Runners in the 5K can warm up with a fitness trainer at 7:50 to start the race at 8 a.m. The one-mile Fun Run will kick off at 8:45 and the quarter-mile Youth Run for children ages 8 and under will begin at 9:30 a.m. Runners are invited to stay for post-race activities including food and music. Winners will be announced between 9:30 and 10 a.m.

Prizes will be awarded in the following categories: top two male and female runners, top male and female ages 1-18, 40-49, 50-59 and 60-99. Prizes of \$100 gift certificates have been donated by Pacers and Whole Foods for the top runners. Prizes for first place in other categories are gift certificates for local restaurants, YMCA membership, yoga classes and bicycle helmets, among others.

In order to prepare for the race on May 3, Rolling Terrace Elementary School has started a walking club for students, staff and parents at recess. From April 14 until May 1, staff and parents have donned reflective safety vests to lead students around the field. On rainy days they walk the halls. The project is voluntary for the students but at press time, Principal Jennifer Connors hoped "that we get most students participating. This will be the extra training that we need to get us all ready for the 5K."

At Takoma Park Elementary School even the teachers have homework. Principal Zadia Gadsden has encouraged the staff to train for the 5K Challenge. A number of staff members can be spotted at the Takoma Park Middle School track three days a week to either walk or run. Rain has not dampened their efforts -- when it rains, they run the stairs in the school and walk/run in the gym.

There's a new addition to Piney Branch Elementary School after-school club offerings, too: the Running Club. Organized as a way to prepare for the upcoming Takoma Park 5K, the club of 22 third, fourth and fifth graders (and a few first and second graders) has been meeting weekly on Ed Wilhelm field behind the school.

After a warm-up and stretching, the students start a timed run around the field. The kids in the running club started week one with a 10-minute run followed by a five-minute run. They are now up to 25 minutes of running each session. The parent leaders, Wendy Cleary, Greg Gorman and Cathy Ocheltree, emphasize that each runner should set their own pace and stick to it.

"We joke with the kids about the 'turtles' and the 'hares.' The hares are the kids who sprint off fast but can't keep the pace. The turtles get visibly proud when they pass the huffing and puffing hares. Each week, there are fewer and fewer hares," according to Gorman. "The kids have shown an amazing improvement in their endurance and pace-setting in just one month. They're now ready for off-campus runs at the middle school and on the Sligo Creek hiker/biker trail, and we're looking forward to everyone being a finisher at the Takoma Park 5K next month."

Individuals interested in sponsoring the race, registering to run or volunteering to help out on Saturday, May 2, or Sunday, May 3, visit www.takomaparkmd.gov/safe_routes for more information.



May House and Garden Tour Celebrates North Takoma

This year's House and Garden Tour, Sunday, May 3, from 1 to 5 p.m., features more than a dozen houses and gardens in the North Takoma neighborhood. The tour's theme, "Almost Lost," describes the history of a neighborhood that has had to fight off multiple threats to its existence and integrity as a residential neighborhood, including the threat of a ten lane highway in the 1970s and the proposed expansion of Montgomery College. The area is one of the oldest parts of Takoma Park, and has some of the loveliest homes in the community.

Sponsored by Historic Takoma, Inc., the tour will take place rain or shine. Advance ticket sales, at \$15 per ticket, will be made at local businesses only. Such tickets may be purchased at the Takoma Park Silver Spring Coop (201 Ethan Allen Ave., at the corner of Ethan Allen and Carroll Ave. in Takoma Park); Now and Then (6927 Laurel Ave. in Takoma Park); Mark's Kitchen (7006 Carroll Ave., Takoma Park); and the Culture Shop (341 Cedar St. NW, Washington, DC). Advance ticket sales at \$20 each are available through the Historic Takoma website, www.historictakoma.org.

www.historictakoma.org.

On the day of the tour, all advance ticket purchasers must stop at Jeque Park (near the intersection of Takoma and Albany Avenues, Takoma Park) to obtain the tour a brochure, which includes the locations of the properties on the tour and an informative description.

Tickets on the day of the tour are \$20.

Ticket proceeds benefit Historic Takoma, Inc. For more information, see www.historictakoma.org or call 301-270-2831.

You Can Help Transform Maple Avenue

Do you live close to Maple Avenue? Do you have a vision to transform Maple Avenue into a safe, attractive community street? Now is the time to think about our street between Philadelphia Avenue and Sligo Creek Parkway.

Work with your community to develop a plan to improve the safety, accessibility, neighborliness and appearance of Maple Avenue. Recommend projects and programming you would like to see!

This first phase of the project is to find out what you and your neighbors have to say and develop a plan.

Workshop 1: What do you want?

Date: Thursday, May 14
Time: 7 p.m.

Workshop 2: Review Options

Date: Wednesday, May 27
Time: 7 p.m.

Workshop 3: Revise Final Concept

Date: Wednesday, June 10
Time: 7 p.m.

Workshops will be held at the Takoma Park Community Center, 7500 Maple Avenue, Takoma Park.

The workshops will include staff presentation, group discussion and hands-on exercises to develop a community plan. Staff will also be reaching out to organizations in the study area. This project is funded by a Community Development Block Grant.

For more information, please contact Carman Lam, Associate Planner, at 301-891-7219, or carmanl@takomagov.org.

got questions?

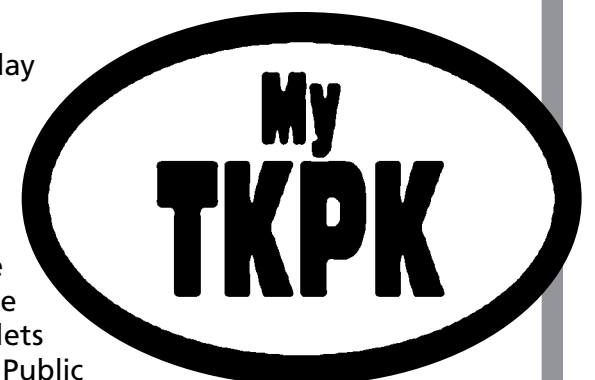
My TKPK: We've Got Answers

- Is the Library open on weekends?
- How can I place an announcement on City TV?
- Can I reserve my neighborhood park for a birthday barbeque?
- Will the City deliver mulch if I have no driveway?
- Where is the City's Passport Office?

At My TKPK you can find the answers to all these questions and more. Full of facts about your home town, the newly launched, easy-to-use web site lets you look up info by department, 24-7. Police? Public Works? Recreation? We've got you covered. And if you can't find the answer, email your question: City staff will send you a personal reply.

Plus, you can use My TKPK to report problems like abandoned vehicles or noise ordinance violations, send a non-emergency inquiry to the Police Department, or request specific information about taxes and fees.

For more answers, go to http://www.takomaparkmd.gov/customer_service/index.html



The Hunt is On!



Children wait their turns, then scamper across the field and search for eggs at the Recreation Department's Annual Egg Hunt April 4. More than 150 people attended this year, to find approximately 3,000 eggs hidden for the holiday.

Photos by Debra Haiduven



Exploring Artistic Borders

The Arts and Humanities Commission's first projected imagery festival, ShadowPlay 1: Borderlands, was a big success with an estimated 100 people in attendance. The event, on March 21, featured the work of 12 regional and international photographers, poetry by Takoma Park Poet Laureate Anne Becker and other local poets, and music from Peter Maybarduk. Following the program, participants attended a reception in the atrium lobby and viewed a borderlands installation piece created by local residents.



Photos by Stephane Janin