

Piney Branch Students Continue Quest for Greener Lunch Trays

By SUSAN HOLLIDAY

The kids did their homework.

The 22 students in the Piney Branch Elementary School Young Activist Club researched their proposal for their school to abandon daily use of disposable polystyrene lunch trays in favor of a more environmentally friendly system. They investigated using compostable paperboard trays instead, but found they'd cost three to four times as much and still be wasteful. So the students looked into purchasing durable, reusable plastic trays and cutlery plus a tray washer, consulted experts, crunched the numbers, and raised the \$10,000 to achieve their goal.

They took their idea to the Montgomery County Public Schools (MCPS) Facilities Management Department, which said the project would cost more than the activists' estimate, and then to the Montgomery County Board of Education (BOE), testifying last July. When the board questioned the feasibility of the students' idea, the club commissioned a feasibility study and sent it to MCPS Superintendent Jerry Weast, who responded last December: a cost analysis by MCPS found the project required \$70,000, and Weast said no.

What an education in community activism!

"They don't understand why it can't be done," said Brenda Platt, one of the Young Activist Club volunteer co-leaders and a Piney Branch parent. But the kids decided, "We have to keep fighting, we're activists," added Platt.

Despite the ultimate denial, the students



The Young Activist Club of Piney Branch Elementary lobbied the County Council to get rid of polystyrene lunch trays at their school.

Photo courtesy of YAC.

gathered support from the school PTA and Principal Bertram Generlette, the Takoma Park City Council, State Senator Jamie Raskin and Delegates Sheila Hixson, Tom Hucker and Heather Mizeur, and Montgomery County Councilmembers Roger Berliner, Marc Elrich, Valerie Ervin, George Leventhal, Nancy Navarro and Duchy Trautenberg.

The final decision makers, though, were the BOE members and MCPS. So the Young Activists held a community forum March 23. MCPS representatives declined the invitation to attend.

At the meeting the children explained the harmful effects of polystyrene use and

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City Layoffs Proposed City Considers Cuts, Tax Rate as Budget Process Begins

By VIRGINIA MYERS

City Manager Barbara Matthews has proposed a number of staff layoffs in her recently announced budget. City Council will be reviewing and discussing the proposal before it approves a final version in May. Meanwhile, Matthews notified ten employees that, due to declining revenues and rising expenses, they could be laid off or shifted from full-time to part-time positions at the end of the fiscal year, June 30. Of the ten, four are full-time positions to be eliminated, two are full-time going to part-time, and four are part-time to be eliminated. Some of the staff members in these positions may be placed in other vacant positions in the City.

The budget proposal also recommends no wage increases, neither for merit nor as part of the stepped wage increase system. In an email to employees March 31, Matthews ex-

pressed regret over these changes, but said she believes them to be "necessary" to keep the City financially stable. Flat wages, she added, will help prevent further layoffs.

Calling it "the tightest budget in years," Matthews explained that revenue sources (like state and county funds) are down, and costs for pension and health insurance are up. Other budget changes were not available at press time, but will be presented at the April 5 City Council meeting and are available at www.takomaparkmd.gov.

Setting the Tax Rate

City Council must also consider whether or not to raise the property tax rate beyond the "constant yield tax rate." City staff wants to be sure residents understand exactly what

LAYOFFS
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Spring brings more new shops

*Bicycle, electric bike,
CD exchange businesses
join the community*

By VIRGINIA MYERS

Three more new businesses have announced that they will be opening in the Old Town and Takoma Junction neighborhoods of Takoma Park; that makes a total of five new shops expected to open in the next six to eight weeks. Most recently, Takoma Bicycle has taken over at 7030 Carroll Avenue, selling new and used bicycles for adults and children; and CD/Game Exchange is buying, selling and trading new and used music, movies and video games at 7040 Carroll Avenue (at press time, both shops expected to open April 1). The Green Commuter announced plans to sell and service electric and conventional bicycles at 7320 Carroll Avenue at the Junction, starting mid-April.

Other openings include Capital City Cheesecake (aiming for a May 1 opening at 7071 Carroll Avenue), and Old Takoma Ace Hardware (hoping to open at the end of April, at 7001 Carroll Avenue).

In addition, Everyday Gourmet (6923 Laurel Avenue) will re-open after renovation, with a new concept that could include beer and wine; and Roscoe's Neapolitan Pizzeria (7040 Carroll Avenue) will be putting café tables out on the sidewalk this month. The Still Point, which offers acupuncture, massage, organic manicures, facials, and other health and spa services, is moving to a larger location at 1 Columbia Avenue in April.

Takoma Bicycle

Takomabicycle.com

Bruce Sawtelle grew up begging his dad to take him to work. So by the time he was nine or ten years old, he remembers, he was writing up repair orders

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PRE-SORT STANDARD
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PERMIT NO. 4422

ECRWSS POSTAL CUSTOMER

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



CITY OF TAKOMA PARK, MARYLAND NOTICE OF A PROPOSED REAL PROPERTY TAX INCREASE

The City Council of the City of Takoma Park, Maryland proposes to increase real property taxes.

1. For the tax year beginning July 1, 2010, the estimated real property assessable base will increase by 2.4 percent from \$1,835,449,475 to \$1,879,939,846.
2. If the City of Takoma Park maintains the current tax rate of \$0.58 per \$100 of assessment, real property tax revenues will increase by 2.4 percent resulting in \$258,044 of new real property tax revenues.
3. In order to fully offset the effect of increasing assessments, the real property tax rate should be reduced to \$0.5663, the constant yield tax rate.
4. The City is considering not reducing its real property tax rate enough to fully offset increasing assessments. The City proposes to adopt a real property tax of \$0.58 per \$100 of assessment. This tax rate is 2.4 percent higher than the constant yield rate and will generate \$258,044 in additional property tax revenues.

A public hearing on the proposed real property tax rate increase will be held at 7:30 p.m. on Monday, April 12, 2010, in the Azalea Room of the Takoma Park Community Center at 7500 Maple Avenue, Takoma Park, Maryland. The hearing is open to the public, and public testimony is encouraged. Persons with questions regarding this hearing may call Jessie Carpenter, City Clerk, at 301-891-7267 for further information.

Official Notice of Council Action on Speed Hump Petitions

On February 22, 2010, the City Council voted to authorize the installation of one or more speed humps on the unit block of Sherman Avenue.

Attest: Jessie Carpenter, City Clerk



CITY OF TAKOMA PARK, MARYLAND NOTICE OF PUBLIC HEARING ON PROPOSED ISSUANCE OF CITY OF TAKOMA PARK GENERAL OBLIGATION BOND 1-2010

Pursuant to Section 823(b) of the City of Takoma Park Charter which requires a public hearing to be held on any proposed indebtedness that is greater than 5 percent of the revenue budgeted for the fiscal year in which the bond is to be issued, the City of Takoma Park Council will hold a public hearing on the proposed issuance of City of Takoma Park General Obligation Bond 1-2010 in connection with a private negotiated bond sale to SunTrust Bank. The proposed Ordinance approves the issuance by the City of up to a \$1,400,000.00 general obligation bond for the following purpose: to pay a deficit arising from less asset value than accrued benefit for prior and current City employees under the State Retirement and Pension System of Maryland. The public hearing will be held on Monday, April 5, 2010, at 7:30 p.m., at the Takoma Park Community Center, 7500 Maple Avenue. Written public comments may be submitted to Jessie Carpenter, City Clerk, 7500 Maple Avenue, Takoma Park, MD 20912 or by e-mail to clerk@takomagov.org.

Attest: Jessie Carpenter, CMC
City Clerk

City Council Action*

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

Written comments may be submitted to the City Clerk by mail: City Clerk, City of Takoma Park, 7500 Maple Avenue, Takoma Park, MD 20912; by e-mail: Clerk@takomagov.org; by fax: 301-270-8794.

February 16, 2010 – Special Session

Single Reading Ordinance 2010-8 was adopted, awarding a contract to implement community-based support groups for ex-offenders.

First Reading Ordinance 2010-9 was accepted, authorizing the installation of one or more speed humps on the unit block of Sherman Avenue

February 22, 2010 – Regular Meeting

Second Reading Ordinance 2010-9 was adopted, authorizing the installation of one or more speed humps on the unit block of Sherman Avenue

The consent agenda was adopted. It consisted of:

Resolution 2010-11 appointing Elena C. Beleno Carney to the Takoma Park Ethics Commission

Resolution 2010-12 appointing April Kissel and William Lawson to the Takoma Park Board of Elections

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/clerk/committees or contact the City Clerk for more information (301-891-7267 or Clerk@takomagov.org)

Façade Advisory Board (one vacancy)
Takoma Park Board of Elections
(two vacancies)
Personnel Appeal Board (one vacancy)
Nuclear-Free Takoma Park Committee (vacancies)
Recreation Committee (vacancies)
Safe Roadways Committee (vacancies)

CITY COUNCIL AND COMMITTEE CALENDAR*

Thursday, April 1 - Police Employees' Retirement Plan Committee meeting, 8:30 a.m. (CC Hydrangea Room)

Monday, April 5 - City Council Administrative Function Session to conduct the City Attorney's evaluation, 6 p.m., Council Conference Room. (Administrative function sessions are closed and not subject to the Open Meetings Act.)

Monday, April 5 – City Council meeting, 7:30 p.m. (CC Azalea Room)

Monday, April 5 - Public Hearing on City of Takoma Park general obligation bond issuance in an amount not to exceed \$1.4 million to finance State Retirement and Pension System of Maryland deficit, 7:30 p.m. (CC Azalea Room)

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

Monday, April 12 – City Council meeting, 7:30 p.m. (CC Azalea Room)

Monday, April 12 – Public Hearing on the City Manager's proposed FY 2011 budget, 7:30 p.m. (CC Azalea Room)

Monday, April 12 – Public Hearing on the Constant Yield Tax Rate, 7:30 p.m. (CC Azalea Room)

Tuesday, April 13 - Tree Commission meeting, 6:30 p.m. (CC Atrium Room)

Tuesday, April 13 - Façade Advisory Board meeting, 7 p.m. (CC Hydrangea Room)

Tuesday, April 13 - Recreation Committee meeting, 7 p.m. (CC Art Room)

Tuesday, April 13 - Takoma Park Board of Elections meeting, 7 p.m. (CC Council Conference Room)

Wednesday, April 14 - Task Force on Environmental Action meeting, 7:30 p.m. (CC Hydrangea Room)

Monday, April 19 – Ward 5 Night. On Monday, April 19, the Council will host a Ward Night for residents of Ward 5. This is part of a series of ward-focused events hosted by the City Council. Ward 5 residents are invited to gather in the Community Center Atrium Lobby at 7 p.m. for refreshments and an opportunity to chat, one on one, with City Councilmembers. The first part of the City Council meeting, beginning at 7:30 p.m., will be devoted to hearing from Ward 5 residents about issues of interest and concern.

Monday, April 19 – City Council meeting, 7:30 p.m. (CC Azalea Room)

Wednesday, April 21 - Task Force on Environmental Action meeting, 7:30 p.m. (CC Azalea Room)

Thursday, April 22 – City Council budget work session, 7:30 p.m. (CC Azalea Room)

Monday, April 26 - (tentative) City Council Administrative Function Session to hold ongoing discussions involving the sharing of information with the City Manager and promotion of the City Manager/City Council relationship, 6 p.m. (Administrative function sessions are closed and not subject to the Open Meetings Act.)

Monday, April 26 - City Council meeting, 7:30 p.m. (CC Azalea Room)

Tuesday, April 27 - Arts and Humanities Commission meeting, 7:30 p.m. (CC Hydrangea Room)

Wednesday, April 28 - Task Force on Environmental Action meeting, 7:30 p.m. (CC Azalea Room)

Thursday, April 29 – City Council budget work session, 7:30 p.m. (CC Azalea Room)

*For the most up to date information, check <http://www.takomaparkmd.gov/clerk/agenda/>. 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).



WARD 5 RESIDENTS – THE CITY COUNCIL WANTS TO HEAR FROM YOU ON APRIL 19!

On Monday, April 19, the City Council will host a Ward Night for residents of Ward 5. This is part of a series of ward-focused events hosted by the City Council. Ward 5 residents are invited to gather in the Community Center Atrium Lobby at 7 p.m. for refreshments and an opportunity to chat, one on one, with City Councilmembers. The first part of the City Council meeting, beginning at 7:30 p.m., will be devoted to hearing from Ward 5 residents about issues of interest and concern to those living in the ward.

Maple Avenue Makeover Unveiled

Basketball court, community garden and lighting planned

By CARMAN LAM

Last May and June, City staff held a series of workshops and “coffee and doughnut” sessions to find out how residents would like to make Maple Avenue a better place for living, working and playing.

Over the course of ten sessions spent brain-storming, planning and drawing with City staff and fellow residents, a list of “do’s and don’ts” was generated. They ranged from a big “yes” to an exercise facility and a big “no” to dog parks. Spanish, Amharic and Russian translators present at these meetings helped assure input from our local non-native English speakers.

Staff took this wish list and explored the feasibility of the most desirable options based on cost, site availability and time constraints. The revised construction budget is \$68,100, since staff reduced spending on public consultation and design components. In the end, an outdoor basketball court, a community garden and street lighting were identified as the most feasible options and were presented to Council for consideration.

The Options

Residents of all ages identified a gym facility as a top priority. Many adults are looking for exercise opportunities. Teenagers frequently complained that the Takoma Piney Branch basketball courts are closed after sundown. And there was a great deal of interest expressed in activities that would provide constructive outlets and involvement for young people.

If there was space at the Community Center to house some indoor exercise equipment, that would have been an attractive option. But there wasn’t. Nor could another suitable space be found. Staff then decided to explore outdoor recreational opportunities, and wound up considering a basketball half court.

The proposed location for the half court is the current recreation bus parking spot, just beside the Community Center near Grant Avenue. To accommodate a small basketball half court, the space will be redesigned with a new sidewalk, a fence and a landscaped buffer along Grant. If funding permits, lighting and benches may also be added to enhance the site’s potential as a hang out spot.

Many Maple Avenue residents, especially those living in apartments and condos, told planners they wanted a little somewhere to plant their favorite vegetables. After the success of the Sligo Overlook Community Garden on Orchard Avenue, City staff were eager to continue partnering with Montgomery County Parks staff to complete this project.

Planners have now identified an under-utilized parking area as a pilot site for urban gardening. A request to lease the land was met with enthusiastic support from the property manager and property owner. The garden will feature innovative, self-watering, recycled plastic containers placed directly onto the asphalt parking surface and filled with soil for planting. Among other advantages, the planter-containers require no construction and allow the flexibility of easy relocation.

A third improvement option presented to the Council was street light installation. Maple Avenue is heavily used by pedestrians as a designated bus route for access to the Metro, home, and many public facilities such as Piney



Residents at Essex House look over options at an afternoon coffee and doughnuts session in their apartment building lobby. This format involved residents on their way home from school, jobs and running errands.

Photo: Paul-Harvey Weiner

Branch Elementary School. Last summer when the community workshops took place, streetlights were dim and provided poor lighting. However, the lights have since been updated and generally improved. A subsequent consultation with the community indicated that the improved



Councilmember Terry Seamens asks area residents what they would like to see during a walk-through of Maple Avenue.

Photo: Paul-Harvey Weiner

lights are satisfactory. Having said that, pedestrian-scale lighting is still a desirable option that would still add character and provide more lighting on the street. The budget would allow for six conventional underground-wired street lights, or the same number of solar-powered lights.

Council Response

Mayor Bruce Williams and the entire City Council have been enthusiastic about the basketball half court. It was felt that the half court, aside from its other virtues, would

provide at least one of the functions of the community gym that did not get built along with the current Community Center due to funding constraints. It can also serve as an interim space when the Takoma Piney Branch facility is closed for renovation between 2010 – 2011. Councilmembers are already planning an inaugural game amongst themselves when the court opens.

The community garden option also enjoys Council support. “The more planters, the better!” was Councilmember Fred Schultz’s response.

The Council’s overall recommendation is to prioritize the construction of the basketball court. In other words, to build as close to a full-size standard half court as financially feasible, within the physical boundaries presented by Grant Avenue. Remaining funds would then be used to purchase planter boxes for the community garden.

Given current funds, lighting the entire length of Maple from Philadelphia to Sligo Creek would not in any case be feasible, nor did this seem the highest priority, given recent lighting improvements. If a larger grant becomes available in the future, however, lighting improvements may well be revisited. Indeed, if current funding permits, Councilmember Terry Seamens has recommended purchasing one or two solar-powered lights to explore the use of green technology.

Coming Soon

Staff are working to complete the design and construction of Maple Avenue improvements by June 2010. Construction of the half court will likely take place in May while the community garden program kicks off in June. Funding is through a Community Development Block Grant, which prioritizes investment in and services for less affluent communities.

For more information on the Maple Avenue improvements, contact Carman Lam at 301-891-7219, or carmanl@takomagov.org.



THE TAKOMA PARK NEWSLETTER

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The Newsletter does not accept commercial, classified, or political advertisements. Unsolicited materials by Takoma Park residents, including reports by community groups and articles that may contain opinion, 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 necessarily reflect the views of the Newsletter or

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The Newsletter is printed on recycled-content paper.



Homeowners' Property Tax Credit Applications Now Available

Are you eligible for a tax credit? Homeowners' Property Tax credit applications are now available for the 2010 tax year. Although the deadline for filing is September 1, 2010, if you file before May 1, the credit will be applied directly to your tax bill.

The tax credit program is designed to help low or fixed income home owners, by limiting the amount they must pay in property taxes. To receive the tax credit, an application and supporting documentation must be sent to the Maryland Department of Assessments and Taxation each year.

The maximum property assessment eligible for the credit is \$300,000, which means that even though your home may be assessed over this amount, it's only the first \$300,000 of its assessed value that will be counted for this credit. Here are the basic requirements for the program:

- Must own or have legal interest in the property
- Must be your principal residence
- Your net worth, not including the value of your home or qualified retirement savings/accounts must be less than \$200,000
- Your gross household income cannot exceed \$60,000

To obtain an application for the home owners' 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/datweb/taxcredits.html or call Linda Walker at 301-891-7222.



COLTA's CORNER

BY JEAN KERR
HOUSING SPECIALIST

Your Rights as a Tenant in Takoma Park
Tuesday, April 13, 7-8:30 p.m.
Takoma Park Community Center
7500 Maple Avenue, Takoma Park

Can a landlord charge me for repairs in my apartment? What can I do if the manager of my building enters my apartment without giving me notice? My landlord kept my entire security deposit when I vacated. What can I do? These are just some of the issues that will be discussed during this workshop. Learn more about city and county resources available to tenants and how you can form a tenant association to deal with problems in your building.

First Time Home Buyer Class
Saturday, April 24
8:30 a.m.- 1:30 p.m.
Takoma Park Community Center
7500 Maple Avenue, Takoma Park

Buying a home is one of the most important decisions you will make in your lifetime. Here is an opportunity for you to do it right, with full knowledge of the home buying process. Class size is limited to 30 people. You will receive a certificate which can be used as proof of your attendance at a certified First Time Home Buyer class. Topics to be discussed include:

- The importance of pre-purchase counseling
- Establish and maintain good credit — facts about the credit scoring system

A tenant contacted the Mailbox indicating that her stove has been inoperative for three weeks. She noted that her landlord had been contacted about this problem by phone and in writing, having sent him a letter by certified and regular mail three days after the oven stopped working. She now wants to know what her rights are in this matter.

"Defective Tenancy" is defined in the city's housing code as any condition in a rental facility that constitutes a violation of the lease terms, the Landlord-Tenant Relations Law, or the Property Maintenance Code. Pursuant to Section 6.16.170A of the city's Landlord-Tenant Law, a tenant who has reason to believe that a defective tenancy exists or has existed in their rental unit in the rental facility common areas and who has provided the landlord written notice of the problem and if the problem has not been corrected (or good-faith corrective action taken by the landlord within a week of the landlord receiving notice) may (1) contact the Montgomery County Housing Code Enforcement Office at 240-777-3785 to report the problem and schedule an inspection by a housing

The Commission on Landlord-Tenant Affairs (COLTA) issued an Opinion and Order on three illegal rent complaints for a rental property in Takoma Park. All three complaints were consolidated into one COLTA hearing.

Linson, et al. v. Hillwood Manor Apartments Joint venture LLP, et al.

COLTA Case Nos. 2009-19T, 20T & 21T

On March 9, COLTA issued a decision on three tenants' complaints, that the landlord charged illegal rents of \$740 for the first unit, \$825 for the second unit and \$825 for the third unit when they moved into the rental property. Based

upon testimony presented at the hearing, COLTA found that the rents charged by the landlord for these units exceeded the rents stated in its annual rent reports submitted to the City. Additionally, COLTA found that the landlord charged the complainants illegal rents and ordered that the landlord refund the tenants a total of \$21,629 (\$3,428 for the first unit, \$5,439 for the second unit and \$12,762 for the third unit) which represented the rent overcharges. Finally, COLTA ordered that the tenants are authorized to withhold payment of their monthly rents if the landlord did not refund them within 16 days from the date of the order.

Free Classes

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

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

Financial Planning 101 and Investing for the Future 102
Wednesdays, May 5 and 12
6:30- 9:30 p.m.
Takoma Park Community Center
7500 Maple Avenue, Takoma Park

These two classes will help you put your financial life in order. The first session is devoted to budgeting, savings and getting a handle on your finances so that you can better prepare for the future. The second session is devoted to understanding tax benefits and covers mortgage interest, tax deductions, trusts, wills and estate planning, reverse mortgages and refinancing options.

Christopher King, who has extensive experience in the financial literacy and housing counseling arenas will help you become financially healthy. Class size is limited to 35 people.

Clase Para Quien Compra Casa Por Primera Vez (Spanish)
Sabado, 15 de Mayo
8:30 a.m.-1:30 p.m.
El Centro de Comunidad de Takoma Park
7500 Maple Avenue, Takoma Park

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

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

Información acerca de los programas de préstamo en Maryland y el Condado de Montgomery. Llama a 301-891-7222 para asistir.

code inspector. The inspector, after confirming the code violation, will provide the landlord with an abatement order deadline which, if not met, will be followed by the issuance of a municipal infraction (fine) and the scheduling of a court date; and (2) file a complaint with the Commission on Landlord-Tenant Affairs (COLTA) requesting a specific remedy.

In this scenario the tenant has provided the landlord written notice of the problem and has not received a response within a week. She may therefore file a complaint with COLTA alleging the existence of a defective tenancy. Her remedy options requested from COLTA could include (1) requiring the landlord to immediately repair

or replace the stove; (2) seeking reimbursement for a reduction in service from the landlord and (3) possibly seeking a reimbursement for documented expenses incurred during the period the stove was inoperative, such as restaurant bills.

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



plan for the future now!

Shape the vision for shopping and homes around two proposed transit stations

Generate Ideas: Wednesday, April 21
6:30 p.m.
Long Branch Library
8800 Garland Avenue

Review Vision: Wednesday, April 28
6:30 p.m., Long Branch Library

For more information, call 301-495-4614 or e-mail MCP-LongBranch@mncppc-mc.org



Housing MAILBOX

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

The 5K Race Is On

BY LUCY NEHER
SAFE ROUTES TO SCHOOL
COORDINATOR

Once again, the Takoma Park Safe Routes to School program has joined forces with area schools to host the second annual, family-friendly 5K Challenge. Events include the 5K Run, 1-Mile Fun Run and Quarter-Mile Youth Run (8 and under). This year features a new event – the 5K Walk – which begins ten minutes after the 5K run. Piney Branch, Takoma Park and Rolling Terrace Elementary School runners are welcoming participation from a new school – East Silver Spring Elementary – in organizing the day and the ESS parents, teachers and student who will be running the Maple Avenue/Sligo Creek Parkway race course. School programs are well underway at all schools now to develop

lifelong fitness habits and encourage walking and running activities leading up to the race. Race proceeds benefit health and safety programs at the participating schools.

Parent volunteers are currently recruiting area businesses to sponsor the event, and more volunteers are also needed to assist with registration, race events, refreshments and other organizing activities. Interested sponsors or volunteers can contact the race director for details, lucyn@takomagov.org.

The race will necessitate some road closures and parking restrictions on May 2: Maple Avenue, between Philadelphia Avenue and Sligo Creek Parkway, will be closed to traffic and with no on-street parking from 7:30 a.m. to 10 a.m.; Sligo Creek Parkway, which is already closed on Sundays, will close at 8 a.m. instead of the usual 9 a.m.

Save the Date!



The Takoma Park Safe Routes to School 5K Challenge, Sunday, May 2, 8 a.m. start. Events include 5K Run, 5K Walk, 1 Mile

Fun Run, 1/4 Mile Youth Run (8 and under). Register online at www.TKPK5K.com. All are welcome!

For details, see www.TKPK5K.com. Registration forms are also available at the Community Center reception counter at 7500 Maple Avenue. Participants may register at 7 a.m. the day of the event, but are strongly encouraged to pre-register during or prior to packet pick-up Saturday, 2-6 p.m. on May 1 in the Community Center.

Historic Structure Tax Credits Available

Have a historic home or building in Montgomery County? Owners of properties listed in the Montgomery County Master Plan for Historic Preservation have until April 15 to apply for tax credits for renovation and maintenance expenses incurred in 2009. Extensive rehabilitation projects as well as common maintenance tasks, such as painting, roof repairs or replacing gutters and downspouts, may qualify for the tax credit, as long as

repairs exceed \$1,000. The tax credit is equal to 10 percent of documented expenses and is applied toward county property taxes.

The Montgomery County Council created the historic preservation tax credit program in 1984. The Historic Preservation Commission reviews tax credit applications, certifies eligibility of expenses and forwards recommendations to the County Department of Finance for approval.

The program is available to county

homeowners except for residents of incorporated Rockville, Gaithersburg, Washington Grove and Laytonsville, who may be eligible through their city historic preservation programs. For a list of eligible activities, criteria and to download an application form, visit the historic preservation tax credit website at <http://www.montgomeryplanning.org/historic/instructions/taxcredit.shtm> or contact county historic preservation staff at 301-563-3400.

SPRING SHOPS

continued from page 1

and selling bikes in his father's Chevy Chase bicycle shop during the summer and on weekends.

The family business grew and at one point involved four shops; it survived deaths and retirements, then dwindled to one shop, in Laurel. Along the way, Sawtelle, at various times, acted as buyer, mechanic and manager.

Now he is opening his own place, and he hopes it will become the neighborhood bike store in Takoma Park. Running a bicycle place is "not a real lucrative business," admits Sawtelle, but that's unimportant. "I do it because I really enjoy it. . . I like to help people solve problems, fix a bike, help them find a new bike, learn about places to ride around the area."

Sawtelle expects to commute from his College Park home on his own bike. His two children, ages 11 and 14, also ride – he recently rode the entire C&O Canal on a tandem with his son.

In addition to selling new and used bicycles and accessories, Takoma Bicycle will include a full service repair shop for everything from simple fixes to complete overhauls. Sawtelle expects to open Takoma Bicycle April 1.

CD/Game Exchange

Cdgamexchange.net

Back in 1974, when the Record Exchange was tucked away in the back of a book store, its trade was in vinyl records. Now known as CD/Game Exchange, the business is back to record albums – in addition to CDs, DVDs and video games.

The Takoma Park shop, opening in the old American Craft space, will buy and sell new and used music, movies and video games of all sorts. Customers can bring in their old CDs, DVDs, games and other media to get store credit or cash to buy new – or different – selections. Owner Sam Lock hopes to devote the second floor to vinyl, with a turn-

table for customers to try out music before they buy.

CD/Game Exchange has been in the area for 36 years, at one time with five locations. Now there are two: a Silver Spring store on Georgia Avenue, and the Takoma Park shop, which replaces one in College Park. Lock says he moved the College Park store because the neighborhood was shifting to more condos and retail; also, he explains, selling used electronics in Prince George's County now requires time-consuming police checks on every item. Besides, Lock has long admired Takoma Park for its active community and progressive politics. His environmental ethic of reuse and recycle should fit right in.

The Green Commuter

Thegreencommuter.net

Jo Reyes is the kind of guy who loves to tell you about his electric bike – a self-described gearhead, he's sure he'll be answering plenty of questions once he opens his new shop, The Green Commuter.

An auto mechanic for 25 years, Reyes worked on race cars for Ferrari of Washington, in Sterling, Va. He owned a Matco Tools franchise for another seven years, was a bicycle courier in the 1990s, and has long been involved with the Electric Vehicle Association of Washington, D.C. "I've always had a passion for electric vehicles," he says. The Green Commuter will be his first shop.

But it won't be all electric. Reyes will also sell pedal bikes and help convert conventional bikes to electric. And he'll rent, allowing customers to try electric bikes before purchase.

Locals might see Reyes pedaling his mountain bike around town from his home on Franklin Avenue to his shop – or, he might be riding the A2B, a popular electric model. He says the electric options are great for baby boomers who don't want to tackle the hills anymore, and they're economical: plug them in any 110 outlet, and the battery will hold a charge that will take the rider 20 miles. The bikes run more quietly than scooters or motorcycles, at about 20 miles per hour.



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

Third Thursday Poetry Reading

Please join us on Thursday, April 29 to hear the work of poets Bonnie Naradzay, Mary Beth Hatem and JoAnne Growney. 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. A reception follows the reading.

"Old to New"

"I like to work intuitively, letting the piece grow instead of drawing it out on paper. I want to be surprised at the end." — Randall Cleaver

"Old to New," an exhibit of found object clocks and lamps by Takoma Park artist, Randall Cleaver, will be on display in the Atrium Gallery from March 31 through

April 30. Please join us at the opening reception on Friday, April 2, 6 - 8 p.m. Music will be provided by the Bruce Khrohmer Duo.

The Atrium Gallery, located on the main level of the Takoma Park Community Center, 7500 Maple Avenue, is open Monday through Friday from 8:30 a.m. to 10 p.m., Saturdays from 10 a.m. to 6 p.m., and Sundays from 2 to 6 p.m.

Public Art Possibilities

We'd like to know what you think. The Arts and Humanities Commission recently issued a call for entries for three public art projects – sculpture in the Long Branch commercial area, art panels for each of the City gateway signs, and traffic circle art. We've narrowed down the choices and would like to hear what you think about the concept plans submitted by the finalists. Proposals will be on display in the Takoma Park Community Center during the week of April 19. Swing by and take a look!

The Art of Coffee for a Cause

Each Monday through the end of May, Mayorga Coffee locations, including the new shop at 314 Carroll Avenue in Takoma, D.C., will feature the Arts and Humanities Blend as the Coffee of the Day. When customers buy a bag of the blend, Mayorga will give 15 percent of the proceeds to the Arts and Humanities Council of Montgomery County, a non-profit organization that provides workshops, classes and other services to county arts and humanities groups. The shop is open from 6 a.m. to 7 p.m. Monday through Friday, and 8 a.m. to 7 p.m. on weekends.

Exhibitions Director Needed

The Arts and Humanities Commission is seeking an Exhibitions Director to coordinate the Takoma Park Community Center exhibitions program. The Director serves as the key point of contact for program, solicits and reviews proposals, assists with logistics and curates one show. The Director serves from July 1, 2010 through June 30, 2011. This is not a paid position, but involves an honorarium of \$2,000. Deadline for application is 4 p.m. April 30. Additional information: <http://www.takomaparkmd.gov/arts/Exhibition%20Director%20Posting%202010.pdf>.

For more information about arts and humanities activities, contact Sara Anne Daines, 301-891-7224, ahc@takomagov.org or www.takomaparkmd.org.



Randall Cleaver in his studio

Photo by Gwynne Barney Ryan

APRIL RECREATION

New This Spring at the Recreation Department

Spunky Sports for Tots

Ages 3 – 5

Children are introduced to the fundamentals of sports such as soccer, tee-ball/softball, floor hockey, kickball, dodgeball and other sports and group games. The goal of this program is to provide the opportunity for each child to develop motor skills and nurture his/her growth socially and emotionally through teamwork and good sportsmanship. Eight weeks. Maximum 15, minimum eight. Co-sponsored with Montgomery County Recreation Department.

TP Recreation Center, New Hampshire Ave.

Sat. 9:30-10:30 a.m.

April 24-June 19

\$35

No program on May 29.

Female Self Defense Class

Ages 11-17

This self defense class is designed for girls 11 -17. Students will be empowered with personal safety tips and practical self defense, and learn to recognize and avoid dangerous situations. The instructor will help students develop their inner strength and work through their fears with realistic scenarios and role play. The atmosphere will be relaxed and comfortable for discussion and answering tough questions. Maximum 15, minimum five.

Lilac Room, TP Community Center

Wed. 5-6:30 p.m.

April 28 and May 12

\$25 includes both days

Takoma Teens Take Charge!

Ages 13-18

This is the perfect opportunity for teens to stand up, be heard and have fun in a non-competitive atmosphere. Under supervision, participants will create a council of teen members that govern the program. In this program teens can relax and communicate freely as they serve as leaders in the community, develop awareness of important issues and promote leadership amongst their peers. Members will think of creative ways to support the teen community, take advantage of educational opportunities and promote programs designed just for this age group. Members will host a variety of activities including educational workshops, fun and adventurous trips and special events. Students from surrounding areas are also encouraged to participate. So get involved, make a new friend and take charge!

T-Zone, TP Community Center

Thurs. 5-6:30 p.m.

April 22, (start up meeting)

Body Sculpting/Pilates with June

Ages 16 and older

A combination of precision body toning, stretching and core strengthening focusing on exercising the whole body to reach your goal of a leaner, stronger body! Light hand weights are used for strengthening and toning the arms, hips and thighs. This class is the ultimate mind-body exercise for anyone who wants to tone, streamline and realign their body. Students are required to bring their own mat and hand weights. Four weeks. Instructor June Kimbrugh-



Some of the youngest Takoma Parkers — some with their own bunny ears — came out to participate in the Annual Egg Hunt last month. Despite chilly temperatures, families had big fun directing their children to fill their baskets with goodies.

Photo by Debra Haidunen

Thornton. Maximum 25, minimum five. Co-sponsored by Montgomery County Recreation Department.

TP Recreation Center, New Hampshire Ave.

Wed. 6-7 p.m.

April 21-May 12

\$40

Arabic Dance Raqs Sharqi - Belly Dancing

Ages 16 and older

Arabic Raqs Sharqi, or Belly Dance is an ancient social dance that originated in the Middle East. Raqs Sharqi is a joyous form of self expression, a celebration of life and femininity. Suitable for people of all ages and shapes, the style is characterized by the intricate isolation, fluid undulations, energetic shimmies and graceful arm movements. Learn instructor Laurel Victoria Gray's signature system of basic position, traveling steps, shimmies and turns. Six weeks. Maximum 20, minimum five.

Azalea Room, TP Community Center

Tues. 7-8 p.m.

April 20-May 25

TP resident \$60

Non-resident \$65

Make it Stand with CREATE

Ages 6-8 Ages 8-10

Create people, places and creatures using paper tubes, plastic bottles, bottle caps and other recyclable materials. Embellish them with paint, tissue paper, fabric and beads. There is a \$20 materials fee paid directly to the instructor on the first day of class. Instructor Nene. Eight weeks. Maximum 12, minimum six.

Art Room, TP Community Center

Ages 8-10 Mon. 3:45-5 p.m.

Ages 6-8 Mon. 5-6:15 p.m.

April 19-June 14

TP resident \$100

Non-resident \$110

No class on May 31.

Cartooning with CREATE

Ages 8-10

Imagine developing a comic book using your own hand-drawn characters, story line and dialogue. In this class, students learn how to visually depict time, 3D space and sequence of events. There is a \$15 materials fee paid directly to the instructor on the first day of class. Instruction will be provided by CREATE ARTS. Eight weeks. Maximum 12, minimum six.

Art Room, TP Community Center

Thurs. 3:45-5 p.m.

April 22-June 10

TP resident \$100

Non-resident \$110

Sampler Class: Beginners Guide to Decorative Stitches

Ages 18 and older

A sampler is a piece of embroidery produced as a demonstration or test of skill in needlework. When a woman saw a new stitching pattern, she would sew a small sample of it onto a piece of cloth – her “sampler.” The patterns were used as a reference and the woman would collect stitches and patterns throughout her lifetime. An art form since the 15th century, historical samples are displayed in museums worldwide and sell for thousands of dollars. Students will learn the history of samplers while creating their own sampler of decorative stitches they can use for future sewing projects. Eight weeks. Instructor Karen Krueger. Maximum eight, minimum four.

Art Room, TP Community Center

Thurs. 4-5 p.m.

April 22-June 10

TP resident \$40

Non-resident \$45

Coed Adult Softball League

Ages 16 and older

Adults this one is for you! Whether you're a group of friends looking for that once-a-week get together or you think you have a well-oiled machine, our high quality league is just for you. This co-ed league takes place on Sunday mornings and is a great way to meet new people and enjoy old friends. We are accepting registration for both teams and individuals so whether you have a group of players or you are an individual looking to play we can get you on the field. We offer a six-week regular season schedule with double header games each week, plus playoffs, and a championship game. All games are umpired by MSUA Certified umpires. *Rosters must consist of at least 50 percent TP residents to qualify for the resident entry fee. Rosters limited to 25.

Lee Jordan Field and Ed Wilhelm Field

Sun. 9:30 a.m.-2:30 p.m.

April 25-June 7

T.P. resident team \$495

Non-resident team \$595

Individual Rate \$45 per person

Silver Foxes

Dallas Black Dance Theatre

This popular and renowned modern, jazz and spiritual dance company presents an exciting matinee program for Seniors.

Publik Playhouse, Cheverly, MD
Fri. 10 a.m.-1 p.m.
April 23
deadline to register 4/19/10
\$5

Brain Games

Lower your brain age and boost your memory, reasoning and creative thinking. Enjoy a variety of cognitive puzzle

challenges and games. The important thing is to have fun while doing something good for you. Come and play! (Check the monthly newsletter).
Senior Room, TP Community Center
April 13 and April 15
11:30 a.m.-12:30 p.m.
No Cost

Knit/Crochet Beginners class

Have you wanted to learn the basics of knitting and or crochet? Join instructor June Gable to learn beginning needlework skills. Four weeks. Registration is required, call 301-891-7280.
Senior Room, TP Community Center
Mon. 10:30-11:30 a.m.
April 19, April 26, May 3 and 10
No cost

Coach Dave Woodward provides encouragement for his team of third graders. The Takoma Park Recreation Department would like to thank all of the volunteer coaches for a wonderful Winter Basketball League season! More than 110 coaches contributed countless hours of their time so that 535 kids could learn, play and meet new friends in the community this winter. The impact of these coaches' contributions will be felt for years to come. We are currently looking for coaches for the upcoming Y.E.S. summer basketball league and the T-Ball program. If you would like to volunteer please contact the Takoma Park Recreation Department at 301-891-7290.



Photo by Debra Haidunen

APRIL RECREATION

continued from page 6

TP Tennis Clinic

Grades 1-8

Forehand winner, backhand lob, jump-serve, overhead smash. Come out and learn all the shots you need to make, to be the next tennis superstar at the TP Tennis Clinic. This program is designed for beginning and intermediate players looking to improve their tennis skills. Please bring your own racket and a water bottle. If you do not own a racket, the Recreation Department will provide one for the clinic. Five weeks.

TP Middle School Tennis Courts
Monday April 26-May 24
Grades 1-3, Monday 5-6 p.m.
Grades 4-5, Monday 4-5 p.m.
Grades 6-8, Monday 3-4 p.m.
TP resident \$25/session
Non-resident \$30/session

6 v 6 Outdoor Soccer Clinic

Grades 1-3 and 4-5

Looking for some fast paced, high energy, high scoring soccer action? Look no further than the TP 6 vs. 6 Outdoor Soccer Clinic. Come out and learn all of the fundamentals you need to improve your ability to play the amazing game of soccer. Bring a water bottle. Five weeks. Ed Wilhelm Field. Behind Piney Branch Elementary

Tuesdays, April 13-May 11
Grades 1-3, 4:45-5:45 p.m.
Grades 4-5, 3:45-4:45 p.m.
TP resident \$20/session
Non-resident \$25/session

Hand Dancing

Ages 16 and older

Join other dancers and learn some fun hand dances or just come for great exercise. Learn dances from musical genres such as R&B, blues, funk, and more. Eight weeks. Instructor Kevin Tisdale. Maximum 25, minimum six. Co-sponsored by Montgomery County Recreation Department.

TP Recreation Center, New Hampshire Ave.
Thurs. 7-8 p.m.
April 22-June 10
\$75

Ladies' Boot Camp

Ages 16 and older

A total body program that includes a circuit of drills such as jumping jacks, running, push-ups, squats, crunches and weight training. This is a challenging workout within a quick hour. Eight weeks. Instructor Travis Grandison. Maximum 25, minimum 10. Cosponsored by Montgomery County Recreation Department.

TP Recreation Center
Tues. and Thurs. 6:30-7:30 p.m.
April 20-June 10
\$85

Youth Ceramics

Ages 8-10

Do you like creating with clay? Students involved in the ceramics class will have the opportunity to make pottery and sculpture using several methods. All involved will learn to use hand-building techniques such as pinching, coil building and slab building. Another component of the class will be instruction in correct use of tools, and demonstrations in glazing. Make sure you have clothes that you don't mind getting dirty for studio time. Seven weeks. Instructor John Baker.

Art Room, TP Community Center
Fri. 4-6 p.m.
April 23-June 4
TP resident \$80
Non-resident \$90

Ceramics

Ages 18 and older

Learn skills such as hand building or

throwing on the potter's wheel. Space is limited for the potter's wheels so sign up quickly. All students will learn about wedging, correct use of tools and glazing. Students who elect to use the wheel will work on their throwing and trimming skills. The hand-building group will learn techniques such as pinching, coil building and slab building. Tools will be provided for each student. Wear clothes that you don't mind getting dirty. Supplies fee of \$25 paid directly to the instructor the first day. Instructor John Baker. Seven weeks. Open studio on Fri. 6:30-9:30 p.m.

Art Room, TP Community Center
Sun. 3:30-5:30 p.m.
April 25-June 13
TP resident \$135
Non-resident \$145
No class on May 30

PLAY BALL!



Photo by Eric Rasch



Photo by Voaranee Soeprapto

Members of the 2009 championship team, the reJOYCErs, are looking for more competition this year in the Takoma Park Recreation Department's Coed Adult Softball League. Join the fun! The league meets for friendly games over the course of six weeks beginning April 25, with double headers each Sunday morning. Full teams or individuals can participate; for more information, see page 6. Left, Elvie Soeprapto, above, the reJOYCErs.

Notice of Public Hearing

FY 2011 Proposed Budget



The City Council will hold a public hearing at 7:30 p.m. on Monday, April 12, 2010 to hear comments on the City Manager's proposed FY 2011 budget. The public hearing will be held in the Community Center Azalea Room, 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 City Manager's proposed budget will be available for review at the Community Center customer service desk and online at www.takomaparkmd.gov.

Attest: Jessie Carpenter, City Clerk

TAKOMA PARK LIBRARY CALENDAR

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

Neighborhood Circle Time

Every Tuesday
Two times: 10 a.m. OR 11 a.m.

Spanish Circle Time

Every Thursday
10:30 a.m. with Señora Geiza
Thanks to the Friends of the Library for sponsoring this program.

Bedtime Stories

Monday, April 5, 7 p.m.
Come in p.j.s, bring your teddy bear or other stuffed favorites as we read some stories and sing some songs and rhymes in this half-hour program.
Perfect for babies, toddlers, pre-schoolers and their grown-ups.

Friends of the Library 'Big Book Club'

Thursday April 8, 7:30 p.m.
We continue our exploration of Melville's "Moby Dick."
Hydrangea Room

Petites Chansons

Saturday, April 10, 10:30 a.m.
Join Madame Marie as she leads singing, rhymes and stories in French.
Thanks to the Friends of the Library for sponsoring this program.

Drop Everything and Read

Monday, April 12 – All day
We'll have reading-related activities and a "Comics Jam" at 4 p.m.

Once Upon a Tale

Wednesday, April 14, 7:30 p.m.
A new look at a traditional tale, told by middle schoolers.
Best for ages 4 and up.

Friends Reading Group

Thursday April 15, 7:30 p.m.
Our book is "The Book of Evidence" by John Banville. (see article)
Hydrangea Room

Stories in Action

Saturday, April 17, 10:30 a.m.
With storyteller/teacher Arianna Ross
For ages 1-3 and their parents; registration required.

Banned Books Club

For kids grades 6 and up.
Monday, April 19, 7:30 p.m.
Our book is "The Jungle," by Upton Sinclair
Registration required.

Friends of the Library 'Big Book Club'

Thursday April 22, 7:30 p.m.
Discussion of "Moby Dick" continues.
Hydrangea Room

Petites Chansons

Saturday, April 24, 10:30 a.m.
Join Madame Marie as she leads singing, rhymes and stories in French.
Thanks to the Friends of the Library

CALENDAR
continues on page 9

Graphic Novels Lead the Way in Geisel Awards

BY KAREN MACPHERSON

Learning to read is serious business. But that doesn't mean it can't be done in a fun way.

This year, for the first time, a graphic novel – a.k.a. comic book – won the Theodor Geisel Award for the best book for beginning readers. The award, presented annually by the American Library Association, is named for the man better known as Dr. Seuss.

Because Dr. Seuss was always pushing the boundaries of what was possible for beginning readers, it seems fitting that this year's winner of the Geisel Award is "Benny and Penny in the Big No-No," a graphic novel written and illustrated by Geoffrey Hayes.

Another graphic novel, "Little Mouse Gets Ready," written and illustrated by Jeff Smith, creator of the classic "Bone" graphic novel series, won a Geisel Honor.

Here's a closer look at these books and the other 2010 Geisel Honor books:

Benny and Penny

Mouse siblings Benny and Penny sneak into the yard of their neighbor, a hedgehog named Melina, because they suspect she has stolen their pail. Inevitably, a spat ensues with Melina. Later, it turns out that the pail was in Benny and Penny's yard all the time and so Benny and Penny have to go back and apologize to Melina.

In "Benny and Penny and the Big No-No" (ages 4-7), author/illustrator Geoffrey Hayes does a marvelous job of highlighting the kind of incidents that seem small to adults but loom so large to children. Hayes' emotion-packed story is complemented by his expressive watercolor illustrations. The charm of Hayes' watercolors, particularly in the way he details the world of Benny and Penny, is reminiscent of the books of Beatrix Potter.



One more important note about "Benny and Penny and the Big No-No," as well as "Little Mouse Gets Ready": both books follow the TOON philosophy, which is to eliminate the frustration many beginning readers feel in trying to follow a story while sounding out the words. In most beginning readers, the text is paramount and the illustrations only provide strategic clues to the story. In the TOON books, however, the illustrations come first and, as such, allow readers to tell the entire story just by "reading" the pictures. The text, meanwhile, provides important details to flesh out the story told through the pictures. For many beginning readers, this idea of "pictures first" gives them the confidence to try to navigate the text because they already know what the story is about.

Little Mouse

Little Mouse is so excited about getting to visit the barn. But first he thinks he needs to get dressed – not an easy task for a young mouse. In "Little Mouse Gets Ready" (ages 4-7), author/illustrator Jeff Smith tells a story that will be familiar to many young readers. But they won't expect the hilarious ending when, after all the work of getting dressed, Little Mouse discovers from his mother that mice aren't supposed to wear clothes after all.

Smith's story, complemented with simple,

colorful illustrations, is infused with humor that will tickle the fancy of young children, like the moment when Little Mouse puts on his underpants and tells his readers to remember to "get your tail in the tail hole!"

In addition to "Little Mouse Gets Ready," three other 2010 Geisel Honor books – all part of established series – were chosen:

Fly Guy

"I Spy Fly Guy," written and illustrated by Tedd Arnold. In this latest adventure of the hilarious "Fly Guy" series, Fly Guy, a mosquito, and his human friend Buzz are playing hide-and-seek when disaster seems to strike. Fortunately, Fly Guy can take care of himself and reappears just when Buzz thinks all is lost. Arnold's simple but action-filled story will send young readers' hearts racing, and they'll love Arnold's big-eyed creatures, as well as the flashy cover that's become a "Fly Guy" trademark.

Mouse and Mole

"Mouse and Mole: Fine Feathered Friends," written and illustrated by Wong Herbert Yee. Mouse and Mole are excited about trying to do some bird-watching. But it isn't as easy as it looks, and the friends have to work together to figure out a way to accomplish their goal. Young readers will enjoy Yee's gentle, realistic story, as well as his watercolor illustrations.

Pearl and Wagner

"Pearl and Wagner: One Funny Day," written by Kate McMullan and illustrated by R.W. Alley. Wagner's having a difficult April Fool's Day. Everyone is playing tricks on him, until he visits the school nurse and finds a way to create his own April Fool's diversion. McMullan's story will have young readers rooting for Wagner, while Alley's illustrations emphasize the book's good humor.

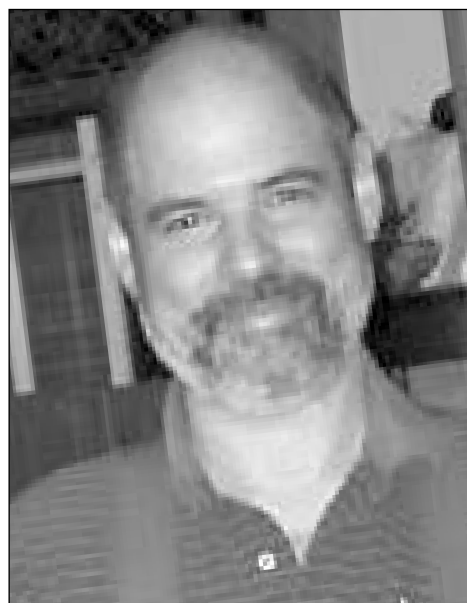
Takoma Park Remembers Ernie Weisman

BY SUSAN GILBERT AND RON SCHECTER

Takoma Park lost a special member of the community when Ernest Weisman passed away on February 3, 2010 at the age of 53. Weisman was a lifelong resident of Takoma Park. His parents, David and Morelyn Weisman, are well known members of the community; David served on the City Council from 1978 to 1982.

Weisman graduated from Blair High School in 1974, after which he trained as a steamfitter. Weisman worked, often with his father, on many of the largest construction projects in the Washington, D.C. area. He was a dedicated and loving husband to Mary Anne and father to Jacob, Larry and Clara.

Weisman contributed to the Takoma Park community in countless ways. He was a long-time member of the Independence Day Committee, which facilitates the Fourth of July Parade and fireworks display. Weisman served as the Committee's president for several years, and he was hard at work every Fourth of July literally getting the show on the road. Wearing his July 4th firecracker t-shirt and ubiquitous red suspenders, Weisman was like a proud mother hen when he saw the delight in everyone's faces along the parade route.



Ernie Weisman

In addition to his charm and wit, Weisman was known for his unfailing willingness to help his neighbors and friends. Weisman truly touched many, many people's lives by his kindness, which knew no bounds, and by his never-ending positive view on life, even as his own was fading. If there was a prob-

lem, Weisman would find the solution, and he'd fix it. There's hardly a furnace, a water heater, a leaky faucet, or a clogged drain in Takoma Park that hasn't benefited from Weisman's touch. Weisman and the incredible cheerfulness that was his alone came to the rescue of many.

Or, perhaps a neighbor has a scheme, something fun, but can't quite pull it off — Weisman would make it happen. Like the Valley View Avenue Bicentennial Birthday Celebration (four neighbors turning 50 in the same year), when friends and family wanted to make something of a spectacle of the event. It was Weisman who thought of parading the birthday celebrants around Takoma Park in the back of a decorated pickup truck, and it was Weisman who procured and drove the truck.

Weisman was also instrumental in securing Block 69, the controversial portion of Takoma Park that was almost bulldozed during construction of Montgomery Community College in the 1970s. Weisman was one of the individuals arrested for blocking the bulldozers to save community homes.

In a town known for its characters, Weisman ranked high among them. He was unique and generous. Simply stated, Ernie Weisman was everyone's friend.

Friends Reading Group to Discuss John Banville

On Thursday, April 15, the Friends Reading Group will meet in the Hydrangea Room at 7:30 p.m. to discuss "The Book of Evidence," a Booker Prize finalist in 1989, a "New York Times" Notable Book, and winner of the Guinness Peat Aviation Award.

"Freddie Montgomery is on trial for a murder he committed because he could... This novel ...presents the engrossing testimony of an improbable murderer, offer-

ing not evidence of his innocence, but of his life. In startlingly fluid prose, at once coldly terrifying and darkly funny, the novel reveals an articulate villain whose amorality is as much a revelation to himself as his humanity is to us." [publisher's note]

"The Economist" called John Banville "Ireland's finest contemporary novelist." Mystery writer Ruth Rendell called the novel "Beautiful... 'The Book of Evidence'

can be read aloud by lovers of mystery fiction and afford them pleasure, awe and terror, proportionate to the appreciation and wonder felt by those reading a serious novel."

Copies of "The Book of Evidence," donated by the Friends of the Takoma Park Maryland Library, are available in the Library for discussion participants. The Friends Reading Group discussions are open to all.

New Books for Gardeners Hit the Shelves

Thanks to the generosity of the Takoma Horticultural Club, the Library has added some distinctive new books to its gardening collection.

"Big Gardens in Small Spaces: Out-of-the-Box Advice for Boxed-in Gardeners," by Martyn Cox (2009). "...See how careful thought and creativity can bring the intimate enclosure of a small garden alive...Boxed in gardeners needn't feel boxed-in any more!" [publisher's note]

"Farm City: The Education of an Urban Farmer," by Novella Carpenter. A "New York Times" Notable Book in 2009, this is a "unique and hilarious memoir about one woman living on a farm in downtown Oakland..." [publisher's note]

"Foliage," by Nancy J. Ondra (2007) – This lavishly illustrated volume won the American Horticultural Society Book Award in 2008. It organizes leafy plants by color and texture, and provides a wealth of well-organized information.

"Mid-Atlantic Home Landscaping," (2006 - revised edition) by Roger Holmes and Rita Buchanan (2006) includes a 'portfolio of designs' for gardens with different themes in a variety of spaces. Also shows how to make paths and walkways, fences, arbors, trellises, ponds and retaining walls, along with problem solving tips and detailed plant profiles.

"Native Trees for North American Landscapes: From the Atlantic to the Rockies," by Guy Stenberg (2004). This detailed compendium received the Na-



Library Director Ellen Robbins shows recently acquired gardening books.

tional Arbor Day Foundation Award. Includes tree profiles of more than 650 species and varieties, and more than 500 cultivars – each describing flowers and fruits, native and adaptive range, culture, problems and best seasonal features.

"The New Encyclopedia of Hostas," by Dina Grenfel and Michael Shadrack (2009 – revised edition). This new edition of an award-winning work describes more

than 700 varieties with 800 photographs, arranged according to leaf color and type of variegation.

"Perennial Vegetables," by Eric Toensmeier (2007) – This winner of the 2008 American Horticultural Society Book Award is a gardener's guide to more than 100 easy-to-grow edibles. Gives species profiles with history and ecology, and information on tolerances and preferences, pests, propagation and planting, harvest and storage, and uses.

"Understanding Perennials: a New Look at an Old Favorite," by William Cullina. Another 2009 "New York Times" Notable Book, the author focuses on the "psychology of perennials...their needs, wants and potentials."

"What's Wrong With My Plant (And How Do I Fix It?): a Visual Guide to Easy Diagnosis and Organic Remedies," by David Deardorff and Kathryn Wadsworth (2009). Reviewed in the "Washington Post." Flow charts allow for easy diagnosis; it is well organized and clearly illustrated.

"The Wild Garden," by William Robinson and Rick Darke (2009 – expanded edition). Called "a model for truly sustainable landscapes," this volume contains the complete original text and beautiful, detailed illustrations from the fifth edition of 1895, enhanced by 125 color photographs.

All titles can be found in the new book section of the Takoma Park Library.

Boot Camp Polishes Resumés

The Takoma Park Library will be hosting a series of Resumé Boot Camps, in which each person's resumé will be critiqued by the entire group, simulating the process that your resumé ultimately will go through when it's reviewed by a group of strangers.

April 28 — **Focus: one- and two-page resumés** for private sector and nonprofit positions

May 12 — **Focus: Federal and SES resumés** (paper and electronic) for Government jobs

June 9 — **Focus: 1- and 2-page resumés** for private sector and nonprofit positions

Each session will be taught by Takoma Park resident Gabe Heilig, author-editor of several ARCO titles on various aspects of applying for federal jobs, and in 1993 won a nationwide RFP to open the only commercial resumé service ever granted a lease to do business in the Pentagon. He has been a personnel recruiter, director of a county-wide career counseling center, and is now developing an Online Resume Encyclopedia and Coaching Laboratory.

Seminars will address:

Structuring your resumé so that it describes your career path to your advantage—since all careers are different, why should all resumes be organized the same way?

Using a relaxed approach to written English, so your text brings readers closer to you, rather than pushing them away.

Crossing the bridge between writing what you want to write and what a hiring decision-maker actually needs to know in order to make a confident decision in your favor. This is the hard part—part of the "boot camp" for the ego we all bring to this process.

Answering your questions.

Critiquing each person's resume. Please bring 10-15 copies, if possible, so we can all do this for each other. Library staff can make copies for participants at no cost prior to the workshop date. Contact the Library to make this arrangement.

Each seminar will run from 7:30 p.m. to shortly before closing time at 10 p.m.

Each seminar will be open to 12 people.

You may register by calling the Library at 301-891-7259 or by registering online at www.takomapark.info/library/registration.html.

CALENDAR

continued from page 8

for sponsoring this program.

Resumé Boot Camp

Wednesday, April 28, 7:30 p.m.
With Gabriel Heilig (see article)
Hydrangea Room.

Favorite Poem Evening

Thursday, April 29
The "Favorite Poem Evening," originally scheduled for April 29, is CANCELED!
Stay tuned next year. Let us know if you would like this event to return.



LIBRARY Briefs

April 12 is "Ramona" author Beverly Cleary's 94th birthday. It's also the third annual "D.E.A.R." day – a.k.a. Drop Everything and Read day. At the Library, we'll celebrate with reading-related activities, book giveaways and a special "Comics Jam" program from 4-5 p.m. No need to register, just come to the Library to Drop Everything and Read!

On Wednesday, April 14 at 7:30 p.m., a group of middle school students will present a special performance titled "Once Upon a Tale." The students have been

participating in a series of workshops, led by poets Elizabeth Rees and Rosanne Singer. In the workshops, the students chose a fairy tale and then worked on various persona poems and other types of poems related to the fairy tale. The poems then will be gathered into a one-of-a-kind performance piece. The April 14 program is perfect for children ages 5 and up; registration is encouraged. Thanks to the Friends of the Takoma Park Maryland Library for sponsoring the entire "Once Upon a Tale" program.

Our French Circle Time, formally called as "Petites Chansons" ("Little Songs"), now is offered twice a month, thanks to the generosity of the Friends of the Takoma Park Maryland Library. Led by Madame Marie Mackler, the program takes place on the second and fourth Saturday of each month at 10:30 a.m. No registration is necessary, and knowledge of French isn't required. Just bring your baby, toddler or preschooler, and prepare

to have fun singing songs and rhymes in French.

Parents with little ones ages 1-3 are invited to our "Stories in Action" program with storyteller Arianna Ross

on Saturday, April 17 at 10:30 a.m. Ross will begin the program by telling stories suitable for the youngest listeners. She'll follow her storytelling session with a workshop during which parents will work with their children as they learn storytelling techniques. The entire program lasts about an hour; families can come for the whole thing, or just the initial storytelling session. Registration is required; to register, please go to: www.takomapark.info/library/registration.html or call us at 301-891-7259. The program is part of a four-part workshop funded by the Montgomery County Arts and Humanities Council as well as the Friends of the Takoma Park Maryland Library.

Langley Park Gang Leader Sentenced to Life in Prison

On March 25 U.S. District Judge Deborah Chasanow sentenced Roberto Antonio Argueta, aka "Alex Antonio Cruz," aka "Buda," age 29, to life in prison, plus an additional 35 years, for ordering the murder of Nancy Diaz and the attempted murder of another juvenile girl. A 12-person federal jury voted to impose a sentence of life in prison without parole on Argueta, who lived in Hyattsville.

On March 4, the same jury found Argueta guilty of conspiracy to commit murder in aid of a racketeering enterprise known as MS-13, conspiracy to participate in racketeering, murder in aid of racketeering, murder resulting from the use of a gun in a violent crime, two counts of assault with a dangerous weapon in aid of racketeering and two counts of using a gun during a violent crime.

According to testimony presented at the eight-week trial, Argueta was a leader of the Langley Park Salvatruchos (LPS) clique of La Mara Salvatrucha, also known as MS-13, a gang composed primarily of



immigrants or descendants of immigrants from El Salvador, with members operating throughout Prince George's County and Montgomery County, and elsewhere inside and outside the U.S.

Witnesses testified at trial that Argueta and other MS-13 gang members stabbed a rival gang member with broken bottles and knives, outside a nightclub in Langley Park, Maryland on September 17, 2004. In October 2004, Argueta led a gang meeting in Prince George's County, in which he and other gang members discussed plans to kill Nancy Diaz.

The jury found, based on the evidence presented at trial and during the penalty phase, that Argueta ordered the murder of Diaz. On October 25, 2004, two other MS-13 members drove Diaz and another juvenile female to the George Washington Cemetery in Adelphi, Maryland. According to testimony, another MS-13 member shot and killed Nancy Diaz, and shot the other girl in the face and stabbed her twice in the chest to attempt to make sure she was dead. The victim survived, and she

later identified her assailants.

Israel Ernesto Palacios, also known as Homie, age 32, of Silver Spring, was sentenced to life in prison for his role in the October 25 murder and attempted murder. James Guillen, also known as Toro, age 23, of Hyattsville, who drove the MS-13 members and victims to the cemetery, pleaded guilty to racketeering conspiracy after a jury was selected for his federal trial, and was sentenced to 262 months in prison. One of the murderers of Nancy Diaz, Jeffrey Villatoro, was prosecuted in the Circuit Court of Prince George's County and received a life sentence. Another of the murderers, Jesus Canales, age 25, of Silver Spring, pled guilty in federal court to RICO conspiracy, including the murder of Nancy Diaz. He has not yet been sentenced.

To date, the United States Attorney's Office, District of Maryland, has charged 51 MS-13 members with various federal offenses; 25 members have been convicted at trial or pled guilty to RICO charges and 19 have pleaded guilty to other charges, primarily immigration or gun violations. Four defendants have been sentenced to life in prison. One remaining defendant faces a capital trial beginning in June, 2010.

Sligo Creek Rape Suspect Arrested

BY VIRGINIA MYERS

A suspect has been arrested and is in jail awaiting trial for the sexual assault that occurred along Sligo Creek in Takoma Park last November 19.

Luis Rivera, 29, is being held without bail at the Prince George's County Detention Center after being arrested by Prince George's County police for a separate assault that occurred days earlier. The first incident also took place at 9:30 a.m. Nov. 13 near Sligo Creek, in Chillum, about two and a half miles south of the Takoma Park assault.

Takoma Park Police served a second arrest on Rivera for the incident that took place in the City. Rivera was charged with first degree rape, first degree assault and other charges.

Takoma Park got involved in the case after a woman jogger was sexually assaulted on the Sligo Creek Park trail between 5 and 5:15 p.m. Nov. 19. According to police, Rivera grabbed the victim as she was jogging and forced her into a wooded area off the trail, where he sexually assaulted her. The assault occurred between Maple Avenue and the Carroll Avenue bridge.

Takoma Park Police Chief Ronald A. Ricucci says the victim flagged down a police cruiser at Maple Avenue and Sligo Creek Parkway, and officers began a K-9 search with Maryland-National Capital Park Police officers. They found the spot where the assault occurred, and Officer Charles Holtzel spotted an individual along New Hampshire Avenue who matched the limited description that had been given: he was Hispanic, smelled of alcohol, was disheveled, and had muddy shoes and jeans.

The victim was brought to the suspect for i.d., but she could not give a positive identification. The suspect agreed to give a DNA sample and police took multiple photographs, which were later used in the first arrest. The victim in the Prince George's County incident picked out the suspect from a photo array "with no hesitation," says Ricucci.

After expediting examination of DNA evidence at the Montgomery County Crime Lab, police matched the DNA found on the Takoma Park victim and the suspect's DNA, and they were able to issue an arrest warrant for the second incident.

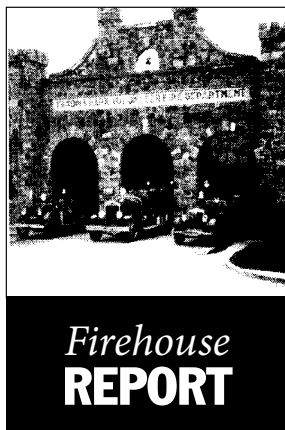
Rivera faces rape charges in both Montgomery and Prince George's County. Maximum sentence for these charges is life in prison without parole.

Chief Ricucci notes that cross-jurisdictional relationships, especially with Maryland-National Capital Park Police, served to expedite the arrest, and praised the City's dispatchers, detectives in the Criminal Investigations Division (CID), Squad 2 patrol officers and K-9 unit for their determination in following through on this case.

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 134 fire-related incidents so far this year. The department handled or assisted with 524 rescue or ambulance-related incidents, for a total of 658 this year. Totals for 2009 were 134 and 428 respectively, for a total of 562, representing an increase of 96 incidents.

Fire Safety Tips in the Kitchen

Watch what you put on the stove. An electrical coil reaches a temperature of 800 degrees. A gas flame goes over 1,000 degrees. Your dish towel or pot holder can catch fire at 400 degrees. So can you bathrobe, apron or other loose clothing!



BY JIM JARBOE

You should never put anything on the stove you don't want to heat. Never heat cooking oil and leave the room. Clean exhaust hood and duct over stove regularly. Wipe up spilled grease as soon as the surface of the stove is cool.

Watch young children when in the kitchen, keep all pot handles on the stove pointing to the back. Use back burners whenever possible. Never pour water on a grease fire, it scatters the flame. Turn off stove

and cover pan or close oven door. Remember, unattended cooking is still the number one cause of home fires.

Finally, don't forget to have a working smoke alarm on all levels of your home; especially outside of each bedroom. Smoke is responsible for three out of four fire deaths.

Check the alarms monthly and change the batteries twice a year.

Baby Sitters Graduates

On March 15, the following girls and boys completed the popular training course conducted by the Takoma Park VFD: Brynne Merkley, Jessica Miller, Alana Richards, Elyse Salpekar, Chris Young, Desman Sumang, Sienna Long, Larabella Gonzalez-Sol, Zoe Rothberg, Gabriela Sarri-Tobar, Susana Perez, Emma Roberts-Vaurio, Allison Mazur, Nina Rollins and Malachi Pauls. Assisting Jim Jarboe in course instruction were Sandy Egan and Cpl. Jerome Erwin, Takoma Park Police Department.

Takoma Park VFD welcomes new members! If you have the time and commitment, we'll supply the rest. Stop by the station and pickup an application or contact Mike Livingston at the fire department 240-773-8954. It will be an experience you'll never forget.

FIRE DEPARTMENT GRADUATES

On February 26, 39 new volunteers, representing nine volunteer corporations from throughout the county, attended their VBOC class graduation. It was held at the Public Safety Training Academy, with family, friends, staff and several fire chiefs also attending. Each graduate received a certificate and uniform ribbon for successfully completing the 10-week VBOC (Volunteer Basic Orientation Course). Congratulations to all, for a job well done.

Left to right, Takoma Park VFD members Emily Kittrell, Jorge Alfaro, Andrew Willey and Peter Chadzynski.



Arbor Day Event Celebrates Trees, Distributes Seedlings

BY MELANIE FOSNAUGHT

This winter's heavy snowstorms have left a disheartening legacy of downed, broken and disfigured trees, but residents who are fond of their leafy neighborhoods need not despair. Given an opportunity—and, in our urban environment, a little help—nature will renew the tree canopy, providing shade, habitat and beauty for future generations of people and wildlife. Residents can provide that help by planting seedlings of tall shade trees now. With time, seedlings that are planted this year can become the magnificent trees that make Takoma Park's "Tree City USA" designation such an apt description.

Ken Hemphill, the newest member of the City of Takoma Park Tree Commission, can report first hand that the patience required to wait for a seedling to become established does pay off. Eight years ago, Hemphill brought home a pair of pawpaw seedlings from the City's Arbor Day giveaway. Two and a half years ago, he began harvesting his first crop of edible fruit.

"The fruit has a texture similar to an avocado, though not as creamy," says Hemphill. "The flavor is a bit more fruity, like a mango. I eat them raw, but I did give some to a friend who made a smoothie out of them."

Hemphill says he planted the trees according to the instructions that were provided at the tree giveaway regarding sun exposure,

Arbor Day 2010

Saturday, April 10
10 a.m. to 2 p.m.
Takoma Park, Maryland Library Grounds

Tree seedling giveaway
Bald cypress, black cherry, chestnut oak, hazelnut, laurel oak, pitch pine, red maple, southern red oak, sweet gum.

Tree displays and activities
Friends of Sligo Creek information
Wildlife Habitat certification with the National Wildlife Federation
City Arborist and Tree Commission members available for questions

Free

soil and planting depth, and was pleasantly surprised when the trees began producing fruit as soon as they did. According to Hemphill, humans aren't the only ones enjoying the fruits, as a fallen pawpaw that he spotted had disappeared by the time he went later to retrieve it.

Over the years, the City has given away hundreds of seedlings of a variety of trees, and Hemphill's experience of watching those small seedlings quickly become thriving trees is not rare in Takoma Park. Given the

right conditions and care, many seedlings can catch up within a few years to nursery trees that were larger when originally planted. Seedlings that are planted in the shade of tall trees typically will grow more slowly than those planted in full sun, but when the taller tree eventually succumbs to the inevitability of time, the seedling will have established a solid root system and will be ready for a growth spurt in the increased light.

"Forests are multigenerational," points out Todd Bolton, the City of Takoma Park Arborist. "Because we don't let acorns grow in the middle of our lawns, we need to consciously plant trees to replace the elders as they die."



Eight years ago, Takoma Park Tree Commission member Ken Hemphill brought home a paw paw seedling from the annual Arbor Day tree giveaway. Now the tree, shown here, bears fruit each season.

Photo by Ben Hemphill

Newly Named Family Fun Festival on City TV

BY LONNI MOFFET

Join City TV on Sunday April 11 as TV crews troll the grounds of the newly renamed Washington Adventist University (formerly Columbia Union College) for their annual spring festival – formerly known as Taste of Takoma, it's now called Family Fun Festival.

Newly released programming featured on City TV this month includes Street Festival performances by Chopteeth, The Roustabouts, and Sir Alan. The most recent Third Thursday Poetry Series sponsored by the Arts and Humanities Commission will also air. Be sure to visit www.takomaparkmd.gov/cable/schedule/ for up to the minute details about daily programming.

The latest edition of Takoma Snapshots includes information on Senior Mediation in Montgomery County and highlights of

the last art exhibits held at the Community Center.

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.

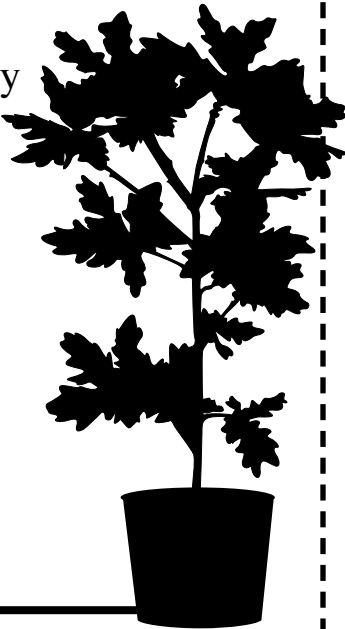


MAKE A DIFFERENCE PLANT A TREE

Discount Trees Available to Beautify Yards, Replace the Canopy

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

Acting as a purchasing agent with Arbor Landscapers, the City is making a number of species available at wholesale prices. Residents can purchase sugar maple, sweet gum, black gum, white oak, and willow oak—all native shade trees that usually retail for about \$350 – for \$195, installed. Sale dates run through April 16, with installation around mid-May.



Please include check, including tax, written to City of Takoma Park and be sure to draw a map of the property and locations for installation (see order form). Submit to Todd Bolton, Takoma Park Department of Public Works, 31 Oswego Avenue, Silver Spring, MD, 20910 by close of business April 16. Someone will be in touch regarding installation dates.

Name _____

Address _____

Phone _____

Species	Price	Quantity	Total
Sugar Maple (2")	195		
Sweet Gum (2")	195		
Black Gum (2")	195		
White Oak (2")	195		
Willow Oak (2")	195		
6 % Sales Tax			

Total amount enclosed _____

CITY TV PROGRAMMING SCHEDULE - APRIL 2010

	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							
9:00 PM		Takoma Park City TV Local Events					
10:00 PM							Coffeehouse
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	

PINEY BRANCH

continued from page 1

the fiscal and environmental advantages of tray-washing. They noted that, at \$.03 per tray, Piney Branch throws away approximately \$5,000 of foam trays per year. After they sang "Styrene Goodnight" to the tune of "Irene Goodnight," the discussion by grown-ups created the evening's fireworks.

Many of the officials' comments were optimistic. Takoma Park Mayor Bruce Williams reiterated the City Council's full backing. County Councilmember Valerie Ervin read parts of the letter signed by the six councilmembers, which stated, "The majority of the county council believes that Montgomery County Public Schools should allow this pilot to proceed so we can determine if using reusable trays and utensils can reduce our carbon footprint."

But County Councilmember George Leventhal, while voicing support for the project, injected some sobering facts. "We're facing an enormous budget crisis right now," he said. "We're going to be adding one student per class in every class throughout the school system. We're going to be laying off teachers, sadly. We're not going to be able to provide any cost-of-living wage increases for school system employees this year. That's what's foremost in people's minds."

An Opposing Point of View

BOE Vice President Christopher Barclay took the microphone and acknowledged that, while the work by the Young Activists has "put good pressure on the school system to really look at the issue of polystyrene trays," he had to play the role of "bad guy."

Citing the "very significant difference" between the cost estimates of the two parties, Barclay said that installing the tray washer presents "a real financial risk for the school system."

"We're facing about \$137.7 million in cuts [at MCPS]," said Barclay "We know there's a lot of work we need to be doing on becoming better stewards for our environment, but I have to say that this is not one that is high on the list in terms of priority."

Polystyrene's Health and Environmental Impacts

The Young Activist Club website (www.youngactivistclub.org) cites 24 municipalities, including San Francisco and Seattle, that have banned the use of polystyrene in all food ware city or countywide, not just in schools. Most of the municipalities' web links name litter reduction and environmental impacts as the main reasons for the bans. An Environmental Protection Agency web page documents negative neurological impacts from airborne styrene, used to create polystyrene, though it states that the evidence of styrene's connection to cancer "is inconclusive due to confounding factors." Nonetheless, the City and County of San Francisco website states, "Polystyrene foam food service ware ends up in landfills, waterways or the ocean. It breaks down into smaller and smaller pieces, which are often mistaken for food and ingested by marine animals, birds, and fish. Medical evidence also suggests that chemicals in polystyrene foam are carcinogenic and may leach into food or drink." Montgomery County incinerates the polystyrene foam lunch trays, according to the Young Activists.

The MCPS food services department "is running a \$2 million deficit right now," he added. It has to pay for itself. Paying for food services "determines the cost of lunch for our students...we can't really afford to raise the prices on lunch so we have to come up with some alternative to get rid of the trays...the issue is how we find a way but not necessarily with a dishwasher in the school."

Audience member Gordon Clark asked Barclay at what point does the BOE "double-check" the costs projected by Dr. Weast for the students' initiative. "No one seems to contradict the numbers even though they seem blatantly erroneous to many of us," he said.

Barclay granted that the MCPS costs seem "a little inflated."

But, he added, "In terms of double-checking [the MCPS numbers], honestly right now, I can't tell you that this is where we're going to spend our time. . . This is not one that I'm going to go out there and run screaming and tell Dr. Weast, 'You've got to go back, you've got to double-check those numbers,'" he said.

Asked later about the actual risk to MCPS if the Piney Branch PTA contractually assumes the full financial burden of the project as the club's co-leaders have requested, Barclay responded, "How do you guarantee that? That is a risk. You have a memorandum of understanding and that cost goes

beyond what has been collected by the PTA ... the school system has to sue a PTA [for non payment]? Why would you want to be in that position? How do we handle that? It's a real issue that has to be dealt with."

When contacted after the forum for comment, BOE Member Phil Kauffman, who attended the meeting but didn't speak publicly, shared many of Barclay's reservations about the financial obligations. He questioned the \$70,000 figure, but wondered whether Piney Branch figures were accurate as well.

LAYOFFS

continued from page 1

this means, and that they have an opportunity to comment on the issue.

As the name implies, the constant yield tax rate is the property tax rate that would yield the same amount of revenue received in the prior year from "real property taxes" (actual property tax dollars paid). If the "real property assessable base" (the actual value of the property) increases, this would trigger a decrease in the constant yield tax rate in order for actual property tax revenues to remain unchanged.

For Fiscal Year 2011, which begins on July 1, 2010, the City's net real property assessable base is projected to increase by 2.4 percent. Because of the growth in the assess-

"I have to be absolutely sure before we go forward that this isn't something that's going to cost the system money," Kauffman said. "I think it's terrific what the kids have done. I'm open for further discussion on this."

The Political Lesson

Perhaps one of the best lessons on activism learned from the forum came from Maryland State Senator Jamie Raskin. He'd been scheduled to attend, but had to stay in legislative session in Annapolis. His comments were read to the audience by his Legislative Counsel Kate Rhudy.

Raskin wrote that he's "inspired" by the Young Activists, who have shown us how "to move beyond green gestures to authentic green practices."

"I trust that the students, being clever and flexible, will work with their teachers, our excellent Board of Education members, and the school system to come up with some good resolutions that will include creative compromises and perhaps unexpected new alternatives," he wrote. He added that he learned from his first term in the state senate, "You've got to take your victories wherever and whenever you find them. Politics is the art of pushing, pushing hard till you finally make something happen, even if it's not exactly what you first anticipated."

able base, the real property tax rate would have to be lowered to keep the revenue at the same level as received in FY 2010. The constant yield tax rate for FY 2011 would be \$0.5663 compared to the FY 2010 real property tax rate of \$0.58 per \$100 of assessed valuation.

The City Manager's proposed budget assumes a continuation of the FY 2010 real property tax rate of \$0.58. Because this rate exceeds the constant yield tax rate of \$0.5663, a public hearing is required by law. The hearing will be held at 7:30 p.m. on Monday, April 12, in the Azalea Room of the Community Center (see page 2 hearing notice for details). For further explanation of the constant yield tax rate, residents can contact Finance Director Yovonda D. Brooks at 301-891-7210 or at yovondab@takomagov.org.

Location: TPSS Co-op in Takoma Park

8 a.m.-4 p.m.—Craft/Yard Sale

9:30 a.m.—Organic Gardening

Local grower Dr. Nazirahk Amen of Purple Mountain Organics will demonstrate how to grow an organic garden.

11 a.m.—Gabe Hutter

Stop by to hear Mr. Gabe's fun children's songs.

1 p.m.—John Guernsey Band

3 p.m.—Drumming Circle

Bring your own drum, we will also provide drums to play.

The event will also include kids arts and crafts, face painting, environmental and community groups, food vendors, lots of food to sample and more.

Takoma Park Co-op
and Old Takoma Business Association present

The 9th Annual

**EARTH DAY
CELEBRATION**

Sunday April 25 • 8 a.m.-4 p.m.

Location: Takoma Park Farmers Market

10:30 a.m.—GREEN Cooking

Local Chef Scott Ryan (chefscottryan.com) will prepare a favorite dish using seasonal and local ingredients from the TPSS Coop and the Takoma Park Farmers Market.

11:30 a.m.—GREEN Living

Alan Abrams from Abrams Design Build (www.abramsdesignbuild.com) will present a green home project

12:30 p.m.—GREEN Commuting

Jo Reyes, of the new Green Commuter shop opening in Takoma Park (thegreencommuter.net), will show how to install a kit to electrify a conventional bike.

1:30 p.m.—GREEN Thumb

Taffy Turner from the Takoma Park Horticultural Club (www.takomahort.org) will demonstrate a home gardening project.

For more information visit:

mainstreettakoma.org/event/51

Bike, walk, bus or metro to the 9th Annual Earth Day Celebration at the TPSS Co-op & the Takoma Park Farmers Market. See you at the festival rain or shine!