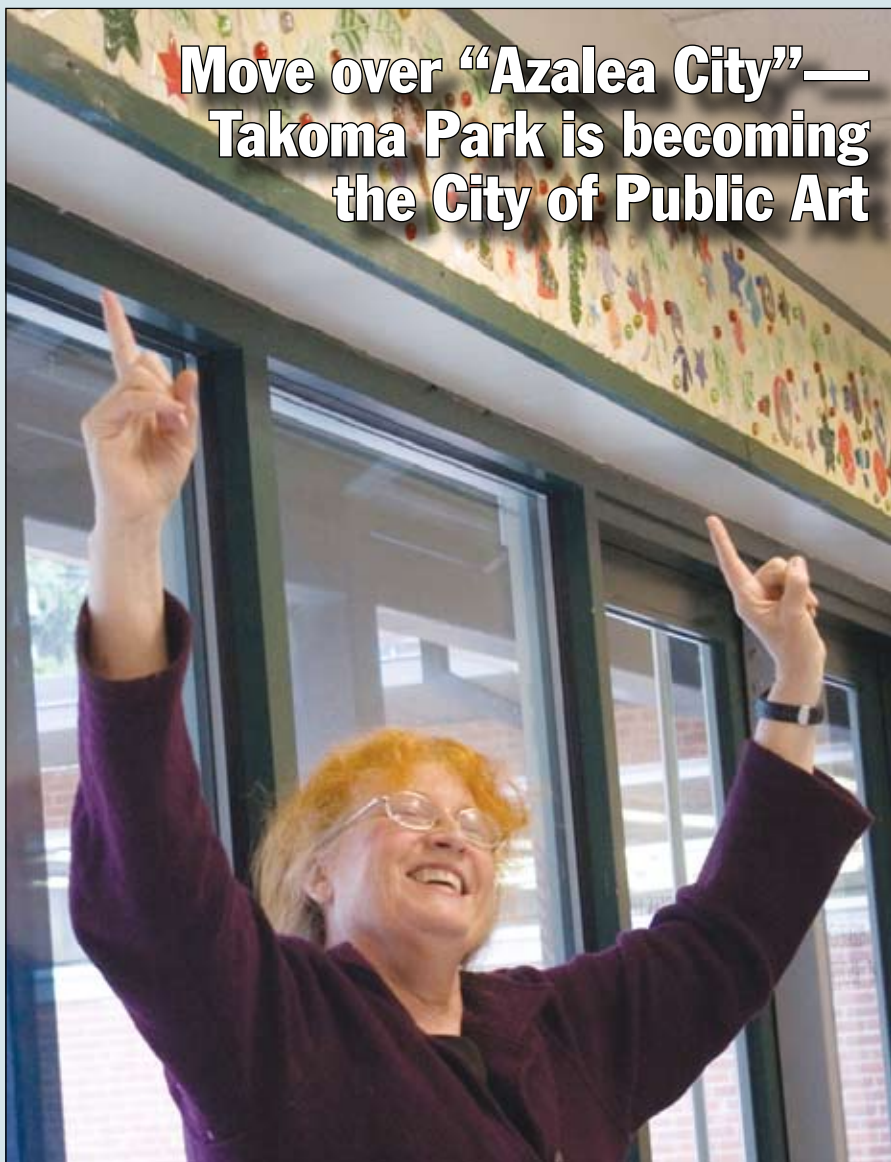


Move over "Azalea City"— Takoma Park is becoming the City of Public Art



Artist Alice Sims celebrates the new mosaic recently mounted inside the Community Center. Sims helped organize the art project with students from nearby Piney Branch Elementary, who were on hand for the unveiling. See story, page 3.

Photo by Laurie Stepp

City Budget Strains as County Proposes More Revenue Cuts

City Council Continues Budget Review

By VIRGINIA MYERS

The \$25 million budget proposal City Manager Barbara Matthews presented to City Council April 5 has already been threatened by further spending cuts, since Montgomery County announced a further reduction in municipal funding April 22. Originally cut by 5 percent, County Executive Isiah Leggett has proposed an additional 20 percent reduction in tax duplication revenue for municipalities, blaming lower than anticipated income tax revenues and unforeseen expenditures for the H1N1 virus and snow removal.

For Takoma Park, the changes translate to an additional \$600,014 cut, or a total of \$750,017 from FY10's tax duplication revenue. (Tax duplication is designed to compensate the City for services like police and road maintenance — services the County would provide if the municipality did not take on responsibility for them itself.)

City officials are meeting with other municipalities to contest the reduction in funding. Mayor Bruce Williams was planning a meeting of the Montgomery County chapter of the Maryland Municipal League at press time, and had already talked to other area mayors. "I've talked with some [County] Councilmembers and I think there's a chance that this can be

changed," he said, though he added that, "in the end, they can do what they want."

**"If FY11 is looking tough,
my feeling is that
FY12 is going to be even
worse."**

— Barbara Matthews,
Takoma Park City Manager

City Manager Barbara Matthews agrees. "This is a period of time in which governments are going to have to restructure the services that they provide and have candid discussions with their residents about what is it they value and what is it they want to pay for." She expects the challenge to continue: "If FY11 is looking tough, my feeling is that FY12 is going to be even worse." While she hopes the City will escape the proposed cuts, she said "If we have to absorb another \$600,000, we'll have to go through and figure out how to do that."

This year's budget was already looking

BUDGET
continues on page 8

Crime Rate Decreases Third Year in a Row

By VIRGINIA MYERS

Crime is down in Takoma Park for the third year in a row, with a decrease in every category of Part I crimes except for larceny, or theft from autos.

Overall, crime decreased by 8.25 percent since 2008. Robbery was down by 42 percent; auto theft down by 8 percent; and burglary down by 23 percent. Assault dropped by 8 percent and rapes dropped from four to three.

Takoma Park Police Chief Ronald Ricucci, who delivered the Police Department's Annual Report at the April 19 City Council meeting, told the Council he is pleased with the department's performance. He praised his officers for diligent work, despite numerous absences due to illness or injury. "We think it's been a good year for the department," said Ricucci. "The people that stand behind me, staff. . . officers. . . have done an excellent job."

Ricucci said the increase in larcenies, from 383 to 429 (11 percent increase) is not unusual in the metro area and even nationwide, but that his officers are continuing to work to thwart theft from autos.

The report also outlined crime statistics ward by ward. Ward 6, which borders Langley Park, recorded the most crime, with 23 percent of the overall incidents in the City. It was followed by Ward 1, near the Metro border with D.C., at 21 percent, and Ward 3, which includes Takoma Junction and part of Old Town, with 18 percent.

Ricucci also reported on new programs in the Police Department, including a partnership with A Child is Missing Alert Program, and the speed cameras installed along New Hampshire and Carroll Avenues for use last March. He noted the "very positive" work of the new Chief's Advisory Board, made up of 12 residents and/or business owners working with the Chief to bring resident concerns to his attention,

and to disseminate information from the department out to the community.

The police department also engaged in social media for the first time last year, establishing a Facebook presence it hopes will strengthen ties to the community. TIP411 is another new outreach program launched last year: it allows residents to send text messages with anonymous tips about local crime.

CRIME RATE
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- Development Update** Page 15

PRE-SORT STANDARD
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ECRWS POSTAL CUSTOMER

CITY COUNCIL AND COMMITTEE CALENDAR*

Monday, May 3 – City Council meeting, 7:30 p.m. (CC Azalea Room)

Monday, May 10 – City Council meeting, 7:30 p.m. (CC Azalea Room)

Tuesday, May 11 – Tree Commission meeting, 6:30 p.m. (CC Atrium Room)

Tuesday, May 11 – Façade Advisory Board meeting, 7 p.m. (CC Hydrangea Room)

Tuesday, May 11 – Nuclear Free Takoma Park Committee meeting, 7:30 p.m. (CC Rose Room)

Tuesday, May 11 – Recreation Committee meeting, 7 p.m. (CC Lilac Room)

Tuesday, May 11 – Commission on Landlord Tenant Affairs hearing, 7 p.m. (CC Council Conference Room)

Thursday, May 13 – Emergency Preparedness Committee meeting, 8:30 a.m. (CC Hydrangea Room)

Monday, May 17 – Ward 4 Night Reception, 7-7:30 p.m. (CC Atrium Lobby)

Monday, May 17 – City Council meeting, 7:30 p.m. (CC Azalea Room)

Tuesday, May 18 – Takoma Park Board of Elections meeting, 7 p.m. (CC Council Conference Room)

Monday, May 24 – City Council meeting, 7:30 p.m. (CC Auditorium)

Tuesday, May 25 – Arts and Humanities Commission meeting, 7:30 p.m. (CC Hydrangea 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).

City Council Action*

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

March 8, 2010 – Regular Meeting

The consent agenda was adopted. It consisted of:

Single Reading Ordinance 2010-10 rescinding Ordinance 2010-5 and authorizing the purchase of three Ford Fusion hybrid vehicles for the Police Department

Three Single Reading Ordinances (2010-11, 2010-12, and 2010-13) authorizing execution of contracts for engineering and construction services for sidewalks

Resolution 2010-13, appointing Howard Kohn to the Recreation Committee

Resolution 2010-14 was adopted, adopting a ranking system for prioritizing sidewalk installation and ADA compliance projects (VOTING NO: Robinson, Seamens)

March 15, 2010 – Special Session

First Reading Ordinance 2010-14 was accepted, awarding a bid for the purchase of a General Obligation Bond to be issued by the City of Takoma Park for the purpose of paying a State Retirement and Pension System of Maryland deficit.

March 22, 2010 – Regular Meeting

Second Reading Ordinance 2010-14 was adopted, awarding a bid for the purchase of a General Obligation Bond to be issued by the City of Takoma Park for the purpose of paying a State Retirement and Pension System of Maryland deficit.

First Reading Ordinance 2010-15 was accepted, amending the Stormwater Management Code.

First Reading Ordinance 2010-16 was accepted, amending Takoma Park Code Title 6 Housing (Ch. 6.16 Landlord-Tenant Relations and Ch. 6.24 Commission on Landlord-Tenant Affairs).

The consent agenda was adopted. It consisted of:

Single Reading Ordinance 2010-17, awarding a contract for a stormwater project on Hancock and Sheridan Avenue

Resolution 2010-14, recognizing Arbor Day in Takoma Park (April 10, 2010)

Resolution 2010-15, approving the continuation of the

Washington Adventist Hospital Land Use Committee

Resolution 2010-16, awarding Small Community Grant Program funds

Resolution 2010-17, endorsing the Greater Washington 2050 Compact and authorizing the Mayor to sign the Voluntary Compact on behalf of the City

Resolution 2010-18, appointing the following members to the Facade Advisory Board: Darsie Cahall, John Urciolo, James DiLuigi (Historic Takoma representative), and Caroline Alderson (Historic Takoma alternate). April 12, 2010 – Regular Meeting

Resolution 2010-19, amending the City Manager's employment agreement

Resolution 2010-20, extending the term of the Task Force on Environmental Action to April 30, 2010

April 12, 2010 – Regular Meeting

Second Reading Ordinance 2010-16 was adopted, amending Takoma Park Code Title 6 Housing (Ch. 6.16 Landlord-Tenant Relations and Ch. 6.24 Commission on Landlord-Tenant Affairs)

Second Reading Ordinance 2010-15 was adopted, amending the Stormwater Management Code

Jeque Park to be Renamed in Honor of Belle Ziegler Opportunity for Public Comments

On May 10, the City Council is scheduled to vote on a resolution renaming Jeque Park as "Belle Ziegler Park."

Jeque Park is a City-owned park at Albany and Buffalo Avenues in Ward 1. Written public comments may be sent to Jessie Carpenter, City Clerk, 7500 Maple Avenue, Takoma Park, MD 20912, or by e-mail to clerk@takomagov.org.

Interested persons may also comment at the City Council meeting on May 10, prior to the Council vote on the resolution.

For additional information, contact the City Clerk at 301-891-7267.



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).

Arts and Humanities Commission (vacancies)

Façade Advisory Board (one vacancy)

Takoma Park Board of Elections
(two vacancies)

Nuclear-Free Takoma Park Committee
(vacancies)

Personnel Appeal Board
(one vacancy)

Recreation Committee
(vacancies)

Washington Adventist Hospital Land Use Committee (up to nine vacancies)



FY 2011 LIVING WAGE RATE ESTABLISHED

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

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

The current living wage rate is \$12.95 per hour. Effective July 1, 2010, the rate will be \$13 per hour.

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

Tasa de Costo de Vida fue Establecido para el Año Fiscal 2011

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

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

Actualmente, la tasa de costo de vida es \$12.95 por hora. Efectivo el 1 de julio de 2010 la tasa será \$13.00 por hora.

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

Public Art Spreads Creativity Across Takoma Park

BY KEVIN ADLER

Several new mosaics and sculptures will soon grace our sidewalks, traffic circles and public buildings, adding to popular murals like the trompe l'oeil of a Victorian porch near Tulip and Carroll Avenues, the ebullient painting of dancers and musicians on the wall at Takoma Junction, the Laurel Avenue sculpture of Roscoe the Rooster and colorful sidewalk tiles along Carroll Avenue near Columbia. "We believe that public art creates a sense of community and a sense of identity," said Sara Daines, director of the City's Housing and Community Development Office and a liaison with the Arts and Humanities Commission.

The newest addition to the City's public art collection is a mosaic unveiled April 21 in the Community Center. Created with funds left over from the bright, reflective nature mosaic built by community members last year on the library's outside wall, the new piece is made of fired-clay designed and produced by children in the ESOL (English As a Second Language) program at Piney Branch Elementary. Located over a doorway near the Community Center computer lab, the colorful mosaic is meant as a welcome, says Alice Sims, president of Art for the People, the arts organization that facilitated the project. "The doorway idea came from [the children's] teacher, Rachna Rikhye, who is from India. She told us about rangoli designs, which are put by doorways or on floors to welcome and bless people."

In a series of workshops, children drew designs based on clothing, jewelry and baskets from their home countries. Then, they made and glazed designs of people, stars, swirls, animals, and symbols, which artist Fritzie Seidler pieced together as a mosaic. "The figures are at the center of the mosaic, and they look like they're flying or jumping. The figures are sheltered by ceramic green leaves that the community made at Earth Day 2009 at the Takoma Co-op," said Sims.

The 15 students who worked on the project, last year's fourth and fifth graders, come from Cameroon, Ethiopia, El Salvador, Somalia, Guinea, France, Bangladesh, India, Vietnam, Gambia and Tanzania. "I was so excited when I saw it on the wall," said Bethlehem Zeleza, who moved to Takoma Park from Ethiopia. She contributed a figure of a girl and a butterfly to the mosaic. "This is a chance to show what I know, where I am from," said Salimatu Mankajand, a girl from Gambian Holland who contributed stars and other symbols, based on her favorite clothing.

Rikhye and Laurie Stepp, who works for Art for the People, are writing about the project in a book titled "The Mosaic Com-

munity." It will serve as a reading aid for ESOL students.

Art for the People is already planning its next project: Stepp anticipates that she and Sims will lead local residents in creating mosaic panels for a "living wall" project across from Westmoreland Park on Westmoreland Ave., near the House of Musical Traditions. "Sustainability and art—that's what we're all about in Takoma Park," she said. "DC Greenworks is our partner; it will build the living wall [of plants]. The city has said it supports the project. We're just putting together funding now."

its dramatic effect heightened by projecting the tiles three dimensionally. Gilliam and Metro's Art in Transition Program are aiming for installation in spring 2011.

"Sam Gilliam is recognized as the foremost contemporary African-American color field painter and lyrical abstractionist in the world," DCCA announced when the commission was awarded. "Gilliam's extraordinary sense of color is modulated by his study of light, color, and its transformative and changing dynamics."

The opportunity for Takoma Park to have a unique artwork produced by an interna-

to cross under the Metro tracks. A number of years ago, we settled on public art as one way to make the corridor more inviting."

Meanwhile, without knowing what Grigsby and OTBA were doing, Takoma, DC resident Dan Turbitt posted a query on his neighborhood listserv in August 2008 about whether his neighbors would like to develop public art along the neighborhood's commercial strip. "We had a meeting at my house, and I found out that other people had been trying to get similar ideas off the ground," said Turbitt. "It really helped immensely that they had started the ball rolling." The Takoma Park Mural Committee was formed, and continued what OTBA had started. "We had to get buy-in from the resident community and the business community," said Turbitt. "It took a lot of people's savvy, knowledge, and creativity. It shows that we can accomplish incredible things here."

Proposals from five finalists were presented at a meeting where the public shared its input. Finalists' revised work was then presented at another public meeting, and a selection committee of seven Takoma Park and Takoma, D.C. residents and a Metro representative made the final choice. "Public input was crucial," said Turbitt. "We talked with the artists about how the location is a gateway to welcome people to our community, and it's also a bridge to bring our community together. . . I think the artists understood through the public meetings that we didn't want a standard, bland design. We challenged the artists to really stretch themselves, to do something that will really set us apart."

More Public Art to Come

Before the Metro project is installed, three more modest artworks funded by the city may be completed or at least underway. A sculpture will be installed in the Long Branch commercial area, at the corner of Flower Avenue and Piney Branch Road to identify the area as a border and provide a more appealing welcome than a standard commercial sign; "traffic circle art" is to be installed at one of the circles in the Crossroads area in Takoma Park's Ward 6; and a series of art panels will be placed on the lower half of pedestrian information kiosks around town. "The Commission has received some very distinct designs" for the gateway panels, said Daines, who adds that residents had an opportunity to review designs for each of the projects in April. Funds for these public art pieces were set aside in last year's budget. "It will be exciting to see them move ahead," said Daines.



Children from Piney Branch Elementary admire the mosaic they created with their peers. The new art decorates the doorway between the Community Center and the Takoma Park Library.

Photos by Laurie Stepp



National Artist Designs Metro Mural

At the other end of the public art scale is an immense mosaic to be installed next year. Located in the Takoma Metro underpass on Carroll Ave., this artwork is supported by a \$250,000 grant from the DC Commission on the Arts and Humanities (DCCA) that attracted 132 entries from across the nation.

Washington, D.C. artist Sam Gilliam won the commission with his design, From a Model to a Rainbow, which involves hand-blown, Italian glass and marble tiles in a colorful abstract design. The project, 14 feet high and 39 feet wide, will be lit from above,

tionally renowned artist didn't come about by chance. It is the culmination of nearly four years of community effort begun by Roz Grigsby, executive director of Old Takoma Business Association, and supported by a dedicated group of residents of Takoma DC. The citizens group navigated the DCCA process and received the necessary support from the Washington Metropolitan Area Transit Authority (WMATA) to arrange for access to the site.

"OTBA looked at the commercial corridor down Carroll Ave., and the Metro is right smack in the middle," said Grigsby. "It's not visually appealing, and it's hard to get people



THE TAKOMA PARK NEWSLETTER

Editor: Virginia Myers
Production: Electronic Ink
www.takomaparkmd.gov
Vol. 49, No. 5

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

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

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The Newsletter is printed on recycled-content paper.



WARD 4 RESIDENTS MEET WITH THE CITY COUNCIL ON MAY 17!

On Monday, May 17, the City Council will host a Ward Night for residents of Ward 4. This is part of a series of ward-focused events hosted by the City Council. Ward 4 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 4 residents about issues of interest and concern to those living in the ward.

New Renovation Accommodates Four Homeless Families

BY LINDA WALKER
AFFORDABLE HOUSING MANAGER

On March 24, the Montgomery County Coalition for the Homeless (MCCH) celebrated the grand opening of a four-unit renovated property located on Lockney Avenue in Takoma Park. A year ago, this deteriorated property was vacant and going through foreclosure. Some tender loving care was needed and MCCH rose to the challenge. The result is the transformation of a neighborhood eyesore into a renovated, energy-efficient home for four previously homeless families.

The funding for this project was a collaborative effort and represents Montgomery County's initiative to reduce homelessness by tackling the problem head on. The County's Housing Initiative Fund provided \$700,000 to finance the purchase and rehabilitation of the building. The Home Builder's Care Foundation provided an additional \$40,000 for the rehabilitation, which included a roof replacement, updated electrical, plumbing and HVAC



A ribbon cutting that included County Executive Isiah Leggett and Councilmember George Leventhal celebrates the renovation of a Lockney Avenue property that has become home to four previously homeless families.

Photo by Patty Kane, Home Builders Care Foundation

systems, and full kitchen renovations with energy efficient appliances.

Decorating Divas, a community-based organization whose success depends on volunteers, took on the task of furnishing and decorating each apartment. Everyone who attended the ribbon-cutting ceremony agreed that the apartments looked as if they were featured in a home design magazine. Whole Foods contributed by providing residents with some basic essentials for the kitchen.

To celebrate the success, County Executive Isiah Leggett, County Councilmember George Leventhal, DHCA Director Richard Y. Nelson, Jr., and MCCH Executive Director Sharon London assisted the new residents in the ribbon cutting ceremony.

City staff has expressed deep appreciation of MCCH's commitment in creating permanent housing for formerly homeless families, and lauds the organization for bringing this deteriorated property back to life, thereby helping Takoma Park preserve its neighborhoods.

Condos Should be Registered as Common Ownership Properties

BY LINDA WALKER
AFFORDABLE HOUSING MANAGER

Condominiums offer home ownership opportunities to those who want smaller living spaces or simply cannot afford the high cost of a single family home in the neighborhood of their choice. Takoma Park has approximately 16 condominiums of varying size, from six-unit properties to one that includes more than 220 units.

What all condominiums have in common is that they must comply with the Common Ownership Community Law, Montgomery County legislation (Chapter 10B) passed in 1991. The law applies to condominiums, cooperatives and homeowner associations throughout the County. Although some municipalities in the county have opted out of this section of the county law, Takoma Park has not because it values the protections the law gives to residents of common ownership communities.

The Common Ownership Communities law was created when a task force created by the county identified problems and issues

peculiar to common ownership communities. Much like the unequal bargaining power that exists between landlords and tenants, the task force found that there exists an unequal bargaining power between governing bodies, owners and residents of homeowners' associations, condominiums and cooperative housing communities.

In order to give residents of these communities an empowering resource, the law created a Commission on Common Ownership Communities (COCC), which operates very much like the Takoma Park's Commission on Landlord-Tenant Affairs. It adjudicates complaints through a hearing process when the parties cannot resolve their issues through informal dispute resolution efforts. In addition, the law regulates elections, budget adoption and enforcement procedures within each homeowner association, condominium or cooperative.

The COCC's mission is to provide owners, tenants, residents, boards of directors and management companies of self-governing residential communities with information, assistance and an impartial dispute resolution program that:

- Improves the quality of life in the community,
- Strengthens the self-governing community structure, and
- Enhances the value of residential property in community associations.

The Office on Common Ownership Communities is the staff support that was set up to help the Commission meet its goals. All condominiums, cooperatives and homeowner associations must register with the Office of Common Ownership Communities, which is located within the county's Consumer Affairs Office, and pay annual dues that are currently \$3 per unit.

In addition to providing an administrative adjudication process that takes the place of a District Court hearing, the Office on Common Ownership Communities holds an annual forum for all its members and has a wealth of information that can be accessed on the county's website, <http://montgomerycountymd.gov/ocptmpl.asp?url=/content/ocp/index.asp>. The CCOC Communicator, a seasonal newsletter, is very informative and includes articles that

any common ownership community would find helpful. In recent editions, topics have included:

- Current Issues Facing Community Associations
- What Communities Should Know About the Department of Permitting Services
- Tips from the County Police
- Recent Summaries of CCOC Decisions
- The Importance of Proper Elections

If you are a homeowner, living within a condominium, cooperative or a homeowners association (different from a neighborhood association), you should check with your Board of Directors to make sure your common ownership community is registered with Montgomery County. For information on registration or the CCOC, you can call the Office on Consumer Protection at 301-240-3636 and ask for the Common Ownership Office.

Laws Change Regarding Landlord Entry to Rentals

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

On April 12, 2010, the Takoma Park City Council unanimously adopted Ordinance Number 2010-16 designed to (1) facilitate the prompt repair of defective conditions in residential rental units while protecting tenants' privacy and (2) to authorize the Commission on Landlord-Tenant Affairs (COLTA) to provide selected financial remedies to tenants whose landlords illegally enter their rental units, and to landlords whose tenants illegally refuse them access to their rental

units.

To accomplish these purposes, Sections 6.16.140 of the Takoma Park Landlord-Tenant Law and Section 6.24.090 of the City's Commission on Landlord-Tenant Affairs (COLTA) Law were amended. The amendment eliminates the prior right of a landlord to enter a rental unit without providing the tenant with a written notice when the landlord's entry is made within two weeks of receiving the tenant's repair request. Unless a tenant consents in writing to an earlier entry by the landlord (and with the exception of emergency situations), tenants must receive at least 48 hours written notice prior to any non-emergency landlord entry. Additionally, landlords or their agents should not enter a rental unit if the tenant objects to the entry.

The amended law leaves unchanged the existing requirement that an entry report be left if the tenant is not present when the entry is made by the landlord and/or the landlord's agent. The written entry report must be left in plain view in the rental unit and must contain the name of the person(s) entering the rental unit, the reason for the entry and work performed, if any, the date and time of entry and departure, and the address and phone number of the landlord.

Prior to the April 12, 2010 revisions, tenants who submitted their improper entry complaints to COLTA were limited to seeking as a remedy, the actual damages that resulted. Landlords were similarly limited to seeking the same remedy for a tenant's improper refusal of entry. To address the prior limitations that dam-

ages would have to be quantifiable or actual, the recent amendment to Section 6.24.090 authorizes COLTA to award punitive damages of up to \$400 for violations of the entry law by landlords and tenants without the necessity for proving that quantifiable damages had resulted from the improper entry or refusal of entry.

Tenants and landlords wishing to review the complete copy of these city code amendments may do so at the city's website www.takomaparkmd.gov. Tenants and landlords having questions regarding the city's Landlord-Tenant and COLTA Laws may reach me by calling 301-891-7215 or via the web at MosesW@takomagov.org.

Takoma Park Hopes for Wildlife Habitat™ Designation

By Bruce Sidwell

With assistance from the Friends of Sligo Creek and the Takoma Horticulture Club, the City of Takoma Park has been working for three years on meeting the requirements of the National Wildlife Federation's certification for a Community Wildlife Habitat™. To meet that goal, the City only needs about 40 more individual yards to register as wildlife habitat. If you have a yard with some trees and shrubs, consider applying. The requirements are straight-forward and can be found at <http://www.nwf.org>.

Back in 1973 the National Wildlife Federation® began a Backyard Wildlife Habitat certification program. They realized that many native species would have a better chance of surviving if suburban and urban yards were more wildlife-friendly. The qualities that make a yard attractive to birds, butterflies, and other welcome native wildlife are: (1) food (seeds, berries, nectar, foliage, nuts, fruits, sap, and pollen); (2) water (such as a birdbath); (3) shelter from the weather and predators; and (4) places to raise young. There are now more than 128,000 yards, schools, businesses, places of worship, parks and other sites certified across the country.

The NWF program expanded the habitat concept to community certification in 1998. At this level, a community of habitats can provide a broader safety net. And also, the human community can enjoy and better understand local wildlife.

To meet the standard for Community Wildlife Habitat™, a city the size of Takoma Park needs a minimum of four schools, four other public spaces, and 150 backyards to be certified.



Friends of Sligo Creek volunteers plant native shrubs at Spring Park as part of the effort to certify Takoma Park as a National Wildlife Federation® wildlife habitat. From left, a helpful neighbor, Steve Smith, Bruce Sidwell, Don Collins, Jenny Reed.

Photo courtesy of FOSC

We now have the schools and public spaces – Takoma Park, East Silver Spring, and Piney Branch Elementary Schools, Takoma Park Middle School, and Takoma Park Cooperative School; Spring Park, Blagden Run (off Sligo), the Becca Lily area of Longbranch Park, and Takoma Woods, between the middle school and Piney Branch Elementary. The Takoma Park Presbyterian Church is also certified.

The City is, however, short on the number of yards required for certification.

The NWF has certified 40 commu-

nities in 18 states. None are certified in Maryland, but Rockville and Bowie are in competition with Takoma Park to become the first in the State. Takoma Park organizers are hoping that each city reaches its goal, but are hopeful Takoma Park will reach it first.

Successful applicants receive a certificate, a quarterly e-newsletter with tips, and a one-year subscription to "National Wildlife" magazine for an application fee of \$20. For more information, see the Friends of Sligo Creek website, www.fosc.org or go to <http://www.nwf.org>.

Azalea Awards Honor Local Superheroes

By Kevin Adler

Takoma Park's renovated City Council chambers and lobby will be ready just in time for the annual Azalea Award celebration of community activists and institutions. Takoma Park's favorite local heroes will take a walk down the red carpet on May 15 in the popular event co-sponsored by the Takoma Foundation and the "Takoma Voice" newspaper.

The awards evening will begin at 5:30 p.m. with a pizza-and-dessert reception in the atrium area of the Community Center. Visitors will have the opportunity see the art display in the lobby area, as well as artwork purchased for the building by the Foundation last year. Food at the reception will be available for a modest fee, but the Azalea Awards are free.

Music by popular roots-rockers Joe Uehlein and the U-Liners will draw

people into the new chambers at 6:30 p.m., and remarks by Mayor Bruce Williams will follow. Then, Foundation members and past Azalea Award winners will present awards in ten categories: Spirit, Green Takoma, Educator, Coach, Arts, School Activist, Business, Mentor, Takoma Activist, and Volunteer/Superhero. The event will include tributes to two former Azalea Award winners who passed away in the last year: Gilbert Kombe and Dan Parr.

"Takoma Park residents love our community, and we want to make it better. This is a chance to thank some of the people who've helped to make Takoma Park a great place to live. Find our ballot online at www.takomafoundation.org, and vote for your favorites," said Pam Larson, a Takoma Foundation board member and co-chair of the Azalea Awards.

Larson added that the event "is fun

and even kind of goofy in some ways. It's a black tie-and-sneakers night, and we have our short red carpet for everyone to walk on." A fundraising raffle will give participants an opportunity to win door prizes, and at the end of the evening, the Takoma Foundation will introduce the eight community organizations that won Foundation grants this spring. "We were very impressed with the range of applications this spring," said Franca Brilliant, chair of the Foundation's Grants Committee. "Announcing the grant winners at the Azalea Awards emphasizes to everyone that it's the generosity of donors to the Foundation that make the grants possible. We want to inspire people to give locally."

Voting for the Azalea Awards is open through Monday, May 10. Information about the candidates, as well as the online ballot, can be found at www.takomafoundation.org.



Takoma Park Arts & Humanities News

celebrating the creative spirit of our community

'Watercolor Expressions' Opens May 3

Landscapes, still lifes, florals, architectural subjects, abstracts and non-representational original watercolor paintings conceived and executed by members of the Takoma Park Watercolor Group, will be on display in Gallery 3 and the Atrium Gallery from May 3 through June 1. Please join us at the opening reception on Friday, May 7 from 6 p.m. to 8 p.m. Live music will be performed during the opening by the Bruce Krohmer 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. Gallery 3, located on the third floor, is open weekdays from 8:30 a.m. to 5 p.m.

Grand Opening Celebrates Auditorium Renovation

"We are Takoma" is the theme for the grand opening of the newly renovated Community Center auditorium. After months of renovation to create a space more conducive to all sorts of performing arts as well as public meetings, A series of free events has been planned to showcase the improvements. Events include a film about renowned local musician John Fahreny May 7 and the annual Azalea Awards May 15. All events are free. See ad on page 13 for more details or call 301-891-7100.

Third Thursday Poetry Reading

Please join us on Thursday, May 20 to hear the work of poets Janice Samuels, Samantha Magrath and Katherine Williams. The reading begins at 7:30 p.m. and will be held in the Auditorium on the main level of the Takoma Park Community Center. A reception follows the reading.

Folk Festival Seeks Crafts Show Applicants

Local artisans and crafters are encouraged to apply for the Crafts Show at the 33rd Annual Takoma Park Folk Festival scheduled for September 12. An estimated 5,000 people attend the festival each year.

Jury fee for interested applicants is \$10, and applications will be accepted through June 1 for the juried show and sale. The festival accepts up to 45 artisans and crafters each year. Booth fees are \$100.

Applicants can work in any media—clay, wood, metal, paper, fabric, etc. Jewelry-makers, photographers, and painters also are eligible. Applicants must show only original work; commercially produced merchandise, imported items, and articles assembled from kits or molds will not be considered.

For complete instructions and the application form, go to www.tpff.org and click on the link for Crafts.

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

Improvements Expected on Local Bus Line

By ILONA BLANCHARD
COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT COORDINATOR
HOUSING AND COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

The Sector Plan for Takoma Langley Crossroads is not quite finished, but the New Ave - New Hampshire Avenue - already has a new planning study underway: the K6 Bus Line Study. The study of the K6 line, which runs from Fort Totten to White Oak along New Hampshire Avenue, is meant to address reports of unreliability and crowding. It is part of a larger, ongoing regional project to systematically upgrade Metrobus service.

After the K6 Bus Line Study is complete, Metro will work with adjacent jurisdictions to implement changes. Several bus lines have already made improvements - among them, the Georgia Avenue/16th Street line - and have seen increases in ridership and user satisfaction as a result.

The K6 line was selected because it has one of the highest Metrobus riderships in Maryland with 7,000 daily riders, Metro officials said. In reaching out to the community this study will identify issues and recommend changes.

For the New Ave resident, this project will have several parts: first, to kick off the study in April, surveys were distributed to riders on board and at bus stops. Riders are encouraged to take the survey, which is also available online at www.Metrobus-Studies.com.

Researchers compiling information will also interview bus drivers and crunch route data to analyze the route. Then, results of the research will be reported to the public: May 12, at 6:30 p.m. residents are encouraged to attend a meeting at the Langley Park Community Center (see box).

By late 2010, an implementation strategy is expected. It will then be up to Metro and affected jurisdictions (District of Columbia, Montgomery County, Prince George's County, Maryland, and the City of Takoma Park) to implement changes.

Anticipated changes can have very visible impacts - one researcher on the project noted that after changes were implemented on the 16th Street Line (Georgia Avenue



The City of Takoma Park used a grant from the State of Maryland to improve seating at New Ave bus stops in Takoma Park, but riders note that while the K6 provides great and fast service, they experience crowding on buses, long waits, especially during the middle of the day and weekends, and occasional badly behaved passengers.

Photo by Ilona Blanchard

Corridor), ridership increased by 7.7 percent.

How did Metro attract those new riders? With start-up and operating funding allocations from the District of Columbia Council, a new limited stop (Express) service was laid on top of the existing service. Supervision, communications equipment and training on the line was restructured, resulting in better bus stop maintenance, better coordination on reroutings, and removal of illegally parked cars. "Accordion" buses were even added to the route for times when extra room is needed to prevent overcrowding. Easy-to-read schedules were posted at bus stops - the City of Takoma Park Safe Roadways Committee has been ahead of the game here, placing these at many stops already.

Does this mean similar changes are in store for New Hampshire Avenue? No - but such changes are possible, along with others tailored specifically to this route and based directly upon the results of the study, community support, public funding sources and the eventual Metro Board vote.

Generally, improvements are recommended in phases, so although funding may be scarce during the current recession, that does not mean that they cannot be implemented at a future date. Some changes, such as those that allow buses to improve their time, can even save money.

For more information on the K6 study and the Metro line improvement program, visit www.Metrobus-Studies.com.

Old Takoma's Curator: The Façade Advisory Board

By CARMAN LAM
ASSOCIATE PLANNER
HOUSING AND COMMUNITY
DEVELOPMENT

Have you noticed the bright "Coming Soon" signs that have been popping up all over Old Takoma in recent weeks? Have you ever stopped by Roscoe's to admire its handsome façade and wonder what type of design review process was involved?

Whenever a new business opens in the historic commercial area, the area's character is protected by a careful façade design review. Every sign, light fixture and window frame finishing undergoes scrutiny by the City's Façade Advisory Board. Established in 1999, the Board's primary responsibility is to ensure that façade designs are harmonious and consistent with the character of Takoma Park's historic commercial area. The Board represents and protects the City's interest in the County's Historic Area Work Permit (HAWP) review process.

The Board meets every two months to review façade change proposals involving signage, lighting and door replacements, all of which require a HAWP before proceeding with construction. The Board then sends its recommendation for or against the issuance of a HAWP, sometimes with conditions, to Montgomery County's Historic Preservation Commission. When a code violation such as a flashing sign is identified, the Board notifies the owners before reporting it to the City's Code Enforcement Department.

The Board is composed of a diverse group of City Council-appointed volunteers: two in the field of architecture and planning; two property/business owners in Old Town and Takoma Junction; a member representing Historic Takoma; and one Takoma Park resident. The seven-member Board currently has six members and one vacancy (in the residential seat).

Beyond its design review role, the Board is also actively interested in Takoma Park's historic commercial areas. On a recent Saturday morning, members of the Façade Advisory Board, Public Works Director Daryl Braithwaite, and Housing and Community Development staff conducted a site walk in Old Takoma. In addition to identifying illegal installations in the right of way, graffiti, broken signs and other code violations, the walk identified ways to improve the accessibility, safety, and beauty of the area.

Façade Advisory Board meetings are open to the public. Consider attending one: it's a fun way to get a sneak preview of new businesses and to see the Board in action. For more information about the Board or on how to become a Board member, contact Carman Lam at 301-891-7219, or CarmanL@takomago.gov.



Metrobus

How Great Can Our New Ave Bus Service Be?

Discuss results of the rider survey and share how you would like your ride to be - whether a straight shot to Fort Totten or White Oak or a hop to local shopping.

When: Wednesday, May 12, 6:30 PM

Where: Langley Park Community Center
1500 Merrimac Drive
Community Room # 2

Information gathered in this study will guide improvements - make your voice heard now!

Officer of the Year Honored

Detective Private First Class Charles Hoetzel has been chosen as the 2009 Takoma Park Police Officer of the Year. Hoetzel was selected because of his overall outstanding performance of duties as an officer and his dedication to the Department in numerous additional tasks, including his role as detective in the Criminal Investigations Division (CID).



D/Pfc. Charles Hoetzel, 2009 Officer of the Year

Photo by Diana Dean

Hoetzel took the Oath of Office with the Takoma Park Police Department on March 3, 2008. He successfully completed his field training in June 2008. Hoetzel currently works in the Criminal Investigations Division (CID) of the Takoma Park Police Department. Hoetzel's teamwork, persistence and efforts to take felons off the streets, to ensure the safety of others, is outstanding.

Hoetzel was assigned 117 cases during 2009, ranging from robbery, burglary, sexual assault, child abuse, theft from auto and many other cases which required extensive investigation. Despite his heavy workload, Hoetzel managed to investigate each case thoroughly, complete the investigative reports and submit all cases, leaving only a handful of cases that were assigned at the end of the year. During 2009, Hoetzel ended the year with a 49 percent closure rate and had a total of 59 arrests.

Hoetzel was the lead investigator in numerous Asian-owned commercial armed robberies that occurred along the New Hampshire Avenue corridor last year. Approximately 16 Asian-owned commercial robberies occurred in Takoma Park and the surrounding jurisdictions, including Prince George's County, Montgomery County and the District of Columbia. Arrests were made in February 2009.

During June and July 2009, there were a series of burglaries that were occurring in the City. Although Hoetzel was not the lead investigator, he showed his dedication and willingness to be a team player by assisting in the execution of several search warrants, collecting and logging evidence, as well as conducting interviews.

In November 2009, a sexual assault occurred along the Sligo Creek Parkway. Hoetzel canvassed the area and immediately located a possible suspect matching the description. The suspect had denied any involvement, but was in possession of a weapon that had been described by the victim. Hoetzel was able to obtain a consent from the suspect to obtain his DNA. Based on that DNA, a match came back on that suspect implicating him in the sexual assault. In addition, Prince George's County was able to link the same suspect to a similar sexual assault that occurred in their jurisdiction. If it were not for Hoetzel observing and stopping this suspect, the case may never have been solved.

The Police Department congratulates Charles Hoetzel on being named Officer of the Year.

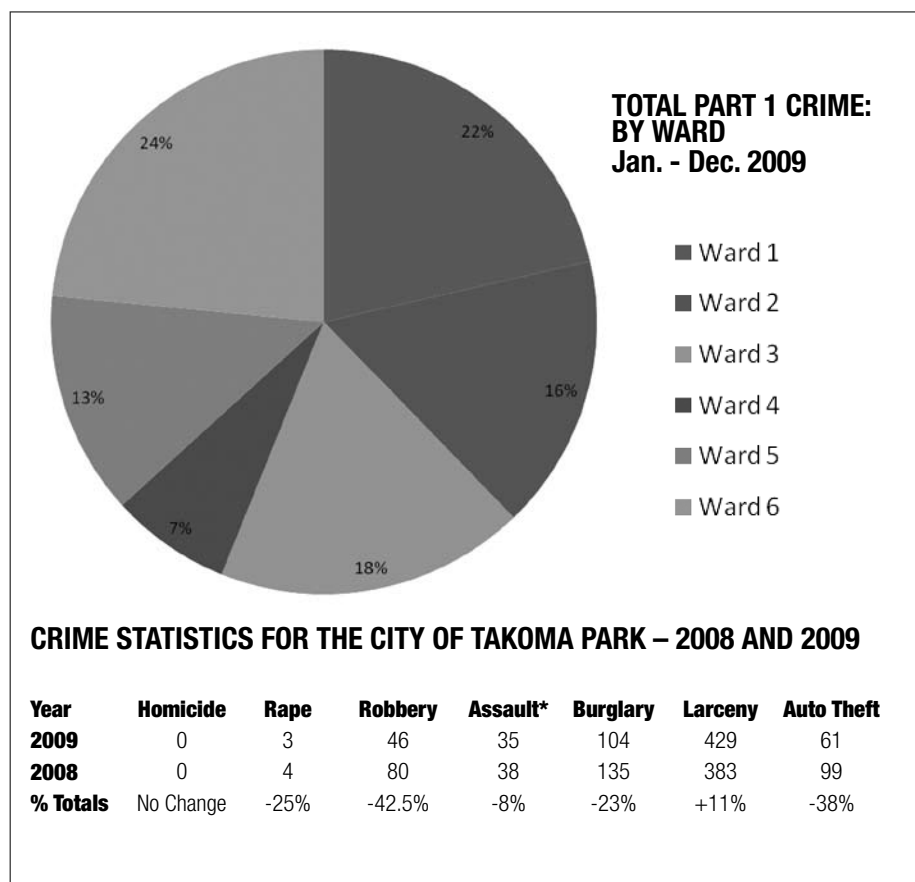
CRIME RATE

continued from page 1

Ricucci praised the Tactical Enforcement Unit for its undercover work, and the Criminal Investigations Division for follow-up. "The numbers you don't see are the number of crimes I think they prevented," he said. And he recognized work from Cathy Plevy, his executive assistant and the public information officer, for her part in organizing and promoting the National Night Out, which won a national award last year. The event, a celebration involving entertainment, demonstrations and information, is designed to educate the community and improve communications between police and residents.

Councilmembers complimented Ricucci on the progress the police have made over the past year, and asked that future reports include additional information parsing out drug arrests from the general arrest information. Ricucci also promised more specific information that will show who is committing crime in the City – whether perpetrators are from outside the City limits, and whether they are repeat offenders.

In addition to information about crime, programs and police policy in Takoma Park, the police department annual report included pages of prevention tips for residents. The Chief encouraged Councilmembers to share the material with their constituents. It includes warnings and advice about identity theft, scams, driving and pedestrian safety and crime

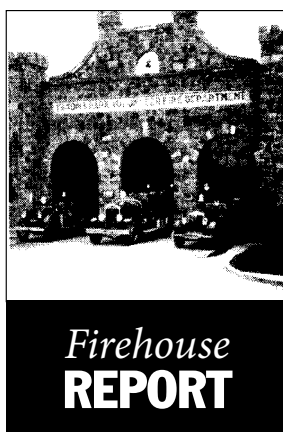


councilmembers to share the material with their constituents. It includes warnings and advice about identity theft, scams, driving and pedestrian safety and crime

prevention for seniors. The report is available at <http://www.takomaparkmd.gov/police/annualreport/index.html>.

Firehouse Report

As of March 31, the Takoma Park Volunteer Fire Department and the personnel of the Montgomery County Fire and Rescue Service assigned to the Takoma Park station have responded to 194 fire-related incidents. The department handled or assisted with 808 rescue or ambulance-related incidents, for a total of 1,002 this year. Totals for 2009 were 195 and 685, respectively, for a total of 880, representing an increase of 122 incidents.



By JIM JARBOE

Does Your House Number Display Measure Up To These Simple Standards?

- * House numbers should be at least five inches high and readable from the street.
- * Commercial and multi-family structures should have address numerals at least six inches high.

tures should have address numerals at least six inches high.

* House numbers should be set on a background of contrasting color.

* When the house is some distance from the street, or when the view of the house is blocked by trees or shrubs, house numbers should be on a sign attached to a tree, fence, gate or lawn stake.

* On a corner lot, house numbers should face the street named in the address.

* House numbers should be illuminated or easily visible at night.

* House numbers must be plain block numerals, not script or written numbers.

Remember, in the event of an emergency, time is very important. So, when you get the chance, take a look at your address numbers from the street. See if you think emergency personnel might have a problem should you need them. Don't take a

chance - be prepared!

Smoke Alarms

Make sure you have working smoke alarms on all levels of your home, especially near the bedrooms. Individuals with sensory disabilities should consider installing smoke alarms that have strobe lights and vibrating pads. Also, consider installing a carbon monoxide alarm in your home. Special note: Unattended Cooking is still the number one cause of home fires.

Babysitters Class

You may still have time to enroll. The class starts on May 3, and runs every Monday from 7 to 9 p.m. for five weeks. Classes will be held at the Takoma Park Community Center, for students ages 11 to 13. Topics to be covered include fire safety, infant and child care, personal safety, first aid and CPR. If interested, please contact the Takoma Park Recreation Department. We must have 10 students signed up to conduct class.

EMERGENCY?

If you see a crime in progress and need to contact the Takoma Park Police, **CALL 301-270-1100.**

If you need to report an emergency that involves the need for fire or rescue services, you must **CALL 9-1-1.**

BUDGET

continued from page 1

grim: Matthews wrote in her original proposal that, “The proposed FY 2011 budget was developed in the midst of the most severe economic downturn since the Great Depression.” In addition to county shortfalls, the City has had to absorb dramatically lower rates on its investments, stock market numbers that have required increased contribution to the police department pension and state retirement plans, and lower property assessments that have decreased the amount of property tax revenue coming into the City. Health insurance for personnel has undergone double digit increases, and worker’s compensation payments have increased significantly as well.

To cope with diminished revenues and continuing costs, Matthews proposed laying off four full-time employees and four part-time employees, and shifting two full-time employees to part-time schedules (see story, March “Newsletter,” <http://takomaparkmd.gov/news/newsletter/index.html#news>). Affected staff members have already been notified and most are looking for new work with the help of a job placement advisor, though the budget must be approved by City Council before the layoffs are final. Matthews also eliminated any wage increases across the board – including her own salary.

The budget proposal has created a stir among City employees. Several of them – many members of the American Federation of State, County and Municipal Employees (AFSCME) — lined up at the microphone during an April 12 public hearing to urge City Council to reconsider the layoffs and wage freeze. Employees from Public Works pointed out the additional work they performed during the snowstorms last winter, and expressed disappointment that, instead of pay rewards, they would miss even a cost of living increase. A Recreation Department employee spoke up for a colleague whose daughter has offered to drop out of college to help the family absorb the impact of lost wages. A Library employee pointed to a part-time colleague, her three children and her husband, a Takoma Park police officer, as a prime example of the human side of budget cuts, asking the Council to find a way to avoid the layoffs. He suggested one cost cutting measure could be the elimination of health insurance for the family members of management employees; most union members do not have that benefit.

The Original Budget Proposal

Matthews’ original proposal lays out \$25,045,303 in expenditures and \$21,268,839 in revenues, with the discrepancy made up through fund balance, including the equipment replacement reserve and a \$2 million bond for the Public Works facility renovation. These numbers are expected to change, however, as County revenues shift and City Council reviews the budget for possible alterations.

The FY2011 budget is divided into four sections: the General Fund, which includes most City services such as police, library, public works, recreation, housing, communications and capital outlay; the Stormwater Management Fund; Special Revenue, which encompasses grant-funded spending; and the Speed Camera Fund, involving revenue from City speed cameras and spending related to road safety.

Revenues come primarily from taxes and utility fees, followed by inter-governmental sources – County and State funding. Other revenue comes from licenses and permits, fines and forfeitures, use of money and property, and charges for service.

The largest expenditure for the City is personnel, which takes up 57 percent of the proposed General Fund budget; next is capital outlay, at 19 percent; then services and charges at 11 percent. By department, within the General Fund, the Police Department would spend the most, at 25 percent, or \$5,761,083. Next is capital outlay, at 19 percent. Public Works comes in at 17 percent, then general government expenses, at 11 percent.

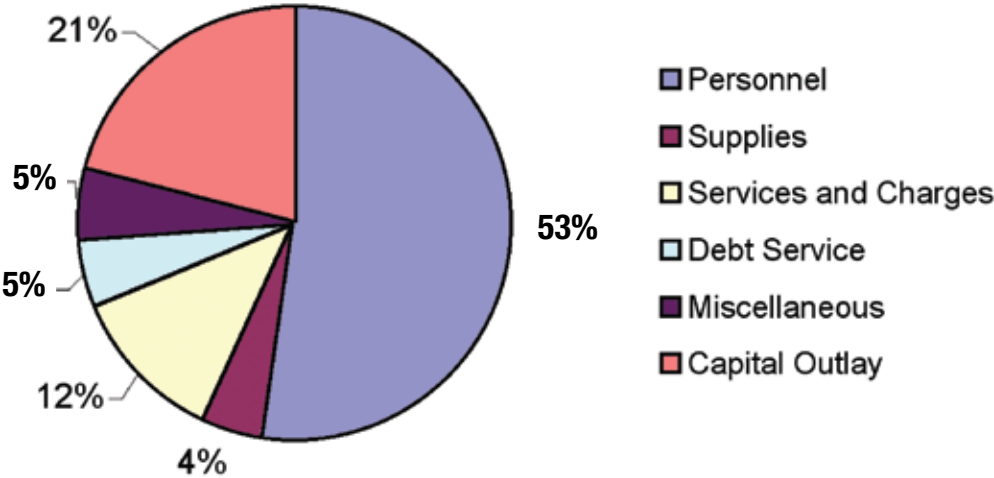
Among the more significant changes in the FY2011 proposal are the elimination of a civilian administrator and a communications supervisor position in the Police Department. Other personnel changes include the elimination of a manager and the reduction of a full-time position to a part-time one in the City Manager’s Office; the elimination of a manager in the Communications Office; the elimination of a part-time position and the reduction of a full-time position to a part-time one in Housing and Community Development; the elimination of two part-time positions and the reduction of other part-time hours in the Library; and the elimination or reduction in hours of various part-time staff in the Recreation Department.

In the proposed budget \$10,000 will go to the newly established Small Community Grant Program – half of what the program received last year. The leaf collection program will be reduced from seven to five weeks. Main Street Takoma gets \$30,000 to support the commercial sector, work City administrators say is more cost-effectively done by farming it out to the organization; the Crossroads Farmer’s Market gets \$10,000 and an emergency assistance program gets \$15,000.

The Public Works facility renovation comes in at \$3.2 million, financed

FY11 BUDGET

All Funds
Combined Expenditures by Type

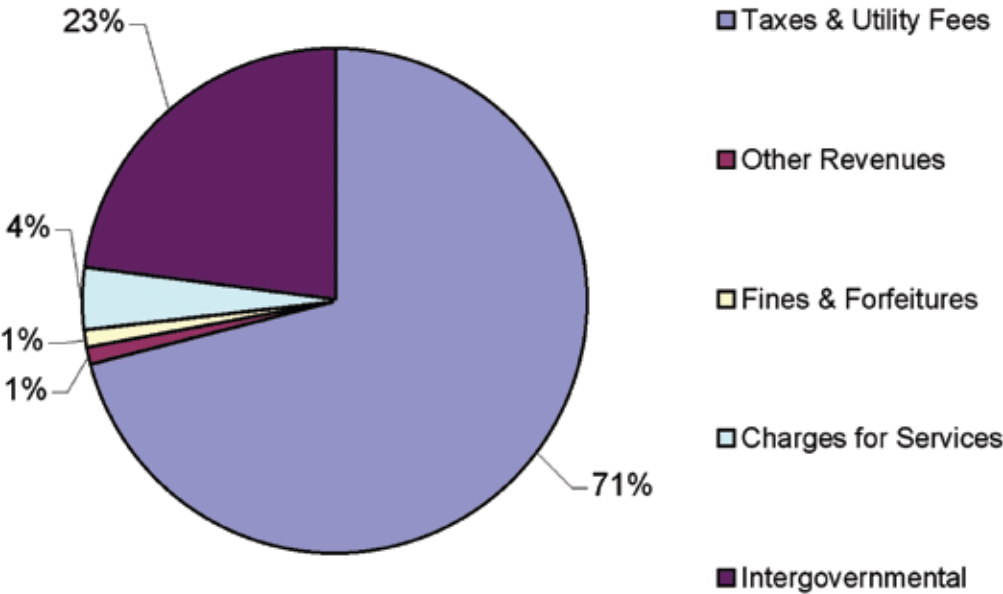


TOTAL\$25,045,303

| | |
|----------------------------|--------------|
| Personnel | \$13,182,345 |
| Supplies | \$1,076,374 |
| Services and Charges | \$2,931,663 |
| Debt Service | \$1,244,463 |
| Miscellaneous..... | \$1,410,830 |
| Capital Outlay | \$5,199,628 |

FY11 BUDGET

General Fund
Revenues by Type

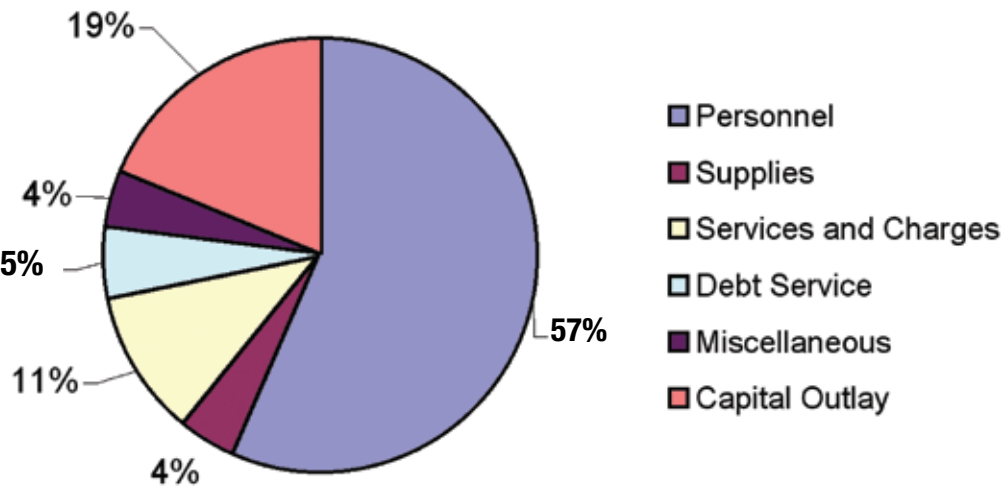


TOTAL\$19,139,544

| | |
|----------------------------|--------------|
| Taxes & Utility Fees | \$13,554,762 |
| Other Revenues | \$241,304 |
| Fines & Forfeitures..... | \$207,000 |
| Charges for Services | \$763,700 |
| Intergovernmental | \$4,372,778 |

FY11 BUDGET

General Fund
Combined Expenditures by Type

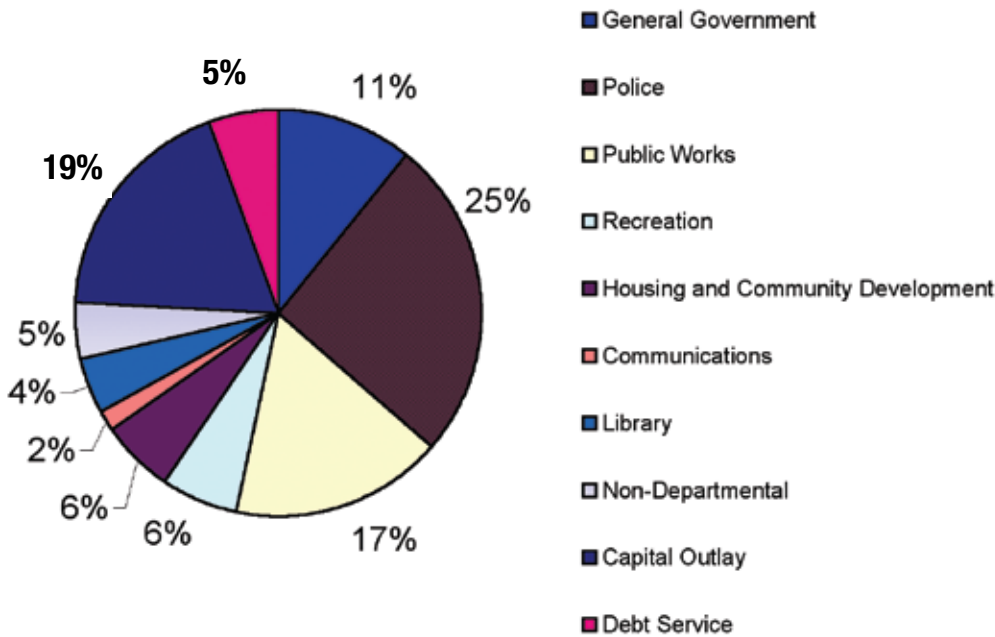


TOTAL\$22,549,843

| | |
|----------------------------|--------------|
| Personnel | \$12,754,542 |
| Supplies | \$973,274 |
| Services and Charges | \$2,460,663 |
| Debt Service | \$1,244,463 |
| Miscellaneous..... | \$927,823 |
| Capital Outlay | \$4,189,078 |

FY11 BUDGET

General Fund
Expenditures by Department



TOTAL EXPENDITURES.....\$22,549,843

| | |
|---|-------------|
| General Government..... | \$2,428,291 |
| Police | \$5,761,083 |
| Public Works | \$3,846,485 |
| Recreation | \$1,356,018 |
| Housing and Community Development | \$1,303,419 |
| Communications | \$391,960 |
| Library..... | \$985,448 |
| Non-Departmental | \$1,043,598 |
| Capital Outlay | \$4,189,078 |
| Debt Service | \$1,244,463 |

City’s Financial Reporting Praised

The City of Takoma Park has been awarded the Certificate of Achievement for Excellence in Financial Reporting by the Government Finance Officers Association of the United States and Canada for its Comprehensive Annual Financial Report (CAFR) for the fiscal year ended June 30, 2009. The Certificate of Achievement is the highest form of recognition in the area of governmental accounting and financial reporting. Its attainment represents a significant accomplishment by a government and its management.

The City’s CAFR was judged by an impartial panel to meet the high standards of the program, including demonstrating a constructive “spirit of full disclosure” to clearly communicate the government’s financial story and motivate interested parties to read the CAFR.

“This award is a reflection of the excellent work performed by Director of Finance Yovonda Brooks and her staff in preparing the CAFR, and their strong management of the City’s finances on a day-to-day basis,” said City Manager Barbara Matthews.

The Government Finance Officers Association is a nonprofit professional association serving approximately 17,500 government finance professionals. The Certificate Program was established in 1945 and is designed to encourage and recognize excellence in financial reporting by state and local governments. The City has received the Certificate of Achievement for Excellence in Financial Reporting for its last four CAFRs.

The City’s CAFR for the fiscal year ended June 30, 2009 can be viewed at www.takomaparkmd.gov.

BUDGET

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through bonds and reserve money. City Council has agreed to proceed with the project because the environment for borrowing is good right now, and contractors are likely to give better prices in an economy that has them hungry for work; in addition, there is general agreement that the facility is badly in need of repair and/or renovation.

Council Searches for Opportunities to Trim

After hearing testimony from staff upset over layoffs and pay freezes, City Council has tackled the budget department by department, making suggestions and querying various numbers in the proposal. Among the comments were concerns from Reuben Snipper (Ward 5) and Josh Wright (Ward 1) regarding the City’s tendency to spend less than it’s budgeted. “We’re consistently, what I would call, overbudgeting,” said Wright at the April 12 worksession, where he pointed out that \$1 million to \$2 million is left unspent each year. “At the end of the day basically what we’re doing is holding residents’ money,” said Wright. City Manager Barbara Matthews noted that the way the Equipment Replacement Reserve and Unappropriated Reserve were identified in past years gave the appearance of a large budget variance at the end of the year. These elements are handled differently now so that any current budget variance cannot be easily compared to past years. Other common causes of budget variance are delays in completion of capital projects and staffing vacancies that are hard to predict from year to year.

Among other budget items questioned by City Council were the 70 cell phones (up from 65 last year) provided to City staff and City Council (an issue brought up by Councilmember Colleen Clay, Ward 2); and the more than \$10,000 in dues to the Metropolitan Washington Council of Governments (Noting the organization’s expensive publications and downtown offices, Councilmember Fred Schultz (Ward 6) said, “Of course we can’t not belong to [COG]. But it seems to me to be there needs to be some sensitivity on their end that these are hard times.” Mayor Bruce Williams disagreed, saying he felt the dues were “a fairly small amount for the benefit we get.”) There was a discussion over closed circuit television in the Community Center, and a request for more information on fiber connectivity that would allow for video conferencing at the Public Works building. The \$12,000 set aside for the Independence Day Committee to run the parade and fireworks was also questioned, and there was some discussion about charging a fee to see the fireworks.

Also of note was the proposal to reduce Community Center hours by closing an hour early (at 9 p.m.) Monday through Thursday and all day on Sunday; closing the Recreation Center on New Hampshire Avenue a half hour early (at 9 p.m.) on weekdays; and opening the Computer Center in the Community Center two hours later (at 2 p.m.) on weekdays and closing it on Sundays. These changes would reduce staffing costs.

Budget work sessions continue through May; the City Council is expected to finalize the budget May 24.

May

Recreation

DUNGEONS AND DRAGONS

Ages 9 - 18

They creep through the twilight, quiet as shadows, muttering in a language long forgotten, a language only spoken by ghosts. Use your imagination and storytelling ability in this classic fantasy role-playing game. Roll dice to cast spells and battle monsters. Creativity and cooperation help the group "survive." Taught by the library's own Dave Burbank. Maximum 30, minimum 15. Four weeks.

Lilac and Rose Rooms, TP Community Center
Thurs. 4 - 6 p.m.

May 20, 27, June 3, 10

| | |
|--------------|------|
| TP resident | \$35 |
| Non-resident | \$40 |

FUN DAY PROGRAM

Ages 5 - 12

This half day Fun Day Program offers an exciting field trip. Students attending Takoma Park Elementary will be picked up from their bus stop and children attending Piney Branch Elementary School will be picked up by staff in the hall near the pool. All other students need to make sure arrangements are made with the Recreation Department for pick-up. Trip is subject to change. Space is limited, sign-up early! If you are registered in Afternoon Addition, the half day program is included in your registration fee. Please mark down your child's swimming ability in the special consideration section.

Wed. 1 - 6 p.m.

June 16

Water Park Fun

| | |
|--------------|------|
| TP resident | \$20 |
| Non-resident | \$25 |

AUTOMOTIVE CARE WORKSHOP

Ages 15 - 21

Automotive technicians are in high demand these days with the rise and development of more sophisticated car features. This workshop is designed to get you started on the basic knowledge of car maintenance. A certified auto mechanic will teach students hands-on car care, safety and environmental procedures, vehicle service and how to troubleshoot general car problems. Don't let this workshop pass you by. Essential knowledge learned at this workshop may turn into a successful career.



Teens from the Recreation Department helped Takoma Park resident Joan Dubrulle (back row) by clearing out her cluttered basement during their community service spring break program. The project was coordinated by Recreation Department teen manager Faye Wright, front center.

Photo by Bradley Williams

T-Zone, TP Community Center

Thurs. 5:30 - 7:30 p.m.

May 13 and 27

\$10 includes both days

JOB TRAINING PROGRAM

Ages 14 - 21

This program develops the skills necessary for our youth to be gainfully employed. Areas that will be covered include resume writing, interviewing skills, dressing for success, proper way to complete a job application and forms, budgeting and finance, conflict resolution, role playing and proper etiquette. Instructor Tangela Bullock. Eight weeks. Co-sponsored by Montgomery County Recreation Department.

TP Recreation Center, New Hampshire Ave.

Mondays, 7 - 8 p.m.

May 3 - June 28

Free

No class on May 31.

BABYSITTING CLASS

Ages 11 - 14

This class is designed for kids 11 - 14 interested in learning more about babysitting. Topics covered will include: CPR, fire safety, first aid, infant and child care and personal safety. A certificate will be issued upon completion of class and exam. This class is cosponsored by the Takoma Park Volunteer Fire

Department, with Fire Chief James Jarboe presiding. Six weeks.

Lilac Room, TP Community Center

Mondays, 7 - 9 p.m.

May 3 - June 14

Free, but must register at the

TP Recreation Department

No class on May 31.

GIRLS LACROSSE CLINIC

Grades 3 - 6

Do you want to be part of one of the fastest growing sports in the country? If your answer is yes, then come out and participate in Takoma Park's Lacrosse Clinic. This five week course will teach all the basic rules and skills of the game. Basic equipment will be supplied. Instruction will be given by qualified instructor. No experience required! Five weeks.

Ed Wilhelm Field, behind Piney Branch Elementary

Tuesdays, 3:30 - 4:30 p.m.

May 11 - June 8

| | |
|-------------|------|
| TP resident | \$20 |
|-------------|------|

| | |
|--------------|------|
| Non-resident | \$25 |
|--------------|------|

TAEKWONDO

Ages 4 and older

The Korean martial art of Taekwondo promotes fitness and strength in a fun and social environment.

Y.E.S. League

Grades 5 - 6, 7 - 8, 9 - 10, 11 - 12

Come out and join the one and only Takoma Park "Youth Exposed to Success" Basketball League! Teams will be guaranteed eight games, and every player will receive a Y.E.S. League jersey. Trophies will be handed out to the playoff champs. Every player must attend one workout in order to be drafted. *Must be entering grade in Fall 2010.

| | |
|-------------|------|
| TP resident | \$25 |
|-------------|------|

| | |
|--------------|------|
| Non-resident | \$35 |
|--------------|------|

Piney Branch Elementary School

Grades 5 - 6*

Workout Date: Mon., May 24

5 - 5:45 p.m.

Regular Season: Mondays, June 21 - July 26

6:30 - 9:30 p.m.

Playoffs: August 2 and 9

Grades 7 - 8*

Workout Date: Mon., May 24

6 - 6:45 p.m.

Regular Season: Tuesdays, June 22 - July 27

6:30 - 9:30 p.m.

Playoffs: August 10 and 17

Grades 9 - 10*

Workout Date: Mon., May 24

7 - 7:45 p.m.

Regular Season: Wednesdays, June 23 - July 28

6:30 - 9:30 p.m.

Playoffs: August 4 and 11

Grades 11 - 12*

Workout Date: Mon., May 24

8 - 8:45 p.m.

Regular Season: Thursdays, June 24 - July 29

6:30 - 9:30 p.m.

Playoffs: August 5 and 12

Silver Foxes

BEGINNERS GUIDE TO DIGITAL CAMERAS AND CELL PHONES FOR SENIORS

Welcome to the digital age. Join instructors Phil Shapiro and Jim Mueller for this hands-on workshop to learn the basic functions of digital cameras and cell phones. If you have a camera or cell phone, bring it to the workshop. Limit 12 students.

Sat., May 1
1 - 4 p.m.
Senior Room. Takoma Park Community Center.
\$7 per person. Open to participants age 55 and older.
You must register for this workshop. Please call 301-891-7280 to register.

WII WEDNESDAY ARE HERE!

Wednesdays are Wii Days for Seniors at the TP Community Center, starting May 5."Wii" is the video gaming system, based on interactive motion-sensing technology using hand-held controls, similar to TV remotes, that respond to the motions you would make if you were really bowling or playing tennis or golf. Join us on Wed., 11:30 a.m. to 1 p.m. in the Teen Room. Drop-in. Open to adults age 55 and older. For more information, call 301-891-7280.

MAY IS GARDEN MONTH FOR TAKOMA PARK SENIORS

Throughout the month of May, garden workshops will be offered to seniors at the TP Community Center. These workshops will cover a variety of topics by speakers from Montgomery County Master Gardeners. Master Gardeners are trained volunteers of the University of Maryland Cooperative Extension. All events are free of charge and open to adults age 55 and older. For more information, please call Paula Lisowski, Seniors Program, at 301-891-7280.

Schedule of Events:

| Topic | Speaker | Date | Time | Location |
|-----------------------------|--------------|---------------|-------------------------|-------------|
| Container Gardening | Pat Kenney | Fri., May 14 | 12:30 - 1:30 p.m. | Lilac Room |
| Growing & Using Herbs | Pat Kenney | Fri., May 14 | 1:30 - 2:30 p.m. | Lilac Room |
| Starting Seeds Under Lights | Gary Cahn | Tues., May 18 | 1 – 2 p.m. | Lilac Room |
| Organic Gardening | Marian Fryer | Mon., May 24 | 11:30 a.m. – 12:30 p.m. | Senior Room |

APRIL RECREATION

continued from page 10

Taekwondo (foot-hand-way) is known for beautiful and powerful kicks. Students learn self-defense and practice drills, forms and sparring. The tenets of Taekwondo – courtesy, integrity, perseverance, self-control and indomitable spirit – are emphasized. Adults are welcome to register with their child. There is a one-time fee paid to the instructor at the first class (non-refundable) for uniform (\$40 children, \$50 for adult). Seven weeks. Instructor Lois Schoenbrun.

Dance Studio, Takoma Park Community Center
Saturdays, 1 – 2 p.m.
May 8 –June 26
TP resident \$75/person
Non-resident \$85/person
No class on May 29.

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 the body. Students are required to bring their own mat and hand weights. Four weeks. Instructor June Kimbrugh-Thornton. Maximum 25, minimum five. Co-sponsored by Montgomery County Recreation Department.

TP Recreation Center, New Hampshire Ave.
Wednesdays, May 19 – June 9

\$40

ARABIC 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 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
Tuesdays, 7 - 8 p.m.

Session 2, June 1 - July 6
TP resident \$60
Non-resident \$65

COLLAGE

Ages 18 and older
Come enjoy new ways of combining materials and media. Using a variety of collage and paper altering processes, students combine found and altered papers and lightweight three-dimensional materials. Principles of color and design will be presented, such as limiting the color palette and the principles of design will be explored such as structure, balance, repetition, value and gradation. This class is suitable for beginners, as well as more experienced students. Basic materials will be provided (some personal or found collage elements may be desired to enhance the collage as well). There is a \$30 materials fee, paid directly to the instructor, due on the first day of class. Six weeks. Instructor Katie Dell Kaufman. Maximum 12, minimum seven.

Art Room, Takoma Park Community Center
Tuesdays, 11 a.m. – 2 p.m.
May 11 – June 15
TP resident \$205
Non-resident \$225

DRAWING AND WATERCOLOR

Ages 11 – 14
Have fun learning to draw with black, white and colored drawing materials, paint with watercolors, use pen and ink and explore mixed media approaches to representational imagery. Subjects will include still

life, portrait, landscape (weather permitting) and floral studies. Beginning students welcome. The focus of the class is appropriate for students interested in developing a portfolio for entry into the Visual Art Center at Albert Einstein High School. Materials fee of \$25, paid directly to the instructor, will be due on the first day of class. Six weeks. Instructor Katie Dell Kaufman. Maximum 12, minimum seven.

Art Room, TP Community Center
Tuesdays, 3:15 – 5:15 p.m.
May 11 – June 15
TP resident \$135
Non-resident \$145

MOTHER'S DAY CRAFTS

Ages 6 – 14
Learn the history of Mother's Day and create the traditional two white carnations. Using calligraphy (beautiful writing) and quilling (paper filigree), make a card or gift fit for a queen. Use your imagination. This program will explore the art of drawing with lines and shapes. After learning and understanding these concepts, students will apply them to create various forms of art. Materials included. Instructor Ann Rollins. Maximum 20, minimum 10. Co-sponsored by Montgomery County Recreation Department.

TP Recreation Center, New Hampshire Ave.
Sundays, 1 - 3 p.m.
May 2

\$20



Jali-D of Young Audiences of Maryland promoted rhythm and rhyming with Rec Department kids during spring break camp.

Photo by Carey Antoszewski

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.

Dia!

Saturday, May 1, 10:30-12
Mr. Gabe performance, crafts, free books.
Registration is required.
Thanks to the Friends of the Library for sponsoring this program.

Mother's Day Gift-Making

Monday, May 3, 6:30-8 p.m.
Kids: come make a gift for Mom or the other special women in your life.
Registration required.
Thanks to the Friends of the Library for sponsoring this program.

Friends Reading Group

Thursday, May 6, 7:30 p.m.
Concluding discussion of "Moby Dick"
Hydrangea Room. All are welcome.

Petites Chansons

Saturday, May 8, 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.

Bedtime Stories

Monday, May 10, 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, preschoolers and their grown-ups.

Resumé Boot Camp

Wednesday, May 12, 7:30 p.m.
With Gabriel Heilig.
Focus on federal and SES resumes.
Registration required.
Hydrangea Room.

Meet Fred Bowen

Thursday, May 13, 7:30 p.m.
"KidsPost" sports writer Fred Bowen will read from his sports novels for kids, then sign books. Bowen's books will be available for purchase.
City Council Chambers.
Registration encouraged.

Friends of the Library Book Sale

Saturday, May 15, 10 a.m. - 3 p.m.
On the Library lawn. (see article)

Friends of the Library Board Meeting

Tuesday, May 18, 7:45 p.m.

CALENDAR
continues on page 13

The Magic of Sid Fleischman

By KAREN MACPHERSON

Newbery Medalist Sid Fleischman knew the secret of dealing with reluctant young readers: hook 'em with humor.

Humor is the thread that runs through all of the dozens of children's books written by Fleischman, who died March 17, the day after his 90th birthday. In his picture books, biographies and novels – including his Newbery winning book "The Whipping Boy" — Fleischman demonstrates his understanding that making kids laugh guarantees they'll keep turning the pages.

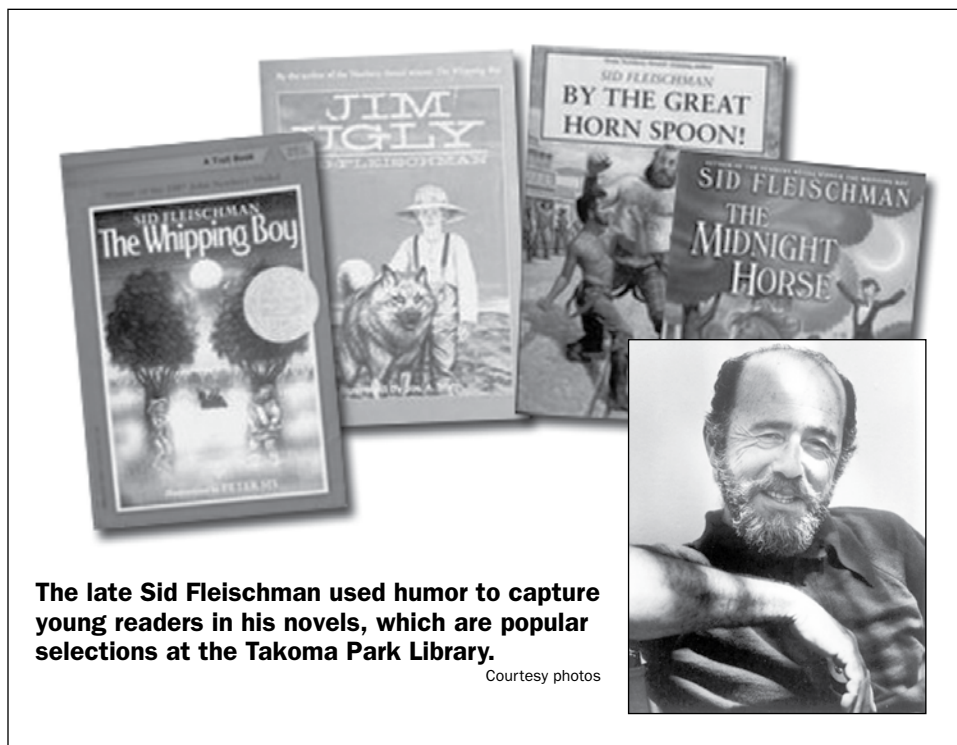
As Fleischman said in a 1997 interview with the "Columbus (Ohio) Dispatch," "Humor is the oxygen of children's literature. There's a lot of competition for children's time, but even kids who hate to read want to read a funny book."

Growing up in San Diego, Fleischman didn't set out to be a children's writer – or any kind of writer. His first career was as a magician, a profession that had captivated him since childhood. He was a self-taught magician, learning magic tricks from books in the library.

Fleischman's first book actually was about a collection of magic tricks he created. Titled "Between Cocktails," the book was published when he was 19. (Later, he wrote a book of magic tricks for kids titled "Mr. Mysterious's Secrets of Magic," which can be checked out from our library).

After serving in World War II, Fleischman began writing novels for adults in 1950. He later was asked to turn one of his suspense novels, "Blood Alley," into a screenplay for a 1955 movie that starred John Wayne and Lauren Bacall.

Fleischman wrote several other screenplays before being inspired to write children's books by one of his three children. As he later recalled the incident in his Newbery acceptance speech, his daughter Jane came home one day from the library proudly bearing the autograph of children's author/illustrator Leo Politi.



The late Sid Fleischman used humor to capture young readers in his novels, which are popular selections at the Takoma Park Library.

Courtesy photos

"You know," Mrs. Fleischman pointed out, "Daddy writes books, too."

"Yes," Jane replied. "But no one reads his books."

Galvanized by Jane's comment, Fleischman decided to write a book just for his family. In "The Abracadabra Kid," Fleischman writes that "a title flashed across my mind and I typed it out. Mr. Mysterious & Company. ... I improvised an opening. ... I found the story and stumbled into the wondrous world of children's books."

At first, Fleischman hesitated to send the manuscript to his agent. Finally, he mailed "Mr. Mysterious" with a note: "I seem to have written a children's book. If you don't care to read it, I will understand. Drop it into the wastebasket."

Instead, Fleischman's agent sent it to an editor at Atlantic Monthly Press in Boston who, as Fleischman writes in "The Abracadabra Kid," "read it in bed that night and accepted it the first thing in the morning."

Fleischman was off and running in a

new career. Over the years, he published a number of well-received books for kids, including a series of tall tale picture books starring farmer Josh McBroom and novels like "Jim Ugly," "Chancy and the Rascal," "Bandit Moon," and, of course, the Newbery Medal-winning "The Whipping Boy." Fleischman also wrote biographies about Mark Twain and Harry Houdini; his biography of Charlie Chaplin is due to be published in April.

One of Fleischman's greatest literary legacies, however, isn't a book. It's his son, Paul Fleischman, who also won a Newbery Medal, in 1989, for his book "Joyful Noise." The two Fleischmans are the only father and son to have won Newbery Medals.

When his father won the Newbery Medal, Paul Fleischman paid him homage by noting: "My father's specialty in magic is sleight of hand.... This style of magic is reflected in his writing.... He knows how to keep an audience guessing, how to create suspense, how to keep readers reading."



LIBRARY Briefs

Sporting Writer to Speak

Fred Bowen, a children's author who also writes a weekly sports column for "The Washington Post" KidsPost page, will talk about his books on Wednesday, May 19 at 7:30 p.m. The program is aimed at kids ages 7 up – and their parents – who enjoy sports and books.

Bowen, who retired recently after years as a federal government attorney, has published 13 sports novels for kids ages 8-12. As he says: "All 13 books weave a little sports history into a fast-paced story about today's kids playing ball. And each book includes a bonus history chapter at

the back."

This spring, Bowen also published his first picture book biography, "No Easy Way," focused on Red Sox slugger Ted Williams. The book has won great reviews and was a Junior Literary Guild selection.

In addition, Bowen has written the KidsPost weekly sports column since the section was established in "The Washington Post" a decade ago. Each week, Bowen focuses on a particular sports topic, from Tiger Woods' difficulty in earning back his fans' trust to the chances of the Washington Nationals to win at least 70 games this year.

At the May 19 event, Bowen will read from some of his books and then talk about his work before taking questions from the audience. He'll conclude by signing books for young fans. Books will be available for purchase at the event, which will be held in the newly-renovated City Council Chambers.

Registration is encouraged for this program. To register, go to www.takomapark.info/library/registration.html or call us at 301-891-7259. Thanks to the Friends of the Takoma Park Maryland Library for spon-

soring this program.

Crafts for Mothers

Kids, come make a gift or two for Mom or the other special women in your life at our Mother's Day Gift-Making event on Monday, May 3, from 6:30-8 p.m. We'll have the materials to make one or two gifts, plus a card. Just bring your creativity! Registration is required for this program so that we have enough materials for everyone. This program is best for children ages 4 up, although younger children are welcome with full adult supervision. To register, please go to www.takomapark.info/library/registration.html or call us at 301-891-7259. Thanks to the Friends of the Takoma Park Maryland Library for sponsoring our program.

Celebrating Children

It's time for our 4th annual "Dia!" formally titled "El dia de los ninos/El Dia de los libros" (Children's Day/Book Day),

CALENDAR
continues on page 13

LIBRARY BRIEFS

continued from page 12

which will take place on Saturday, May 1 from 10:30 a.m.-noon. This national event, established by the American Library Association, emphasizes the importance of literacy for children of all linguistic and cultural backgrounds.

At our May 1 celebration, we'll begin with a performance by Mr. Gabe (also known as local dad/guitarist Gabe Hutter), who will sing songs in English, Spanish and French. Participants then are invited to do a simple craft. All young readers will leave with a free book, courtesy of the Friends of the Takoma Park Maryland Library. Registration is required so we can make sure to have enough books and craft materials to all. To register, please go to www.takomapark.info/library/registration.html or call us at 301-891-7259.

Library Calls on Young Book Reviewers

Calling all young book reviewers! We're starting a program to encourage kids in the third, fourth and fifth grades to read a book and then write a brief review of it. The books for the program actually are advance reading copies (ARCs) sent by publishers to Karen MacPherson, the library's children's librarian, as part of her work as the children's book reviewer for Scripps Howard News Service. ARCs are pre-publication paperback versions of a book that will eventually come out in hardcover. So, by participating in our new "Kids Review" program, kids will be able to read books before they come out in the stores!

Print versions of the kids' reviews will be

compiled in a binder located on the librarian's desk in the children's room, while online versions (using the first name of reviewers only for Internet safety) will be posted on our books blog. All of the ARCs in the program are suitable for kids ages 7-10; most of the ARCs are novels. If your child is interested in participating, email Karen MacPherson at karenm@takomagov.org and we'll get you started.

Reading Group chooses "Lucky Jim" for Spring

At a recent meeting, members of the Friends Reading Group decided it was time to lighten their spring book discussion with a humorous selection. After consulting some titles reviewed in Michael Dirda's essay "Comedy Tonight," they chose Kingsley Amis' first novel, "Lucky Jim" (1953).

Dirda summarized the novel thus: "Jim Dixon has accidentally fallen into a job at one of Britain's new red brick universities. A moderately successful future in the History Department beckons. As long as Jim can survive a madrigal-singing weekend at Professor Welch's, deliver a lecture on 'Merrie England' and resist Christine, the hopelessly desirable girlfriend of Welch's awful son Bertrand."

The "New Yorker" called "Lucky Jim" "a highly unusual first novel by a young English writer who is endowed with, and in control of, more than his share of talent, humor and human sympathy." (March 6, 1954)

"Saturday Review" was also generous in its praise of its young author: "Mr. Amis writes without clichés or awkwardness, a virtue the best English writers today seem unable to avoid." "Lucky Jim" is ... "a first rate novel that will continue for some time

to appeal to those who think human nature shows up even in the universities..." (February 20, 1954)

"Lucky Jim" has since become a classic, establishing Amis as a writer of comedy, often compared to P.G. Wodehouse. He went on to publish 20 novels, including "The Old Devils" (1986), winner of the Booker Prize.

The Friends Reading Group discussion of "Lucky Jim" will be held on Thursday, May 27 at 7:30 p.m. in the Community Center Hydrangea Room. Copies of the book are available at the Takoma Park Library for Reading Group participants, and are provided by the Friends of the Library. All are welcome to join in the discussions.

Friends Book Sale Returns

The semi-annual Friends of the Library book sales have become a familiar sight on the Library lawn every spring and fall, as families gather to visit and peruse the array of wonderful fiction and non-fiction books for every age reader. Book dealers and collectors join families and line up well before the 10 a.m. opening, and the rush of buyers continues till the sale's 3 p.m. closing.

This spring's sale will be held on Saturday, May 15. All book sale proceeds go the Takoma Park Library through the Friends, and have been used to fund special performances (including the March lecture by Michael Dirda), workshops for families, regular programs in Spanish and French, books, Library furnishings (including new tables for the Children's Room), lanyards for kids' library cards, and - most recently - equipment and programs for kids enrolled in the Recreation Department's after school program at the New Hampshire Avenue Recreation Center.

Book Sale volunteers are always needed

and community service hours are available for reliable students who wish to help out. Anyone wishing to work at the book sale should contact Ellen Robbins at 301-891-7258 or by email at ellenr@takomagov.org

Library Arrives at Rec Center

A recent collaboration between the Friends of the Library, the Library staff, and staff of the New Hampshire Avenue Recreation Center will help extend the Library's service boundaries beyond its walls. Kids who may not be able to easily visit the Library now have their own book cart with specially provided books, and are enjoying special programs brought to them by Dave Burbank. The Center staff is bringing students in their after school program to the Library and helping them to get Library cards.

CALENDAR

continued from page 12

Petites Chansons

Saturday, May 22, 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.

Banned Books Club

For kids grades 6 and up.
Monday, May 24, 7:30 p.m.
Our book is "The Crucible" by Arthur Miller
Copies are available at the Library's main desk.
Registration required.

Friends Reading Group

Thursday, May 27, 7:30 p.m.
Our book is "Lucky Jim" by Kingsley Amis.
Hydrangea Room. All are invited.

*The City of Takoma Park
proudly announces
the opening
of the newly
renovated Auditorium,
a beautiful LEED-Certified
cultural venue,
with sophisticated
audio-visual capabilities.*

*Join us as we celebrate with
a series of free events and
kick off what will be a centerpiece
of the Takoma Park community
for years to come.*

★ ★ ★
Friday, May 7 at 7:30 p.m.
"THE LEGEND OF JOHN FAHEY"
Discussion follows with
filmmaker Marc Minsker as part
of the Takoma Park/Silver Spring
Experimental Film Festival.
Performance by
Fahey protege Peter Lang.

free event but tickets required as space is limited

**WE ARE
TAKOMA**

**CELEBRATING THE NEW
TAKOMA PARK**

AUDITORIUM

★ ★ ★
Monday, May 10 at 8 p.m.
POSITIVE VIBRATIONS YOUTH STEEL ORCHESTRA
This award-winning steel pan group performs all
genres of music, from jazz and gospel to R&B
and calypso.

Tuesday, May 11 at 8 p.m.
STREAM AND THE BLUE DRAGON BAND
Middle Eastern rhythms meet jazz and Afro-Caribbean
sounds in the Dragon's unique, colorful and lively music
with Middle Eastern style dancers.

Wednesday, May 12 at 8 p.m.
HENRY ALLEN
A conversation with Pulitzer Prize winner, Henry Allen:
artist, journalist, poet, novelist, critic, Takoma Park resident
and former editor at the Washington Post.

Thursday, May 13 at 8 p.m.
split bill with BILLY COULTER & MAUREEN ANDARY
The music of 5x Wammie winner Coulter has been
described as blurring the line between Roots Rock
and Power Pop. Andary is a singer/songwriter
inspired by 1930s Jazz and Cabaret.

Friday, May 14 at 8 p.m.
HYENAS IN PETTICOATS
A reading of selected scenes from Grace Cavalieri's
award winning play about Mary Wollstonecraft,
the mother of modern feminism.

Saturday, May 15 at 5:30 p.m.
THE AZALEA AWARDS
Join the Takoma Foundation and the Takoma Voice in
celebrating the local heroes and heroines who make our
community the great place it is.

ALL EVENTS ARE FREE
TAKOMA PARK COMMUNITY CENTER
7500 MAPLE AVENUE
For more information on these
and other planned events call 301-891-7100
or check the website www.takomparkmd.gov

Takoma Park Celebrates Completed Auditorium Renovation

The old City Council Chambers is emerging as a state-of-the-art performing arts auditorium, a long-anticipated resource designed to accommodate a community full of creative artists anxious to use the space. The space, with revamped sound and light systems, improved seating and a redesigned stage that accommodates both City Council meetings and performances, will host music, dance and other performance art.

The first show there goes live on Friday, May 7, with a film about the legendary local musician John Fahey and a musical tribute. Music, literary, dance, drama and community events will continue the entire week, and will include Positive Vibrations Steel Orchestra, Stream and the Blue Dragon Band; Pulitzer Prize-winning writer Henry Allen; musicians Billy Coulter and Maureen Andary; Grace Cavalieri's play, "Hyena in Petticoats," Takoma Park Voices in song with Becky Linafelt and Sonya Cramer; and the Takoma Foundation's Azalea Awards (see schedule, page 13).

The refurbished space has a new lighting system with colors, dimming, scene controllers and a control booth; wireless microphone capability for up to 10 microphones; three projection screens on the stage, a multimedia lectern, a video recording system with five robotic cameras and three hand-helds; and other state of the art technology.

The auditorium will have raked seating for 154, plus room for wheel chairs. Moveable desk seating will accommodate City Councilmembers during their meetings; the rear wall of the stage opens for stor-

age of the desks. Backstage also includes a kitchenette, bathroom and wheelchair ramp.

The auditorium is also designed for environmental sustainability, and is eligible for LEED-CI (Commercial Interior) Certification, an indication of its green profile. It features a high-efficiency heating and cooling system, energy efficient LED theatre lights, and furniture and finishes that are recyclable and/or from local sources when feasible: Council desks are of Plyboo strand bamboo veneer, a renewable resource that is formaldehyde free; the stage flooring is of sustainably harvested maple; the wall covering, made from organic Kenaf grass and recycled newspaper, is renewable, carbon neutral, 100 percent recyclable and biodegradable.

Acoustic panels are made from 100 percent post-consumer recycled polyester fabric printed with water based ink. The carpet is from 15 percent post-consumer recycled content and Green Label Plus certified; ceiling tiles are 40 percent recycled content, and seating is from 100 percent recycled polyester fabric. An additional \$80,000 was added to allow for extra design time required for special purchasing and installation of green features. The entire project cost \$1.39 million, and was financed through state and federal funds, plus a donation from the Washington Adventist Hospital.

Priority for using the new space will go to City Council and City-sponsored events and programming; other events will be booked on a first come, first served basis.

Azalea Awards on City TV

On Saturday, May 15 City TV will be on deck with live coverage of the Sixth Annual Azalea Awards. The Azalea Awards, sponsored by the "Takoma Voice" and the Takoma Foundation, recognize Takoma Park's volunteers and neighbors who give their time to make their hometown blossom. The Azalea Awards will be the first of several community events to be held at the new auditorium. Art, dance, poetry, music... stay connected to City TV to see what your community has to offer.

Don't miss "County Report This Week," the new weekly news show produced by the Montgomery County PEG Network that focuses on the latest events from Montgomery County.

The May edition of Snapshots will include an overview of the city's Information Systems Department, highlights of the Earth Day events in Takoma Park, the Washington Adventist University Family Fun Day, a review of the Recreation Department Spring Concert, and the Census 2010 event in the Crossroads.

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.

Council Meetings: 7:30 p.m. Mondays, 10 a.m. and 8 p.m. Wednesdays and 8 p.m. and noon Fridays

Takoma Park Snapshots: 8 a.m. Mondays, p.m. Tuesdays, 4 p.m. Wednesdays and 7 p.m. Thursdays and Sundays

County Report This Week: 7 p.m. Mondays, 11 a.m. Tuesdays, 2 p.m. Wednesdays and 6:30 a.m. and noon Thursdays



Administrators break ground on the new music building at Washington Adventist University April 9. It is expected to open in the fall of 2011.

Photo courtesy of WAU

Adventist University Launches New Music Building

Washington Adventist University (WAU) broke ground on a new music building on Friday, April 9. The building, funded in part by a grant from the State of Maryland, will be the new home of the University's Department of Music. It is scheduled to open in fall, 2011.

The yet unnamed building will be the home of several world-touring performance groups, including the Columbia Collegiate Choral, the New England Youth Ensemble of Washington Adventist University, the Washington Concert Winds, and the Pro Musica elite choral group. These groups have performed locally at the National Cathedral, the John F. Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts, and the National Art Gallery. The chorale and orchestra also perform regularly at Carnegie Hall in New York.

The new building is the second milestone the college has celebrated in the past year. Formerly known as Columbia Union College, the school received permission to become a university in early 2009 and began operating as Washington Adventist University in July.

The University also plans to build a new health fitness facility on its 19-acre Takoma Park campus, in partnership with Washington Adventist HealthCare and Washington Adventist Hospital. University administrators have met with City officials regarding conceptual plans for the center.

Washington Adventist University is a residential Christian institution open to students of all backgrounds, at undergraduate, graduate and professional levels.

Speak with the Mayor

Mayor Bruce Williams welcomes community input and invites you to meet with him during his regular office hours on Tuesdays, 2-7 p.m. (by appointment only), in the third floor Council Conference Room of the Takoma Park Community Center. If a holiday falls on a Monday, office hours move to Wednesday, same time.



Bruce Williams

For Quick City Service Use My TKPK

Email your questions about city services or find answers on FAQs at our interactive web site
www.takomaparkmd.gov/customer_service/index.html

Laundry, Retail, Art, Transit Among Development Possibilities

A Review of Current Projects Around Takoma Park

BY ILONA BLANCHARD

Below is one of an occasional series of updates on projects under review in the City. If you or your neighborhood organization receive a letter in the mail from a developer or Maryland National Capital Park and Planning Commission (MNCPPC)/Montgomery County Montgomery County Planning Board, or see a sign posted on a property, this is the only notification you may receive. It is your responsibility to call for more information about projects in your area. We encourage neighborhood organization to designate members to track projects and keep neighbors updated.

Developers are interested in your input; only by calling the number on the letter you receive in the mail, appointing a member of your neighborhood association to serve as the primary contact with the developer, attending meetings and providing input, can you ensure that your views, concerns, support and ideas are heard.

Long Branch Development Vision

A series of community workshops in April for the Long Branch Sector Plan culminated in a vision of urban characteristics for the upcoming build-out of the area. A draft of the Sector Plan is to be completed by M-NCPPC staff this summer and will include recommendations to support future redevelopment around two new Purple Line stops on Arliss and on University Boulevard at Piney Branch Road. The workshops had broad participation from the community.

Residents suggested green plazas and sidewalks, better connections and lighting, more playing fields with better facilities for families, and mixed-use and vibrant commercial areas for their neighborhood.

Takoma/Langley Improvements

A second draft of the Takoma/Langley Crossroads Sector Plan, a collaborative planning effort undertaken by Montgomery and Prince Georges Counties' Planning Boards in association with the City of Takoma Park, is expected to be reviewed this summer by the Montgomery County Planning Board. The plan addresses pedestrian safety, community resources, housing, and commercial/mixed use redevelopment, and is to be forwarded to the Montgomery County Council in September, which will consider the plan in 2011 at which time there will be a public hearing. The Langley Park portion of the plan has already been adopted by Prince George's County Council.

If you are interested in learning more about the progress of either of these Sector Plans, contact Ilona Blanchard at 301-891-7205 or ilonab@takomagov.org.



Takoma Park Elementary School additions, designed to accommodate a growing student population, should be completed by August, 2010

Photo by Virginia Myers

Laundry at the Gateway

In the Maryland Gateway, the proposal for 6450 New Hampshire Avenue has been revised from a carwash to a laundry/dry cleaners. Configuration of the site remains largely similar to that originally proposed for the car wash. M-NCPPC has not yet accepted the application for review. The Master Plan recommends that this site be used as a connection between New Hampshire Avenue and Sligo Mill Road, and is identified as a proposed roadway in the New Hampshire Avenue Concept Plan. For more information, contact Ilona Blanchard at ilonab@takomagov.org or 301-891-7205.

New Retail and Offices for Long Branch

At the intersection of Flower Avenue and Piney Branch Road in Long Branch next to Beijing Delight, 8435 Piney Branch Road is scheduled for a subdivision Planning Board hearing in June. The project will add less than 1,000 square feet to the old garage building and rehabilitate it for retail storefronts and upper story office or retail.

The project will not go through site plan due to the small scale of the proposed development. The applicant has requested a waiver of five of the 24 parking spaces required under the zoning ordinance. The Commercial Revitalization Overlay Zone allows the Planning Board to grant reductions in the number of parking spaces that

must be provided in exchange for related pedestrian or transit improvements. It is expected that the City will provide comments to M-NCPPC prior to May 10.

The City has been awarded a \$100,000 grant in Community Legacy funds from the State of Maryland for the project. This grant will leverage green features and pedestrian access in the rehabilitation of the building and the 8435 Piney Branch Road site. For more information, please contact Ilona Blanchard at 301-891-7205 or ilonab@takomagov.org.

Public Art to Come

The Arts and Humanities Commission is considering public art piece for installation on the Beijing Delight property at the corner of Piney Branch Road and Flower Avenue, a City gateway. (See related story, page 3.) For more information, contact Sara Daines at 301-891-7119 or sarad@takomagov.org.

Revitalizing Takoma Junction

Residents concerned with the revitalization of Takoma Junction have asked the City Council to appoint an official task force to look at long term plans for the City-owned lot next to the new fire station at the Junction and consider other revitalization issues. The Council has endorsed the concept and is expected to take action in May.

Terms:

Site Plan and Subdivision Review are extensive review processes during which the City works with other agencies and the community to ensure the Montgomery County Planning Board's review includes the Takoma Park perspective.

Mandatory Referral is a similar process; however the Montgomery County Planning Board decisions are non-binding and only advisory in nature.

For more information on City review of projects during the Site Plan, Subdivision, or Mandatory Review process, please contact Ilona Blanchard at ilonab@takomagov.org or 301-891-7205.

Basketball at the Community Center

As a result of resident meetings and requests for changes to their neighborhood, the City will be installing a basketball court next to the Grant Avenue entrance parking lot of the Takoma Park Community Center in May. The court is expected to be completed in June.

Purple Line Planning Continues

The State of Maryland submitted the first round of an application for Federal funding for the Purple Line – the bi-county transit way that will connect the Takoma Langley Crossroads and Long Branch neighborhoods with Silver Spring, College Park, Bethesda, New Carrollton and possibly beyond. Project costs are estimated at \$1.5 billion. Additional information may be found online at www.purpleline.com or by contacting Michael Madden, Project Manager, Maryland Transit Administration, at mmadden@mtamaryland.com or 410-767-3694.

Transit Center Funded

The Maryland Department of Transportation just received an additional \$12 million in federal funding for the new transit center at the intersection of New Hampshire Avenue and University Boulevard (where the Taco Bell is currently located). Maryland is still working on the acquisition of the property; however, the federal funding does place a deadline on the project milestones. Contact Michael Madden, Project Manager, at MMadden@mtamaryland.com, or 410-767-3694 for more information.

Takoma Park Elementary Targets August

The Montgomery County Public Schools (MCPS) Takoma Park Elementary Public School on Holly Avenue is now well under construction, with new steps linking to the Library and community center. The project is scheduled to be completed in August of this year. For more information, contact Ray Marhamati at 240-314-1010 or at ray_marhamati@mcpsmd.org.

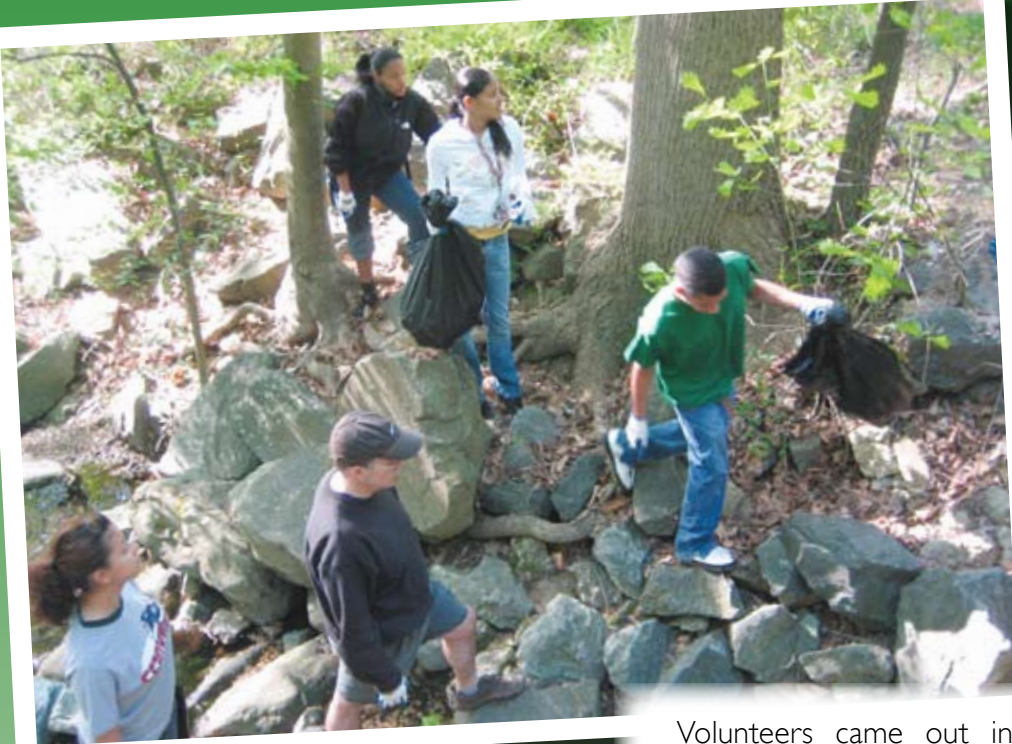
Gilberts Addition Scaled Back

Gilberts Addition, the development at the corner of Eastern Avenue and Laurel Avenue has been scaled back due to costs. The developer, John Urciolo, is submitting a request to M-NCPPC to revise the site plan to provide for the temporary installation of a parking lot on the lower level in place of the proposed new building. Approval is required before the project can be completed.

Streetscape Improvements

The Holton Lane Streetscape, which extends from New Hampshire Avenue to the EZ Storage building features new streetlights, landscaping, and banners designed to improve the safety, visibility and the pedestrian experience of the commercial area. This project is to be completed in June. For more information, contact Carman Lam at carmanl@takomagov.org or 301-891-7219.

SWEEP THE CREEK



Volunteers came out in force to "Sweep the Creek" on Saturday, April 17, collecting mounds of trash from the banks and waters of Sligo Creek at the annual cleanup event. Organizers counted 379 participating volunteers, who collected 303 bags of trash along ten different sections of the creek, including the popular portion that runs through Takoma Park. Among the more unusual finds: three tires, a bicycle, a ladder, a sawhorse, part of a car bumper, a broken skateboard deck, a scooter, and a set of rusty keys to the sheriff's office.

The event was sponsored by Friends of Sligo Creek. For more photos and for information about other activities designed to support the health of the creek environment, go to FOSC.org.

Photos by FOSC Section Stewards and Marvin Esquivel, of the Crossroads Youth Opportunity Center

