Crowd Weighs in on Fate of Route 410

Administrator says state has no plans to widen road

By Virginia Myers

The Community Center Auditorium was packed Nov. 8 when some 120 people attended the City Council meeting over a proposal to transfer the ownership of portions of MD 410 and two blocks of Carroll Avenue in Takoma Park from the City of Takoma Park to the Maryland State Highway Administration (SHA). The proposal would also provide $696,000 to the City in lieu of repaving MD 787, Flower Avenue, provided the City makes the needed street improvements instead. Flower Avenue would then be removed from the State Highway inventory and become a local road (see related story, this page).

Attendance at the meeting was high because many people were concerned that if SHA owned the roadway of MD 410, it

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Flower Avenue Considered for Annexation, “Green Street” Project

By Suzanne Ludlow
Deputy City Manager

Flower Avenue might yet live up to its name, if the suggestion that it be turned into a “green street” gains momentum.

First, however, a proposal that the city annex the right-of-way along the Silver Spring side of Flower Avenue is being considered.

Annexation

On Nov. 22, the Takoma Park City Council voted to consider annexation of the right-of-way between the pavement of Flower Avenue and the Silver Spring properties on the east side of Flower Avenue between Carroll Avenue and Piney Branch Road. The annexation would facilitate street and sidewalk improvements for this road, which is currently a State Highway. No privately owned property is proposed to be annexed into Takoma Park. Still, a public hearing on the proposal will be held to solicit input from residents before the project moves forward. The hearing is set for Monday, Feb. 7, 2011.

Annexation—the addition of land into an incorporated municipality, such as the City of Takoma Park—is guided by Maryland state law, which specifies required steps that must be taken to annex land. In the case of annexation of right-of-way, which is the land on which public streets and walkways are located, the process is relatively simple. If the right-of-way to be annexed is not in an incorporated municipality and the jurisdiction holds the public hearing and follows the annexation procedures correctly, the annexation will proceed if the City Council votes to do so. Annexation of privately owned land is a much more complex process, requiring support by a certain percentage of owners and residents, and may involve a referendum if the annexation is challenged.

What would be annexed?

The current Takoma Park City boundary runs south from Piney Branch Road along the east side of the Flower Avenue pavement past Division Street and then proceeds east through the middle of Wilkinson Hall on the Washington Adventist University campus past Garland Avenue before jogging to Carroll Avenue. Between Piney Branch Road and Wilkinson Hall, the sidewalk on the west side of the street and the two lanes of Flower Avenue pavement are

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Adventists Plan Sports and Fitness Center

Residents Invited to Contribute to Planning Process

By Kevin Adler

Over the next few months, Takoma Park residents will have the opportunity to provide their input on what could become a $25 million sports and health center developed jointly by Washington Adventist Hospital and Washington Adventist University. The first public meeting about the draft plan was sparsely attended, but representatives of the sports and health center say that they are committed to getting extensive public feedback on the plan.

“At each conversation we have, we learn something,” said Vincent Day, a consultant who was hired more than two years ago by the hospital to help it devise a redevelopment plan. “We will be continuing to reach out in the next few months...because we believe that Takoma Park residents are an invaluable part of this process.”

The sports and health center would be just one part of a more extensive Health and Wellbeing Village that the hospital intends to create in Takoma Park. The redevelopment is occurring because Washington Adventist Hospital is relocating its primary campus to a new facility in the White Oak area of Silver Spring.

At the public meeting on October 27, Day unveiled a draft design for a two-story fitness facility that would be located on the Washington Adventist University baseball field on Flower Avenue. The sports facility would have 60,000 to 70,000 square feet of space, and its centerpiece would be a full-size basketball court that meets NCAA standards and has bleacher seating for about 1,500 people. The facility also would have a lap pool and a separate small pool for physical therapy, as well as a weight room and a cardio room. Finally, the center would have classrooms and office space for the athletic department and might become the new home of the university’s radio station, WQTS.

Potentially, Takoma Park residents would have access to the facility for swimming, exercise classes, basketball leagues—the possibilities are wide open. “When we interviewed people in the community, the need for more fitness facilities was the priority,” said Day. “The lap pool was one specific need that came through loud and clear, and that’s part of why it was added.”

Few people have seen the draft design, but the reaction has been positive. “It looks like an interesting plan, with a lot to offer the community in terms of additional recreation options,” said Anne Holland, co-chair of the Washington Adventist Hospital Land

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Published by the City of Takoma Park www.takomaparkmd.gov DECEMBER 2010
Visit with the Mayor

Mayor Bruce Williams welcomes community input and invites you to meet with him. The City Council is on recess until January 3, 2011. To schedule a meeting with the mayor during December, contact Peggye Washington at 301-891-7230 or by email at peggyew@takomagov.org.

City Council Action*

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

**City Council and Committee Calendar**

The City Council will be on recess from Tuesday, November 30 through Sunday, January 2. Meetings will resume on January 3, 2011.

- **Wednesday, December 1** - Commission on Landlord-Tenant Affairs meeting, (CC Hydrangea Room)
- **Wednesday, December 8** - Takoma Junction Task Force meeting, 7:30 p.m. (CC Hydrangea Room)
- **Wednesday, December 8** - Takoma Park Board of Elections, 7 p.m. (CC Council Conference Room)
- **Thursday, December 9** - Emergency Preparedness Committee meeting, 8:30 a.m. (CC Hydrangea Room)
- **Monday, December 13** - Recreation Committee meeting, 7 p.m. (CC Hydrangea Room)
- **Tuesday, December 14** - Tree Commission meeting, 6:30 p.m. (CC Lilac Room)
- **Tuesday, December 21** - Washington Adventist Hospital Land Use Committee meeting, 7:30 p.m. (CC Hydrangea Room)
- **Tuesday, December 21** - Takoma Junction Task Force, 7:30 p.m. (CC Lilac Room)
- **Thursday, December 23** - City offices closed beginning at 12:30 p.m. for the Christmas Holiday. The Community Center will be closed through the holiday weekend beginning at 12:30 p.m. on December 23.
- **Friday, December 24** - City offices closed for the Christmas Holiday.
- **Tuesday, December 28** - (tentative) Arts and Humanities Commission meeting, 7:30 p.m. (CC Hydrangea Room)
- **Friday, December 30, 2010** - City offices closed for the New Year Holiday. The Community Center will be closed until January 3, 2011.

**Volunteer Needed to Represent Takoma Park on the Montgomery County Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Commemorative Committee**

The Committee advises the County Executive on plans for the annual Montgomery County program held in observation of the birthday of Martin Luther King, Jr. Takoma Park has a position for one member and one alternate member on the Committee. Contact Jessie Carpenter (301-891-7267 or JessieC@takomagov.org) for information.

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

**Holiday Schedule for Passport Services in the Community Center**

Passport services will not be available the week of December 20. Regular hours will resume on December 27.

**Notice to Community Organizations Who Plan to Request Funding from the City of Takoma Park for Fiscal Year 2012 – Application Deadline: January 7, 2011**

The City Council has adopted a formalized process for review of requests for funding in amounts over $2,500. The process is intended to ensure that requests are reviewed by the Council prior to consideration of the budget for the next fiscal year. Funding decisions will not be made until the Council has discussed the budget and determined whether sufficient funds are available.

**Volunteers NEEDED to REPRESENT Takoma Park**

The next round of City Council ward-focused meetings will begin on Tuesday, January 18. On that evening, Ward 5 residents are invited to join the City Council for a reception at 7 p.m. followed by a special Ward 5 public comment session during the City Council meeting. The tentative schedule for future Ward Nights is:

- **Ward 4** - February 22 (Tuesday)
- **Ward 1** - March 21 (Monday)
- **Ward 3** - April 11 (Monday)
- **Ward 6** - May 16 (Monday)
- **Ward 2** - June 20 (Monday)

Residents who have questions may contact their City Councilmember or Jessie Carpenter, City Clerk at 301-891-7267, jessieC@takomagov.org.

**City Council Meeting**

- **October 25** – Regular Meeting
  - First Reading Ordinance 2010-49 was accepted, amending Takoma Park Code Ch. 14. 20 Morals and Conduct to Repeal Obsolete Sections (VOTING NAY: Wright)
  - Resolution 2010-65 was adopted, appointing Barbara Muhlbacher to the Takoma Junction Task Force
  - Resolution 2010-66 was adopted, supporting the request of the Montgomery County Coalition for the Homeless to purchase a six-unit apartment building at 8316 Flower Avenue

- **November 1** – Special Session
  - First Reading Ordinance 2010-50 was approved, approving a PILOT agreement with Montgomery Housing Partnership for the Edinburgh House (7513 Maple Avenue) (VOTING NAY: Clay, Robinson, Schultz)

- **November 8** – Regular Meeting
  - Second Reading Ordinance 2010-50 was adopted, approving a PILOT agreement with Montgomery Housing Partnership for the Edinburgh House (7513 Maple Avenue) (VOTING NAY: Clay, Robinson)
Music, Art, Shopping Events Headline Holiday Happenings

A year of change in Old Town Takoma Park has made it easier than it’s ever been to shop local for the holiday season. Five new businesses have opened, one has expanded into a new location, and there is a feeling of creative mass that shopkeepers hope will sustain a robust commercial area in the city’s signature district. To make shopping easier, renovations to the parking lot behind the shops on Laurel Avenue has been finished, making access smoother: vehicles will enter from Laurel/Carroll Avenue, and exit onto Eastern Avenue. At the end of November, shops were hoping for a successful “Small Business Saturday,” a national effort to encourage shoppers to patronize local businesses on the Saturday following Thanksgiving, Nov. 27, and looking forward to the holiday season in December. Other efforts to “shop local” include “Think Local First DC.”

Main Street Takoma, a collective of mutually supportive local business owners in the Old Town area, are promoting both, and have organized a number of holiday events to draw shoppers into the district.

There are also the new shops to sample: CD Game Exchange (7042 Carroll Ave.), Takoma Bicycle (7030 Carroll Ave.), The Green Commuter (7320 Carroll Ave.), Capital City Cheesecakes (7071 Carroll Ave.), and Old Takoma Ace Hardware (7001 Carroll Ave.). The Still Point wellness center, spa has expanded into the building at 1 Columbia Avenue, at the corner of Carroll and Columbia, but also maintains an art shop at its old location, 7089 Carroll Ave.

Here is a sampling of events to enjoy as you support the Takoma Park business community. For other activities, and for a list of shops, see www.mainstreettakoma.org.

PERFORMANCES
Young Takoma Concert Series, Holiday Brass Ensemble
Dec. 11, noon-2 p.m.
Old Town Gazebo, Westmoreland and Carroll Avenues
Nothing says Christmas music quite like the bright sounds of trumpet and trombone. This young group of musicians includes students of Brian Weber and other local teachers.

Brass Ensemble of the Takoma Park Community Band
Dec. 12, 2-3 p.m.
Old Town Gazebo, Westmoreland and Carroll Avenues
Members of the Takoma Park Community Band have broken out of that local institution to form an additional group of just brass. They’ll play their best holiday tunes for passing neighbors.

The Jingles
Dec. 12, 11 a.m.-2 p.m.
Old Town Gazebo, Carroll and Westmoreland Avenues
The Jingles come together once a year for the sole purpose of playing Christmas music and spreading holiday cheer in the D.C. area. This year’s group is a winds quintet of music enthusiasts that includes returned Peace Corps volunteers, members of D.C. Different Drummer’s, students and professionals.

Foggy Bottom Morris Men
Dec. 16, 6-7 p.m.
Old Town Gazebo, Westmoreland and Carroll Avenues
Traditional dance from the British Isles, complete with twirling sticks and stomp- ing boots, comes back to the Takoma Park Gazebo for another holiday celebration. Known for dancing up the sun on May Day (see photo), the Morris Men also celebrate the coming of the Winter Solstice. This year’s performance will include the Abbots Bromley Horn Dance and a traditional Mummer’s Play.

ART
29th annual Takoma Park Crafts and Fine Arts Festival
Dec. 4, 10 a.m.-4 p.m.
Dec. 5, noon-4 p.m.
7208 Maple Ave.

Local artisans will display and sell their handcrafted items, including knit and crochet pieces, ornaments, wreaths, dolls and pottery. Refreshments included. For more info, call 301-270-5367.

Cedar Avenue Artists Holiday Show
Dec. 4-5, 11 a.m.-4 p.m.
The Boathouse, 7209 Cedar Ave.
A group of neighborhood artists put their work on display – and up for sale – at this annual holiday event.

Takoma Park Community Center Holiday Art Sale
Dec. 11, 10 a.m.-2 p.m.
7500 Maple Ave.
A four-hour art extravaganza of local artists displaying and selling jewelry, pottery, photography, wearable art, tilework, painting and prints as well wood. Pieces will range from “funky to fine, functional to not-so-functional,” according to organizer in the city’s Arts and Humanities Commission. The event will also feature live music.

Kittner Studio Open House
Dec. 12, 1-5 p.m.
Kittner Design Studio, 7056 Carroll Avenue, 2nd Floor (between Salon Jam and Subway). Sam and Bobbi Kittner have become mainstays in the Takoma Park art community. See (or purchase) Sam’s panoramic photographs and Bobbi’s collage and jewelry during their open house. Refreshments provided. www.kittner.com.

Takoma Metro Arts Center Open House
Dec. 12, 10 a.m.-5 p.m.
Tucked away in a warehouse at 6925 Willow St. N.W. in Takoma, D.C. is a warren of artists’ studios, and from 10 a.m. – 5 p.m. Dec. 12 they’ll be open for business during the Takoma Metro Arts Center Open House. asalondc.org.

OTHER EVENTS
12th Annual Takoma Park Alternative Gift Fair
Dec. 4, noon-4 p.m.
Takoma Park Presbyterian Church, 310 Tulip Ave.

Instead of giving a material gift, many people are opting for the gift of charity, donating to various causes in the name of family and friends to whom they want to give the most meaningful gifts. The receiver of the gift gets a note indicating that a donation has been made in their name, the charity gets a helping hand. The Alternative Gift Fair brings dozens of organizations to gather so “shoppers” can choose their favorite causes. This year’s event includes supervised kids’ activities, including cookie decorating; a sweet and savory bake sale; raffle; live music and free seated massage. For more information, see www.aggw.org or email aggw_inc@yahoo.com.

Pajama-Rama
Dec. 5
7:30 a.m.
Old Town Shops

Takoma Park Authors’ Book Sale
Dec. 4, 3-5 p.m.
Capital City Cheesecakes, 7071 Carroll Ave.

Local authors will be on hand to discuss their latest works, and to sign and sell their books.

Old Takoma Businesses Holiday Open House
Dec. 11-12
10 a.m.-5 p.m.
Shops will run specials and offer refreshments to shoppers on these two special promotional days for the season. This year, you can get your photo taken with Santa: on Dec. 11 from 3-5 at Summer Delights (6919 Laurel Ave.) or on Dec. 12 from 3-5 at Old Takoma Ace Hardware (7001 Carroll Ave.).
Council Helps Facilitate Renovation of Parkview Towers

By VIRGINIA MYERS

The City Council voted unanimously Nov. 22 to waive about $83,498 in municipal taxes for a local company that renovates buildings for affordable housing. The deal is likely to be finalized at a second Council vote on the matter, scheduled for Nov. 29.

The arrangement, called a PILOT (payment in lieu of taxes), would excuse Montgomery Housing Partnership from 50 percent of its municipal taxes on Parkview Towers, a 125-unit apartment building at 7667 Maple Avenue, for two years. It would then waive 25 percent of taxes for three more years. The money would be used for initial renovations of the building, which MHP representatives say will help them secure more conventional and long-term financing to finish the project.

The agreement also requires that MHP lease a minimum of 50 percent of the units to households at 60 percent or less than the area median income (AMI). City officials hope the project will solidify and improve affordable housing alternatives in the city.

This was the second proposal MHP offered on the Parkview Towers property. The first, a request for 100 percent relief from municipal taxes for a total of ten years, was rejected before the vote ever came up, so MHP modified its terms.

Councilmembers first debated the issue Nov. 15. In a straw vote, only one member, Terry Seamens (Ward 4) indicated full support for a 100 percent tax waiver. Reuben Snipper (Ward 5) said he would vote for a 50 percent reduction; Mayor Bruce Williams said he’d vote for 25 percent and Colleen Clay (Ward 2), Josh Wright (Ward 1) and Dan Robinson (Ward 3) said they would refuse to approve any tax break to MHP. Councilmember Fred Schultz was absent.

Council concerns included the uncertainty of continued financing, the original proposal’s undefined number of low-income households, and the general lack of funds available in the city budget. “We just have to figure out where we would get $50,000 next year within the budget,” said Josh Wright of the original plan, which would have cost the city $47,713 a year. "Th"e City Council voted to waive municipal taxes on the property to assist with the cost of renovation, and as a way to promote affordable housing initiatives in Takoma Park.

Montgomery Housing Partnership hopes to close on the purchase Parkview Towers, at 7667 Maple Avenue, this month, and begin renovations to the 125-unit building shortly thereafter. Council City Council voted to waive municipal taxes on the property to assist with the cost of renovation, and as a way to promote affordable housing initiatives in Takoma Park.

By MOSES A. WILDS, JR.

HOUSING Mail Box

A tenant contacted the Mailbox regarding whether his lease has to indicate how his security deposit will be handled by his landlord and whether there should be language in the lease regarding the tenant’s ability to terminate the lease if an involuntary change in employment occurs requiring relocation to another state.

In accordance with Section 6.16.060.D. (Lease Requirements) of the Takoma Park Landlord-Tenant Law, leases must indicate that a tenant’s security deposit will be deposited and returned in accordance with Section 6.16.120 of the City’s law and in accordance with the Real Property Article of the Annotated Code of Maryland (Sections 8-203, 8-203.1) as amended. Some of the major provisions of these sections of the law include requirements regarding security deposits being deposited in escrow accounts, the 3 percent annual interest accrual rate for security deposits and the 45-day timeframe for the deposit being returned following the end of the tenancy.

Section 6.16.060.G. requires that leases must include language permitting the termination of a lease following the tenant’s providing the landlord with one month’s written notice received prior to the next rent due to an involuntary change of employment requiring (1) relocation from the Washington, DC Standard Metropolitan Statistical Area (SMSA); (2) death or involuntary unemployment of a major wage earner; or (3) for any other reasonable cause beyond the tenant’s control. The lease may provide for, in the case of termination for reasonable cause beyond the tenant’s control, that the tenant will pay a reasonable termination charge not to exceed one month’s rent or the actual monetary damages incurred by the landlord from the termination, whichever is the lesser amount, in addition to rent due and owing through the termination date and during the notice period.

Tenants or landlords having questions about the City’s Landlord-Tenant Law may call 301-891-7215 and/or contact me via the web at Moses W@takoma.gov.org.

DID YOU KNOW?

The Computer Learning Center in the Community Center is staffed and open every weekday from 2 to 8 p.m. and on Saturdays, noon to 6 p.m. Computers available for Takoma Park Library card holders; wireless access throughout the building. Wireless printing in Library.

Photo by Virginia Myers

Photo by Virginia Myers
Trio of Singer-Songwriters Grace Takoma in December

Two concerts will be offered this month at the Takoma Park Auditorium: featuring the Takoma Park Community Band and Victoria Vox. The concerts will be held on Monday, December 20, at 7:30 p.m. at the Takoma Park Auditorium, 7500 Maple Avenue, Takoma Park.

Victoria Vox is a multi-instrumentalist and singer whose ukulele playing has gained her national fame. The Berklee alumnus will benefit Hungry for Music and the Berklee City Music Network. Tickets are $15 general admission, available at www.hungryformusic.org or by calling 240-582-6193.

Takoma Park-based Hungry for Music is a nonprofit charity organization that supports music education and cultural enrichment, both in the United States and abroad, by acquiring and distributing quality musical instruments to needy children with willing instructors and a hunger to play. The Berklee City Music Network is a national network of institutions offering the Berklee Pulse music method to under-served teens at no cost to them.

For more information check out our Face Book and Twitter pages.

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Indoor Soccer Program
Ages 7 – 10
This soccer program presents the opportunity for friends to have fun together while focusing on technical skills development in the winter months. More importantly, the local program is designed to enhance the soccer skills of each participant, keep your player in shape and sharpen those skills for the upcoming season. Last year the program was a sell-out. Please note that program registration will be first come, first served, and space will be limited to 30 participants. Parents are encouraged to participate.

TP Recreation Center
New Hampshire Ave.
Sun. 1-3 p.m.
Jan. 9- Feb. 27
$60
No program on Jan. 16.

Winter Basketball
Winter Basketball walk-in registration is Saturday, December 4, 10 a.m.-1 p.m. at the Takoma Park Community Center, 7500 Maple Ave. Bring check, credit card or money orders. No cash, please. DEADLINE TO REGISTER IS DECEMBER 10, 2010. See box below for details.

Youth Ceramics
Ages 8 – 10
Learn hand-building techniques such as pinching, coil building and slab building to create one-of-a-kind projects. Correct use of tools and application of glazes will also be taught. Make sure you wear clothes you don’t mind getting dirty. Four weeks. Instructor John Baker. Maximum 10, minimum five.

Art Room
Takoma Park Community Center
Wed., 3:45-5:45 p.m.
Dec. 1-22
TP residents $45
Non-residents $55

Learn To DJ Workshops
Ages 12 - 18
Whatever your music genre of choice, whatever your skill level, get hands-on experience using the latest controllers and software. Learn to execute perfect blends, clean mixes and unique sounds in any style of music. Learn the fundamental techniques and concepts of modern day DJing. Along the way, you will gain an appreciation for rhythm, timing and song structure, and thus begin to develop a DJ’s ear for music. The program will leave you well-positioned for the remainder of the Recreation Department’s Learn to DJ Program, taught by our very own Simon “Kilo Vibes” Moore. Minimum four, maximum eight.

Takoma Park Community Center
Tuesdays, 5-6:30 pm
Nov. 30, Dec. 14 and 21
FREE

Teen Ski and Snowboard Night Club
Ages 13-17
The Teen Ski and Snowboard Night Club provides ages 13-17 with the opportunity to ski and snowboard each Saturday night. Sponsorship for this program is provided by the Takoma Park Community Center and the Recreation Department. For more information contact the Recreation Department at 301-628-4300 or email mweeks@takoma-park.md.us

Register for Youth Basketball League
The Takoma Park Winter Basketball League welcomes all kids grades K*-8 to register for the upcoming season. Registration will run from September 1 through December 10, 2010.

*Must be 5 yrs old by January 8, 2011.

Registration Fees
Takoma Park Residents Fee: $60
Non-Resident Registration Fee: $70

Scholarship Opportunity
Scholarship Registration Fee: $10
Scholarship opportunities are available to all Takoma Park Residents in need of assistance. This benefit is available to Takoma Park residents who can provide proof of enrollment in the Free or Reduced Meals program or similar financial assistance program.

For more information about the Takoma Park Recreation Department’s Winter Basketball League or if you are interested in coaching please call (301) 891-7225, or visit www.takomaparkmd.gov/recreation.
Silver Foxes
For Active Adults Over 55

Big Birthday Bash (New)
Let’s celebrate you! Bring your friends and join us for a birthday celebration with cake, ice cream, well wishes and fun! Each season we will honor the birthdays that fall into a three month period. Drop-in. No registration is required.

Senior Room
Takoma Park Community Center
Fri. 1-2 p.m.

Dec. 17 (October, November, Dec.)
No cost

Special Bingo
Come try your luck. Win a prize. Drop-in. No registration is required.

Senior Room
Takoma Park Community Center
Thurs. 12-2 p.m.
Dec. 30
No cost

Blood Pressure Screening
The Washington Adventist Hospital will be doing monthly blood pressure screening. Drop-in.

Senior Room
Takoma Park Community Center
Thurs. 11:30 a.m.-12:30 p.m.
Dec. 30
No cost

RECREATION
continued from page 6

Club is a terrific way to enjoy unlimited skiing and snowboarding any night of the week! This club is for teens who would like to learn how to ski or snowboard for the first time and for experienced riders who want to discover the thrill of alpine skiing or snowboarding at night. Club card members are entitled to unlimited use of lift access, skiing or snowboarding lessons during each visit, equipment rental and nine escorted visits to one of the three mountains (Roundtop, Whitetail, Liberty). Pay as little as $205 if you have your own equipment. But the best part of the Night Club is that members can use their cards ANY night of the week beginning January 2, 2011. Early bird registration ends December 7. Contact Faye Wright for more information, 301-891-7283.

Takoma Park Community Center
January 20, 23, 29
Feb 5, 10, 13, 26
March 5, 12
Fee: $285
$205 (if you have your own equipment)

Please make checks payable to Liberty Mountain.

Teen Open Gym
Ages 13 - 17
Not just for basketball! Double Dutch ropes, flag football and other game supplies are provided. So come join us!

Piney Branch Elementary School Gym
6-9 p.m.
Dec. 1, 17, 28

Talent Showcase
Ages 12 - 18
Do you have a talent to showcase? Your talent may be just what we need. It’s not too late, a quick audition or video clip may allot you a spot in the showcase. Talent near and far will be showcasing their skills by singing, dancing, performing with a band and/or other diverse talents. This event will take place at the Takoma Park Community Center on Friday, December 10 from 7:30-8:30 p.m. Holiday prizes will be raffled throughout the Talent Showcase. For more information or to audition to be in the show, please contact Faye Wright, 301-891-7283 or fayew@takomagov.org.

Kameron Cunningham and Mark Overton, Jr., left, build models of H2O (water) from clay, exploring the basic structures of snow, ice and fresh water resources during the Young Climate Explorers program in the teen lounge.

At Afternoon Addition, right, Angela Pajic, Zoe Popovici and Lucia Parish-Katz strut their costumes during the fall festival.

Photo by Debra Haiduwen

Photo by Carey Antozowski

Wii Games
“Wii” is a video gaming system based on interactive motion sensing technology using hand-held controls that respond as if you are really bowling, playing tennis or golf. Come and play these challenging and fun games.

Teen Lounge
Takoma Park Community Center
Wed. 11:30 a.m.-1 p.m.
December 1, 8, 15, 22
No cost.
**Community 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.

**Friends Reading Group**
Thursday, Dec. 2, 7:30 p.m.
Discussion of “The Brothers Karamazov” by Fyodor Dostoevsky continues. Community Center

**Holiday Gift-Making**
Monday, Dec. 6, 6:30-8:30 p.m.
Kids: come make gifts for your favorite grown-ups and friends. Spaces limited; registration required.

**Bedtime Stories**
NOTE DIFFERENT DAY!
Tuesday, Dec. 7, 7 p.m.
Come in p.j.s, bring your teddy or other stuffed favorites as we read some stories and sing some songs in their half-hour program. Perfect for babies, toddlers, preschoolers and their grown-ups.

**Friends of the Library Board Meeting**
Tuesday, Dec. 7, 7:45 p.m.

**French Circle Time**
Saturday, Dec. 11
10:30 a.m. with Madame Marie
Registration strongly encouraged
Thanks to the Friends of the Library for sponsoring this program.

**Holiday Sing-a-long**
Saturday, Dec. 11, 11:15 a.m.
Come sing songs of the season. All ages welcome.

**Caldecott Club**
Monday, Dec. 13 – 7 p.m.
Come read and discuss this year’s Caldecott Medal possibilities. Best for ages 5 up; adults also welcome.

**Winter Solstice Celebration**
Thursday, Dec. 16, 7 p.m.
All ages; no registration required

**Caldecott Club**
Saturday, Dec. 18
10:30 a.m. with Madame Marie
Thanks to the Friends of the Library for sponsoring this program.

**Junior Banned Books Club and Banned Books Club**
Monday, Dec. 20, 7 p.m.
Both clubs will meet together for our annual meeting focused on picture books. Kids in third grade up are welcome; registration required. Thanks to the Friends of the Library for sponsoring this program.

**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.**

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**Children’ Librarian Shares Favorite Reads for 2010**

**By Karen MacPherson**

It’s that time of year — a time to assess the best children’s and teen books of the year, as so many library patrons ask for recommendations during gift-giving season. Here are a few books on my list, drawn from the reviews I’ve written in 2010 and in my weekly children’s book column for Scripps Howard News Service. The full list is available on our Children’s Room blog: http://www.takomapark.info/library/children/index.html. Check the blog also for updates that I’ll do through the end of the year.

**Caldecott Club**

The second meeting of our Caldecott Club will take place on Monday, Dec. 13 at 7 p.m. Even if you didn’t come to the club’s first meeting in November, please feel free to come to this meeting and enjoy reading and discussing some potential winners of the 2011 Caldecott Medal, given annually by the American Library Association to the best-illustrated children’s book. Our final Caldecott Club meeting will take place on January 31, where we’ll discuss the actual winner of the book, which will be announced in early January. Note: the Caldecott Club is for kids ages 5 up, their parents and other adults who are interested in children’s literature. Registration required; to register, go to: www.takomapark.info/library/registration.html.

**Banned Books Clubs**

We’ll have a joint meeting of our Junior Banned Books Club (for kids in grades 3, 4, and 5) and Banned Books Club (for middle- and high school students) on Monday, Dec. 20 at 7 p.m. We’ll be reading picture books that people in other parts of the country have tried to ban. The list includes classics like “Sylvester and the Magic Pebble,” “The Three Billy Goats Gruff” and “In the Night Kitchen.” All are welcome, but registration is required. To register, go to: www.takomapark.info/library/registration.html.

**Winter Solstice Celebration**

Come celebrate the Winter Solstice (a few days early) on Thursday, Dec. 23. **LIBRARY BRIEFS** continues on page 9
things is that adults don’t mind reading them repeatedly; with her very wry sense of humor, she has the “Sesame Street” knack for entertaining both kids and adults. In “Pot,” for example, Patricelli portrays both the baby’s exuberance and the parents’ relief at a successful trip to the toilet, while in “Tubby,” she concludes the bathtime scene by writing: “Mommy dries me. Daddy dries the bathroom.” Don’t forget to check out previously published board books by Patricelli, including “Quiet Loud,” “Yummy Yucky,” “Binky” and “Blankie.” (Ages 6 months-3).

Check out new board-book editions of some classic children’s books, all perfect for ages 1-3. There’s the marvelous “Ten Black Dots” by author/illustrator Donald Crews; and the hilarious “Sheep” books written by Nancy Shaw and illustrated by Margo Apple. “Sheep in a Jeep” and “Sheep Trick or Treat.” “Sheep out to Eat,” “Sheep in a Shop” and “Sheep on a Ship.”

GRAPHIC AND HYBRID NOVELS

“Big Nate: In a Class By Himself,” details a day in the life of middle-schooler Nate Wright, an 11-year-old who believes that he is “destined for greatness.” Author/illustrator Lincoln Peirce has based this new graphic novel (and its sequel, “Big Nate Strikes Again”) on characters from his popular daily comic strip. Kids will natural enjoy this book, but parents also will get a laugh from this humorously realistic look at the world of middle school. (Ages 8-12.) It’s June 1942 and Evelyn, a wealthy and motherless young girl, is forced by her newly remarried father to summer with her bohemian, dillentante Aunt Lila in New York City. Evelyn is desperately unhappy until she meets Tony, whose dad manages the swanky apartment building where Evelyn is staying. In “The City of Spies,” authors Susan Kim and Laurence Klaran detail Evelyn and Tony’s eschew class distinctions as they work together uncovering a Nazi spy ring right in their neighborhood. (Ages 9 up.)

TEENS

Perhaps only Louis Sachar, author of the Newbery Medal-winning “Holes,” could construct a novel around the game of bridge and make it interesting to teens. But his new book, “The Cardturner,” features such an engaging set of characters that it actually could spark more teen interest in bridge. Sachar’s story revolves around the unlikely friendship that develops between a self-deprecating high-school senior named Alton Richards and his gruff great-uncle Lester, a bridge master who’s blind and needs someone to be his “cardturner.” As it turns out, Alton himself has a knack for playing bridge, which becomes vitally important when tragedy strikes. (Ages 12 up.)

Will Grayson, Will Grayson,” featuring alternating chapters written by two stars of the young adult lit world: John Green and David Levithan. Their book follows two main characters — each named Will Grayson and living in the Chicago area — as they try to navigate life and love during one crucial high school year. Mr. Green’s Will Grayson is straight, and Mr. Levithan’s is gay, but the characters’ sexuality is only one of many aspects explored in this entertaining, provocative and incredibly thought-provoking novel. (Ages 14 up.)

LIBRARY BRIEFS

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16 at 7 p.m. As usual, we’ll begin with local musician and educator Bill Jenkins, who will bring his awesome collection of drums and lead us in some soluce drumming. Then the Foggy Bottom Morris Men will swoop in with their sticks, stories and amazing dancing. This annual event, which we have been offering at the Library for nearly two decades, is perfect for all ages, and no registration is required.

Holiday Sing-a-Long

Come one, come all to our annual Holiday Sing-a-Long on Saturday, Dec. 11 at 11:35 a.m. We’ll sing songs of Hanukkah, Christmas and Kwanzaa, with music provided by students of local music teacher Wendy Laxner. No need to register — just come prepared to lift your voice in song.

Check our Blogs for News and Updates

In recent weeks, we’ve had to make last-minute changes in some of our programs for various reasons. While we avoid making these changes if at all possible, they are sometimes inevitable. That’s why we ask Library patrons to regularly check our Children’s Room Blog (http://www.takomapark.info/library/children/index.html) and our Library News Blog (http://takomapark.info/library/ml/index.html). We try hard to keep these blogs updated and will post any schedule changes immediately. Of course, you also are welcome to call us at 301-891-7259 when we are open, but you can check our virtual library via the blogs 24 hours a day, seven days a week.

Book Sale Scores

Under a sunny sky and warming temperatures, local residents, passers by and book dealers crowded the Library lawn and discovered an abundance of bargains at the Friends of the Library Book Sale on October 23. By the sale’s end at 3 p.m., a record amount of nearly $3,000 had been raised by the Friends. All the funds go to the Takoma Park Library in the form of gifts. The sale’s success was made possible through the energetic support of a multitude of volunteers. In no special order, thanks are warmly extended to the following helpers: Suzanne Morgan, Anne Marie and Ripley Stroud, Sam McCollin, Neema Malloy, Patricia McMahon, Mary Ellen Koenig, Must Deyo, Ren Frey, Silvey Shafer, Dan and Nancy Kunkel, Elaine Vaurio, Judy Tribley, Sherlyn and John Ernst, Rebekah Zandton, Karen Boyer, Pat Hanrahan, Kay Daniels Cohen, Katherine Dixon-Pegol, Claudine Schwaber, Clar Garman, Maurice Belanger, Michele Morgan Tim Rahn, Tim Hardin, Noreen Wells and the Department of Public Works. Special thanks are due to Library staf Dave Burbank who handled book donations throughout the year with help from Janet Fendrezyczky, and Book Sale Coordinator Merrill Lessler.

The Friends book sale will return in the Spring.

Friends Reading Group to discuss Camus

Interspersed with lengthy works such as “The Brothers Karamazov” and “Moby Dick,” the Friends Reading Group schedules discussions of shorter books. On Thursday, Jan. 6 at 7:30 p.m. in the Hydrangea Room, they will look at “The First Man” by Nobel Prize winner Albert Camus. “The First Man” was discovered in the wreckage of the car accident that killed Camus in 1960, and was published 25 years later. It “tells the story of Jacques Cormery, a boy who lived a life much like Camus’ own. Camus summons up the sights, sounds and textures of a childhood circumscribed by poverty and a father’s death yet redeemed by the austere beauty of Algeria and the boy’s attachment to his nearly deaf-mute mother.” [Publisher’s note]

The “Boston Globe” called this book a “masterpiece…One of the most extraordinary evocations of childhood that exist in any language.” The “Los Angeles Times Book Review” called it “Rending, brilliant…joyfully vivid…has an overwhelming emotional integrity…To read it is to visit a tomb and find that a spring is bubbling from it.” Copies of “The First Man” are available at the Takoma Park Library, provided by the Friends of the Library. All are invited to attend the discussion.
**Takoma Park's Anti-Crime Seminar a Success**

On October 26-27, Chief Ronald Ricucci of the Takoma Park Police Department introduced a new Crime Prevention and Personal Safety seminar to the City of Takoma Park. "Being a Victim is a seminar that teaches easy-to-understand methods you can use to increase awareness and prevent criminal confrontation. In 17 hours, you get the tools you need to develop your own personal safety strategy, including information about:

- The psychology of the criminal mind
- Personal and technological security
- Home and phone security
- Self-defense tools and training options
- Automobile and travel security

There were 118 participants attending the seminar, and feedback was overwhelmingly positive. One participant wrote that the instructor was "fantastic," using humor to hold the attention of the group. Another called the program "excellent" because "it showed me ways to take precautions to make it hard on the criminal," and "really drives home how vulnerable we are based on our practices." Others said they learned useful "tricks" for safety, enjoyed the common-sense tone of the course, and were impressed with handouts they plan to use for reference.

Ricucci is encouraged by the number of participants and will be holding another Refuse to be a Victim seminar in the future.

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**Holiday Safety Precautions**

As we approach the holiday season, we ask that our residents take a couple of safety precautions to ensure a safe and happy holiday season:

1. Park in well-lighted spaces when at the shopping centers.
2. When shopping, keep your purse attached to you or your shopping cart. Do not leave your purse unattended or unattended.
3. Keep your children in sight at all times. Don't let them wander off.
4. Make sure all credit cards are returned to you when shopping.
5. If you take purchased items to your car and want to resume shopping, put those items in your trunk. Never leave packages in open view in an unattended car.
6. Be aware of your surroundings at all times.
7. During the holidays, don't drink and drive - always have a designated driver.
8. During the holiday season, the police will be conducting sobriety checkpoints. Be aware.

The holiday season is a time for family and fun. Don't become a victim. Be safe, not sorry.

**Happy Holidays from the Takoma Park Police Department!**

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**Public Information Meeting**

**Fitness Center and Health and Wellbeing Village**

On the Washington Adventist Hospital and University grounds, December 8 & 9: 7 p.m.

Washington Adventist University Cafeteria

Wilkinson Hall, 2nd Floor

7600 Flower Ave., Takoma Park

Washington Adventist Hospital. Because the hospital will be shifting acute-care services to White Oak, the Village will probably focus on primary care in Takoma Park, Stocks said, with doctors' offices and other related facilities.

"The Health and Wellbeing Village would be a terrific resource for Takoma Park," said Stocks. "We think that the fitness center would be a major anchor, providing Adventist Healthcare with facilities for primary care and rehabilitative care and the community with access to educational and fitness facilities."

For decades, the hospital and university have collaborated through programs such as having university nursing students do their practicum training at the hospital. Stocks said. "The university is very much focused on the future of healthcare and healthcare careers," Stock said, citing the university's creation in 2009 of the Department of Health, Wellness and Physical Education. "Bringing together health and health education is the core of our 'village' concept."

Potentially, the project can fulfill many needs simultaneously. "It all fits together," said Day. "We had a university that was thinking about replacing a gym that was built in 1929, as well as building a fitness center. We had a hospital that wanted to offer rehabilitation services, sports medicine and holistic care. Plus, we learned through interviews about the community's needs for a fitness center for adults, as well as recreational and athletic opportunities for kids."

Now, it's a matter of fine-tuning the plan. "Our firm [Dynamis] has gone through this process for reuse of hospital facilities for more than 100 projects," said Day. "We have learned that creating the public opportunity gives the most valuable information, especially through face-to-face contact of individual interviews and public meetings. We conducted more than 200 interviews in Takoma Park, among hospital and university staff, as well as city residents... We have a draft design, and we are vetting the components with all the constituents."

Day said that the hospital and university want to finalize the design fairly rapidly, in part because some of the funding for the project comes from a grant that will expire in 2015. The Joseph A. Selligren Grant is a set-aside for Washington Adventist University as part of the state's support for Maryland Independent Colleges and Universities. "We will have to conduct private fund-raising, too, but the state grant is a driving factor," said Day.

Optimally, Dynamis will "refine the programmed priorities" for the sports center within two months of completion of the public meetings, said Day. In tandem, the project's architect will update the design to meet the programmatic objectives and accommodate the limitations of the proposed site. With that information, officials at the hospital and university can review the plan and decide on how to move forward.
Loose leaf collection will continue through December 22 this year. Residents can rake leaves to the curb at their convenience through that date. Most streets will not have an assigned collection day. The goal of the program is to collect leaf piles within two weeks of their appearance at the curb. Leaf collection is dependent on the weather, and rain and freezing conditions can slow collection. Bagged yard waste collection will continue to be offered by the City on Mondays throughout the year.

There are five streets that have an assigned collection date; they are state highways and have heavy traffic volume. Carroll Avenue, from the 7000 to 7800 block, Ethan Allen Avenue, and Flower Avenue, from the 7900 to 8600 block, will have collection on Monday, Dec. 20. Piney Branch Road and Philadelphia Avenue will have collection on Friday, Dec. 17. On these dates, only these streets will receive collection.

The Public Works Department welcomes your comments and suggestions about the service we are providing. Please contact Public Works by phone: 301-891-7633. You can also call the leaf collection hotline at 301-891-7626 to notify us when your leaves have been raked out. We will collect reported piles from the hotline calls within a week to 10 days of the call.

The City also operates the weekly Monday day collection for bagged grass, leaves, branches and brush all year long. The Monday collection requires leaves and loose yard materials to be in paper bags, trash cans or stiff-sided containers. Plastic bags cannot be used for yard material because these items are composted and the plastic interferes with the composting process. Branches must be less than four feet long and less than three inches in diameter and tied into small bundles or stacked in a trash can. The Monday yard waste collection is cancelled on weeks with a Monday holiday.

Please follow these guidelines:

**Rake leaves into a pile at the edge of the curb. Do not rake leaves into the street. Leaf piles can create traffic hazards.**

1. Do not park your car in front of a leaf pile and when raking please try to avoid piling leaves where cars are likely to be parked.
2. The vacuum leaf collection is for leaves only. Do not include branches, brush, vines, rocks or debris. These items can seriously damage equipment and delay collection.
3. Do not pile leaves near storm drain inlets. Leaves can block the drains and cause flooding problems.

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### ANNEXATION

**continued from page 1**

within the City of Takoma Park. East of the edge of the pavement, the land is Silver Spring, which is an unincorporated area of Montgomery County. It is this portion of land—between the roadway and the front property lines of the homes, apartments and businesses on the Silver Spring side of the street—that is proposed to be annexed.

The area is currently a mix of asphalt pathway, dirt, grass, trees and some concrete sidewalk. Pedestrians find that walking along the east side of the roadway to schools, shopping and bus stops is unsafe. The route is not usable at all by those who are handicapped.

#### Why is the City considering annexation?

Currently, Flower Avenue between Piney Branch Road and Carroll Avenue is MD 787, a State Highway. It does not really function as a highway and Maryland would like to remove it from their State Highway inventory. Currently, they own the right-of-way and are responsible for maintaining the roadway.

Discussions between the State Highway Administration (SHA) and the City of Takoma Park are underway concerning several State Highways in Takoma Park—in fact, these discussions were at one point linked as a “road swap” but have since been decoupled. The discussions are explained in the same services from Takoma Park, just as the City of Takoma Park maintains the sidewalk on the west side of Flower Avenue, and Montgomery County maintains it on the east side. Because the eastern side walk is in such poor shape, Takoma Park has been urging the County to improve the sidewalk for a number of years. The County has the sidewalk improvement project scheduled for Fiscal Year 2016. The project had been scheduled for earlier, but, due to budget constraints, has been delayed several times.

#### A Green Street

Besides wanting to have the east sidewalk improved, Takoma Park staff has suggested that this portion of Flower Avenue would be a good “green street.” “Green streets” slow stormwater runoff by diverting it through landscaped areas, and at the same time accommodate autos, bicyclists, transit riders and pedestrians in a safe and attractive setting. Nationwide, there is a growing movement for this type of street design. (See photos.)

Since Montgomery County already has plans to improve the sidewalk, Takoma Park has been discussing ways the County could contribute to the “green street” project now. Although the County does not have funds in its current budget for the project, staff believes the County could contribute funds or services in exchange for the City agreeing to maintain the full right-of-way in the future via the annexation. Several County officials have agreed that this segment of Flower Avenue would be a good candidate for a “green street” project.

If the annexation is not approved, but SHA removes this segment of Flower Avenue from its State Highway inventory, Takoma Park will be responsible for maintaining its side of the street and the two lanes of pavement, while Montgomery County will continue to be responsible for the remaining right-of-way. SHA could choose to simply repave the roadway with the $696,000 before removing the State Highway designation, as it had offered several months ago, but no sidewalk improvements would be made.

#### How annexation impacts residents

Annexion of the full width of the right-of-way by Takoma Park would mean that Takoma Park would be responsible for maintaining the road instead of SHA, filling potholes, plowing snow, taking responsibility for road signs, etc.

Residents on the Silver Spring side of Flower Avenue would still receive services like trash, recycling and leaf collection from Montgomery County; residents on the Takoma Park side of Flower Avenue will receive the same services from Takoma Park, just as they always have.

If the City Council decides to pursue the renovation of Flower Avenue as a “green street,” the proposed street improvements will affect residents and property owners of both the Takoma Park and Silver Spring sides of the streets. All residents and property owners along the street would be strongly urged to participate in the planning process. After basic information is gathered—including such a survey that identifies the exact boundaries of the right-of-way, and the location of trees, street lights, etc.—residents and owners would need to help determine how much on-street parking is needed, where the sidewalk should be located, how to accommodate trees, access to properties, etc.

A survey of the right-of-way is required before the Council could vote on the annexation. The survey that would be done is also needed for the street improvement planning process. If the Council decides to move forward on the street improvements, community meetings will be scheduled.

#### When would annexation occur?

The Takoma Park City Council started the process to consider annexation at its meeting on Nov. 22. Over the month of December, the City will be advertising the public hearing and informing County and State agencies about the possible annexation. City staff will prepare a document that details the expected cost to maintain and police this added section of right-of-way and how the City would accommodate those added expenses.

The City Council will hear testimony from Takoma Park and Silver Spring residents at the Feb. 7 public hearing, consider the information on the expected costs to maintain and police the annexation area, then vote on the annexation. A vote on the annexation may be held as early as Feb. 14. If the City Council decides to approve the annexation, annexation would become effective 45 days following that vote. If the Council does not approve the annexation, it may still consider trying to coordinate with the County on a green street project.

For more information on the annexation process or the possible changes to Flower Avenue contact Suzanne Ludlow at SuzanneL@takomagov.org or 301-891-7229.
SPOOKTACULAR!

Halloween, Takoma Park Style

Takoma Park’s annual Halloween festivities brought out all sorts of town characters, who paraded through the streets, then followed the firetruck to Piney Branch Elementary School for refreshments. Among them were, clockwise from top right, a very young Frankenstein, a serious fire-fighter, pretty kitty, frilly princess, tiny pup, a family from Alice in Wonderland and, below, one of many canine competitors in the costume contest.

Photos by James Baxter