**Sligo Creek Homeless Camp Cleared**

By Kevin Adler

As a long-time user of the pathways along Sligo Creek, Donna Victoria is accustomed to finding the remnants of people’s parties and evidence of a homeless person or two camping out in the underbrush. But she was surprised in January when a walk in the woods near the intersection of Sligo Creek Parkway and New Hampshire Avenue revealed what appeared to be a large homeless encampment hidden in the undergrowth.

“People have been living in the woods in the park and the Long Branch stream valley for years. I’ve cleaned up some of the camps when they have been abandoned in colder weather,” says Victoria, a former City Councilmember and current member of the Takoma Park Police Department’s Advisory Board. “But it was one person at that location or somewhere else. This camp is a lot bigger than in the past. It looked like maybe five or six people were using it.”

Victoria’s discovery set in motion a series of phone calls and e-mails that resulted in the Maryland-National Capital Park and Planning Commission’s (Parks Department), which has jurisdiction over the park, sending in a crew to clean the site, remove some of the invasive vines, and commit to regular monitoring to try to ensure that campers do not return. The initial cleanup was completed in mid-February.

The former camp is at the base of a steep hill between Sligo Creek, Bright Light Baptist Church, and New Hampshire Avenue. It’s near Becca Lilly Neighborhood Park, adding a layer of concern for users of that playground, said Ward 6 Councilmember Fred Schultz, in whose ward the site is located. “Donna Victoria informed me about it, and I went to investigate. It’s almost impossible to find it, but when you do, it’s huge and it’s a mess,” he says. “There’s a huge pile of detritus—trash, food containers, clothing, shopping carts.”

Dense undergrowth of porcelain berry vines makes it hard to see from roads above or below, the bike path, or the church’s parking lot, even in the winter, says Schultz. “Porcelain berry vines are like a living time capsule. They get left behind from when people camped. There’s a good argument for keeping them if it means protecting the site.”

**Recent Bank Robbery a “Life Changing” Event**

**Takoma Park Police Chief Ronald Ricucci shares his account**

By Virginia Myers

Police Chief Ronald Ricucci was driving to work, taking a business call, when the alert tone in his car sounded. And kept sounding. “Suspicious package at Capital One Bank,” came through. Then, a call from a bank teller, and the corresponding police radio alert: “Armed robbery in progress.”

Recalling the incident, Ricucci says, “It’s a day I’ll never forget,” even after 43 years of experience as a police officer. Not only is any bank robbery memorable, the rapid response to the Capital One Bank at the corner of New Hampshire Avenue and University Boulevard—five squad cars began arriving within 45 seconds—was “a chief of police’s greatest dream come true,” he says. A hostage survived, a perpetrator was stopped, and, remarkably, much of the incident was on television almost as it was unfolding.

As many people know, after extensive national media coverage of the event, the Takoma Park bank robbery attempt began just before 9:30 a.m. on Friday, January 27. A man wearing a mask and hood walked up to a Capital One bank teller and drew a 9mm handgun. Speaking in Spanish, he demanded cash. On the counter before him, placed a wire-and-metal device that looked like a bomb; a similar device was strapped to his shoulder.

According to police reports, when a “Good Samaritan” customer tried to grab the suspect’s gun, the suspect pistol whipped him. During the commotion, a bank employee ran outside for help. The gunman, meanwhile, had succeeded in getting a packet of cash and had taken a teller as hostage inside the bank. He walked outdoors with his hostage, a teller, his gun to her head.

There he was surrounded by police officers who had responded from Takoma Park, Prince George’s County and Montgomery County. Their guns were trained on him. As if this weren’t enough, the dye pack the teller had managed to attach to the cash exploded. Then the suspect slipped on...
City Council Action*

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

February 7, 2011 – Special Session
The Consent Agenda was adopted. It consisted of:
- Resolution 2011-6 opposing MC 19-11
  (Montgomery County – Polling Places –
  Electioneering Boundaries)
- Resolution 2011-7 opposing HB 12
  (Procurement – Employee Uniforms and
  Equipment – Place of Manufacture)

TAKING CARE OF BUSINESS:

NEWS BRIEFS FROM THE CITY CLERK

Ward 1 Night – Monday, March 21
Residents of Ward 1 are invited to join the City Council on Monday, March 21 for a reception from 7:30 p.m. in the Community Center Lobby. A special Ward 1 public comment session will be held at the beginning of the City Council meeting, beginning at 7:30 p.m.

The tentative schedule for future Ward Nights is:
- Ward 3 – April 11 (Monday)
- Ward 6 – May 16 (Monday)
- Ward 2 – June 20 (Monday)

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

PUBLIC HEARING NOTICE
119-127 Geneva Avenue Subdivision
Monday, March 7, 2011, 7:30 p.m.
Community Center Auditorium, 7500 Maple Avenue

The public is encouraged to attend a public hearing on Monday, March 7, at 7:30 p.m. in the Community Center Auditorium to comment on a proposed subdivision of 119-127 Geneva Ave. After preliminary meeting matters, the developer will make a presentation. The public hearing will follow the presentation. Written comments may be sent to clerk@takomagov.org or City Clerk, 7500 Maple Ave., Takoma Park, Md. 20912.

COUNCIL COMPENSATION COMMITTEE VOLUNTEERS NEEDED

The City Council is seeking Takoma Park residents to serve on a 2011 Council Compensation Committee to review the salaries of the mayor and councilmembers. The Committee will make recommendations to the Council regarding whether or not the current salaries should be adjusted. Any adjustment would be adopted by ordinance prior to the 2011 election and would take effect with the next succeeding City Council. The Committee will be asked to make its report and recommendation to the Council on May 2, 2011. Salaries were last adjusted for the Council term which began in November 2007. The Mayor currently receives $13,000 per year; Councilmembers receive $10,000 per year.

Deadline for applications: March 11, 2011. Application forms and additional information are available online at www.takomaparkmd.gov/clerk. Submit applications to the Clerk, City of Takoma Park, 7500 Maple Ave., Takoma Park, Md. 20912 or jessie@takomagov.org. For additional information, contact the Clerk at 301-891-7267.

REDIRECTING TASK FORCE TO BE APPOINTED

The City Council is recruiting volunteers to serve on a Redistricting Task Force. The Task Force will be charged with applying the 2010 Takoma Park census block data to evaluate the population distribution within the six wards and make recommendations to the City Council as to whether redistricting is needed and, if so, to provide options for revised ward boundaries. The next City of Takoma Park election will be held on November 8, 2011.

Deadline for applications: March 11, 2011. Application forms and additional information are available online at www.takomaparkmd.gov/clerk. Submit applications to the City Clerk, City of Takoma Park, 7500 Maple Ave., Takoma Park, Md. 20912 or Jessie@takomagov.org. For additional information, contact the Clerk at 301-891-7267.

TAKOMA PARK ELECTION BOARD OPPORTUNITY AVAILABLE

The Takoma Park Board of Elections is now planning for the November 8, 2011 City Election. There is one vacancy at the present time. If you are a Takoma Park registered voter who is interested in working with a dedicated group of volunteers to plan and conduct the next and future elections, please contact Jessie Carpenter, City Clerk, at 301-891-7267 or jessie@takomagov.org.

City Council Calendar

Monday, March 7 – City Council meeting, 7:30 p.m. (CC Auditorium)
Tuesday, March 8 – Facade Advisory Board meeting, 7 p.m. (CC Hydrangeas Room)
Tuesday, March 8 – Tree Commission meeting, 6:30 p.m. (CC Lilac Room)
Tuesday, March 8 – Takoma Junction Task Force meeting, 7:30 p.m. (CC Hydrangea Room)
Thursday, March 10 – Emergency Preparedness Committee meeting, 8:30 a.m. (CC Hydrangea Room)
Monday, March 14 – City Council meeting, 7:30 p.m. (CC Auditorium)
Tuesday, March 15 – Washington Adventist Hospital Land Use Committee, 7:30 p.m. (CC Lilac Room)
Thursday, March 17 – Nuclear Free Takoma Park Committee, 7:30 p.m. (CC Hydrangea Room)
Monday, March 21 – Ward 1 Night Reception, 7:30 p.m. (in the Community Center Atrium Lobby)
Monday, March 21 – City Council meeting, 7:30 p.m. (CC Auditorium)
Tuesday, March 22 – Arts and Humanities Commission meeting, 7:30 p.m. (CC Hydrangea Room)
Wednesday, March 23 – Takoma Junction Task Force meeting, 7:30 p.m. (CC Hydrangea Room)
Monday, March 28 – City Council meeting, 7:30 p.m. (CC Auditorium)

*For the most up to date information, check 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.

NOTICE ON ADA COMPLIANCE

The City of Takoma Park is committed to ensuring that accommodations is invited to contact the Deputy City Clerk at 301-891-7267 or clerk@takomagov.org.

Volunteers Needed to Serve on Council Appointed Boards, Committees, and Commissions

There are opportunities for Takoma Park residents to serve on a number of City boards, commissions, and committees. If you feel you can make a positive contribution, please consider volunteering. 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)
Takoma Park Board of Elections (vacancy)
Emergency Preparedness Committee (vacancies)
Ethics Commission (vacancies)
Nuclear-Free Takoma Park Committee (vacancies)
Personnel Appeal Board (vacancy)
Recreation Committee (vacancies)
Washington Adventist Hospital Land Use Committee (vacancies)

Visit with the Mayor

Mayor Bruce Williams welcomes community input and invites you to meet with him during his regular hours on Tuesday: by appointment from 2 - 5 p.m., with walk-ins from 5 - 7 p.m. To schedule a meeting, contact Peggye Washington at 301-892-7230 or peggye@takomagov.org.
Video Americain owner Barry Solan is happy to guide customers through the many categories of film at his eclectic store in Takoma Park.

The Last Video Store
Video Americain hangs on in the digital age

BY BOB GULDIN

Walk into the store on Laurel Avenue in Old Town Takoma Park, and you’ll find thousands of shelf-feet full of VHS tapes and DVDs — everything from Charlie Chaplin to Japanese animé to the latest Harry Potter. You may see your neighbor browsing new releases, or get some advice from a friendly but enthusiastic stranger on films by Kurosawa, or the latest season of “Lost,” or what sort of movie will engage parents, tweens and teens all at once. The staff, in classic video store mode, is mostly young, opinionated and devoted to film, ready to make suggestions or direct you to the right shelf for your selection. You can bring your dog while you shop, or sit on the old, deflated couch and watch a snippet of whatever’s playing — more than likely the old, de- rated couch and watch a snippet flim, ready to make suggestions or direct them to it.

“I became the guy I never wanted to be — the holding on guy,” says Barry Solan, the store founder. Most likely, he’ll hold on as long as he can. “I love the store and take pride in it.”

Solan, a plump and shaggy brown bear of a man, is a natural behind the counter, taking in money, cajoling staff, kibitzing with customers. He’s been playing that role since he was five years old.

Solan’s parents owned and ran a mom and pop grocery store in Wilmington, Del. and young Barry was always behind the counter with them. He may have a master’s degree and a teaching certificate, but he was born to run a business.

He opened Video Americain in Takoma Park in 1995. “We were very lucky to get into Takoma Park,” Solan says. He attributes his success here not only to a sophisticated film-loving community that appreciates a broad selection of indie, foreign and classic movies, but also to a great landlord, John Urciolo. Urciolo owns most of the block that houses the Old Town Post Office, Now and Then and numerous other small businesses.

“John has been very amenable to working with the store-owners,” Solan says. “He has a vision of the mix of businesses he wants to see on the street.” Solan recalls that in December 2009 Urciolo gave his tenants a significant discount on the month’s rent, to help them through one of the lowest points in the recession.

Even so, the general nationwide decline in video rentals has hit Video Americain too — just not as hard as it has hit most of the smaller, conventional video stores in strip malls and small towns. “The last four months of 2010 were down 15 percent compared to the year before,” Solan says. February was not so bad: “Winter’s our best season of ‘Lost,’” he says, “so I’m not in touch with my pain right now.”

Solan got into the video biz in stages. As a young man, he worked in a movie theater in Philadelphia with a video store attached to it. From 1979 to 1986, he ran the State Theater, a movie house in Newark, Del., that showed a lot of foreign films. He opened his first video store in Newark in 1988, and spread out from there. Solan, who’s been in it from the start, takes a broad view of the rise and fall of the video era. “It was a bottom-up revolution.”

VIDEO AMERICAIN continues on page 9
Financial Management Classes

Learning about credit, home buying and basic money management

Given the current economic environment, financial planning and credit management has become not only important, but necessary. Accumulating wealth doesn’t just happen. Individuals have to decide and plan to do it. The City of Takoma Park is now providing an opportunity for residents to learn how to plan and manage their financial futures. Credit and financial management classes will be offered again in April. Below is the schedule of classes. The size of each class is limited and pre-registration is required by calling Linda Walker at 301-891-7222 or by e-mail at lindaw@takomagov.org.

CREDIT MANAGEMENT (TWO)
April 27 and May 11
7 – 9:15 p.m.
Takoma Park Community Center

Understanding Credit, April 27
• Credit: How it all began
• Understanding your credit report
• What is a credit score?
• The five factors of a credit score
• Why do credit scores are used

Protecting and Improving Your Credit, May 11
• Establishing credit
• Credit repair, fact or fiction
• Effective credit management techniques
• Identity theft
• Case study

FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT (THREE)
May 25, June 8, June 22
7 – 9:15 p.m.
Takoma Park Community Center

Getting to Know the Financial You, May 25
• Developing a financial plan
• Setting your financial goals
• Keeping good records
• Case study

Changing the Way You Think about Finances, June 8
• What is your cash flow pattern
• Needs vs. wants assessment
• Creating a budget
• Case Study

Thinking Like an Investor, June 22
• Identifying the different forms of income
• Moving from savings to investing
• Investment vehicles
• Case study

A tenant contacted the Mailbox regarding the types of documents that should be submitted with a Commission on Landlord-Tenant Affair (COLTA) Complaint Form, the deadline for submitting complaint-related documents that may not be available when the complaint is filed, and when the landlord’s answer to the complaint must be submitted.

Documents submitted with the COLTA complaint form should include a copy of the signed lease, and may include any documents supporting the complaint, such as County housing inspection reports, correspondence between the tenant and landlord or the landlord’s agent(s), copies of cancelled checks, invoices, receipts and photographs. Only photographs printed on photographic paper may be submitted and all photographs must be dated and include a brief statement describing what each photograph represents. An addendum forwarded by the Landlord-Tenant Office to the complainant with the complaint form reiterates this information.

In accordance with COLTA Regulations (which may be reviewed at the city’s website, takomapark.md.gov), all complaint-related documents (except those resulting from a commission-issued subpoena) and written descriptions of physical evidence not submitted with the complaint must be submitted within 15 days after filing the complaint. Failure to meet this post-filing document submission deadline may result in the exclusion of the documents, unless the Commission allows the documents to be admitted upon show of good cause.

Tenants or landlords submitting COLTA complaints are reminded that in those instances where complaints result in a commission hearing, it is imperative that the complaint file, which is provided in advance of the hearing to the hearing panel and the other party, contain all relevant complaint documents. Failing to meet all of the requirements outlined will reduce the probability of documents being submitted that have not been previously reviewed by the hearing panel or the other party prior to the hearing.

COLTA Administrative Regulations require that a sworn written answer to the complaint be filed within 20 days after the complaint has been mailed by the department. The written response must indicate whether the respondent intends to defend against the complaint and provide a brief statement indicating the ground(s) of his/her defense. A copy of the complaint response along with all relevant documents must be given to the complainant at the time the response is sent to COLTA. An addendum forwarded by the Landlord-Tenant Office to the respondent with the complaint form reiterates this information.

The failure to file a timely response constitutes a waiver of the respondent’s right to present evidence or argument in defense of the complaint. The failure to identify physical evidence or file relevant documents with the response may result in their exclusion unless the commission allows the documents to be admitted upon the showing of good cause.

Tenants or landlords with questions about the city’s landlord-tenant law or COLTA may call 301-891-7215 and/or contact us at mosews@takomagov.org.

Main Street Takoma
Facade Improvement Grant

City businesses can apply for new façade improvement funds available through the City this month. The Main Street Takoma Façade Improvement Grant program encourages business and property owners to make physical improvements to building exteriors and their surroundings. Examples of eligible activities include signage, awnings, façade rehabilitation and outdoor furniture.

An information session about the program will be held from 11 a.m. to noon on March 7 at Roscoe’s Pizza, 7040 Carroll Ave. To RSVP or to set up a preliminary meeting, contact Carman Lam at 301-891-7219 or carmanl@takomagov.org.

Free Tax Preparation Available

If you are a family of two or more and earned less than $45,000 or an individual with no dependents and earned less than $25,000 in 2010, you may qualify for free tax preparation. IRS-certified volunteers at local nonprofit and government agencies will e-file your taxes and direct deposit your state tax refund for you. This service is being co-sponsored by an assortment of organizations including Community Action Partnership and Montgomery County.

The service is available by appointment only. You may call the following local centers: TESS Center (Takoma-East Silver Spring Community Service Center) at 8513 Piney Branch Road, Silver Spring, 301-565-7675, or Montgomery County Community Action Agency at the Mid-County Services Center, 2424 Reddie Drive, Wheaton, 240-777-1123.

You are invited
to a free class

“Tenant Rights in Takoma Park”
on Thursday, March 10
7 – 8:30 p.m.

Takoma Park Community Center
Lilac Room
7500 Maple Avenue
Takoma Park, Maryland

Light Refreshments will be served

To Register: Call 301-891-7215

Following Format with Landlord-Tenant Complaint Forms

By Moses A. Wilds, Jr.
Landlord-Tenant Mediation Specialist

Takoma Park, 7222 or by e-mail at lindaw@takomagov.org

FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT (THREE)
May 25, June 8, June 22
7 – 9:15 p.m.
Takoma Park Community Center

Getting to Know the Financial You, May 25
• Developing a financial plan
• Setting your financial goals
• Keeping good records
• Case study

Changing the Way You Think about Finances, June 8
• What is your cash flow pattern
• Needs vs. wants assessment
• Creating a budget
• Case Study

Thinking Like an Investor, June 22
• Identifying the different forms of income
• Moving from savings to investing
• Investment vehicles
• Case study
We Are Takoma

Film Describes Pioneering Women Pilots

“Breaking through the Clouds: The First Women’s National Air Derby.”

Film and Discussion with Filmmaker Heather Taylor
7 p.m. March 8
Takoma Park Auditorium
7500 Maple Avenue
Free

On Tuesday, March 8, the City celebrates International Women’s Day with a special screening of “Breaking through the Clouds: The First Women’s National Air Derby.” The film chronicles the story of 20 women (including Amelia Earhart) who raced across the United States in 1929 over a nine-day span to prove that women could fly. Facing cultural stereotypes, mechanical failures, navigational challenges and endless chicken dinners in every stop along the way, the women became pioneering legends in aviation. Following the screening, filmmaker Heather Taylor will answer questions about the content the film, as well as the process of making it.

The program is co-sponsored by Dots in Progress, Women in Film, Video-DC and the City of Takoma Park’s Arts and Humanities Commission.

For more information contact us at 301.891.7224 or ahc@takomagov.org, or see http://www.takomaparkmd.com/TakomaPark/ArtsAndHumanities/Events/.

“American Feud” Film Traces Partisan Politics

“American Feud: A History of Conservatives and Liberals”

Film and Discussion with Filmmakers Richard Hall and Simone Fary
7:30 p.m. March 10
Takoma Park Auditorium
7500 Maple Avenue
Free

An entire political science course in 90 minutes, “American Feud” is the first documentary to trace the history of liberalism and conservatism in the United States. Designed to appeal to people of all interests and temperaments, from the impassioned to the merely curious, “American Feud” explores the back story of a political system seemingly in crisis. Interviews with a variety of distinguished and, sometimes, controversial figures, such as Noam Chomsky, G. Gordon Liddy, Howard Zinn, Kevin Phillips and Michael Kazin, among others, offer a nuanced picture of how two political philosophies have changed over time. The film challenges viewers to revisit certain “outdated” ideas, which prevent them, the filmmakers argue, from having good government now and in the future.

Richard Hall’s work includes “Southwest” and “The Fall of the Elephant: 1992 Republican National Convention,” screened in 1992 and 1993, respectively, at respected film festivals. He is a video journalist for C-SPAN’s Book TV since its inception in 1998, directing and producing Book TV programs. Simone Fary’s work includes “Cheng Se Tseo in His Own Words” (2002), screened on two PBS affiliates in Pennsylvania and at the 2004 Asian film festival. She also produced “Compassionate Conservatism,” a 30-second Internet PSA that placed in the top 5 percent of entrants in MoveOn.org’s “Bush in 30 Seconds” contest.

Brought to you by the City of Takoma Park’s Arts and Humanities Commission.

For more information contact us at 301.891.7224 or ahc@takomagov.org, or see http://www.takomaparkmd.com/TakomaPark/ArtsAndHumanities/Events/.

Artists needed for public project

The Old Takoma Business Association (OTBA) is sponsoring a new public art project for its Old Takoma’s Main Street corridor (Carroll Avenue in Takoma Park, Maryland through Carroll Street, Northwest in Takoma, D.C.). reCYCLE is a public art exhibit designed to highlight the art, bicycling and recycling cultures of Old Takoma. The OTBA is seeking local artists/creators/welders or teams to design and build outdoor sculptures using mostly bicycles and spare bicycle parts to be installed along the sidewalks to create a self-guided, walking tour with the goal of attracting and engaging visitors and showcasing Old Takoma.

The sculptures will remain in place for four to six months and then be auctioned off to the public.

For more info and artist application: visit http://www.mainstreettakoma.org/files/reCYCLE%20artist%20application.pdf.

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.

The following free events are sponsored by the Takoma Park Arts and Humanities Commission.

“Cycles,” with Marcie Wolf-Hubbard, Helina Metaferia and Rosalind Alumanah

The Galleries at the Takoma Park Community Center present four exhibitions in the month of March. The Cycle exhibition will combine the mixed media work of Marcie Wolf-Hubbard, an accomplished Montgomery County artist and educator, the paintings of Helina Metaferia, a holistic practitioner of the healing arts, large-scale black and white canvases of Rosalind Alumanah, an African artist, and the work of students who participated in the 2010 Mixed Media Artist Residency program hosted by Pyramid Atlantic in Silver Spring, in December 2010.

Opening reception will be held on Friday, March 4 from 6 – 8 p.m., with a musical performance from 6:30 – 7:30 p.m. by David Hubbard and Bob Lash of Sky High Radio.

“American Feud: A History of Conservatives and Liberals”

An entire political science course in 90 minutes, “American Feud” is the first documentary to trace the history of liberalism and conservatism in the United States. Designed to appeal to people of all interests and temperaments, from the impassioned to the merely curious, “American Feud” explores the back story of a political system seemingly in crisis. Discussion with filmmakers Richard Hall and Simone Fary follows the Thursday, March 10 screening. Event begins at 7:30 p.m. and will be held in the Takoma Park Community Center Auditorium.

Third Thursday Poetry Reading

The Kafeflektaschi Trio (Judy Neri, Ellen Cole and Jill Raymond) and Kathi Wolfe are featured at this month’s poetry reading. The reading takes place on Thursday, March 17, with an hour of original work read by the poets themselves. The reading begins at 7:30 p.m. and will be held in the Takoma Park Community Center Auditorium.

For information on these and other activities sponsored by the Takoma Park Arts and Humanities Commission, please contact Sara Anne Daines at 301.891.7224 or by email at SaraD@takomagov.org or check us out on Facebook http://facebook.com/takomaparkmd.
March Recreation

Creative Kids InterAct Story
Ages 8 – 10
An innovative and dynamic literature-based drama program introduces students to acting, increases their love of books, encourages literacy and builds vocabulary. Each week, a professional actor/teacher will lead the class in exploring and dramatizing specially selected children's stories based on these books, using communication and teamwork that boosts self-esteem and is loads of fun! Six weeks. Maximum 15, minimum 10. Instruction provided by InterAct Story staff.

March 2 – April 6
TP resident $35
Non-resident $45

Spring Break Camp – The Great Outdoors
Ages 5 – 11
Come experience the great outdoors with Takoma Park Recreation. Hikes, crafts, swimming, a trip to Chesapeake Children's Museum to learn about the critters that live in and around the Chesapeake Bay, a special guest plus a whole lot of fun are in store. The week will end with an Earth Day celebration.

TP Community Center
9 a.m. – 4 p.m., Mon. – Fri.
April 18 – 22
TP resident $140
Non-resident $160
Before Care
7 – 9 a.m., Mon. – Fri.
TP resident $35
Non-resident $45

After Care
4 – 6 p.m., Mon. – Fri.
TP resident $35
Non-resident $45

Fun Days
Ages 5 – 12
The Fun Day Program offers exciting field trips on scheduled whole day school closings and activities and performances on scheduled half-day closings. Participants will meet at the Community Center. On half days only, students attending Takoma Park Elementary will be picked up at their school and children attending Piney Branch Elementary will be picked up in the hallway by the pool by a Recreation staff member. On full days pack a lunch. On half days, bring a snack. Trips, activities and performances on schedule.

TP resident $110
Non-resident $130

Wednesdays, 4:45 – 5:30 p.m.
Dance Studio, TP Community Center
Ages 8 – 10
TP resident $20
Non-resident $25

March 2 – April 6
TP resident $35
Non-resident $45

Workout Wednesdays
Females ages 12 – 17
Forget the repetitive workouts; we plan to sample a variety of fun exercise routines from Zumba and Step to Hip Hop Dance. Workout Wednesdays are perfect whether you want to maintain physical fitness, focus on weight loss or develop strength and endurance. Bowling and swimming included! Bring three friends and be entered to win a chance to have a private Saturday night pizza party for 10 of your friends. Advance registration is required.

TP Community Center
9 a.m. – 3 p.m., Mon. – Fri.
April 20 – 28
TP resident $80
Non-resident $100

Paws for Health
Basic Puppy Obedience
Puppies six months and younger
The purpose of this class is to socialize your puppy and begin training basic obedience commands. You will learn how to teach your dog sit, down, come, stay and stand. Learn loose leash walking and husbandry. And don’t forget about teaching your dog a trick or two. Problems behaviors such as nipping, barking and jumping will be addressed. Must have proof of rabies vaccine. Six weeks.

TP resident $85
Non-resident $105

Basic Dog Obedience
Dogs six months and older
Teach your dog basic obedience and expand on any commands they already know. We will cover problem behaviors such as nipping, barking, jumping, lunging and digging. Learn loose leash walking and heel. Learn techniques to increase the length of time your dog can perform sit/stay, down/stay and increase the distance for come. Other items covered are distance stop, directional commands and tricks. Must have proof of rabies vaccine. This class is not appropriate for aggressive dogs. Six weeks. Minimum five, maximum 12.

TP resident $85
Non-resident $105

March 2011
Takoma Park Newsletter

Takoma Park Recreation

March 31
Udvar Hazy Air and Space Museum
Non-resident $45
TP resident $25

March 4
Fri. 1 – 5:30 p.m.
Azalea Room, TP Community Center

Donna Victoria plays dress-up during the Winter Play Day event in February.
Photo by Debra Haiduven

Saturday, March 12
3 – 4 p.m.
Heffner Community Center

Flag football, a popular class last fall, is starting up again March 23.
Recreation Department Photo

RECREATION continues on page 7
RECREATION
continued from page 6

Go Deep (Flag Football)
Ages 8 – 13
Are you ready for some football? Go Deep is a flag football skills program that will teach the basic fundamentals of football. Players will be taught proper flag pulling techniques, route running, catching, passing, defensive skills and most importantly sportsmanship. Players will be separated by size and age so they can enjoy the flag football experience: non-contact, continuous movement. Players will be able to show off their skills during exhibition games each week. Don’t drop the ball…Register now! Five weeks. *Meet at TP Community Center*

Hodges Field
(Behind Takoma Park Elementary)
March 23 – April 20
TP resident Free, but registration is required
Non-resident $10
For more information, please contact Lew McAllister lewm@takomagov.org, 301-891-7284.

Kickball Program
Ages 8 – 13
Join the Recreation Department for this playground favorite. Knock it out of the park with a big kick and use those same feet to motor around the bases. This program is all about playing the game. More game time, equals more fun. The program will focus on teamwork and sportsmanship. Don’t strike out on this exciting program, sign up today. Five weeks.

*Meet at TP Community Center*
Hodges Field
(Behind Takoma Park Elementary)
Thursday, 3:30 – 4:30 p.m.
March 24 – April 21
TP resident Free, but registration is required
Non-resident $10
For more information contact Lew McAllister 301-891-7284 or lewm@takomagov.org

Zumba
Ages 18 and older
Zumba fuses hypnotic Latin rhythms and easy-to-follow moves to create a one-of-a-kind fitness program. The routines feature interval training sessions where fast and slow rhythms and resistance training are combined to tone and sculpt your body while burning fat. Add some Latin flavor and international zest into the mix and you’ve got a Zumba® class! Six weeks. Instructor Kim Pope. Maximum 25, minimum 10.

Dance Studio, TP Community Center
Mondays, 7 – 8 p.m.
March 8 – April 22
TP resident $75
Non-resident $85
Ages 16 and older
Body Sculpting/Pilates
Join us as we celebrate January, February and March birthdays with cake, ice cream, games, fun. Drop-in. All seniors welcome.

TP Recreation Center, 7315 New Hampshire Ave.
March 8 – April 28
TP resident $135
Non-resident $155

Collage
Ages 18 and older
Collage is a fun way to work with different mediums and techniques. Students will have the freedom to work with their own tastes and ideas. Six weeks. Instructor Katie Dell Einstein High School. Materials fee of $25, paid directly to the instructor on the first day of class. Maximum 25, minimum 10.

Art Room, TP Community Center
Tuesdays, 3:15 – 5:15 p.m.
March 8 – April 12
TP resident $135
Non-resident $155

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 on the first day of class. Maximum 12, minimum seven. Only five spaces left.

Art Room, TP Community Center
Tuesdays, 3:15 – 5:15 p.m.
March 8 – April 12
TP resident $60
Non-resident $70

Buddies share a moment after the basketball game.

Photo by Debra Haiduven
Choosing the best books for beginning readers

By Karen MacPherson

Over the past few months, an increasing number of parents have come into the Library asking for help in choosing books for their children, who are just learning to read. We are always happy to provide guidance to find just the right books for these newly-emerging readers. In our beginning reader collection, we have a couple of hundred books at various levels, from books with just a few words on each page to those containing several short chapters.

As we work with parents to find the best beginning readers for their child, there are a couple of overall factors that are useful to know about our collection:

Our books aren't shelved by grade. Instead, they are shelved just like the rest of our kids' fiction sections: by author's last name. So, a beginning reader titled "Biscuit" by Alyssa Satin Capucilli will be shelved under Capucilli (the label on the spine will say J r Capucilli. That's "J" for juvenile, which is on the spine of every book in the Children's room, "r" for reader, and "Capucilli" for the author's last name).

While some schools may shelve books by grade levels, each school system invariably determines those levels. So, for example, a second-grade book in one school system may be a third-grade book in another. Because public libraries like ours work with various school systems, we stick to our traditional system of shelving our readers by the author's last name.

You can't rely on publishers' levels. Just like school systems, each publisher has a different way of deciding what is the level of a particular book. As a result, what is a "Level 1" for one publisher, is a "Level 2" for another, etc. So we suggest that parents keep that in mind as they look at the books in our collection.

A few other factors to consider:

For a great source of interesting, well-written books for newly-emerging readers, check out the list of books that have won the Theodor Geisel Award or were Geisel Honor books. As many people know, Theodor Geisel was the real name of the man better known as Dr. Seuss, who injected a much-needed note of humor into learning to read with books like "The Cat in the Hat.

First awarded in 2006, the Geisel Award spotlights the best books for beginning readers. A committee of librarians and...
Do It Yourself Budget Game Lets Residents Try Balancing City Finances

children's book experts, under the jurisdic-
tion of the American Library Association, 
annually select the Geisel winners, which 
include both traditional beginning read-
ers, graphic novels, picture books and 
non-fiction books. Our Library has all of these 
books. For the full Geisel winners list, go 
to http://www.ala.org/ala/mgrps/divs/alsc/ 
awardsgrants/bookmedia/geiselaward/in-
dex.cfm.

TOON books offer a new kind of begin-
ning reader, done comic book style. These 
books are designed to eliminate the frus-
tration many new readers feel when they 
lose the thread of a story as they try to 
sound out the words.

In the TOON books, readers can tell 
what happens in a story simply by looking 
at the pictures. The words, meanwhile, add 
more information. The approach is the 
opposite of traditional readers, where the 
focus is on the text and the illustrations 
merely add a few clues.

These books deliberately aren’t given lev-
els, but parents can go to the TOON web-
site, http://toon-books.com, to see how 
the books are rated in two different systems, 
the Lexile system and the Guided Reading 
system.

Our TOON books are shelved by author, 
and include: “Benny and Penny in the Big 
No-No!” (written and illustrated by Geoff-
rey Hayes (this book won the 2010 Geisel 
Award)); “Stinky,” written and illustrated by 
Eleanor Davis (a 2009 Geisel Honor book); “Little 
Mouse Gets Ready,” written and il-
lustrated by “Bone” creator Jeff Smith” (a 
2010 Geisel Honor book); and “Mo and Jo: 
Fighting Together Forever,” written and il-
lustrated by Dean Haspiel and Jay Lynch.

Just ask us for a complete list of these 
books; they can also be readily identified 
by their distinctive book spines.

The “We Both Read” series also takes a 
new approach to beginning readers. In 
these books, also shelved by author, chil-
dren and their grown-ups take turns read-
ning. Parents read the more complicated 
text on the left-hand side of each two-page 
spread, while children read the simpler text 
on the right-hand side.

The “We Both Read” books come in vari-
ous levels of complexity and include both 
fiction and non-fiction. We also have sev-
eral “We Both Read” books in Spanish.

Titles in this series include: “Lulu’s Lost 
Shoes” by Paula Blankenship; “Frank and 
the Balloon” by Devon Ross; and “Animals 
Under Our Feet” by Sindly McKay. Ask us 
for a full list of these books.

Finally, to try to make it as easy as possi-
ble for parents, we’ve developed an overall 
list of suggested books for newly-emerging 
readers. I’ll post this list on our Children’s 
Room blog (http://www.takomapark.info/ 
library/children/index.html) and we’ll also 
have print copies at the main desk.

Do it yourself budget game lets residents try balancing city finances.

Do it yourself budget game lets residents try balancing city finances.

Do it yourself budget game lets residents try balancing city finances.

Video American owners, Barry Solan, behind the counter, where a quirky display of new and vintage movies and related paraphernalia decorate the shelves. Photo by Virginia Myers.

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Do it yourself budget game lets residents try balancing city finances.
New speed camera on University Boulevard

Revenue generated available for public safety expenditures

A new, portable speed camera was installed in the 900 block of eastbound University Boulevard January 31. Drivers traveling 12 miles over the speed limit there were issued warnings until Feb. 13; beginning Feb. 14, citations were issued for violations.

The speed camera is the fifth installed in the City since March 2009. The others are placed in the intersections of Harmony Road and Harpersville Avenue (southern), the 7100 block of New Hampshire Avenue (northbound) and in the eastbound and westbound lanes of the 500 block of Ethan Allen Avenue.

Revenues from the four existing speed cameras were $3,566,202 before expenses, through Dec. 31, 2010. City Council members will consider speed camera revenues as they plan the City budget over the next few months. Camera revenues are available for any public safety program, and are not limited to pedestrian safety, as some had previously assumed.

One police officer and one civilian employee will be directing the speed camera program for the City. Anyone with speed camera questions can call the Safe Speed number, 301-891-7138, and any message left will be returned, or contact Chief Ronald Ricucci at 301-891-7104.

Burglary prevention means locking doors at night

Over the course of several days last month, Takoma Park police responded to four residential burglaries in the City. One occurred while the residents were sleeping.

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The bank robbery attempt was caught on live video.

Ricucci’s Account continued from page 1

Snow. The hostage ran to safety, and six officers shot. The suspect was pronounced dead on the scene.

The entire incident was over within 15 minutes.

But until that time, Ricucci admits his stomach was in knots. Driving “code three” along the beltway with his siren blaring, he listened to the dramatic event unfold over the radio, and arrived at the scene minutes after the shooting. “I knew there was going to be a shooting, call it my sixth sense,” says Ricucci. He had heard that the robber had invited the officers into the bank, that there was a hostage: signs that the suspect was “dumb or he was desperate.”

After the shooting, the tension continued, as officers thought there might be more suspects in addition to a bomb, and the suspect needed first aid. But the suspect, later identified as Carlos Rudolfo Arcia, age 45, from the 5400 block of Sargent Road in Hyattsville, Maryland, was alone. The bombs turned out to be kitchen sponges wrapped in aluminum foil, duct tape and wire. Paramedics tended at Espinoza Arcia, but he was dead on the scene.

The customer who had been pistol-whipped was hospitalized; the hostage was treated for minor scrapes, and a Prince George’s officer was grazed by a stray bulle.

Investigations of the incident continue.

Multiple Jurisdictions

From the beginning, Takoma Park Police Detective/Sergeant Dan Frishkorn took charge, as he was among the first on the scene. According to the Chief, the entire Takoma Park day shift showed up to help; two had been up the street, and the other came up New Hampshire Avenue. The area is heavily patrolled by Takoma Park, Prince George’s and Montgomery County police, as it is a crossway for their jurisdictions.

But it was Frishkorn who took charge, and “barked out” orders to surround the bank, says Ricucci. He also asked for a SWAT team and a negotiator, since there was a hostage involved. Montgomery County sent a team to supplement the officers already present.

Because of the size of the investigation, which involved some 45 witnesses who had to be interviewed, multiple agencies, and three shooters from Takoma Park, Ricucci handed the investigation over to Montgomery County. “We’re only so big,” he explains, referring to the 42 officer Takoma Park Police Department. “The investigating officers will be on leave for about two months, to accommodate department and criminal investigations required after a homicide, and will undergo psychological evaluations, as well.

“It was a good example of cross-jurisdictional cooperation,” says Ricucci. “From an operational standpoint there’s nothing we could have done differently.” Ricucci praises all the officers involved, as well as the bank employees, who remained calm and had the presence of mind to send the cash out with a dye pack. Officers maintained “good firearms discipline,” he says, and radio discipline as well, keeping the scene quiet so that one officer could be heard giving orders.

One of the most unusual aspects of the case, says Ricucci, was the fact that it was filmed from a helicopter run by news crews, and very quickly seen on televisions and the internet, facebook and twitter across the country and as far away as South America. “The whole world’s changed,” says Ricucci. His wife, who was watching the news in Florida at the time, called to see if he was all right, and he realized the families of the officers involved would have to be notified immediately, before they saw the drama unfolded on television, themselves.

“It’s one of those life changing events I’ll never forget,” says Ricucci. “The whole department was put on a national stage in five minutes. And I’m proud of our department.”

RICUCCI’S ACCOUNT continued from page 1

serious house fire hits takoma park

On January 31, at 10:48 p.m., a fire occurred at 7537 Carroll Avenue, resulting in major damage to the house. The fire started in the laundry room. The apparent cause - malfunction dryer. No injuries were reported.

Fire Safety Tips for the Home

Wiring/Extension Cords

In many older homes, capacity of the wiring system has not kept pace with today’s modern appliances. Overload electronic systems invite fire. Watch for these overloaded signals:

• Dimming lights when an appliance goes on.
• A shrinking TV picture.
• Slow heating appliances (like a toaster).
• Fuses blowing frequently.

Check for frayed insulation, damaged cords, loose connections and loose wall receptacles.

Clothes Dryers

Never put in synthetic fabrics, plastic, rubber or foam, because they retain heat. Clean lint screen before and after use. Dryers must be vented to the outside and plugged into their own outlets. Never leave home with the dryer running.

TPVFD welcomes two new members

At the department’s membership meeting on February 11, Kevin Polis-tin and Samantha Hopkins were voted into membership. The department is always looking for new members, if you are interested in joining, please contact Mike Livingston at the fire station, 240-773-8954. The only requirement from you is time and commitment. The rest is free!
Gas Station Robbers Arrested

After a rash of robberies at local gas stations that had residents nervous about pumping gas in town, Takoma Park Police staked out the W-Express gas station on New Hampshire Avenue, and arrested three suspects February 16.

Police set up surveillance after 14 inci- dents at W Express and the Sunoco next door, in which gas station customers were pumped for a variety of their vehicles or of property in the vehicles, sometimes while pumping gas, other times while paying for it. The incidents began in October 2010.

The arrest scenario began at 7:59 a.m., when a Takoma Park police officer report- ed an attempted robbery over the police ra- dio. A man had tried to grab a customer’s purse as she was pumping gas, then sped away in a car that turned out to be stolen. An officer stationed at the D.C. border saw the vehicle approach and tried to stop it, and a pursuit began.

The chase continued until the stolen ve- hicle crashed into a dump truck on 31st Street Northeast. Three suspects bailed out of the vehicle and attempted to flee, but were apprehended by Takoma Park and Metropolitan Police.

The arrested suspects were Delvito Ra- shad Anderson, 19, of Oxon Hill, Mary- land; Charles Bradford Wise, 21, of Fort Washington, Maryland; and a 17-year-old male juvenile of Washington, D.C. The juvenile was taken into custody by Metropoli- tan Police, to be released to his guard-
ations related to designing for compat- ibility and livability. This set of guidelines will be finalized by the Planning Board af- ter the more general Sector Plan is adopted by the County Council.

The text drafting meetings will involve pre-meeting assignments to help prepare participants for discussion. There will be posted online the Saturday prior to the meeting at www.theNewAv.e.com. To find assignments, select the link to Urban De- sign Guidelines on the left side of the page. Additional reading material may also be suggested.

All meetings will be held from 7:30 to 8:45 p.m. in the Takoma Recreation Cen- ter at 7315 New Hampshire Avenue. The entrance is located at Merwood Avenue. Please arrive early to sign in.

Subjects for upcoming meetings are as follows:

- **Thursday, March 3, 2011**
  - Building Blocks
  - Thursday, March 17, 2011
  - Streetscapes; circulation
  - Thursday, March 31, 2011
  - Open space and landscaping
  - Thursday, April 7, 2011
  - Discussion
  - Thursday, April 14, 2011
  - Discussion
  - Thursday, April 21, 2011
  - Illustrations (may be introduced earlier)

Text will be finalized by the Mont- gomery County Planning Board once the Montgomery County Council has adopted the Sector Plan.

Help Shape the Crossroads

Residents invited to provide development design input

City staff are urging residents to help draft text for Urban Design Guidelines that will influence the development of the Takoma Langley Crossroads. The completed Guidelines will give the County Planning Board members param- eters to use as they review large projects in the Takoma part of the Crossroads commercial area. The document will be a companion piece to implement the new zoning recommended in the Sector Plan, as it will provide fine-grained recommen-

Homeless Camp Cleared

continued from page 1

a curtain that just crawls up trees and is al- most imperceptible,” he says. “Once you get in there, you’re hidden from view.”

At the request of City Manager Bar- bara Matthews reached out to her contacts at the Parks Department’s Homeless En- campment Task Force, who led the effort to remove the trash. “I’m very pleased with the outcome,” says Schultz. “The Parks Department was very responsive. They brought in a lot of workers and some heavy equipment. I went to the site when they were working on it, and there were layers and layers of stuff.”

It’s possible that the camp was being used throughout this winter, not just in warmer months. Schultz says that a member of the cleanup crew told him that he had visited the site on the prior day to assess the equip- ment that would be needed, and he found nearly stacked clothing and unopened food containers. When the crew came back the next day, those items were gone.

Evidence of recent activity suggests that having the site on the Homeless Encamp- ment Task Force’s monitoring list is as important as the initial cleanup. “We all know that the homeless problem is chronic, and whoever is living there deserves to be helped,” Schultz says. “But we do have kids playing at Becca Lilly just up the hill, and we have people walking dogs or jogging along the path at all hours.”

Solving the problem would also include better control of the vines, observed Vic- toria. “Porcelain berry vines are killing a lot of trees along the creek, and they are just choking the life out of each other,” she says, de- spite the efforts of volunteers from Friends of Sligo Creek.

While the assumption is that homeless- ness is on the rise locally due to the recess- ion, survey data are mixed. The Mont- gomery County Coalition for the Homeless conducts a point-in-time survey every Jan- uary that gives some sense of the situation.

Data from 2011 are not yet available, but the survey found 1,064 homeless people in January 2010, says Coalition representa- tive Julie Maltzman. “The figure represents a reduction of more than 10 percents from 2008 and 2009. “In the last few years, the County Council put a lot of money into de- veloping permanent housing options and supportive services, and it’s been very ef- fective,” Maltzman says.

On the other hand, “The State of Home- lessness in America” survey, released in January 2011 by the Alliance to End Home- lessness, found that Maryland had a home- less population of about 11,700 people in 2009, which represented an increase of nearly 27% from 2008 to 2009.

Kaffeeklatsch and Basketball, Music and Play on City TV

In March City TV will contin- ue covering the Third Thursday Poetry Series. Mark Thursday, March 17—St. Patrick’s Day—at 7:30 p.m. and come to the Audi- torium or watch City TV live for poems of the Kaffeeklatsch Trio (Judy Neri, Ellen Cole, and Jill Raymond), and Kathi Wolfe.

The March edition of Snap- shots Magazine will feature a variety of activities caught on video, including segments on the Winter-Basketball League, the Mid-Winter Play Day organized by Takoma Plays, the art exhibit, “Four in February” with works from Jan Stovall, Ruth Pettus, Ted Shroll, and Faint Fields, and “Love at Last Sigh,” the first mu- sical performed at the new Audi- torium.

Middle or high school student who want to learn about and par- ticipate in television production, can contact City TV and join the team for a weekend of television production.

If you are a non-profit or a community organization you can advertise your activities on our bulletin board, and also on the City’s facebook page and twit- ter feed, contact Craigt@takomagov.org or call 301-891-7236. Also, if you would like City TV to cover an event or add specific programming to its line-up, call 301-891-7118 or send an e-mail to cabletv@takomagov.org.

Takoma Foundation to Award $12K in Grants

Applications are now being accepted by the Takoma Foundation for its spring grants cycle. The Foundation will award a total of $12,000 in small grants to local nonprofits for projects supporting youth, adult education, cultural enrichment, the environment, and other activities to strengthen the community. The applica- tion deadline is Friday, March 25.

Non-profit organizations that have a let- ter of determination from the IRS or proj- ects that have a non-profit fiscal agent are eligible to apply for grants. PTAs, schools, neighborhood associations and civic groups also are eligible. Applicants should propose projects that will have a direct ef- fect on the residents of Takoma Park and/ or Takoma DC. Applicants can seek grants of up to $2,000.

Projects funded in the Foundation’s most recent grants cycle included a downtown Takoma art exhibit made from recycled bi- cycles, a rain garden, books for a multicultu- tural book club for middle schoolers, a sur- vey on issues related to wood-based home heating, conversion of a storage room into a community center and conflict-resolution programs for high schoolers. Overall, the Foundation has awarded more than $300,000 in grants since its inception in 1989.

The grant application and guidelines can be found online at www.takomafoun- dation.org. For additional questions, contact

Maureen Kohl, grants chair, at 301-275- 1653.

In other news, the Takoma Foundation is again this year co-sponsoring the Aza- lea Awards in conjunction with the Tako- ma Voice newspaper. To vote for Takoma Park’s most dedicated community activists and supporters, go online to www.takoma. com. Nominees have been announced in 10 categories: Takoma Spirit, Community Ac- tivist, Coach, Arts, Green, School Activist, Superhero, Business, Educator and Men- tor. A ceremony to honor the 2011 Azalea Award winners and spring grants recipi- ents will be held on Saturday, April 16 in the Community Center Auditorium. The event is free, and all visitors are welcome.
Continued from page 11

Robbers Arrested

Although there have been no further reports of thefts at gas stations since the arrests, police advise residents to continue to use caution at self-service gas pumps. Many drivers leave their keys in the ignition and their cars unlocked when they get out to pump gas. While the driver is putting gas in the tank, the carjacker can simply open the car door, get in the car and drive away. This is especially dangerous if children and/or pets are in the vehicle.

Sometimes, the carjacker will wait until the driver goes to the gas station’s cashier to pay for the gas. While the driver is busy paying the cashier, the carjacker will drive off with the car.

Police advise careful consideration of where and when to buy gas. Choose a safe, familiar area during daylight hours whenever possible. Never let the gas supply get so low that you are forced to stop for fuel in an unsafe or unfamiliar area at a dangerous time.

Theft can also be a problem: Most people will leave their keys in the ignition and their purses and/or wallets, cell phones, etc. on the passenger seat of the vehicle. With doors unlocked, it’s easy for a thief to open the door, take your belongings and flee. It only takes seconds.

Some Tips When You Are at a Gas Station:
1. Never leave your keys in the ignition.
2. Do not leave your valuables in plain sight when you exit your vehicle. Even with doors locked and no keys, the thief cannot resist your valuables.
3. Pay attention to your surroundings. Do not let your cell phone distract you. (Using a cell phone at a gas pump is dangerous anyway; cell phones and other electronic devices may emit electrical charges, and should be left in the vehicle during fuelling).
4. If you are going to pay for your gas inside the cashier’s office, do not leave your children in the vehicle, even with locked doors. Take them with you.
5. If you are using a credit card at the gas pump, always take your receipt or hit the “clear” or “no” button on the pump when it asks whether you want a receipt. Otherwise, you leave your credit card information open for the next person.

Takoma Park Calendar

March 2011

Do you have an item for the City calendar? Let us know if you have a non-profit event that would be of interest to most City of Takoma Park residents, and we’ll consider it for inclusion in the calendar. Deadline for the April issue is March 21. To submit calendar items, email tpnewseditor@takomagov.org.

Public Meetings

City Council Meeting
March 7, 7:30 p.m.
Takoma Park Community Center Auditorium
See takomaparkmd.gov for agenda

Public Hearing on the Subdivision of 119-127 Geneva Avenue
March 7, 7:30 p.m.
Takoma Park Community Center Auditorium
Developer presentation, then public hearing

City Council Meeting
March 14, 7:30 p.m.
Takoma Park Community Center Auditorium
See takomaparkmd.gov for agenda

City Council Meeting and Ward 1 Night
March 21, 7 and 7:30 p.m.
Reception, 7 - 7:30 p.m.; meeting 7:30 p.m.
Takoma Park Community Center Auditorium
See takomaparkmd.gov for agenda

City Council Meeting
March 28, 7:30 p.m.
Takoma Park Community Center Auditorium
See takomaparkmd.gov for agenda

Arts and Literature

“Cycles” Opening Artists Reception
Exhibit with Marcie Wolf-Hubbard, Helina Metaferia and Rosalind Alumanah
March 4, 6 – 8 pm
Music by Sky High Radio, 6:30 – 7:30 pm
The Galleries at Takoma Park Community Center
Free
sarad@takomagov.org, 301-891-7224

“Breaking Through the Clouds: The First Women’s National Air Derby”
March 8, 7 – 9:30 pm
Film and Discussion with Filmmaker Heather Taylor
Takoma Park Community Center Auditorium
Free

“American Feud: A History of Conservatives and Liberals”
March 10, 7:30 - 10 p.m.
Film and discussion with filmmakers Richard Hall and Simone Fary
Takoma Park Community Center Auditorium
Free
sarad@takomagov.org, 301-891-7224

Peter Case in Concert
March 20, 7 - 9:30 p.m.
Takoma Park Community Center Auditorium
$15 advance, $20 door
www.hungryformusic.org, 240-582-6193

Art for the People Exhibit
Ongoing through March
Mark’s Kitchen, 7006 Carroll Ave.
Work from Community Vision Day Shelter for the Homeless

Seniors

Birthday Party for Seniors
March 18, 1 p.m.
Takoma Park Community Center Senior Room
Celebrating January, February and March birthdays
Free
Seniors age 55 and older
301-891-7280

Musicalita for Seniors
March 10, 10 a.m. - 1 p.m.
Strathmore Music Center
Tea, musical performance and light refreshments
Meet at Takoma Park Community Center
Bus pick up at Franklin Apartments, Mapleview Apartments, and Victory Tower
Seniors age 55 and older
Free
301-891-7280

Maryland Women’s Heritage Center Senior Trip
March 25, 9 a.m. – 3 p.m.
Baltimore, Maryland
Meet at Takoma Park Community Center
Bus pick up at Franklin Apartments, Mapleview Apartments, and Victory Tower
Seniors 55 and older
Free
301-891-7280

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.