Rapist Sentenced 90 Years for Crime at Montgomery College

The man who raped a 19-year-old student at the Montgomery College campus in Takoma Park was sentenced to 90 years in prison on July 15. Nathaniel L. Hart, of Washington, D.C., pled guilty to the rape, which occurred on Jan. 26, 2010. The sentence, three times the sentencing guidelines for first-degree rape, means the earliest Hart could receive probation is 2055.

The state’s attorney’s office called the crime, “a nightmare scenario,” according to a report in the Gazette newspaper. The rape occurred at 3:30 p.m., when Hart crawled under the locked bathroom stall door and told his victim he had a gun. He raped her, then allowed her to dress and raped her again. According to the Washington Post, the victim was able to reach her cell phone and send a text message to a friend. Police chased him for five hours, searching Silver Spring and finally locating him in a loading dock. Police chased him for five hours, searching Silver Spring and finally locating him.

RAPIST SENTENCED continues on page 5

Teens Resist Proposed Curfew in Montgomery County

Youth in Takoma Park Would Be Affected

By Virginia Myers

The July 26 Montgomery County Council meeting included many teenagers, there to protest a new curfew being considered for the county. Proposed by County Executive Isiah Leggett, the curfew would prohibit people under age 18 from being out after 11 p.m. on week nights, and after midnight on weekends. Exceptions would be made for those returning from work, school or religious functions, or acting under the direction of a parent.

Penalties for breaking curfew could include community service, and parenting classes for parents of teenagers who have been detained.

Raising concerns at the meeting was Councilman Ken Zirkle, who pointed out that the curfew would affect teenagers in Takoma Park and Silver Spring. He said the county should work with local police to increase their presence.

Takoma Park teens are often out late at night, but Montgomery County Council is considering a curfew that could change that.

Photo by Lauren Poor

Council Delays Hiring Process for Recreation Department Director

Clarifying Vision for Recreation Services Takes Precedence

By Virginia Myers

City Council has delayed the replacement of outgoing Recreation Department director Debra Haidavens, voting 4 to 3 to more fully discuss its vision for recreation programming before City Manager Barbara Matthews fills the vacancy.

“With the hiring of the delay came as a surprise: Matthews, anticipating the impact of the vacancy on a department of nine full-time employees, was trying to move quickly through the recruitment process. She had already scheduled interviews with replacement candidates. Those interviews were canceled (and related airline tickets refunded) by the city.

“We have to decide, what do we really want this department to do, and then we go out to hire the person that is best equipped to fulfill the community vision,” said Matthews, who introduced the idea at the July 25 council work session.

Schultz reminded his colleagues that they are not responsible for day to day operations—“Our job is to determine policy, not to presume that we know how to run a recreation department,” he said—and felt it would be “grossly unfair to take out the council’s vision for the department to function without missing the skills and the leadership of that person.” He did feel that further exploration of general recreation goals was “long overdue,” however, and worth a “short delay” in the hiring process.

Councilmembers did debate about that delay’s affect on staff, who will have to cover additional workload as well as operate in a leadership vacuum. “Losing an entire...
**City Council Action**

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

**Thursday, August 4** - Takoma Junction Task Force meeting, 7:30 p.m. (CC Hydrangea Room)

**Tuesday, August 9** - Recreation Committee meeting, 7 p.m. (CC Hydrangea Room)

**Tuesday, August 9** - Tree Commission meeting, 6:30 p.m. (CC Lilac Room)

**Thursday, August 11** - Emergency Preparedness Committee meeting, 8:30 a.m. (CC Hydrangea Room)

**Tuesday, August 16** - Washington Adventist Hospital Land Use Committee meeting, 7:30 p.m. (CC Lilac Room)

**Thursday, August 18** - Takoma Junction Task Force meeting, 7:30 p.m. (CC Azalea Room)

**Tuesday, August 23** - Arts and Humanities Commission meeting, 7:30 p.m. (CC Hydrangea Room)

**Wednesday, August 24** - Takoma Park Board of Elections meeting, 7 p.m. (CC Council Conference Room)

**Thursday, August 30** - Takoma Junction Task Force meeting, 7:30 p.m. (CC Lilac Room)

*For the most up to date information, check takomaparkmd.gov/clerk/agenda. Most meetings are held in the Takoma Park Community Center – Sam Abbott Citizens’ Center, 7500 Maple Ave., (CC). Individuals interested in receiving a weekly Council agenda and calendar update by email should contact the City Clerk at 301-891-7267 or suzannel@takomagov.org.*

**Notice on ADA Compliance**
The City of Takoma Park is committed to ensuring that individuals with disabilities are able to fully participate in public meetings. Anyone planning to attend a City of Takoma Park public meeting or public hearing, and who wishes to receive auxiliary aids, services or accommodations is invited to contact the Deputy City Manager at 301-891-7229 or suzannel@takomagov.org at least 48 hours in advance.

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### Fee Increases in Place for City Services

Effective July 1, 2011 (except where noted), fees for City services have increased to the following:

**Public Works**
- Dumpster Permit Fee (Aug. 1) ................. $30
- Driveway Apron Fee (Aug. 1) ................. $40
- Utility Permit (Aug. 1) ................. $40
- Heavy Trash Pick-up ................. $10 for three items

**Library**
- Library Card, Montgomery County resident, TP non-resident ................. $37
- Library Card, non-resident of Montgomery County ................. $60
- Black and white copies or printing ................. 20 cents per page
- Color printing ................. 50 cents per page

**Police**
- Meter violation fines (Aug. 1) ................. $40
- Other parking fines (Aug. 1) ................. $5 increase from FY-2011
- Police reports ................. $10
- Vehicle impound release (Aug. 1) ................. $25

**Housing**
- Development application fees ................. vary
- Non-resident workshop fees ................. $25

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**City of Takoma Park, Maryland**

**FAIR SUMMARY OF PROPOSED CHARTER AMENDMENT**

This is to give notice that on July 11, 2011, the Council of the City of Takoma Park adopted Charter Amendment Resolution No. 2011-1 which amends Article II, Section 202 “Description of Corporate Boundaries” of the Takoma Park Charter. The revised description of corporate boundaries incorporates the Flower Avenue right-of-way as annexed pursuant to Takoma Park Annexation Resolution No. 2010-70. For further information, contact the City Clerk, 7500 Maple Ave., Takoma Park, MD 20912, phone 301-891-7267, e-mail clerk@takomagov.org. The full text of the amendment is available for review at www.takomaparkmd.gov.

Attest: Jessie Carpenter, City Clerk

**RESIDENT VOLUNTEERS NEEDED FOR CITY BOARDS, COMMISSIONS, AND COMMITTEES**

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)**
- Board of Elections (vacancy)
- Commission on Landlord-Tenant Affairs (vacancy)
- Emergency Preparedness Committee (vacancies)
- Ethics Commission (terms expiring September 30)
- Takoma Junction Task Force (vacancies)
- Personnel Appeal Board (vacancy)
- Recreation Committee (vacancies)
- Tree Commission (terms expiring September 30)
- Washington Adventist Hospital Land Use Committee (vacancies)

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**CITY CLERK Briefs**

**CITY OF TAKOMA PARK, MARYLAND**

**PUBLIC HEARING**

Community Development Block Grant (CDBG)

**Monday, September 26, 2011**

7:30 p.m.
Takoma Park Community Center Auditorium
7500 Maple Ave., Takoma Park MD

The City of Takoma Park will be holding a public hearing on Monday, September 26, 2011 to solicit community input regarding priority needs and proposed projects for the Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) program.

The CDBG program, initiated in 1974, is one of the oldest programs at the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) and is designed to fund activities that primarily benefit low and moderate-income residents. CDBG grants are provided on an annual basis to communities such as Takoma Park to ensure decent, affordable housing for all, provide services to the most vulnerable, create jobs and expand business opportunities.

For more information on the CDBG program and the upcoming public hearing, contact the Housing and Community Development Department at 301-891-7224.
On a lovely Sunday afternoon in April, a dozen people stood near the Takoma Park Farmer's Market and recited poems they had written. Most market patrons surged past, intent on getting their weekly supply of organic produce and racing on to their next activities. But more than a few people stopped to listen—and that was the point for Merrill Leffler, who helped to organize the readings as part of the Spring for Poetry project. “The arts are a critical part of life,” said Leffler. “They are not a luxury, whether we are in difficult times or ecstatic times. We can enjoy them, learn from them and discover what we ourselves may be capable of. Poetry is a way of reaching in to ourselves and reaching out to others.”

Developing venues for poets to share their work with the public has been a passion of Leffler’s for many years, and it led to his selection as the city’s third poet laureate, with a two-year term that started on July 1. A resident of Takoma Park since 1977 and an accomplished poet, critic and founder of the poetry magazine (Dryad) and publishing firm (Dryad Press), Leffler has been an important contributor to the literary life of Takoma Park. “Takoma Park has been very supportive of the arts, including poetry, and it’s an honor to have a chance to do my part,” said Leffler, who succeeds Anne Becker and Donald Berger as poet laureate.

Spring for Poetry, which debuted in 2007, is an example of Takoma Park’s embrace. Leffler and his wife Ann Slayton conceived of the idea of a ‘poetry walk’ as an international collection of poems on posters that residents could read as they made their way around town. Local resident Clair Garman volunteered to make the frames, and Friends of the Takoma Park Library jumped aboard. Graphics arts students at Montgomery College, under the direction of Michele Morgan and Prof. Andrea Adams, produced eye-catching designs. The Department of Public Works pitched in with sign installation. More than 30 poetry posters have been produced to date, and they can be found along the town’s main walkways and in city parks.

For people who prefer consuming poetry from a seated position, the Arts and Humanities Commission sponsors poetry readings on the third Thursday of every month and the Friends of the Library sponsors the annual event called “Favorite Poem Evening,” in which all comers are invited to read their favorite poem and comment about what it means to them. As an organizer and participant, Leffler has experienced poetry’s gift to both build communities and to challenge people’s entrenched ways of thinking and communicating.

“The past wasn’t always so. It was a white hot ’69 Corvette once or in 1954 a new T-Bird sleek and ebony passing you with wild contempt, or even a Kaiser convertible in 1952, rose-colored knight of peculiar countenance striding on Sunrise highway cast towards Montauk and the sea. Heads did turn in strange surprise. But beauty ages, pal, and even the best lines go soft, the sweetest body (let’s face it) cannot hold up. Service it though you will, garage it against life’s storms, follow every precaution—you can never do enough. Either fatigue finally sets in—or boredom. Salute their former dignity or stash them in a museum, or write encomia remembering them fondly or sing of glories (like the ancient poets) that inevitably go to ruin.

You know the course: the child becomes the man, survives to three score ten, more or less, and then becomes a child again, or worse. Soon he’s merely memory and then a blank. Listen up. The day is calling, and the night. Dum de démés. Full speed ahead. Pull out all the stops. Just drive the poet wrote into something rich and strange—and keep the damn thing straight and on the road.”

— Merrill Leffler

Merrill Leffler reading the Gettysburg Address, poem-style. Photo by Michele Morgan

By Kevin Adler

“The TAKOMA PARK NEWSLETTER
Editor: Virginia Myers
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The Newsletter does not accept commercial, classified, or political advertisements. Unsolicited materials by Takoma Park residents, including reports by community groups and articles that may contain opinion, or letters to the editor will be considered for publication if sent to tpnewseditor@takomagov.org or Newsletter, City of Takoma Park, 7500 Maple Avenue, Takoma Park, MD 20912.
Name, address and telephone number must accompany all submitted material. Pursuant to City Council Resolution No. 1992–36 of June 8, 1992 that sets forth the editorial guidelines of the Newsletter, the Editor reserves the right to edit all submitted copy for length, clarity, style, spelling and grammar. Published material containing opinions does not necessarily reflect the views of the Newsletter or the City of Takoma Park.

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

By Karen MacPherson

One of the Takoma Park historic district’s most unusual – and unusually charming – neighbors passed away last month at the age of 52. Many residents may not have known his name, but had likely seen Arthur Paul “Bart” Mayer III at one time or another over the past decade. Bart lived with his sister, Conny Mayer, and her four children for the past 20 years, first in D.C., then in Jerusalem, where Conny was working for the State Department, and then finally at the Mayer family house on Piney Branch Road.

Bart was a familiar figure, roaming the streets of Takoma Park and greeting everyone with a smile. He never let his Down Syndrome dim his delight in life. Amazing and often hilarious stories abound about Bart and the people he inspired; here are a few from his sister, Conny:

“Bart just roamed and roamed and roamed around Takoma Park on an endless cycle of visiting almost every shop in town. He used to heft the 7-11 – generously helping himself to Coke Zero’s – and we also came to realize he was clever enough to stand in line with whatever change he’d pilfered from around the house. So then let his sweet face induce another patron to pay off the bill for him.”

“We did, of course, try to control this pesky behavior. We worked with the Takoma Park police who really did the philosophy of working with the community proud. I got so upset with the petty thievery. Officer Roberto Rodriguez played along but, in the beginning not nearly tough enough to make an impression on Uncle Bart. So — with anyone else in the waiting room probably thinking we were all mad — I snuck around behind their complaint response coordinator, Officer Rodriguez and gestured to him I wanted to get tough. He smiled and I knew I was trying to communicate until I pretended to whip out a pair of handcuffs and then pointed wildly at Bart.

With that Eureka moment, Officer Rodriguez gave Bart the tough love, forcing Bart to look him in the eye and tell him if stealing was right or wrong, etc. Bart came out of there one chastised being. Scared straight lasted three weeks!

“Next we decided we’d pass our cell numbers to all the merchants and they could call us when Bart was being a pest or stealing. That worked a bit better and the police also constantly called us to get him from hither or yon.

“All that and yet, when Bart stopped roaming around last year because the Alzeheimers was starting and he was having episodic seizures, the merchants called us to see if Uncle Bart was okay because they hadn’t seen him in awhile. It was very touching — we definitely did not think that they would have been able to see how sweet and charming Uncle Bart really was.

“Even as he lay dying in the hospital, Bart managed to provoke events that made us smile and laugh. As he lay there unconscious, he brought out the best in all around him. The ICU staff eventually gave up on enforcing both visiting hours and the number of people they allowed in Bart’s room. Leave it to my brother to charm and inspire people even from a coma.”

A tenant contacted the Mailbox regarding her right as a victim of domestic violence to terminate her tenancy.

Effective October 1, 2010, victims of domestic violence and/or sexual assault have new rights under the law. Section 8-5A, Rental Housing Victims of Domestic Violence and Sexual Assault of the Real Property Article, Annotated Code of Maryland, as amended, 2010 supp., provides affected persons rights they did not have previously. The new law applies to individuals who are the legal tenants or occupants of the property and who have obtained a final peace or protective order from the court and it provides the following protections under the law:

The right to terminate their tenancy with 30 days written notice, mailed or hand-delivered to the landlord along with a copy of the final peace or protective order. Rent must be paid during the 30 days notice period and lease obligations cease at that point. Failure to vacate in accordance with the notice allows the landlord the right to either rescind it and require compliance with the terms of the original lease; OR file a Tenant Holding Over Action that may result in eviction from the rental unit; The right to have the landlord change the rental unit locks following written notice to the landlord along with a copy of the final peace or protective order. The lock change must be completed by the close of the next business day following receipt of the written request from the tenant. If the landlord fails to change the locks within this timeframe, the tenant has the right to have the locks changed by a certified locksmith without the landlord’s permission. The tenant is required to give the landlord a copy of the new key by the close of the next business day after the locks have been changed. If the landlord changes the lock, he/she must provide the tenant with a copy of the key at a mutually agreed upon time, not to exceed 48 hours following the lock being changed. The landlord may charge a lock change fee not to exceed the reasonable cost of changing the locks. Failure of the tenant to pay the fee within 45 days after the locks have been changed may result in the fee being added as additional rent or deducted from the tenants’ security deposit.

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

COLTA: landlord failed to provide entry notice

On June 15, 2011 COLTA issued a decision on the tenants’ complaint that the landlord twice improperly entered their apartment and failed to provide them with a report of entry in violation of the Takoma Park Code. The landlord in their complaint response indicated that the tenants had been provided with proper notice of each entry. The Commissions’ decision issued after a May 24 hearing held that: (1) the landlord had violated Section 6.16.140 by failing to provide notice before entering the tenants’ apartment and failing to leave a report of entry following each entry; (2) the landlord’s violations were intentional and had a severe impact upon the tenants’ sense of security; (3) compliance with the entry notice and reporting requirements of Section 6.16.140 is important to provide tenants with a sense of security since landlords are required by law to hold a key to each rental unit; and (4) the landlord was ordered to pay the tenants the amount of $1,600 as punitive damages for failing to provide proper notice and failing to provide a report of entry on two separate occasions.

The COLTA decision has been appealed to the Circuit Court.

COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT BLOCK GRANT APPLICATIONS AVAILABLE

Deadline 4 p.m. Tuesday, September 6, 2011

The City of Takoma Park is accepting proposals for the use of its Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) program. Grants are awarded on a competitive basis to community organizations for a wide range of activities directed toward neighborhood revitalization, economic development and the provision of improved community facilities and services.

Approximately $25,000 is available for programming which primarily benefits individuals or households of low and moderate incomes. An estimated $100,000 is available for capital projects benefiting low and moderate income neighborhoods. The project could be something that the organization does on its own or in partnership with the City of Takoma Park. Funds would be available in mid to late 2012.

Applications are available online www.takomapark-md.gov. Deadline for submissions is 4 p.m. on Tuesday, September 6, 2011.

For more information, contact the Housing and Community Development Department at 301-891-7224 or sarad@takomagov.org.

SPEAK WITH THE MAYOR

The City Council will be on recess for the month of August. Mayor Bruce Williams will resume office hours on Wednesday, September 7, 2-5 p.m. (by appointment only), and 5-7 p.m. (for walk-ins), in the third floor Council Conference Room of the Takoma Park Community Center. Beginning September 13, office hours will return to Tuesdays. Residents who need immediate assistance during the recess may contact Peggye Washington, Executive Assistant, at 301-891-7230 or peggye@takomagov.org to schedule a meeting with the Mayor.

Bruce Williams
Police Say Goodbye to Officer Diesel

Takoma Park Police officers who worked closely with the unit’s canine “officer,” Diesel, mourned the loss of their faithful dog when he died July 7 of complications from a tumor.

Diesel, born in Hungary in 2003, received a number of awards for his law enforcement accomplishments in Takoma Park. He apprehended well over a dozen suspects and recovered countless packages of illegal narcotics from inside vehicles, hotel rooms and outdoor hiding places. Two were especially memorable, says PFC Ernest Atwell, who partnered with Diesel at the time: the capture of a suspected robber at Eastern Carry-Out, and of a suspected burglar who repeatedly targeted the Game Exchange in Silver Spring. The Silver Spring incident led to search warrants which closed several other cases for Montgomery County.

Cpl. Doug Malarkey partnered with Diesel beginning in 2004, and within that first year the dog made nine felony apprehensions. Malarkey particularly remembers chasing an MS-13 gang member who violently attacked a police officer and ran off with a machete. Diesel deployed Diesel, following a strong track to University Boulevard, where the highway’s hard surface would normally disrupt the scent. But Diesel pressed on. “I began to doubt Diesel but reverted to my training, where we were always taught, ‘Trust your Dog’,” says Malarkey.

Across the highway, Diesel continued “at lightning speed” across several backyards to a six-foot, wooden fence, which he tried to jump. Malarkey helped him over, continued the chase over two more six-foot fences to the rear of a house where Diesel switched from “ground scenting” to “air scenting.” This meant the assailant was close by.

Montgomery County Police (MCFP) set a perimeter and searched but found nothing. “Some MCFP Officers were looking at me now like I was crazy, since we were now over a mile from the location of the attack on the officer,” says Malarkey. But once MCFP cleared, he recast Diesel and conducted a grid search of smaller structures. When he approached a shed at the back of the house, he could smell the sweat of the assailant inside. MCFP returned and an apprehension was made by Diesel after all verbal commands were ignored. Although Diesel loved working, Atwell says he most enjoyed performing in K9 demonstrations for the community. “Diesel loved the attention and the children,” says Atwell, who suspects the dog believed himself to be an overgrown two-year old child. “Diesel was always kind and loving toward children,” agrees Malarkey. Indeed, when Malarkey’s daughter was born, Diesel stood guard when she slept, and loved to wear a T-shirt proclaiming him to be “big brother.”

For Atwell, who was rarely apart from Diesel, the dog’s death was like losing a best friend. “There aren’t any words that could ever describe the devastation of losing Diesel,” he wrote in a tribute. “Everyone, including those who are scared of dogs, loved Diesel. His life and career ended with dignity just as he deserved.”

**Photo Courtesy Takoma Park Police**

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**Everyone, including those who are scared of dogs, loved Diesel!**

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**PFC Ernest Atwell**

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TEEN CURFEW

continued from page 1

Youth Rights Association has spoken against the measure. Many of the local teen opponents are far from the gang stereotype: they are good students with supportive parents who are savvy enough to come to political meetings where their voices will be heard. Among them is Alan Xie, the County Board of Education’s student member who helped organize the Facebook campaign.

Opponents cite studies that show curfews are not proven to reduce crime or gang violence, and some question police motives for targeting minors who cross over into Montgomery County, suggesting that because Montgomery’s population has a higher percentage of white teens, enforcement will involve racial profiling.

At the hearing July 26, individuals and representatives of community groups came forward on both sides of the issue. Councilmembers agreed that the bill as presented needs work, and many modifications were discussed. Among them were exceptions for entertainment venues (music and

RAPIST SENTENCED

continued from page 1

putting him at the Days Inn on 16th Street, where he had broken into one of the rooms.

In court Hart, who was once a student at the college, apologized to the victim and blamed his behavior on mental problems. The victim addressed him before the sentencing, telling him he was “a disgrace to your species.” She is speaking out about the crime: the Post, contrary to its usual policy of protecting the identity of victims, published her name, with her permission, and quoted her: “This is capable of happening to anyone, and no one is untouchable,” she said. “People can be vicious anywhere, anywhere that you feel most comfortable.”
Voter Registration for Takoma Park residents – U.S. citizens and non-U.S. citizens

To vote in the election on November 8, a voter must be a qualified voter of the city and must have resided within the corporate limits of the City of Takoma Park for 30 days immediately preceding the election. The voter registration cut-off date is October 10. Changes of address must also be filed by this date. Voter registration or change of address forms are available in the Takoma Park Community Center.

Thinking About Running for Office?

Candidates for Mayor or Councilmember who wish to have their names placed on the ballot for the November 8 election must receive a nomination and be seconded at the Nominating Caucus on October 4. Contact the City Clerk for an information package for candidates.

Candidates for the office of Mayor must have resided in the City for at least six months immediately preceding his/her election, and must be a qualified voter of the city. The Mayor must maintain principal residence in the City during his/her term of office. If the Mayor changes his/her principal residence from the City, the Mayor's term shall be immediately terminated and the vacancy shall be filled as provided in Section 308 of the City Charter. The Mayor is prohibited from holding other publicly elected offices during his/her term of office, and is prohibited from serving on any city board, commission, or other body that has authority to adjudicate or otherwise resolve disputes.

Candidates for the office of Councilmember shall have resided in the City (and ward from which they are elected) for at least six months immediately preceding their election and shall be qualified voters of the City. The Councilmembers shall maintain their principal residence in the City and in their ward during their term of office. If a Councilmember changes his/her principal residence from the City or from the ward from which the Councilmember was elected, the Councilmember’s term shall be immediately terminated and the vacancy shall be filled as provided in Section 308 of the City Charter. The Councilmembers are prohibited from holding other publicly elected offices during the term of office, and are prohibited from serving on any city board, commission, or other body that has authority to adjudicate or otherwise resolve disputes.

Nominating Caucus

The Nominating Caucus will convene at 7:30 p.m. on Tuesday, October 4, to accept nominations of candidates for Mayor and Councilmember. The Nominating Caucus will be held in the Auditorium of the Takoma Park Community Center – Sam Abbott Citizens’ Center, 7500 Maple Ave. Only qualified voters of the City may participate in the Nominating Caucus. To participate in the caucus, your registration or change of address form must be in the hands of the City Clerk by this deadline.

2011 Election Calendar

- **Tuesday, October 4, 7:30 p.m.** - Nominating Caucus
- **Friday, October 7, 5 p.m.** - Deadline for candidates nominated at Caucus to withdraw.
- **Monday, October 10** - Voter registration cut-off date.
- **Tuesday, November 1, 4 p.m.** - Last day to make application for regular absentee ballot
- **Wednesday, November 2** - Late absentee balloting begins
- **Friday, November 4, 5 p.m.** - Any write-in candidate for Mayor or Councilmember who wishes to be pre-registered as a write-in candidate and to have his/her name posted in the voting booth for the purpose of identifying him/her as a candidate for office, must file his/her name with the City Clerk by this deadline.
- **Tuesday, November 8, ELECTION DAY, Polls open 7 a.m. to 8 p.m.** at the Community Center. Absentee ballots must be received by the City Clerk prior to the closing of the polls.
- **Wednesday, November 9, 7:30 p.m.** - Special meeting of the City Council to receive the certification of the election results.
- **Monday, November 21, 7:30 p.m.** - Inauguration - Mayor and Councilmembers take office

Running for Office?

Candidates for Mayor or Councilmember for the November 8 election will be open from 7 a.m. to 8 p.m. on Monday, October 10. Changes of address must also be filed by this date. Voter registration or change of address forms are available in the Takoma Park Community Center.

More information on instant runoff voting is available on the City of Takoma Park website: www.takomagov.mdc.gov.

Election Judges Needed

The Takoma Park Board of Elections is seeking qualified voters to serve as election judges for the election. Expect long hours and hard work that will prove to be both rewarding and exciting! Those who have experience as judges or have bilingual abilities are urged to apply. Registered voters of Takoma Park who are not citizens of the United States are also encouraged to apply.

A Takoma Park election judge may not be a candidate for elective office, nor serve as a campaign manager or treasurer, nor take any other part in a campaign for a candidate or ballot initiative.

Election judges serve during the entire election and must attend one scheduled training prior to the election. Election judges are paid $135 for their service. A chief judge receives $175. For further information or to request an application, contact the City Clerk’s Office by phone at 301-891-7214 or 301-891-7267 or e-mail clerk@takomagov.org. Application deadline: September 16.
El Método de las Elecciones Municipales

Es el año de elecciones en Takoma Park. Preparese para votar en la elección el 8 de noviembre para elegir un Alcalde y seis Miembros del Consejo, leyendo la siguiente información sobre nominaciones, las reglas de votación y la fecha límite para registrarse como votante.

Registros de Votantes para Residentes de Takoma Park – Ciudadanos Americanos y No Ciudadanos Americanos

Para votar en la elección el 8 de noviembre, el votante tendrá que ser un votante capacitado en la ciudad de Takoma Park y haber residido en la ciudad por 30 días inmediatamente antes del día de la elección. La fecha límite para registrarse para votar es el 10 de octubre. Aviso de cambio de domicilio también tendrán que ser sometidos para esta fecha. Se pueden obtener formularios de registro de votante o cambio de domicilio en el Centro Comunitario de Takoma

¿Estás Pensando en Presentarte como Candidato?

Candidatos para el cargo de Alcalde o Miembro del Consejo que desean tener su nombre en la boleta electoral para la elección del 8 de noviembre, tendrá que haber recibido una nominación o candidato que no hayan sido apoyados por la ciudad. Se le prohibe al Alcalde mantener otro cargo público durante su mandato. El Alcalde cambia su domicilio principal durante su mandato. Si el Alcalde cambia su domicilio principal fuera de la ciudad, su candidatura para el cargo de Alcalde o Miembro del Consejo será terminado inmediatamente y el cargo vacante se llenará como indicó la sección 308 del Código de la Ciudad. Se le prohibe al Alcalde mantener otro cargo público durante su mandato. El Alcalde cambia su domicilio principal durante su mandato. Si el Alcalde cambia su domicilio principal fuera de la ciudad, su candidatura para el cargo de Alcalde o Miembro del Consejo será terminado inmediatamente y el cargo vacante se llenará como indicó la sección 308 del Código de la Ciudad. Se le prohibe al Alcalde mantener otro cargo público durante su mandato. El Alcalde cambia su domicilio principal durante su mandato.

Para participar en la Reunión Electoral, la junta de nominaciones decidirá el nombre de una persona elegida por el nombre de una persona en un solo puesto. El nombre de cada persona nombrada por el puesto de Alcalde y Miembro del Consejo tomarán su lugar en la boleta electoral para el cargo de Alcalde o Miembro del Consejo. Cualquier candidato que reciba la mayoría de votos será declarado como elegido.

El Calendario de la Elección Municipal del 2011

- Martes, 4 de octubre, 7:30 p.m. – Reunión Electoral
- Miércoles, 2 de noviembre – Comienza la votación de emergencia por boleta en ausencia.
- Viernes, 4 de noviembre, 5 p.m. – Fecha límite para cualquiera candidato autonominado para el puesto de Alcalde o Miembro del Consejo que desee ser pre-registrado como candidato autonominado y que no la junta de nominaciones.
- Miércoles, 1 de noviembre, 4:00 p.m. – Fecha límite para solicitar papeleta regular por voto ausente.
- Lunes, 21 de noviembre, 7:30 p.m. – Inauguración – Alcalde y Miembros del Consejo tomarán su puesto.
- Martes, 8 de noviembre, DÍA DE LA ELECCIÓN MUNICIPAL, las urnas de votación estarán abiertas desde las 7 a.m. a 8 p.m. en el Centro Comunitario de Takoma Park. Esta es la fecha y hora límite para someter boletas en ausencia a la Secretaría Municipal.
- Martes, 8 de noviembre, 7:30 p.m. – Reunión Electoral.

Segunda Vuelta de Elecciones Inmediata

El Consejo de la Ciudad enmendó la Carta Municipal en 2006 adoptando un sistema de segunda vuelta de elecciones. Se le permitirá a los votantes clasificar a los candidatos según su orden de preferencia. El candidato para el cargo de Alcalde que reciba la mayoría de los votos será decla-

Para más información sobre la elección, favor de contactar la Oficina de la Secretaría Municipal: Clerk@takomagov.org o llame al 301-891-7267 o 301-891-7214
August Recreation

Morning Addition
Ages 5 – 11
This before-school program is designed for those families that need early morning options before the school day starts. Staff will be available to provide informal recreation activities and will escort participants to Takoma Park Elementary School and Piny Branch Elementary School. Children will also have time for homework assignments, breakfast (not provided) or to prepare for their day at school. For more information call Carey Antoszewski, 301-891-7233.

Azalea Room
Takoma Park Community Center
Monday – Friday 7 – 9 a.m.
August 29, 2011 – June 12, 2012
TP residents $1090
Non-residents $1420

Afternoon Addition
Ages 5 – 12
Emphasis is on providing leisure and recreation programs utilizing our facilities to include but not be limited to the computer learning center, dance studio, art room, game room, athletic fields, library and more. We have some exciting activities planned this year including: drama, music, art, special guests, sports, field trips, study time and playtime that will enlighten, empower and enrich minds and imaginations. For information call Carey Antoszewski, 301-891-7233. Enroll today, space is limited. Half day “Fun Day” programs are included in the fee.

Afternoon Addition
Ages 5 – 11
This after-school program is designed for those families that need time after school to complete homework assignments. Staff will be available to provide informal recreation activities and will escort participants to Takoma Park Elementary School and Piney Branch Elementary School. Children will also have time for homework assignments and will be provided with a snack (not provided) or to prepare for their day at school. For more information call Carey Antoszewski, 301-891-7233.

Azalea Room
Takoma Park Community Center
Monday – Friday 3:30 – 6:30 p.m.
August 29 – June 12
TP residents $1,940
Non-residents $2,440
Discount for Morning and Afternoon Addition together
TP residents $2,700
Non-residents $3,260

Payments are made in four equal installments. On half days of school, After School is open 1 - 6:30 p.m. Morning and Afternoon Addition does not operate on days schools are closed. Recreation Staff will escort children who attend Takoma Park Elementary School and Piney Branch Elementary School to and from Takoma Park Community Center on whole and half days.

Dribble, Pass and Shoot Basketball Camp
Ages 6 – 12
Individual improvement, pride and accomplishment are the guiding philosophies of this camp, which covers a range of skills on the hardwood. The level of instruction will be adjusted to fit each participant.

Takoma Park Recreation Center
7315 New Hampshire Avenue
Monday – Friday 9 a.m. – 4 p.m.
August 15 – 19
$200/week

Volunteers Needed To Lead Bone Builders
Bone Builders, a light exercise class for seniors, is sponsored by Montgomery County’s RSVP and Aging and Disability Services in partnership with Takoma Park Recreation Department. Volunteer leaders are needed twice per week. Volunteers will receive a full day of free training and ongoing supervision by a master trainer. Contact Shawn Brennan, 240-777-1350 or shawn.brennan@montgomerycountymd.gov.

National Capital Trolley Museum
Come see some great old street cars from this region and Europe on display in Street Car Hall and complete your visit by getting aboard a real, working streetcar for a fun ride through the surrounding area. Warm weather, dress appropriately. The Museum is accessible, but the streetcar is not wheelchair accessible. Bring spending money for lunch at a local restaurant. Grandchildren are welcome. Meet at Takoma Park Community Center, 7500 Maple Ave. Bus pick up at Franklin, Mapleview and Victory Tower apartments only. Registration is required. Call 301-891-7280 to pre-register, fill out form by 8/5/11 or earlier. Open to active adults age 55 and older.

Senior Day, Montgomery County
Senior Day, Montgomery County is sponsored by the Montgomery County Department of Aging and Disability Services in partnership with Montgomery County’s RSVP and Aging and Disability Services. The event features a meal sponsored by Adventist Healthcare, a variety of dance, fitness, and educational speakers and demonstrations, and free chair massage. Call 301-891-7280 to pre-register, and then fill out registration form by 8/12/11 or earlier. Open to active adults age 55 and older.

Agricultural Fair
Agricultural Fair, again this year to enjoy a good old-fashioned county fair with animal and agricultural exhibits, craft shows, commercial vendor booths and festival foods. Bring your lunch or spending money to buy lunch, and wear comfortable walking shoes. Some, but not all, of the fairground’s buildings and grounds are accessible by wheelchair. Meet at Takoma Park Community Center, 7500 Maple Ave. Bus pick up at Franklin, Mapleview and Victory Tower apartments only. Registration is required. Call 301-891-7280 to pre-register, and then fill out registration form by 8/12/11 or earlier. Open to active adults age 55 and older.

Silver Foxes For Active Adults Over 55

Volunteers Needed To Lead Bone Builders
Bone Builders, a light exercise class for seniors, is sponsored by Montgomery County’s RSVP and Aging and Disability Services in partnership with Takoma Park Recreation Department. Volunteer leaders are needed twice per week. Volunteers will receive a full day of free training and ongoing supervision by a master trainer. Contact Shawn Brennan, 240-777-1350 or shawn.brennan@montgomerycountymd.gov.

National Capital Trolley Museum
Come see some great old street cars from this region and Europe on display in Street Car Hall and complete your visit by getting aboard a real, working streetcar for a fun ride through the surrounding area. Warm weather, dress appropriately. The Museum is accessible, but the streetcar is not wheelchair accessible. Bring spending money for lunch at a local restaurant. Grandchildren are welcome. Meet at Takoma Park Community Center, 7500 Maple Ave. Bus pick up at Franklin, Mapleview and Victory Tower apartments only. Registration is required. Call 301-891-7280 to pre-register, fill out form by 8/5/11 or earlier. Open to active adults age 55 and older.

Silver Spring, Maryland
9 a.m. – 3 p.m. Aug. 11
$5

Senior Day, Montgomery County
Agricultural Fair
By popular demand, we will return again this year to enjoy a good old-fashioned county fair with animal and agricultural exhibits, craft shows, commercial vendor booths and festival foods. Bring your lunch or spending money to buy lunch, and wear comfortable walking shoes. Some, but not all, of the fairground’s buildings and grounds are accessible by wheelchair. Meet at Takoma Park Community Center, 7500 Maple Ave. Bus pick up at Franklin, Mapleview and Victory Tower apartments only. Registration is required. Call 301-891-7280. Open to adults age 55 and older. See you there!

11:30 a.m. – 12:30 p.m. Aug. 9
Senior Room
Free

Bingo
Come and try your luck. Win a prize. Drop-in. Open to adults age 55 and older.

12 – 2 p.m. Aug. 25
Senior Room
Free

2011 Maryland Senior Olympics
The Maryland Senior Olympics, a non-profit organization for pro-active residents aged 50 and above, hosts the 2011 games Aug. 13 – Nov. 6, marking 31 years of helping raise physical fitness awareness for the senior population. For more information about the Olympics and how you can participate in an individual or team sport, go to: www.mdseniorolympics.org, visit www.takomaparkmd.gov/recreation or contact:
Edward P. Wroth, III
Executive Director, Maryland Senior Olympics
12900 Middlebrook Road
 Germantown, MD 20874
RECREATION DIRECTOR
continued from page 1
son at the head of administration of recre-
ation for that period of time just seems like a recipe for losing all the gains that have been made by recreation,” said Snip-
er, when Council was considering up to a year of deliberation before hiring. After the meeting, outgoing director Haduwen agreed, describing any prolonged vacancy as having a “huge impact” on staff, and pos-
sibly on programming. In the end, Council agreed to produce a final policy by Novem-
ber 14, immediately after the November 8 City Council election and before the new Council takes office.

Lack of direction
For several years, the Recreation Depart-
ment has been a frequent topic of interest to City Council, but several members admitted they’ve fallen short of giving staff clear di-
rection for the program. “I think the vision it- self was never clearly articulated by this council,” said Seamens. Instead, sporadic conversations would bloom during budget meetings, as when, last year, Seamens pro-
posed replacing much of the department’s permanent staff with volunteers.

“At times the Recreation Department and the city manager and staff have been frus-
trated about not quite knowing what the Council wants as regards to recreation,” said Wright. “I think we need to clearly ar-
ticulate that and put it in writing.”

Mayor Bruce Williams got more specific, saying the Council has been “schizophren-
ic” about recreation department fees, with some members saying they should be low, to make programming accessible to low-
income residents, and others advocating higher fees that would more closely cover programming costs.

Moving forward
During discussion July 25, councilmem-
bers took turns sharing their ideas about the changes they’d like to see in the Recreation Department. Clay wants to consider restructuring fees so that the city gets more of a return to fund activities; she suggests a smaller administrative staff, more aquatic programs, better software, more partner-
ships with organizations like the library, job training for teens and a consultant to pro-
vide advice to The Recreation Committee and staff. She also noted that the teen room and game room are too small, and suggested more creative use of that space.

Seamens referred to a 1999 Public Safety Citizens Advisory Committee report that called for better youth programs, and wants to look at incorporating stronger partner-
ships, more use of volunteers and closer in-
tegration with the police department.

Schultz suggested raising fees for non-
residents, providing scholarships for low-
income families, better utilization of the Recreation Committee, better service for the hard-to-serve population – i.e. teenag-
ers – and replacing the worn out Recreation Center on New Hampshire Avenue.

Several council members said they thought the current Recreation Department has improved significantly over the last few years, praising Haduwen and her staff. Rev-

cence has almost doubled, and camps and other programs fill to capacity.

Nevertheless, the staff has felt beleaguered in recent years, and this recent development has created further tension. At the meeting, even those councilmembers who offered praise also suggested there is room for im-

“ar tn my mind this isn’t a criticism of the job you guys are doing,” said Wright, ad-

“in the auditorium during the meeting. “You’re do-
g a good job. We’re looking to hire a new director. That and the policy decision are completely interlinked.”

Residents urged to comment
To ensure community input, the Council
turned to its Recreation Committee, ask-
ing that members solicit residents for ideas about what they’d like to see in their recre-

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TAKOMA PARK CALENDAR - AUGUST 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 September issue is August 15. To submit calendar items, email tpnewseditor@takomagov.org.

PUBLIC MEETINGS
City Council Meetings
On break for the month of August
Meetings resume Sept. 6, 7:30 p.m.
Takoma Park Community Center
Auditorium
See takomaparkmd.gov for schedule

ARTS AND LITERATURE
Open Mic Mondays
Mondays, 7 – 10 p.m.
Everyday Gourmet, 6923 Laurel Ave.
House of Musical Traditions-sponsored
showcase
Sign-ups, 6 p.m.
Free

Gabrielle Louise
Next to the House Concert
Aug. 13, 8 p.m.
7014 Westmoreland Ave.
Folk roots with jazz undertones
$15 advance, $18 door
Students $10
imtfolk.org

Deadline, Third Thursday Poetry
Submissions
Aug. 15
Submit three to five poems for consideration
301-891-7224 / saradi@takomagov.org

We the People:

Recruitment: What Do You Think?
Recruitment Committee members will be contacting community leaders about what residents most want in their recreation program. Members also wel-
come informal input from all Takoma Park residents. Talk to any member you know, or use the information below to contact the chair or vice chair.

Chair, Jay Keller
Vice-chair, Cindy Dyballa
jayktakoma@gmail.com, 301-891-2785
c_dyballa@yahoo.com, 301-270-9041

Kay Daniels-Cohen
Jane Hurst
Denise Jones
Christopher King
Howard Kohn
Peter Munger
Ray Scannell
Alice Sims

A Film Series to Promote Conversation about Race & Diversity
Aug. 19, 7 p.m.
Seeker’s Church, 276 Carroll St.
Free

All Student Art Show
Through Sept. 9
Montgomery College Department of Visual Art and Design
Takoma Park/Silver Spring Campus -
The Morris and Gwendolyn Cafritz Fine Art Center
930 King Street
240-567-6821

Kids Activities
Library Summer Quest “Campfire”
Aug. 8, 7 p.m.
Takoma Park Library
Share summer reading, with crafts and camp songs
Register at 301-891-7259 or www.
takomaparkinfo/library/registration.html
Free

Comics Jam
Aug. 15, 7 p.m.
Takoma Park Library
Read comics on the big screen
Free

Seniors
National Capital Trolley Museum
Aug. 11, 9 a.m. – 3 p.m.
Meet at Community Center
Active adults 55 and older
Street car history and lunch with the Recreation Department
See page 9 for more information
$5

Senior Day, Montgomery County Agricultural Fair
Aug. 16, 9 a.m. – 3 p.m.
Meet at the Community Center
Active adults 55 and older.
See page 9 for more information
Gaithersburg, Maryland
Free

Ongoing
Takoma Park Farmers Market
Saturdays, 10 a.m. – 2 p.m.
Laurel Ave.

Crossroads Farmers Market
Wednesdays, 2:30 – 6:30 p.m.
7876 New Hampshire Ave.
Near the corner at University Blvd.
Free

Upcoming
Takoma Park Folk Festival
Sept. 11 10:30 a.m. – 6 p.m.
Takoma Park Middle School
7611 Piney Branch Road
Multiple musicians, dance, crafts, food
Free

Annual Play Day
Sept. 24
Takoma Park Middle School
7611 Piney Branch Road
Two hours of games, music, dance and play.
Takomaplays.org
Free

2011 Takoma Park Election Nominating Caucus
Oct. 4
For information about registering to vote, running for office, or voting in City of Takoma Park elections, contact Jessie Carpenter, City Clerk, 301-891-7267 or jessiec@takomagov.org.

Citizens’ Police Academy
Thursdays beginning Oct. 6
7 – 9:30 p.m.
Takoma Park Community Center
Ten weeks to learn about Police Department operations
301-891-7121, carlami@takomagov.org
Free

2011 Takoma Park Election Voter Registration Deadline
Oct. 11
For information about registering to vote, running for office, or voting in City of Takoma Park elections, contact Jessie Carpenter, City Clerk, 301-891-7267 or jessiec@takomagov.org.

2011 Takoma Park Election Day
Nov. 8
For information about registering to vote, running for office, or voting in City of Takoma Park elections, contact Jessie Carpenter, City Clerk, 301-891-7267 or jessiec@takomagov.org.
Registration required for some events, as indicated in listing. You can register online by going to www.takomapark.info/library/registration.html or by calling 301-829-7259. Events take place in the Library unless otherwise noted.

**Neighborhood Circle Time**
Every Tuesday
Two times: 10 a.m. OR 11 a.m.

**Spanish Circle Time**
Every Thursday
10:30 a.m. with Señora Geiza
Thanks to the Friends of the Library for sponsoring this event.

**Bedtime Stories**
Monday, August 1, 7 p.m.
Come in p.j.s, bring your teddy bear or other stuffed favorites as we read some stories and sing some songs and rhymes in this half-hour program.
Perfect for babies, toddlers, preschoolers and their grown-ups.

**Summer Quest “Campfire”**
Monday, August 8, 7 p.m.
Come do a craft, sing some camp songs and hear some stories at our annual “campfire” Registration encouraged, so we can be sure to have enough craft supplies for everyone.
Thanks to the Friends of the Takoma Park Maryland Library for sponsoring this program.

**Comics Jam**
Monday, August 15, 7 p.m.
KIds and grownups -- come read comics on the big screen with our graphic novel guru, David Burbank.
No registration.
Thanks to the Friends of the Library for sponsoring this event.

**Friends of the Library Board Meeting**
Tuesday, August 16, 7/45 p.m.
In the Library.

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**“Dark” Teen Fiction Debate Continues**

By Karen MacPherson

The often-contentious relationship between parents and teens is mirrored in the decades-old debate over what constitutes appropriate reading for young adults.

This debate was first sparked by the 1967 publication of “The Outsiders,” by S.E. Hinton, which is considered the first book truly aimed at teens. Many parents were horrified by Hinton’s picture of violent, disillusioned young adults, but teen readers loved the book – and still do.

Since then, the debate over appropriate reading for teens has continued, as adults have attempted to ban books by numerous young adult authors, including Robert Cormier, whose novel, “The Chocolate War” is considered a seminal teen book; Judy Blume, author of books like “Are You There God? It’s Me, Margaret” and “Forever”; and Phyllis Reynolds Naylor, author of the “Alice” series.

Now, the debate has flared up again with the publication, earlier this summer, of an essay, “Darkness Too Visible,” in the Wall Street Journal. In the essay, Meghan Cox Gurdon, the Journal’s children’s and teen book reviewer, contends that contemporary fiction for teens is “rife with explicit abuse, violence and depravity.

“It books show us the world, teen fiction can be like a hall of fun-house mirrors, constantly reflecting back hideously distorted portrayals of what life is,” Cox Gurdon writes. “There are of course exceptions, but a carefree young reader—or one who seeks out depravity—will find himself surrounded by images not of joy or beauty but of damage, brutality and losses of the most horrendous kinds.”

Cox Gurdon’s examples include the “hyper-violent” “Hunger Games” dystopian trilogy by Suzanne Collins, and author Lauren Myracle’s newest book “Shine,” which tells the story of a teen girl living in a small town, where she overcomes her shyness to investigate the brutal beating of her best friend, who is gay.

Both “The Hunger Games” and “Shine” have received excellent reviews from professional reviewers. Collins’ three “Hunger Games” books are best-sellers with both teens and adults and also were among the top 10 most frequently challenged books in the country in 2010, according to the American Library Association (ALA). Myracle’s books, which include “Tiffin” and “Tyl,” also are hugely popular with teens and also are among the most challenged books in the country, according to the ALA.

Cox Gurdon’s essay triggered an immediate and angry response by young adult authors, as well as from librarians, booksellers and teen readers themselves. Maureen Johnson, author of a popular young adult novel titled “13 Little Blue Envelopes,” created a Twitter campaign in support of contemporary teen fiction, using the hashtag #YAsaves. (With Twitter, users “tweet” messages of up to 140 characters; a hashtag is used to mark and categorize topics in a tweet.)

In her initial tweet, Johnson—recently named by Time magazine as one of the 140 top Twitter users to follow—asked: “Did YA help you? Let the world know how!” Within hours, according to an article in Publishers Weekly, “#YAsaves got 15,000 responses from regular readers and from such big-name writers as Judy Blume and Neil Gaiman.”

Many teens wrote about how reading books of the type criticized by Cox Gurdon helped them make it through the dark experience in their own lives, or understand the kinds of challenges faced by other teens.


Noting his own background as a sexually-abused child, Alexie wrote: “...there are millions of teens who read because they are sad and lonely and enraged. They read because they live in an often-terrible world. They read because they believe the only escape is to protest the actions of certain adults, that books—especially the dark and dangerous ones—will save them.”

In his piece, Cox Gurdon acknowledged “the argument in favor of such novels is that they validate the teen experience…If a teen has been abused, the logic follows, reading about another teen in the same straits will be comforting. Yet it is also possible — indeed, likely — that books focusing on pathologies help normalize them.”

Writing for Salon.com, Mary Elizabeth Williams agreed that part of a parent’s job is to protect kids. But she added, “There’s something almost comical about raising them with tales of big bad wolves and poisoned apples, and then deciding at a certain point that literature is too ‘dark’ for them to handle. Kids are smarter than that.”

Other critics of Cox Gurdon’s essay noted that she focused on only a small slice of the burgeoning teen fiction market. With one exception—this year’s winner “Shipbreaker” by Paolo Bacigalupi—he also ignored winners of the Printz Award, given annually by the ALA to the best teen books (to see the winners, go to: http://www.ala.org/ala/mgrps/divys/yalsa/booklistawards/printaward/previouslywinners.winners.cfm).

Several weeks after her first essay was published, Cox Gurdon responded to her critics, re-stating her position and adding: “If the American Library Association were inclined to brand people in effigy, I might well have gone up in smoke these past few days.”

Meanwhile, David Leviathan, editorial director at Scholastic and the author of several well-reviewed teen novels, told Publishers Weekly that Cox Gurdon’s essay actually has rallied teen book lovers. Cox Gurdon “is entitled to her viewpoint,” Leviathan said, “but what she inadvertently released is all of this profound evidence of the worth of what we do.”

(NOTE: On June 20, I was a guest of the “Midmorning” show on Minnesota Public Radio, on a program devoted to discussing the topic of teen fiction and the controversy surrounding Cox Gurdon’s essay. To hear the program, go to this link: http://minnesota.publicradio.org/radio/programs/midmorning/date/06-20-2011.)
Police Put on Party for National Night Out

Police will pull out all the stops to welcome residents to Piney Branch Elementary School on Tuesday, Aug. 2, during National Night Out festivities. Activities, all of which are free, will include games and music, giveaways, interactive educational activities and plenty of information on safety and crime prevention. There will be a moon bounce, face painting and bike safety demonstrations and tune-ups; officers will show off their vehicles, and mounted police will let residents pet their horses. McGruff the Crime Dog will be on hand as well, teaching children about safety. Parents can also have their children finger-printed.

National Night Out, sponsored by the National Association of Town Watch (NATW), is celebrated by police departments across the nation. It is designed to heighten safety and crime prevention awareness; to support locally-based businesses, groups, and organizations; and to strengthen relationships among community members and between the community and local police department. It is open to all interested area residents.

Businesses and organizations that would like to be part of the event can reserve a spot by contacting Officer Carla Magnaye, 301-891-7121 or carla.m@takomagov.org. Participation is free. Visit http://takomaparkpolice.cenno.weebly.com for details.

National Night Out
Tuesday, August 2, 2011
6 – 9 p.m.
Piney Branch Elementary School
7510 Maple Ave.
Takoma Park

House Fire
On June 8, at 1 p.m., a serious fire occurred in the 7400 Block of Holly Avenue. The fire caused approximately $15,000 in damage to the house. There were no injuries. The cause was determined to be a clothes dryer.

Candles During Power Outages
Avoid using candles for emergency lighting.
* If your electrical service goes out, use flashlights and battery powered lamps when possible.
* Don’t carry lit candles.
* Keep candles at least three feet away from anything that can burn.
* Store candles, matches, and lighter fluid in a locked cabinet.
* Never leave a burning candle unattended.
* Extinguish all candles when you leave a room, the home or go to sleep.

TPVFD members receive special recognition
At the June 8 membership meeting, Chaplain Dave Hooker was bestowed TPVFD Lifetime Membership.

POLICE Briefs

Click it or Ticket Campaign a Success
The statewide 2011 Chiefs’ Challenge, Click it or Ticket, reminded residents of Maryland’s seatbelt law, and promoted driver safety throughout the month of May.
The campaign, which emphasizes safety restraint enforcement, ran from May 1 through June 3. During that time, the Takoma Park Police Department issued 481 seatbelt violation tickets.
Police Chief Ronald Ricucci praised the department’s efforts, and offered special congratulations to the top four ticket writers: Cpl. Michelle Holmes, Sgt. Richard Poole, Pvt. Peter Marable and Cpl. Jerome Erwin.
According to the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA), Click it or Ticket is the most successful seat belt enforcement campaign ever, helping create the highest national seat belt usage rate.

Police Academy Begins in October
The Takoma Park Police Department is reaching out to the community with an academy program open to all residents interested in learning more about police operations in the City. The ten-week course is designed to educate residents on the required duties and obligations of a police officer, and it will provide a glimpse into all aspects of the City’s police department that make it run smoothly on a daily basis.
The academy will begin on October 6, and run from 7 to 9:30 p.m. each Thursday night. Sessions will be held at the Takoma Park Community Center and there is no cost to participate. The deadline for registration is August 31. Seats are filling up quickly. Contact the Community Outreach Program Officer, Carla Magnaye, at 301-891-7121 or at carla.m@takomagov.org to register.

Summer Heat
Since summer weather has brought excessive heat to the Washington region, the Metropolitan Washington Council of Governments (MWCOG) and the District Department of the Environment (DDOE) have issued Code Orange and Code Red Air Quality Alerts, signaling that air pollution concentrations in the region may become unhealthy for sensitive groups.

Consider:
• Fueling your car only after dark
• Skipping the use of gas powered blowers, weed whackers, or edgers
• Avoiding idling your car excessively
• Avoiding or limiting exertion mid-day
• Carpooling, telecommuting, or taking mass transit to work
• Limiting driving and combining errands
• Waiting for a cooler day to use oil-based paints or switching to non-solvent or low VOC-based paints
• Avoiding using aerosols and household products that contain solvents
• Avoiding mid-day driving
• Conserving energy at home and work to reduce power demand.

To stay safe, avoid exertion mid-day and drink plenty of fluids. Do not leave pets or children in the car unattended. If you become over-heated seek an air-conditioned or shady location for rest. And check on elderly neighbors to be sure they are safe.
Remember locations such as libraries, community centers or other places that have air conditioning, and seek these places out if you are overheated or your air conditioning is not functioning.

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
The annual Takoma Park Independence Day Parade ran the gamut, from Caribbean music to Girl Scouts, Reel Lawn Mowers to Washington Revels. Float winners included the Vietnam Veterans of America Chapter 641 for Military/Veterans; Burtonsville Fire Department for fire companies; Finest! Parade Marching Wildcats for Performing Arts; Singo Lodoyo USA for Costumed Entries; Cub Scout Pack #33/Boy Scouts of America Troop 33 for Youth Groups; Greenbelt Dog Training Marching Drill Team for Roscoe Award Animal Groups; Coalition for Natural Sports Fields for Wacky Tacky Takoma Award; and Takoma Park Presbyterian Church for the TPIDC Memorial Award.

Photos by Lloyd Wolf