**New Year, New Resolve!**

According to researchers at the University of Scranton, “improve finances” is the second most popular New Year’s resolution after the always popular “weight loss.” What are your resolutions for 2017?

Making New Year’s Resolutions is a time-honored tradition. Resolutions are a fun and positive way to start the New Year, so we’re featuring some from City staff and leadership here in the January newsletter.

“...my resolution for 2017 is: Be Kind. Be Bold. Resist.”

—Kate Stewart, Mayor, City of Takoma Park

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**Feasibility study begins at Piney Branch Elementary School**

By Apryl Motley

With the Montgomery County Board of Education’s appointment of the architectural firm of Smolen-Emr-Ilkovitch Architects Inc. on Nov. 15, 2016, the feasibility study at Piney Branch Elementary School officially got under way. The primary focus of the study is to determine the feasibility for a classroom addition to alleviate overcrowding at the school and address the projected need for even more space in the future.

Architects have started the due diligence phase of the study, which, according to Seth Adams, director of the division of construction for Montgomery County Public Schools, “focuses on looking at the building as a whole in terms of both civil and structural engineering.” Adams stressed that this is not a decision-making process. “Part of due diligence is understanding what’s there,” he said. “This is a data collection and fact-finding process to look at the feasibility of all options, including maintaining or not maintaining the pool. Information will be collected about the pros and cons of each option.”

From the City’s perspective, “the ideal outcome is that the needed classroom space is added, but not necessarily to the detriment of the existing pool,” noted Deputy City Manager Jason Dannweiler. “Acknowledging the need for classroom space is paramount. If something has to happen with the pool at PRES, then we hope our partners — namely at the County, the school system, Washington Adventist Hospital, Montgomery College — step up and help advocate for and/or finance construction of a new pool/aquatics center locally.”

Once the due diligence phase is complete, the community feedback process will begin giving City leadership and residents the opportunity to share their concerns. “The community will have multiple opportunities for feedback,” Adams said. The first of four meetings will be scheduled for the end of this...
OFFICIAL CITY GOVERNMENT MEETINGS
TPCC Takoma Park Community Center

CITY COUNCIL MEETINGS
Wednesday, Jan. 11, 7:30 p.m.
Wednesday, Jan. 18, 7:30 p.m.
Wednesday, Jan. 25, 7:30 p.m.
Wednesday, Feb. 1, 7:30 p.m.
Regular City Council meetings will take place in the Community Center Auditorium. The City Council will hold two budget retreats in January — Monday, Jan. 9 and Tuesday, Jan. 17. Both begin at 6 p.m. in the Hydrangea Room.

ARTS AND HUMANITIES COMMISSION
Tuesday, Jan. 24, 7 p.m.
TPCC Hydrangea Room

BOARD OF ELECTIONS
Tuesday, Jan. 24, 7:30 p.m.
TPCC Third Floor

COMMITTEE ON THE ENVIRONMENT
Monday, Jan. 9, 7:15 p.m.
TPCC Linoc Room

EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS COMMITTEE
Tuesday, Jan. 24, 7 p.m.
TPCC Hydrangea Room

FAÇADE ADVISORY BOARD
Tuesday, Jan. 10, 6:30 p.m.
TPCC Hydrangea Room

NOISE CONTROL BOARD
(tentative) Tuesday, Jan. 17, 7 p.m.
TPCC Third Floor

NUCLEAR-FREE TAKOMA PARK COMMITTEE
Tuesday, Jan. 10, 7:30 p.m.
TPCC Azalea Room

RECREATION COMMITTEE
Thursday, Jan. 19, 7 p.m.
TPCC Hydrangea Room

SAFE ROADWAYS COMMITTEE
Tuesday, Jan. 17, 7:30 p.m.
TPCC Lilac Room

TAKOMA JUNCTION COMMUNITY CONSULTATION PROCESS ADVISORY COMMITTEE
Thursday, Jan. 12, 7 p.m.
TPCC Hydrangea Room

TREE COMMISSION
Tuesday, Jan. 10, 6:30 p.m.
TPCC Atrium Room

*All meetings are open to the public unless noted otherwise. Schedule changes may occur after the Takoma Park Newsletter deadline. For the most up-to-date information, visit www.takomaparkmd.gov and click on "Events and Meetings." Most meetings are held in the Takoma Park Community Center — Sam Abbott Citizens’ Center, 7801 Maple Avenue (TPCC). Individuals interested in receiving a weekly Council agenda and calendar update by e-mail can sign up at takomaparkmd.gov/government/city-council/legends.

ADHA NOTICE
The City of Takoma Park is committed to ensuring that individuals with disabilities are able to fully participate in public meetings. Requests with a disability who wish to receive auxiliary aids, services, or accommodations at a City of Takoma Park public meeting or public hearing or who cannot attend a public meeting but would like to record an audio comment to be played during the public comment period of the meeting, should contact the following: Jason Daniels, Deputy City Manager, at jason@daniels@takomaparkmd.gov or 301-891-7202 at least 48 hours in advance.

TAKOMA JUNCTION COMMUNITY CONSULTATION PROCESS ADVISORY COMMITTEE VACANCY

The Takoma Junction Community Consultation Process Advisory Committee helps facilitate community input and feedback on critical stages of the Takoma Junction development project. The committee’s efforts focus on creating, in connection with Neighborhood Development Company, the process needed to guide community participation on important aspects of the development project effectively. The committee will not be responsible for making substantive decisions or providing specific recommendations to the Council about the design, layout or use of the planned development. The Committee currently has one vacancy for a resident from Ward 4. Members should be skilled in outreach and social media, knowledgeable about local resources, and familiar with the best means of reaching residents throughout the community. The work of the committee will be finished when the community consultation period in the development process is complete in spring 2017. To apply for appointment, complete and submit an application: takomapark.seamlessdocs.com/bbc-application.

CityPhone

Important City Phone Numbers

Main ......................... 301-891-7100
City Clerk ....................... 301-891-7267
City Manager ............... 301-891-7229
City TV ......................... 301-891-7118
Finance ....................... 301-891-7212
Housing & Community Development ..... 301-891-7119
Library ......................... 301-891-7259
Police ......................... 301-270-1100 / Emergency 911
Public Works .................. 301-891-7633
Recreation/Facilities Rental ........ 301-891-7280

Stay informed about City Council meetings and agenda! Subscribe to our weekly email list. You’ll find the subscription form on the Council agenda page takomaparkmd.gov/government/city-council/agendas.

The Commemoration Commission advises the City Council on ways in which the City might best serve the public with regard to matters involving the arts; encourages and aids the appreciation and awareness of, and participation in, the arts among all Takoma Park residents; encourages cooperation and coordination among organizations, institutions and concerns involved with the arts in Takoma Park, and facilitates employment opportunities for artists and the development of self-sustaining arts programs.

The Board of Elections plans and conducts regular and special City elections in coordination with the City Clerk; encourages voter registration in the City; conducts voter education programs and prepares and distributes voter outreach materials; recommends to the Council amendments to the City’s elections law and regulations when it deems such amendments are necessary and will provide for the improved conduct of elections; and periodically reviews City elections procedures.

The Commemoration Commission documents, maintains, and preserves past, present, and future memorials, commemoratives, and recognitions in the City; recommends to the City Council procedures and programs to honor and commemorate individuals, organizations and businesses that have made significant contributions to the social, cultural, historical, political, economic, or civic life of the City as a whole or to a neighborhood/local area as well as programs for individuals to honor others; implement such programs within its scope and budget; and decide on recognitions after opportunity for public review and comment.

The Ethics Commission provides written advisory opinions; investigates, hears, and decides in ethics inquiries and complaints; conducts a public education program; recommends legislative changes and improvements to the Ethics Ordinance; and promulgates regulations to accompany the Ethics Ordinance.

The Noise Control Board assists and advises the City on noise control issues, including administration and enforcement of the Noise Control Ordinance. The Board adjudicates noise disturbance complaints.

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VACANCIES ON CITY BOARDS, COMMISSIONS AND COMMITTEES

Interested in serving? A great first step is to review information at www.takomaparkmd.gov/government/boards-commissions-and-committees. Then, attend a meeting to see if it is a good fit for you. If you have questions, contact the committee, or talk to your City Councilmember or the City Clerk. Appointments are made by the City Council. Apply by completing the online application and submit it along with a resume or statement of qualifications.

The following groups have vacancies as of Dec. 16, 2016:

- The Arts and Humanities Commission advises the City Council on ways in which the City might best serve the public with regard to matters involving the arts; encourages and aids the appreciation and awareness of, and participation in, the arts among all Takoma Park residents; encourages cooperation and coordination among organizations, institutions and concerns involved with the arts in Takoma Park, and facilitates employment opportunities for artists and the development of self-sustaining arts programs.

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- The Ethics Commission provides written advisory opinions; investigates, hears, and decides in ethics inquiries and complaints; conducts a public education program; recommends legislative changes and improvements to the Ethics Ordinance; and promulgates regulations to accompany the Ethics Ordinance.

- The Noise Control Board assists and advises the City on noise control issues, including administration and enforcement of the Noise Control Ordinance. The Board adjudicates noise disturbance complaints.

Board members serve staggered three-year terms. The Nuclear-Free Takoma Park Committee oversees implementation and adherence to the Takoma Park Nuclear Free Zone Act and provides public information and issues related to the Ordinance.

The Recreation Committee advises the City Council on how best to serve the diverse recreation needs of Takoma Park residents, including but not limited to reviewing and recommending policies and programs that concern recreational opportunities within the City, with a special emphasis on youth and seniors and broad and diverse participation.

The Safe Roadways Committee advises the City Council on transportation-related issues including, but not limited to, pedestrian and bicycle facilities and safety, traffic issues, and transit services and encourages Takoma Park residents to use alternatives to driving, including walking, bicycling, and transit.

The Personnel Appeal Board adjudicates employee appeals of the City Manager’s decisions regarding employee grievances or dismissals. The Board meets annually unless called to convene a hearing.

All actions take place in scheduled legislative meetings of the City Council. Only negative votes and abstentions/vacuums are noted. Adopted legislation is available for review online at www.takomaparkmd.gov.
Plastic bag ban now in effect

A long anticipated ban on the use of plastic single-use bags at point of sale went into effect in Takoma Park on December 1. The City Council, known for its progressive stance when it comes to sustainable policies and practices, passed the ordinance earlier this year after much consideration and discussion about the ban.

“We in Takoma Park, Md., have been a national leader in the preservation of natural resources and the environment,” said Councilmember Jarrett Smith who initially proposed the ban. “With this plastic bag ban, our tenacity for all things that protect the environment continues... Sligo Creek, the Chesapeake Bay, and other environmental treasures will always be a priority for our city.”

Mayor Kate Stewart echoed these sentiments: “Takoma Park is proud of its dedication to protect the environment and create a sustainable community. Our deep commitment is exemplified by our willingness to pioneer new programs, stemming back to the early days of recycling and tree protection laws.”

The plastic bag ban does provide a few exceptions, including dry cleaning bags, newspaper bags where newspapers are delivered by the publisher, and non-point of sale plastic bags, such as those used for raw or bulk items like produce, grains, candy and small hardware items. Farmers markets within the city are exempt from the ban for the first year until December 1, 2017, at which point they may provide compostable plastic bags to customers.

The emphasis for the first 90 days of the new ordinance will be on education and outreach to local business. For full text of the ordinance, please visit https://documents.takomaparkmd.gov/government/city-council/ordinances/2016/ordinance-2016-31.pdf.

A slightly longer version of this article appeared on the City’s website on Dec. 5, 2016: takomaparkmd.gov/news-alert/plastic-bags-banned.
A Maryland National Capital Park and Planning Commission roadway, and snow and ice response is performed by Montgomery County. Heavy plows will assist with snow removal on these streets in the course of their work to clear city streets.

If you have any questions before or during a winter event, please contact the Public Works Department at 301-891-7033.

Helpful Tips for Residents to Follow During a Snow Event
Stay connected:
Conditions leading to a declared snow emergency include the expectation of a significant quantity of snow or an ice event. The city manager may declare a snow emergency and will announce the status through Takoma Park Alert, local media, and on the city’s website, Facebook and Twitter.

Adhere to the following restrictions that go into effect during declared snow emergencies:

- Residents are strongly encouraged to park vehicles in their driveways whenever possible. Fewer cars on the street allow city plows to move more quickly and safely clear the roads.
- If you must park on the street, make sure to park your car as close to the curb as possible to maintain a distance of at least 25 feet from an intersection.
- Clear your sidewalks:
  - Residents are responsible for clearing the public sidewalks adjacent to their property.
  - When possible, keep sidewalks clear of snow and ice by regularly shoveling accumulated snow during and after a snow event.
  - Please do not shovel large amounts of snow into the street when clearing your driveway, lead walk or sidewalk. The best place to pile snow is on the lawn or grassy areas. Piles of snow shoved out into the street can cause problems for passing vehicles.

Be a good neighbor and help others in need:
Reach out and ask neighbors if they need assistance with keeping their sidewalks clear. Many residents are physically unable to shovel snow and ice and are resistant to request help from neighbors or friends. Your thoughtfulness can make a big difference to someone who might otherwise be unable to cope.

In response to the need to expand access to affordable homeownership, the City set aside $50,000 in the FY17 budget to pilot a down payment assistance program. The program, called “The Home Stretch,” is projected to assist up to five eligible individuals or families in achieving homeownership. Eligibility requirements include:

- Applicant must be a “first-time homebuyer.” For the purposes of this program, a first-time homebuyer is defined as one who has not owned property in the past five (5) years.
- Applicant’s income must not exceed 80% of the Area Median Income (AMI) for Montgomery County. For a family of four, for example, the maximum allowable income is $86,600 for 2016.
- Applicant must successfully complete a homebuyer education course approved by the City of Takoma Park prior to receiving assistance.
- The home must be located in the City of Takoma Park.
- The home must serve as the applicant’s principal residence.
- Interested applicants must submit an online interest form, available on the City’s website starting Jan. 6, 2017. For additional information, please visit the City’s website.

At its Dec. 7 business meeting, the Takoma Park City Council voted to allow 30 more days for a Letter of Intent to be negotiated and agreed to by the Takoma Park Silver Spring Co-op and the City’s development partner, NDC, regarding the Takoma Junction development. In the meantime, NDC has signed a Letter of Intent with the Ability Project to provide a second story, 6,000 sq. ft. space in the development for adults with special needs to have a supportive environment in which they can gather and relax.

To learn more about the content of discussions with the Co-op to date and where things stand regarding current plans and aspirations, residents may wish to view this presentation given by NDC President Adrian Washington. takomaparkmd.gov/city-blog/takoma-junction-redevelopment-update.

Residents are welcome to weigh in now and in the months ahead.

Frequently Asked Questions:
What are the City Council’s goals for the project?
The goals of the City Council regarding the Takoma Junction development project remain: improve the aesthetic appeal of the commercial district, and be contextually sensitive and environmentally sustainable.

The Council has repeatedly expressed its concern for the well-being of the Co-op, particularly its need for continuity of operations. And, the Council is looking at the long-term needs of the City’s taxpayers by putting a key property back on the tax rolls.

Where, exactly, will the Co-op be located?
There are two choices: the Co-op may remain in the building it is in and expand or not, or the Co-op could opt for relocating into a brand new building on the site of the City’s current surface parking lot.

NDC has presented concept designs for either option. Moving into a new building adjacent to its current building has advantages in terms of the Co-op’s continuity of operations and the opportunity to occupy a space optimized for grocery use. However, the Co-op may not wish to pursue that option. To be clear: NDC remains open to an arrangement where the Co-op is the anchor tenant and retains its current space, while also addressing the Council’s overarching goals. NDC’s proposals do not include relocating the Co-op to a site away from the Junction.

What about traffic studies, and will the State Highway Administration allow a “lay-by” design for large trucks to unload in front of the Co-op?
While NDC’s traffic consultant has been active in the development of options, a real traffic study does not come until later when more information is known about a proposed site plan and potential uses. At the Mayor’s request, City staff confirmed that SHA has no objections to such a design in concept.

How will the process move forward?
The final design of the Takoma Junction project is a long way off — there is a whole Takoma Park community process ahead, as well as the site plan review process through Montgomery County. The Council will be weighing many aspects of the site plan, including design, parking, loading, community use space, and safety. As a City-owned property, the Council has final say, within the parameters of the County’s Codes.

How can city residents provide their input?
Comments may be submitted through the City’s website at takomapark.seamlessdocs.com/JunctionComments.

This article was adapted from City Manager Suzanne Ludlow’s Dec. 9 blog post.
THE ARTS

The U-Liners
Saturday, Jan. 14, 7:30 p.m.
Suggested Donation: $10

Local Takoma Park band The U-Liners performs at the Takoma Park Community Center Saturday, Jan. 14, at 7:30 p.m. We Are Takoma is excited to have the group back at the auditorium. We caught up with band member Joe Uehlein for a question-and-answer exchange about the group via email.

Joe Uehlein: What is one thing you wish more people knew about The U-Liners?

That we continue to grow as artists, and as human beings. We are always bringing new music into the mix. And, babies, too! When we formed the band 14 years ago, there were no children in the mix, but over time, five children were born to members of the band. Musically, we are not wedded to staying in one idiom. We like to explore different sounds, mixing traditional bluegrass instruments and sound with rock ‘n roll and just keeping the music fresh and expansive. Music is life, and we strive to live that way.

We Are Takoma: We Are Takoma is excited to have the band perform at the Takoma Park Community Center Saturday, Jan. 14, at 7:30 p.m. Plenty of original songs, as well as our fave covers! Songs to jump and dance to, and most importantly, songs to dance to, and most importantly, truly amazing artistry from Avril Smith on guitar, Tom Espinola on mandolin, Larry Ferguson on drums, Jessica Lake on vocals, Barry Warsaw on bass, and, for this upcoming show, and other shows as well, Rickie Simpkins on violin. Oh, yeah, and me, Joe Uehlein, on guitar and vocals!

We Are Takoma: The U-Liners take a unique approach to your repertoire. Can you elaborate on that?

Joe Uehlein: We’ve developed a broad and deep repertoire of hundreds of songs from different genres suitable for many different occasions. We play bars and clubs, as well as concert halls, and we like to feature our original material. We love to go from bluegrass to rock ‘n roll to folk and soul all in one gig. We’ve been referred to as “Woody Guthrie meets Merle Haggard meets Jerry Garcia,” and we’ve done tributes to those artists and Pete Seeger, too!

We Are Takoma: How has Takoma Park influenced The U-Liners?

Joe Uehlein: I’ve lived in Takoma Park for going on 32 years, and Avril has been here for a long time, too. Tom’s been teaching here for many years. I moved to Takoma Park because of the art and music and the politics. Living in a close knit community, and a community that shares our values as human beings and as artists, has influenced our sound and the songs we select.

We Are Takoma: What can audience members expect at a The U-Liners concert?

Joe Uehlein: Plenty of original songs, as well as our fave covers! Songs to jump and down to, songs that cause you to think, songs to dance to, and most importantly, truly amazing artistry from Avril Smith on guitar, Tom Espinola on mandolin, Larry Ferguson on drums, Jessica Lake on vocals, Barry Warsaw on bass, and, for this upcoming show, and other shows as well, Rickie Simpkins on violin. Oh, yeah, and me, Joe Uehlein, on guitar and vocals!

We Are Takoma: The U-Liners are a dynamic group. Tell us about the band.

Joe Uehlein: Entering our 14th year together, we play a genre-blending style of Americana and roots-rock music from folk to rock, swing to bluegrass, country to soul. And, we like to mix it all up into one kind of music with a cool groove. We have a sub-specialty of songs with a purpose, songs that have something to say about the world around us, and, for me, these come from my life experiences as a laborer and as an environmental, social and economic justice organizer.

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The U-Liners perform at the Takoma Park Community Center Saturday, Jan. 14, at 7:30 p.m. Special Guest Rickie Simpkins on fiddle! 1.14.2017 SATURDAY, 7:30-10 P.M. TAKOMA PARK CIVIC AUDITORIUM 7900 Maple Avenue, Takoma Park, MD 20912

Docs in Progress Presents Community Stories Student Showcase
Thursday, Jan. 12, 7:30 p.m.

Join us in celebrating the opening of our new exhibition Human Element. The show features works by photographer Suzheila “Sheila” Reyes-Bunnag, textile artist Maria Simmonson, and painter Cynthia Farrell Johnson. Enjoy great art, snacks, and beverages and meet the artists. The opening reception is free. Human Element is on view at the Takoma Park Community Center through March 5.

Third Thursday Poetry
Thursday, January 19, 7:30 p.m.

Join us for a fabulously free evening of poetry with works read by poets themselves. Gary Jacobs, Chris Llewellyn, Patric Petter, and Donald Illich. Come for the free event then stay for the reception. Third Thursday Poetry is part of the We Are Takoma arts and humanities series and made possible by the City of Takoma Park.

http://www.docsinprogress.org/communitystories. Community Stories Student Showcase, part of We Are Takoma arts and humanities series, is free for everyone.
New Year’s resolution can seem pretty pointless when you never actually work, or when you feel guilty because maybe you made some unrealistic ones. You really wanted to stick to them or at least try them out. In the end it seems a lot of New Year’s resolutions almost always fail. So what’s the point, right?

Well, resolutions don’t have to be crazy and wild. Resolutions are about bettering yourself to your standards, not everyone else’s. So let’s make them a little more attainable, and make them fun. Maybe, just maybe that will help with fulfilling them. Here are a few suggestions to try out for this year’s resolutions.

1. Get in shape. Losing weight is the top resolution for most people. It’s easy to start an exercise and diet program, but the trick is to find one that works for you. Help keep this resolution by joining the fitness center at the Takoma Park Recreation Center (7315 New Hampshire Ave) or registering for one of the Recreation Department’s many fitness classes.

2. Pick up useful skills or fun hobbies. Just sitting around all day won’t get you anywhere. Give your thumbs a break from all the texting and social media! It’s better to use your free time in a constructive manner and pick up new skills while having fun at the same time. In the end you will be glad that you did.

3. Improve your GPA if you are still in school. Make small goals of improve-

ment, start off by simply doing your best to improve on the next test. Make small goals that are attainable and keep increasing your goal, so eventu-

ally you can move that “C” to a “B,” and then you are well on your way to a “A.” Stop by the Power Hour every Tuesday afternoon in the Teen Lounge for extra help on your homework.

4. Start expressing yourself artistically. Expressing yourself in some creative artistic way is a great form of stress re-

lief and helps keep your mind sharp. So get in the arts, write, craft, make DIY projects, whatever makes you feel good. Sign up for a ceramics class at the Community Center or stop by one of the many we Are Takoma events.

5. Play more. Play is an important source of relaxation and stimulation. In ad-

dition, it can make you more creative and productive. Bring more play into your life by making it a New Year’s resolution and include your friends on the fun! Kick off your year of play at the Inflatable Splash and Play Pool Party hosted by the Recreation Department and Let’s Play America on January 8-10, at 2-4 p.m. at the Piney Branch Public Pool.

6. Call your friends! Spring Break P.R.E.P.S. Week Spring Break P.R.E.P.S. (Planning and Researching for Educational and Professional Success) week is about assisting teens in planning for their future. During this week, teens will be able to participate in discussions with business professionals and take a few college tours to get a sense of life after high school. Occasional break away trips, such as bowling, laser tag, or roller skating, will be included. Come with questions, an open mind and a bag lunch! Now starting at 9 a.m. before Care and After Care available for an additional fee!

Takoma Park Community Center Teen Lounge
7500 Maple Avenue Grades 6-12
9 a.m. - 4 p.m.
Residents: $100 / Non-residents: $125

7. Visit the website! The website is your best friend! You can find answers to your questions about college and receive guidance on the road to applying and getting into college. Takoma Park Recreation Center Rose Room
7500 Maple Avenue Grades 9-12
Wednesdays, January 11 - March 1 3-8 p.m.
Free

8. Attend the Teen Lounge! Teens will be able to participate in discussions with business professionals and take a few college tours to get a sense of life after high school. Occasional break away trips, such as bowling, laser tag, or roller skating, will be included. Come with questions, an open mind and a bag lunch! Now starting at 9 a.m. before Care and After Care available for an additional fee!

Takoma Park Community Center Teen Lounge
7500 Maple Avenue Grades 6-12
Ongoing Tuesdays 4 - 8 p.m.
Free

9. Visit the Takoma Park Recreation Center Gymnasium
7315 New Hampshire Avenue Grades 9-12
8 Week Session
Wednesdays, January 11 - March 1 3-8 p.m.
Free

10. Relax and stimulate the mind! The Community Center is hosting thousands of events. Take advantage of the possibilities offered for first-generation college students. Find answers to your questions about college and receive guidance on the road to applying and getting into college. Takoma Park Recreation Center Rose Room
7500 Maple Avenue Grades 9-12
9 a.m. - 4 p.m.
Free

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9 a.m. - 4 p.m.
Free

19. Visit the website! The website is your best friend! You can find answers to your questions about college and receive guidance on the road to applying and getting into college. Takoma Park Recreation Center Rose Room
7500 Maple Avenue Grades 9-12
9 a.m. - 4 p.m.
Free

20. Visit the website! The website is your best friend! You can find answers to your questions about college and receive guidance on the road to applying and getting into college. Takoma Park Recreation Center Rose Room
7500 Maple Avenue Grades 9-12
9 a.m. - 4 p.m.
Free
and education by laying the foundation for a great launch in life! Spring Forward will teach you how to go from ordinary to extraordinary. Takoma Park Community Center Rose Room 7500 Maple Avenue Grades 6-12 8 Week Session Thursdays, January 12 - March 2 3 - 5 p.m. Free

ADULTS

ART Ceramics: Wheel Throwing Receive instruction on using the potter's wheel. Participants will make cups, bowls and dishes. Tools and other materials provided. There is a $15 materials fee due to the instructor on the first day of class. Takoma Park Community Center Art Studio 7500 Maple Avenue 16 years & older 8 week sessions Wednesdays, February 1 - March 22 6:30 - 8:30 p.m. Resident: $110 / Non-Resident: $130 Ceramics: Hand Building & Sculpture Come learn how to use clay without the wheel. Bowls, soap dishes, vases, and plates can be made by many methods, including plaster molds to create large bowls and plates. Sculpture students can make clay animals, figures or portrait heads. Glazes are food safe. There is a $15 materials fee for clay, glazes and tools due the first day of class. Takoma Park Community Center Art Studio 7500 Maple Avenue 16 years & older 8 week sessions Mondays, February 8 - March 27 11:30 a.m. - 1:50 p.m. Resident: $110 / Non-Resident: $130 DROP-IN Multi Media Lab Located on the second floor of the Community Center, participants will have access to the latest Mac computers, word processing and editing software, including but not limited to Final Cut Pro and a variety of other programs. Utilizing this equipment will allow you to produce professional work of the highest quality at your own pace. No instruction provided; work independently. The Multi Media Lab will be closed on Thursdays and Sundays. For more information, please contact John Webster at 301-891-7225 or johnw@takomaparkmd.gov. Takoma Park Community Center Multi Media Lab Monday - Wednesday & Friday, 3 - 8 p.m. Saturday: 12 - 1:50 p.m. Closed on Thursdays and Sundays MARTIAL ARTS Karate Self-Defense Promote physical fitness, self-defense, leadership and cultural exchange through the practice of a traditional Okinawan karate style, Isshinryu (which means One Heart Way). This program is a partnership between the Takoma Park Recreation Department and the Penn State University Karate Club. Co-sponsored by the Montgomery County Recreation Department. Instructor: Penn State University Karate Club, Takoma Park Recreation Center Gymnasium 7315 New Hampshire Avenue 16 years and older Ongoing, Saturdays, beginning January 12 12 - 1 p.m. Drop-in: $5 Ladies Boot Camp A challenging workout within a quick hour, this total body program includes a circuit of drills, such as jumping jacks, running, push-ups, squats, crunches and weight training. Students are required to bring their own mats. Co-sponsored by the Montgomery County Recreation Department. Instructor: KJ Total Fitness. Takoma Park Recreation Center Gymnasium 7315 New Hampshire Avenue 16 and older 8 Week Sessions Tuesdays and Thursdays January 10 - March 2 6:30 - 7:30 p.m. $85 Drop-in: $10 Pilates A fun and invigorating workout that teaches controlled movements utilizing the body’s “core” — abdomen, back, and hips. Pilates improves core control, coordination, standing alignment and balance with mat exercises. Pilates is the ultimate mind-body exercise for anyone who wants to tone, streamline, and realign their bodies. Co-sponsored by the Montgomery County Recreation Department. Students are required to bring their own mats and hand weights. Instructor: Nancy Nickell. Takoma Park Recreation Center Fitness Center 7315 New Hampshire Avenue 16 and older Wednesdays, January 4 - February 8 6 - 7 p.m. 6 Weeks: $60 4 Weeks: $40 SENIOR/55 PLUS DRO IN Bingo Try your luck. Win a prize. Takoma Park Community Center Senior Room 7500 Maple Avenue 55 and older Thursday, January 26 12 - 2 p.m. Free Blood Pressure Screening Adventist Healthcare will be doing a free monthly blood pressure screening. Takoma Park Community Center Senior Room 7500 Maple Avenue 55 and older Thursday, January 26 11:30 a.m. - 12 p.m. Free

RECREATION Special Announcements

Indoor Splash & Play Pool Party Pinetree Branch Public Pool Saturday, January 8 2 - 4 p.m. Splash around and have a blast! This event promises to be great fun for everyone! Volunteers wanted. This event is co-sponsored by the Takoma Park Recreation Department and Let’s Play America. For more information, visit letsgoplayamerica.org

Summer Camp Expo Join us for our 3rd Annual Summer Camp Expo where you will get the opportunity to register your children for Takoma Park Recreation Department’s upcoming summer camps. During the Expo only, families will receive a 20% discount off participating camps! (Must be in line by 1 p.m. to get the discount). Please check out the Summer Camp Guide for descriptions and prices associated with the camps. Takoma Park Community Center 7500 Maple Avenue Saturday, January 28 10 a.m. - 1 p.m.

Summer Camp Employment Looking for something fun and rewarding to do this summer? Look no further! Takoma Park Recreation Department will soon be looking for summer camp staff. Apply online at takomaparkmd.gov/hr/careers

It’s Snowing — Is My Class Canceled? The City of Takoma Park has several ways to let you know if City facilities are closed and Takoma Park Recreation programs are canceled: get noticlas via Takoma Park Alert (www.takomaparkmd.gov/alert); check the City’s website; or call the Recreation Department’s Inclement Weather Line (301-891-7101 x5606). In general, if the Federal Government closes or has a delayed opening in the morning, the City does the same. Classes that begin before a delayed opening are usually canceled. Morning and Afternoon Addition and After the Bell programs follow the Montgomery County Public Schools declarations. If there is a two hour delay in the morning, Morning Addition starts at 9 a.m.

Local Businesses Wanted Are you a business looking for summer help? The Recreation Department is looking for businesses to partner with for Teen Summer Youth Employment Program. The Business Interest Meeting is scheduled for Wednesday, February 15, 10:30 a.m. @ TPFC. For more information or to RSVP, email leiciam@takomaparkmd.gov.

Celebrate Takoma Committee Volunteers Needed The Recreation Department is beginning to plan the fourth annual Celebrate Takoma Festival for Saturday, May 20, from 4 - 7 p.m., and we need your help. The festival celebrates the cultural diversity of Takoma Park. We will be looking for food, merchandise vendors and local entertainers. If you would like to volunteer to be a part of the steering committee, email Debby Huffman at deborahl@takomatarkmd.gov. The committees meet monthly in the evenings. Come join the fun!
Seeking solace in our shelves

By Karen MacPherson

In the weeks after the election, amidst a surge in hate crimes nationwide, our library patrons — young and old — searched for solace on our shelves, looking for hope and inspiration. There are many books that can speak to this need, especially books aimed at children, and so we have put together a special “Hope and Inspiration” annotated booklist.

We offered a community, read-out-style “Hope & Inspiration Storytime” in early December based on this booklist with patrons taking turns reading the books aloud. We plan to offer another one this winter. Meanwhile, here’s an abbreviated version of our booklist. Of course, there are many more books where younger readers — and their grown-ups — can find hope and inspiration. Just ask us for further suggestions! (Note: This booklist was, published in the Washington Post online on Dec. 13 and in print on Dec. 20.)

For younger readers, ages 3-7:

Because Amelia Smiled, written and illustrated by David Ezra Stein: One smile has international consequences in this book that celebrates the power of love and hope.

Can I Play Too?, written and illustrated by Mo Willems: Elephant and Piggy must wrestle with the question of what to do — and how they should act — when Snake, who has no arms or legs, asks to play.

Counting on Community, written and illustrated by Innosanto Nagara: In this counting book, readers learn any number of ways that community is important, from working together in a community garden to protesting injustice.

If You Plant a Seed, written and illustrated by Kadri Nelson: A huge food fight breaks out when a rabbit and a mouse refuse to share the bounty of their vegetable harvest with a flock of birds, things look grave until the mouse realizes that sharing just might be a better solution.

Last Stop on Market Street, written by Matt de la Pena and illustrated by Christian Robinson: During a bus ride, a young boy in the inner city learns to appreciate his Nana’s ability to find — and celebrate — beauty anywhere.

The Lion and the Mouse, written and illustrated by Jerry Pinkney: Setting Aesop’s beloved fable in the African Serengeti, Pinkney’s illustrations — and nearly wordless text — give this classic a powerful new twist.

The Peace Book, written and illustrated by Todd Parr: In his relentlessly cheerful style, Parr defines the meaning of peace for very young children.

The Story of Ferdinand, written by Munro Leaf and illustrated by Robert Lawson: This classic tale tells the story of a peace-loving bull named Ferdinand, who is mistakenly thought to be a tough, violent animal but proves otherwise when he’s put to the test in the bullring.

LIBRARY BRIEFS

Caldecott Club: Our Caldecott Club meets on Jan. 9 at 7 p.m. to vote on our choice for the 2017 Caldecott Medal. We’ll be reading and briefly discussing our finalists before voting on our top selection. It will be interesting to see how close we can come to the winner of the “real” 2017 Caldecott Medal, which will be announced by the American Library Association on Jan. 23. All ages are welcome at our program, and no registration is required. Plus, cookies and lemonade will be served, courtesy of the Friends of the Takoma Park Maryland Library.

Friends fundraising on the move: Two recent book sales held by the Friends of the Takoma Park Maryland Library netted $3,900. The Friends’ book sales could not take place without the efforts of many volunteers, as well as City staff. We wish to thank the volunteers, in no particular order, whose efforts were crucial in making our sales a success: Michele Morgan, Walter Mulbry, Rachel Mulbry, Tim Rahn, Tom Brune, Rebekah Zanditon, Deborah Nelson, Miriam Seapiro, Pat Hanrahan, Sylvie Shafer, Emily Van Loon, Suzanne Morgan, Pat Taylor, Pat McMahon, Kim Linton. Susan West Montgomery, Laura Jacoby, Linda Carlson, Mary Rein, Irene Huntoon, Ann Slattery, Nancy and Dan Kunkel, Sheryl Yun and Jerry Ernst, Sam McCollin, Dave Burbank and Phil Shapiro of the library staff, Troy Fringal and ‘Dreil’ of the department of public works, and of course coordinator and organizer Merrill Lefler. All proceeds for the Library Book sales benefit the Library in support for programs and resources.

Lost and found giveaway: Over many months we have accumulated many articles of clothing (mostly kids’), in our lost and found. We will be giving everything away in early January, on a first-come-first-serve basis.

Faustian Bargain

By Phillip F. Schewe

Johann Wolfgang von Goethe is to German literature what Shakespeare is to English literature. Novelist, playwright, critic, copious letter writer, scientist and diplomat, he dominated German culture and had a wide readership outside German-speaking lands during and after his life (1749-1832).

For the Takoma Park Big Book Club, dedicated to tackling challenging books, Goethe’s masterwork, Faust, is a natural selection. In spring 2017 the club will meet to hear a noted expert summarize Goethe’s career. Then, club members will meet several more times to discuss Faust, a long verse drama written in two parts published 25 years apart. Faust is the story of a man who sold his soul to the devil in return for unlimited earthly powers. Other writers prepared Faust stories, but none as famous as Goethe’s.

To round out the book club discussions, we will probably consider one of Goethe’s novels, which were also widely popular and influential.

Phillip Schewe is the current organizer of the Big Book Club; contact him at pschewe@umd.edu if you’d like to be on the mailing list. The above picture shows a statue of Goethe in Grant Park, Chicago.
Learning takes flight at Takoma Wings Academy

By Rick Henry

Takoma Wings Academy (TWA) is an example of a great idea that has taken flight. In this case, literally.

The unique program brings middle school boys and girls from low-income, immigrant families together in a summer camp to investigate the science and engineering of flight in nature, aviation and space exploration as well as flight as a means of self-expression in the arts.

The ½ day, three-week summer camp, which has been held at Takoma Academy for the last two years, recently received a $9,000 Community of Life Grant from the City of Takoma Park. It is a joint venture between two area nonprofits, Silver-Spring-based Artivate, which specializes in arts-based community learning programs, such as workshops, performances and artist-in-residence programs, and Big Learning, (formerly the Montgomery County Council of PTAs), which operates elementary and middle school instructional programs in language and the sciences.

The pairing of the two organizations was intentional, said James Modrick, Artivate’s executive director. “We wanted participants to explore the science and engineering of flight through an artistic lens. The program engages both sides of the brain, the technical side and the creative side.”

Jane De Winter, Big Learning’s executive director, agreed, noting the two organizations had worked together on previous initiatives before deciding to pair up on TWA. Both De Winter and Modrick stress the concept of STEM education rather than STEM education.

“Big Learning is focused on STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering and Math), but Artivate provides the A (Arts) piece that is so important,” De Winter said. “By bringing the two means getting participants involved in both design and building.”

“We take a ‘maker’ approach that gets them involved in building and testing different types of flight devices, such as hovercrafts and hydroplanes,” Modrack said.

De Winter added that they engage the participants in friendly competitions that allow them to showcase what they have developed. “We have them build catapults and see who can launch things the farthest, for example,” she said.

These challenges not only provide a fun way for the campers to test their prototypes, but they teach them important lessons about resiliency and experimentation. “If something doesn’t work as well as they hoped, the kids learn to go back and look at the problem a different way and make adjustments,” she said. “It shows that failure is not a deal breaker, but part of the process.” Beyond that, De Winter said, the challenges allow the participants to coalesce and support each other.

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Passport Services

Passport services are available on first come, first served basis Monday through Thursday from 9 a.m. to 1 p.m. at the Takoma Park Community Center on the second floor. Takoma Park staff encourage calling the City’s main phone number at 301-891-7100 and checking if the office is open before departing for the Community Center for passport services.

For additional information, visit takomaparkmd.gov/services/passports.

Staying prepared

By Ron Hardy, Emergency Preparedness Manager

This past year Takoma Park experienced a blizzard, had some temporary power outages, experienced a shelter in place or lock-down of schools and municipal buildings due to a gunman loose in the county, a Zika virus scare and took note of the other events across the country with tornadoes, wild fires, and civil unrest. The employees of the city are here to serve the needs of the community and assist city residents with services. However, the employees are just as vulnerable to the disasters as the community they serve.

Each year city employees receive annual training in their specific job functions as well as safety preparedness, such as an active assailant, sheltering during weather hazards and being aware of their surroundings. When visiting a city facility, you should feel confident that city staff is trained to act responsibly to different events and give guidance on our safety procedures.

We all know the basics of having a gallon of water a day per person and enough dry or canned food to last for three days, staying indoors during extreme weather, and having a go bag with extra clothes, copies of essential documents and medicines. As our neighbors on Arliss Street experienced, you never know when tragedy will strike. As we learned from this disaster, the help and resources will come, and the members of the community will help one another.

If a disaster of a larger scale were to happen in our region, would you be able to be self-sufficient for three days, have a portable radio to receive informational updates, and a plan to communicate with your family?

The city has an Emergency Preparedness Committee, which helps review the city’s Emergency Operations Plan and works with the Emergency Preparedness Manager on outreach projects to assist residents in better preparing themselves for a disaster. The Takoma Park newsletter provides a monthly article useful to residents on preparedness, but if you, a group or your neighborhood would like more information on preparedness, contact us at tpepc@takomaparkmd.gov or 301-891-7126.

FEASIBILITY STUDY

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“After the first meeting, what we’re trying to accomplish is showing some initial concepts for a classroom addition and getting feedback about the community’s priorities,” he explained. “Then, the second meeting is typically scheduled two weeks after the first giving us time to revise the concepts based on the community’s feedback.”

In terms of the overall timeline for the study, the goal is finalize the report in the spring. With that report in hand, the superintendent will make a recommendation to the board of education, and should they act on that recommendation, the Montgomery County Council will make the final decision about whether to move forward with a classroom addition at Piney Branch. “The feasibility study does not mean there will be a project at Piney Branch,” Adams said. “It will be determined whether this is a priority from a capital project perspective.”

The first meeting to solicit community feedback will be advertised via cards sent to parents via mail and also sent home with students. This information will also be posted on the construction division’s website when it becomes available: www.montgomeryschoolsmd.org/departments/facilities/construction/index.aspx.

TAKOMA WINGS

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Such lessons and hands-on experiences are particularly important for the demographic enrolled in the program, boys and girls, aged 10-14, from low-income families. “I want to thank the department and appreciate the kind words by Monsignor Sal Criscuolo. It was truly a great time,” Jarboe said at the meeting.
Local rental housing needed to support refugee resettlement

Takoma Park Welcoming Committee for Syrian Families has been actively working since November 2015 to support resettlement of Syrian families in Takoma Park. We are working with resettlement agencies to meet this goal. Our top priority is to identify safe and affordable rental housing options for new families in Takoma Park.

If you are a home owner and interested in supporting this effort by offering your home or part of your home as a rental property, please review the federal requirements listed below to ensure that it meets the required criteria, so housing is safe, sanitary and in good repair:

- There must be an appropriate number

RENTAL HOUSING □ Page 12

Banners of encouragement

The Takoma/Langley Crossroads Development Authority (www.takomalangley.org) recently hung new banners throughout the Takoma/Langley area. The banners feature encouraging phrases in English, Spanish and French designed to lift the spirits of passersby during the holidays and winter months when darkness comes early, and skies are often grey.

Expressions imprinted on banners include:
- Be the change you wish to see and Si el cambio que deseas ver
- Never Give Up and Ne perdez jamais espoir
- Work Hard, Dream Big and Travaillez dur, Revez en grand
- Tomorrow is another day

Many of the banners are sponsored by local businesses and have their names and phone numbers imprinted on them to give them more visibility. For more information, contact Melanie Iss at 301-445-7910 or misa@takomalangley.org

FSGW shares folk arts

By Morgan Fecto

It's a Thursday night in early December, and although the days are darker, things are light at April Blum's Adelphi home. That is, Contra dancers are light on their feet.

"The hall we're usually in wasn't available, but as it happened, I have a 25 foot by 50 foot ballroom in my house," said Blum, who is president of the Folklore Society of Greater Washington. "We call it 'Ballroom Blum,' and we even have a Facebook page."

Blum lends her home to the arts, and as a part of FSGW, she gives her time to sharing folk arts with the community. Of the 200 annual FSGW-sponsored events, the Mini Fest at Takoma Park Middle School is especially significant to those who organize it.

"It's just an absolutely joyous way to spend a cold and grey February day — regardless of the weather, it's warm and bright inside," said Blum. "My favorite is walking the hallway and hearing music coming from the stairwell or people singing acapella."

Spontaneity and participation are cornerstones of Mini Fest's fun. Morris Dancers break into "Morris Choruses," Flamenco dancers and cigar box guitar makers give workshops, and singers from every folk tradition fill the middle school's cafeteria, the craft-lined hallways, and five adjacent classrooms with a cacophony of sound.

"It's a blast is what it is," said Mimi Fest programmer Mike Livingston. "Being able to share stuff with the community and have it be well received, that's exhilarating."

Organizers finalize the Fest's program schedule in mid-January, but attendees can bank on harmony workshops, a "Jams Room," banjo, English Country dancing, storytellers spinning tall tales, and of course, Subway sandwiches. They can also expect something new: a room dedicated to participatory programs for families with children.

"You or I, if we're not into a performance then we can walk down the hall, but kids can't if they're not excited," said Livingston. "But there's always more to do. This meeting will be a great time to share ideas and to tell us how you want to help."

Applications for performers, crafters, community tables, food vendors and beneficiary groups will be made available early in the year. Discussions have been underway about how the Festival can stay true to its traditions, while also reach out to new audiences, too, said Rob Hinkal, the Festival's program chair.

As part of its outreach, the Festival will host fundraisers or community events in the spring and summer. "We're going to be busy," said Walter Mulhry, committee member.

For information about the exact time and location of the meeting on Jan. 24, check out the Festival's website at www.tpfll.org or its Facebook page.

Folk Festival kickoff meeting Jan. 24

Although it's the middle of winter, the Takoma Park Folk Festival is not in hibernation. The Festival's leadership team will be holding a kickoff meeting on Tuesday, Jan. 24, and all members of the community are invited.

After missing last year for the first time since its creation in 1978, the Festival's organizers are preparing a full-scale event and considering ways to add new activities. The Festival is scheduled for Sept. 10, 2017, at Takoma Park Middle School.

"We've got an energetic group of new volunteers," said Sarah Lanning, Festival co-chair and a new festival committee member herself. "But there's always more to do. This meeting will be a great time to share ideas and to tell us how you want to help."

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"FSGW was founded 50 years ago at the height of the folk music revival. There's a certain philanthropic idea that making music and dance available to the community at large and paying musicians for their talents is an important thing for a society to do," Blum said. "Our ticket prices are low so that people can afford to come."

Experiencing art and kinship is more vital in such dark winter days, too. "When you dance dance down the line at Contra and someone swings you, it's like getting a hug every time," Blum said. "We're primates — we need to be touched, but it's also really casually, and to not make a big deal out of it."

"You or I, if we're not into a performance then we can walk down the hall, but kids can't if they're not excited," said Livingston. "That's why we're going to give them an opportunity to do something."

Since Blum started organizing the Mini Fest with Charlie Baum in 2006, she's wanted to expand the children's programming at Mini Fest. The hope is that expanding the variety of workshops and demos will introduce them to a lifelong passion.

"Dancing brings us together, and children get it," said Blum. "They see that you're more powerful in a group, and they see those crisp moments in a group when everyone reaches out their hands to simultaneously make a star. Dance is ephemeral. It's passing beauty."

"It's kind of zeal for the arts that keeps the all-volunteer FSGW running. The key word in the FSGW is 'society.' It's everyone stepping up to make this happen," Livingston said.

When it comes time to schedule the Fest's programs, stepping up kicks into high gear.

"What happens in a community like this — with talented people who are so engaged — is that many of the performers are involved with more than one thing — a musician in one group, a dancer in another, with a thing on the side," Livingston said. "It's about navigating schedule conflicts. Charlie does a really good job of organizing things so that people don't have to be in three places at once."

When past Mini Fest schedules have included 300 performers, this can be quite a juggling act. Even with such a robust program, Blum said that the Festival is always affordable. "FSGW was founded 50 years ago at the height of the

Foggy Bottom Morris Men

Dancing brings us together, and children get it."
Unity in the Community Initiative Update

In weeks since the initiative kick-off in September, Captain Tyrone Collington, Takoma Park Mayor Kate Stewart and Meaghan Murphy have been actively working to strengthen relationships between the Takoma Park Police Department, city-elected officials and community residents. Since youth are at the heart of the initiative, Captain Collington, Mayor Stewart and Meaghan have focused a lot of their efforts on creating opportunities for the youth to have positive interactions with TRPK police officers and city-elected officials outside the law enforcement arena. By working hand-in-hand with school principals, the Unity the Community initiative has been a great tool in assisting in efforts to create continuous opportunities for directly connecting the youth with the police department and city-elected officials.

One recent example of the initiative in action was Captain Collington’s speaking engagement at Don Bosco Cristo Rey High School’s awards ceremony. Principal Savoy invited Collington to be a guest speaker and share his journey to becoming a police officer with the students.

Mayor Stewart and Meaghan Murphy recently met with Blair High School Principal Renay Johnson.

RENTAL HOUSING

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of bedrooms.
• All areas and components of the housing (interior and exterior) are free of visible health and safety hazards, and in good repair. (Specifications range from ensuring there is no mold, that emergency escape routes are identified and are accessible, windows and outside doors have working locks, heat, ventilation, lighting and hot and cold running water are adequate. There is no evidence of current rodent or insect infestation.)
• The kitchen should be equipped with a stove, oven and refrigerator in good repair, and bathrooms should be equipped with sink, flush toilet, and shower or bath in good repair.
• If your home is not licensed to rent but meets the criteria, please let us know and we will work with you to coordinate that need with the City of Takoma Park. Please also note that the resettlement agency offers financial support to be used for housing as well. If you are interested in supporting this initiative, please contact Takoma Park City Councilmember Terry Seamans (terry@takomaparkmd.gov) or Shruti Bhatnagar (shruti_bhatnagar@yahoo.com).