Looking Back and Moving Ahead: My Top 10 Highlights from 2019

By Kate Stewart, Mayor, City of Takoma Park

“You have to act as if it were possible to radically transform the world. And you have to do it all the time.”

—Angela Davis

As we look forward to the year ahead in 2020 and the opportunities and challenges we will encounter, we must take Angela Davis’s advice and face each day “as if it were possible to radically transform the world.”

Takoma Park, as a community, has put these words into action throughout 2019 and will continue to do so in 2020. We did a great deal in 2019. Here are my top 10 highlights for the year:

1. Adoption of Housing and Economic Development Strategic Plan: Building a Livable Community for All

This fall, the City took the critical and necessary steps to work toward the realization of the human right to safe, high-quality, and affordable housing and the interrelated right to an adequate standard of living. Adoption of the Housing and Economic Development Strategic Plan: Building a Livable Community for All is a culmination of four years of community conversation, research, Council and staff work, and more.

The plan is guided by our race equity and environmental sustainability goals. The City staff have already begun working on implementation steps, such as our Home Stretch down payment assistance program that has already helped move three Takoma Park families from renting to homeownership, and each year the Council continues to fund the Affordable Housing Reserve. As we move into 2020, continuing to implement the strategies in the Strategic Plan will be a top priority for the City.
On Nov. 6, 2019, the City Council adopted Resolution 2019-50 indicating support for proceeding with the planned renovation of Silver Spring Intermediate Park and the transfer of the park property from Montgomery County Public Schools to Maryland-National Capital Park and Planning Commission for continued operation as a park. On Nov. 13, 2019, Ordinance 2019-43 was adopted to authorize a contract with Belton Goulston for the purchase of trash and recycling containers for use in the public right-of-way. The purchase amount is $29,263. The City Council adopted FY2020 Budget Amendment No. 2 by Ordinance 2019-48 on Nov. 18, 2019. First reading of the ordinance took place on November 13. Also on Nov. 18, 2019, the City Council adopted a contract to execute a five-year contract with the option for renewal for up to five additional one-year extension terms. A contract for stormwater system cleaning and video inspection was approved by Mobile Dredging and Video Pipe, Inc. by Ordinance 2019-46. Ordinance 2019-47 approved a contract award for elevator refurbishment to Elevator Control Services in the amount of $195,715. Ordinance 2019-48 authorized the purchase of two hybrid Ford EcoBoost Explorers at the cost of $110,444 from Apple Ford Fleet Services. These are replacement vehicles for the Police Department.

A number of resolutions were adopted on Nov. 18, 2019. Resolution 2019-51 established the Parks for Management Task Force. The following residents were appointed: Jacqueline Davison (Ward 1), Jim Douglas (Ward 1), Allen Fetter (Ward 5), Therese Kittner (Ward 3), Roger Schlegel (Ward 3), Emanuel Wagner (Ward 2), Claudia Wayne (Ward 2), Allen (Ward 6) to the Board of Elections. By CR-2019-2 amended Article V - Amendment Procedures to provide that the signature requirement for Charter amendment petitions is 20% of registered voters at the time of the last regular election, rather than twenty percent of persons registered at the time of submitting the petition. CR-2019-3 amended Article VI - Registration, Nominations and Elections: (1) to eliminate the 21-day residency requirement for voters; (2) to eliminate outdated procedures; (3) to clarify existing language; (4) to eliminate binary language; (5) to revise deadlines to comport with early voting; (6) to provide for election to be resolved by lot rather than runoff election; (7) to eliminate the requirement that election judges be appointed by the City Council; (8) to establish a list of voters only registered to vote in City elections rather than a list of non-registered voters; (9) to change references to “citizens” to “residents”; (10) to provide that the signature requirement for advisory referendum petitions is 20% of registered voters at the time of the last election, rather than 20% of persons qualified to vote; (11) to provide that the signature requirement for recall petitions is 20% of registered voters at the time of the last election, rather than the greater of 1500 qualified voters or 20% of qualified voters; (12) to require that signatures on recall petitions be obtained after the most recent election and at least 120 days prior to the next general election; (13) to prohibit the City Council from reapointing a recalled official; and (14) to allow potential candidates to nominate themselves or second their nomination.

The City Council is seeking applicants for a number of boards, commissions and committees. Takoma Park residency is required unless noted. If you are interested in appointment, please drop in to observe a meeting then submit the online application: http://bit.ly/bcc-application. Meetings are posted on the City website calendar. Additional information is available at takomaparkmd.gov/government/boards-commissions. Positions are available or terms are expiring on the following:

**Ordinance Committee**
- Thursday, Jan. 23, 6:30 p.m.
- TPCC Hydrangea Room

**Ethics Commission**
- Thursday, Jan. 16, 7 p.m.
- TPCC Auditorium

**Grants Review Committee**
- Monday, Jan. 13, 6:30 p.m.
- TPCC Hydrangea Room
- Monday, Jan. 6, 4:30 p.m.
- TPCC Hydrangea Room

**Recreation Committee**
- Thursday, Jan. 16, 7 p.m.
- TPCC Hydrangea Room

**Tree Commission**
- Tuesday, Jan. 14, 6:45 p.m.
- TPCC Hydrangea Room

**Youth Council**
- Monday, Jan. 6, 6:30 p.m.
- Monday, Feb. 3, 6:30 p.m.
- TPCC Rooms TBA

**Police Chief’s Advisory Board**
- Wednesday, Jan. 15, 7 p.m.
- TPCC Hydrangea Room

**Arts Program**
- Monday, Jan. 23, 7-9 p.m.
- TPCC Hydrangea Room

**Committee on the Environment**
- Monday, Jan. 20, 7:30 p.m.
- TPCC Hydrangea Room

**YOUTH COUNCIL**
- Monday, Jan. 13, 6:30 p.m.
- TPCC Hydrangea Room

**Takoma Park Park**
- Saturday, Jan. 25, 11 a.m. to 5 p.m.
- TPCC Auditorium

**Board of Elections**
- Tuesday, Jan. 28, 7 p.m.
- TPCC Hydrangea Room

**TPCC Rooms TBA**
- Wednesday, Jan. 22, 7:30 p.m.
- Wednesday, Jan. 29, 7:30 p.m.
- Wednesday, Jan. 30, 7:30 p.m.
- Wednesday, Feb. 5, 7:30 p.m.
- Wednesday, Feb. 12, 7:30 p.m.
- Wednesday, Feb. 26, 7:30 p.m.
- Wednesday, March 3, 7:30 p.m.

**TPCC Auditorium**
- Tuesday, Jan. 14, 6:45 p.m.
- Saturday, Jan. 25, 11 a.m. to 5 p.m.
- Wednesday, Jan. 29, 7:30 p.m.
- Wednesday, Feb. 5, 7:30 p.m.
- Wednesday, Feb. 26, 7:30 p.m.
- Wednesday, March 3, 7:30 p.m.
- Thursday, March 5, 7 p.m.

**CITY COUNCIL MEETINGS**
- TPCC: Takoma Park Community Center
- Monday, Feb. 3, 7 p.m.
- Monday, Feb. 17, 7 p.m.
- Monday, Feb. 24, 7 p.m.
- Monday, March 2, 7 p.m.
- Monday, March 9, 7 p.m.
- Monday, March 16, 7 p.m.
- Monday, March 23, 7 p.m.
- Monday, March 30, 7 p.m.
- Monday, April 6, 7 p.m.

**CITY COUNCIL MEETINGS**
- Monday, Jan. 6, 6:30 p.m.
- Monday, Feb. 3, 6:30 p.m.
- Monday, Feb. 10, 6:30 p.m.
- Monday, Feb. 17, 6:30 p.m.
- Monday, Feb. 24, 6:30 p.m.
- Monday, March 2, 6:30 p.m.
- Monday, March 9, 6:30 p.m.
- Monday, March 16, 6:30 p.m.
- Monday, March 23, 6:30 p.m.
- Monday, March 30, 6:30 p.m.
- Monday, April 6, 6:30 p.m.

**Ordinance Committee**
- Thursday, Jan. 23, 6:30 p.m.
- TPCC Hydrangea Room

**Ethics Commission**
- Thursday, Jan. 16, 7 p.m.
- TPCC Auditorium

**Grants Review Committee**
- Monday, Jan. 13, 6:30 p.m.
- TPCC Hydrangea Room

**Noise Control Board**
- Tuesday, Jan. 21, 7 p.m.
- TPCC Hydrangea Room

**Nuclear-Free Takoma Park Committee**
- Tuesday, Jan. 22, 7:30 p.m.
- TPCC Lovely Room

**PARKING MANAGEMENT TASK FORCE**
- Monday, Jan. 13, 6:30 p.m.
- TPCC Lovely Room

**Police Chief’s Advisory Board**
- Wednesday, Jan. 15, 7 p.m.
- TPCC Hydrangea Room

**Recreation Committee**
- Thursday, Jan. 16, 7 p.m.
- TPCC Hydrangea Room

**Tree Commission**
- Tuesday, Jan. 14, 6:45 p.m.
- TPCC Hydrangea Room

**Youth Council**
- Monday, Jan. 6, 6:30 p.m.
- Monday, Feb. 3, 6:30 p.m.
- TPCC Rooms TBA

**Ordinance Committee**
- April meetings are open to the public unless noted otherwise. Schedule changes can 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 at the Takoma Park Community Center – Sam Abish Citizens’ Center, 7500 Maple Avenue (TPCC). Individuals interested in receiving a monthly Council agenda and calendar update by e-mail can sign up at takomaparkmd.gov/government/city-council/agendas.

**ADA Notice**
- The City of Takoma Park is committed to ensuring that individuals with disabilities are able to participate in public meetings. Anyone with a disability who intends to receive auxiliary aids, services, or accommodations at a City Council meeting must contact the City Clerk at 301-881-2700 at least 48 hours in advance.
HIGHLIGHTS

From page 1

2. Declaration of Climate Change Emergency: Working Toward 100% Reduction by 2035

Last spring the City declared a climate emergency, establishing a goal to reduce the City’s greenhouse gas emissions 100% by the year 2035. Over the last year, under the direction of our Sustainability Manager, Gina Mathias, we have been working to update our Sustainability Plan from 2014 to put in place the needed strategies to take aggressive action on climate change in the City. I want to thank Councilwoman Dyballa for her continued efforts on this issue.

In November, we received the final report from the Cadium Group, which provides guidance on how we can greatly reduce greenhouse gas emissions. This month, the Council, working with our Sustainability Manager and Committee on the Environment, will be focusing on how we can implement some of the suggested strategies.

3. Advancement of Racial Equity Work

- We continue to deepen our work on racial equity. We started this year with our Council priorities retreat. Thanks to Councilmember Smith, we worked with consultants on racial equity to facilitate the retreat and help inform our discussions.
- Most of our Councilmembers and Department heads have completed racial equity training through the Government Alliance for Racial Equity (GARE).
- In addition, as we look at racial disparities in the City, we see gaps in homeownership, as well as in income levels and unemployment rates. In addition to the Home Stretch down payment program noted above, we also hold First Time Homebuyers Classes in Partnership with the Latino Economic Development Center (LEDC). Thank you to the work of our Housing and Community Development staff for coordinating these programs.
- Our Economic Development Manager, Samira Cook-Gaines, who came to the City in January, has helped the City focus more on workforce development. We are partnering with WorkSource Montgomery and the Ethiopian Community Center to provide writing and other career assistance for residents. She has organized a Success Fair and is working on a number of projects to assist business owners, tech startups, and entrepreneurs.
- And our recreation staff, including Ja-vonte McDonald, Youth Success Program Coordinator, and Leicia Monfort, Teen Programs Manager, have greatly increased our programs for young people. These programs have particularly attracted girls of color to programs they previously had not participated in, such as G-Facing. Other Recreation Department programs also help support young people and seniors, a majority of whom are people of color.

4. Reaffirmation of Our Commitment to Being a Sanctuary City and Welcoming Immigrants in Our Community

- We continue to defend our status as a Sanctuary City and work towards making sure we are a welcoming and inclusive community. Last year, we stood with Mayor Bowser in her opposition to a proposed detention center for children in D.C., and we were featured on CNN responding to the President’s threats of sending immigrants being detained to Sanctuary cities.

5. Moving Forward with Plans on New Hampshire Avenue and the Recreation Center

- Over the last few years and particularly this year, the City Council and staff have been focusing on advocacy for improvements along New Hampshire Avenue. Councilwoman Searcy has been a fierce advocate and successful at engaging with Maryland representatives, specifically in the area around New Hampshire Avenue and University Blvd.
- A major step forward this year was the City becoming the property owner of the Takoma Park Recreation Center, which we have operated on New Hampshire since 1997. In the next year, we will determine how to redevelop the property to ensure that City goals are met for recreation, as well as for housing or other economic development needs. I want to thank the residents who are part of the Friends of the Takoma Park Recreation Center, who have long advocated for improvements.
- In addition, the staff has been hard at work applying for and receiving grants to improve the area. One example is the New Ave Bikeway Grant, which the City received $235,000 in grant funding from the Maryland Bikeways Program. Another example that benefits us city-wide is a $50,000 grant from the Council of Governments for a bus stop accessibility inventory that is now underway.
- The City has also been granted a Neighborhood Revitalization Award from the Maryland Department of Housing and Community Development. The grant will be used for targeted facade and signage improvements for businesses along the New Hampshire Avenue corridor.

Proposed Modifications to Parking Meters on the 7300 Block of Carroll Avenue and the Unit Blocks of Grant and Lee Avenues

The City Manager proposes to modify the parking meter zone which includes the even side of the 7300 Block of Carroll Avenue and the immediately adjacent parking spaces on the Unit Blocks of Lee and Grant Avenues. The time limits for the meters will be modified and certain meters will be removed to allow for short term drop off and delivery use. A diagram showing the locations and proposed modifications is available for review on the City website at www.takomaparkmd.gov/parking.

Pursuant to Administrative Regulation 10-10, notice of proposed modifications and opportunity to comment shall be published in the Takoma Park Newsletter and posted at the site. Comments on the proposal may be submitted to the City Clerk at clerk@takomaparkmd.gov. The deadline for receipt of comments is Friday, January 24, 2020.

THE TAKOMA PARK NEWSLETTER

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Assistant: Sean Gossard
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Important City Department Phone Numbers

City Information ....................................................... 301-891-7100
City Clerk ................................................................. 301-891-7257
City Manager ......................................................... 301-891-7229
Finance ................................................................. 301-891-7212
Housing & Community Development ................................. 301-891-7119
Library ........................................................................ 301-891-7259
Neighborhood Services ........................................... 301-891-7113
Police ................................................................. 301-270-1100/Emergency 911
Public Works ......................................................... 301-891-7633
Recreation/Facilities Rental ...................................... 301-891-7290

Immigrants in Our Community

• In addition, as we look at New Hampshire Avenue and across the City to improve transportation and improve the walkability of our community, Councilwoman Kostikou has done a phenomenal job of advocating on behalf of the City and bringing new ideas for us to consider. I look forward to seeing what she has in store for us in 2020.

6. Increased Tenant Outreach and Support to Improve Living Conditions for Residents

As we work on the Housing and Economic Development Plan, we also see the incredible need in the City to assist tenants and residents who live in condos to ensure that all races and ethnicities have quality, affordable housing options. To begin to address this need:
- We increased the half-time landlord-tenant mediator position to full-time, which, when filled, will greatly enhance our ability to advocate on behalf of renters and housing associations.
- Staff and Council, especially Councilwoman Searcy, have done outstanding new work with residents who live in condominiums this year and that work has been met with deep appreciation from the condominium communities.
- A great amount of onsite outreach has occurred with tenants, as have some very interesting discussions with landlords. Residents who have never reached out to City staff before are coming into the City offices for assistance. Housing Manager Grayce Wiggins has been working long hours because the need for assistance is so great right now. As the residents come in for housing assistance, we also connect them to job assistance and other resources.

7. Plastic Straw Ban

Shout out to the young people in our community from Pinery Branch Elementary School who started The Last Plas-
Lines from the Lavatory

By Rick Henry

To capture people’s interest in a subject or initiative, the old adage says, “You must engage them where they are.”

The City’s Takoma Park Arts cultural series is taking that adage one step further. Rather than simply engaging people where they are, the Bathroom Poetry Project is engaging people “where they go,” by displaying the work of local poets in bathrooms at the Takoma Park Community Center.

“A bathroom is the last place you would expect to find poetry, so it’s a fun way of engaging people with poetry who might not experience it elsewhere,” said Takoma Park Arts and Humanities Coordinator Brendan Smith. “Everyone needs to use the bathroom at some point, so we have a captive audience, at least for a few minutes.”

The current Bathroom Poetry Project is not a new initiative. It was first undertaken in the City in 2008. Silver Spring poet Roberta Coll launched it, and the idea quickly spread beyond Takoma Park to cities such as Washington, D.C.; Raleigh, N.C.; Chicago and Austin, TX. The initiative floundered after a couple of years, however, until Smith decided to revive it.

“I was looking through some old files and found a folder with the poems that were featured in bathrooms around Takoma Park in 2008, and I thought it would be fun to put them back up in bathrooms in the Takoma Park Community Center,” he said. “Why let good poems go to waste when you can bring them back for a second visit - or a number 2.”

Smith said there is no immediate timetable for how long the project will remain in place, but adds that Takoma Park Arts is not soliciting new bathroom works. He does hope the effort provides not just some light-hearted and engaging fun for city residents, but will help showcase the group’s other poetry offerings, including its popular Third Thursday Poetry series with free readings from local poets, held on the third Thursday of most months.

Those readings are of a much more serious nature than the Bathroom Poetry Project. Past themes have included immigration, serious illness, and Spanish-language poetry. The next reading, Poetry from Behind Bars, will be held at 7:30 p.m. on January 16 at the Takoma Park Community Center. Poet Ambassadors from the Free Minds Book Club & Writing Workshop will read poetry they wrote while incarcerated in the D.C. jail or federal prisons. Their words reveal the human costs of imprisonment and the power of poetry to offer healing.

City of Takoma Park Community Grants Application Opening This Month

The Community Grants Program funds projects that provide greater access and opportunities for participation in the arts and sciences in Takoma Park. This grant program is open to non-profit organizations and business association and provides up to $10,000 in financial support.

This year, the City has expanded the program guidelines and simplified the application process. To see if your organization is eligible for funding, visit takomaparkmd.gov/grants to review our guidelines on the Community Grants Page.

The online application will open on Jan. 21, 2020, and close March 12, 2020. To be reminded when the application is open, interested parties should register for a free account on the Community Grants page found at takomaparkmd.gov/grants. Previous online applicants will be notified automatically. Funding is available for projects taking place between July 1, 2020, and June 30, 2021.

For more information, contact the City of Takoma Park’s Housing and Community Development Department at 301-891-7119 or email Jennifer Hale, grants coordinator, at jenniferh@takomaparkmd.gov.

You may also attend our Community Grants Information Open House at the Community Center on Thursday, Feb. 6, 2020, from 5–7 p.m. at the Takoma Park Community Center. To register for this information session, email grants@takomaparkmd.gov.

Meeting to Discuss the Creation of Housing for Adults with Special Needs

The Department of Housing and Community Development is meeting with residents to discuss the creation of housing for adults with special needs on January 23 at 7 p.m. in the Takoma Park Community Center. If you are interested in attending this information meeting, please RSVP by email at housing@takomaparkmd.gov or call 301-891-7222.

Don’t Wait To Get Help

The City of Takoma Park helps City residents facing emergency assistance with housing matters (eviction and foreclosure), utility disconnections, food insecurity, prescription assistance, and other emergency needs. For more information, contact the Department of Housing and Community Development at 301-891-7119 or email at housing@takomaparkmd.gov.
An ABSTRACTED Journey Through Art

ABSTRACTED Art Exhibition
Opening Reception
Jan. 9, 7 p.m.
Takoma Park Community Center
7500 Maple Avenue
Free Event

Please join us for the opening reception for ABSTRACTED, a group exhibition featuring a diverse range of abstract artwork by Seemeen Hashem, Steve Wanna, Elroy Williams, and artists from the VisAbility Art Lab. Hashem transforms discarded musical instruments, bicycle parts, and other found objects into unique sculptural forms. Wanna will display mixed-media work and a site-specific suspended installation that incorporate elements of “controlled randomness.” Williams’ large abstract paintings convey his passion for life and perseverance in the face of adversity. The VisAbility Art Lab in Rockville teaches art workshops for adults with autism and other intellectual or developmental disabilities. The exhibition will be on view at the Takoma Park Community Center until March 25. We hope to see you at the opening reception where you can see (and buy) the artwork and meet the artists.

A Balkan Journey by the Orfeia Vocal Ensemble

Jan. 24, 8 p.m.
Takoma Park Community Center Auditorium
7500 Maple Avenue
Free Event with $10 Suggested Donation

Orfeia Vocal Ensemble

Orfeia is an all-woman vocal ensemble dedicated to preserving and sharing traditional music from Bulgaria and Eastern Europe. Orfeia’s repertoire spans the rich and varied vocal traditions of Eastern Europe, from traditional village songs to sacred chants and from the Middle Ages to today.

The Power of Music: By the People, For the People

Concert by the Patagonia Winds
Jan. 31, 8 p.m.
Takoma Park Community Center Auditorium
7500 Maple Avenue
Free Event with $10 Suggested Donation

Patagonia Winds

The Patagonia Winds will take chamber music out of the drawing room and to the public in an engaging concert by this professional wind quintet. This dynamic concert incorporates multimedia visual elements and commentary to draw audiences into the intimacy of chamber music. Celebrating its 10th anniversary season, the Patagonia Winds is known for its virtuosic playing, ensemble chemistry, and dynamic programming that the whole family can enjoy. Founded by flutist and Takoma Park resident Melissa Lindon, the group has performed concerts and children’s educational programs at various venues, including Strathmore Mansion, Lyceum, Fairfax Old Town Hall, Musical Arts International, and the Chalice Concert Series. In 2015, the Patagonia Winds commissioned its first work and was featured in a recital at the National Flute Association Convention in Washington, D.C.

From Inmate to Poet: Poetry from Behind Bars Poetry Reading

Jan. 16, 7:30 p.m.
Takoma Park Community Center Auditorium
7500 Maple Avenue
Free Event

In “the land of the free,” the United States now has the highest incarceration rate in the world, but the people behind bars are more than just inmate numbers. In a unique poetry reading, Poet Ambassadors from the Free Minds Book Club & Writing Workshop will read poetry they wrote while incarcerated in the D.C. jail or federal prisons across the country. Their words reveal the human costs of imprisonment and the power of poetry to provide a voice and offer healing. Donations will be accepted to support Free Minds, and a reception will follow the reading where the audience can meet the poets. For more info about Free Minds, visit freemindsbookclub.org.
REGISTRATION FOR WINTER PROGRAMS IS OPEN!

FITNESS

**Double Dutch**
Learn to jump rope Double Dutch style. Double Dutch is a form of jump rope. Participants will learn how to turn the ropes as well as have fun jumping. They will also learn self-expression, coordination, self-discipline and teamwork. The team will consist of approximately 10–12 youth between the ages of 6–17 years old. Practice will be on Tuesdays and Thursdays for 1 hour. No experience is necessary, and we welcome all who are willing to learn.

Instructor: Latoya Gayle
Takoma Park Recreation Center

TRIPS

**Snow Tubing for Teens**
Join us for an evening in the snow as we head to Liberty Mountain to go snow tubing. Race down one of ten tubing lanes solo or link up with a friend. During a break from snow tubing, hang inside the lodge and have a hot cup of cocoa or get a game of flag football started outside. It’s your day so have fun the way you like. We will meet in the Teen Lounge. Bus will depart at 2 p.m.

Takoma Park Community Center
Meeting place: Teen Lounge
Grades 6–12
Friday, 2–8 p.m.
January 24
Resident: $25 / Non-resident: $35

**DANCE**

**Hip Hop Dance**
Join this introductory Hip Hop Dance Class and have some fun! Students will explore various hip-hop styles, learn the importance of Hip Hop and choreographic tools to create their own dance and execute short choreography. Students will participate in student-led performances.

Instructor: Charonne Butler
Takoma Park Community Center

**TRIPS**

**Snow Tubing for Teens**
Join us for an evening in the snow as we head to Liberty Mountain to go snow tubing. Race down one of ten tubing lanes solo or link up with a friend. During a break from snow tubing, hang inside the lodge and have a hot cup of cocoa or get a game of flag football started outside. It’s your day so have fun the way you like. We will meet in the Teen Lounge. Bus will depart at 2 p.m.

Takoma Park Community Center
Meeting place: Teen Lounge
Grades 6–12
Friday, 2–8 p.m.
January 24
Resident: $25 / Non-resident: $35

**ADULTS**

**LOCAL BUSINESSES**

**Do you have a local business, and are you interested in helping local teens? Sign up to participate in the Summer Youth Employment Program to offer a Takoma Park teen a job this summer! Business Interest Meeting January 8.**

RSVP to Leicia Monfort at 301-891-7290

**DANCE**

**Mindful Movement**
This open and inviting class that combines elements of meditation, dance, yoga, and authentic movement is for dancers and non-dancers alike. Using creative movement and principles from different dance styles, we will explore and observe, through sensing and moving, our mind and body connection to bring awareness and creative freedom to the wonderful world of your body. Expect free dancing, some technical elements of dance (i.e. African, jazz, contemporary, modern),
Gymnasium 7315 New Hampshire Avenue
16 and older
8 Week Sessions
Tuesdays and Thursdays, 6:30–7:30 p.m.
January 7–February 27
$95
Drop-in: $10

MARTIAL ARTS
Kung Fu
Bung Fu is the Jamaican style of Kung Fu. Come learn meditation, self-defense, improved flexibility and self-awareness. This ancient form of self-defense provides physical and mental exercise, which could help students defend themselves by strengthening hand- and-eye coordination as well as assisting with the maintaining of balance as they get older. The student will gain physical fitness as well as mental and spiritual growth. Instructor: Master Robert Thompson
Takoma Park Community Center
7500 Maple Avenue
16 years and older
9 Week Session
Monday, 7:30–8:30 p.m.
January 6–March 16
(No class: 2/21 & 2/18)
Resident: $165 / Non-resident: $185

MULTI MEDIA
Photography 101 (Adults)
We are constantly taking photos, but they don't come out the way we imagined. In this class, learn the intro to photography as an art form and step up your photography game. The class will cover shooting manual on your DSLR, rules of composition, portrait photography, object photography, landscape photography, posing 101, editing your photos, using natural light vs. non-natural light, composition and turning your phone into a camera. Instructor: Vinny Mwano
Takoma Park Community Center
7500 Maple Avenue
Multi Media Lab
18 years and older
8 Week Session
Tuesdays, 7:15–8:15 p.m.
January 7–February 25
8 Week Session
Thursdays, 6–8 p.m.
January 30–February 27
Instructor: Isaac Aseare
Takoma Park Community Center
7500 Maple Avenue
Multi Media Lab
13 years and older
2 Day Session
Thursdays, 7:30–9 p.m.
February 13 & February 20
Resident: $130 / Non-resident: $150

Video Production and Editing
From pre-production techniques to properly videotaping with any device and techniques of editing, learn the art of video production.
Instructor: Isaac Aseare
Takoma Park Community Center
7500 Maple Avenue
Multi Media Lab
13 years and older
5 Week Session
Thursdays, 6–8 p.m.
January 30–February 27
Resident: $165 / Non-resident: $185

EDUCATION & DEVELOPMENT

Writing Life Stories
Do you want to share important life experiences through your writing? Our stories are part of what make us human. Whether you are a lifelong writer or a beginner, this class is for you. I will help you to jump-start your memories, organize your ideas, and edit your work. Prepare to have fun! Bring a notebook and pen or a laptop to every class. We use the book: Writing the Memoir by Judith Barrington. Instructor: Barbara Rosenblatt
Takoma Park Community Center
7500 Maple Avenue
Rose Room
16 years and older
8 Week Session
Wednesdays, 7–8:30 p.m.
January 8–February 26
(No class: 1/15)
Resident: $135 / Non-resident: $155

Youth Mentor Training
A training session for adults who are interested in mentoring youth. Adults will learn that mentoring is a very rewarding experience that assists youth in making dramatic changes in their lives. This training will provide understanding of the self and others, which will lead to confidence and skill.
Takoma Park Community Center
7500 Maple Avenue
Azalea Room
18 years and older
10 Week Session
Saturdays, 10:30–11:45 a.m.
January 11–March 14
Resident: $50 / Non-resident: $100

FITNESS

Ladies Boat 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.
Instructor: KJ Total Fitness
Takoma Park Recreation Center

SPORTS

Takoma Park Adult Softball League
Dust off your glove and warm up your swing; the Takoma Park Adult Softball League is back! This is a fun co-ed recreational program for competitive adults of all skill levels. Gather some friends to enjoy the spring season on the softball field. Team registrations must contain a minimum of 50% Takoma Park residents to qualify for Resident Team entry fee. Top 4 teams advance to the playoffs. No Games on Easter, Mother’s Day, Father’s Day, or Memorial Day weekend.
Various Field Locations
16 and older
7 Week Season
Saturdays, 9:30 a.m.–1:00 p.m.
April 5–June 28
Resident Team Fee: $645 / Non-resident Team Fee: $745

DROP-IN

Bingo
Come and try your luck. Win a prize. No registration required.
Takoma Park Community Center
Senior Room
7500 Maple Avenue
55 and older
Tuesday, January 28
12–2 p.m.
Free

55+

VIDEO PRODUCTION & EDITING

Computer Basics
This three-week course will introduce people with little or no previous experience to basic skills, such as sending and receiving email, internet searching, and using a word processor to compose letters, etc. You need a Takoma Park Library card to access the computers and take this course. Instructor: Anne LeVeque
Takoma Park Community Center
Computer Lab
7500 Maple Avenue
55 and older
3 Week Sessions
Wednesdays, 10 a.m.–12 p.m.
January 22–February 5
$5

Computer Extras
In this three-week course, experiment with social media and master the calendar and other computer/smart device apps. Bring your questions. You need a Takoma Park Library card to access the computers, and take this course.
Instructor: Anne LeVeque
Takoma Park Community Center
Computer Lab
7500 Maple Avenue
55 and older
Wednesdays, 10 a.m.–12 p.m.
March 4–18
$5

FITNESS

Heart & Core
Move to the high-energy beat to pump up the heart rate followed by 20 minutes of Pilates core floor workout to strengthen the area from shoulders through hips. Instructor: Nancy Nickell
Takoma Park Recreation Center
Gymnasium
7315 New Hampshire Avenue
55 and older
Saturdays, 9:15–10:15 a.m.
January 4–March 14
$5

SPORTS

Tennis Fun and Fitness
This class blends exercise with learning or reviewing tennis skills utilizing special equipment for indoor play. All equipment provided, but you can bring your own racket.
Instructor Coach SJ
Takoma Park Recreation Center
Gymnasium
7315 New Hampshire Avenue
55 and older
Thursdays, 6–7:15 p.m.
January 9–March 12
$5
Great Events at the Library

- **LEGO Club**
  - Saturday, Jan. 11, 1-4 p.m.
  - Building fun for ages 3-10.

- **Mock Caldecott for Adults**
  - Saturday, Jan. 25, 2-4 p.m.
  - Join Dave Burbank for a rousing session of Dungeons & Dragons. Ages 8 up.

- **Kids Art**
  - Sunday, Jan. 26, 2–3 p.m.
  - Join Dave Burbank for a rousing session of Dungeons & Dragons. Ages 8 up.

- **Alternative Games**
  - Saturday, Jan. 25, 2–4 p.m.
  - An alternative games session featuring lemonade, cookies, and allergy-free treats.

- **Caldecott Club**
  - Monday, Jan. 13, 7 p.m.
  - We’ll re-read our finalist books from 2019 and choose our Mock Caldecott 2020 winner. Lemonade and cookies served.

- **Comics Jam**
  - Monday, Jan. 14, 4 p.m.
  - Come read some great comics!

- **Petites Chansons**
  - Saturday, Jan. 25, 10:30 a.m.
  - Led by Madame Marie

- **Spanish Circle Time**
  - Tuesdays, 10:30–11 a.m.

- **Spanish Time**
  - Thursdays, 10:30–11 a.m.

- **Friends Bi-Monthly Book Club Discussion**
  - Jan. 22, 7:30 p.m.
  - Our book is *Jimmy Corigan, the Smartest Kid on Earth*, a graphic novel by Chris Ware. Tim Rahn and Dave Burbank will lead the discussion, which is geared to adult readers.

- **Black History Celebration**
  - Join us on Saturday, February 8 at 2 p.m. to close out our yearlong celebration of the 50th anniversary of the Coretta Scott King Book Awards. We’ll be highlighting the newly-minted 2020 CSK winners, which will be announced by the American Library Association on Monday, January 27. We’ll also read a few past CSK-winning favorites.

- **Comics Jam**
  - Monday, Feb. 3, 7 p.m.
  - It’s a Book Party! We’ll eat cake and read the 2020 Caldecott Medal and Honor books.

- **LEGØ Club**
  - Sunday, Feb. 9, 1:30–3 p.m.

**CALDECOFT ACTIVITIES**

We have a trio of great programs in January — and one in early February! — focused on the prestigious Caldecott Medal, which is given annually by the American Library Association to the best-illustrated book for kids ages birth-14. Here’s the run-down.

So far, only one graphic novel — *This One Summer* — has won a Caldecott Honor in the 81-year history of the award. No graphic novels have ever won the Caldecott Medal itself. Could that change this year? On Monday, January 6 at 7 p.m., we will look at a few kids graphic novels featuring particularly distinguished art and stories for kids ages birth-14.

These books include: *Queen of the Sea*, written and illustrated by Dylan Meconis; *New Kid*, written and illustrated by Jerry Craft; and *This Was Our Pact*, written and illustrated by Jerry Craft.

Snacks will be served, courtesy of the Friends of the Takoma Park Maryland Library.

For the fifth consecutive year, we are hosting a Mock Caldecott for Adults on Monday, Jan. 11, from 1-4 p.m. At this program, we’ll read and discuss 10 great possibilities for the 2020 Caldecott Medal, using the actual Caldecott Medal criteria. Then we’ll vote on our favorite.

The actual awards are announced at the Youth Media Awards sponsored by the American Library Association.

Once the awards are announced, it’s time for a Book Party! On Monday, February 3 at 7 p.m., we’ll celebrate with lemonade, cake and allergy-free treats as we read the actual 2020 Caldecott Medal and Honor Books. All are welcome!
Theodore Carter at the Takoma Park Community Center

Public artist takes the lead

By Taylor Dibbert

Theodore Carter is a 2019 Azalea Award winner in the Arts Leader category. He grew up in Palo Alto, California. Carter was a political science major at Stanford and graduated in 1999. “I came to Washington, D.C., thinking I would go into that [the political] world,” he said.

He ended up going another direction and has been a teacher for the past 15 years. He currently works at Georgetown Day School where he is a home room teacher for third grade and covers most subjects, including math, writing, reading and social studies. He also coaches baseball at the high school.

He came to Takoma Park around 2007. When he and his wife were considering the move from Silver Spring, Carter said that Takoma Park seemed like a nice place to raise children. He also mentioned Takoma’s history as being “arts friendly,” the co-op and the farmer’s market as being significant draws.

His wife, Elizabeth, is a senior advisor at AARP. They met at the Big Hunt in Washington, D.C. Carter said she is the first person to read what he writes and that she’s taken many of the photos for his website. Carter has two children. His son Ben is 15 and his daughter Brett is 11.

His focus is public art. Last year, he rolled out “Night of 1,000 Fridas.” He described it as “a large-scale public art project aiming at getting 1,000 depictions of Frida Kahlo out into the world on the same night, Jan. 25, 2019.” Four hundred people participated, and 1,644 Fridas were created.

This ambitious project was featured on 5 continents and 15 countries, including Mexico, Spain, Senegal and Australia. “This was definitely on a scale that was much larger than anything I’d done before,” he told me. “It gave me an opportunity to reach out to other artists and try to build a community and something on a larger scale.”

To complete the project, Carter connected with people he’d never met and was unlikely to meet in the future. Essentially, he had to delegate. “I had people coordinating in different locations and I told people that whatever they wanted to contribute, it counted,” he said.

A grant from the Awesome Foundation, a Washington, D.C.-based organization, helped a lot. It allowed him to advertise and attract artists. There were participants in their 90s and others who were in preschool.

“Frida is somebody who means something different to everyone,” Carter said. He noted that a lot of people connected with her through gender identity, disability and creativity. Carter, who has also written fiction about Frida Kahlo, said his own art pertaining to her looks mainly at gender, sexuality and power.

In terms of his art, Carter strives to do big things and capture people’s attention. “I’m just all about trying to disrupt people’s every day,” he said. “Any time that people can interact with art, it is great and positive.”

Carter also noted that Mayor Kate Stewart has been supportive of his work and participated in 1,000 Fridas. Both Laura Barclay at Main Street Takoma and Ashleigh Nugent have been supportive as well.

Carter has a background in writing and received a master’s in writing from Johns Hopkins University in 2004. He is the author of four books, including a self-published children’s book that came out in November 2019. His literary influences include Kurt Vonnegut, Shirley Jackson, Roald Dahl and Joyce Carol Oates. And he’s an avid reader.

But he comes from three generations of visual artists. Carter told me about his childhood and watching his grandparents paint in their studios, that had an influence. “I sort of resisted that [art] in my own education and now, as I get older, I’m going back to it.”

In 2018, he completed a mural at the VFW. “[The best way to describe the VFW mural is by saying that] my vision was to make it look like the back of a motorcycle jacket,” he said. His daughter Brett helped him complete the project. “It was great to have her in that space and interacting with the staff and patrons. Everyone was so kind to her, and she was so proud when it was all done and on each subsequent visit. We signed the piece together.”

One of the Carter’s frustrations is always wanting to do more. For example, he won’t be doing 1,000 Fridas this year (because it’s so time-consuming), though he would love to. He has a full-time job and other commitments “I always feel like I have more ideas than I’m able to complete.”

Carter mentioned that winning an Azalea Award was “really validating” and made him feel tied to the community: “I’ve paid attention to the Azalea Awards in the past, it felt good.”

He said that Takoma Park is “a place where a lot of interesting things happen, and you see art all over.”

The Empty Bowls Project is back again! Empty Bowls is a nation-wide project to raise money to fight hunger. Empty Bowls supports food-related charitable organizations around the world and has raised millions of dollars to help end hunger over the years.

Those that spearhead the project encourage others to, “Think Globally and Act Locally.” Approximately 63,000 Montgomery County residents do not know where their next meal will come from. Recent reports from the Montgomery County Public Schools (MCPS) website indicate that 35.1 percent of students are eligible for free or reduced meals due to the low-income levels of their families.

This year, the Recreation Department will create 45 bowls between the Afternoon Addition, After the Bell and Teen programs. The bowls will be available for purchase during the Martin Luther King Jr. program on January 20 at Takoma Park Middle School. Al- ice Sims, who leads the program, said, “We explain to the kids that the bowls are for those less fortunate in the community. The kids understand and are excited to create the bowls and give them as presents for those in the community.”

Joyce Seamen, who is the department head for Health & Wellness for the Adventist Community Services of Greater Washington, has received donations from Empty Bowls on behalf of her organization. Joyce said, “People who have purchased the bowls were very happy with how creative and pretty the bowls looked. I am glad that the kids at the Recreation Department are involved with this project and are willing to help those that are less fortunate in the community. I am thankful to the Martin Luther King Jr. Commit- tee and the Recreation Department for thinking of us and for all that they do for the Empty Bowls Project.”

The bowls are in the process of being created right now. We look forward to seeing you at the MLK event and hope that you will consider purchasing a bowl to help those in need.
THE FIREHOUSE REPORT
By Jim Jarboe

As of Nov. 30, 2019, the Takoma Park Volunteer Fire Department and Montgomery County Fire and Rescue personnel assigned to the station responded to 464 fire-related incidents in 2019. The department also addressed or assisted with rescue or ambulance-related incidents, for a total of 3,051. Totals for 2018 were 553 and 2,783, representing an increase of 199 incidents.

During November, Takoma Park volunteers put in a total of 989.5 hours of standby time at the station, compared to 875.5 in 2018, an increase of 114 hours.

Maryland fire deaths
Maryland Fire Marshal Office reported as of Dec. 31, 2019, 53 people have died in fires compared to 71 in 2018.

Hot vehicle deaths
As of Dec. 31, 2019, 52 children have died across the country in hot vehicles. This brings the grand total to 849 since 1998.

TPVFD 25th Annual Dinners for Needy Families
The following people (pictured left) assisted with pickup and delivery: R.Ki. Alfaro, Dave Hooker and Jim Jarboe. Thanks to Takoma Park Volunteer Fire Department and Auxiliary and Takoma Park Lions Club for providing funds to purchase the dinners.

Toy Drive Thanks
On Sunday, December 22, members of the Takoma Park Volunteer Fire Department and the Takoma Park Police Department assisted with sorting and bagging toys for 181 children representing 76 families. Thanks to Steve Novik for assisting with pick-up of toys, and to the TPVFD Auxiliary, Justin Rattey and the Hiram-Takoma Freemason Lodge No. 10 for donating to the toy drive. (Left to Right: TPVFD member Tina Willey, Tina Smith, Ret. Sgt. TPPD, TPVFD members Ashlee Willey, Connor Rattey, EMS; Lt. Jorge Alfaro, KKi Alfaro and Jim Jarboe. Not pictured: Non-members Tori Williams and Renarda Brooks)

ANNUAL CHECKLIST

Are you ready for weather threats?

![Image](https://via.placeholder.com/150)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Situation:</th>
<th>Prepared? Yes? No? To Do &amp; deadline________</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>INDOORS AT HOME</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lighting and radio:</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Flashlight close at hand and working batteries (that fit the flashlight) or lantern (for power outages) with working batteries; and one for every person in the home</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>• Headlamps for mobility</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Portable radio - battery-operated, solar-powered, or hand crank radio</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Food:</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• 3 days of supplies; water for 3-6 days; non-perishable food; hand-operated can opener</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• NO gas or flames</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Health support:**
- Prescription medication, enough for at least a week
- Medical professionals’ contact list with specialty and phone/ email info
- Copies of health insurance information, medical records, and other health documents (easily accessible)
- Contact information for nearest hospital and emergency personnel
- Family/friend contact information (phone/ email)—see also communication

**Communication/Contacts:**
- Emergency contact list; local and out of area including name, relationship, phone/ email (Be sure the contact agrees, and tell the information to others.)
- Charged cell phone and portable charger (ready for use); notepad and pencil/pen

**Assistance for the elderly, disabled, or non-English speakers:**
- Elderly and disabled persons
  - Mobility and power source for wheelchairs, medical equipment; health support information (see above)
  - Takoma Park Police Department CARE Program will call registered residents daily who are alone or have special needs (To sign up, call 301-270-1100)
- Non-English speakers:
  - Contact information for interpreters

**Storms and Scams are Coming Again: Time for Your Annual Checklist**

By Claudine Schweber, Co-Chair, Emergency Preparedness Committee

Are you ready to deal with threats to safety due to snowstorms, power outages, or freezing temperatures? Are you ready for threats to your financial and private safety by scammers? Like the annual medical check-up, here’s the annual checklist.

Are you ready for scams’ threats?

There’s been an increase in calls and email from persons asking/demanding your money, or else... Warrants will be out for your arrest, you will lose out on government aid after a storm, a family member may be in danger, or you will not get the prize. Of course, it’s all a lie. Beware and be wary! Here are some examples of popular scams:

**Social Security threat:**
- Caller (sometimes a robocall) saying your benefits will end and you need to wire money, send cash or purchase a gift card. This is the #1 scam reported to the Federal Trade Commission.
- IRS scam: Calls from IRS impersonators claiming you owe back taxes. Pay or else... arrest is imminent.
- Disaster assistance scam: Calls offering to help with repairs or finding you a

**ANNUAL CHECKLIST**

**For more information, visit:**
- 2020CENSUS.GOV
- United States Census 2020
tic Straw Takoma Park campaign and continued the tradition of advocacy from our young people. Last spring, the Council passed a ban on the commercial use of plastic beverage straws and stirrers. Because of the hard work of the students and residents who did the research and outreach to local businesses, we were able to move quickly in passing the ban, which became effective this month. Thank you to everyone who worked on this effort.

8. Increased Community Engagement

The Council and City staff are always looking for ways to increase our engagement with the community and make sure we are a responsive and service-oriented government. Some changes we have made this year include:

• We started to hold meetings prior to formal Council meetings to facilitate greater discussion with members of the public. We have had presentations followed by question and answer sessions. Thank you to Councilmember Kostiuk for his suggestions and assistance in pulling together a number of these meetings.
• Councilwoman Kostiuk and I have been working with DC Council representatives to coordinate meetings regarding the work on Eastern Avenue. We were able to hold two meetings last year with most of the utilities and DC Department of Transportation in the same room to hear from residents and report about the project.
• When specific concerns or issues come up in the City, we have been responsive in pulling together experts around the region to present information and answer residents’ questions. A great example of that this year is the excellent panel of experts our Director of Public Works, Daryl Braithwaite, pulled together on why oak trees are dying.
• Donna Weight, the City’s Communication Specialist, has been putting in place a number of new ways for the City to communicate with residents. We started the new Takoma Insider which is sent via email each Friday. In addition, we have focused on providing information in different languages, specifically Spanish and Amharic.

9. Our Amazing City Committees and Commissions

We have amazing committees and commissions in the City that help the Council and staff tackle the work of the City. This year, we began to look at how we can increase participation in the Committees and improve the experience residents have when they serve on Committees. We conducted a survey to gather input and are working on recommendations to share with the full Council on how to improve the system.

In particular, many of our committee members stepped up in a big way last year:

• The Tree Commission and Committee on the Environment have been invaluable as we tackle the Tree Ordinance and Tree Canopy work and continue the work to address Climate Change;
• The Board of Elections is busy working to prepare us for our 2020 Elections, which will be the first City elections in sync with national elections;
• The Grants Review Committee has been taking a careful look at how we run the program and expanded the pool of grantees;
• The Arts & Humanities Committee put in place a new Cultural Plan with an emphasis on racial equity;
• Thank you to the residents and Councilwoman Kostiuk who have helped revitalize the Safe Roadsway Committee, now the Complete Safe Streets Committee;
• And all the work of the Youth Council, Commemoration Commission, and the Recreation, Pension, and Nuclear-Free Committees, the Noise Control Board, the Commission on Landlord-Tenant Affairs, Ethics Commission, Emergency Preparedness, Façade Advisory Board, Police Chief’s Advisory Board.
• We also have a number of short-term task forces such as the Parking Task Force, Council Compensation, and the Legal Services Review Advisory Group.

I want to specifically thank City Clerk, Jessie Carpenter, who assists the City Committees in functioning.

10. Award-Winning, Smart, Skilled, Hard Working City Staff

Every day our amazing staff work on behalf of our community and residents. Many times, the work they do goes unrecognized. I am glad to say this year our staff has been recognized and brought more praise to our City! Here are just a few examples:

• City Manager, Suzanne Ludlow, received the Caring Heart Award for Outstanding Service to the Community.
• Jessie Carpenter, City Clerk/Director of Council Affairs, and Leicia Monfort, Teen Program Manager, were recognized by Takoma United for an Engaged Community as 2019 Unsung Heroes.
• Finance Director, Susan Cheung, and her staff were awarded the Distinguished Budget Presentation Award from the Government Finance Officers Association for the FY2019 City Budget.
• Lucy Neher, the coordinator of the Safe Routes to School Program, secured a grant for $86,494. The budget includes coordinator salary, non-infrastructure activities, such as Walk to School Day activities, and the iCan Shine Bike Camp for two years. In addition, Lucy’s work coordinating the TKPF 5K race resulted in $30,000 going to local schools to promote safety and wellbeing.
• Last year, three of our outstanding Planning Division staff members became “EcoDistrict Accredited Professionals” – Rosalind Grigsby, Community and Development Manager; Jamie Ernst, Planner, and Alex McEachen, Planning Intern. The certification is a step toward creating a certified EcoDistrict in Takoma Park to accelerate neighborhood-scale sustainability, green infrastructure, and community-based decision making.
• Karen MacPherson, the Library’s Children and Young Adult Manager, has had numerous articles published in the Washington Post. One example is her June 2 article, “Yes, Parents, there is a magic formula to keep your kids reading through the summer.”
• Our Police Department has dealt with a number of very tough cases this year and has shown professionalism, caring, and gone above and beyond to assist residents. In particular, under Chief DeVaull, the departmental structure has been changed, the Chief’s Advisory Board has been revised, and several new community outreach programs have been initiated. I want to thank Councilmember Seams for his vision and advocacy to support and improve policing in our community.

We have many more stars in the City, and it is impossible to name each of them and their accomplishments. I want to extend my thanks to all of them for their dedication and hard work.

Looking Ahead to 2020

In the year ahead, we will continue much of the work discussed above, and specifically, we will wrap up our work on the tree ordinance and tree canopy goals. Thank you to Councilmembers Kostiuk, Dyballa, and Kovar for leading these efforts.

Other projects will include the library renovation, Census 2020, upcoming City Elections, and a number of other projects.

In addition to working on projects, I want to thank my colleagues on the Council for their participation in regional and national associations and committees.

ANNUAL CHECKLIST

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What to do?

1. Hang up
2. Contact Montgomery County Consumer protection (240-777-3636 or visit www.montgomerycountymd.gov/ocp), which has an on-call investigator of the day.
3. Contact the supposed company or agency directly and report to the FTC (www.ftc.gov), IRS, social security (1-800-772-1213; www.identitytheft.gov/SSI) or other department/agency named in the call.

Annual Checklist

temporary rental, they ask for your financial information or money via gift card or wiring money to do this for you. Also, watch out for woodchucks, people claiming to be contractors who come and offer to do tree cutting and other improvements and ask for a deposit in cash or money transfer (no more than 1/3 allowed in Maryland).

Pepco scam: Calls from (fake) utility company person saying you owe X$ on your bill, they ask to be paid by phone via a prepaid debit card and tell you where to purchase this card, codes are then read to the scammer.

January 2020

Tokoma Park News | Page 11
Baked goods and more from farms located within 125 miles of Takoma Park are offered. Top Notch Toastmasters Second and fourth Tuesdays, 7:15 – 8:30 p.m. TP Community Center Improve your communication and leadership skills. Top Notch Toastmasters meetings provide opportunities for positive, supportive development of personal and interpersonal skills that make you a better communicator, a better leader. Come to our meetings to sharpen your abilities, meet new friends, and make a difference in your life. Community Self Defense Wednesdays, 10:30 – 11:30 a.m. 6836 New Hampshire Ave., Takoma Park Certificated Gracie Jiu Jitsu Black Belt instruction Free and open to all Parents of Special Needs Adults (POSNA) First Thursdays, 7 p.m. TP Community Center This support and advocacy group of parents and other loved ones of adults with special needs including autism, Down's syndrome, and severe chronic psychiatric challenges usually meets the first Thursdays of every month. For more information, contact Mary Mucchi at muchu10@comcast.net. VILLAGE OF TAKOMA PARK EVENT Village Rides Volunteer Training Wednesday, Jan. 15, 7 – 8:30 p.m. Takoma Business Center 6830 Carroll Ave., Suite 910 Orientation session for those interested in volunteering for Takoma Park. There is parking in the back of the building, first come, first served. There is additional metered parking on the street in front of the building. 10th annual Mid-Winter Play Day Sunday, Feb. 9, 1 – 4 p.m. TP Community Center Let's Play America and the Takoma Park Recreation Department have teamed up to present you to the tenth annual Mid-Winter Play Day. Come join Let's Play America and the Takoma Park Recreation Department for a fun afternoon of indoor play. Free for all. To see a full listing of activities and performances, visit www.letsplayamerica.org. Volunteers can contact Pat, 301-928-9962, thatplayday@gmail.com. ARTS AND LITERATURE People's Open Mic Sundays, 9 p.m. Republic restaurant, 6839 Laurel Ave. www.replicatokoma.com Takoma Park Community Band Mondays, 7:30 – 9:30 p.m. Hefner Park Community Center, 42 Osweego Ave. Join the Takoma Park Community Band for weekly rehearsals at the Hefner Park Community Center. No auditions required, just plenty of enthusiasm. Drum for Joy! with Jaqui MacMillan Mondays, 7 – 8:30 p.m. Electric Maid, 268 Carroll St. Learn hand drumming Blues Mondays, 7:30 – 10:30 p.m. Republic restaurant, 6839 Laurel Ave. www.republictakoma.com Open Mic Night Tuesdays, 9 – 11 p.m. Busboys and Poets, 225 Carroll St. NW Jazz Tuesdays, 7 – 10 p.m. Takoma Station, 6814 14th St. NW Open mic for jazz musicians Wednesday Night Drum Jams Wednesdays, 7 – 9:30 p.m. The Electric Maid, 268 Carroll St. NW Hosted by Katy Gaughan and friends Puppet Lab First Saturdays, 10 a.m. – noon Rhizome DC, 6590 Maple St NW Puppet Lab's purpose is to be a hub for all those interested in puppet theater who would benefit from boosting creative power, honing puppet-manipulation skills, cross-pollinating ideas, receiving feedback about works in progress, and building local puppet community. Suggested $5-10 donation Visions of Our Community Photo Exhibit Public Reception Thursday, Jan. 9, 7 p.m. TP Community Center An exhibit of winning photographs from the student photography contest, “Visions of Our Community,” will be displayed at the Takoma Park Community Center January 7 – March 25. ABSTRACTED Art Exhibition Opening Reception Thursday, Jan. 9, 7 p.m. TP Community Center Please join us for the opening reception for ABSTRACTED, a group exhibition featuring a diverse range of abstract artwork by Seemeen Hashem, Steve Wanna, Eloy Williams, and artists from the ViaAbility Art Lab. See p. 5 for more information. Carroll Cafe Friday, Jan. 10, 7:30 – 9:30 p.m. Seekers Church, 276 Carroll St. NW Victoria Vox is a ukulele-toting award-winning songwriter and performer. With a passion for songwriting since she was 10 (first on keyboard, then on guitar), she studied at the Berklee College of Music and, in 2003, took up the ukulele as her main accompanying instrument. Since the release of her first ukulele album in 2006, Vox has been one of the leading songwriters on the ukulele scene. $18 in advance, $20 at the door carrollcafe.org Rediscovering Your InnerART: Finding Joy and Creativity through Expressive Writing Sundays, Jan. 12 – Feb. 23 (No class on Feb. 16) Dance Exchange, 7117 Maple Ave. Start your year off with writing prompts and creative exercises to help you jumpstart creative projects that may have languished, or simply to live a more creative, zestful life! For more information, visit www.eventbrite.com/e/rediscovering-your-heart-finding-joy-creativity-through-expressive-writing-tickets-7800567671. This class is being offered independently and is not part of Dance Exchange’s programming. Takoma Park Old-Time Jam Wednesday, Jan. 15, 7:30 – 10 p.m. Takoma BevCo, 6197 Laurel Ave. All ages and skill levels are welcome to join the jam session every third Wednesday. Bring your guitars, fiddles, banjos, tubas, flutes, penny whistles, flat feet, singing voices or just listening ears. Poetry from Behind Bars Poetry Reading Thursday, Jan. 23, 7:30 – 9:30 p.m. TP Community Center Auditorium In a unique poetry reading, Poet Ambassadors from the Free Minds Book Club & Writing Workshop will read poetry they wrote while incarcerated in the D.C. jail or federal prisons across the country. See p. 5 for more information. Documentary Screening – Heather Booth: Changing the World Tuesday, Jan. 21, 7 – 9 p.m. TP Community Center auditorium The Takoma Park Youth Council is hosting a documentary screening of “Heather Booth: Changing the World,” a film about the life and advocacy of nationally recognized activist and Takoma Park resident Heather Booth. The film will be followed by a Q&A session with Heather Booth herself. A Balkan Journey by the Orfeia Vocal Ensemble Friday, Jan. 24, 8 p.m. TP Community Center Auditorium The Orfeia Vocal Ensemble will lead a magical journey through the rich musical heritage of the Balkans. Free Event with $10 Suggested Donation. See p. 5 for more information. The Power of Music: By the People, For the People Concert by the Patagonia Winds Friday, Jan. 31, 8 p.m. Takoma Park Community Center Auditorium The Patagonia Winds will take chamber music out of the drawing room and to the public in an engaging concert by this professional wind quintet. Free Event with $10 Suggested Donation. See p. 5 for more information. COMING EVENTS Summer Camp Registration opens Monday, Feb. 3, 8:30 a.m. Registration for Takoma Park residents opens for Recreation Department Summer Camps. There will be an early bird discount of 15 percent applied to all registrations completed the week of Feb. 3 – 9. Discount will be applied automatically both in person and online. Spaces fill fast. On Monday, Feb. 10, registration will open for non-residents and all patrons will receive 10 percent off from Feb. 10 – 18. For a complete list of camps and sign-up details, visit takomaparkmd.gov/recreation. JANUARY Do you have an item for the city calendar? Do you have an item for the newsletter calendar? Let us know if you have a nonprofit event that would be of interest to City of Takoma Park residents, and we’ll consider it for inclusion in the calendar. Deadline for the February issue is Jan. 10, and the newsletter will be distributed beginning Jan. 24. To submit calendar items, email tpnewseditor@takomaparkmd.gov. "TP Community Center" is the Takoma Park Community Center, 7500 Maple Ave., Takoma Park. All addresses are in Takoma Park or Takoma, D.C., unless otherwise noted.