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Monday, May 25
Holiday for City Staff

Trash/recycling collection
Monday, May 25
No yard waste collection



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TAKOMA PARK

A newsletter published by the City of Takoma Park, Maryland

Volume 59, No. 5 ■ takomaparkmd.gov

Facing the Virus

By Rick Henry

Like many a quarantined high school student, Arjun Oberoi wanted to use his new-found time to do something to help battle the COVID-19 virus.



Front view of face shield

He thought his background could prove valuable. With an elite knowledge of, and experience with, robotics and access to special equipment, the 15-year-old sophomore at Montgomery Blair High School was anxious to get involved.

When Oberoi saw that Open Works, a makerspace in Baltimore, had put out a call for people with 3D printers to make parts for face shields, he knew what he had to do. "I started running the 3D printers in my basement to make the parts," he said.

Which begs the question, "How does a 15-year-old happen to have not just one, but multiple, 3D printers in his basement?" The answer lies in Oberoi's long-time involvement with robotics, which he's been competing in for eight years. He is currently the captain of the FIRST Tech Challenge (FTC) Robotics Team Wizards. exe. The team, comprised of students from 7th-12th grade, won the 2018 World Championship. He runs the team out of his basement, and as a result, has access

FACING THE VIRUS □ Page 3



Susan Ludlow, City Manager

Budgeting in Challenging Times

Last month, I presented a draft budget for FY2021. The City Council has held several Work Sessions to consider the FY21 Budget. Work Sessions are key opportunities for Councilmembers to hear from and question staff regarding the proposed budget numbers and work program. The final work session is Monday, May 4 at 7:30 p.m.

Obviously, we are in a challenging time, and we are in the process of scrutinizing every aspect of the budget to see what effect the COVID-19 pandemic will have, what will be needed during recovery and how to position the City for the coming years.

Since my initial presentation, I have received a number of questions about potential cuts and other measures given the current crisis. Some have expressed concerns that we are treating this like any other budget year. *I assure residents that this is not the case.*

As I noted in last month's newsletter article about the proposed budget and in my presentation to the Council, I have already taken significant steps in consideration of the health emergency and its possible financial repercussions:

Union negotiations with the City's two unions have been put on hold as have the normal wage increases that occur on July 1 for both union and non-union employees. We will then be able to go into negotiations with more knowledge of the economic situation.

BUDGETING □ Page 3

Be Kind. Be Bold. Resist.

During the health emergency, I have been trying to remember to get outside each day. This week, during a walk around my neighborhood, I noticed the dogwoods coming into bloom.

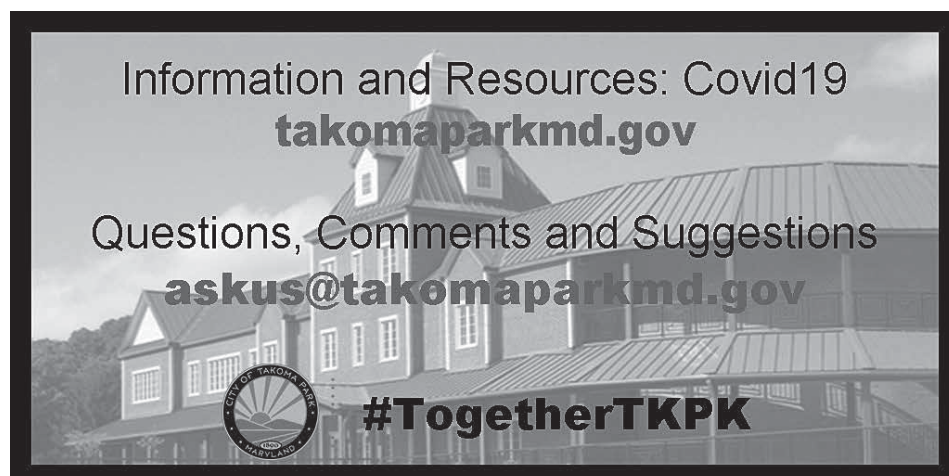
The dogwood is a personally meaningful flower – it appears very fragile but can withstand harsh conditions. As a symbol of strength and durability, it speaks to the challenges we all overcome in our lives.

Three years ago, I had a dogwood flower and the words, "Be Kind. Be Bold. Resist." tattooed on my left forearm. It was right after the 2016 Presidential elections, and I wanted a reminder of our collective ability to stand together in the face of challenges.

BE KIND □ Page 3



Mayor Stewart



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Patricia Labovitz**
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DOCKET

City Council & Committee Calendar

OFFICIAL CITY GOVERNMENT MEETINGS

CITY COUNCIL MEETINGS

Monday, May 4, 7:30 p.m.
Budget Work Session

Wednesday, May 6, 7:30 p.m.
City Council Meeting

Wednesday, May 13, 7:30 p.m.
City Council Meeting
First Reading Ordinances Adopting the FY21 Tax Rates and Budget

Wednesday, May 20, 7:30 p.m.
City Council Meeting
Second Reading Ordinances Adopting the FY21 Tax Rates and Budget

Wednesday, May 27, 7:30 p.m.
City Council Meeting

CITY BOARD, COMMISSION, AND COMMITTEE MEETINGS

Meetings will be held remotely for the duration of the public health crisis.

BOARD OF ELECTIONS

Thursday, May 14, 7 p.m.

COMMITTEE ON THE ENVIRONMENT

Monday, May 4, 7:15 p.m.

Monday, June 1, 7:15 p.m.

EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS COMMITTEE

Thursday, May 28, 7 p.m.

FAÇADE ADVISORY BOARD

Tuesday, May 12, 6:30 p.m.

PARKING MANAGEMENT TASK FORCE

Wednesday, May 6, 6:30 p.m.

Additional meetings may be added. For current information, visit www.takomaparkmd.gov and click on "Events and Meetings." Information on any meetings taking place will be published there along with information on how the public can observe. Individuals interested in receiving a weekly Council agenda and calendar update by e-mail can sign up by sending an email to clerk@takomaparkmd.gov.

ADA NOTICE

The City of Takoma Park is committed to ensuring that individuals with disabilities are able to fully participate in public meetings. Anyone with a disability who wishes to receive auxiliary aids, services, or accommodations at a City of Takoma Park public meeting or public hearing is invited to contact Jessie Carpenter, City Clerk, at jessiec@takomaparkmd.gov or 301-891-7267 at least 48 hours in advance.

Important Takoma Park Election Dates

The next City of Takoma Park election for Mayor and City Council will take place on Tuesday, November 3. This is the same date at the Presidential Election. Voters will cast ballots at their usual assigned voting location but will check in and vote first in the Presidential Election, and then check in and vote in the Takoma Park Municipal Election.

Tuesday, September 15: Nominating Caucus

Thursday, October 22 through Thursday,

October 29: Early Voting

Tuesday, November 3: Election Day

City Council Action

Only negative votes or abstentions are reported here. Resolutions and ordinances are published online after adoption.

At the City Council meeting on **March 18, 2020**, FY2020 Budget Amendment No. 3 was adopted by **Ordinance 2020-6. Resolution 2020-10** was adopted, extending the City Manager's employment contract to July 1, 2021. (Councilmember Smith voted against the resolution.)

On **April 1, 2020**, the Council adopted amendments to the Takoma Park Election Code by **Ordinance 2020-7**. Substantive amendments include the addition of a requirement that candidates file campaign expenditure reports, establishment of a

reporting requirement for disposition of surplus campaign funds, addition of certain limits on campaign contributions, and establishment of a campaign registration process that opens in June of an election year. **Resolution 2020-11** was also adopted. The resolution authorizes changes to the FY20 Community Grants Program to one which funds the provision of operational support for grantees. The change was necessitated by the inability of grantees to facilitate planned events and activities as a result of the health emergency.

At its **April 15, 2020** meeting, the City Council

adopted **Ordinance 2020-8**, authorizing a contract with RR/MM Lukmire Architects for professional services related to continued engineering design, permit application preparation, construction document preparation, and construction administration for a replacement Library. The contract amount is \$499,835. **Resolution 2020-12** was adopted, suspending quasi-judicial proceedings before the City's boards, commissions, and committees until 30 days after Maryland's COVID-19 state of emergency has been terminated.

VIRTUAL CITY COUNCIL MEETINGS

Due to the public health crisis, the City Council has been meeting remotely by video conference. This will continue as long as necessary. The meetings are available to watch live (or view afterwards) in all the usual ways:

- on the City Council Video Page of the City Website (<https://takomaparkmd.gov/government/city-council/meetings-and-documents/city-council-video/>)
- on City TV (RCN - Channel 13, HD Channel 1060 | Comcast/xfinity - Channel 13 | HD Channel 997 | Verizon Fios - Channel 28)
- on Facebook (@TakomaParkMD/)
- on YouTube (<https://www.youtube.com/user/TakomaParkTV>)

The public can comment live during the public comment portions of the meetings by registering and logging into the video conference. The link will be provided by weekly email from the City Clerk and on the City website. For those not able to do so, brief written comments may be sent on a special form to be read by the City Clerk. As always, other comments may be sent by email to clerk@takomaparkmd.gov to be circulated to the Council.

NOTICE OF PUBLIC HEARINGS

TRAFFIC CALMING ON THE 7300 AND 7600 BLOCKS OF WILDWOOD DRIVE

Wednesday, May 13, 2020
7:30 p.m.

Residents on the 7300 block of Wildwood Drive have petitioned for a second speed hump to be installed on the block and residents of the 7600 block of Wildwood Drive have petitioned for a speed hump to be installed on the block.

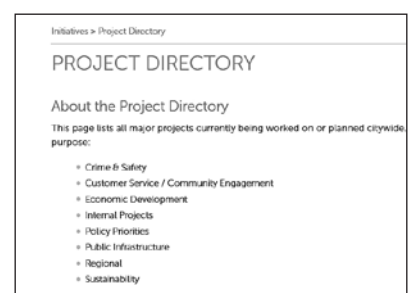
The City Council will hold public hearings on the proposed traffic calming (in the order listed above) on Wednesday, May 13, 2020. Given that meetings and hearings may still need to be held remotely, interested residents can comment live during the public hearing by registering and logging into the meeting. The link will be provided by weekly email from the City Clerk and on the City website. For those not able to do so, brief written comments may be sent on a special form to be read by the City Clerk. All other written comments will be added to the hearing record.

Using the Takoma Park Project Directory

What is going on in Takoma Park? The Project Directory can fill you in! The Project Directory lists all major projects currently being worked on or planned citywide and includes need-to-know information for each one. takomaparkmd.gov/initiatives/project-directory



1. To access the Project Directory from the City of Takoma Park website, on the home page under initiatives, select "Project Directory" as shown at left.



2. You'll be taken to the "Project Directory" page, which lists all major projects being worked on or planned citywide. Projects are grouped by classification based on their purpose.



3. Then click on the name of the project that interests you. In this example, a resident wanted more information about Police Facility Improvements.

FACING THE VIRUS
From page 1

to several 3-D printers, robots and other machines, allowing him to produce the components for the shields.
'The face shields that I'm producing in-house are composed of two parts, a clear film, and a 3-D printed frame,' he said of the process. 'The clear film generally takes the form of a standard 8.5 x 11 transparency sheet, with six holes punched in it. The holes line up with pegs on the face shields, so they just pop into place.'
After initially producing the shields for Open Works, he reached out to the local community to gauge interest. Not surprisingly, he found there was a great need. 'The response was very large, so I decided to start also producing some to distribute locally,' he said.
Doing so meant expanding his operation and enlisting the help of others, including Dr. Usa Bunnag, a dentist who is disinfecting the parts and helping with distribution, and Matt Zigler, who works at the Bullis School and is laser-cutting the holes in the transparency film, 'which is much faster than doing it by hand,' Oberoi said.
In addition, many others in the community have donated transparencies and 3D printer parts after seeing his social media posts and asking how they could help. He also cited Mr. John Kaluta, a teacher at Blair, who procured two 3-D printers



Rear view of face shield

from the school, which allowed Oberoi to initially increase his production. The two Blair printers brought Oberoi's total to seven and has allowed him to make and distribute parts for more than 500 face shields.
He has distributed them to a few places so far, including Alexandria Birthcare and Women's Health (which employs a Blair alumni) as well as the Rockville Police Department and Holy Cross Hospital. Oberoi's goal is to distribute 1,000. For more information, email rockville-faceshieldsparts@gmail.com.

BE KIND
From page 1

Today, as we face the health crisis, I am again reminded of our need to be kind, be bold, and resist.
Be Kind. The stress and the uncertainty are mounting. For some in our community, the fears of falling ill or losing loved ones have become a reality. Remember that now, more than ever, we need to treat each other and ourselves with kindness and compassion.
Be Bold. My resolution for the new decade was to, in the words of Angela Davis, 'act as if it were possible to radically transform the world. And... do it all the time.'
Right now, that is a difficult task as the uncertainty and enormity of COVID-19 hang over us all. It is hard to think about a time after the crisis. But each day, there are little things we can still do that will radically change our world. Here in Takoma Park, we have so many heroes in

our community, stepping up to care and support each other.
From donating food or money to standing outside and cheering our public works department as they pick up trash and recycling, to calling a neighbor or friend to give them support - there are things each of us can do to uplift others and ourselves.
No act is too small.
Resist. Resist facing this alone. If you need assistance, please reach out. We have resources on the website, and my blog has listed other ideas. You can also call the City at 301-891-7100.
Like the dogwood flower, we are strong. By treating each other with kindness, by remembering to act boldly, and by resisting the idea that you or your family must face this alone, we will get through this crisis together.
-Kate Stewart, Mayor, City of Takoma Park

This article was originally published (April 11, 2020) on the City's website: takomaparkmd.gov/news/be-kind-be-bold-resist.

BUDGETING
From page 1

A number of sidewalk projects and a building project in the Community Center (totaling \$1.6 million) were postponed to the FY22 year of the proposed Capital Improvement Program as were some smaller improvements and projects, totaling about \$100,000.
Public art projects were postponed; funds may get shifted into assistance programs.
We have also shifted some unused conference and office expense funds to the mini-grants program to provide immediate support to local businesses.
Staff have been evaluating programs and expenses to determine those that will not occur or could be cut or postponed as well as identifying revenue sources that may be affected by the pandemic and the associated economic disruption. It is anything but business as usual for the Takoma Park city staff.
As the current crisis is still unfolding, it may be a few more weeks before we are able to project the levels of federal support that we may receive from recently adopted legislation, and we are following efforts for an additional federal aid package.
As the Council deliberates, items that are likely to be affected or those that the Council may wish to handle differently have been highlighted so that those elements

may be part of the Council's Reconciliation List. The Reconciliation List is the list of possible adjustments to the Proposed Budget that the Council will consider as it moves to the adoption of the final budget.
The City of Takoma Park has a well-deserved reputation for fiscal responsibility and transparency, and that will not change. During the Great Recession, we took the steps needed to maintain the essential services and character of Takoma Park, even as significant and painful cuts were made. The cuts happened at the appropriate time, when the extent of the impact was clear so that our actions would be effective. We will continue to be fiscally responsible and follow best practices in dealing with the economic changes ahead of us.
Uncertainty is challenging. Health uncertainty and financial uncertainty are both stressful and they are occurring at the same time during this COVID-19 pandemic. I know we will get through it together as a community, but it will be hard, particularly in the coming weeks. A constructive way through this is to plan for different situations, both near term and long term so that we know our options. The FY21 Budget is that plan for the City, and we have worked on it together.
-Suzanne Ludlow, City Manager, City of Takoma Park

A Note about the Tax Rate
I have been asked why I proposed to increase the tax rate for FY21, particularly during a pandemic. There are two main reasons:
Under the Maryland State Code (Section 6-308 Tax-Property Article), the Council cannot approve a tax rate that is larger than the tax rate that is advertised for the budget public hearing. The City Manager must propose a tax rate that will be larger than or equal to the one the Council will adopt.
There are more questions this year about the coming year's work program and budget than in any previous year that I have worked for the City of Takoma Park. What will happen to the City's expected revenues? Will we be required to do different work or offer different services or assistance during a pandemic that might cost us more money? Having the larger tax rate available as the Council considers the budget allows flexibility in their deliberations.
As I have noted in prior messages, I have taken a number of steps to save money or increase flexibility while the Council considers the budget this year. We put a pause on union negotiations and pay increases, I proposed the postponement of some capital expenditures until FY22, and I have delayed some expenditures on art projects (the Lincoln Avenue mural, the Holton Lane sculpture, and the restoration of the BY Morrison mural). Funds that couldn't be spent due to the pandemic were re-routed to programs to assist residents and businesses. Most of these actions are to provide flexibility as the Council considers the FY21 budget or to provide timely assistance.

A slightly different version of this article appeared on the City's website Friday, April 10: takomaparkmd.gov/news/budgeting-in-challenging-times.

THE TAKOMA PARK NEWSLETTER
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The Newsletter does not accept commercial, classified or political advertisements.
The Newsletter is printed on recycled content paper.

Important City Department Phone Numbers
City Information 301-891-7100
City Clerk..... 301-891-7267
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



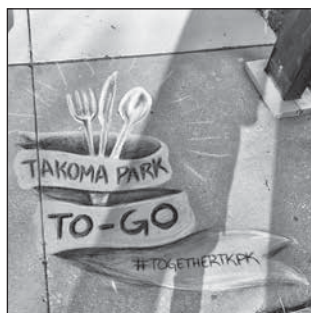
BUILDING COMMUNITY

Takoma Park Together = Small Business Support

The City has embarked on a multi-layered campaign to support small businesses in Takoma Park. This exciting outreach campaign will engage residents and support local businesses, in a socially responsible way, during this unprecedented health emergency.

Phase One

We kicked off the campaign with the installation of our first chalk mural near the Takoma Park Recreation Center on New Hampshire Avenue. We have branded the campaign as “Takoma Park Together” and are using the trending hashtag #TogetherTKPK to spread the word on social media. Up to 40 small chalk murals and designs will be created on sidewalks and walkways around the City in the next two months to identify our To-Go businesses and brighten the daily walks of our residents. Chalk murals will be developed in and around restaurants listed on the “Takoma Park To-Go” website (www.thenewave.com/takoma-park-to-go) as a demonstration of our ongoing support and commitment to our beloved small businesses.



Phase Two

The second phase of the Takoma Park Together campaign is a fundraising effort led by another Takoma Park business. No Plan Press (www.noplan.press/category/takoma-park) has created three unique posters featuring designs promoting



the Takoma Park Together campaign. All of the proceeds from the sale of these limited-edition posters will benefit Takoma Park’s Citywide Small Business Mini-Grant Program and the Old Takoma Business Association’s (OTBA) Micro-Grant program.

“Takoma Park businesses are a huge part of our lives, and right now they need us.”
—Mayor Kate Stewart

Phase Three

We will continue to receive donations for the Takoma Park Citywide Small Business Mini-Grant Program. We have received more than 100 applications for grant assistance as of April 20. City funds will be exhausted well before the need, and we are counting on our residents for additional support.

4 Ways You Can Help

1. Buy a meal from a “Takoma Park To-Go” restaurant and tag your favorite Takoma Park together mural on social media (#TogetherTKPK)

Takoma Park Together Chalk Murals: the City has partnered with our local business, Chalk Riot, to create temporary chalk murals on sidewalks/walkways across the community, to engage our residents around social distancing and safety issues, and identify businesses that are still open and offering takeout and delivery. You can help support these businesses by picking up a meal from one of our Takoma Park To-Go restaurants.

2. Purchase a limited-edition “Takoma Park Together” poster

Visit www.noplan.press/category/takoma-park to purchase an exclusive “Takoma Park Together” poster with locally inspired designs. Each piece will be letterpress printed by hand, one at a time on an antique 19th-century printing press right here in Takoma Park. All orders will be delivered for free to Takoma Park addresses. Posters range in price from \$20-\$100, and all profits from the sale will go to the Citywide Small Business Mini-Grant Program and Old Takoma Business Association Micro-Grant Program.

3. Purchase Limited-Edition “Takoma Park Together” Herbs, Flowering Plants and Succulents

Takoma Park local business, Indigro Plant Design (indigroplants.ecwid.com/Takoma-Park-Together-Fundraising-Campaign-c49596319), has created four exclusive Takoma Park Together designs of herbs, succulents, and flowering plants to raise funds for the Takoma Park Together campaign to support our local businesses during the COVID-19 emergency. Up to 50 percent of the profit from sales will support both the Citywide Small Business Mini-Grant program and the Old Takoma Business Association (OTBA) Micro-Grant program.

4. Donate to the citywide mini-grant program

We are still accepting donations online or via check for the Citywide Small Business Mini-Grant Program. We would like to thank OTBA for assistance with the technical infrastructure to receive online donations. Donations can be made online or by check made out to City of Takoma Park and mailed to City of Takoma Park, Finance Department, Attn: Small Business Mini-Grant Donation, 7500 Maple Avenue, 3rd Floor, Takoma Park, MD 20912. Thank you for your generous support for our small businesses during this challenging time!

Organic Lawn Care and The Safe Grow Act

Do you pull out the weed killer at the first sign of dandelions? If so, you could be putting your family at risk and breaking the law! The Safe Grow Act places restrictions on the use of cosmetic pesticides for lawn care on public and private property.

All pesticides, herbicides, and insecticides are toxic on some level. Along with killing pests and weeds, they can also harm you, your children, your pets, and any wildlife on your lawn.

Young children are especially at risk from pesticides. Their bodies and immune systems are still developing. They are also more likely to spend time outside on the lawn, playing or crawling and coming in contact with any pesticides used there. It is possible to keep your lawn healthy and looking good without using pesticides.

When your lawn is healthy, there’s less chance that weeds or pests will take it over. Pests often indicate that your lawn isn’t getting the nutrients it needs. Most lawns need fertilizer once a year. You can top-dress with a quarter- to a half-inch of

compost. Or look for fertilizer that’s labeled “slow release” or “natural organic.”

The way you mow your lawn can also make a difference. By leaving your grass a little longer, usually between 2.5 and 3.5 inches, you can usually improve your lawn’s health. This is because the leaves of longer grass have more access to sunlight, which helps the grass grow thicker and create deeper roots.

All lawns need water to grow. But most are watered too often and with too little water. Although each type of lawn has different watering needs, a good rule of thumb is to water only when needed, and then to water deeply, with about an inch of water.

When pests do appear, many experts agree that integrated pest management (IPM) is the most effective and environmentally friendly way to control pests. Basically, this means using holistic ways to treat pests when possible, such as mowing your lawn higher to shade out weeds or planting more disease-resistant types of grasses or plants. Here are a few

suggestions to try:

- Give nature a little time to work. Damaged parts of your lawn may bounce back over time. And most lawn and garden pests have natural enemies that will help control pests. For example, ladybugs and praying mantises eat other bugs while not damaging your lawn or garden.
- Pull out weeds using a long-handled weed puller. It’s usually easier than by hand. Vinegar can also be used to kill weeds.
- Mulch garden beds to prevent weeds.
- Remove diseased plants, so the problem doesn’t spread.

Having a safer lawn may mean that you learn to live with a weed or two. But even healthy lawns have a few weeds and pests. Knowing that your kids are safe when playing hide-and-seek or leapfrog should make any weeds that do pop up a little easier to tolerate.

Information regarding safe lawn care practices and legislation can be found on the City’s website at Government > Tako-

ma Park Police Department > Neighborhood Services > Safe Grow.



Is your lawn, apartment, and/or patio garden free of synthetic pesticides (including herbicides and fungicides) and safe for wildlife, pets and people? If so, let us and your neighbors know! Contact Neighborhood Services at 301-891-7113 or neighborhoodservices@takomaparkmd.gov. for a free yard sign.

TAKOMA PARK ARTS

All upcoming Takoma Park Arts events at the Takoma Park Community Center have been postponed to help prevent the spread of the coronavirus, but you can watch many of our past events online now at <https://bit.ly/2SjjHVD>, including concerts, theater, dance, poetry readings, art exhibitions, and more.

Use the links below to watch these featured events! You can sign up for our weekly e-newsletter at takomaparkmd.gov/arts for updates about the rescheduling of future events.



Online Vintage Movie Night: Propaganda Cartoons

Watch at <https://bit.ly/34IWMxz>

Local film historian Richard Hall compiled a fun online screening of vintage propaganda cartoons with political, social, or commercial messages that were filmed over the past century. From silent World War I films to World War II Disney cartoons made for the U.S. government and on through the Cold War, cartoons have been used as propaganda tools that entertain while also attempting to mold public opinion in sometimes subtle or blatant ways. You can watch the cartoons at home on Youtube using the link above.



DC Highlife Stars

African Music and Stories with Georges Collinet and the DC Highlife Stars

Watch at <https://bit.ly/3e1u2P8>

Legendary radio broadcaster Georges Collinet, aka Maxi Voom Voom from VOA and Afropop Worldwide, shares rare unseen footage and stories from his 50 years covering African music and culture, including documentaries he filmed across Africa.

Congolese master vocalist Samba Mapangala sang traditional African songs before the DC Highlife Stars took the stage with their unique blend of classic highlife and rumba along with some new dance hits. Eme and Michael from Takoma Radio's Jolly Papa Show hosted the evening before a large audience, so check it out and get your feet moving!



World-Music Duo Dong Xi

Dong Xi: East Meets West World Music Concert

Watch at <https://bit.ly/2JRFwHb>

In a unique concert spanning cultures, Chinese dulcimer player Chao Tian They and percussionist Tom Teasley combine musical traditions in their original music inspired by Chinese folk, classical music, and American jazz.

The world-music duo called Dong Xi collaborates in "controlled improvisations" that fluidly change with each performance, blending the subtleties of the Chinese dulcimer with percussion in an elaborate musical tapestry that threads its way across countries and cultures. For more information and to hear more of their music, go to www.dongximusic.com.



Silk Road Dance Company

Dance Journey Along the Silk Road

Watch at <https://bit.ly/2JOflf9>

Join the Silk Road Dance Company to experience the beauty and charm of traditional dances from across the world. From the steppes of Central Asia to the mountains of the Caucasus, this performance features dances of nomadic groups, oasis dwellers, and royal courts. Performed in breathtaking traditional costumes, these dances capture the spirit and grace of ancient civilizations of the Silk Road, including Uyghur, Uzbek, Tajik, Turkmen, Iranian, Kazakh, and Afghan influences.

Founded in 1995 by Artistic Director Laurel Victoria Gray, the award-winning Silk Road Dance Company presents traditional and contemporary women's dances that offer a unique glimpse of the life and art of little-known cultures, especially those of the Islamic world. The company has performed in Uzbekistan, Qatar, Singapore, Canada, and the United Kingdom, as well as prestigious venues in the D.C. area, including the White House, Kennedy Center, and Library of Congress. For more info, go to www.silkroaddance.com.

Nature Revisited Art Exhibition

See the art and hear from the artists at <https://bit.ly/3bVKwq6>

In the *Nature Revisited* exhibition at the Takoma Park Community Center, three photographers and a mixed-media artist shared their fresh and surprising interpretations of landscapes from across the world, casting nature through different lights. The artists include Rachel Ann Cross, Michael Duncan, Stewart Sarkozy-Banoczy, and Peter Stern.

In her *Sacred Treks* series, Cross painted elements from her epic hikes, including more than 500 miles along the centuries-old Camino de Santiago in France and Spain. A retired optical scientist, Michael Duncan captures long-exposure night photos that bring galaxies to life in the western United States.

Sarkozy-Banoczy documents communities across the



Michael Duncan, Cracked Eggs

world that are severely affected by climate change, including dwindling fishing villages in Newfoundland. As an ultralight plane pilot, Stern takes low-altitude

landscape photos that resemble abstract paintings, including images of environmental devastation in Pennsylvania mine country.



Peter Stern, Strata

The Takoma Park Recreation Department is proud to announce the grand opening of The Virtual Community Center! Come one, come all to see our newest creation offering a mixture of FUN (Fantastic, Unbelievable, Non-traditional) classes on ZOOM for Takoma Park residents. In addition to virtual classes, it will also house a running list of our R.A.R.s (Rec Approved Resources), so you can refer back to all the great activity suggestions. Stop by the website and check us out!
takomaparkmd.gov/government/recreation/virtual-community-center



YOUTH

DANCE

Dance Class

Exploring various dance styles that can be tried at home that include, but are not limited to, Hip-Hop, Ballet and Jazz. Instructor: Charonne Butler

Ages 6–12
 Thursdays, 11:30 a.m. –12 p.m.
 Free

FITNESS

Recess

Opportunity for youth to virtually participate in exercise and communicate with their peers while remaining inside. Instructor: Charonne Butler

Ages 6–12 years
 Tuesdays, 11:30 a.m.–12 p.m.
 Free

ADULT

FITNESS

Spirit Group Fitness

Class will be geared toward supporting all members of the community, as each class spotlights trainers leading versions of the exercises for those standing, seated, progressed, and exercising alongside a supporter (which is a great option for those with limited mobility or with a developmental disability). Truly, a person of any fitness and ability level can get a meaningful exercise experience from these classes. Instructor: Spirit Club

Ages 16 & Up
 New class video uploaded each Wednesday
 Free

ReVamp Fit Home Workout

Fitness class will entail movements to work on your total body endurance, strength, and flexibility. Move with us to get your day started on a strong note!

Instructor: Abel Asafere

Ages 16 & older
 Thursdays, 10–11 a.m.
 Free

Let's Move Caribbean Dance

Dance your worries away with this fun, energetic, and easy to follow dance workout. Afro-Caribbean fitness dance class is for all ages and will get the body moving to build cardio endurance and coordination. Instructor: KJ Total Fitness

All Ages
 Fridays, 5–6 p.m.
 Free

Total Body Blast

Provides a mix of calisthenics, balance, strength training and cardiovascular exercise in one dynamic session. Participants will work at their own pace to complete the workout that focuses on all major muscle groups

Ages 16 & Up
 Saturdays, 9–10 a.m.
 Free

MULTIMEDIA

Digital Marketing

We are all experts of something, and someone is looking to benefit from your expertise. Learn the key digital marketing skills that can help you monetize your expertise. In this course you will learn how to navigate the digital world to sell a product or your services. There are a lot of online courses that will teach you how to use SEO, content marketing, social media, and Google Analytics, but none of them walk you through the proper steps from ideation to your first customer or client. In this course Vinny will walk you through the steps that have helped over 35 companies (artists, start-ups, education, independent consultants) start monetizing on their

Coronavirus and the Launch of Virtual Classes

As the Takoma Park Recreation Department pivots to Virtual Zoom classes on very short notice, there are a host of complications, from laptops and Internet access to mental health and financial needs. The Recreation Team has spent the past month putting together our hearts and minds to come up with resources, digital tools, and video sessions to support the Takoma Park community during this stressful time. As difficult and uncertain as things may seem, this situation provides all of us with a chance for growth and transformation. We hope that our live and pre-recorded classes will help you find ease in your experience, care for yourself, and become a beacon of health and peace for others.

As the season turns so does the delivery of activities for the City of Takoma Park Recreation Department. We have begun our journey into Virtual classes facilitated through Zoom. Usage of Zoom rose 67 percent from the start of 2020 to mid-March as recreation departments, schools and companies adopted the platform for remote activities in response to the coronavirus pandemic. One of the first classes that we offered was taught by Charonne Butler, who offers both Recess and Dance Virtual Classes. Her classes are well-attended and very interactive. Charonne said these classes are a chance to reconnect with kids to get through the pandemic. One of the



Virtual Class Instructors

parents, Rosa Johnson, said, “The movements during the classes change quite rapidly, which keeps it interesting for my older son, but they are not too hard for my younger son to follow. It’s amazing to see them so engaged, having fun as if they were physically in front of the instructor.”

Offering these classes has been informative and an opportunity to learn more about Zoom. It has been an experiment into the new normal. These classes al-

low for the residents to still be engaged in programs and activities while remaining inside. We must be able to recognize that we are human. It is very important that we figure this out together. The idea of being able to just transfer what you are doing in a gym, dance studio, art studio, computer lab, etc. into a virtual environment has its challenges. However, trying to do that during a pandemic is another problem altogether. On one level, we must be able to understand our

participants’ practicalities. Some only have smartphones. Some have cabin fever. Some have family responsibilities. Some need to find a new place to live, new job, and new health insurance. These classes offer a level of comfort and peace of mind for many.

The City of Takoma Park Recreation Department is excited to offer a mixture of Virtual FUN (Fantastic Unbelievable Nontraditional) classes on ZOOM to our very own Takoma Park residents. This is a chance to break up the monotony of the coronavirus while remaining inside. Check us out on Facebook and Twitter to get up to the minute information about these exciting classes as well as the links for the classes. Currently we are offering seven classes with more on the way. Here’s a listing of the classes:

Recess; Tuesdays @ 11:30 a.m.; Instructor - Charonne Butler

Online Mobile Photography; Tuesdays @ 5 p.m.; Instructor - Vinny Mwano

ReVamp Fit Home Workout; Thursdays @ 10 a.m.; Instructor - Abel Asafere

Dance Class; Thursdays @ 11:30 a.m.; Instructor - Charonne Butler

Digital Marketing; Thursdays @ 5 p.m.; Instructor - Vinny Mwano

Let’s Move Afro Caribbean Dance; Fridays @ 5 p.m.; Instructor - KJ Total Fitness

Total Body Blast; Saturdays @ 9 a.m.; Instructor - KJ

TKPK5K: Thank You! We'll Be Back!

The Takoma Park Safe Routes to School 5K Challenge, TKPK5K, started in 2009 with three schools, 350 runners and plans for each school to use the proceeds to enhance safety, health and fitness through their PTAs. By 2011, there were five schools: Takoma Park ES, East Silver Spring ES, Takoma Park MS, Rolling Terrace ES and Pinney Branch ES. Until 2019, these five school PTAs have worked closely with the City's Safe Routes to School program to organize the TKPK5K and support other Safe Routes events and activities.

Last year, there were 1,547 runners and race proceeds that allowed each school to receive a check for \$6,000. The race committee, many who have worked on this event for more than 10 years, is looking into ways to offer a race in some form in 2020.

Many thanks from SRTS for the support from the race committee; all sponsors, especially the top sponsors: Finn Family Group, Lucid Media, Takoma Bicycle and USI; our wonderful volunteers; City Departments, including Housing and Community Development, City TV, Finance, Public Works, and Recreation; the Takoma Park Police Department and Crossing Guards; Takoma Park Volunteer Fire Department and Washington Adventist Hospital. We owe our success to you.

And to all TKPK5K runners, thanks for coming out in support of Safe Routes to School, pedestrian and bike safety and fitness. And thanks for the positive feedback during the past few weeks. We will be back!



RECREATION

■ From page 6

digital platforms. Each lesson in this course is designed to get you to narrow your idea to where you can start monetizing your expertise online. Instructor: Vinny Mwano

16 years & Up
Thursdays, 5–6 p.m.
Free



Online Mobile Photography Course

Learn the secret formulas to capturing beautiful moments and memories for any occasion season on your phone. Whether it is portraits, a scenic walk, a street market, a birthday or your pet, we can help you get those timeless moments translated into a picture in the best possible way. This course will help you take better food photos, group photos, and interior and exterior portraits. Vinny will teach you how to compose for portraits, travel, movement, and landscape photography. You will also be practicing composition, shutter speed, ISO, and aperture adjustment with built-in native apps and manual mode function to get the best photo out of your phone. At the beginning of each class the instructor will review your photos and provide professional feedback that will help you take better photos. At the end of each class, there will be an assignment to get you practicing the skills taught in class. Instructor: Vinny Mwano

16 years & Up
Tuesdays, 5–6 p.m.
Free

55+



Phone a Neighbor Program

We are looking for Takoma Park Seniors who would like an occasional phone call during this time of uncertainty. All participants must have a landline phone or cell phone. To sign up, email javontem@takomaparkmd.gov or call Ms. Paula at (240) 687-4132.

Phone Calls
Ages 65+
Weekly
Free



Check our Virtual Community Center page for a link to a Bone Builders class video to follow along at home!



You MAY Take a Bike Break

Popular biking events will not take place as usual in Takoma Park this spring but that doesn't mean you can't celebrate Bike Month. You can even pledge to ride to work on September 22, 2020, for World Car Free Day. Register today at www.biketoworkmetrodc.org. Takoma Park Safe Routes to School is planning to celebrate Walk and Bike to School Day on Wednesday, October 7, 2020.

For now, take a bike break; enjoy some exercise, fresh air and sunshine. Studies show that exercise has a positive impact on cognitive performance. You can even ride your bike before virtual school or work at home. For people who don't typically bike to school or work, this is the perfect time to try it out.

Map your route! You can use an actual map (how fun!) or an online mapping app. Do the ABC Spin Check. Always wear a helmet when you ride. Follow the rules of the road. We may not see a lot of traffic now, but the cars will return to the road, and all bicyclists need to be aware. And remember to practice social distancing, for now.

Learn to ride. Spring is the perfect time. Find a level surface, such as an empty parking lot, school running track or cul-de-sac for practicing. Check the Takoma Park Bike Map (<https://bit.ly/2KvnjIR>) for local tips and trips. When you're ready, head to Sligo Creek Parkway during extended car-free hours (<https://bit.ly/2VwwZA3>).

Don't have a bike? Check with your local bike shop to see if they are offering on-



line purchase and delivery services. Shop local. Takoma Bicycle is offering customers that need a new bike the option to order and pay for it on their secure website for pick up curbside at the store or home delivery. Website: www.takomabicycle.com

Here are some resources for new and experienced riders:

- **ABC Quick Check:** www.pedbikeinfo.org/bicyclesaferjourney/abcquick-check.pdf
- **Bike Helmet Fitting:** www.nhtsa.gov/sites/nhtsa.dot.gov/files/8019_fitting-a-helmet.pdf
- **Learn to ride video from REI:** www.youtube.com/watch?v=ADkm4qkXAj8
- **Washington Area Bicyclist Association (WABA):** waba.org
- **League of American Bicyclists:** www.bikeleague.org
- **Safe Kids Worldwide:** www.safekids.org



Our Favorite Children's Books

In recent years, the Library has celebrated Children's Book Week by asking patrons – kids and adults – to share the title of a favorite children's book and why it's a favorite on special notecards. This year, of course, we need to do things differently, so we asked folks to email us instead.

In honor of the 101st Children's Book Week, here are some favorite children's books shared by our patrons, as well as Library and city staffers. Perhaps you'll find one that will become a new favorite or will be cheered to find an old favorite spotlighted. Enjoy!

***Nora's Stars*, written and illustrated by Satomi Ichikawa**

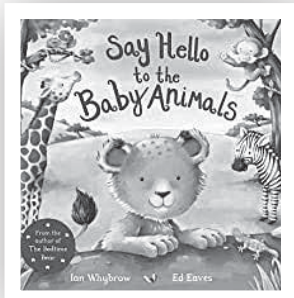
"One of my favorite children's books is *Nora's Stars* by Satomi Ichikawa. Nora teams up with the magical toys in a trunk in her grandmother's house to capture all the stars in the sky in a big blue cloak. Then she realizes that by selfishly keeping all the stars for herself and her magical friends, she is depriving the world of their nighttime reverie. This book teaches the importance of thinking of others in such a joyful and enchanting way, and as a kid, I remember vividly imagining what it would be like to have a blanket full of glowing stars!" (Jessica Clarke, City of Takoma Park Deputy City Manager)

***The Magic Faraway Tree (The Faraway Tree #1-3)* by Enid Blyton**

"This was the first chapter book that I read to (my daughter) Lulu. Each chapter – about the adventures in a tree that transports the characters to different fantastical places – was the perfect length for a bedtime story. Lulu and I loved being with these characters for nearly 700 pages and visiting the magical lands with them." (Alisa Tang)

***Say Hello to the Baby Animals!* written by Ian Whybrow and illustrated by Ed Eaves**

"I liked this book because there are a lot of animals, and I learned what noises they make. This is one of the first books I ever had read to me when I was a baby. And you can touch the animals in the book: They feel fluffy!" (Lulu Tang Dunand)

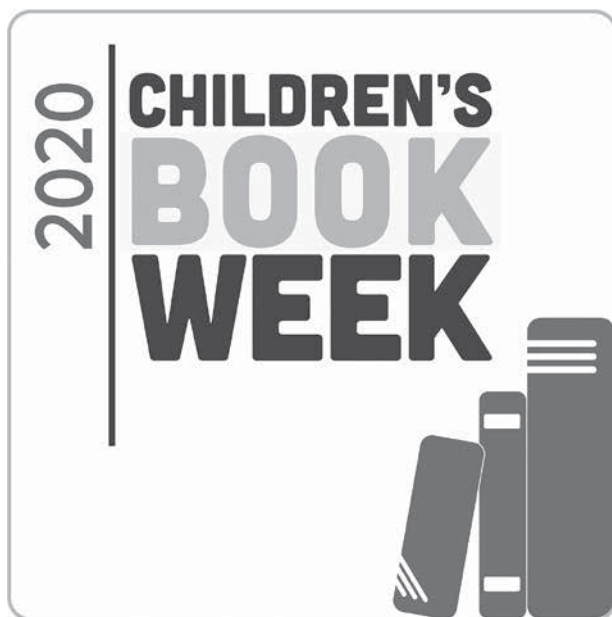
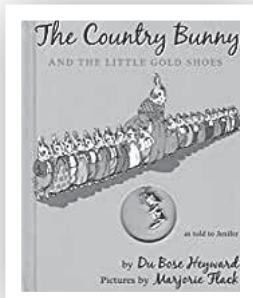


***There's a Wocket In My Pocket!* written and illustrated by Dr. Seuss**

"I didn't know Dr. Seuss before because he's not popular in France. Dr. Seuss is all about rhyme and alliteration, and I don't remember growing up with French children's books with alliteration. When I read to Lulu, I could improvise and free-form jam." (Landry Dunand)

***The Country Bunny and the Little Gold Shoes* by DuBose Heyward and illustrated by Marjorie Flack**

"What I remember best is the mountains and mountains of decorated Easter eggs in the illustrations. They were magical and so beautiful, and the task that the country bunny had before her to deliver them all was formidable. But with the help of her gold shoes, her 20 children, and sheer determination, she succeeded. I read this story over and over again, and it never failed to move me. Moms can do anything!" (Ellen Robbins, Library Director)



***Llama Llama Hoppity-Hop* written and illustrated by Anna Dewdney**

"Our toddler is a big fan of *Llama Llama Hoppity-Hop* by Anna Dewdney. This book encourages kids to get engaged in the actions of the little llama. Our kiddo never gets tired of hopping, tapping, and thumping as we read the book." (Bridget Kelly Cherry)

***Ernie the Elephant* written and illustrated by Leela Hope**

"When my baby cousin (I call him my nephew) was born, there were complications, and he had to stay in the NICU for many months. I would go and visit him as often as possible. He was just a tiny thing because he was three weeks early, and due to loss of oxygen, the doctors told us that he would be developmentally challenged. Well, long story short. One day I decided to read a book to him. I started with *A Christmas Carol*, and the look he gave me was priceless. Guessing correctly, that wasn't the book for him. I went through Amazon Kindle and found *Ernie the Elephant*. His face lit up when I started to read to him the book about a big elephant to some but still considered little to others, going through his own challenges. Now four years later, his face still lights up when Aunt Danyelle breaks out her Kindle and reads to him about the big, but small, courageous Ernie the Elephant." (Danyelle Gallop, NCIC/Warrants, Takoma Park Police Department)



***Animalia*, written and illustrated by Graeme Base**

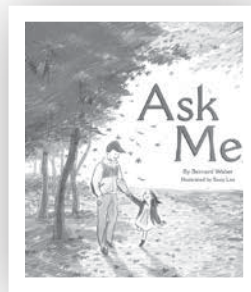
"The illustrations were so simultaneously intricate and other-worldly that I could stare at a single page many different times and always find something new. I could hear noises, smell smells, give the animals personalities, and imagine each scenario coming to life. Over time, I had favorite animals and favorite places that I couldn't wait to run into upon opening the book all over again." (Cassandra Robbins)

***Snail Where Are You?* by Tomi Ungerer and *Fortunately* by Remy Charlip**

"I like these two for their lively sense of humor and the mutual dependence between text and illustration." (Julie Boddy)

***Ask Me* written and illustrated by Bernard Waber**

"It's a good dad book that makes you appreciate the questions your kids ask and the conversations you end up having." (David O'Shell)



***Dory Fantasmagory* by Abby Hanlon**

"I like Dory and her sister, Violet and Violet's doll, Cherry. Mrs. Gobble Gracker is a little scary. These books are so funny." (Natasha O'Shell)

***My Big Wimmelbook—At the Construction Site* written and illustrated by Max Walther**

"I like trucks!" (Alastair O'Shell)

***Christina Katerina and the Box* written by Patricia Lee Gauch and illustrated by Doris Burn.**

"Very cool 1970s b/w celebration of kid creativity. You can do a lot with a refrigerator box and your best friend and your imagination." (Kati Nolfi, the library's children's librarian)

***The Ramona series* by Beverly Cleary**

"It is hard to choose (a favorite children's book). The first book, or series of books, that comes to mind is the *Ramona Quimby* books by Beverly Cleary. These books taught me so many things about being a kid, a parent and the craft of writing. Perhaps the most important thing I learned was to read books to my kids that I enjoyed, too. In fact, my husband and I used to 'fight' over who got to read and who had to clean the kitchen after dinner. We enjoyed our evenings with our girls and Ramona so much." (Lucy Neher, City of Takoma Park Special Project Coordinator)

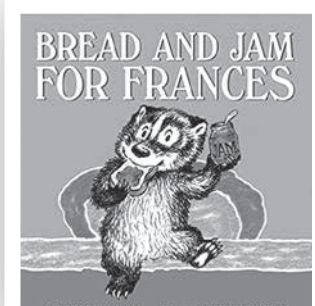


***The Sneetches and Other Stories* written and illustrated by Dr. Seuss.**

"This book is compilation of four stories. The title story, *The Sneetches*, brilliantly satirizes the folly of discrimination, with a jab in the ribs to capitalistic exploitation for personal gain. Dr. Seuss has such a deep understanding of human frailties and he teaches by allowing us to laugh about ourselves." (Phil Shapiro, Library Computer Center staffer)

***Bread and Jam for Frances and other Frances books* written by Russell Hoban and illustrated by Lillian Hoban**

"I love the realistic & entertaining foibles in the character of Frances. I also appreciate the vivid detail that pulls kids in and helps develop attention span. Looking at how Albert and Frances set up and eat their lunch, the reader is able to experience the lunch with them and, for this generation, a whole other time period! Love me some Frances!" (Gretchen Weigel Doughty)



BOOK WEEK

■ From page 8

***The Animal Family* written by Randall Jarrell and illustrated by Maurice Sendak**

"It's always hard to say why I like books - if you need my words, well, the language is beautiful, it creates an entire universe of feeling and the book is also visually beautiful. But I'd rather use John Prine's words, today, to explain why I like this book: 'Rather than *tell* them everything, you save your details for things that exist. Like what color the ashtray is. How far away the doorway was. So when you're talking about intangible things, like emotions, the listener can fill in the blanks and you just draw the foundation. I still tend to believe that's the way to tackle it today.'" (Mary Arimond)

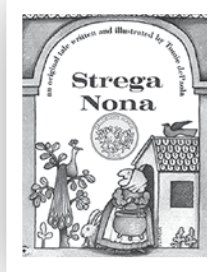
***A Traveler in Time* by Alison Uttley**

"My older sister recommended it to me, and I read and re-read it many times. She ended up buying a paperback copy for me a few years ago. It was a nice reminder to me. The book features the Tudor period, and I think it had

a lot to do with my love of that time period. Also, time travel! (Elizabeth Ferry, Library Staffer)

Kate Ivcevish recommended five picture books:

- *Strega Nona* written and illustrated by the late, great Tommy DePaola
"The concept of an endless pasta pot that bubbles and boils on command always entranced me as a child, as well as my own kids. It just looked so delicious, even as it threatened to overtake the sisters of the convent!"
- *The Amazing Bone* written and illustrated by William Steig
"Has anyone captured the absolute dizzying joy of a warm spring day better than this author? I think not. And the renaissance qualities of that bone? Magic."
- *The Philharmonic Gets Dressed* written by Karla Kuskin and illustrated by Marc Simont
"As a child, I loved the simple, direct descriptions and wonderful illustrations of these grownups get-



ting dressed for such a serious occasion. It has always stayed with me, even though I have yet to share with my own kids."

- Each and every *Frances* book by Russell and Lillian Hoban
"Adorable illustrations, such expert snapshots of a little girl grappling with jealousy, fairness, sneakiness, kindness and forgiveness. I can't pick one because they are all so good. I especially loved how the books embraced delicious food and birthday planning."
- *The Little House* written and illustrated by Virginia Lee Burton
"Admittedly, I love this more than my kids. They never quite took to it, but the story, along with the illustrations and how the house bore an expression of how it felt on each page, was incredibly moving to me. That author was way before her time."



Online Programs

The library may be closed, but some of our programming continues online, thanks to Kati Nolfi, our children's librarian, Library Associate Dave Burbank, our staff artist and comics guru, and Karen MacPherson, children's and teen services coordinator.

Home with her teacher husband and their two young children, Kati has created a number of Storytime videos featuring a book (or two or three!) and some songs and rhymes. These Storytime videos are easily accessed via our Facebook page; Kati creates two or three of the videos weekly. Here's a link to one from April: <https://youtu.be/mREF-zKA1DY>. Kati also tests out various art activities with her kids and posts about the process - and the results - on Facebook, so other families can try them out at home.

Dave, meanwhile, has taken two of our most popular programs - Comics Jam and Sketch Club - online via Zoom. Comics Jam, which had been a monthly program, now is offered weekly on Wednesdays from 4-5:30 p.m. Join Dave for some fun reading great comics! He concludes the program by taking drawing requests from participants. On Fridays from 4-5:30 p.m., Dave hosts Sketch Club (also known as "Scribbler's Cabal"). This isn't a drawing class, but rather a low-key program where everyone has fun drawing together, but each focusing on his/her own work. Those who want to can present their work to the group for some gentle, positive feedback. To access both of these programs, go to <https://zoom.us>. Click on "Join a Meeting" and put in Meeting ID 734-913-6285. (If the Meeting ID changes, we will post the new one on our Facebook page and listservs).

And, for the youngest Library patrons and their grown-ups, Ms. Karen is now doing a weekly online Circle Time via Zoom on Tuesday mornings, 10:30 a.m. - 11 a.m. Through May, the Meeting ID is: 897-6962-2209, and the password is: 309390. To keep up with the library's online activities - and other fun book-related things, check our Facebook page or our Twitter (@takoma).

No Overdue Fines

A reminder that there will be no overdue fines charged on books or other materials that come due during the time the library is closed. You're welcome to keep the materials at home during this time, or if you are finished with them, feel free to put them in the bookdrop. Our bookdrop is open 24/7, and we check it at least once daily.

Meet Takoma Park Tak-tivist Priscilla Labovitz

By Taylor Dibbert

Priscilla Labovitz is a 2020 Azalea Award winner in the Tak-tivist category. She has lived in Takoma Park since 1981, is married and has two adult children. She previously worked as an immigration lawyer and retired about six years ago.

Her husband, Joseph Cirincione, is president of Ploughshares Fund, which according to the foundation's LinkedIn page, is "dedicated to building a world where nuclear weapons are never used again." Her daughter lives in McKinleyville (Humboldt County), California with her family. Her son, a teacher at Montgomery Blair High School, resides in Washington D.C. with his family.

Through her activism and volunteer work, Labovitz stays busy and accomplishes a lot. She currently serves on the City's Recreation Committee. "Getting a new recreation center on New Hampshire Avenue is my pursuit," she said.

She described entering the recreation center for the first time about four years ago and being surprised by what she found. "I was stunned by what a decrepit place it was," she said. Among other issues, she said it's quite small. "The men's bathroom has one stall; the women's has two," she said. "It has not been renovated."

On the positive side of the ledger, Labovitz notes that the facility is consistently kept clean. And she spoke highly of recreation center supervisor Vince Cain. "Vince is doing a wonderful job," she said.

She further noted that the differences between that building and the Takoma Park Community Center were stark. It didn't seem fair to her for certain residents not have access to a better, more modern facility. Consequently, she's worked and continues to work diligently to change the status quo.

After sharing her concerns with



Priscilla Labovitz

Howard Kohn, a longtime Takoma Park resident and Recreation Committee member, Kohn suggested that Labovitz join the Recreation Committee. "That was a wonderful suggestion," she said. From her perspective, the committee is comprised of "a bunch of wonderful, dedicated, straightforward, fun people."

Additionally, Labovitz founded the Friends of the Takoma Park Recreation Center in 2016. "The purpose of the group is to get a new Takoma Park Recreation Center," she noted. "Over time, it's become clear that what we [the members of the group] all want is to have it all on the same site."

Building a new recreation center is an ambitious project that comes with challenges. Getting funding for such an initiative is a big challenge. What's more, at the time that Labovitz was getting her efforts going, the City didn't own the building; it does now. The City acquired it in July 2019, and Labovitz played a role in making that happen.

Plans for a new recreation center are now in the works, though it's not a done deal. The idea is to also in-

clude some housing, including low-income and market-rate, in the same building. According to Labovitz, City staff and the Mayor are very enthusiastic about the project: "It's good for youth, and it's good for housing."

The City recently gave approval for Brick & Story, a consultancy group, to do community engagement and explain the process. City documentation says that the group "is experienced in executing inclusive community engagement processes and has proposed to commit a team of culturally competent staff that includes team members that speak Spanish, Amharic, French, and English."

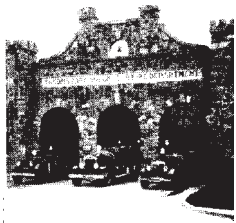
If the project moves along, the City would eventually collaborate with a partner organization to develop the new facility. There are other bureaucratic steps too, though Labovitz is optimistic.

She's engaged in other pursuits as well, such as participating in the Racial Equity Working Group. She's the President of Takoma Park Lunch and Learn and serves on the board of What's My Bias. She really likes the people she works with. "These are wonderful community programs, and I'm working with delightful people," she said.

Labovitz regularly stocks a pair of Free Little Libraries, one in Langley Park and another at the Takoma Park Recreation Center. "Oftentimes, I don't tell people that I'm doing these things," she said. "It's just easy, and it makes me feel good."

Labovitz is driven by social justice. She also said that her volunteer work is "so rewarding." More generally, she observed that the Takoma Park community is friendly and has good values.

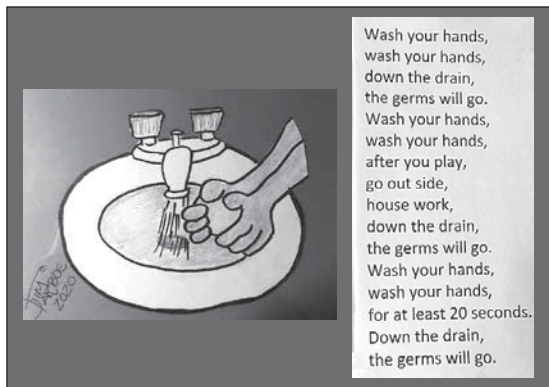
People are "generous, active, outspoken," she said. Labovitz could just as easily have been describing herself.



THE FIREHOUSE REPORT

By Jim Jarboe

The Takoma Park Volunteer Fire Department has suspended all meetings, training, and other activities at the station until further notice. The only members permitted in the station are the ones checked out to ride on the medic engine or ambulance. A Tip of the Helmet to our Montgomery County Fire Rescue Service personnel assigned to be there, staffing the medic engine and ambulance around the clock, 24-7. Please keep these precautions in mind and stay safe!



STAY CONNECTED!

The City of Takoma Park strives to keep residents engaged and informed in a variety of ways:

- **Social Media:** Follow TakomaPark
- Facebook: [Like us](#)
- Twitter: [@TakomaParkMD](#)
- **NEW! Social Media Hub:** Don't like Twitter or Facebook but want to know the latest post or tweets by the City? Visit: takomaparkmd.gov/about-takoma-park/social-media-hub/
- **Takoma Park Alert:** Public safety notifications - **Sign up** for Public Safety notifications on Takoma Park Alert: (emails/texts): takomaparkmd.gov/services/takoma-park-alert



- **Takomaparkmd.gov:** where you can access information on upcoming Council meetings, agendas, City news, and the status of City projects
- **Monthly Newsletter:** both in print and electronic copy
- **NEW! The Takoma Insider:** Receive our weekly eNews right to your email. **Sign up:** <http://eepurl.com/gg4dMb>
- **My TkPk:** Make a service request or report an issue using the online app. **Learn more:** takomaparkmd.gov/services/my-tkpk

#OneCommunity - TakomaParkMD.gov

Be Prepared and Be Careful



By Claudine Schweber, co-chair, Takoma Park Emergency Preparedness Committee

You've read, talked, and heard about corona virus preparedness, and hopefully you have applied the advice from the City, the County, the CDC and other reputable sources. "Reputable" may be a challenge because the scammers are busy selling expensive masks that never arrive, or cures, such as kimchi or cow dung! At the same time, will you be prepared for other emergencies, such as flooding, massive storms, fires, tornadoes, and power outages?

So, here's a two-part approach: **1) Be prepared** by making a plan for emergencies and implementing it; **2) Be Careful** about using advice, buying products, and sending personal information without first checking with creditable sources.

Be Prepared

Make a plan. NOW! No excuses. This virus is a warning. Here are some basic steps that you need to set in place now. *

- 1. Identify emergency contacts:** Each person (or the family) should identify one local person and one out-of-area person, who would be informed of your situation. Make sure this person agrees to be your information center to whom you would provide updates and who would respond to questions from others. This will enable others to find out about you and eliminate confusing and multiple calls/emails. Also, provide contacts with a medication and doctor/pharmacy list (and keep an accessible copy at home).

- 2. Develop a disaster kit:** Create a supplies kit that includes water, non-perishable food, working flashlights and extra batteries, blankets, and kid-friendly activities; include a note to take cell phone and charger with you. Store this kit in an accessible and dry place.

- 3. Designate meet up locations:** Identify evacuation routes, safe room/basement, and a place to meet away from home. Develop a shelter in place plan.

- 4. Involve everyone in the family/unit:** Discuss the plan with everyone in the household; make sure plan meets their various needs, such as seniors, disabled, those with access/ functional needs, and non-English speakers. Share with in-home caregivers. Update at least annually.

*Thank you to K. Quinn of the EPC

for providing this succinct and clear framework.

Be Careful

Yes, scammers are busy. We need to check the claims, offers, and calls because this time, we may be tempted to get help—which may not exist or is damaging! Recent blatant examples include:

- Maryland Attorney General Frosh has warned about fake cures, advertisements for sham home testing kits, and requests for personal information supposedly from federal officials or the World Health Organization.
- Price gouging, such as selling a case of water for \$38
- Pepco scammers threatening to close down your power unless additional payments are made and personal information to your bank account is submitted; other scammers target people with past due bills, claiming the customer should buy a prepaid debit card or the power will be shut off (Call Pepco at 202-833-7500 to check.)
- Fake IRS scammers asking for direct deposit information to verify your account for the forthcoming stimulus checks
- Robocalls offering testing kits and work at home schemes

What to do?

- Fact check information before using or sending any information to others.
- Check the CDC website (www.cdc.gov) and or Federal Trade Commission website (www.ftc.gov/coronavirus).
- Visit Montgomery County Office of Consumer Protection's website (www.montgomerycountymd.gov/ocp) and search Scam Gram.
- Robo Calls: Hang up; don't press any numbers.
- Check the City of Takoma Park website regularly for updates and/or email askus@takomaparkmd.gov.

Being prepared prevents being scared. It's easy to contact us at tpepc@takomaparkmd.gov or 301-891-7126.



Editor's note

English:

Look for this icon next to newsletter articles that you can read online in other languages using the translation feature on the City of Takoma Park's website. After clicking on the link for the article, look in the upper right hand corner of the web page next to the navigation bar, and select the language you want using the drop-down box.

French:

Recherchez cette icône à côté des articles du bulletin que

vous pouvez lire en ligne dans d'autres langues à l'aide de la fonction de traduction disponible sur le site Web de la ville de Takoma Park. Après avoir cliqué sur le lien de l'article, regardez dans le coin supérieur droit de la page Web à côté de la barre de navigation, puis sélectionnez la langue souhaitée à l'aide du menu déroulant.

Spanish:

Busque este ícono junto a los artículos del boletín que puede leer en línea en otros idiomas usando

la función de traducción en el sitio web de la Ciudad de Takoma Park. Después de hacer clic en el enlace del artículo, busque en la esquina superior derecha de la página web junto a la barra de navegación y seleccione el idioma que desee con el cuadro desplegable.

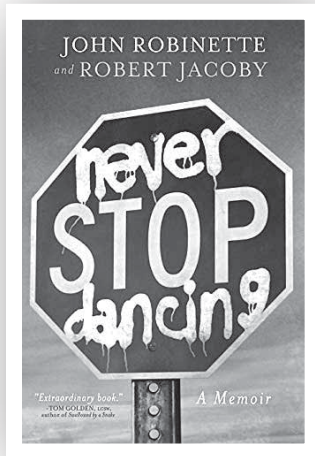
Amharic:

የታሪክ አዲስ አበባ ከተማ አስተዳደር የጥቅም ስራ ለማድረግ የሚያስፈልጉትን መረጃዎች በዚህ ገጽ ላይ በቀላሉ ማግኘት ይቻላል። ለዚህ ማድረግ የሚያስፈልጉትን መረጃዎች በዚህ ገጽ ላይ በቀላሉ ማግኘት ይቻላል።

Good reads from Takoma Park authors

By Sean Gossard

With topics ranging from personal tragedy and coming to terms with the sudden death of a spouse to a coming-of-age story set in Soviet Russia to the theft and mysterious return of a famous painting, authors residing in Takoma Park have been quite prolific. Takoma Park has long been praised as a haven for the artists and seen as a city that fosters creative output of all sorts. Here's a look at just a few of the Takoma Park authors who published works last year.



Keep dancing

Robert Jacoby and John Robinette decided to turn a devastating tragedy into a way to cope and deal with the sudden loss of a loved one in the memoir "Never Stop Dancing." Released in October 2019, "Never Stop Dancing" is a set of interviews and conversations between Jacoby and Robinette, whose wife Amy Polk was tragically killed in a pedestrian traffic accident in 2010. Robinette was left to raise two children among the bittersweet memories that filled their family home in Takoma Park.

"You could point to 'Tuesdays with Morrie,' but Morrie [Schwartz] was approaching death," Jacoby said. "The way I look at it, in 'Never Stop Dancing' John is leaving death and looking at a new life."

The two already had a strong prior relationship that they say involved many deep conversations on everything from loss to religion to politics. "After the first two or three interviews, I was starting to look forward to it," Robinette said. "It gave me a chance to work out things I'd been dealing with and struggling with."

The book also sheds light on male friendship, as the two would meet frequently before the tragedy for conversations and debates. "Conversations were pretty organic and free flowing," Jacoby said. "I had a set of questions but tore them up."

Jacoby already had some experience with holding in depth interviews. His first book was a series of interviews with a merchant marine, but he wanted to do something even more comprehensive over the course of a year.

"I did not hesitate," Robinette said of agreeing to the idea of being interviewed about his wife's death.

Robinette also said Takoma Park and

its residents helped with the grieving process. "From a local Takoma Park perspective, the outreach from the community was overwhelming; it saved my life," Robinette said. "Our church, neighbors and community, their desperation to help was pretty clear and almost universal. And that's a fairly significant theme in the book."

"This book goes beyond a grief memoir per se because we tackle to many themes from so many angles," Jacoby said. "It's about loss grief, spirituality, and my story of helping a friend over a year and then it's our story of friendship." For more on the book, visit never-stop-dancing.com.



Remember this far

Takoma Park's poet laureate Kathleen O'Toole published a book of poetry in October 2019. "This Far" is a collection of poems taken in one season of the poet's life. The poems focus on themes like grief, religion, the sacramental power of nature and how works of art illuminate and console.

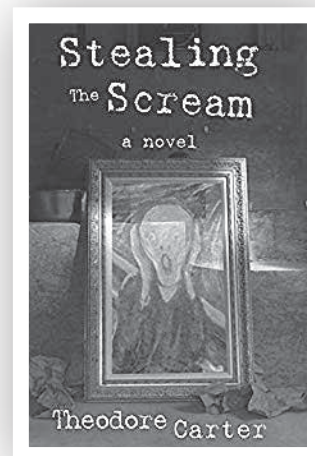
"I see 'This Far' as a retrospective," she said. "The poems range from very simple, lyrical poems to more complicated meditations. ... There are whole sections of the book that are elegies about presences in my life and people who have passed on that were saints in my life."

As for tips for aspiring writers, O'Toole said the first thing is to always have something to write down your thoughts on. "That's really how I started," she said. "There were little bits of things that amazed me or troubled me. I think the material of poetry are things that move you."

The second is to get out in the world and listen to other poets. O'Toole brings up Takoma Park's Third Thursday Poetry Readings held once a month in the Community Center as a place to listen and engage with other poets. She also said there are plenty of writer workshops and other events to attend in the area.

"I did that for years as a way to reflect my writing back to myself," O'Toole said. "Finding the range of poets out there really expands your horizons." O'Toole also credits the city as an incubator for artistic talent, a thought shared by many writers in Takoma Park.

"I wasn't here maybe two years before I got an invitation to be part of a writer and artist collaborative and that kind of thing just happens in Takoma Park," she said, "so we came up with paintings and poems that were inspired by each other. And things like that don't just happen everywhere." For more from O'Toole, visit kathleenotoolepoetry.com.



Steal the scene

Theodore Carter, a teacher at Georgetown Day School, had his first book published in 2012, but had a big year in 2019 with three publications. "I've been writing most of my life," he said. "Last year was a big year publishing wise, so I'm sort of regrouping this year."

Carter said he gets ideas from what he sees in the news, whether it's the theft of a famous painting or scientists mistaking rotting whale blubber off the coast of Chile for a new species. "I draw a lot of inspiration off real-life news events," he said. "I love the absurdities, especially when they're true."

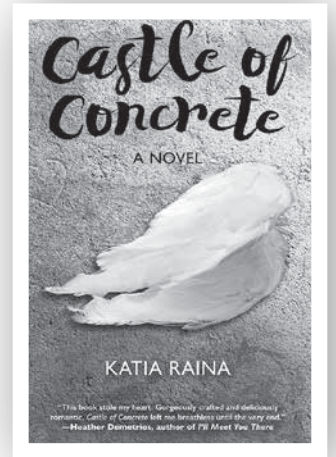
For his latest novel "Stealing the Scream," published last September, Carter played off the real-life 2004 theft of Edvard Munch's iconic painting "The Scream."

"Stealing the Scream" is a humorous, crime novel telling the story of what may have happened when the masterpiece was stolen and recovered two years later with no explanation of how or where it was found.

"I was really interested in the story of stealing a painting that you can never resell and the hubris of doing something like that," he said.

Last January, he published a book of short stories titled "Frida Sex Dreams and Other Unnerving Disruptions" and also launched an art project inspired by the iconic Mexican painter. The project also helped him win a 2019 Takoma Park Azalea Award in the Arts Leader category.

He said that a big reason he moved to Takoma Park in the mid-2000s was because of its thriving arts community. "Part of the reason we live in Takoma Park is because it's traditionally a place that helps art and artists," he said. Find more about Carter at theodorecarter.com.



Collapse the castle

Author Katia Raina took a slightly different path, publishing her first novel in June after more than 15 years of work. Raina, who emigrated to the U.S. from Russia as a teenager in the 1990s, said she had thought of calling it quits before "Castle of Concrete" was finally published. "Sometimes it would have been so much easier to give up on it, but for some reason it just didn't let me go," Raina said. "Maybe it was the story pulling me back or my own stubbornness that kept me going."

"Castle of Concrete," a coming-of-age story set in the final years of Soviet Russia's collapse, tells the story of Sonya, a shy Jewish girl finding troubled love and reuniting with her once-dissident mother. "That age and time was so powerful to me and it's something I can go back to the easiest," she said.

Raina said one of the reasons the book took so long to get published was that publishers thought it may be too "Russian."

But she said, "When we learn more about the world through books, we find how often the local and the global really blur, how a 1990s Jewish-Russian teen has wants and fears and insecurities that are not that dissimilar to someone from Takoma Park."

The hard work and perseverance have been rewarded though, as "Castle of Concrete" was the winner of the 2019 Moonbeam Silver Prize for Young Adult Historical Fiction. Raina said the 15 years it took to finally get published "Castle of Concrete" hasn't deterred her from her next work.

"Absolutely, I'll do it again," she said. "I have a story now I'm working on; all I can say is that it's something that's super different from this novel. It took 15 years to write this one, and I wanted to switch gears." And she couldn't have found a better place than Takoma Park to have her novel debut.

"Takoma Park the community has been so excited and amazing, and I'm grateful for everyone that showed their support. It's really been the best place to have debut a novel after 15 years of work." For more on Raina, visit katiaraina.com.

Most of these authors and their works can be found on Indiebound.org, goodreads.com or by visiting a local independent bookstore like Politics and Prose Bookstore.

May 2020 Calendar Notice

For the foreseeable future, we'll use this space to feature city resources and provide important updates or city services. However, let us know if you have a virtual, 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 June issue is May 8, and the newsletter will be distributed beginning May 29. To submit virtual calendar items, email tpnewseditor@takomaparkmd.gov.

Event Cancellations

Due to COVID-19 concerns, please be advised that all events and meetings held in City facilities have been cancelled or postponed until further notice. Updates will be provided when events have been rescheduled.

The Police Department is open 24/7 for emergency services.

- All Takoma Park Arts events are canceled until further notice.

- All Takoma Park Maryland Library events are canceled until further notice.
- The Takoma Park Safe Routes to School 5K Challenge, TKPK5K, will not be held on Sunday, May 3 as planned.
- The Takoma Park Newsletter has received notice of the following event postponements or cancellations:
- Takoma Park House & Garden Tour

(Postponed)

- Historic Takoma Park White Historian Lecture Series (Postponed)
- Second Annual Takoma Park Children's Business Fair

Please note that this list is not exhaustive. If you have concerns about whether a specific event is cancelled, contact the sponsoring organization directly.

SHARE IDEAS

Attend virtual City Council meetings!

Monday, May 4, 7:30 p.m.
Budget Work Session

Wednesday, May 6, 7:30 p.m.
City Council Meeting

Wednesday, May 13, 7:30 p.m.
City Council Meeting and Public Hearings on Traffic Calming (see p. 2 for details)
First Reading Ordinances Adopting the FY21 Tax Rates and Budget

Wednesday, May 20, 7:30 p.m.
City Council Meeting
Second Reading Ordinances Adopting the FY21 Tax Rates and Budget

Wednesday, May 27, 7:30 p.m.
City Council Meeting

Detailed agendas are available for review online at www.takomaparkmd.gov/citycouncil/agendas.

Due to the public health crisis, the City Council will be meeting remotely by video conference throughout April. The meetings are available to watch live (or view afterwards) in all the usual ways:

- on the City Council Video Page of the City Website (<https://takomaparkmd.gov/government/city-council/meetings-and-documents/city-council-video/>)
- on City TV (RCN - Channel 13, HD Channel 1060 | Comcast/Xfinity - Channel 13 | HD Channel 997 | Verizon Fios - Channel 28)

- on Facebook (@TakomaParkMD/)
- on YouTube (<https://www.youtube.com/user/TakomaParkTV>)

The public will be able to comment during the public comment portions of the meetings by registering and logging into the video conference. The link will be provided by weekly email from the City Clerk and on the City website. For those not able to do so, comments may be sent by email to clerk@takomaparkmd.gov.

SUPPORT LOCAL BUSINESSES

The City of Takoma Park has established a Small Business Mini-Grant Program to assist local businesses impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic. To donate, go to takomaparkmd.gov/news/help-support-takoma-park-businesses.



SEND KUDOS



#TogetherTKPK

Showing Thanks to the Takoma Park Police & Public Works Departments

Draw a picture or send a note of thanks to those working on the front line to keep us safe. We will print it for all staff to see!

Email:
PublicWorks@takomaparkmd.gov
or
Police@takomaparkmd.gov

STAY ACTIVE

COMMUNITY ACTIVITIES

Takoma Park Recreation Department Virtual Recess

Tuesdays, 11:30 a.m. – noon

It's Zoom Recess. Join the Rec Dept. for stretching and fun fitness. For additional information contact Charonne Butler at Charonnebutler@gmail.com or visit www.facebook.com/events/236858234120337

Takoma Park Recreation Department Virtual Dance Parties

Thursdays, 11:30 a.m. – noon

Youth ages 5-12 should join the Rec Dept. as Ms. Charonne teaches a different dance technique each week. For additional information contact Charonne Butler at charonnebutler@gmail.com or visit www.facebook.com/events/2857722547638219

TPRD Virtual ReVamp Fit Exercise Class

Thursdays, 10 – 11 a.m.

Geared toward ages 18 and up — get your heart rate up and your stress levels down. For additional information contact Abel Asafere at revampfit1@gmail.com or visit www.facebook.com/events/2598461813731359

ARTS AND LITERATURE

Washington Revels & Carpe Diem Arts Daily Antidotes of Song

Online/Virtual Daily, 10 a.m. (ongoing)

Every morning, Washington Revels and Carpe Diem Arts will share some "notes of hope" as one of their song leaders offers a song online. Be there as they begin each day with the inspiration and connection of singing together. Visit their website for instructions on how to join online. Free, but donations encouraged. Info: info@revelsdc.org; <http://revelsdc.org/2020/daily-song>

GOING TO MARKET

Takoma Park Emergency Food Pantry

First Saturdays, noon – 3 p.m.
Grace United Methodist Church, 7001 New Hampshire Ave.
Bi-weekly and monthly food supplements for needy families. Also available Monday through Friday by appointment only. For appointments call 240-450-2092 or email educare_ss@aol.com.
www.educare-supportservices.org

Food Pantry at Takoma Park Middle School

The Difference Makers at TPMS have a food pantry for families. During the school closing, volunteers will continue to provide food for families' needs. To donate food, go to <https://amzn.to/2wFHq14> to order nonperishable items that will be delivered to TPMS.

Crossroads Farmers Market

Wednesdays, 11 a.m. – 3 p.m.
April 15 through November 25
(Operating hours and dates open subject to change)
Anne Street and University Boulevard East
This producers-only farmers market features a range of vendors selling fresh fruits, vegetables, eggs, honey, coffee, flowers and plants, and tasty prepared foods. takomaparkmarket.com

Takoma Park Farmers Market

Sundays, 10 a.m. – 2 p.m. (Seniors Only Shopping Hour: 9 – 10 a.m.)

Year-round
Parking Lot behind the Shops on Laurel Ave. Street Parking

All vendors are using gloves and wiping down surfaces. In addition, the market is working hard to enforce customer social distancing. Please stay at least 6' from other customers while at the vendor stands and in line. Please only send 1 person per family to the market (no kids please). Please also stay home if you are not feeling well.

TPSS Co-op

Online orders only with pick up available 9 a.m. – 7 p.m. in the Junction parking lot. Visit tpss.coop or tpss.coop/shop.