TP News caught up with incoming City Manager Jamal Fox just a few weeks before his first official day on the job.

Fox comes to Takoma Park from Camas, Washington, where he served as the City Administrator. Some residents may have already seen him around town. This former Greensboro City Councilmember and adjunct professor in political science at North Carolina A&T State University (his alma mater) looks forward to being an active member of the community and region.

Fox and his wife, Jaimee, have one son, Jamal Jr., who is two years old and a new daughter, Jordynn, born on July 25. Fox is a proud father, husband, and member of the Phi Beta Sigma Fraternity Inc.

Here’s more on his motivation for coming to Takoma Park and his impressions of the City and the work that lies ahead for him, staff, and the City Council.

TP News: Why Takoma Park? What appealed to you about coming to the City to begin the next chapter of your career?

Fox: For me, it was a no brainer. A lot of local professionals reached out to see if I was interested in coming back to the east coast. I have family in the area. I always wanted to raise my family on the east coast. It was one of those opportunities that you couldn’t turn down. The proximity to D.C. and other assets of the area are unmatched. I couldn’t have chosen a better community in which to raise my family.
City Council Action

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

The Council approved submission of two grant applications to the Maryland Department of Housing and Community Development by resolution on June 16. Resolution 2021-14 approved submitting the application for financial assistance to conduct site preparation work for the Takoma Park Recreation Center site totaling $300,000. Resolution 2021-15 approved the application for financial assistance to conduct a project feasibility study for the Washington-McLaughlin senior housing site in an amount not to exceed $350,000. By Ordinance 2021-30, the City Council approved a contract in the amount of $75,000 with New Ecology for energy efficiency services in multifamily buildings. Ordinance 2021-31, an emergency ordinance, continues the suspension of certain provisions of the Takoma Park Code restricting the posting of signs. The suspension will continue until June 30, 2022.

Resolution 2021-16 was adopted by the City Council on June 23, 2021. The resolution authorized execution of an employment agreement with Jamal T. Fox as City Manager. Mr. Fox’s term as City Manager will begin on August 2, 2021. Resolution 2021-17 designates Jessica Clarke, Deputy City Manager, as resident agent for the City of Takoma Park. Resolution 2021-18 extended the term of the Reimagining Public Safety Task Force and the terms of its members until presenting its final recommendations to the City Council. (The Task Force presented its final recommendations on July 13.)

Also, on June 23, 2021, the City Council adopted Resolution 2021-19 to recommended disapproval of the Takoma Junction Development Combined Site Plan by the Montgomery County Planning Board. In the resolution, the City Council states the following reasons for the recommendation: 1) The plan has not received approval from the MDOT-SHA for the layby. 2) More work is needed to address the rear facade design in order to have a minimal impact on the residential neighborhood and wooded area behind it and ensure a less intrusive and more visually appropriate design. 3) The plan does not provide 2700 square feet of public space of the type and quality of that included in the plans that were submitted for development review pursuant to Resolution 2018-41. 4) The plan does not demonstrate adequate public parking for area businesses as stated in Resolution 2018-41. 5) Stormwater treatment does not significantly exceed the 50% requirement specified in Resolution 2018-41.

Finally, on the same evening, the Council approved Ordinance 2021-32 as an emergency ordinance to enter into a contract with a nonprofit housing organization and use of up to $270,000 from the Housing Reserve Fund for a housing project at 1202 Holton Lane.

At the City Council meeting on June 30, 2021, the City Council adopted Resolution 2021-20 recognizing retiring City Manager Suzanne Ludlow. Ms. Ludlow’s last day with the City was July 1.

On July 7, 2021, by adoption of Resolution 2021-21, the City Council approved submission of a Maryland Revitalization Grant Application for acquisition funds and architectural fees for 6530 and 6600 New Hampshire Avenue. (Councilmember Smith abstained.) Resolution 2021-22 was adopted the same evening. With the resolution, the Council strongly recommended approval of the scope of work and boundary area of the Minor Master Plan Amendment by the Montgomery County Planning Board, and requested that the Planning Board consider the following: 1) include Eric Center, the small commercial area at the intersection of Eric and Flower Avenues, in the Boundary Area; 2) include the City of Takoma Park Public Works building complex at 31 Oswego Avenue in the Boundary Area; 3) ensure a robust community engagement process that includes the multi-family units on Maple Avenue; and, 4) conduct community engagement that involves the residents and properties that are outside the Boundary Area but also impacted by the use of and connectivity with the Boundary Area, in particular, nearby residential neighborhoods.

Apply for a Seat on a City Committee

The City Council is taking applications through Sept. 30 for many city boards and committees. Please apply if you would like to take an active role in the community and help make Takoma Park a more livable, environmentally sustainable, equitable community.

Residents serving on these City boards and committees provide an invaluable service to our community. Your voice and perspective matter, as well as your advice and expertise on a wide range of topics, to assist the City Council in its decision-making process.

Boards and committees are important because they:

- Provide the Council with tangible recommendations in key priority areas or fulfill the City’s regulatory functions and requirements.
- Leverage residents’ technical expertise and lived experiences to inform City policies and programs.
- Ensure that the Council has regular and timely information to use when considering its priorities or important issues.
- Provide an opportunity to engage residents on issues that are important to them as well as enable residents to assist in community education and engagement activities in priority areas.

Most boards and committees meet once a month. Some meet less frequently. Members may need to do a small amount of work outside of meetings to prepare for and continue work in between meetings. Members will receive a stipend of $40 per meeting and are eligible to apply for reimbursement for transportation and childcare expenses. If you need assistance with digital access, we may be able to help.

We welcome residents with all different types of experience and knowledge and seek diverse members to represent our community. Your experience living in Takoma Park and interacting with our community on a daily basis, and/or working in your chosen profession, can give you what you need to be a part of a board or committee.

The Council is currently accepting applications for nine boards and committees, which focus on a wide range of topics and issues:
- Arts & Humanities Committee
- Board of Elections
- Commission on Landlord-Tenant Affairs
- Emergency Preparedness Committee
- Ethics Commission
- Grants Review Committee
- Green Team
- Recreation Committee
- Tree Commission

You can apply at bit.ly/tkp-com. Questions? Contact Jessie Carpenter at jessie@takomaparkmd.gov or 301-891-7267.

City Council Action

Official City Government Meetings

REMOTE/VIRTUAL MEETINGS CONTINUE

We expect that most meetings will continue to take place in a remote/virtual format until September. For the most 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.

COMMENTING AT CITY COUNCIL MEETINGS

Individuals interested in commenting live during City Council meetings must sign up by 5:00 p.m. on the day of the meeting. The link to sign up will be published on the calendar and on the City Council agenda page. The time limit per comment is three minutes. Requests for additional time, or requests to share slides or videos at a City Council meeting, must be directed to the Mayor at least 24 hours in advance. Email letters@takomaparkmd.gov.

Written comments sent by email to clerk@takomaparkmd.gov or by U.S. mail will be shared with the full Council.

CITY COUNCIL MEETING SCHEDULE

The City Council will be on recess through Tuesday, September 7. The first City Council meeting in September will be on Wednesday, September 8.

CITY BOARD, COMMISSION, AND COMMITTEE MEETINGS

BOARD OF ELECTIONS
Thursday, August 12, 7 p.m.

EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS COMMITTEE
Thursday, August 26, 7 p.m.

NUCLEAR-FREE TAKOMA PARK COMMITTEE
Tuesday, August 10, 7:30 p.m.

PARKING MANAGEMENT TASK FORCE
Thursday, August 19, 7:30 p.m.

POLICE CHIEF’S ADVISORY BOARD
Monday, August 16, 7 p.m.

RECREATION COMMITTEE
Thursday, August 19, 7 p.m.

TREE COMMISSION MEETING
Tuesday, August 18, 7 p.m.

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 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 jessie@takomaparkmd.gov or 301-891-7267 at least 48 hours in advance.

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August 2021
TP News: Now that you have had the opportunity to drive through the community. It's contagious. The love, enthusiasm, and commitment are all there when you drive through the community. It's contagious. It makes me want to be here. I feel good about the decision to move to the City. I am ready to take it to the next level.

Five Questions for Jamal Fox

1. What’s on Your Desk Right Now? City Council Priorities, American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) plan and implementation, Reimagining Public Task Force meeting, assessment of the City organization.

2. What You Do in Your “ Spare Time?” Spending time with family, playing board games, talking walks, visiting parks, traveling, bowling, going to movies, still working on golf swing.

3. Biggest Most Important Lesson You Have Learned: Integrity is earned, but once you lose it, it's hard to get back.

4. Best Advice You Ever Got (and from who?): Remain humble. Never forget your purpose and where you came from. (Various mentors in my life have shared this central theme.)

5. Last Book You Read: My Grandmother’s Hands by Resmua Menakem.

and write the next chapter of Takoma Park.

As you consider the rest of this year and the year ahead, what have you begun to identify as some of the primary challenges and opportunities facing the City?

Fox: Moving forward with the understanding that the City received over $174 million in federal funds, we need to implement a plan for allocating those funds. I am also focused on further embedding and operationalizing racial equity. I want to look at staffing as well and how we can provide more bandwidth and capacity for staff to do their jobs more efficiently. How can we make work fun again and support them? We don’t have census data back yet, but when we do, we’ll see how much Takoma Park has grown. As the community is growing, is the organization growing with or away from it? How do you balance those priorities? Addressing these kinds of questions presents both challenges and opportunities.

TP News: Describe your leadership style. What can staff and residents expect?

Fox: I am all about making sure we’re data driven, and we’re being ethical at all times. I also want to make sure we’re having fun and that staff are supported in doing their jobs and have opportunities for being innovative and creative. Grace will need to be extended both ways. There will be times when we will have to agree to disagree. I center equity, community, and people in everything I do. Residents and staff should know that I place the benefit of the community over everything else. My approach to allow the City’s principles and values to guide us in co-creating and co-sharing spaces together. In some cases, we may need to restructure to streamline for effectiveness and efficiency to the benefit of the community.

TP News: What elements are critical to building strong communities? In your experience, which strategies have proved successful in bridging gaps that exist in communities?

Fox: It goes back to the basics. I focus on the three Cs for sustained organizational performance and success: Core, Communications, and Culture. We will have listening sessions, so I can be on ground bearing concerns first-hand and building relationships. Relationships matter. We must come together, and it’s OK for that to be uncomfortable sometimes. Diversity of thought thinking outside the box are important in building community. To engage a population as diverse as Takoma Park, it’s about building community and reaching people where they are. My overarching framework is simple: “One City, One Community, One Takoma Park.” You’ll hear me say that a lot.

The Takoma Park Folk Festival Is On!

Tradition meets innovation as this beloved event engages the live and virtual worlds of music and crafts.

When: September 12, 2021
Time: 4 – 9 p.m.
Where: Live-streamed from multiple locations – make your own venue!

The 2021 Takoma Park Folk Festival (TPFF 21) is on! While some aspects of the festival format are contingent on the status of COVID-19 conditions in the area, the music and spirit of this beloved annual event will be as strong as ever.

As past attendees know, the festival’s music program is customarily held on local school grounds and is organized around six performance stages. This year, reflecting the fluid pandemic conditions, the 2021 festival will feature its usual diverse range of music, including traditional and new takes on American and international folk music and other genres, but will be live-streamed, with the possibility of in-person events contingent on public health guidance.

Pending COVID-19 conditions, the festival organizers might consider other possibilities like anchoring the live-streamed events to public limited-audience locations as well as multiple “watch parties” around town. Viewers will also be encouraged to hold watch parties gatherings in their homes and other venues.

Viewers will be able to get creative with their watch parties and enjoy this unique opportunity to be part of the festival from the comfort of their own homes. They can even dress the part! T-shirts and other merchandise are available online at tpff.org. And Takoma Park viewers are encouraged to order in from local restaurants who sponsor the festival!

A Juried Craft Show is also being organized, which will be held in person at the Takoma Park Community Center from 12-6:30 p.m.

Information about the musical program and the craft show will be posted on the TPFF website (tpff.org) and Facebook (facebook.com/takomaparkfolkfestival) during the summer as well as in the September issue of this Newsletter.

“The community and its leaders are very excited to have the festival as part of the city’s fall schedule,” said Robin Starn, chair of the festival. “It’s especially meaningful this year as the we emerge from the pandemic and are able to enjoy live music again.”

Festival organizers especially thank the City of Takoma Park, which is a core supporter of the festival, as well as the many organizations and restaurants that have participated in and sponsored the event every year.

Please check the website (www.tpff.org) and Facebook for updates on the 2021 program schedule and performers. For additional information, contact info@tpff.org.
Maple Avenue Complete Streets Project Update

The City is one step closer to a Complete Streets upgrade for Maple Avenue! This project aims to enhance the safety and comfort of Maple Avenue from the D.C. border to Sligo Creek Parkway, with special attention to the needs of people walking and rolling along the corridor. At the end of June, the project contractor, Toole Design, shared the Preliminary Designs (known as 30% Designs). The design used input from community meetings, focus groups, and a City Council session to generate a basic design concept. Pending additional funding, the City will conduct additional design work and community outreach to refine the project and move it closer to reality. For more information, search for “Maple Ave Complete Streets Redesign” in the City website’s search bar.

Keep Growth Under Control

During the warmer months, you will probably spend more time maintaining your yard. The City’s code states that the height of all grass and weeds must be kept below 10 inches. Vines, shrubbery, hedges, and other vegetation must also be maintained. It is also important that vegetation not encroach onto the public sidewalk or extend out over the public sidewalk, including any vegetation overhanging the public sidewalk below 8 feet. The sidewalks should be clear so that people can safely get by without ending up in the street. Thank you for helping keep our community safe and beautiful.

—Neighborhood Services Staff

Together Again: Join Dance Exchange’s Season Kick-Off on Maple Ave

Dance Exchange invites you to celebrate their Season Kick-Off on Sunday, September 12, 12–4 p.m. After closing its Community and Creative Hub on Maple Avenue during the height of the pandemic and reopening in phases with limited capacity, the Takoma Park-based dance organization is excited to welcome artists, neighbors, and partners to once again gather, move, and make in-person.

The Season Kick-Off, happening in and around Dance Exchange’s studios at 7117 Maple Avenue, will include sample classes, performances, and opportunities to connect with Dance Exchange as well as other artists and local groups. Included in the sample classes will be Dance Exchange’s creative aging movement class for older adults—part of their Dance On program, which is made possible thanks to the City of Takoma Park’s Community Quality of Life Grant.

Save the date and find more information as it becomes available at www.danceexchange.org or call 301-270-6700.

Takoma Park Annual Play Day

Let’s Play America is planning the Takoma Park Annual Play Day with the assistance of the Recreation Department. The Play Day is scheduled for Saturday, September 25, 10 a.m.–2 p.m. to be held at Takoma Park Middle School. Rain or shine the Play Day will go on; four bands are already signed up to play, and more exciting activities are being planned. Public Works will be supplying big trucks for the fun Touch-A-Truck activity that people of all ages enjoy. Volunteers ages 12 and older may contact info@letsplayamerica.org if they are interested in helping with the event. Volunteer teens can receive community service from 8 a.m.–4 p.m. but must sign up through the Montgomery County Volunteer website. Teens help with set-up, invite people to play and then help with clean-up.

Minor Master Plan Process Begins

In partnership with the Montgomery County Planning Department, the City is starting the process of a Minor Master Plan update, which updates the City’s set of land use planning goals and strategies, known as a Master Plan. The focus of the Minor Master Plan update is the Washington Adventist Hospital campus and the area surrounding Maple Avenue, from Philadelphia Avenue to Sligo Creek Parkway. On September 9, the County Planning Commission will finalize the project scope and geographic boundary. Once that is finalized, the County, working with the City, will start a full-scale community engagement process to begin shaping the plan. For more information, search for Minor Master Plan in the City website’s search bar.

Proposed typical section for Northern Maple Avenue (Philadelphia Avenue to Sligo Creek Trail)
Free concerts, plays, art exhibitions, film screenings and more arts events will return to the Takoma Park Community Center in September after the building reopens to the public.

The Takoma Park Arts series shifted online during the COVID-19 pandemic to reach people at home with virtual poetry readings, film screenings, and concerts. Future events will be held in person in the auditorium at the Community Center (7500 Maple Avenue).

“We're very excited to bring the arts in their many forms back to the community,” Arts and Humanities Coordinator Brendan Smith said. “The arts are a vital part of Takoma Park’s identity and local economy, and we’re happy to share the talents of a diverse range of artists and performers from across the D.C. area.”

All events in the Takoma Park Arts series are free to everyone, regardless of whether they are city residents. The City’s Arts and Humanities Division pays honoraria to support the performers, and audience donations are accepted at concerts and plays.

“Musicians, actors, and other performers shouldn't be asked to work for free, so we help support the livelihoods of our creative community,” Smith said.

Events are being rescheduled starting in September and through the fall. You can find more details about upcoming events and sign up for our weekly Takoma Park Arts e-newsletter at takomaparkmd.gov/arts.

A new screening in the popular Vintage Movie Night series will be held in the Community Center auditorium. Local filmmaker and film historian Richard Hall will feature short vintage films about the founding fathers and ongoing efforts to whitewash American history.

Other film screenings include a shorts night featuring local filmmakers and two films about the Civil War, including The Invalid Corps and Union. Georgetown University professor Ben Harbert also will screen his documentary Follow Me Down: Portraits of Louisiana Prison Musicians. Over two years, Harbert interviewed inmate musicians in three Louisiana prisons, revealing their talents in a humanizing film about prison life and the power of music.

The gallery spaces in the Community Center will feature a new art exhibition by veterans from the Uniting US nonprofit organization (unitingus.org). The group encourages veterans to create art as a form of therapy and financial support. The Arts and Humanities Division organized a holiday art sale with Uniting US last December, which raised more than $2,000 for veteran artists and the Crossroads Community Food Network.

A wide variety of performances also will be staged by local theater and dance groups, including Word Dance Theater, Dance Exchange, a Spanish-language play by Teatro de Luna, and a children's theater performance titled Adventures of Mono Liso.

In an upcoming lecture, University of Maryland professor Richard Bell will discuss his book STOLEN: Five Free Boys Kidnapped into Slavery and Their Astonishing Journey Home. The book explores the “Reverse Underground Railroad” where unscrupulous men kidnapped Black children in the North and sold them into slavery in the South, destroying lives and separating families. Nevertheless, some resourceful children escaped and made the arduous journey home.
**RECREATION**

**EDUCATION & DEVELOPMENT**

**Piggly Bank Pioneers**
We will introduce financial concepts to primary school aged children. Young people learn economic ideas such as forms of money, needs vs. wants, budgeting, saving, and investing through interactive games and activities. We will identify ways to build wealth, credit, and the importance of being responsible. This experience fosters growth in the self-awareness and social awareness competency of social and emotional learning. Along with other common core standards, the information reviewed in the Piggly Bank Pioneers class reinforces the idea that quantities can be represented and counted while providing opportunities for students to interpret data.

**Virtual**

4-7 years

Saturdays, 10-11 a.m.

September 11-October 16

**Free**

**EXTENDED CARE**

**School Year 2021-2022**
If you had a great summer with us, we encourage you to register your children for our childcare programs during the school year. Morning and Afternoon Addition are held at the Takoma Park Community Center and Before the Bell & After the Bell are held at the Takoma Park Recreation Center. Our emphasis is on providing fun, leisure, and recreation programs. There is a 10% deposit due at the time of registration. The remaining balance will be divided into monthly payments beginning Sept. 1. Registration is already open, so make sure to claim your spot!

**Before & After the Bell Childcare**
This is our before and after school program at the Takoma Park Recreation Center (7315 New Hampshire Ave.), providing a safe environment for children grades K-5. The children will engage in daily indoor/outdoor group activities and holiday-based events. Each afternoon kids will receive a snack, have a time to complete homework, and enjoy arts and crafts, sports, board games, plays, free play and more! Transportation will not be provided through 11/12/22; please contact MCPSS Transportation 301-440-4130 to change your bus route to (New Hampshire Towers), and staff will escort them to and from the bus stop.

Takoma Park Recreation Center
7315 New Hampshire Avenue
Grades K-5

**MCPSS School Year**

**Before the Bell:** 7-9 a.m.

$1,500

**After the Bell:** 4-6:30 p.m.

$2,300

**Morning & Afternoon Addition**
This is our before and after school program at the Takoma Park Community Center (7300 Maple Ave.). Children will have time to work on homework assignments, games/activities or prepare for their day at school. Each afternoon kids will receive a snack. Staff will be available to escort participants to and from Takoma Park Elementary School and Piney Branch Elementary School.

Takoma Park Community Center
7300 Maple Avenue
Grades K-5

**MCPSS School Year**

**Morning Addition:** 7-9 a.m.

Resident: $1,500 / Non-Resident: $1,800

**Afternoon Addition:** 4-6:30 p.m.

Resident: $2,300 / Non-Resident: $2,600

**DANCE**

**Creative Movement**
Students will learn the importance of creative movement and choreographic tools to create their own dance. Students will participate in routine warmups and stretches. Students will participate in student led performances.

Takoma Park Community Center
7500 Maple Avenue
Dance Studio

6-12 years

Tuesdays, 6:30-7:30 p.m.

September 7-October 26

Resident: $86 / Non-Resident: $97

**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 a short choreography. Students will participate in student led performances.

Takoma Park Community Center
7500 Maple Avenue
Dance Studio

6-13 years

Thursdays, 6:30-7:30 p.m

September 8-October 28

Resident: $85 / Non-resident: $75

**Jazz Dance**
Jazz Dance is a structured dance class that challenges the mind by mesmerizing patterns, sequences, and basic Jazz Dance steps. Students will increase awareness of fluidity in movement, shape, and dance alignment.

Virtual

6-13 years

Thursdays, 6-7 p.m.

September 11-November 14

**Free**

**TEENS**

**FITNESS**

**Capoeira for Teens**
Capoeira is a Brazilian dance mixed with martial arts, acrobatics, and music. Through this class students will focus on learning basic corporal techniques of Capoeira including, acrobatics, defense and attack movements. Students will also learn the rhythms and songs necessary for Capoeira, including the instrument, tambourine and other native Brazilian instruments.

Takoma Park Community Center
Outdoor Basketball Court
7500 Maple Avenue
Grades 6-12

Mondays, 2:45-4:45 p.m.

September 12-November 15

Resident: Free / Non-resident: $10

**Commit 2 Fit**
Get your yoga mat and water bottles and join us on Saturday mornings on the field for a fun and energized session to work out and get fit. Limited spaces available; registration required.

Takoma Park Community Center
Ed Wilhelm Field 2

Arts Avenue
Grades 6-12

Saturdays, 10:30-11:30 a.m.

September 11-October 23

**Zumba for Teens**
Zumba classes for teens feature kid-friendly routines original Zumba® choreography. We break down the steps, add games, activities, and cultural exploration elements into the class structure. Zumba for Teens help develop a healthy lifestyle and incorporate fitness as a natural part of a teen’s life by making fitness fun. Classes incorporate key childhood development elements like leadership, respect, teamwork, confidence, self-esteem, memory, creativity, coordination, cultural awareness.

Takoma Park Community Center
Outdoor Basketball Court
7500 Maple Avenue
Grades 6-12

Wednesdays, 3:45-4:45 p.m.

September 15-11-November 17

Resident: Free / Non-resident: $10

**SOCIAL**

**Friday Night Lights**
Join us every 2nd Friday of the month for a fun-filled Friday night. Each month we will host a different event to include movie watch parties, DJ dance offs, Minute to Win it games, trivia, and game nights. Prizes will be given, and you can enter to win a family pizza night on us!

Takoma Park Recreation Center
7315 New Hampshire Avenue
Grades 6-12

Second Fridays, 6-8 p.m.

September 10

Free with Teen Membership

**Teen Talk Tuesdays**
Join Ms. Lucia at 5 p.m. for Teen Talk Tuesdays. Grab your seats and we’ll bring the “tea”! Let’s talk about fashion, fads, questions, advice, and current events, etc. You name it! Some weeks we will have experts or special guests join in on the conversation.

Takoma Park Community Center
Teen Lounge
7500 Maple Avenue
Grades 6-12

Tuesdays, 3:30-4:30 p.m.

September 14-December 21

Free with Teen Membership

**EDUCATION & DEVELOPMENT**

**Tots**
Children are introduced to the fundamentals of sports such as soccer and basketball. The goal of this program is to provide the opportunity for each child to develop motor skills and nurture their growth socially and emotionally through teamwork and good sportsmanship.

Instructor: Recreation Staff

Takoma Park Recreation Center

Gymnasium

7315 New Hampshire Ave

3-5 years

6 Week Session

Saturdays, 9-10 a.m.

September 18-October 23

**$50**

**DANCE**

**Pre-Ballet**
Pre-Ballet for ages 4-6 is a combination of music and movement that emphasizes learning basic ballet vocabulary, movement patterns and musically in a creative movement. By introducing students to the basic shapes, positions, postures and traditions of classical ballet, the Pre-Ballet curriculum enhanced both cognitive and physical development at this important time.

Takoma Park Community Center

7500 Maple Avenue

Dance Studio

4-4.5 years

Saturdays, 11:30 a.m.-12:15 p.m.

September 11-November 6

Resident: $65 / Non-Resident: $75

**ENVIRONMENTAL**

**Hands On Gardening with Carla**
Learn how to cultivate plants from seeds and cuttings, care for plants and grow flowers, vegetables, fruits and house plants. Parents are welcome to participate with their children and/or teens. Fun for the entire family. Class will be held at the Takoma Park Middle School Green House.

Instructor: Carla Perlo

Takoma Park Middle School

7611 Piney Branch Road

Green House

6-10 years

Thursdays, 4:15-5:30 p.m.

September 9-October 14

Resident: $80 / Non-Resident: $90

**SPORTS**

**Basketball Skills**
This class will teach the fundamentals of the sport. Good Sportsmanship will be emphasized. Participants will be provided with excellent coaching. You will learn proper dribbling, shooting and defensive techniques. Please contact vincentc@takomaparkmd.gov for more information.

All skill levels are welcome, and registration is required.

Takoma Park Community Center

Gymnasium

7315 New Hampshire Ave

6-12 years

7-Week Session

Saturdays, 10:15-11:15 a.m.

September 11-October 23

**$80**

**YOUTH**

**Pieggly Bank Pioneers**
We will introduce financial concepts to primary school aged children. Young people learn economic ideas such as forms of money, needs vs. wants, budgeting, saving, and investing through interactive games and activities. We will identify ways to build wealth, credit, and the importance of being responsible. This experience fosters growth in the self-awareness and social awareness competency of social and emotional learning. Along with other common core standards, the information reviewed in the Piggly Bank Pioneers class reinforces the idea that quantities can be represented and counted while providing opportunities for students to interpret data.

**Virtual**

4-7 years

Saturdays, 10-11 a.m.

September 11-October 16

**Free**

**Junior Yoga**

Get your yoga mat and water bottles and join us on Saturday mornings on the field for a fun and energized session to work out and get fit. Limited spaces available; registration required.

Takoma Park Community Center
Ed Wilhelm Field 2

Arts Avenue
Grades 6-12

Saturdays, 10:30-11:30 a.m.

September 11-October 23

**Free**
Back Outside Again! (Youth (Re)Engagement after COVID-19)

By Leicia Monfort

I’m just going to come right out and say it, “It’s been a loooong year and half!” Thank goodness things are starting to get back to “normal.” If you’re like me, you’re wondering “so now what do I do with my kid(s)’? How can I support them getting back out into the world after they’ve been cooped up for so long?”

In March, some families chose to go back into the school building while others remained virtual. Regardless of what decision was made, some parents are finding it hard for their child(ren) to socialize during this time, and with school opening back to its regular schedule in the fall there’s concern from parents on how can they successfully help their child(ren) with the transition. Here are a few tips that seem to be working for my family:

Start small. If you feel safe doing so, pick one or two friends and set up a play date (Yes, this can be done with teens, just don’t let them know it’s a “play date.” They’re too grown for those words). Some safe play date suggestions include bike riding on a path, going to a playground or skatepark, participating in scavenger hunts, and holding cooking competitions (We did this virtually and made ice cream sundaes; sooo good), etc.

Take a walk. This sounds simple enough. For those who have not been outside since the beginning of the pandemic, they have no idea what it’s like outside, and though they may not come out and say it, some young people are still afraid. Taking a walk together allows your child to see what has changed and to gain a sense of normalcy. To some, seeing people who are vaccinated without masks may make them feel safer and to others it can be frightening. Be sure to get a feel of how your child reacts.

Have dinner together – outside. Visit a local restaurant that has outdoor seating available. This way you are experiencing something you’ve done pre-pandemic without rushing the idea of being indoors with strangers.

Sign up for a Recreation Program. The Takoma Park Recreation Department is running in-person camps, and they’re doing a great job of keeping the groups small to keep our kids safe. Signing up my child for camp this summer might just have been the best decision I made for her. Camp so far has given her the connections that she has been missing during quarantine. She can share her experience with her peers and learn theirs as well. When I pick her up, she’s excited to tell me what she’s done each day.

Check out the Takoma Park Recreation Department’s website for details on Sign up for a Recreation Program. The Takoma Park Recreation Department is running in-person camps, and they’re doing a great job of keeping the groups small to keep our kids safe. Signing up my child for camp this summer might just have been the best decision I made for her. Camp so far has given her the connections that she has been missing during quarantine. She can share her experience with her peers and learn theirs as well. When I pick her up, she’s excited to tell me what she’s done each day.

Try these ideas and let us know how things are working out for you. Now get out there and enjoy yourself!
Director’s Notes

Library Confessional: Getting Back into the Habit of Reading When a Pandemic Destroys Your Attention Span

By Jessica Jones

I have a confession: I didn’t do much reading during the worst of the pandemic: Well, that’s not exactly true. I didn’t do much new reading during the pandemic. I re-read a lot of books, circling back to them like comfort food. I listened to a lot of new audiobooks. But I had a big mental block on new physical books.

I know I’m not the only one, but still. Librarian. Everyone has different coping mechanisms, and we can all give ourselves a little grace for the things we didn’t accomplish during a worldwide pandemic. If you are struggling with your attention span, I see you. But we can get our reading groove back. Here’s how I’ve been doing it.

1. Give yourself permission to read whatever you want to read. Not what you think you should be reading, or what other people have told you to read. This is your permission to read All the Genre Fiction and books “below your reading level.” Pick up a romance novel! Read about some wizards and dragons! Go to space! Indulge in some recreational horror: research shows it can help us confront and cope with our fears. Or, read a childhood classic, like one about those Bionicle kids that no one was supervising and who were somehow allowed to live in an abandoned train car.

2. Try shorter formats and read some novellas and short stories. Short stories are the literary equivalent of watching a movie. You get a whole self-contained story, and unlike a novel chapter that ends on a cliffhanger, the short story that ends ambiguously is telling you to put the book down for a bit and think about it. There’s less of a compulsion to keep reading if you’re trying to go to bed at a reasonable hour.

3. Listen to an audiobook if you haven’t been doing that already. Some people think that audiobooks “don’t count,” but honestly? I believe that thinking is a little elitist at best and discounts many cultures’ rich oral storytelling traditions at worst. Listening to a story is still absorbing a story, and it’s a very forgiving format for readers who need to fidget and move their bodies.

Your resident library staff can all help find books and audiobooks that will capture your interest and help you find your way back to reading. There are so many studies out there that reinforce the benefits of reading by reducing stress, increasing empathy, promoting resilience, slowing cognitive decline, and increasing lifespan. (And yes, we can cite our sources because it’s us.) Bonus: All these tips can help encourage the younger reluctant readers in your lives to love reading, too.

Beach Reading

By Anne LeVeque

It’s August, and a lot of us head to the beach (or the mountains, the lake, or even the local pool) for respite from the summer heat. It’s always fun to have some light reading on hand to pass the time. Some of us bring tried and true favorites, while others may want something new to read. I polled our library staff for their favorite beach reading.

From Jessica Jones: Becky Chambers’ The Long Way to a Small, Angry Planet hits all the points I require for beach reading. It’s escapism (in space!), it has interesting and engaging characters, and the story doesn’t stress me out. The plot: a group of mostly lovely people (some of which are human) tunnel through space on a government contract to open a wormhole to the intergalactic consortium’s newest matching planet.

From Gene Miller: Non-beach reading for people who hate the beach: The Personal Librarian by Marie Benedict and Victoria Christopher Murray. If you are a bibliophile, a visit to the J.P. Morgan Library on Madison Avenue should be on your bucket list, as it’s one of the premiere collections of old and rare books in the world. That it is such is largely the work of Morgan's personal librarian, Belle DaCosta Greene. This book is the fictionalized story of Ms. Greene, who was born Belle Marion Greener in Washington, D.C., where her father was dean at Howard University’s School of Law. And of course, thereby hangs the tale: a brilliant and enterprising young Black woman becomes the personal librarian to one of the richest White men in the late-Victorian world and builds the most astonishing collection anywhere. The centennial celebration of the Morgan Library is coming in 2024. Please go but read this book first.

From Mary Rein: My summer reading suggestion is A Honeybee Heart Has Five Openings: A Year of Keeping Bees, by Helen Jukes. This refreshing memoir will take you away from the pandemic and far from D.C. It will give you a year in Oxford, England with a hive of honeybees in the back garden. You will meet the author, her friends, the bees, and a quirky community of urban beekeepers. Helen Jukes is a curious and thoughtful observer with a wide-ranging mind. I know a lot more about bees and beekeeping than I did a
the perspective of tribal police and his daughter Anne Hillerman who is carrying on the stories of her father's beloved main characters in sequels to his stories. I'm currently reading The Sinister Pig, which skewers the Feds' clumsy handling of criminal justice in the tribal context as the central characters, both Navajo cops, plus a Hopi deputy sheriff, solve a robbery and the related killings as they make their way through labyrinthine canyons in the Four Corners region.

From Phil Shapiro: Any of the books by Dave Barry in our library collection will probably tickle your funny bone. Pulitizer prize-winning humorist Dave Barry has a way with words that will often make you giggle. Look him up on YouTube to view his speech to Takoma Park residents in 2016. (Note from Anne: Some titles include Lessons From Lucy: The Simple Joys of an Old, Happy Dog. State Ever: A Florida Man Defends His Homeland, Peter and the Starcatchers (with Ridley Pearson), Dave Barry Is Not Making This Up, and many, many more! (The video Phil mentions can be found at youtu.be/a3dOOk7ce9U.)

Finally, from yours truly: When I'm at the beach, I often re-read Dorothy Sayers' mystery books, particularly my favorite, Gaudy Night. This year I will be taking Laurie King's latest Mary Russell and Sherlock Holmes mystery, Castle Shade. Call it fanfic, pastiche, takeoff, derivative work (if you're a copyright lawyer), whatever! Sherlock Holmes has inspired more of it than any other fictional character, and Laurie King has made it her own with the introduction of her character, Mary Russell. This is the 22nd book in the series, and while many series go stale after so many volumes, King keeps it fresh. I'm looking forward to her take on vampires.

We will notify you when your request has been filled. Our reply email will give you information on when you can pick up your request. When you arrive at the library parking lot, call 301-580-0085 and we will bring it out to you. Requests will be held for one week and then the items will be checked back in.

If you would like home delivery of your request (Takoma Park residents only), please indicate that in your email. We will deliver the book to your door and call you when it arrives. Deliveries must be received in person; we will not leave books at your door.

BOOKS-TO-GO CONTINUES!

We are continuing our Books-to-Go service and our Books-to-You (delivery service). Here is what you need to know:

Email your request to librarytakomapark@gmail.com (preferred) or phone us at 240-507-0229. In the subject line of your email, include the name on the account you're using and either your birthday (month and day, not year) or the last four digits of your library card. In your message, list the items you want to check out. Include the title, author, and call number for each item requested. Please check our catalog first at https://takoma.lib.md.us, to be sure that the item is available. Please limit your requests to 10 items per order. If a book is checked out, it will be placed on hold. If you have overdue books, you will not be permitted to check out new ones!
Maryland fire deaths
The Maryland State Fire Marshal Office reported as of August 2, 2021, 33 people have died in fires compared to 32 in 2020.

Hot vehicle deaths
As of August 2, 2021, 10 children have died in hot vehicles. The only way we can prevent a tragedy, is to check the back seat when getting out of your vehicle. Make sure everyone goes with you and don’t forget to lock the vehicle.

Safety message
In the event of fire in your home, you must have a pre-plan:
- Plan two ways out of each room, especially the bedrooms.
- Designate a meeting place outside, and make sure everyone knows the location to ensure everyone is out.
- Call the fire department 9-1-1 from a neighbor’s house.
- Once out, stay out. Don’t go back for any reason.
- Review these items with the family on a regular basis.

Passport Services
Passport services are available on first come, first served basis Monday through Thursday from 9 a.m. to 11 a.m. at the Takoma Park Community Center on the second floor. Appointments are required and can be scheduled by emailing sofun@takomaparkmd.gov.

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

Get prepared for emergency
For persons with disabilities, being prepared and cared for is a 24/7 life-long necessity. Accessibility is about daily living situations—the ability to call 911, use a computer, get to a shelter, stay indoors in case of storms or power outages—as well as surviving fires, storms, extreme heat, power outages.

Thirty years ago, on July 26, 1990, the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) was finally signed into law. In the intervening 31 years, all of us have benefited from some universal design changes that were developed for persons with disabilities, such as curb cuts at sidewalk corners—good for shopping carts and children’s carriers; audio at street crossings; automatic door openers. Thank you ADA folks!

Today, the Maryland Department of Disabilities website offers information on a variety of issues, such as employment, emergency preparedness, disability benefits, technology. So, three decades after the ADA, what are some of the challenges that new preparedness planning for persons with disabilities, their families, and supporters?

Contacting 911 emergency help:
Beginning August 2020, persons with speech difficulties or barriers or in an unsafe situation could TEXT 911 in Maryland. Until then, talking was the only way to get emergency help. That meant that those who could not speak, articulate, hear could not get immediate help themselves. Try Text to 911 to be prepared in case it’s needed.

Technology skill and access:
With so much information now on the web (e.g., this column) those with and without the access, skills, or equipment can miss important, lifesaving information. The Maryland Technology Assistance Program (MDTAP) provides resources, loans for assistive technology, help and more. Check out the video www.youtube.com/watch?v=Ls6UeJb7oWk&t=3s for more information about the Loan Closet Library or call 1-800-832-4827.

Service animal care:
Service animals are considered a critical partner under the ADA, so they cannot be excluded from places (restriction allowed only if pet behavior is direct threat to life or safety).
Bringing music to Takoma Park one backyard at a time

By Sean Gossard

For a little over a year now, one non-profit group has been helping to bring music to the air of Takoma Park and the surrounding areas while keeping people safe by staying socially distant. Jazz Kitchen Productions, which was kicked off last year by Michael Philips, has been putting on concerts during the pandemic being hosted in the backyards of neighbors around the Greater Washington area.

Its mission is to “organize and present concerts and other public events to support jazz musicians and the local jazz music scene in the DC-Maryland-Virginia area,” according to its website. The concerts mostly feature local jazz musicians — like Elijah Jamal Balbed, Todd Marcus, Chuck Redd, and Shannon Gunn — but they’ve also had a few bluegrass and country rock acts swing by. Philips, who is also the music director at WOWD Takoma Radio, said it was important to him to find a way to help musicians who lost a major part of their livelihood when the pandemic hit.

“The pandemic came, and all these local musicians weren’t able to play live and couldn’t express themselves through art and also, it affected their livelihood.” Philips said. “It was created in response to the pandemic.”

Phils found inspiration from Creative Alliance and their “Sidewalk Serenades” series out of Baltimore. “They would get people to come by with a guitar or fiddle and play in front of your house for 15 or so minutes then move on to the next house and the next house,” he said. “With the jazz, we wanted it to be longer, so we’ve been doing 45 minutes from house to house.”

According to Phillips, this way of setting up shows also helps keep the costs down for the concert hosts while making sure musicians are still able to make a living. “If you’ve ever hired a band for a wedding or something, they can be pretty expensive, like $1,000,” he said, “so this is a way to spread that cost across several houses.” Originally, he said, they kept audiences to just around 10 people, but as restrictions have been lifting, more people have been able to come out to enjoy the shows. They’ve also been more open to allowing people to eat and drink during the shows.

Philips said they’ve done around 100 of these concert series around the area and that audiences have been incredibly responsive. “People get their own private concerts in their front or backyards,” he said. “The ones in the front yards are really fun, and they become sort of block parties with people bringing their chairs and sitting and relaxing.”

While it’s mostly focused on jazz music, Philips said he’s hoping to branch out into different genres. “I expanded it last year since I got requests from people who wanted to hear bluegrass,” he said. “I’d like to get into doing some classical music, small string quartets and things like that.”

He even had a country rock act hold a backyard concert, but it’s a bit more complicated setting up and taking down the speakers and instruments. “I did one country rock band, RunHe and the Wranglers, and they had a lot of equipment,” he said. “It takes them a little longer, so they just do three concerts in a day. The jazz artists do four a day.”

Philips is not sure what’s in store for the backyard concert series’ future, but there are still plenty of concerts to go this summer. “It’s so much fun and the people who host it are unanimously telling me how much fun they have and really love,” he said. “I’ve done a whole bunch in Takoma Park, people are around here really love it.” If you’re interested in hosting a backyard concert of your very own, visit www.jkproductions.org.

Above: Trombonist Reginald Cynteje performs in a neighborhood backyard during a weekly Jazz Kitchen concert.

In September and then part two coming in June. It’s educational and lots of fun! Enjoy demos, unique interactive programs, and performances. Limited space, so register early. See the Fall 2021 Forever Young newsletter for details.

Takoma Park Community Center
7500 Maple Avenue
Art Studio
55 & up

2 Day Session
Monday & Tuesday, 12:30–4:30 p.m.
September 13 & September 14
Resident: $49 / Non-resident: $59

DANCE

DROP–IN

Bingo
Welcome back! Come try your luck and win a prize. This is drop-in; no registration required. Host: Paula Lisowski
Takoma Park Community Center
7500 Maple Avenue
Senior Room
55 & up
Tuesdays, 12–2 p.m.
September 28
Free

T’ai Chi Strength
Begin with meditation and stretching followed by Tai Chi forms and balance exercises to build strength and endurance. End with cool down exercises. Instructor: Master Robert Thompson
Takoma Park Community Center
7500 Maple Avenue
Dance Studio
55 & up
Tuesdays, 12–1 p.m.
September 3–October 19
Free

Zumba Gold
The design of this class introduces easy-to-follow Zumba choreography that focuses on balance, range of motion and coordination.
Instructor: Yesika Flores
Takoma Park Community Center
7500 Maple Avenue
Dance Studio
55 & up
Wednesdays, 11:45 a.m.–12:45 p.m.
September 8–October 20
$5

SPECIAL EVENTS

Family Outdoor Movie Night Returns again on Saturday, September 11 at Ed Wilhelm Field: The Family Outdoor Movie returns at dusk at Ed Wilhelm Field (behind Piney Branch Elementary School). Bring your lawn chair or blanket and enjoy a movie under the stars with your family! The movie will be a family friendly “G” or “PG” rated hit. Bring snacks and your own water. Due to limited parking, walking is encouraged. COVID 19 protocols will be followed. Visit our website takomaparkmd.gov/recreation to vote on the movie. For additional information, contact John Webster at 301-891-7225 or johnw@takomaparkmd.gov.

Monster Bash
Join us Saturday, October 30, 2021. The Takoma Park Recreation Department staff is preparing for a hoot of a party that is designed for the entire family. We are working to be back to normal with a parade down Philadelphia and a party in the Community Center parking lot. We will continue to monitor COVID-19 as we move closer to the date. For additional information for this event, please contact John Webster at jwbush@takomaparkmd.gov or 301-891-7293. In the event of inclement weather, the Monster Bash will be moved to Takoma Park Middle School and there will be no road closures. To receive an update on weather conditions, please call our inclement weather line at 301-891-7107 ext 5065.

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**COMMUNITY ACTIVITIES**

**A Community Day**
Saturday, August 21, 4-8 p.m.
35 Van Buren Street, N.W., Washington, DC

**Movie Night**
Saturday, September 11, dusk
Ed Wilhelm Field
Bring your lawn chair or blanket and enjoy a movie under the stars with your family! The movie will be a family friendly “G” or “PG” rated hit. Bring snacks and your own water. Due to limited parking, walking is encouraged. COVID-19 protocols will be followed. Visit takomaparkmd.gov/recreation to vote on the movie. For additional information, contact John Webster at 301-891-7225 or johnw@takomaparkmd.gov.

**Dance Exchange Season Kick-Off**
Sunday, September 12, 12– 4 p.m.
7117 Maple Avenue
Dance Exchange invites you to celebrate its Season Kick-Off. The Season Kick-Off will include sample classes, performances, and opportunities to connect with Dance Exchange as well as other artists and local groups. Save the date and find more information as it becomes available at www.danceexchange.org or call 301-270-6700.

**Takoma Park Annual Play Day**
Saturday, September 25, 10 a.m.–2 p.m.
Takoma Park Middle School
Rain or shine the Play Day will go on; four bands are already signed up to play, and more exciting activities are being planned. Public Works will be supplying big trucks for the fun Touch-A-Truck activity that people of all ages enjoy. Volunteers ages 12 and older may contact info@letsplayamerica.org if they are interested in helping with the event.

**Parkinson’s and Movement Disorder Support Group**
Do you have Parkinson’s or another movement disorder? Or are you a caregiver? If so, you might be interested in our informal support group which meets monthly to share resources and experiences. Our meetings are virtual via Zoom, but soon we hope to return to in-person meetings at the Takoma Park Community Center. It is free, and you do not have to be a resident of Takoma Park. For further information, contact Tom Bigford at tebigford@gmail.com or 301-580-4056.

**STAY ACTIVE**
All virtual class links can be found on the Virtual Community Center page: www.takomaparkmd.gov/recreation.

- **Enhance Your Fitness**
  Tuesdays, 8:45–9:45 a.m. 55 & up
- **ReVamp Fit Home Workout**
  Wednesdays, 10–11 a.m.
- **Classic Foundational Fitness and Training**
  Tuesdays and Thursdays, 10–11 a.m. 55 & up
- **Spirit Group Fitness**
  New videos uploaded each Wednesday
- **Jazz Dance**
  Thursdays, 6–7 p.m. 6–12 years

**SHARE IDEAS**
Attend virtual committee meetings!

**Note:** The City Council will be on recess through Tuesday, September 7. The first City Council meeting in September will be on Wednesday, September 8.

- **BOARD OF ELECTIONS**
  Thursday, August 12, 7 p.m.
- **EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS COMMITTEE**
  Thursday, August 26, 7 p.m.
- **NUCLEAR-FREE TAKOMA PARK COMMITTEE**
  Tuesday, August 10, 7:30 p.m.

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**SAVE UP TO 20% THE COST**
**GET HELP THROUGHOUT THE PROCESS**
**CUSTOMIZE YOUR SYSTEM**

**Join your Neighbors**
**Learn more about solar**
**Sign up for a free informational session**

WWW.MYGREENMONTGOMERY.ORG/CAPITAL-AREA-SOLAR-CO-OP/