Redistricting Update and Schedule for Completion

With the completion of the 2020 U.S. Census, the population balance of the City’s wards must be reviewed, and the boundaries adjusted to ensure that wards are close to equal in population and meet other requirements. All cities across the U.S. go through this process every decade. The final decision on ward boundaries will be made by the City Council and will be effective for the next City election.

The City is working with a consultant to develop a new ward map that meets the legal requirements and the criteria set by the City Council. So far, the City has hosted two community meetings, and the consultant has prepared five draft maps that were presented for feedback at the second community meeting.

The City has also prepared a survey for residents to share information about their communities and neighborhoods, a comment form for residents to share comments and questions on the redistricting process, an FAQ answering common questions.

New 2022 Assessed Real Property Values are Here!

This winter, property owners across the City will receive an updated assessed value for their properties. The State of Maryland conducts these assessments every three years, guiding the tax rates that the City and County set for residents and business owners (See takomaparkmd.gov/government/finance/real-property-tax for more information.)

Property taxes are determined by two factors: (1) the total assessed value of the real property (land plus improvements) and (2) the property tax rate that is established by each taxing jurisdiction. In Takoma Park, taxing jurisdictions include the State of Maryland (for completion/finance/real-property-tax) and County set for residents and businesses.

Information and Resources: Covid19 takomaparkmd.gov

Questions, Comments and Suggestions askus@takomaparkmd.gov

#TogetherTKPK

REDISTRICTING FAQS

Q: Does the redistricting affect school district assignments?
A: Absolutely not. School districts are established by a separate process conducted by Montgomery County Public Schools. Even if you change wards through city redistricting, it will not affect school assignments. Additionally, Takoma Park’s redistricting will not affect County Council representation or your representation in any other level of government.

Q: Why can’t the City just keep the current ward map?
A: The City’s current wards are not population balanced. The District Scenario Modeler shows that the current wards have an imbalance of 77.5 percent between the highest and lowest population ward (the actual deviation is likely slightly lower; blocks are assigned to wards based on which ward the centerpoint of the block falls in, and in some cases the population-center won’t be in the block-center. We cannot know...

REDISTRICTING DATES

Community Listening Sessions on Zoom
January 10 and 11
- Monday, January 10, 7–8 p.m.
- Tuesday, January 11, 6:30–7:30 p.m.

These meetings are intended to give as many people as possible an opportunity to review and comment on map options before they are presented to the City Council on January 19. Register at takomaparkmd.gov/initiatives/project-directory/redistricting

Council Review of Possible Ward Maps
January 19
The City Council will discuss map options at its meeting on January 19. Maps will be available for review on the City’s website beginning January 12.

Continued Discussion of Ward Maps (if needed)
February 2

Public Hearing on Redistricting Plan
February 9

Ordinance Adopting Redistricting Plan
February 16 and February 23

Inside

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Special Report: Information Literacy Page 8

Friends Big Book Club Page 9

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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 November 10, 2021, Ordinance 2021-45 was adopted to authorize the purchase of a loader for Public Works from Jesco Inc., at the cost of $31,113. Ordinance 2021-48 was also adopted, authorizing a contract for a compensation and pay equity study. The study is to be conducted by Bolton USA at the cost of up to $34,000.

On November 17, 2021, the City Council approved a contract with Arcadis for construction management services for the Library Redevelopment Project by Ordinance 2021-50. The Council authorized a contract with Matrix Consulting Group for consulting services for an organizational workforce needs and risk assessment study at the cost of up to $78,500. Ordinance 2021-47 also authorized appropriation of the funds to the City Administration Contracts account through use of fund balance. Ordinance 2021-49 was adopted, amending the Takoma Park Code, Chapter 6.16, Landlord-Tenant Relations, to require landlords to install window guards in certain units in certain multifamily dwellings. Purchase of police vehicles was approved by Ordinance 2021-51. The vehicles are to be purchased from Apple Ford at the cost of $210,000. The vehicles will be outfitted through Frontline Mobile Tech at a cost of $90,760.

Also, on November 17, Ordinance 2021-46 was adopted to provide for adjustments to the salary and compensation of the Mayor and Councilmembers. Increases will take effect with the swearing in of the Mayor and Councilmembers elected in the November 2022 election. The salary of the Mayor will be increased to $32,000 per year. The salary of each Councilmember will be increased to $24,000 per year. Finally, the Council adopted Resolution 2021-46 setting forth the dates of the Council’s winter recess. (First reading of Ordinances 2021-47, 2021-49, and 2021-46 was held on November 10, 2021). A Special Meeting of the City Council was held on December 1, 2021. At the meeting, Resolution 2021-47 was adopted to appoint Paul Gunter, Ward 1, to the Task Force on Sustainable Banking and Investments. Mr. Gunter is replacing Jay Levy, Ward 1, who resigned from the Task Force. Also, at the meeting, Ordinance 2021-52 was adopted to amend the annual budget to provide additional compensation to City employees in recognition of their efforts during the last year. The ordinance appropriated $535,000 for a one-time lump sum payment in the amount of $2,500 to be made at the end of 2021 to all City of Takoma Park employees who were employed as of December 1, 2021. The payment to employees covered by a collective bargaining agreement is contingent upon agreement with the respective unions.

Ordinance 2021-50 was also adopted, authorizing a contract for a risk assessment study at the cost of up to $78,500. Ordinance 2021-49 was adopted, amending the Takoma Park Code, Chapter 6.16, Landlord-Tenant Relations, to require landlords to install window guards in certain units in certain multifamily dwellings. Purchase of police vehicles was approved by Ordinance 2021-51. The vehicles are to be purchased from Apple Ford at the cost of $210,000. The vehicles will be outfitted through Frontline Mobile Tech at a cost of $90,760.

Important City Department Phone Numbers

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
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<th>Phone Number</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>City Information</td>
<td>301-891-7100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>City Clerk</td>
<td>301-891-7267</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Communications</td>
<td>301-891-7236</td>
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<td>Finance</td>
<td>301-891-7212</td>
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<tr>
<td>Housing &amp; Community Development</td>
<td>301-891-7119</td>
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<tr>
<td>Library</td>
<td>301-891-7259</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Neighborhood Services</td>
<td>301-891-7113</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Police</td>
<td>301-270-1100/Emergency 911</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Public Works</td>
<td>301-891-7633</td>
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<tr>
<td>Recreation/Facilities Rental</td>
<td>301-891-7290</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
questions about the redistricting process, and a map-making tool for residents to create their own ward maps. The map drafts (including a web map layering out the current wards and different options), surveys, FAQs, and the tool are available on the City’s redistricting webpage (takomaparkmd.gov/initiatives/project-directory/redistricting) and engaging with the community.

At this point, the City staff and consultants continue to review comments, draft maps, and feedback from residents to refine maps presented at the community meeting. The feedback will inform the City’s redistricting work and guide the development of the final draft maps.

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January 2022

The Takoma Park Newsletter is published 12 times a year as the official publication of the City of Takoma Park, takomaparkmd.gov.
Plant-A-Tree – Orders Now Being Accepted for Spring 2022

The City of Takoma Park offers discounted tree plantings for private property for the Spring and Fall planting seasons. Orders are now being accepted for Spring 2022. Orders must be submitted to the Public Works Office by February 21 to be included in the Spring planting season. Either visit the Tree Care and Resource page of the City of Takoma Park website or the Public Works Office at 31 Oswego Avenue to download or pick up an order form.

Trees offer numerous benefits to your yard and to the community, including providing cooling shade, intercepting stormwater, supporting a robust local ecology, and providing natural beautification. With a changing climate and other stresses challenging our mature tree populations, planting new young trees is more important than ever. You can be a part of this important cause by having a tree planted in your yard, and we are excited to partner with you to help make that happen.

This program focuses on planting native shade trees. Shade trees do the best job at providing canopy cover to the city. Pick-up an order form to see which trees are being offered this season. We look forward to working with you to restore the urban forest canopy of Takoma Park and beautify your yard.

Help re-envision the Washington Adventist Hospital and University Campuses with the City of Takoma Park and Montgomery Planning

The City of Takoma Park and Montgomery Planning are currently gathering feedback from community members for the Takoma Park Minor Master Plan Amendment. The plan will update a small part of the 2000 Takoma Park Master Plan, including the Washington Adventist Hospital and University campuses as well as the surrounding area along Maple Avenue. This will guide the area’s future growth with a focus on equity and climate impact, including both virtual and in-person activities. You can learn more about this plan, including both virtual and in-person activities, by visiting montgomeryplanning.org/planning/communities/downcounty/takoma-park.

For those who may have missed the opportunity to speak with our interviewers or if you reside outside of the targeted areas, the planning team still wants to hear from you. Take this questionnaire at www.surveymonkey.com/r/takoma-park-mm or by using the QR code shown here.

There will be additional opportunities to engage with the planning process, including both virtual and in-person activities. You can learn more about this plan, including the timeline, the approved scope of work, and how to get involved by visiting montgomeryplanning.org/planning/communities/downcounty/takoma-park.
THE ARTS

Takoma Park Holiday Art Sale Supports Local Artists

The Takoma Park Holiday Art Sale returned for its 15th year at the Takoma Park Community Center on Dec. 4, 2021. The sale featured 25 local artists selling a wide range of original art and crafts, including paintings, photography, sculpture, jewelry, and clothing.

The art sale was the first large event in the Community Center in almost two years due to previous pandemic restrictions. Masks were required, and hundreds of people visited the art sale, which is organized by the City’s Arts and Humanities Division with support from the Arts and Humanities Committee.

“It was exciting to hold the art sale again because it’s a popular community event that brings artists and the public together,” Arts and Humanities Coordinator Brendan Smith said. “We want to support small local businesses and the creative economy, and this is a fun way to do that.”

Local photographer Rob Rudick is a longtime art sale vendor who was happy with the turnout.

“The Holiday Art Sale is a shining example of the community’s support for local artists, and it’s a premiere showcase for our local talent,” he said. “City staff and the Arts and Humanities Committee did a terrific job in selecting the artists and publicizing and staging the event.”

Free Takoma Park Arts Events at the Community Center

Please join us for these free upcoming events in the Takoma Park Arts cultural series at the Takoma Park Community Center at 7500 Maple Avenue. You can find more info and sign up for our weekly e-newsletter at takomaparkMD.gov/arts.

The Poetry of Migration Poetry Reading
Thursday, Jan. 27 at 7:30 p.m.

Three local poets who emigrated to the United States will share their poetry and their experiences as strangers in a new land where they have felt the contrasting tug between the forces of assimilation and their own cultural heritage.

Indran Amirthanayagam will read his poems, which focus on the experiences, dilemmas, and dreams of the migrant. He was born in Colombo, Ceylon (now Sri Lanka) and writes in English, Spanish, French, Portuguese, and Haitian Creole. He has published 20 poetry books and edits the Beltway Poetry Quarterly. Luz Stella Mejía is a writer, editor, and marine biologist from Colombia, who has published two poetry books. Vladimir Monge grew up in El Salvador and studied education sciences. He has two published poetry books and is the coordinator of a local group of Latin American migrant poets called Collectivo Literario Alta Hora de la Noche.

The Reverse Underground Railroad Lecture
Thursday, Feb. 3 at 7:30 p.m.

In honor of Black History Month, University of Maryland history professor Richard Bell will share the little-known and horrific history of the “Reverse Underground Railroad.” In the decades leading up to the Civil War, free Black children and adults in the North were kidnapped and sold into enslavement in the South.

Bell will talk about the history of the Reverse Underground Railroad, which he researched for his book titled Stolen: Five Free Boys Kidnapped Into Slavery and Their Astonishing Odyssey Home. It is the true story of five Black boys who were kidnapped in Philadelphia in 1825 and smuggled into slavery in the Deep South and their daring attempt to escape and bring their captors to justice.

Lured onto a small ship in Philadelphia with the promise of food and pay, the boys were instead met with blindfolds, ropes, and knives. During four long months, their kidnappers drove them overland into the Cotton Kingdom in the South to be sold as slaves. Determined to resist, the boys formed a tight brotherhood as they struggled to free themselves and find their way home.

Vintage Movie Night: Whitewashing American History
Thursday, Feb. 10 at 7:30 p.m.

In another Takoma Park Arts event celebrating Black History Month, archival film enthusiast Richard Hall will share his curated selection of mid-20th century classroom film clips from an era when the experiences of Black people and Native Americans were almost never seen or heard.

As state legislatures pass new education laws that are reactions against a true accounting of America’s racist past, take a journey back in time to see how it was in the not-so-good-old days when filmmakers and educators erased the history of minority groups and celebrated white founders and pioneers.
REGREATION

Registration for Winter Classes is open.

TRESTETKS

SCHOLARSHIPS FOR CITY RESIDENTS

Scholarships that were approved for 2021 have now expired. If you would like to continue receiving the discounted rates toward future enrollments, be sure to reapply for 2022. And if you haven’t applied before, now is the time! Visit takomaparkmd.gov/recreation/recreation-scholarships or stop by our office to receive a copy of the application.

DANCE

Ballet & Stretch

A beginning ballet class that focuses on creative and strengthening strategies using ballet foundations. Participants will learn ballet terminology, ballet technique, and partnering. Instructor: Chorinne Butler Virtual 5–11 years Saturday, 10:30–11:15 a.m. January 29-March 19 Resident: $25 / Non-resident: $45

Hip-Hop Dance

Join this Hip Hop Dance Class that focuses on fitness and rhythm. Plus, you get to have lots of fun. These family-friendly moves invite you to bring a friend to create, dance and move virtually anywhere. Instructor: Chorinne Butler Virtual 5–11 years Saturday, 11:00–11:15 a.m. January 29-March 19 Resident: $25 / Non-resident: $45

EDUCATION & DEVELOPMENT

Power Hour

Take advantage of our homework power hour focusing on academic support. We are the perfect balance of academics and fun. Students are given quiet time to complete homework or to read. Staff is available to assist and can review completed assignments. Registration is not required. Takoma Park Community Center Teen Lounge 7500 Maple Avenue Grades 6–12 Monday-Thursday, 3:30–4:30 p.m. Free

Teen Talk Tuesdays

Join Ms. Leica at 3:30 p.m. for Teen Talk Tuesdays. Grab your seats, and we’ll bring the “tea!” Let’s talk about fashion, fads, questions, advice, current events, etc. You name it! Some weeks we will have experts or special guests join in on the conversations. For more information, please contact Leica Monfort at leica@takomaparkmd.gov. Takoma Park Community Center Teen Lounge 7500 Maple Avenue Grades 6–12 Tuesdays, 3:30–4:30 p.m. Free

Youth Summer Employment Program Interest Meeting

Join us at the SYEP Interest Meeting and learn about this 8-week program, which will begin June 27 and end August 20, 2022. The City of Takoma Park is pleased to announce the return of the City’s Summer Youth Employment Program. The purpose of the Summer Youth Employment Program is to provide young people with a summer-long adventure that is more than just a job, but a true learning experience. There are a limited number of meaningful employment opportunities available this year. To register for the Interest Workshop or to find out more information, please visit our website at www.takomaparkmd.gov/recreation or call 301-891-7290. Takoma Park Community Center Azalea Room 7500 Maple Avenue 16–21 years Friday, March 11 6–8 p.m.

FITNESS

Cao皮ra 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 drums, tambourine, and other native Brazilian instruments. Takoma Park Community Center Dance Studio 7500 Maple Avenue Grades 6–12 Mondays, 3:45 p.m.–4:45 p.m. January 31-April 4 Resident: $20 / Non-resident: $30

Zumba for Teens

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

Tokoma Park Community Center Dance Studio 7500 Maple Avenue Grades 6–12 Wednesdays, 3:45 p.m.–4:45 p.m. February 8-April 5 Resident: $20 / Non-resident: $30

Commit 2 Fit

Get your yoga mat and water bottles and join us Saturday mornings at 11:30 a.m. for a fun and energized session to work out and get fit. Limited spaces available; registration required. For more information, please contact Leica Monfort at leica@takomaparkmd.gov.

Takoma Park Community Center Dance Studio 7500 Maple Avenue Grades 6–12 Saturdays, 11:30 a.m.–12:30 p.m. January 29-April 2 Resident: $20 / Non-resident: $30

ADULT

ART

Make a tile-Paint a tile

This class will be making tiles and decorating bought bisque tiles. The tiles will be made and designed of flowers or leaves or lace pressed into the clay. Many objects can be used; it’s the student’s choice. The bisque tiles will be painted, stamped and/or stenciled. The instructor will have many of these to be used. The tiles will be fired and glazed, and colorful permanent tiles will be taken home. There will be a $10 materials fee that will be due to the instructor on the first day of class for clay, boards, glazes, and bisque tiles. Instructor: Alice Sims Takoma Park Community Center 7500 Maple Avenue Art Studio 16 & Up Saturday, 11 a.m.–12 p.m. February 12-March 12 Resident: $30 / Non-resident: $30 Materials Fee: $10

Painting Exploration

In this beginner class, participants are encouraged to try different materials and methods, as well as explore some of the basic elements of design in their work. Participants will try to still life and landscape as well as painting from their imaginations. We will examine paintings by other artists and give helpful feedback to one another in a comfortable setting. Grab a brush and come by the studio to explore painting! A nonrefundable $35 materials fee is due to the instructor on the 1st day of class. Instructor: Caroline Mackinnon Takoma Park Community Center 7500 Maple Avenue Art Studio 16 & UpSaturday, 11 a.m.–12 p.m. February 12-March 12 Resident: $30 / Non-resident: $30 Materials Fee: $10

FITNESS

Afrebat/Afro-Ndoumbo

Dance Class

A contemporary Afro Dance company specializing in African dancing. Zuri Sana’a DanXercise’s mission is to bring you joy and memories through the art of dance. Zuri Sana’a DanXercise combines hip hop, salsa, dancehall, contemporary and African dance moves within...
A Visual Feast of the Arts

Holidays are over, it’s cold outside with dreary skies, and you’re ready to lift your spirits and get rid of the winter blues. How about a visual feast of the arts? Washington, DC museums and galleries are ready for you with a variety of fascinating exhibits. Here’s a sampling below. Admission is free unless noted otherwise.

Alma W. Thomas: Everything is Beautiful – Through Jan. 23, 2022

Tuesday – Sunday, 11 a.m. – 6 p.m.
The Phillips Collection, 1600 21st Street NW, Washington, DC

Along with fellow Howard University graduate Alma Thomas, David Driskell is essential to the story of African American art through this comprehensive look at the artist’s collages, paintings, drawings, and prints. In the exhibition Everything is Beautiful, traces Alma Thomas’s trek from Georgia to DC and beyond through artistry and archival assets, showcasing the artist’s wide-reach influence and dynamic artistic practices.

*Tickets required.

Wednesday – Sunday, 11:30 a.m. – 7 p.m.
Smithsonian American Art Museum, 8th and G Streets NW, Washington, DC


Wednesday – Sunday, 11:30 a.m. – 7 p.m.
National Portrait Gallery, 8th and G Streets NW, Washington, DC 20004

For the first time, a museum focuses on the portrait work of visionary Chinese American artist Hung Liu in this exhibition at the National Portrait Gallery. The exhibit is in memoriam of Liu, who tragically passed away in 2021. Her multilayered paintings, often sourced from photographs, are a feast for the eyes and mind.

The New Woman Behind the Camera – Through Jan. 30, 2022
Open 10 a.m. – 5 p.m.
National Gallery of Art, 8th Street & Constitution Avenue NW, Washington, DC

Breath-taking photographs from more than 120 women photographers around the world. See beautiful images from these trailblazers who embodied a creative and confident spirit and whose work showed unique perspectives from the 1920s to the 1950s.

New Glass Now – Through March 6, 2022
Wednesday – Sunday, 10 a.m. – 5:30 p.m.
Renwick Gallery, Pennsylvania Avenue at 17th Street NW, Washington, DC 20006

Objects, videos, installations, and performances by 50 different artists in 23 countries, allowing visitors to marvel at the tremendous skill of contemporary glassmaking.

Toyin Ojih Odutola: A Countervailing Theory – Through April 3, 2022
Wednesday – Sunday, 10 a.m. – 5:30 p.m.
Hirshhorn Museum & Sculpture Garden, Independence Avenue & 7th Street NW, Washington, DC 20560

Panel by panel, pastels reveal a myth conceived by Odutola, reminding one of a mammoth graphic novel. The installation spans the entirety of the Museum’s circular inner galleries on its second floor.
Director’s Column Will Return

Happy New Year, Takoma Park! This month and next, the library is publishing a special two-part report on information literacy: the skills you need to tell “good” information from “bad.” Information literacy is an immensely important issue today, and this library, along with many other libraries, wants to equip you with the best tools for discerning the massive quantities of information that are thrown at us every day. So that there is space in this newsletter for that article, I’m giving over my column inches to it. It’s that important.

—Jessica Jones

Information Literacy: A Special Report from the Takoma Park Maryland Library, Part One

By Anne LeVeque and Jill Raymond

Not long ago, a library patron asked for help in finding information about Critical Race Theory (CRT). The patron had searched online using Google and said that all the results, “were negative.” We helped the patron find unbiased information about CRT, including a clear definition of it. There is a huge amount of misinformation and disinformation about CRT being bandied about in the public square, not just on social media but in school board meetings, state legislatures, and the courts. Many of these debates are heated and have led to death threats and the courts. Many of these debates are heated and have led to death threats and the courts.

The consequences of poor information literacy can be dire. In the age of COVID, people have literally died because they believed incorrect information about the disease, how to prevent spreading it, how to treat it, and, of course, vaccinations which prevent it. Not only that, but the misinformation around COVID has led to significant financial losses in our economy.

The Johns Hopkins Center for Health Security published a report in October 2021 estimating that the cost of COVID vaccine misinformation and disinformation is between $50 and $300 million dollars per day since May 2021, and that is just in the United States. Global figures are much higher. At press time, the omicron variant has just emerged, and we may see this figure increase significantly.

First, let’s start with some definitions: What is misinformation and what is disinformation, and what is the difference? The meanings are very close. Both terms refer to false information. Misinformation refers to false information, such as false rumors, misunderstandings of information, and misleading use of facts. Disinformation is like misinformation; false information is used deliberately and in an organized fashion. The term has its origins in the Cold War era and originally referred to a type of propaganda, particularly government-sponsored propaganda.

The word “disinformation” has come to mean any organized campaign of false information, whether government-sponsored or not. Think of it as the deliberate intent to convey an untruth or to persuade people of an untruth for the purpose of achieving some goal of the perpetrator.

Information literacy is the ability to distinguish reliable information from misinformation and disinformation. The term arose in the 1980s in the context of libraries and refers to the ability to evaluate information critically.

INFORMATION LITERACY  Page 9

Listen to this!

By Kati Nolfi, Children’s Librarian

Sawbones: A Marital Tour of Misguided Medicine

Dr. Sydnee McElroy is a family doctor, and Justin McElroy is her husband. Both are podcast royalty. Aside from the sometimes-gross details, Sawbones is a wholesome show, for those of us who have overheard children. It occupies a sweet spot for me. It is informational, but not boring and not depressing. Sydnee and Justin balance each other extremely well. The show is educational, but not dull.

Aside from the sometimes-gross details, Sawbones is a wholesome show, for those of us who have overheard children. It occupies a sweet spot for me. It is informational, but not boring and not depressing. Sydnee and Justin balance each other extremely well. The show is educational, but not dull.

Sawbones is a show that covers subjects like IV cocktails or vaping or homeopathy or trepanation, etc. and debunks them as either innocuous but not helpful or downright harmful. The episodes are slowly returning to the wacky medical history of pre-COVID time, but the show has covered subjects like masking, quarantine, and pandemics for the past year and a half. Don’t drill a hole in your head!

News from the Friends of the Takoma Park Maryland Library

By Tim Rahn

Friends Book Group Discussion

The Friends Book Group discussion of Odds Against Tomorrow by Nathaniel Rich will take place on January 13 at 7:30 p.m. in the Hydrangea Room of the Community Center. The library has several copies, and it’s also available as an audiobook from the library’s streaming service Hoopla.

Spring 2022 Big Book Club

The FTPML Big Book Club will read Palace Walk by the Egyptian novelist Naguib Mahfouz this spring. There will be three or four sessions of discussion, which will include an introductory presentation. FTPML will announce the dates and location in next month’s newsletter and the fortnightly Takoma Insular. The book

BOOK CLUB  Page 9

January 2022

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is packaged in such a way as to achieve a specific reaction in listeners/readers. Relevant details may be left out deliberately or irrelevant ones disproportionately emphasized. The best example of this is television commercials. All of us boast, exaggerate, or try to “spin” the facts if, for instance, we are embarrassed about something. But for serious and reliable information based on facts as society currently has the tools to discern them, casual assertions cannot be taken at face value.

An extreme sort of spin is clickbait. Clickbait is not necessarily incorrect, but it is designed to tempt. It screams something phrased to enrage, terrify, offend, or otherwise make people put down what they're doing and look at something they would otherwise ignore. Whenever this is the case, we must look at what interest is being served here. Most clickbait articles are on sites that are paid “per click,” so there is a financial interest in getting people to read these lurid articles.

Satire is such an enormous source of misinformation that some social media platforms have required it to be tagged as such. A certain satire is not always discernible as comedy. Three centuries ago, Johnathan Swift wrote “A Modest Proposal,” which suggests that the poor in Ireland could survive by eating by their children. Scholars debate Swift’s precise target, but it certainly served to excoriate British policy towards the Irish.

Today, Alexandra Petri writes columns for the Washington Post with headlines like, “Big Bird is a Communist.” But as things get passed around on the internet, often without identifying source details, some people mistake satire for sincere argument, and may be inclined to join in up with a movement that isn't real. Is Big Bird a communist? Another example is in the 1990’s, the satirical news website The Onion ran a joke article saying that J.K. Rowling, author of the Harry Potter books, was encouraging children to worship Satan. This article was spread among people who believed it to be a real news article and evidence that the Harry Potter books were Satanic. Those who spread the article, presenting it as real, whether they knew it was satire, have spread misinformation.

The founders of America knew that a mass of people could be manipulated into an angry mob capable of violent behavior none of the individuals would separately, having thought about it, engage in. What they feared is really a combination of disinformation—on the part of the perpetrator, who has something to gain—and misinformation being passed along among members of a crowd that is emotionally primed to believe what the perpetrator is telling them. And that's why the founders knew the framework of checks and balances they devised was not by itself sufficient for protecting democratic government. An educated and knowledgeable populace was necessary.

In this article, we hope to convey information about some of the ways we currently have the tools to discern them, and the power which knowledge gives. Library Director Jessica Jones contributed to this article. Next month's article will discuss how to tell reliable information from misinformation.

A Note to Readers: You can find references, footnotes, and some expanded content on the library website, including links to reliable sources of information along with some amusing illustrations and memes. Go to www.takomapark.info for more information.

**BOOK CLUB**

The program is designed to enhance strength, decrease fall risks; increase physical fitness level; improve cardiovascular capacity and range of motion; and enhance general sense of well-being. Class utilizes a high-back chair, light hand weights, and/or a resistance tube. Equipment is not provided.

**FITNESS**

Don't worry about the cold weather and join your neighbors and friends for basketball practice. Drop-in: no registration is required. A free senior fitness pass is required.

Takoma Park Recreation Center

7315 New Hampshire Avenue Gymnasium

55 & Up

Thursdays, 12–2 p.m.

Free with pass

Walking Group

Don’t worry about the cold weather and join your neighbors and friends for indoor lap walking. Drop-in: no registration is required. A free senior fitness pass is required.

Takoma Park Recreation Center

7315 New Hampshire Avenue Gymnasium

55 & Up

Tuesdays, 1:15–2:30 p.m.

Free with pass

**EDUCATION & DEVELOPMENT**

This class will offer instruction in basic computer skills, including email, safe internet browsing, sending, and receiving photos, using word-processing applications and more. A current Takoma Park Maryland library card is required to access the computers and participate in this class.

Limit 4 spaces. Instructor: Anne LeVeque

Takoma Park Community Center

Computer Room A

7300 Maple Avenue

55 & Up

Wednesdays, 10 a.m.–12 p.m.

January 26–February 16

**RECREATION**

The game room is available for adults aged 55 and older to play pool, table tennis, basketball arcade and other games.

Takoma Park Community Center

Game Room

7300 Maple Avenue

55 & Up

Ongoing

Mondays, 11 a.m.–1:45 p.m.

Tuesdays and Thursdays, 9 a.m.–4 p.m.

Saturdays, 10 a.m.–12 p.m.

Free

**DROP-IN**

This class will offer instruction in basic computer skills, including email, safe internet browsing, sending, and receiving photos, using word-processing applications and more. A current Takoma Park Maryland library card is required to access the computers and participate in this class.

Limit 4 spaces. Instructor: Anne LeVeque

Takoma Park Community Center

Computer Room A

7300 Maple Avenue

55 & Up

Wednesdays, 10 a.m.–12 p.m.

January 26–February 16

**Yoga for 55+**

This class is about the gentle flow of yoga poses modulated to individual's needs depending on their balance level. Improve balance, flexibility, posture, and stamina and energize mind and spirit for better health and well-being. No experience needed.

Students must bring their own yoga mats.

Takoma Park Recreation Center

7315 New Hampshire Avenue Gymnasium

55 & Up

Tuesdays, 12–1 p.m.

January 25–March 22

$5

**Yoga for Healthy Aging**

This class helps build strength, endurance, flexibility, and range-of-motion and improve posture and balance, and aids in preventing/reversing bone loss related to osteoporosis using seated, standing, and floor poses and breathing and relaxation techniques. Students need to provide their own yoga sticky mats, a yoga belt (or equivalent, e.g., a necklace), a tennis ball, and preferably a yoga block and blanket.

Instructor: Carol Mermey

Takoma Park Community Center

Dance Studio

7300 Maple Avenue

55 & Up

Fridays, 12–1 p.m.

January 28–March 25

$5

**Basketball Open Play**

The game room is available for adults aged 55 and older to play pool, table tennis, basketball arcade and other games.

Takoma Park Community Center

Game Room

7300 Maple Avenue

55 & Up

Ongoing

Mondays, 11 a.m.–1:45 p.m.

Tuesday–Friday, 9 a.m.–1 p.m.

Saturday, 10 a.m.–12 p.m.

Free

**VIDEOS**

We all pass around misinformation. We all like to be “in the know.” Sometimes an otherwise reliable source we trust has made a mistake, and we have passed that on in casual conversation or on social media.

One source of misinformation is our own memory. Professional investigators know that the memories of eyewitnesses to crimes or other events are notoriously unreliable, some have even telegraphed their interviewing techniques appropriately.

Are there things you would like to be true, but you suspect probably are not, like horoscopes? Are you ever in arguments with friends about a scandal involving a sports figure or celebrity? You may not want to think this person guilty of serious moral failings, but the credible evidence suggests that maybe they are.

Psychologists know that people too often believe what they want to believe is true for emotional reasons. This is called “confirmation bias.” People often want to believe something just because they think large numbers of other people think it’s true. This can bring about something called the Mandela Effect in which large numbers of people believe that something happened (the death of Nelson Mandela in prison in the 1980’s, when in fact he died in 2013 after serving as president of South Africa) that didn’t occur.

Another source of misinformation is “spin.” Spin is the manipulation of information for a particular purpose. It is not necessarily inaccurate, but it is info that

...
THE FIREHOUSE REPORT

By Jim Jarboe

Maryland fire deaths

The Maryland State Fire Marshal Office reported as of December 29, 2021, 60 people have died in fires compared to 51 in 2020.

Hot vehicle deaths

As of December 29, 2021, 23 children have died in hot vehicles across the country. Grand total to 906 since 1998. Just because we are into fall and winter, deaths to children can still happen in your vehicle. So, when you leave your vehicle, make sure everyone goes with you. Also, lock it!

Meet the delivery crew: (Left to right) TPVFD Jim Jarboe, TPLC/PDG Mike Bigler, TPVFD members Andrew Willey, Ariel Cruz, Auxiliary President Tina Willey, and Chaplain Dave Hooker, Takoma Park Councilmember Terry Seamens and granddaughters Chyanna, they also assisted.

Turkey Dinners for Families in Need at Thanksgiving

For the 27th consecutive year, the Takoma Park VFD and Takoma Park Lions Club have been providing complete turkey dinners purchased at Safeway, each meal serves six to eight people. Thanks to Our Lady of Sorrows and Grace Methodist Church for assisting with families.

Turkey Dinners for Families in Need at Thanksgiving

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Meeting the need for masks and vaccines and protecting children, the elderly, and disabled. While COVID and its variants continue to demand our vigilance, we also need to be ready this winter for power outages, snow blasts, and new threats.

First, help for new danger! — Catalytic Converters. What is a converter? This is a metal attachment under the car, that looks like a small muffler, made of expensive metals. Depending on the metals, each converter is worth $50–$250. Cars built since 1980 with a motor have this converter.

Help is available. Takoma Park police offer “Etch and Catch” Program to mark the converter and make sale/profit difficult in collaboration with RLS and Lowe’s. The car gets a bright yellow sticker that reads, “This vehicle’s catalytic converter has been etched by the Takoma Park Police Dept.” To make an appointment, contact Paula Lisowski, seniors programs manager, at 301-891-7280 or paulal@takomaparkmd.gov. See takomaparkmd.gov/government/recreation/snow-angels.

Question 1: Must I drive home from work at night? I haven’t ever done this on a regular basis. The other night, I almost hit an oncoming car. Is it true that I can do something to limit the danger, glare and accidents?

Answer: First, it’s time to clean up your act. Clean your front/back windshields; dirty ones can impact your visibility but also create glare for oncoming cars. Second, make sure your headlights are clean—dirty ones can impact your visibility. Third, keep a flashlight nearby; blinding drivers is not acceptable.

Question 2: If this happens again? A) wander outside looking for lighted area; B) know where there are working flashlights, battery lanterns, fresh batteries and keep a working flashlight nearby; C) light candles, they look so pretty D) search drawers and closets for flashlights, batteries, and make sure everyone knows where they are. I know I have them somewhere.

Answer: B) Keep at least one working flashlight on all floors with extra batteries and make sure everyone knows where they are. No lighted candles: they are a fire danger.

Answer: Your hearing is fine and so is your sanity—Takoma Park’s “Snow Angels” can dig you out. These angels are Takoma Middle School Students in the Difference Makers Club working with the city of Takoma Park. Note that the program operates on days the students are out of school and when there is two inches or more of snow. You fit the qualifications: Takoma Park resident, or 55 or older or have a disability, have no one at home who can help with shoveling. However, the 2021-22 list is full, so get on the waiting list ASAP.

Contact Paula Lisowski, seniors programs manager, at 301-891-7280 or paulal@takomaparkmd.gov. See takomaparkmd.gov/government/recreation/snow-angels.

Question: What is a converter? The power went out during the heavy winds recently. I was totally in the dark. What should I do if this happens again? A) wander outside looking for lighted area; B) know where there are working flashlights, battery lanterns, fresh batteries and keep a working flashlight nearby; C) light candles, they look so pretty D) search drawers and closets for flashlights, batteries, I know I have them somewhere.

Answer: B) Keep at least one working flashlight on all floors with extra batteries and make sure everyone knows where they are. No lighted candles: they are a fire danger.

Question: I’m worried about snow because I cannot shovel my side-walks or the street, which I know is required in Takoma Park. I’m 66, live alone and my right side is immobile due to an accident last year. My neighbor said there are “angels” in Takoma Park who do this. Am I losing my hearing and my sanity?

Answer: Your hearing is fine and so is your sanity—Takoma Park’s “Snow Angels” can dig you out. These angels are Takoma Middle School Students in the Difference Makers Club working with the city of Takoma Park. Note that the program operates on days the students are out of school and when there is two inches or more of snow. You fit the qualifications: Takoma Park resident, or 55 or older or have a disability, have no one at home who can help with shoveling. However, the 2021-22 list is full, so get on the waiting list ASAP.

Contact Paula Lisowski, seniors programs manager, at 301-891-7280 or paulal@takomaparkmd.gov. See takomaparkmd.gov/government/recreation/snow-angels.

Question: I must drive home from work at night. I haven’t ever done this on a regular basis. The other night, I almost hit an oncoming car. Is it true that I can do something to limit the danger, glare and accidents?

Answer: First, it’s time to clean up your act. Clean your front/back windshields; dirty ones can impact the light beams causing glare from incoming cars; second, make sure your headlights are clean—dirty ones can not only affect your visibility but also create glare for oncoming cars. Second, make sure your headlight are properly aligned, so they face straight ahead, high or too low beams can limit your visibility and blind oncoming drivers.

Take care of these items, and you can say, “Yes, we can.”with confidence.

Contact us at 301-8891-7126 or tpvfd@takomaparkmd.gov. Join us once a month for “Dear Beatrice: Prepared” on Talk of Takoma, WOWD/LP radio 99.3, Sundays 1–3 p.m.

Editor's note

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.

Turkish: You can use the translation feature on the site. You can also use the language in the menu bar to select the language.

Amharic: You can use the translation feature on the site. You can also use the language in the menu bar to select the language.

Arabic: You can use the translation feature on the site. You can also use the language in the menu bar to select the language.


Docs in Progress Sets Its Lens on the Future

By Sean Gossard

For Docs in Progress, it’s been a pretty wild ride the past few years, with some major changes planned by the Silver Spring-based film organization that were turned upside down by the COVID-19 pandemic.

“We had a lot of internal changes during the pandemic and before,” says Docs in Progress executive director Lynn O’Connell. “Our fabulous founder Erica Ginsberg stepped down in 2019 and Docs in Progress also started moving into its new offices in Silver Spring in partnership with Montgomery County’s Housing Opportunities Commission.”

Docs in Progress, which is dedicated to helping local filmmakers, was selected as one of only three nonprofits to occupy ground floor space in Alexander House in downtown Silver Spring. The new facility features a state-of-the-art education center, as well as a new screening room with more than 50 seats.

Unfortunately, because of the COVID-19 pandemic, the group had to delay the opening ceremony of their new facility for nearly two years. They currently plan on having a ribbon-cutting ceremony in March of 2022 along with their Community Film Festival.

Along with the delay in moving into their new home, Docs in Progress also had to figure out how to adjust to a world with social distancing and quarantines. “During COVID, we switched over to all digital,” says O’Connell, who joined Docs in Progress in the beginning of 2021. “It has not been easy, any arts organization has struggled because it is difficult to build community if you can only do it online and not be in the same room as other people. On the other hand, the positive of all this is that we learned that it is possible to do great things and reach more people through the power of online.”

Those digital events still include screening new documentaries by local filmmakers, including the group’s Silver Screenings series. This year, they featured the documentary “Finding Fellowship” by Prince George’s filmmaker Jason Green. The film tells the story of how three racially segregated Methodist churches – two white and one black – decided to merge in the wake of Dr. Martin Luther King Jr’s assassination in 1968.

“It was very local and very well attended,” said O’Connell. “We’ve also continued our trailer nights. These are free and everyone is welcome to share their ideas to help the filmmaker move their film along to completion.”

Docs in Progress has classes for aspiring filmmakers of all ages. One workshop was on making documentaries during the pandemic. “We’ve done classes for the community on how to put these films together,” says O’Connell. “We also do a teen workshop and did one around the theme ‘My Life During COVID.’ One student did a documentary on a local food pantry in Montgomery County and another did one on her father who opened a restaurant that closed during COVID.”

They also have a few classes coming up this fall, including ones for beginners on photography and other more advanced classes on getting documentaries into film festivals and how to fundraise and write scripts.

O’Connell says they plan to return to in-person screenings and classes next year with the opening of their new facility, but will also have classes and screenings available virtually. She says the Community Film Festival will be both in-person and virtual with films and Q&A panels from local filmmakers.

Docs in Progress also partnered with the Kennedy Center on an initiative to get more people with disabilities into the film industry.

O’Connell says that Docs in Progress was approached by Day Al-Mohamed, a disabilities attorney and Docs in Progress board member, who is in a wheelchair and blind; about making a documentary about disabilities. Her series “Renegades” was released on American Masters PBS in July.

“We discovered a huge need to get people with disabilities in the filmmaking industry,” O’Connell says.

O’Connell says that Docs in Progress plans on using the lessons it learned during the pandemic to help it grow and reach new audiences in the future.

“When we look to 2022 and beyond we’ll focus more on people online who may not be able to get to Silver Spring or may not be able to travel,” she says “We’ll use what we learned going forward.”

For updates or to sign up for Docs in Progress screenings or classes, visit www.docusinprogress.org or facebook.com/docsinprogress.

STAFF SPOTLIGHT

Five Questions for Ira Kowler, Economic Development Manager

Before joining the staff of the City of Takoma Park, Ira Kowler was Geographic Team Director at the City of Baltimore Development Corporation. What brings him to Takoma Park? He’s “excited by the opportunity to work in local government at a smaller scale, where you can make a greater day-to-day impact.” For him community means “all the people who impact the quality of your life, whether you know them or not.”

Here is Ira’s take on our five questions for new staff members.

1. Favorite Place/Activity in Takoma Park: With two farmer’s markets, you can get (almost) all your shopping done without the grocery store.

2. Best Thing about Working in Takoma Park: How easy it is to get around the community without my car.

3. What’s on Your Desk Right Now: A cup of coffee, a Ward Map, and a whole bunch of sticky notes.

4. What You Do in Your “Spare Time”: I’m a big soccer fan, so most weekend mornings you can find me watching an Arsenal game, trying not to wake anyone up!

5. Best Advice You Ever Got (and from who): “Whenever you cook bacon, always make an extra strip” —My wife

Fun Facts

Most Played Song on His Playlist: Take a Chance on Me by ABBA

How He Takes His Coffee: Shot of espresso before I leave the house, black coffee at the office

One Thing He Wants Residents to Know About Him: My cats have names that are paw-sitively purr-fect cat-puns. Can you guess them?

Ira Kowler at work and play
POSTPONED

Winter Basketball League
• Basketball practices will begin the week of January 18.
• The first game of the Basketball League will be Saturday, January 29.

Futsal League
• Futsal practices will begin Saturday, January 22.
• The first game for the Futsal League will be Sunday, February 6.

Rentals
• Rentals Services will be postponed until further notice.

TPPD Community Police Academy
• Postponed until Spring

PUBLIC DAYS OF NOTE

Martin Luther King Jr’s Day - City Offices Closed

Monday, Jan. 17
All City offices and facilities will be closed Jan. 17 for the Martin Luther King Jr. Day.
The Takoma Park Police Department is open 24/7 for emergency services.

CITY CAREERS

The City of Takoma Park recruiting includes all career staff, part time or temporary staff, interns, and more.
The list of open positions changes frequently, so please check takomaparkmd.gov/careers regularly for up-to-date information.
The most recent available positions are:
• Crime Analyst responsible for the collection, collation, analysis, and dissemination of information related to crimes occurring in and around Takoma Park.
• Childcare Director responsible for planning, leading, and conducting recreation activities for Morning Addition & Afternoon Addition at the Community Center and Before and After the Bell at the Recreation Center.
• Recreation Program Leader II to plan and administer all aspects of the Teen Lounge between 2–7 p.m., Mondays through Fridays for the remainder of the school year.
• Facilities Maintenance Supervisor to perform skilled work in the repair and maintenance of City facilities and equipment and oversee the day-to-day operations of the Building Maintenance and Custodial divisions.

Applications, and details about these and other open positions can be found at takomaparkmd.gov/careers.

The City of Takoma Park is proud to be an equal opportunity employer. We strive to be a diverse workforce that is representative of the residents we serve and the area in which we live. We are dedicated to creating an inclusive environment where employees of diverse backgrounds can thrive and make a positive impact in the services we provide.

SCHOLARSHIPS FOR CITY RESIDENTS

Scholarships that were approved for 2021 will expire at the end of December 2021. If you would like to continue receiving the discounted rates toward future enrollments, be sure to reapply for 2022.
And if you haven’t applied before, now is the time!
Visit takomaparkmd.gov/recruitment/recruitment-scholarship or stop by our office to receive a copy of the application.

COMMUNITY ACTIVITIES

City of Takoma Park’s 12th Annual Mid-Winter Play Day

Organized by the nonprofit Let’s Play America assisted by the TP Recreation Department
Sunday, February 13, 1 – 4pm
Takoma Park Community Center, 7500 Maple Avenue
Everyone deserves to play, people of all abilities, ages, and backgrounds.
This indoor/outdoor event will have activities inside and out. When inside, all attendees and volunteers will wear masks. Performers in the Auditorium will include the Takoma Park Community Band, the Chicken Lady, a comedy half hour, Dance Exchange, and Simon Says with Congressman Raskin. Outside activities will include double dutch, floor hockey, hula hoop, hopscotch, corn hole, and four square. Attendees will be able to enjoy these inside activities: dress-up, balloon game, decorate a cookie, board games, face painting, playing with boxes, playing with play dough, recreation room games, yoga heights (mini yoga sessions), and giant checker, chess, and connect four. Free refreshments will be provided by the Co-op, Giant Food, Target, and Starbucks.
Volunteers may email Pat theplaylady@gmail.com or text her at 301-928-9962.
Later this month, teen volunteers will be able to sign-up on the Montgomery County Volunteer website. Teens will volunteer from 12 – 5 p.m. www.let’splayamerica.org

Historic Takoma Reading Room

Sundays (first and third) 7:22 Carroll Avenue
Visitors will have access to reference books on Takoma and Maryland history, the collection of Takoma Voices and City newsletters, historical journals, and more. Historic Takoma is also hosting the Maryland Reference Collection of the Takoma Park Maryland Library during the library’s renovation. Historic Takoma volunteers will be available to answer questions about the collections and Historic Takoma. Reading Room hours will be 1 – 4 p.m. on the first and third Sundays of each month. historic.takoma.org

Docs In Progress

Doc In Progress is offering programs ranging from beginner filmmaking and storytelling workshops to workshops for emerging filmmakers looking to polish their skills in camerawork, editing, and more. For more information visit www.docsinprogress.org/filmmakers.