

Takoma Park News



April 2024

A newsletter published by the City of Takoma Park, Maryland

Volume 63, No. 4 ■ takomaparkmd.gov

Important Dates

Takoma Park Fitness Expo
Saturday, April 6, 10 a.m.–2 p.m.
Takoma Park Recreation Center
7315 New Hampshire Ave.

Family Outdoor Movie Night
Saturday, April 6—starts at dusk
Ed Wilhelm Field
2 Darwin Ave.

**Flower Avenue Community/
Ward 5 Meeting**
Sunday, April 7, 3–5 p.m.
Dynamic Choice Salon
8004 Flower Ave..

Fixit Clinic
Sunday, April 14, 2–4 p.m.
Takoma Park Maryland Library
7505 New Hampshire Ave., Suite 205

Earth Day/Arbor Day
Saturday, April 20, 10 a.m.–2 p.m.
Sligo Creek Stream Valley Park
Playground

Favorite Poem Night
Wednesday, April 24, 7 p.m.
Takoma Park Maryland Library
7505 New Hampshire Ave., Suite 205

City Nature Challenge
Friday, April 26, 1–3 p.m.
Circle Woods
(Poplar and Circle Avenues)

Saturday, April 27, 10 a.m.–noon
Stuart Armstrong Garden
(Philadelphia and Holly Avenues)

**Percussion Discussion
Tap Performance**
Friday, April 26, 7:30 p.m.
Takoma Park Community Center
7500 Maple Ave.

**Día de los niños/Día de los libros
Children's Day/Day of the book**
Saturday, April 27, 11 a.m.
Takoma Park Maryland Library
7505 New Hampshire Ave., Suite 205

Renew Your Commitment to Mother Earth

by Eric Bond

The first Earth Day was held on April 22, 1970. Denis Hayes, a young environmentalist, was tapped by Senator Gaylord Nelson (D, Wisc.) to organize a day of education and action in the wake of a devastating environmental disaster. Sen. Nelson had been impressed with the power of students protesting the Vietnam War with consciousness-raising teach-ins. He sought to harness that passion for the Earth. Hence, the date for the first Earth Day (and those subsequent) was selected to fall between spring break and final exams.

The 1960s saw the beginning of a greater understanding in the United States about the cost that our fellow organisms were paying for human industry and conveniences. In 1962, Silver Spring's own Rachel Carson published *Silent Spring*, calling attention to the environmental damage and wildlife deaths resulting from common pesticides. The increase in air pollution from automobiles and factories throughout the 1960s degraded air quality in major cities to the point that it could no longer be ignored. Then, in 1969, a Union Oil well off the coast of Santa Barbara, California, blew out, dumping 3 million gallons of oil into the Pacific Ocean, killing more than



Photo by Eric Bond.

Bibi Etienne takes a break from planting trees in Circle Woods during a March 24 tree-planting. Earth Month will provide more activities for planting trees and caring for our urban forest. Come out to the Earth Day/Arbor Day celebration at Sligo Creek Stream Valley Park on April 20.

10,000 seabirds, dolphins, seals, and sea lions.

Earth Day, organized four months after Santa Barbara's Environmental Rights Day,

was a protest on behalf of a beleaguered planet. Fifty-four years later, we have even

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Acting Deputy Managers Named to Permanent Roles

by Sean Gossard

New Takoma Park City Manager Robert DiSpirito announced a slate of promotions last month, moving two acting deputy city managers into permanent positions and naming a director of Housing & Community Development.

David Eubanks will serve as permanent deputy city manager for external operations—including overseeing the Housing & Community Development, Public Works, Library, and Recreation departments—while also being the first go-to to serve as acting city manager during any of DiSpirito's temporary absences.

"I am incredibly grateful to have the opportunity to continue supporting the City of Takoma Park as deputy city manager," Eubanks said. "I have had the privilege of serving in a number of roles during my three-year tenure, including deputy director of Public Works, director of Housing & Community Development, and acting city manager. In each instance, I have been able to expand my understanding of the city's operations and work collaboratively with our knowledgeable and hardworking staff. I believe my experience thus far will be beneficial in my new role overseeing the City's primarily external facing departments."

DiSpirito also announced that Andrew



David Eubanks is deputy city manager for external operations.



Andrew Bolduc is the deputy city manager for internal operations.



Ira Kowler is the director of Housing & Community Development.

Bolduc will serve as the city's deputy city manager for internal operations—Human Resources, Information Technology, Communications, and staff liaison to the city attorney and labor attorney.

"It has been a great honor to serve Takoma Park as its acting deputy city manager over the past several months," Bolduc said. "I am thrilled at the opportunity to continue to work with Robert, David, [Executive Assistant to the City Manager] Christine [Heidebrecht], and the exceptional senior leadership team on the many critical projects and innovative initiatives that will help bring this organization and

community forward."

Bolduc will also serve as acting city manager in the event that DiSpirito and Eubanks are unavailable.

"David and Andrew, as you well know, work closely and very well, productively and professionally together," DiSpirito said in an email announcing the news. "This structure of two deputies provides parity and is one that both David and Andrew favor as well. I believe that the three of us will serve as a strong administrative team. David and Andrew will have the authority to make decisions on behalf of departments

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Mayor & Council
7500 Maple Ave.
Takoma Park, MD 20912

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On the DOCKET

CITY COUNCIL

Individuals interested in receiving a weekly city council agenda and committee calendar update by email can sign up by sending a message to clerk@takomaparkmd.gov.

The public may comment at regular meetings of the city council in person or via Zoom. To comment over Zoom, you must register by 5 p.m. on the meeting date. There is no need to register to comment in person.

CITY COUNCIL MEETINGS

(Meeting start times can change. Please check the agenda page on the city website to confirm the time.)

April meetings of the City Council will be mainly devoted to reviewing and discussing the city manager's recommended budget for fiscal year 2025.

- Wednesday, April 3—City Council Regular Meeting, 7:30 p.m. in the Community Center Auditorium
 - City Manager Presentation of Recommended FY25 Budget
 - General Government (City Attorney, City Manager's Office, City Clerk, Communications, Finance, Human Resources, Information Systems, Legislative)
 - ARPA
- Wednesday, April 10—City Council Regular Meeting, 7:30 p.m. in the Community Center Auditorium
 - Public Hearing
 - Public Works, Police
- Monday, April 15—City Council Special Meeting, 7:30 p.m. in the Community Center Auditorium
 - Library, Recreation, Housing and Community Development
- Wednesday, April 17—City Council Regular Meeting, 7:30 p.m. in the Community Center Auditorium
 - Budget Reconciliation
- Wednesday, April 24—City Council Meeting, 7:30 p.m. in the Community Center Auditorium
 - Public Hearing
 - Budget Reconciliation
- Monday, April 29—City Council Special Meeting, 7:30 p.m. in the Community Center Auditorium
 - Final Budget Reconciliation
- The City Council will NOT meet on May 1 to provide time for staff to finalize the budget after reconciliation is completed.

CITY BOARD AND COMMITTEE MEETINGS

Check the calendar on the city website for the most up-to-date information on council and committee meetings, including links to access meetings and agendas. Visit takomaparkmd.gov and click on "Events and Meetings." Many City boards and committees continue to meet on Zoom. Some are holding hybrid meetings (in-person/Zoom)

ARTS AND HUMANITIES COMMITTEE

Tuesday, April 9, 6:30 p.m.
(Community Center Hydrangea Room)

BOARD OF ELECTIONS

Thursday, April 11, 7:30 p.m.
(remote/virtual)

EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS COMMITTEE

Thursday, April 18, 7 p.m.
(Community Center Hydrangea Room with virtual option)

GRANTS REVIEW COMMITTEE

Tuesday, April 9, 6:30 p.m.
(remote/virtual)

POLICE CHIEF'S ADVISORY BOARD

Monday, April 15, 7 p.m.

ADA NOTICE

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

(Community Center Hydrangea Room with virtual option)

RECREATION AND COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT COMMITTEE

Thursday, April 18, 7 p.m.
(remote/virtual)

SUSTAINABLE MARYLAND CERTIFIED COMMITTEE

Monday, April 1, 7 p.m.
(Community Center Hydrangea Room with virtual option)

YOUTH COUNCIL

Thursday, April 11, 4 p.m.
(Community Center Hydrangea Room with virtual option)
Thursday, April 25, 4 p.m.
(Community Center Hydrangea Room with virtual option)

CouncilAction

Only negative votes and abstentions are noted here. All resolutions and ordinances are published after adoption.

January 31, 2024

- Resolution 2024-8 authorized the donation of a video camera trailer to the City of Takoma

Park from the Takoma Langley Crossroads Development Authority, Inc.

February 28, 2024

- Ordinance 2024-2 approved FY 2024 Budget Amendment No. 3. First reading of the ordinance was held on February 21.

FY 2025 Budget Public Hearings

The city manager is scheduled to present his recommended FY 2025 Budget on Wednesday, April 3, 2024. There are two special opportunities to comment during public hearings:

- Wednesday, April 10, 7:30 p.m.
- Wednesday, April 24, 7:30 p.m.

Both hearings will take place in the Community Center Auditorium, 7500 Maple Ave. The public is invited to attend the hearings and sign up to speak. Advance sign up is available until 5 p.m. on the day

of the hearing by contacting Jessie Carpenter, city clerk, at clerk@takomaparkmd.gov or 301-891-7267. Those wishing to comment over Zoom should register at the link provided on the meeting agenda page.

The City Council welcomes resident comments on the budget at these public hearings or on any Wednesday night in April. Comments may also be emailed to clerk@takomaparkmd.gov for distribution to the City Council.

Engage with Your City Government!

Takoma Park has a council/manager form of government. The city manager of Takoma Park oversees the day-to-day operation of the city operations and works to ensure that city staff provide excellent services to the community and adhere to best practices in managing city finances.

The city council appoints the city manager, implements the policies set by the council, and prepares an annual budget for their consideration.

The Takoma Park City Council consists of seven members. Six of these members are elected by ward, and one is elected at-large and serves as the mayor. You can watch and participate in city council meetings at the community center or online. On the city council page of the city website (takomaparkmd.gov), you can find agendas, supplementary information, and links to videos of past meetings.

If you are unsure about which ward you are in, check the ward map and street directory, also available through the city council page.

Contact information for the mayor, city council and city manager.

- Mayor **Talisha Searcy**: talishas@takomaparkmd.gov
- Ward 1 Councilmember **Shana Fulcher**: shanaf@takomaparkmd.gov
- Ward 2 Councilmember **Cindy Dyballa**: cindyd@takomaparkmd.gov
- Ward 3 Councilmember **Randy Gibson**: randallg@takomaparkmd.gov
- Ward 4 Councilmember **Terry Seamens**: terrys@takomaparkmd.gov
- Ward 5 Councilmember **Cara Honzak**: carah@takomaparkmd.gov
- Ward 6 Councilmember **Jason Small**: jasons@takomaparkmd.gov
- Takoma Park City Manager **Robert DiSpirito**: robertd@takomaparkmd.gov



Mayor Talisha Searcy



Shana Fulcher (Ward 1)



Cindy Dyballa (Ward 2)



Randy Gibson (Ward 3)



Terry Seamens (Ward 4)



Cara Honzak (Ward 5)



Jason Small (Ward 6)

Public NOTICES

Recruitment for City Boards and Committees: Consider Serving! The next appointments will be made in June. Apply by June 3, 2024

The City Council welcomes residents with all different types of experience and knowledge and seeks 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.

Applications are being accepted now to fill vacancies and terms ending on a number of boards and committees. Appointments will be made in June. If you are thinking of applying, this is a good time to sit in on a meeting or two, to see if it is a good fit for you. **Residents of Wards 4, 5, and 6 are particularly encouraged to apply.**

We know there will be one or more vacancies in June on the following, but there will likely be other openings as well.

Appointed members are eligible to receive a \$40 stipend per meeting attended.

- Commission on Landlord-Tenant Affairs
- Emergency Preparedness Committee
- Ethics Commission
- Recreation and Community Engagement Committee
- Sustainable Maryland Committee
- Tree Commission

Possible vacancies:

- Arts and Humanities
- Board of Elections
- Grants Review Committee

Contact Assistant City Clerk Irma Nalvarte, IrmaN@takomaparkmd.gov or 301-891-7214 for more information.

Takoma Park Election for Mayor and City Council November 5, 2024

2024 is an election year for Takoma Park. Election Day is Tuesday, November 5. The Nominating Caucus will take place on Tuesday, September 10.

- Our election is *completely separate* from the presidential general election, which takes place on the same day.
- If you are already registered to vote at your current address, there is no need to register again.
- All residents ages 16 and above are eligible to register and vote for mayor and city council.
- Non-citizen residents may register with the City Clerk to vote in elections for mayor and council.
- **This election will be vote by mail.** Every registered voter will receive a ballot in the mail. Ballots may be returned to a Takoma Park ballot drop box or returned by mail.
- The Community Center will be open on November 5 for residents who choose to vote in person.
- Candidates who wish to have their name placed on the ballot must be nominated at the City Nominating Caucus on September 10.

The complete election calendar is posted at takomaparkmd.gov.

Questions? Contact Jessie Carpenter, city clerk, at 301-891-7267 or jessiec@takomaparkmd.gov.

- Non-citizen residents may register with the City Clerk to vote in elections for mayor and council.
- **This election will be vote-by-mail.** Every registered voter will receive a ballot in the mail. Ballots may be returned to a Takoma Park ballot drop box or returned by mail.
- The Community Center will be open on November 5 for residents who choose to vote in person.
- Candidates who wish to have their name placed on the ballot must be nominated at the City Nominating Caucus on September 10.

Questions? Contact City Clerk Jessie Carpenter at 301-891-7267 or jessiec@takomaparkmd.gov.

Las Elecciones de la Ciudad de Takoma Park para Alcalde y Concejo 5 de noviembre de 2024

2024 es un año electoral para la Ciudad de Takoma Park. El día de las elecciones es el martes 5 de noviembre. La Reunión Electoral de Nominaciones se llevará a cabo el martes 10 de septiembre.

- Nuestra elección *es completamente independiente* de la elección general presidencial, que se lleva a cabo el mismo día.
- Si ya está registrado para votar en su dirección actual, no es necesario que se registre nuevamente
- Todos los residentes mayores de 16 años son elegibles para registrarse y votar por un alcalde y miembro del concejo.
- Los residentes no ciudadanos Americanos pueden registrarse ante la Secretaria Municipal para votar en las elecciones para alcalde y concejo.
- Estas elecciones se votará por correo. Cada votante registrado recibirá una papeleta por correo. Las papeletas pueden ser devueltas por correo o colocadas en una buzón electoral de Takoma Park.
- El Centro Comunitario estará abierto el 5 de noviembre para los residentes que decidan votar en persona.
- Los candidatos que deseen que su nombre sea colocado en la papeleta electoral deben ser nominados en la Reunión Electoral de Nominación de la Ciudad el 10 de septiembre.

El calendario electoral completo está publicado en takomaparkmd.gov.

¿Preguntas? Para más información en español póngase en contacto con Irma Nalvarte, 301-891-7214 o IrmaN@takomaparkmd.gov.

FY 2025 Living Wage Rate Established

Every City contract for the provision of services awarded after a competitive bid or proposal process requires the contractor and any subcontractor to pay each employee assigned to perform services under the city contract a living wage. The current living wage rate is \$17.05 per hour. Effective July 1, 2024 through June 30, 2025, the Takoma Park living wage rate will be \$17.60 per hour. Certain contracts are exempted from this requirement. Additional information can be found at takomaparkmd.gov/services/bids-contracts/.

ROLES

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when requested or needed by the departments. They will consult with me when a matter has financial or policy implications or is particularly complex, or should it be their desire to speak with me. I have great confidence in their professional judgment and abilities.”

The moves are expected to be cost-neutral, according to DiSpirito, as two other open positions—policy analyst and ARPA manager—won't need to be filled.

DiSpirito also announced that Ira Kowler will take on the role of permanent director

of Housing & Community Development after serving as the acting director for the past year and will report directly to Eubanks.

“Ira has performed very well this past year in the acting HCD director role while still covering his economic development duties,” said DiSpirito. “He has the enthusiastic support of his department staff, works quite well with the senior leadership team, and has earned this opportunity. His knowledge of planning, housing, and economic development, in particular, coupled with his productivity, will continue to serve us well.”

Editor's note

English:

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

French:

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

Spanish:

Busque este ícono junto a los artículos del boletín que puede leer en línea en otros idiomas usando la función de traducción en el sitio web de la Ciudad de Takoma Park. Después de hacer clic en el enlace del artículo, busque en la esquina superior derecha de la página web junto a la barra de navegación y seleccione el idioma que desee con el cuadro desplegable.

Amharic:

ኮራንት ያለውን ደህንነት ይፈልጉ የዚህ መጽሔት አርባዎ ራስዎ ማውጣት ለሌሎች ቋንቋዎች በመስመር ላይ ማንበብ ይቻላል ተርጉሙን በመጠቀም በታክሜ ከተማ ውስጥ ያለውን ባህሪ የፓርክ ድርጅት ጣቢያ ጠቀሜታዎን በኋላ ስድስት ክፍሎች ላይ ይመልከቱ በላይኛው ቀኝ ጥንግ ላይ ታክሰን የአሰሪ ክፍሉን ይምረጡ የሚጠቀሙበት ቋንቋ ተቀልቋይ ሳጥን.

Building COMMUNITY

Roll into Spring, Safely and Sustainably

by Kaysi Webley
Special Projects Coordinator

As the vibrant colors of spring blossom around us, it's the perfect time to celebrate the joys of walking and cycling to school or work and for leisure. Spring is an ideal season for embracing sustainable and active commuting options. Let's review the importance of seasonal safety checks and how we can collectively contribute to a greener future during Earth Month.

1. Embrace the Spring Advantage: Spring brings longer days, milder temperatures, and refreshing breezes that beckon us outdoors. It's an opportune time to encourage our students and remind ourselves to walk or cycle to school or work, reaping the benefits of increased physical activity and getting a positive start to the day.

2. Seasonal Safety Checks for Safer Routes: Just as we prepare our homes for the changing seasons, it's essential to conduct safety checks for bicycles and pedestrian pathways. Ensure that bikes are in good condition by inspecting the ABCs: **A**ir in tires is sufficient; **B**rakes are not worn; **C**hains and cranks are not loose, rusted, or gunked up. In addition, make sure that your bike has functioning lights and bells. Pedestrians should be sure to use sidewalks, pathways, and crosswalks. Please report issues to 311 or online using MY-TKPK (takomaparkmd.gov/services/my-tkpk/) so that issues can be addressed to create and maintain safer routes throughout our city.

3. Navigating Changing Weather Conditions: As temperatures fluctuate during spring, it's crucial to be prepared for



changing weather conditions. Dress in layers, wear reflective gear, and carry rain gear on cloudy days. Remember to be mindful of wet surfaces, especially after rain, and to always follow traffic rules. By instilling and adopting good habits, we will be ready to navigate safely through any weather.

4. Earth Day and Eco-Friendly Commuting: As Earth Day approaches on April 22, let's reflect on the environmental impact of our daily choices. Walking and cycling to school and work contribute significantly to reducing our carbon footprint. These sustainable modes of transportation not only improve air quality but also foster a sense of environmental responsibility among our youth. This Earth Day, let's commit to making a positive impact by embracing eco-friendly commuting initiatives.

5. Call to Action: Implementing Eco-Friendly Commuting: We urge residents, schools, and businesses to come together to support eco-friendly commuting initiatives. Consider organizing walking or cycling events, establishing bike-sharing programs, or promoting carpooling among families. By collectively adopting these initiatives, we can create a culture of sustainability that benefits our environment and enhances the well-being of our community.

6. Get Ready for Bike Month in May: May is Bike Month! Check the City webpage for more bike information: bit.ly/TKPKBikeways. Below are some of the programs we have planned.

- Bike to School Day is May 8. Please contact your school to get more information.
- Adult Learn-to-Ride Bike Class

is May 11th at the Takoma Junction parking lot. Class registration opened Monday, March 25. Please check in at waba.org/learntoride/. Spaces are limited so register early! (Rain date is May 18.)

- Bike to Work Day is May 17. We have three stops this year: Takoma/Langley Crossroads, Downtown/Old Takoma, and Sligo Creek Trail on New Hampshire Avenue. For more information and to register, visit biketoworkmetrodc.com/
- Free pop-up bike repairs. More information on dates and locations will be available at waba.org/learntoride/.
- Check out the 2019 Takoma Park Bike Map to plan your route. It is available for free from public buildings and bike shops in the city or online at bit.ly/TKPKbikemap.

Takoma Park Bikeways Projects

We want YOUR feedback on new bikeway projects! The City of Takoma Park is actively working on the designs for multiple bikeway projects, including the New Ave Bikeway on New Hampshire Avenue, an upgrade to the Metropolitan Branch Trail, and a redesign of Maple Avenue. Follow along with each project on the City's website where you can learn about public events and opportunities to participate in the planning process! Visit bit.ly/TKPK-Bikeways.

Spring is a time of renewal and growth, and by embracing sustainable commuting options, we sow the seeds for a healthier, happier, and greener future. Let's roll into spring.



Saturday, April 20, 2024
(*Rain date April 21)

Takoma Park Earth Day Celebration!



Because there is no Planet B.

10 AM-2 PM | Sligo Creek Stream Valley Park Playground

Snowcones • Art • Games • Guided Tree Walk • EV Showcase

More info: takomaparkmd.gov/sustainability | dorothy@takomaparkmd.gov | (301) 891-7623

Celebrate Our Leafy Neighbors on Arbor Day

by Marty Frye, Urban Forest Manager

April is a special time for tree lovers. The soil is warming up, the buds are ready to burst into a rainbow of flowers and leaves, and our trees awaken from their wintery slumber to start stretching their limbs. First comes the glow of the red maple flowers and the shimmering white of the serviceberry flowers, followed by cherries, redbuds, pawpaws, tulip trees, lindens, and more!

To mark this rebirth, we celebrate Arbor Day. Officially, National Arbor Day is April 26—but here in Takoma Park, we celebrate it on Saturday, April 20, in conjunction with Earth Day activities. This is a time to focus on all the benefits that trees bring us, such as cooling shade, stormwater interception, wildlife habitat, and a calmer and more pleasant urban environment.

Most importantly, Arbor Day is a time to focus on what we can do to promote the health of our trees and urban forest. It is time to spread wood mulch or shredded leaves on the soil out to the drip line of your trees. It is time to prepare to water any young trees on your property throughout the growing season and to water mature trees during times of drought.

And it is time to follow-through on plans you've made to plant a new tree!

Many residents have been participating in our Tree Takoma program to get the expertise of a Casey Trees Urban Forster to



Photo by Eric Bond

find the right location and species in their yard for a new tree. Trees are most likely to live a long and healthy life when species and location are well-considered. After confirming their planting plan, Tree Takoma participants then get the trees installed in the upcoming planting season. The program is provided by the City of Takoma Park at zero cost to the resident.

To sign up to be a Tree Takoma participant, visit the Urban Forestry page of the city's website. On this page, you can also find helpful information on hiring an arborist, recommendations on tree care best practices, information on all the work the city does to manage trees in public space, and information on tree regulations and permits you should be aware of.

Come celebrate Arbor Day and Earth Day on Saturday, April 20, 10 a.m.–2 p.m., by the Sligo Creek Stream Valley Park playground. I will be leading tree walks and will be available to answer all your tree questions.

The ARTS

Percussion Discussion Celebrates Tap Dance

Friday, April 26, 7:30 p.m.
Takoma Park Community Center
7500 Maple Ave.
Free performance

The local Knock on Wood Tap Studio has redefined tap dancing for more than two decades, and the studio's resident ensembles will share their talents in a free performance at the Takoma Park Community Center on April 26.

Percussion Discussion includes three groups at different age and experience levels. Capitol Tap features youth tap dancers, Monumental Tap includes intermediate-level adult dancers, and District Tap highlights advanced adult performers. Each ensemble has its own repertoire, and they collaborate on intergenerational performances.

Lisa Swenton-Eppard founded Capitol Tap in 2010, followed by District Tap and Monumental Tap. She grew up in her mother's dance studio in southern Maryland where she learned to tap dance at an early age and started teaching when she was 15 years old.

"Tap was the one genre that spoke to me the most, and it's been a mainstay in my life," she says. "I'm now in my 38th year as a tap dance educator, not just for my own companies but also for other dance studios in the area."

This performance is part of the City's *Takoma Park Arts* series, which includes free concerts, theater, dance, art exhibitions, and film screenings at the Takoma Park Community Center.

Percussion Discussion incorporates both



Photos: Percussion Discussion

historical and contemporary tap dance and has performed at the Kennedy Center, Na-

tional Museum of African American History and Culture, Wolf Trap, and other venues.

"My dancers talk about the sense of connection and community they feel when creating music and dance together," Swenton-Eppard said. "Performing is a form of communication and finding common ground with others through a range of emotions."

The origins of tap dance are rooted in the Stono Rebellion in South Carolina in 1739, where enslaved Africans used weapons and drums in an unsuccessful uprising. This led to a law being passed a year later that prohibited enslaved people from playing musical instruments. Scholars believe this to be the precursor that moved rhythmic patterns of West African step dances from the drum to the body, with tap dance evolving over centuries from various cultural influences.

The dance form took off in the mid-1800s at dance competitions and minstrel shows, and then later in nightclubs, musicals, and vaudeville shows. Metal taps on the bottom of shoes didn't appear until the early 1900s, replacing wooden-soled shoes and other footwear.

Bill "Bojangles" Robinson gained worldwide fame for his tap dancing in the early 1900s despite discrimination against Black performers. Fred Astaire and Gene Kelly helped develop the Broadway style of tap featured in musicals such as *42nd Street* and *Anything Goes*. Tap dancing reemerged in the 1980s with new dance styles fueled by funk and hip hop and has continued to grow in popularity.

"I like how this dance and music form is an American art form that is steeped in rich history," Swenton-Eppard says.

Bus Shelter Posters Brighten Takoma Park Community Center

Bus shelter posters featuring artwork by artists from across the D.C. area are now on display in the atrium at the Takoma Park Community Center.

The posters were featured at bus shelters across Takoma Park in 2021 in the *Art on the Move* public art project to raise spirits during the COVID-19 pandemic lockdowns and support the arts community. The artists also have been featured in recent exhibitions at the Community Center.

"This was a very popular project which transformed local bus shelters into small art galleries so we wanted to share the posters with a wider audience," says the City's Arts and Humanities Coordinator Brendan Smith.

Smith collaborated with graphic designer Charlotte Mann Lee to design seven different posters, featuring artwork from 14 artists working in a diverse range of mediums. Four posters highlight work by individual artists, while the other posters focus on figurative art, abstract art, and the work of four Black female artists.

Shana Kohnstamm's beautiful felt scul-



tures were featured in one colorful poster.

"The posters provided instant accessibility to my work and hopefully a nice surprise for those who were out and about. I'm glad they are being shared with the public again," she says. "If there is any one lesson we learned from the pandemic, it's that art in all its forms is essential to our wellbeing and enriches our human experience."

The posters also featured artwork by Debra Ambush, Stephanie Firestone, Michelle Frazier, Deborah Grayson, Sarah Louise Hyde, Michael Hyman, Julius Kassovic, Frederik Langhendries, Craig Moran, Doug Schulte, Michael G. Stewart, G. Jackson Tanner, and Samantha Viotty.



Don't Miss More *Takoma Park Arts* Events

Please join us for more FREE *Takoma Park Arts* events at the Takoma Park Community Center at 7500 Maple Avenue. No tickets or reservations are required, and donations are accepted. You can sign up for our e-newsletter at takomaparkmd.gov/arts to get more info about our upcoming events.

Mayur Dance Company:
Anjali-An Offering
Friday, May 3, 7:30 p.m.

With intricate rhythmic footwork and lyrical movements, dancers from the Mayur Dance Company will perform classical dances from the Odissi tradition which originated in Hindu temples in India.

The Capitol Hillbillies
Friday, May 31, 7:30 p.m.

The Capitol Hillbillies will raise the roof with their rousing mix of barrelhouse blues and jug band music from the 1920s and 30s.

Juels Bland
Friday, June 14, 7:30 p.m.

Juels Bland is a local singer-songwriter and acoustic guitarist whose music and lyrics evoke rich soulful tones in an uplifting concert.



Takoma Park News

Send submissions to: Editor: Eric Bond • editorbond@gmail.com | Assistant Editor: Sean Gossard • TPNewsEditor@takomaparkmd.gov
Questions: Donna Wright Communications Director • donna@takomaparkmd.gov | Eric Bond • editorbond@gmail.com
takomaparkmd.gov

The Takoma Park Newsletter is published 12 times a year as the official publication of the City of Takoma Park, takomaparkmd.gov.



LIBRARY

Takoma Park Maryland Library
7505 New Hampshire Ave.,
Suite 205

There is plenty of parking as well as access to public transportation—not to mention free WiFi.

Library and Computer Center hours:

Monday-Thursday 10am – 8pm
Friday-Sunday 12pm – 6pm

To protect our most vulnerable patrons and staff, the library encourages everyone to continue to wear a mask while in the library; masks are optional in city facilities now.

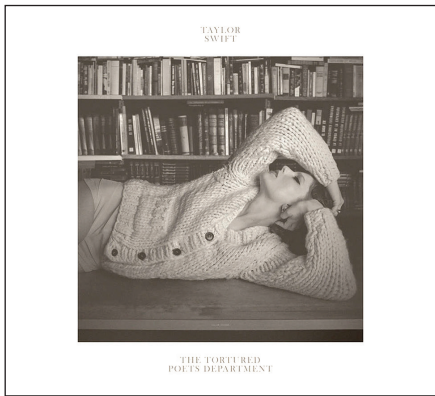
Internet Hotspots to borrow - The library has a supply of Verizon JetPacks for patrons to borrow. The hotspots will permit up to 10 devices to connect to the internet. These items will be available only to adult patrons and require a signed user agreement.

Books-to-Go is continuing, and **Books-to-You** (delivery for Takoma Park residents only) is back. Email librarytakomapark@gmail.com to order. Please note: if you are picking up a Books-to-Go order, please call the library's main number, 301-891-7259.

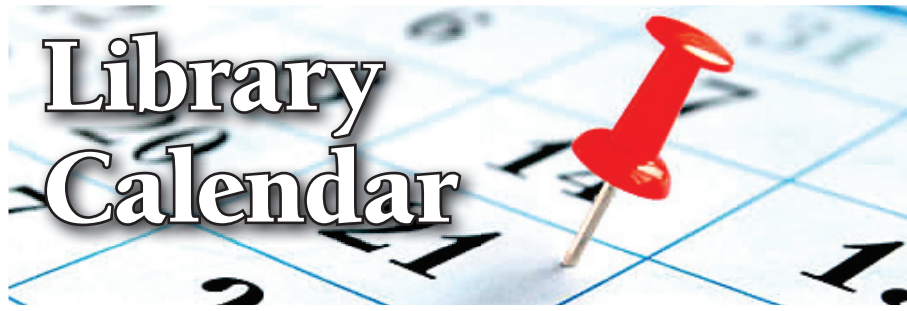
Programs and Events

A Note about Program and Event Registration:

Library events are always free and open to all. We ask patrons to register for some programs. Registration provides the Library and its partners with a headcount so we can prepare accordingly. Registration, however, does not guarantee a seat, and participants are encouraged to arrive early.



Celebrate Poetry Month and the release of Taylor Swift's 11th album, *The Tortured Poets Department*, on Saturday, April 20 at 1 p.m. Join us for poetry writing, trivia, refreshments,



prizes, and more. This program is for kids and teens, ages 7+. Middle and high school students: contact Kati (kathrynn@takomaparkmd.gov) if you are interested in SSL hours for helping out.

Favorite Poem Night returns!

Wednesday, April 24 at 7 p.m. in the library. Help us celebrate Poetry Month with a reprise of our annual Favorite Poem Night in the library's cozy interim quarters here at 7505 New Hampshire Avenue. Following up on our children's and teens poetry program on Saturday, April 20—as Taylor Swift releases her new recording *The Tortured Poets Department*—this year, we encourage participants to consider song lyrics as they decide which poem they'd like to read to the group (lyrics are poetry! After all, Bob Dylan received the Nobel Prize in Literature for his song lyrics). There will, as always be refreshments. Email your name, phone number, and the name of the poem and poet, tortured or not, you have selected, to Jill Raymond at jillr@takomaparkmd.gov no later than April 21.

El día de los niños/El día de los libros (Children's Day/Book Day), commonly known as Día, is a celebration every day of children, families, and reading. This

year we will celebrate it on Saturday, April 27 at 11 a.m. with a tri-lingual play in Nawat, Español, and English, featuring puppets and live music! "Yek Peyna Guxgatan" is a heartwarming story about a Salvadoran-American grandchild visiting their grandmother in El Salvador for the first time, and discovering their Indigenous history and language through song. This play is a collaboration between Angel Rose Artist Collective & TELAS Laboratorio Teatral. Thanks to Takoma Foundation, Takoma Park Arts, the Friends of the Takoma Park Maryland Library, and REFORMA for supporting this event!

Language Exchange! ¡Intercambio de Idiomas!

Spanish and English conversation group Thursday evenings

English speakers will help people learning English and, in exchange, speakers of Spanish will help people learn their language—in a small, friendly, accepting group. *Esperamos que hablantes nativos de inglés ayuden a otros a aprender inglés y, a cambio, hablantes nativos de español ayuden a otros a aprender su idioma, en un grupo pequeño, amigable y receptivo.* No formal classes, just casual

conversation. Lots of mistakes expected and encouraged. All levels, language beginners are welcome. Every Thursday, 6:30-7:30 p.m. Registration is encouraged, and you can drop in whenever you wish.

Crochet and Cozies (All-ages) - Join us at 10:30 Monday mornings for crochet and cozy mysteries. Bring your hooks, needles, and yarn. Don't have any? We'll find some for you. A beginner? You'll find help. Knitters and loom knitters—please join us. Registration is optional, but allows us to contact you if necessary.

Neighborhood Circle Time Join Ms. Kati and/or Ms. Verónica every Tuesday at 10:30 a.m. for Circle Time indoors in our interim library. We sing songs, have fun with fingerplays and rhymes, dance, and do movement exercises. We read a book in the middle of the program. And we close with bubbles. **Jumpstart With the Arts** joins us with live music for Circle Time on the first Tuesday of each month—the next time they will be with us is April 2nd with **Nicolo the Juggler**. Jumpstart With the Arts is made possible by the generosity of the Friends of the Takoma Park Maryland Library.

Canta Juego: Spanish Circle Time every Thursday at 10:30 a.m. ¡Canciones y juegos en español! Join the fun at our weekly Spanish Circle Time, led by Señora Geiza. In this 30-minute program, kids and adults can sing songs and do rhymes and movement exercises in Spanish. Sponsored by the Friends of the Takoma Park Maryland Library.

Family Chess - Sundays at noon. Caregivers and kids are invited to play. Bring a chessboard and pieces if you like, but we have plenty. Players of all levels are welcome, there will be group instruction once a month. Please register if you want to receive updates.

LEGO Club - Come in and play with Legos! Sunday, April 7, 2–4 p.m.

Author event - Tuesday, April 23, 6 p.m. Meet author and illustrator Kevin McCloskey. Author of the *Giggle and Learn* series. He will read and sign his latest book, *Caterpillar: What will I be when I get to be me?* Sponsored by Politics & Prose.

Director's column

Indigenous and Endangered Languages

by Jessica Jones

When I worked in northern New Mexico, the Spanish there was a little different than what I was used to hearing in Texas. When I asked the locals about this, I was told that the Spanish spoken in the mountains of northern New Mexico was closer to what the Spanish conquistadores spoke in the 17th century than the Spanish from outside the region. It is an isolated pocket of language preservation.



What also captured my interest was the Indigenous language preservation. The Pueblo peoples of the Southwest have historically spoken Tewa (or Tiwa/Towa, depending on the locale), and there were a lot of people in the area working to teach the language to save it from the threat of extinction.

Indigenous languages across the globe are endangered. On the one hand, it isn't the worst thing to have some languages in common that allow us to communi-

cate with people from around the world, like the United Nations' official languages of Arabic, Mandarin Chinese, English, French, Russian, and Spanish.

On the other hand, language can be as much a foundational component of culture as traditions and rituals, foods, dress, craft, and values. Language conveys meaning; it's how we transfer knowledge. What, then, do we lose when we lose languages?



Community members work together to repair a variety of items at the first Fixit Clinic at the Takoma Park Maryland Library. The next clinic will be Sunday, April 14, 2–4 p.m. Photos by Maurice Belanger.

Friends News

Book Sale! Now accepting donations of books for the book sale! Please drop off your books at the library. We're looking for popular fiction, children's books, biography, popular history, cookbooks, art books, and other bestsellers. Please do not give us old textbooks, yearbooks, manuals, or anything that's been stored in a basement. Please bring your books in boxes, if possible.

The book sale will be held on Saturday, May 18, 10 a.m.–2 p.m. at the library.

On the Monday following the book sale, May 20, we will be holding our annual meeting at the library. There will be a speaker and refreshments.

Fixit Clinic! In March, the Friends held their very first Fixit Clinic at the library. It was very well attended, with various items repaired. Participants learned a bit about how to repair and maintain small appliances, clothing, lamps, bikes, dull knives, broken furniture, and more.

The next Fixit Clinic will be held Sunday, April 14, 2–4 p.m. Want to repair your broken stuff AND make a difference by keeping it out of the landfill? Then bring your small appliances, computers/devices, lamps, bikes, clothing/sewing, dull knives, broken furniture, and more to our FREE clinic. Your skilled neighbor vol-

unteers will diagnose your item's issue and show you how to make the repair (so you'll learn some basic do-it-yourself skills, too!).

Please register at tinyurl.com/2e256mmh for an appointment. Email fixittakoma@gmail.com with your questions or if you want to volunteer. There will be more Fixit Clinics in the future: check the Friends website, ftpl.org, or the Takoma Insider email news brief for future dates.

Book groups The Friends Book Group will meet on May 9, July 11, September 12, and November 14 at 7 p.m. in the Community Center on Maple Avenue. On May 9, the Friends Book Group will discuss Nathaniel Hawthorne's *The Scarlet Letter*. In September, the selection will be *The Wind in the Willows* by Kenneth Grahame. Selections for July and November will be announced as they are finalized. Books are available at the library and as ebooks and audiobooks on Hoopla.

The Big Book Club is continuing to read *The Marble Faun* by Nathaniel Hawthorne. The next meetings will be held on April 3 and April 17, at 7 p.m. in the Hydrangea Room of the Community Center at 7500 Maple Ave.

For more information about both book groups, please email ftplbookgroup@gmail.com

Listen to This!

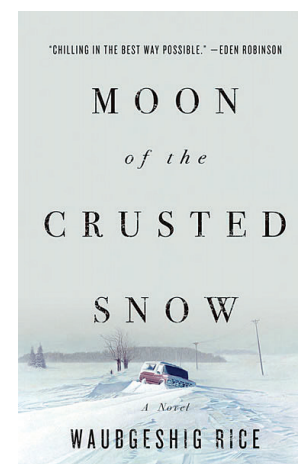
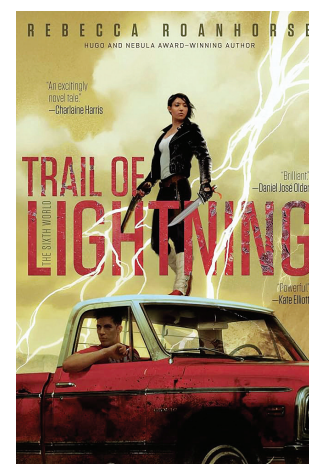
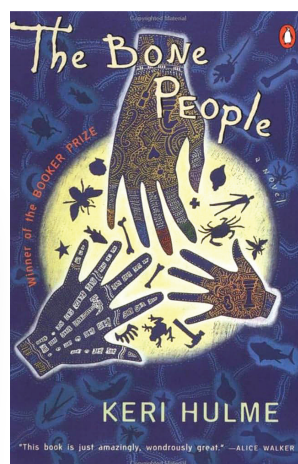
by Anne LeVeque



The thing about Austen with Zan Cammack and Diane Neu

The two women hosting this podcast have been enormous fans of Jane Austen since their adolescence, and have known one another since they met in grad school in a course on—wait for it—Jane Austen. Mr. Darcy's shirt (the costume worn by Colin Firth in the 1995 movie) just sold for \$32,000. In 1813, when *Pride and Prejudice* was published, that would have been a substantial fortune. The podcast focuses on material culture—how the material world of Austen creates meaning in her novels.

If you're a Jane Austen fan, or a Regency-era fan, this will explain all those things that just don't show up in the modern day. A ha-ha? An entail? A curricle? What does it all mean?!? Found wherever you get your podcasts.



ENDANGERED

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On April 27, the Library will have a **Día de los Niños** program, including a multilingual play at 11 a.m. that will feature Spanish, English, and Nahuatl, the latter being an Indigenous language spoken by people in what is known today as Mexico, and formerly as the Aztec civilization.

While the Aztecs might be a relatable reference point to those of us outside of the region, it also underscores the way we sometimes think about Indigenous peoples, and their languages, as being of-the-past. That's not true of Indigenous languages today, but it could be in the future.

In a report by the United Nations Permanent Forum on Indigenous issues dated

2018, they cite approximately 6,700 languages in the world today. They go on to say that, "Although indigenous peoples make up less than 6% of the global population, they speak more than 4,000 of the world's languages" and that Indigenous languages, "are central to the identity of indigenous peoples, the preservation of their cultures, worldviews and visions and an expression of self-determination."

This, then, is what we lose when we lose Indigenous languages.

What is the Library doing to promote or preserve them? The **Día de los Niños** program on April 27 is one example. Come and hear some Nahuatl!

Beyond that, we offer Pronunciator, an online language learning program that covers

ENDANGERED □ Page 11



A collaboration between:




Yek Peyna Guxgatan

GOOD MORNING, EL SALVADOR | BUENOS DÍAS, EL SALVADOR



Please register!

tinyurl.com/TKPKLibPrograms

A trilingual play in Nawat, español, and English. And a celebration of *Día: Children's Day / Book Day!*

Saturday, April 27 | 11:00 AM
Takoma Park Maryland Library
 (7505 New Hampshire Avenue)

Supported by:






RECREATION

For a full list of our classes and to register visit bit.ly/TPRDActiveNet (case sensitive).

TOTS

DANCE

Combo Tot

Fun and energizing class for your little ones. This is the introductory foundational class consisting of rhythmic movements, into basic tumbling and various styles of dance. Jam-packed with games and toys, your little ones won't even realize they are learning to dance.

Takoma Park Community Center
(Dance Studio)
7500 Maple Ave.
Ages 16 and up
10-week session
Sundays, 12:15–1 p.m.
April 7–May 19
Resident: \$125 / non-resident: \$145

YOUTH



CAMP
Registration is already open for our summer camps.
Be sure to claim your spot!

CAMPS

Dance Camp

This is a two-week camp that focuses on dance technique, team building, and performances. Campers will learn ballet, jazz, modern, and hip-hop dance styles. They will also participate in a performance at the end of each session to display their newly learned skills. We will also enjoy other activities, including games, arts and crafts, and meditation—because all work and no play is no fun! We can't wait to dance with you! Beforecare and aftercare are available for an additional fee. Instructor: Charonne Butler.

Takoma Park Community Center
7500 Maple Ave.
Ages 6–12
2-week sessions
Monday–Friday, 9 a.m.–4 p.m.
Session 1: July 15–July 26
Session 2: July 29–August 9
Resident: \$595 / non-resident: \$625 per session

New Ave Adventure Camp

Explore a new adventure each week with games, crafts, activities, and trips related to each theme. Camp will consist of active and passive activities, both indoors and outdoors. Select the weeks with themes that pique your interest and fit your schedule! Beforecare and aftercare are available for an additional fee.

Takoma Park Recreation Center
7315 New Hampshire Ave.
Ages 6–12

Eight 1-week sessions
Monday–Friday, 9 a.m.–4 p.m.
June 24–August 16
Resident: \$150 / non-resident: \$170
*4th of July week: resident: \$120 / non-resident: \$140

DANCE

Ballet & Stretch

This class focuses on the basics of ballet, but highlights advanced concepts, including history, stage production, performance etiquette, and choreography. Students will explore the history of ballet and practice combinations from various ballet choreographers. Instructor: Charonne Butler.

Takoma Park Community Center
(Auditorium)
7500 Maple Ave.
Ages 5–12
Saturdays, 12:30–1:15 p.m.
April 13–May 18
Resident: \$150 / non-resident: \$170

Hip Hop Dance

This movement class focuses on the basics and culture of hip-hop. Students will learn basic b-boy and b-girl dance techniques, practice temporal awareness, spatial awareness and learn choreography. Instructor: Charonne Butler.

Takoma Park Community Center
(Auditorium)
7500 Maple Ave.
Ages 5–12
Saturdays, 11:30 a.m.–12:15 p.m.
April 13–May 18
Resident: \$150 / non-resident: \$170

SPORTS



2024 T-Ball League

This league allows kids to have fun while learning the fundamentals of baseball. Emphasis will be on fun, learning to hit, running bases and catching. No experience is necessary as all skill levels are welcome. Participants must bring their own baseball glove. All teams will be formed by the Recreation Department. Games will be hosted at Belle Ziegler Field. Games are played on Saturday mornings at 9 a.m. Volunteer coaches are needed.

Belle Ziegler Field
7350 Takoma Ave.
Ages 5–8
8-game season
Saturday, 9 a.m.–12:30 p.m.
June 8–July 27
Resident: \$70 / non-resident: \$80

2024–2025 School Year Childcare Registration opens soon!

Current scholarship awardees:
April 10, noon

Takoma Park residents:
April 17, noon

Before- and after-school childcare options at two locations:
7500 Maple Ave. and
7315 New Hampshire Ave.



TEENS

CAMP

Visual Arts Camp

Campers have fun and express themselves with color, shape, and design. They sharpen their drawing skills, explore new media, and exercise their imagination with these inspiring art projects. Each week a different theme/focus. No beforecare or aftercare available for this camp. Instructor: Katie Dell Kaufman.

Takoma Park Community Center
(Art Studio)
7500 Maple Ave.
Ages 11–14
Three 1-week sessions
Monday–Friday, 9 a.m.–3 p.m.
June 24–July 19
Resident: \$310 / non-resident: \$340

Filmmakers in Action II: Summer Edition

Join our one-week summer break film camp for grades 9–12! Dive into the art of filmmaking as we craft a captivating docu-series, earning SSL hours while highlighting talents, stories, and cultural diversity within the community. Explore unique narratives, talents, and community-centric subjects through an engaging lens. Unleash your creativity, learn valuable filmmaking skills, and contribute to a project celebrating the richness of Takoma Park. Be a part of this inspiring week of storytelling, collaboration, and capturing the heart and soul of our community on screen!

Takoma Park Community Center
Teen Lounge
7500 Maple Ave.
Grades 9–12
1-week session
June 24–28
10 a.m.–2 p.m.
Resident: \$220 / non-resident: \$240

Powered by S.T.E.A.M.

All aboard! During this one-week summer camp, teens can enjoy STEAM-powered activities! This will be an action packed week full of hands-on STEAM learning and career exposure, including food science and engineering challenges. Paperwork will need to be completed prior to the first day of camp. Participants will need to bring a non-perishable lunch every day. There is NO refrigerator or microwave access.

Takoma Park Community Center
(Teen Lounge)
7500 Maple Ave.
Grades 6–12
1-week session
August 5–9
9 a.m.–4 p.m.
Resident: \$220 / non-resident: \$240

DANCE

Afterschool Hip-Hop Dance @ TPMS

Hip-hop incorporates aspects of modern dance, tap, and swing, integrating music, and complex movements to form artistry. Come and learn the fundamentals of hip-hop dance by learning fun routines! Teens will also have the opportunity to explore other types of dance such as stepping. Teens may also have the opportunity to perform for Takoma Park Middle School Events. Instructor: Kokoe Abas.

Takoma Park Middle School
7611 Piney Branch Road.
Grades 6–8
Wednesdays, 3:30–4:30 p.m.
April 3–May 22
Free

DROP-IN

Teen Lounge

Welcome to the Teen Lounge—where teens can get a quick snack, do their homework, participate in fun activities, or simply kick back with friends after school in a safe environment. Youth in grades 6–12 are encouraged to come to the lounge after school! Various afterschool programs may be held in the lounge throughout the school year and will be announced accordingly. Enrollment on ActiveNet is FREE but required to visit the lounge. Students will need to register once every school year. Registration forms can be picked up from the Takoma Park Community Center or completed online via ActiveNet. The Teen Lounge is closed on non-school days, including holidays and weekends.

Takoma Park Community Center
(Teen Lounge)
7500 Maple Ave.
Grades 6–12
Montgomery County Public School Days
Monday–Friday, 3–6 p.m.
Free

EDUCATION & DEVELOPMENT

Entrepreneurship for Teens

Ever thought about starting your own business? Even teens can do it! Entrepreneurship for Teens is an interactive virtual class that centers around a growth mindset, entrepreneurial skills, and business startup. This class is taught by our Teen Money Management instructor, Tyrona Boone of Zoey & Zander. The Zoom link will be sent the week before class starts.

Virtual
Grades 6–12
Mondays, 6–7 p.m.
April 8–June 3
Free



ENVIRONMENTAL

Teen Earth Day Volunteer Event!

April is Earth Month! What better way to celebrate than to help out in your own community on a day off from school! In partnership with City of Takoma Park's Public Works Department, teens can volunteer to assist at the Stuart Armstrong Garden at the corner of Philadelphia and Holly Avenue. Participants will earn two student service learning (SSL) hours!

Takoma Park Community Center
(Teen Lounge)
7500 Maple Ave.

RECREATION

For a full list of our classes and to register visit bit.ly/TPRDActiveNet (case sensitive).

RECREATION

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Grades 6–12
Wednesday, April 10
12:30–3:30 p.m.
Free

ADULTS

FITNESS

Five Animal Play Qi Gong

This form of Qi Gong is one of the most ancient continuously practiced healing exercise systems in the world. Enjoy peaceful movements modeled on the Crane, Bear, Monkey, Deer, and Tiger. Participants will develop more strength, grace, flexibility, balance, and healing in a relaxed group setting. You will feel the effects in your body, mind and spirit as you find more harmony with nature and yourself. No experience necessary. Instructors: Patrick Smith and Joann Malone.



Virtual Class
Ages 16 and up
Tuesdays, 7:30–8 p.m.
April 30–June 18
Resident: \$30 / non-resident: \$50

Flow Yoga

Flow Yoga is a mixed-level hatha yoga class with flow sequences. Students who are new to yoga will learn what yoga is, get familiar with yoga poses and alignment, be introduced to basic breathing techniques,

and become more grounded and mindful in their approach to yoga both on and off the mat. Students who have been practicing yoga for a while will also benefit from this class, as they will have the opportunity to deepen their practice and understanding of yoga and will learn more sequences, poses, and modifications. The class sessions are energizing, grounding, playful and renewing. Instructor: Jill Skillcorn.

Takoma Park Recreation Center (Back Room)
7315 New Hampshire Ave.
Ages 16 and up
Saturdays, 9–10 a.m.
April 13–May 18
Resident: \$60 / non-resident: \$70

DRAMA & THEATER

Acting Technique for the Stage

Have you always wanted to take an Acting Class, but had no opportunity? Well here's your chance to learn the fundamentals of this fascinating artform. In the process, you'll utilize the Stanislavsky Technique, which is a psycho-physical approach to acting that leads to a heightened emotional truth in performance. While experimenting with lively theatre exercises, you'll apply this technique to a monologue that will be performed for an invited audience in the final class. It will be a fun and interesting journey, full of practical insights that will stay with you well beyond the stage! No materials needed. Instructor: W. Allen Taylor.

Takoma Park Community Center (Auditorium)
7500 Maple Ave.
Ages 16 and up
Mondays, 7–9 p.m.
April 1–June 10
Resident: \$230 / non-resident: \$260

SPORTS

Adult Drop in Pickleball

Join other "new" players for Adult Drop in pickleball. This is a drop-in program. The entire magic and success of pickleball is the way it has been set up to be a welcoming sport in an informal setting. Meaning, you can show up to the courts and pick up a game. It doesn't matter what your age is; you can just play. That is the beauty of DROP IN play.

Takoma Park Recreation Center
7315 New Hampshire Ave. (Gymnasium)
Ages 16 and up
Mondays, 6:30–8:30 p.m.
April 1–May 20
Resident: \$20 / non-Resident: \$30

Adult Summer Basketball League

Join our Adult Basketball League this summer! Put together your winning team and go against other area teams in order to win the league championship. Teams will be provided uniforms. Games are played at Takoma Park Middle School on Wednesdays and/or Thursdays at 6 or 7 p.m.



Takoma Park Middle School
7611 Piney Branch Road
Ages 18 and up
6-week session
Wednesday/Thursdays, 6–8 p.m.
July 10–August 15
Team Fee Resident: \$300 / non-resident: \$400

Takoma Park Volleyball Club

Join the Takoma Park Volleyball Club! Grab a friend or make a new one on the court. The club will meet weekly at the Takoma Park Recreation Center for pick up games of volleyball. Registration is required to participate and all skill levels are welcome.

Takoma Park Recreation Center (Gymnasium)
7315 New Hampshire Ave.
Ages 16 and up
Wednesdays, 6:30–8:30 p.m.
April 3–May 22
Resident: \$20 / non-Resident: \$30

RECREATION □ Page 10

Great Opportunities to Improve Your Health and Well-being

By Sylva Etian

Moving to Takoma Park was the best thing I've done for my future. Not only did I find a home that was affordable, the enticement of the community to engage residents in all sorts of activities was tantalizing!

I found myself in the throes of an environment that thrived on staying healthy. Every day, I witnessed a parade of parents pushing children in their strollers, walking their dogs, using hand weights while speed walking, even jogging. I couldn't wait to join the community programs so that I, too, could benefit from all these healthy activities.

I became a "hopeful" ninja trying to master the moves in my Tai Chi class. Gracefully, I embraced dance moves in my line dancing class, and became quite the disco queen in my Zumba classes. Now I'm letting out steam pounding on huge rubber balls with my drumsticks, as well as learning the latest hip-hop moves to wonderfully wild dance



The Recreation Department loves to hear good spoken feedback from program participants, but it always makes a special impact when they go the extra step to put it in writing! Such is the case with Sylva Etian, an active 55+ recreation program participant since 2013. Sylva enjoys several of the fitness classes offered at the Takoma Park Recreation Center, 7315 New Hampshire Ave., and she believes participation in these classes is the key to improvements in her health.

music! In my quieter moments, I participated in meditation classes to mysterious Indian tunes and even checked out the knitting class for a session or two. Bingo gave me hope that I'd win the Powerball lottery one day. The opportunities are endless!

So, get with the beat, check out all sorts of exciting opportunities to improve your health, meet fascinating folks, and have fun!

For more information about the Takoma Park Recreation Department programs for all ages, including class descriptions, dates, times and costs, go to the Takoma Park Recreation website: takomaparkmd.gov/government/recreation.

To register for classes, click on ActiveNet. Don't forget about the scholarship program providing city residents who qualify an opportunity to apply for a lesser fee than the published amounts. For more information and to apply click on "Recreation Scholarships." As always, you are welcome to contact the Recreation Department at 301-891-7290 for more information.

RECREATION

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55+ ACTIVITIES

CAMP

Pickleball Summer Camp - Intermediate

Welcome to Forever Young's 2024 Intermediate Summer Camp for adults 55 plus. The 2024 camp is Pickleball for Intermediate Players. You'll enjoy a week of pickleball designed to expand your skills and knowledge while having fun. This camp is for players who have some experience playing the game with other players or had some training such as taking a beginner class and are familiar with the basic knowledge of rules, scoring, etc.

Takoma Park Recreation Center
7513 New Hampshire Ave.
Ages 55 and up
1-week session
Monday-Friday, 10 a.m.–3 p.m.
August 19–August 23
Resident: \$95 / non-resident: \$105

DROP-IN

Bingo

Come try your luck and win a prize! This is a drop-in activity; no registration is

required. Host: Paula Lisowski.

Takoma Park Library
7505 New Hampshire Ave.
Ages 55 and up
Tuesdays, 12–2 p.m.
April 23, May 28, June 25
Free



FITNESS

Enhance Your Fitness

A great total body workout using low-impact aerobic movement and gentle resistance training. This class focuses on increasing strength, balance and flexibility through stretching, breathing, core training, and proper posture alignment, using standing and seated exercises including warm-up and cool-down routines. Instructor: Adriene Buist.

Virtual
Ages 55 and up
Tuesdays, 9–10 a.m.
Spring: April 2–June 2
Summer: July 2–August 13
\$6

SPORTS

Pickleball Open Play

Join other new players for pickleball practice and play in the Gymnasium. This activity is geared toward beginners. Two

courts and limited paddles available. Drop-in.

Takoma Park Recreation Center
(Gymnasium)
7315 New Hampshire Ave.
Ages 55 and up
Thursdays, 12–2 p.m.
April 4–June 6
Free with membership

SPECIAL EVENTS

Fitness Expo

Come join us for an exciting day that will include demonstrations from our fitness classes as well as presentations from our local community health and wellness organizations. The expo will kick off at 10 a.m. For additional information or if you would like to volunteer for this event, please contact Vincent Cain at 301-891-7289 or Vincentc@takomaparkmd.gov.

Takoma Park Recreation Center
7315 New Hampshire Ave.
All ages
Saturday, April 6
10 a.m.–2 p.m.
Free

Family Outdoor Movie Night

Our outdoor movie will begin at dusk on 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 Recreation Department will provide one small bag of popcorn per person and water. Due to limited parking, walking to the event is encouraged. The movie will be a family friendly hit, vote on the city website ahead of the event!
Ed Wilhelm Field
2 Darwin Ave.
All ages
Saturday, April 6
Movie starts at dusk
Free

EARTH

■ From page 1

greater awareness of the price of human activity as our habitat and our species is living through a time of climate change, a climate crisis. While climate scientists and anthropologists hold varying opinions about when to mark the beginning of the Anthropocene Epoch—meaning the period in which human activity is changing the global environment—it is clear that many species, including our own, are gravely threatened.

The theme of this year's Earth Day is Planet versus Plastics, making the demand for a 60% reduction in all plastics by 2040. You can learn more about the threats of plastic to the environment and other valuable Earth Day information at earthday.org.

At takomaparkmd.gov/sustainability, you can find links to information about actions that the city has already taken to reduce plastics, including a ban on plastic bags and on plastic straws and stirrers. In addition, the city has banned polystyrene.

In Takoma Park, Earth Day has been extended to an entire Earth Month. But why not make day an Earth Day by mindfully reducing our waste and greenhouse gas emissions, planting trees and caring for our urban forest, and fighting for vulnerable people in our community and around the world who most experience the impact of climate change.

Here in Takoma Park, we have a sustainability manager, Dory Estrada, who is working to keep the city on track to achieve net-zero greenhouse gas emissions citywide by 2035—and fossil-fuel-free by 2045. In the most recent Takoma Park City Guide (available on the city website), Estrada identifies ways that the city can help you electrify your home, reducing your carbon footprint. The city can help you set up an energy audit and connect you to resources to transition away from methane as the energy source to heat your home and cook. At takomaparkmd.gov/sustainability, you can find a wealth of information.

Earth Month provides an opportunity to reset intentions, individually and together, to make our community more sustainable and resilient—which then links to actions

Follow Our Sustainability Efforts

Visit takomaparkmd.gov and search for "sustainability newsletter" to receive regular email updates. And look for sustainability news and updates on social media.

Facebook: Sustainable Takoma Park

Instagram: [sustainableTKPK](https://www.instagram.com/sustainableTKPK)

X (formerly Twitter): [sustainableTKPK](https://twitter.com/sustainableTKPK)

by people in other communities around the world. These are some local Earth Month activities to engage you and your family.

Healthy Homes Fair

Saturday, April 6, noon–5 p.m.
D.C. Armory
2001 E Capitol St. SE, Washington, D.C.

Join the Department of Energy and Environment and Electrify DC, a leading non-profit dedicated to home electrification, at the inaugural Healthy Homes Fair, a full-day expo and interactive learning experience for 1,000+ home renovation professionals, career seekers, homeowners, and renters. Takoma Park is a co-sponsor of this fair. More information at doec.dc.gov/event/healthy-homes-fair.

Teen Earth Day Volunteer Event

Wednesday, April 10, 12:30–3:30 p.m.
Meet at Community Center Teen Lounge
7500 Maple Ave.

What better way to celebrate Earth Month than to help out in your own community on a day off from school? In partnership with the Public Works department, teens can volunteer to assist at the Stuart Armstrong Garden at the corner of Philadelphia and Holly Avenues. Volunteers will meet at the Takoma Park Community Center Teen Lounge and walk to the site. A light snack and water will be provided. Participants will earn two student service learning (SSL) hours. Learn more on the Recreation department webpage at takomaparkmd.gov.

TPSS Food Co-op Earth Day Celebration

Sunday, April 14, 11 a.m.–3 p.m.
201 Ethan Allen Ave.

Power to the Planet—featuring speakers Maryland Delegate Lorig Charkoudian and Takoma Park Mayor Talisha Searcy. Partner organizations include Citizen's Climate Lobby, Small Things Matter, Climate Action Coffee Pollinators, Green Party of Montgomery County, Zero Waste in DC, Fulfillery, Manna Food Center, City of Takoma Park, Montgomery County Food Council, One Montgomery Green, UMD Insect Zoo, Beyond Plastics MoCo, Meals on Wheels of Takoma Park, Friends of Native Trees Takoma, and Montgomery Energy Connection. Music by Mr. Lilo, Seth Kibel and Daryl Davis, and the U-Liners. More information at tpss.coop.

Takoma Park Earth Day/Arbor Day

Saturday, April 20, 10 a.m.–2 p.m.
Sligo Creek Stream Valley Park Playground

Because there is no Planet B! This event will feature exhibitors from the City of Takoma Park and local environmental partners in close proximity to the new playground at Houston and Kennebec Avenues. Snow cones, face painting, art activities and educational materials about sustainability programs will be available for the whole family! Come check out the EV showcase, attend a guided tree walk, and learn about the various environmental involvement opportunities in our community. The rain date is Sunday, April 21.

Long Branch Earth Day

Saturday, April 20, 3–5 p.m.
Flower Avenue Park
8746 Flower Ave. Silver Spring

Get outside, breathe the fresh spring air, and give thanks for our planet and community. Learn about our local ecosystem, native species, and our role in keeping the Earth healthy.

Weed Warriors

Sunday, April 21, 1–3 p.m.
Long Branch Stream Valley Unit 1
Piney Branch Road to Carroll Avenue

Come out and fight invasive species as

a weed warrior. You must be 16 or older, and you must pre-register for this activity: montgomeryparks.org/event/weed-warrior-long-branch-svu1/.

Nature Center Pop Up

Friday, April 26, 4–6 p.m.
Arliss Neighborhood Park
8810 Garland Ave., Silver Spring

Come talk with a naturalist about the park, explore natural objects, and try out biology-themed activities. This is a walk-up event, providing a 20–30 minute experience. Stay to play or hike in the park! The Nature on Wheels vehicle will host this event.

City Nature Challenge

Friday, April 26, 1–3 p.m.
Circle Woods (Poplar and Circle Avenues)

Saturday, April 27, 10 a.m.–noon
Stuart Armstrong Garden (Philadelphia and Holly Avenues)

The City Nature Challenge is a friendly global competition form of a bioblitz—an opportunity to observe and document plants, insects, animals, and fungi on a particular site. This event is a fun way to get out and explore our natural world and meet neighbors. Learn more about how to join the 2024 City Nature Challenge at citynaturechallenge.org.

Montgomery County GreenFest

Saturday, April 27, 11 a.m.–4 p.m.
Blackrock Center for the Arts
12901 Town Commons Drive, Germantown

Leap into action this 2024 and join us at GreenFest 2024, where people of all ages come together to celebrate, learn, and start or continue their journey to improving our community and the environment! GreenFest is organized by a coalition of public, nonprofit, and university partners, including the City of Takoma Park. For more information, go to montgomerycountygreenfest.org.

At Your SERVICE

Nationwide Prescription Drug Take Back Day Saturday, April 27, 10 a.m.–2 p.m.

The Takoma Park Police Department is participating in the Nationwide Prescription Drug Take-Back Day. This campaign allows the public to prevent pill abuse and theft by ridding their homes of potentially dangerous expired, unused, and unwanted prescription drugs. Collection boxes will be set up in the first-floor police lobby of the municipal building, or outside (weather permitting). Prescription, over-the-counter, and pet medications will be accepted. In addition, vape pens and other e-cigarette devices are now accepted BUT only after the batteries are removed from such devices.

Although we continue to participate in this nationwide event, residents looking to dispose of excess and expired prescription and over-the-counter medications can visit the safe and secure permanent drop-off location at the City of Takoma Park Police Department, 7500 Maple Ave. The collection site is open 24 hours a day, seven days a week. Drugs can be dropped off with no questions asked.

Items that CANNOT be left are liquids, inhalers, aerosol cans, regular household ointments/lotions, needles/sharps, and/or thermometers.

Join the Team!

We're Hiring Crossing Guards. Please apply today and be a part of a great team.

We're Hiring Communications Officers. This position is responsible for receiving and dispatching emergency and non-emergency calls for service. This position requires the ability to do the following:

- Communicate clearly and effectively
- Handle multiple activities simultaneously while maintaining attention to detail
- Remain calm and objective
- Independently analyze situations and quickly identify appropriate action
- Provide effective customer service
- Work effectively with an ethnically and culturally diverse staff and community

To learn more about these positions and to apply, go to takomaparkmd.gov/government/police/recruitment/.

Community Policing Report 2023

The Takoma Park Police Department is committed to fostering strong relationships with the community we serve. In alignment with the President's Task Force on 21st Century Community Policing, we have structured our initiatives around six main pillars. Through these efforts, we aim



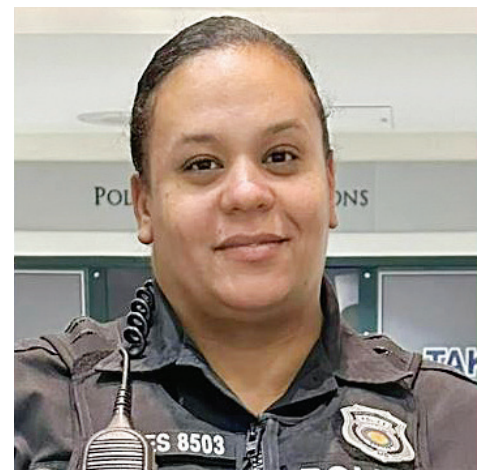
to enhance trust, improve policies, leverage technology, reduce crime, prioritize officer training and education, and ensure officer safety and wellness. You can find our 2023 report by visiting the police page on the city website and clicking on "Community Policing."

Introducing Corporal Cindia Torres—Our New LGBTQ Community Liaison Officer



Corporal Cindia Torres, a dedicated officer with a passion for community engagement and inclusivity, has recently accepted the position of LGBTQ Liaison for the Takoma Park Police Department. In this vital role, Corporal Torres is committed to fostering understanding, trust, and cooperation between law enforcement and the LGBTQ community.

Corporal Torres will serve as the direct contact person for the LGBTQ community to address any law-enforcement or community-related concerns they may have. Along with our agency Victim/Witness Coordinator, Corporal Torres will work with victims of reported hate crimes, offering assistance and resources as they navigate the criminal justice system. Strengthening the relation-



Corporal Cindia Torres

ship between the police department and the LGBTQ community is an agency priority. Corporal Torres will cultivate inclusion; promote equity; and foster acceptance through outreach, educational programs, and participation in community events.

By serving as a liaison, Corporal Torres is dedicated to ensuring the collective and individual voices of the LGBTQ community are heard and their needs addressed effectively. Corporal Torres is bilingual in English and Spanish. You may reach Corporal Torres at cindiat@takomaparkmd.gov or 301-891-7101 ext. 5676.



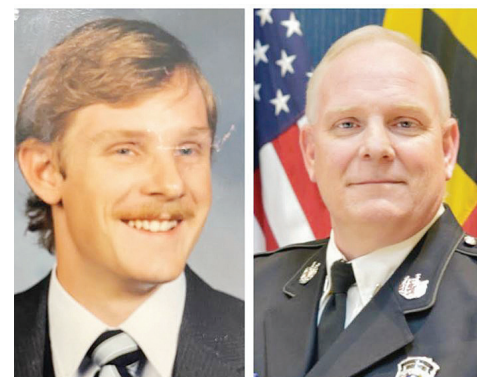
www.takomaparkmd.gov/police

TAKOMA PARK POLICE DEPARTMENT

POLICE ANNUAL REPORT 2023



Prepared By:
Catherine Plevy
Police Public Information Manager
March 2024



Captain Richard Cipperly

Captain Richard Cipperly Retires

Please join us in congratulating Captain Richard Cipperly on his retirement, after 34 years of service to Takoma Park. Captain Cipperly has had a tremendous impact on our agency and the community during his career. We wish him the best!

Ward 5 Public Safety Meeting

Tuesday, April 16, 9:30–10:30 a.m.
Silver Spring International Middle School
313 Wayne Ave, Silver Spring

Takoma Park Police and Montgomery County Police will jointly discuss public safety, with Spanish interpretation, in support of Ward 5 residents whose children attend Silver Spring International Middle School.

Elude the Imposters

by Claudine Schweber
Emergency Preparedness Committee

It is unfortunately true that there are people actively trying to separate you from your money right now—via offers over email, phone, and text. Be prepared to take action.

Imposter scams include someone pretending to represent the government, such as from the IRS, asking you to verify your social security number or other personal information. This can happen through a phone call or via text. Do not

provide personal information over the phone. And do not click on a hyperlink.

If you get such a call or message that seems to come from the IRS, call the IRS immediately: 1-800-366-4484. Report messages to phishing@irs.gov.

An identity thief uses stolen personal information to buy items and run up debt in your name—or get you into even greater trouble. To learn more, visit consumer.ftc.gov/topics/identity-theft. Check the current list of scams and fraud and what to do here: usa.gov/scams-and-fraud.

ENDANGERED

■ From page 7

315 languages, many of which are Indigenous, like Ainu (Japan), Aleut (Alaska and Russia), Amazigh (North Africa), Apache (American Southwest), and Arawak (Caribbean) ... and that's just the A's.

We also have books that are written by Indigenous authors, many of which feature Indigenous language. Waubgeshig Rice (Anishinabe/Ojibwe, author of *Moon of the Crusted Snow*) often uses Anishinaabemowin in his work. Rebecca Roan-

horse (Diné/Navajo, author of *Trail of Lightening*) sometimes includes Diné vocabulary. Keri Hulme's (Maori) work *The Bone People* features Maori words.

One of my favorite things about working in libraries has always been that curiosity is a shared trait among colleagues. If there is a language you are interested in learning more about, we would be happy to help you find more information about it—especially since we would probably end up learning something new ourselves.

Community ACTIVITIES

Note: For Earth Month events, see page 10, and a list of city events on page 1.

Mariachi Night

Tuesday, April 2, 5:30–8 p.m.
Cielo Rojo
7211 Carroll Ave.

Mariachi Imperio by Blanca Chucúan transports you to Guadalajara with its own spin on traditional rancheras and corridos.

The HalfSmokes

Friday, April 5, 7–10 p.m.
VFW Post 350 in *Hell's Bottom*
6420 Orchard Ave.

Hear all your favorite tunes from WHFS radio's glory days. Combining melodic pop with rootsy rock, their inspired performances of these eclectic classics will remind you of happier times. TheHalfSmokes.com. No cover charge.

Historic Takoma Reading Room

Sunday, April 7 and 21, 1–4 p.m.
Historic Takoma
7328 Carroll Ave.

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. Find out more at historictakoma.org. Free.

An Evening with Local Artist Martina Loncar

"Paper Forest" installation opening
Thursday, April 11, 6–8 p.m.
Takoma Bevco
6917 Laurel Ave.

Carroll Café: OCEAN Celtic Quartet

Friday, April 12, 7:30 p.m.
Seekers Church
276 Carroll St., Takoma D.C.

The OCEAN Celtic Quartet puts a refreshing spin on traditional British and Irish songs as well as Jennifer Cutting's original compositions, from soaring ballads and stirring sea chanteys to blazing fiddle and accordion tunes. Reserve seats at carrollcafe.seekerschurch.org/2024/01/ocean-celtic-quartet/.

Crossroads Farmers Market Kick-off

Wednesday, April 24, 10:30 a.m.–2:30 p.m.
Anne St. at University Blvd. East

Crossroads Farmers Market offers the season's freshest fruits and vegetables, as well as free-range eggs, honey, locally roasted coffee, healthy snacks, and fresh-cut flowers, all from no more than 50 miles away. The market is cultivating a more inclusive local food system in the Takoma/Langley Crossroads. Every Wednesday through November, 10:30 a.m.–2:30 p.m.

Mayur Dance Company

Friday, May 3, 7:30 p.m.
Takoma Park Municipal Building
7500 Maple Ave.

With intricate rhythmic footwork and lyrical movements, dancers from the Mayur Dance Company will perform classical dances from the Odissi tradition which originated in Hindu temples in India.

Takoma Park Children's Business Fair

Saturday, May 4, 10 a.m.–2 p.m.
Laurel Avenue

Takoma Park Children's Business Fair is a one-day marketplace that allows children ages 6–14 to develop a brand, create a product or service, build a marketing strategy, then showcase to the community. There will be 50 booths and up to 150 children. Rain date: May 11. More information at childrensbusinessfair.org/takomapark.

Cinco de Mayo Celebration

Sunday, May 5
Long Branch. Silver Spring
More information to come. Visit discoverlongbranch.org.

Bike to School

Wednesday, May 8

Each year, students and parents ride to school together and learn about proper helmet fitting and basic bike safety. Participating schools include Takoma Park Middle, Takoma Park Elementary, Piney Branch Elementary, East Silver Spring Elementary, and Rolling Terrace Elementary. Check with your school administration, PTA, or May Takoma Park Newsletter for details. Free.

Takoma Flea

Saturday, May 11, 10 a.m.–4 p.m.
Grant Avenue

Takoma Flea is an outdoor market offering a unique mix of vintage, collectibles, antiques, salvage, and repurposed goods. Find clothing, jewelry, housewares, furniture, vinyl records, and more. More information at mainstreettakoma.org.

Bike to Work

Friday, May 17

Whether you're working from the office or from your living room, celebrate bicycling as a fun, eco-friendly, and healthy way to exercise and commute. Come by Takoma Park's pit stops in Old Takoma, Takoma/Langley Crossroads, and on the Sligo Creek Trail at New Hampshire Avenue to receive a free T-shirt and bike safety swag. For more information and to register, visit biketoworkmetrodc.com. Free.

Takoma Park House and Garden Tour

Sunday, June 9, 1–9 p.m.

Historic Takoma is delighted to announce the resumption of the annual House and Garden Tour, following four year Covid hiatus. Please watch historictakoma.org for details on location and tickets. Volunteer docents are a key component of the tour. If you would like to volunteer for a two-hour shift, please use the contact form on the Historic Takoma website.

Celebrate Ten Years of Safe Grow

by Rick Baravechia
Code Enforcement Manager

Avoid the Chemical Romance

Harmful chemicals are not necessary to beautify our surroundings. This is the reasoning behind the creation of the Safe Grow Act that the City enacted in 2014. This law was created to protect ourselves and our environment from harmful pesticides and herbicides.

The Safe Grow Act places restrictions on the use of cosmetic pesticides for lawn care on public and private property. The list of restricted pesticides includes products that are known to cause cancer, endocrine disruption, and are identified by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) as having other toxicity characteristics.

Of the 30 most commonly used lawn pesticides, 17 are possible and/or known carcinogens, 18 have the potential to dis-



rupt the endocrine (hormonal) system, 19 are linked to reproductive effects and sexual dysfunction, 11 have been linked to birth defects, 14 are neurotoxic, 24 can cause kidney or liver damage, and 25 are sensitizers and/or irritants.

Children are especially sensitive to pesticide exposure, as they take in more pesticides relative to their body weight than

adults and have developing organ systems that are more vulnerable and less able to detoxify toxic chemicals.

In 2019, Montgomery County enacted the Healthy Lawns Act, which mirrors our Safe Grow legislation, so that all Montgomery County residents can reduce their exposure to the unhealthy effects of harmful lawn care pesticides.

Organic lawn care isn't difficult—in fact, it can save time and money, while protecting you, your family, your pets and the environment. Find a list of restricted chemicals at takomaparkmd.gov/safegrow. On that page, you will find other resources about maintaining a healthy lawn and yard, including a series of videos about natural landscape management.

Here are some tips for maintaining a healthy lawn, as we transition to spring: remove winter debris, test soils, dethatch your lawn, overseed thin areas, and ap-

ply corn gluten for inhibiting germinating weeds. Also, consider aerating your lawn and applying lime, if needed, for pH adjustment. Overwhelmed? Don't be. Reach out with any questions to Rick Baravechia, Takoma Park code enforcement manager, at duaneb@takomaparkmd.gov or 301-891-7113.

Let the World Know that Your Yard Is Safe

Is your lawn, apartment, and/or patio garden free of synthetic pesticides (including herbicides and fungicides) and safe for wildlife, pets, and people? If so, let us and your neighbors know! Free yard signs are available. Celebrate 10 years of Safe Grow today! Reach out with any questions to Rick Baravechia, Takoma Park code enforcement manager, at duaneb@takomaparkmd.gov or 301-891-7113.

Plastics Are Not Our Future

Plastic Straws and Stirrers Are Banned in Takoma Park

In the 1967 movie *The Graduate*, Mr. McGuire tells Benjamin Braddock that "the future is plastics." Well, now we are in 2024, and plastics are most definitely the past. We can do better with sustainable solutions, and the City of Takoma Park has taken one small but significant step by banning plastic straws and stirrers.

Americans go through 500 million plastic straws and stirrers a day. However, these simple products are not recyclable and end up in our oceans—accounting for about 4 percent of the plastic pollution found in oceans. They cause pollution and harm wildlife. Plastic never decomposes, as it breaks down into smaller



Enjoy your mojito or other spring beverage with a renewable straw, such as one made of bamboo

pieces, never disappearing entirely.

The Takoma Park Plastic Straw and Stirrer Ban has been enforced since July 2020, with

an initial fine of \$100 (\$200 for subsequent violations) to any retail establishment or other institution that violates the ban. This isn't the first environment-centered product restriction law established by Takoma Park. We have enacted a Plastic Bag Ban, a Polystyrene Ban, and the Safe Grow Law.

Instead of a plastic straw or stirrer, consider one of these single-use options: paper, sugar cane, hay, and bamboo. Or get a reusable straw made of stainless steel, glass, or rubber. There is more information about the Plastic Straw and Stirrer Ban on the city website, including tips for transitioning away from plastic.

The theme of Earth Day 2024 is the Planet versus Plastics, with the goal of reducing plastic production by 60% by 2040. Do your part.



Questions, Concerns,
or Ideas?

Reach out to Takoma Park
City Manager Rob DiSpirito at
robertd@takomaparkmd.gov
or 301-891-7202.