

Takoma Park News



December 2024

A newsletter published by the City of Takoma Park, Maryland

Volume 63, No. 12 ■ takomaparkmd.gov

Important Dates

Green Business Information Session
Tuesday, December 3, noon–1:30 pm
Online via Zoom. Register at bit.ly/greenbiztakoma.

Blood Drive
Saturday, December 7,
11:30 a.m.–4:30 p.m.
Takoma Park Community Center
7500 Maple Ave., Azalea Room
Register at bit.ly/3NSheh8.

Fixit Clinic
Sunday, December 8, 12:30–2:30 p.m.
Takoma Park Maryland Library
7505 New Hampshire Ave.
Register in advance at tinyurl.com/mr3jd97k.
Email questions to Fixittakoma@gmail.com.

Celebrate Solstice
Thursday, December 19, 6:30 p.m.
Takoma Park Maryland Library
7505 New Hampshire Ave.

Christmas Eve
Tuesday, December 24
City offices and facilities are closed.
Tuesday's trash, recycling, and food waste routes will be collected on Thursday, December 26.

Christmas Day
Wednesday, December 25
City offices and facilities are closed.
Wednesday's trash, recycling, and food waste routes will be collected on Friday, December 27.

New Year's Day
Wednesday, January 1
City offices and facilities are closed.
Wednesday's trash, recycling, and food waste routes will be collected on Thursday, January 2.

Meet Your New City Council

By Sean Gossard

Takoma Park came out to vote last month on a new council and there were a few surprises with two open seats and two incumbents failing to keep their positions for the first time in 20 years.

"It takes a lot to put yourself out there when running for public office," said Mayor Talisha Searcy at the new council's first meeting on November 18. Searcy ran for her second term unopposed and received 4,592 votes. "The fact that we were able to come out of this election season with our community values intact is a true testament to us as a city."

In Ward 1, Shana Fulcher lost re-election to her seat to Jessica Landman. Fulcher received 619 votes to Landman's 727, with 18 write-ins.

In Ward 2, Cindy Dyballa ran unopposed and received 734 votes, with 62 write-ins.

In Ward 3, during the first round of votes, Roger Schlegel received 624 votes, Matt Bormet received 478 votes, and Lucy Moore received 266 votes, with 36 write-ins. The vote then went to a runoff since none of the candidates secured more than 50 percent of the votes. In the runoff,



Takoma Park's new city council, from left, Ward 6 Councilmember Amy Wesolek, Ward 5 Councilmember Cara Honzak, Ward 2 Councilmember Cindy Dyballa, Mayor Talisha Searcy, Ward 3 Councilmember Roger Schlegel, Ward 4 Councilmember Kurt Gilbert, and Ward 1 Councilmember Jessica Landman.

Schlegel received 715 to Bormet's 654.

In Ward 4, Kurt Gilbert received 464 votes and Tony Kyere received 215, with 15 write-in votes.

In Ward 5, Cara Honzak also ran unopposed and received 321 votes with 8 write-ins.

ELECTION □ Page 3

Behind the Badge, Behind the Toy Drive: Lt. Joseph Butler

by Sean Gossard

What started as a midnight conversation while on patrol one night in Takoma Park has turned into one of the largest annual charity drives in the city.

Nearly a decade ago, Lt. Justin Butler was on patrol with his supervisor, former Takoma Park police officer and current city councilmember Kurt Gilbert, when they started talking about privilege.

"We were talking about how blessed we are and how fortunate we are and how so many people don't have what we have,"



his career with the Takoma Park police department in March of 1998. "And after a while, I had a whole room full of this stuff and I said 'There are people out here struggling, so let's give them away.' So Gilbert and I decided to go to Takoma Park citizens and deliver toys to them."

It didn't take long for them to realize that the police cars were more focused on young boys, and there was a need for unisex toys and toys for young girls. So the two put their money together to buy toys for children of all genders and ages.

"After that, it started to grow and grow and we got involved with the city fire department and started asking citizens for donations," Butler said.

Butler is retiring from the police department in March 2025 but after a little time off, he plans to get back to work.

"We're hoping to start up a food drive next year for Thanksgiving," he said.

Butler said he could not have made the toy drive what it is without the help of many city employees and residents including Lt. Cynthia Williams, who took over running the event for the past few years; Police Public Information Manager Cathy Plevy; Daniel Bushman for helping

said Butler. "He said, with his kids, even though they don't celebrate Christmas, he'd still buy them gifts anyways and he'd give his daughters two gifts but they had to donate one to someone in need."

So Butler got to thinking of other ways to help families in need around Takoma Park have their own special Christmases.

"After he told me this story, I started to collect these toy police cars from all over the country and other law enforcement memorabilia," said Butler, who began

BUTLER □ Page 10



Mayor & Council
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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 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.

Meeting start times and listed agenda items can change. Please check the agenda page on the city website to confirm the start time and final agenda. All city council meetings will convene at the Takoma Park Community Center Auditorium, 7500 Maple Ave., unless noted otherwise.

Wednesday, December 4: City Council Regular Meeting, 7:30 p.m. (Community Center Auditorium)

Work Session:

- Introduction to The General Assembly and Lobbying
- Discussion of Legislative Priorities
- City Manager FY26 Budget Projections
- Council Budget Priorities and Survey Results

Wednesday, December 11: City Council Regular Meeting, 7:30 p.m. (Community Center Auditorium)

Presentation:

- Legislative Priorities Session with the District 20 Delegation

Voting Session:

- Resolution Adopting Council Budget Priorities
- Resolution Providing for the City Council Winter Holiday Recess

Work Session:

- Library Construction Project Update
- Sustainability Program Update
- Overview/Orientation – CIP and Equipment Replacement Reserve

Wednesday, December 18: The City Council will NOT meet.

Wednesday, December 20: The City Council will NOT meet.

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, implements the policies set by the council, and prepares an annual budget for the council's 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 **Jessica Landman** jessical@takomaparkmd.gov
- Ward 2 Councilmember **Cindy Dyballa** cindydy@takomaparkmd.gov
- Ward 3 Councilmember **Roger Schlegel** rogers@takomaparkmd.gov
- Ward 4 Councilmember **Kurt Gilbert** kurtg@takomaparkmd.gov
- Ward 5 Councilmember **Cara Honzak** carah@takomaparkmd.gov
- Ward 6 Councilmember **Amy Wesolek** amyw@takomaparkmd.gov
- Takoma Park City Manager **Robert DiSpirito** robertd@takomaparkmd.gov



Mayor Talisha Searcy



Jessica Landman (Ward 1)



Cindy Dyballa (Ward 2)



Roger Schlegel (Ward 3)



Kurt Gilbert (Ward 4)



Cara Honzak (Ward 5)



Amy Wesolek (Ward 6)

CityCouncilAction

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

October 16, 2024

- Proclamation Recognizing Kenneth Flemmer for His 11 Years of Service to the City of Takoma Park

October 23, 2024

- First Reading Ordinance 2024-29 Approving FY25 Budget Amendment No. 2 – General Fund and Stormwater
- First Reading Ordinance 2024-30 Approving FY25 Budget Amendment No. 2 – ARPA Reallocations
- Ordinance 2024-31 Authorizing Award of FY25 Food Insecurity Reduction Grant Funds. Grant awards. Food distribution projects: Small Things Matter, \$30,000; Meals on Wheels of Takoma Park/Silver Spring, \$30,000; EduCare Support Services, Inc., \$30,000; So What Else, Inc., \$30,000; CHEER, \$30,000; Adventist Community Services of Greater Washington, Inc., \$28,278. Workforce

Development Project: Crossroads Community Food Network, \$10,555. Sustainability/Education Project: Community Food Forest Collective.

- First Reading Ordinance 2024-32 Amending Title 6 of the Takoma Park Code to Add Provisions to Create a Housing Preservation Tax Credit
- First Reading Ordinance 2024-33 Amending Title 6 of the Takoma Park Code to Add Provisions to Create a New Rental Housing Tax Credit

October 30, 2024

- Second Reading Ordinance 2024-29 Approving FY25 Budget Amendment No. 2 – General Fund and Stormwater
- Second Reading Ordinance 2024-30 Approving FY25 Budget Amendment No. 2 – ARPA Reallocations
- Second Reading Ordinance 2024-32 Amending Title 6 of the Takoma Park Code to Add Provisions to Create a Housing Preservation Tax Credit

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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 virtually on Zoom. Some are holding hybrid meetings (in-person/Zoom)

ARTS AND HUMANITIES COMMITTEE

Tuesday, December 3, 6:30 p.m. (Community Center Hydrangea Room)

BOARD OF ELECTIONS

Monday, November 11, noon (Community Center, location to be announced with Zoom option)
Wednesday, November 13, noon (Community Center, location to be announced with Zoom option)

EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS COMMITTEE

Thursday, December 19, 7 p.m. (Community Center Hydrangea Room with Zoom option)

GRANTS REVIEW COMMITTEE

Tuesday, December 10, 6:30 p.m. (virtual/Zoom)

POLICE CHIEF'S ADVISORY BOARD

Monday, December 16, 7 p.m. (Community Center Hydrangea Room with Zoom option)

POLICE EMPLOYEES' RETIREMENT PLAN COMMITTEE

Tuesday, December 3, 9:30 a.m. (Community Center Hydrangea Room with Zoom option)

RECREATION AND COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT COMMITTEE

Thursday, December 19, 7 p.m. (virtual/Zoom)

SUSTAINABLE MARYLAND COMMITTEE

Monday, December 2, 7 p.m. (Community Center Hydrangea Room with remote option)

YOUTH COUNCIL

Thursday, December 5, 4 p.m. (Community Center Hydrangea Room)
Thursday, November 12, 4 p.m. (Community Center Hydrangea Room)

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.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

ELECTION
■ From page 1

City of Takoma Park Maryland, City, Election Result

Ward 6 also had a three-way race that resulted in a runoff vote. During the first round of votes, Amy Wesolek received 260 votes, Ambroise Agosse received 252 votes, and incumbent Jason B. Small received 210 votes. In the runoff, Wesolek won the majority of votes over Agosse, 380 to 334.

Councilmember Dyballa spoke first to her new colleagues at the swearing-in ceremony, saying, "I'm looking forward to the next two years as a team. While we may disagree, I am sure we will disagree respectfully. I think we share some common values, and if we can hang on to that, it'll be a great couple of years."

Councilmember Honzak welcomed her new colleagues and shared some advice she received from former Ward 4 Councilmember Terry Seamens, who did not seek re-election after serving since 1999, "If it's already been said, you don't need to say it again."

After that, the four new councilmembers addressed the community in their new roles for the first time.

Councilmember Wesolek shared her top priorities for the upcoming term, including protecting the city's large immigrant population.

"I'm very proud that Takoma Park is a sanctuary city, meaning we will not cooperate with any federal law enforcement regarding immigration. All are welcome here regardless of where they were born or what immigration papers they have."

Councilmember Gilbert took time to thank his family, his new constituents, and his opponent.

"I want to thank God for this opportunity to serve my community again," said Gilbert, a former member of the Takoma Park police department. "If I could just take a moment to acknowledge my mom. She is a very strong, powerful woman in my life, and I'm very grateful she's here to see this day."

Councilmember Schlegel also took time

MAYOR									
Candidate	Ward 1	Ward 2	Ward 3	Ward 4	Ward 5	Ward 6	Total	Percent	Result
Searcy	1076	747	1164	610	311	684	4592	94%	Elected
Write-In	93	51	82	28	11	16	281	6%	
Total Valid Votes	1169	798	1246	638	322	700	4873		

City Council Ward 1			
Candidate	Votes	Percentage	Result
Fulcher	619	45%	
Landman	727	53%	Elected
Write-in	18	1%	
Total Valid Votes	1364		

City Council Ward 2			
Candidate	Votes	Percentage	Result
Dyballa	734	92%	Elected
Write-In	62	8%	
Total Valid Votes	796		

City Council Ward 3						
Candidate	Round 1			Round 2		
	Votes	Percentage	Transfer*	Votes	Percentage	Result
Matt Bormet	478	34%	+176	654	48%	
Lucy Moore*	266	19%	-266			
Roger Schlegel	624	44%	+91	715	52%	Elected
Write-in*	36	3%	-36			
Total Valid Votes	1404			1369		
Ballots Exhausted*			35			
Winning threshold by round	703			685		

*Write in has the fewest votes and is eliminated. 10 votes transferred to Roger Schlegel; 15 votes transferred to Matt Bormet; 11 votes transferred to Lucy Moore; 3 ballots exhausted. Lucy Moore is eliminated. 161 votes transferred to Matt Bormet; 81 votes transferred to Roger Schlegel; 24 ballots exhausted.

City Council Ward 4			
Candidate	Votes	Percentage	Result
Kurt Gilbert	464	67%	Elected
Tony Kyere	215	31%	
Write-In	15	2%	
Total Valid Votes	694		

City Council Ward 5			
Candidate	Votes	Percentage	Result
Cara Honzak	321	98%	Elected
Write-in	8	2%	
Total Valid Votes	329		

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Ward 6 Chart on page 5



Takoma Park News

Send submissions to: Editor: Eric Bond • editorbond@gmail.com | Assistant Editor: Sean Gossard • TPNewsEditor@takomaparkmd.gov
Questions: Ryan Kelly, acting communications manager • ryank@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.



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:
ከታች ያለውን ደህን አድ ደረጃ ላይ የዚህ መጽሔት አርከፍ ራስዎ ማውጣት ይቻላል። በዚህ ገጽ ላይ የተጻፉትን አንቀጾች በመመርመር ላይ ማንበብ ይቻላል። ተርጉሙን በመጠቀም በታችኛው ገጽ ላይ ውስጥ ያለውን ባህሪ የፓርክ ድር ጣቢያ ጠቀሱ እና ለሌሎች አድራሻዎች ላይ ደመልሱት። በላይኛው ቀኝ ጥንግ ላይ ታንቢክን የአሰሪውን ደምረጡና ደምረጡ የሚጠቀሙበት ቋንቋ ተቀልጭላለች።

Apply Now to Serve on City Boards and Committees

The city council is accepting applications to fill mid-year vacancies on boards and committees. Residents with all different types of experience and knowledge are welcome to apply. 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 participate.

- Board of Elections
- Commission on Landlord-Tenant Affairs
- Emergency Preparedness Committee
- Ethics Commission
- Grants Review Committee

- Recreation and Community Engagement Committee
- Sustainable Maryland Committee
- Tree Commission

Appointed board and committee members are eligible to receive \$40 for each meeting attended. To apply, go to takomaparkmd.gov and search for "boards and committees." Application deadline: January 10, 2025.

Questions? Contact Irma Nalvarte, Assistant City Clerk, irman@takomaparkmd.gov or 301-891-7214.

CITY COUNCIL ACTION

■ From page 2

- Credit
- Second Reading Ordinance 2024-33 Amending Title 6 of the Takoma Park Code to Add Provisions to Create a New Rental Housing Tax Credit (Councilmember Gibson voted against.)
- Resolution 2024-39 Directing Staff to Develop and Budget for a Multifamily Rehabilitation Tax Credit

- Ordinance 2024-34 Approving Multifamily Building Improvement Grant Awards. Buildings: 8315 Roanoke Avenue, \$43,225; 112 Lee Avenue, \$118,650; 702 Chaney Drive, \$200,000; 8308 Roanoke Avenue, \$72,200; 8202 Houston Court, \$95,475.
- Ordinance 2024-35 Approving the Procurement of 12 Police Patrol Vehicles (Councilmember Gibson voted against.)
- Resolution 2024-40 on the Removal of Unlawful Restrictive Covenants

Building COMMUNITY

Navigating the Process for Traffic Calming and Sidewalk Requests

We all want to feel safe when walking, biking, or driving in our neighborhoods. That's why in July of this year, Takoma Park updated the policies and procedures for requesting new traffic calming measures and sidewalks. Get caught up on what you need to know to ensure your concerns are addressed.

How to Request a New Traffic Calming Device

If you live within a quarter-mile (1320 feet) of an area that you think could benefit from speed humps, raised crosswalks, or other traffic calming measures, you can submit a request to the City Manager. Just fill out the online Traffic Calming and Sidewalk Request form. The City will then evaluate factors like crash data, pedestrian safety, and neighborhood demographics to prioritize your request.

After your request is reviewed, the city will hold a public meeting to get feedback from the community on the proposed traffic calming project. Based on that input, the city will develop a design and submit it for city council funding approval during the budget process.



How to Request a New Sidewalk

Similar to traffic calming, city residents can also request new sidewalks within a quarter-mile of their home using the same online request form. The city will evaluate factors like pedestrian safety, social equity across neighborhoods, nearby attractions that generate foot traffic, and the feasibility of installing a new sidewalk in that loca-

tion.

After reviewing your sidewalk request, the city will hold a public meeting to discuss the proposed project design. Feedback will be collected from the community before finalizing the plans. Approved sidewalk projects will then be prioritized for review during the budget process. Once approved, projects will be scheduled for construction.

Stay Involved and Informed

The city will publish an annual list of all evaluated traffic calming and sidewalk requests, including which projects have been funded for that year. You can review this list and provide input during the city's budgeting process.

Be reminded, the City may also proactively install traffic calming devices or new sidewalks even without a resident request, as part of their ongoing efforts to improve safety and accessibility across the community.

Have a concern?

If you've identified an area that could use some traffic calming or a new sidewalk, don't hesitate to submit a request. The city is committed to using data and community input to prioritize projects that will have the biggest positive impact. Together, we can make our streets safer and more walkable for everyone.

Visit bit.ly/TKPKTrafficCalming to access the Traffic Calming and Sidewalk Request form and learn more at bit.ly/TKPKTrafficCalmingRegulations.

Let's work together to improve our neighborhoods!

Project Update: Metropolitan Branch Trail

In October, design consultants RK&K made updates to the Metropolitan Branch Trail design in Takoma Park to address comments to widen the existing asphalt trail segment that connects from the intersection of Takoma Avenue/Fenton Street. In November, the design was submitted for mandatory review by the Montgomery County Planning Board.

The project will improve the existing trail to meet current design guidelines and standards and to provide a continuous trail that is safe for all user types.



The project limits for the Metropolitan (Met) Branch Trail are along the west side of Takoma Avenue /Fenton Street from the Washington, D.C., line to approximately 250 feet south of the Fenton Street /New York Avenue intersection—an approximate distance of 0.45 miles.

Notice of Proposed Administrative Regulation for the Implementation and Enforcement of Takoma Park Code, Sections 6.16.090 (Fees) – To regulate the fees charged to tenants in the City of Takoma Park and setting a process for the addition of a fee or waiver from the allowed fee schedule

An Administrative Regulation is being proposed for the implementation and enforcement of Sections 6.16.090 (Fees) to regulate the fees charged to tenants and setting a process for the addition of a fee or waiver from the allowed fee schedule.

Pursuant to the requirements of the "Administrative Regulations Ordinance" (Authority: Chapter 2.12 "Administrative Regulations," of the Takoma Park Code), notice of the City's intention to adopt an administrative regulation must be publicly noted, allowing residents the opportunity to comment on the proposal. The proposed regulation is available for review at bit.ly/3Z51OeH. To obtain further information about the proposed regulation,

contact Devin McNally, Housing Manager, Housing and Community Development Department, 301-891-7222, devinm@takomaparkmd.gov.

Written comments on the proposed regulation should be submitted to the City Clerk at: clerk@takomaparkmd.gov. The deadline for receipt of public comments is Monday, December 30, 2024.

Schedule for Review

- Publication of Proposed Regulation – November 25, 2024
- Publication of Regulation and Notice of Final Action – January 2025 City Newsletter
- Effective Date – January 15, 2025

Stay Safe on the Roads This Holiday Season

The holidays bring joy, but also unique hazards on our streets. This is a simple message to keep you safe this winter and holiday season:

Slow down. Stay alert. Look out for each other.

Whether you're driving, walking, or riding a bike, follow these key tips:

Drivers

- Scan for pedestrians and cyclists, especially at intersections.
- Increase following distance and reduce speed in bad weather.
- Avoid distractions—keep your eyes on the road.

Pedestrian

- Use crosswalks and follow signals.
- Wear bright/reflective clothing, especially at night.
- Avoid distractions like phones.

Cyclists

- Follow traffic laws and ride predictably.
- Use front and rear lights, especially in low light.
- Wear a helmet and be extra cautious around vehicles.

Let's make our streets safer for everyone this holiday season. Slow down, stay alert, and look out for one another.

Safe travels, and happy holidays!

The ARTS

Trap Bob Returns with New Superheroes

It's a bird! It's a plane! It's Trap Bob painting tables with new female superheroes!

Tenbeete Solomon, a.k.a. [Trap Bob](#), painted three tables in the Takoma Streetery outdoor dining area in 2021 featuring her "Girl" characters, bold Black female superheroes who each have their own superpower. The tables have faded over time, so the City's Arts and Humanities Division hired her to repaint the tables with new superhero designs.

"We're very excited to have Trap Bob back in town to revive these tables with her unique and colorful style," says Arts and Humanities Coordinator Brendan Smith. "The tables have been very popular, so we wanted to extend their artistic life while providing more outdoor seating in downtown Takoma Park."

Trap Bob shared some thoughts about this project and her own artistic journey. Be sure to check out the tables outside Takoma Bev at 6917 Laurel Ave.

What was the inspiration for your artist name Trap Bob?

It was a mix of a childhood nickname and being a super fan of trap music pioneer Gucci Mane. I also love how the name throws people off and forces them to let go of their expectations.

How did you develop these Black female superheroes and what do they represent for you?

I created my "Girl" characters as an outlet to express the emotions of both myself and my community. They are all one person and every person. For me, they represent hope and determination.

The biggest theme behind my work is that "art will save the world." When my "Girls" show up as superheroes, they are fighting for what's right and just, and they serve as reminders that we are all superheroes in our everyday lives through our work and our choices.



Trap Bob brings new superheroes to Takoma Park.



Did you grow up reading comic books or watching superhero films?

I grew up very influenced by anime, cartoons, and video games so I've definitely leaned into character design as it has been my favorite way to communicate my message. Without realizing it, my "Girls" were born from me aiming to relate to my audience and bring people together in a digestible and approachable way.

What's your background as an artist and some of your favorite projects?

I got interested in art around the time

I was graduating from college and studying business and marketing. I was stressed about my future and finding my passion, so I started drawing to relieve stress since it was something I always enjoyed but never took seriously. I fell in love with it and completely committed myself to being a self-taught artist.

I started with painting and moved into illustration and digital art and, more recently, murals and public art. Freelancing became a classroom for me, and I explored different mediums through various clients and projects. I have worked with so many amazing individuals and organizations in

the D.C. area and have expanded to nationwide projects and campaigns.

Some of my favorite projects included a portrait of Mary W. Jackson, NASA's first black female engineer, for the renaming of the NASA headquarters and some animation for Missy Elliott's "DripDemeanor" music video. I recently worked with some other artists to create a mural gallery at the Scramble parkour gym in Arlington, and it's been fun coming back to Takoma Park to keep this project alive.

ELECTION

■ From page 3

to thank his family, including his wife and two children. He spoke of his parents and how their lessons will help shape his time in office.

"Dad always taught us that problem-solving was at its best when everybody in the room was being listened to, especially the person being least attended to," he said. "Our mom was amazing at giving everyone the benefit of the doubt and finding a way to love every single person, and I hope to be able to do that from here."

Councilmember Landman spoke last, saying she's excited to serve her ward.

"I'm very honored to be representing Ward 1," she said. "And I look forward to representing all of the residents of Ward 1, the ones who voted for me, the ones who didn't vote, and even the ones who voted against me. Because that's the most exciting thing, to find commonality. I think there are common values among everyone on the council."

Mayor Searcy closed out the meeting

City Council Ward 6						
Candidate	Round 1			Round 2		
	Votes	Percentage	Transfer*	Votes	Percentage	Result
Ambroise Agosse	252	34%	+82	334	47%	
Jason Small*	210	28%	-210			
Amy Wesolek	260	35%	120	380	53%	Elected
Write-In	24	3%	-24			
Total Valid Votes	746			714		
Ballots Exhausted*			32			
Winning threshold by round	374			358		

*Write in has the fewest votes and is eliminated. 13 votes transferred to Ambroise Agosse; 8 votes transferred to Amy Wesolek; 3 ballots exhausted.

Jason Small is eliminated. 69 voted transferred to Ambroise Agosse; 112 votes transferred to Amy Wesolek; 29 ballots exhausted.

with congratulations for the new council and words of hope for an uncertain future.

"I think one of the things that's important as we continue to move forward as a city is that we embrace our character and we embrace our values and that we serve as that beacon of hope to other communities across this country when you have a group joined in a shared vision to make our community better," she said. "We're no longer running, now we have to lead."

During the final meeting of the outgoing

council right before the new council was sworn in, Mayor Searcy took a few minutes to recognize former Councilmember Seamens and his decades of service.

"As the Ward 4 councilmember, Councilmember Seamens advocated for residents, addressed food insecurities locally, and fought for police reform," Searcy said. "Councilmembers Seamens and his wife, Joyce, are pillars of the community and have jointly worked to support Takoma Park residents by delivering food and con-

necting residents with social services."

Before closing out the final meeting of the outgoing council, Searcy also told the story of Seamans and his wife urging her to run for mayor in 2022 and how he helped in her first years leading the city.

"Growing up in the South, my grandmother used to pass us little candies in church," Searcy said through tears. "So, Councilmember Seamens, every council meeting when he would see things getting a little difficult, would pass me a candy. I cannot express how much I appreciate your leadership—you've given me room to fail—your dedication to the city and to each and every person in this community, regardless of where they live or their backgrounds. You've just shown pure love to the people of this community. Thank you very much."

Mayor Searcy also thanked Fulcher and Smalls for their service on the council as well as former Councilmember Randy Gibson, who did not seek re-election.



LIBRARY

7505 New Hampshire Ave.,
Suite 205

Library and Computer Center hours

Monday–Thursday 10 a.m.–8 p.m.
Friday–Sunday noon–6 p.m.

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

December closures

The Library and Computer Center will be closed on Sunday, December 1 as part of the Thanksgiving holiday. The Library and Computer Center will be closed on Tuesday, December 24 and Wednesday, December 25 for the Christmas holiday and on Wednesday, January 1, 2025, for New Years Day.

Internet Hotspots and Chromebooks to borrow.

The library has a supply of Verizon JetPacks and Chromebooks for patrons to borrow. The hotspots will permit up to 10 devices to connect to the internet. The Chromebooks are great for email and web browsing. These items will be available only to adult patrons and require a signed user agreement. You must have had a library card for a minimum of one month before checking either of these items out.

Books-to-Go (pick up at the library) and **Books-to-You** (delivered—for Takoma Park residents only) continues. 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 do ask patrons to register for some programs. Registration provides the library and its partners with a headcount so that we can prepare accordingly. Registration, however, does not guarantee a seat, so participants are encouraged to arrive early.

Crochet and Cozies, all ages welcome: Join us at 10:30 Monday mornings for crochet and cozy mysteries. We are now making many hats for those in need as the weather gets colder! 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. Register on our Events calendar.

Fixit Clinic! The Friends of the Takoma Park Maryland Library is having their next Fixit Clinic on Sunday, December 8, 12:30–2:30 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, etc. to our FREE clinic. Your skilled neighbor volunteers will diagnose your item's issue and show you how to make the repair (and you'll learn some basic DIY skills too!). The clinic is free, but you must register so that we can prepare

for your repair. To register, use this link: <https://tinyurl.com/mr3jd97k>. Email questions to Fixittakoma@gmail.com.

Clínica Takoma Fixit! ¿Quiere reparar sus cosas rotas y marcar la diferencia manteniéndolas fuera del vertedero? Luego traiga sus pequeños electrodomésticos, computadoras / dispositivos, lámparas, bicicletas, ropa / costura, cuchillos sin filo, muebles rotos, etc. a nuestra clínica GRATUITA. Tus vecinos voluntarios expertos diagnosticarán el problema de tu artículo y te mostrarán cómo hacer la reparación (¡y también aprenderás algunas habilidades básicas de bricolaje!). LA CLINICA ES GRATUITA, pero debe <https://tinyurl.com/mr3jd97k> para que podamos prepararnos para su reparación. Para inscribirse, utilice este enlace: Fixittakoma@gmail.com.

Neighborhood Circle Time: Join Ms. Verónica and Ms. Sylvie every Tuesday at 10:30 a.m. for Circle Time. We sing, 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! Ms. Sylvie will be leading Circle Time through the end of the year. **Jumpstart With the Arts** joins us with live music for Circle Time on the first Tuesday of the



Mr. Gabe plays at Circle Time on Tuesday, December 3.

month. The next time they will be with us is Tuesday, December 3 with special guest Mr. Gabe. 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: Join us on Sundays at noon to play this ancient strategy game. Caregivers and kids are invited. We have plenty of chess boards and pieces. Players of all levels are welcome. There will be group instruction once a month—please welcome our new instructor, Jonathan. Please register if you want to receive updates.

Sundays: Board games, LEGO, Marble Run, Arts & Crafts. Sundays in the library are a lot of fun.

The Winter Solstice celebration will be happening once again in December—mark your calendars for Thursday, December 19 at 6:30 p.m. We'll have dancing, storytelling, and treats! This is an all-ages event. See the article for more details.

As the World Turns

by Anne LeVeque

The Winter Solstice celebration will be held on Thursday, December 19, beginning at 6:30 p.m. Once again, we will have the Rock Creek Morris Women sharing traditional dances and music. The Just in Time step dance troupe is also returning, with exciting offerings.

We'll have a demonstration of axial tilt, we'll learn new words like *obliquity* and *orbital plane*, and how our friends who live in the Arctic Circle have no daylight at all, while those in Antarctica have no night-

time on this special day. There will also be crafts for little hands to try, and storytelling for everyone.

We'll have delicious refreshments, including hot cider, hot tea or cocoa, cookies, candy canes, and more. Invite all your friends and neighbors to celebrate our swiftly tilting planet.

The celebration will take place in the interim library at 7505 New Hampshire Ave., Suite 205. Special thanks to the Friends of the Takoma Park Maryland Library for supporting the Solstice Celebration this year and throughout all the past years!





Friends News

The FTPML Friends Book Group will discuss *Sir Gawain and the Green Knight* on Thursday, December 12, 7:30–9 p.m. in the Azalea Room of the Community Center.

Online accessibility to the discussion will be available. If you are interested in joining online send your request to ftpmlbookgroup@gmail.com.

Written in Middle English, *Sir Gawain and the Green Knight* is by a poet who has come to be known as the Gawain or Pearl poet. The latter name is taken from another poem believed to be written by the same poet. While a 2007 translation by the British poet laureate, Simon Armitage, will be available to borrow, other translations are also available, including one by J.R.R. Tolkien. Both of those translations, as well as several others, are available as ebooks or audiobooks from Hoopla. The library does not have a print edition of the Tolkien translation.

The poem tells the story of the challenge from the Green Knight to the knights of King Arthur's round table. The knight has interrupted a Yuletide feast to issue his challenge: one of the knights must behead him, then in one year that knight will suffer the same or similar fate at the hand of the Green Knight.

Sir Gawain accepts the challenge. After beheading the Green Knight, Gawain spends the following year searching the north of Britain for the knight knowing he will meet his fate at the monster's hands.

If you are interested in joining the discussion and you do not receive Friends Book Group announcements, write to ftpmlbookgroup@gmail.com for details on joining the email list.

Copies of *Sir Gawain and the Green Knight* can be borrowed from the library and from Hoopla.

Growing Up Jewish in a Small Town

Book review by Gene Miller

The Jew Store by Stella Suberman, Algonquin Books, 2001.

Listen while I tell you: a story of the Jews of St. John's, Newfoundland by Alison Kahn, ISER Books, 1987.

So much of what I knew of Jewish immigrants in the United States was centered in New York City. The idea of small-town Jews hadn't really registered with me until I read Stella Suberman's memoir, *The Jew Store*. Suberman's family left New York City in the 1920s and moved to small-town Tennessee, where her father opened a dry goods store. The store was known colloquially as "The Jew Store," hence the title, and there were many such stores across America.

Suberman recounts with warmth and alertness the story of growing up in "Concordia"—a fictional town name—and meeting open and welcoming friends and, at the same time, the prejudices both subtle and overt.

The Subermans' first guide to the folkways of small-town Tennessee was their first landlady, Brookie Simmons, a/k/a Miss Brookie. She was full of sass and sharp insights about the townspeople. It was she who advised Mr. Suberman to ignore the Klan, despite their regular parade of threats about Jews, Roman Catholics, and "foreign agitators."

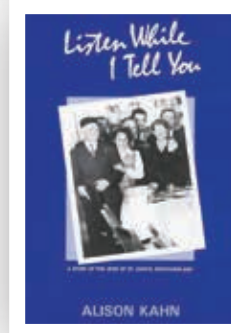
"Truth is," counsels Miss Brookie, "They wouldn't know a foreign agitator if one bit 'em on the rear while they were hymnsinging in church" A Jew like Mr. Suberman might have been more publicly apparent, but Miss Brookie said that, despite their bluster, the Klansmen all knew they needed a Jew store.

I have no idea how often such scenarios were played out and replayed across the heartlands. I'm guessing a lot if only because I grew up going to Sam Rubinson's department store in New Holland, Pennsylvania. Rubinson had built his business by catering to the needs of the Plain People—the Amish and Mennonites—of eastern Lancaster County. He stocked what seemed to me to be hundreds of bolts of the fabrics the Amish and Mennonite women would use to make their families' clothing.

When Stella's oldest sister, Miriam, fell in love with a local Tennessee boy who wasn't Jewish, the social realities set in for the Subermans. Mr. and Mrs. Suberman were not ready to have their children marry gentiles, and they really wanted to have their son, Stella's brother, bar mitzvahed. So Mr. Suberman sold his store to a chain that was expanding its Tennessee operations and the family moved back to New York City.

Stella writes that she still feels the tug of connection to her family's sojourn in Tennessee when she sees the occasional sign like MANDELBAUM'S FAMILY STORE or SCHECTER'S DRY GOODS AND READY-TO-WEAR in a small southern town. And she wonders how her life would have progressed had her parents chosen to stay.

While I loved Stella Suberman's stories of growing up Jewish in far-flung Tennessee, Alison Kahn's *Listen while I tell you: a story of the Jews of St. John's, Newfoundland* taught me that such experiences were not limited to heartland America. Newfoundland is a wild and wonderful place whose colonists were mostly Irish Catholics and English



Protestants.

But it turns out that there has long been a small colony of Jewish immigrants trying to make a go of it by selling dry goods on "The Rock," as Newfoundlanders refer to their island home. Kahn, a Takoma Park resident who did graduate work at Memorial University in St. John's, collected some of the stories of the Jewish families who came to Newfoundland in the late 19th and early 20th centuries and tried to make a go of it in a place where, as the song goes "The winters try to kill us."

"Tried" is the operative word here: Newfoundland has never been a rich province. Even the capital of St. John's seems not to have sparkled with opportunity: one of the stories Kahn has collected comes from Ida Sidel, who arrived in St. John's from

Riga, Latvia, in 1932: "When I came here to Newfoundland, I came here after New Year's...And you know, after Christmas you have the slush and the weather, and oh God. The houses look so—like little shacks to me. I said 'My God, look where I am.'"

Nevertheless, the seminal figure in the story of Jewish merchants in St. John's, and by extension Newfoundland, was Israel Perlin, who had a dry goods store on Water Street in St. John's. Many if not most of the newly arrived immigrant men arrived with little or no money or English. They would go to Perlin's and be outfitted with huge backpacks full of sundries, which they would carry about the province, selling door-to-door. The peddlers and their loaded backpacks would walk, travel by boat to the coastal fishing villages, or take the cross-island passenger train and jump off at a point nearest to the next town on their itinerary. It was a hard life, made harder by the language barrier. Kahn recounts one story of a peddler who got into some trouble when he asked for overnight lodging with: "May I sleep with you?"

Although at their peak, there were perhaps as many as 12 Jewish stores like Perlin's on Water Street in St. John's, the Jewish community nevertheless struggled to survive. The population fluctuated in population and practice. The synagogue, Beth-El, often couldn't afford to bring in a rabbi. If Beth-El did manage to find a rabbi, it was seldom long until he was off to the greener pastures of Halifax, or Montreal, or Toronto, or even New York City. Keeping kosher in St. John's was almost impossible, if only for want of a kosher butcher. St. John's Jewish families had to deal with the same social issues faced by the Subermans in Tennessee: Who will our sons and daughters marry? Will they stay Jewish?

The stories Kahn has collected tell us that their record was spotty: many of the second and third generation immigrants have either intermarried with non-Jews or simply left St. John's—very often to go to university elsewhere—and never returned. But the stories also speak of success: services are still being held at Beth-El in St. John's, still the only synagogue in the province.

Both Suberman and Kahn have given us a glimpse into the world of smaller things—but then, what is our world but a whole collection of smaller things?

The Jew Store is available on Hoopla. *Listen While I Tell You* is available at the Takoma Park Maryland Library.

Director's column

Aftermath

by Jessica Jones

December concludes an eventful year before we open up into a new 2025 that promises to be at least as eventful as 2024.

I'm ending this year thinking about change. There is change that has already started as we welcomed new city council members in November, and change coming in the new year with elected officials at all levels of government.

Information literacy and escapism are topics that I've touched on in previous columns. We will need both in the coming days, regardless of our individual politics, and I want to return to them as we process our relationship to a world where sometimes change feels like the only consistent variable.

Information literacy: In a previous life, I taught information literacy to college students — meaning that I taught impressionable young people how to research and discern quality information sources from ... I don't know what term is best to use here since it depends on the alternative designation at any given moment. Sometimes it's "sources with manipulative agendas," sometimes it's propaganda, sometimes it's "people who want your money," and sometimes it's outright garbage.

Honestly, I believe AI is making this distinction even more difficult, if for no other reason than by virtue of the sheer volume of narrative that AI can generate (and at the expense of our environment to boot). And, when it's not text, it's edited images or deep fake videos. It can mimic the tone, voice, and face of trusted sources who have had no permissions sought or given to use their likeness for any purpose. Even more alarmingly, it's not regulated beyond the framework we have to protect intellectual property, which is unevenly enforced at best.



Also, I think we all know by now, that once bad information is out there, it's like trying to cram toothpaste back into the metaphorical tube. It is so difficult to take anything back, and it is really (really) difficult to scrub anything from the internet. Remember back in 2013 when those "unflattering" photos of Beyoncé made the rounds, and her publicists tried to remove it from our collective digital consciousness?

Suffice it to say, that did not work. And if Beyoncé's Beehive and millions of dollars and professional staff couldn't prevent me from finding it in a single Google search ... it's here to stay.

All of this is to say, it is more important than ever to question our sources — even familiar sources.

Here are some questions we can ask ourselves as we browse *AI Gore's Interwebs*:

- Is this information from an original author, or has it been reinterpreted? How many times has it been, or potentially been, reinterpreted?
- Why should I believe this? What are the credentials of the content creator?
- Are there ads accompanying this? What are they trying to sell me?
- What does this content creator gain from my trust?
- Are there any sources cited? What is the credibility of the source?
- How old is this content? Is it outdated

AFTERMATH □ Page 10



Listen to This!, the podcast review will return next month.

RECREATION

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

TOTS

DANCE

Combo Tot Dance

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. Instructor: Dance Solutions

Takoma Park Community Center
(Azalea Room)

7500 Maple Ave.

Ages 3-5

Sundays, 12:15-1 p.m.

January 12-March 2

Resident: \$125 / non-resident: \$145

SPORTS

Recess and Results

With only about 1 in 4 children meeting the daily recommendation of 60 minutes or more of physical activity per day, Recess and Results with Lynsey gives young children the opportunity to move their bodies in a way that is both fun and engaging. It combines age-appropriate strength, flexibility, and cardiovascular training through play. With Recess and Results, we're not just getting kids moving—we're helping them build a foundation for a healthy, active life, all while having fun along the way.

Takoma Park Recreation Center
(Gymnasium)

7315 New Hampshire Ave.

Ages 3-5

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

February 1-March 8

Resident: \$60 / non-resident: \$70



YOUTH

DANCE

Ballet & Stretch

This 45-minute 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 choreographers. Instructor: Charonne Butler

Takoma Park Community Center
(Auditorium)

7500 Maple Ave.

Ages 5-12

Saturdays, 12:30-1:15 p.m.

January 11-March 15

Resident: \$90 / non-resident: \$110

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 technique, practice temporal awareness, spatial awareness and learn choreography. Instructor: Charonne Butler

Takoma Park Community Center
(Auditorium)

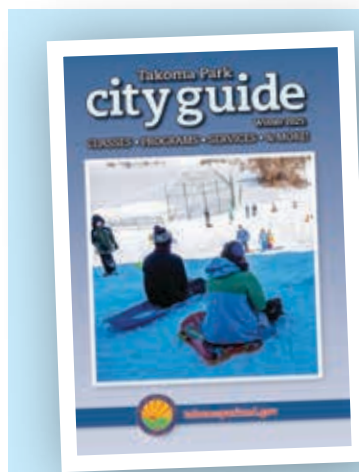
7500 Maple Ave.

Ages 5-12

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

January 11-March 15

Resident: \$90 / non-resident: \$110



Winter is right around the corner, and that means it is time to sign up for our winter recreation classes and programs! Registration opens for all Takoma Park residents on December 16 at noon. From youth to seniors, we have something for everyone! Explore art classes, Spring Break Camp, Fun Days, fitness and dance classes, sports leagues, and much more. To see a full list of offerings, check out the Winter City Guide inserted in this newsletter and register on ActiveNet.

Winter Program Registration

December 9 for scholarship participants

December 16 for Takoma Park residents

December 23 for non-residents

DROP-IN

Kid Night

The Takoma Park Recreation Center provides affordable, safe, and FUN activities for kids on the first and third Friday nights of the month. Come out to a night of games, activities, and more. Bring your friends and meet new ones. Free with Recreation Center membership.

Takoma Park Recreation Center
(Gymnasium)

7315 New Hampshire Ave.

Ages 5-12

Fridays, 4:30-6:30 p.m.

January 3 and January 17

Free with membership

EXTENDED CARE

School year 2024-2025

Our emphasis is on providing fun, leisure and recreation programs before and after the school day, while providing a safe environment for children grades K-5. Participants will engage in daily indoor/outdoor group activities and holiday-based events. Children will have time for free play, homework assignments, breakfast (not provided)—or simply prepare for their upcoming day in beforecare. Each afternoon kids will receive a snack; have a time period to complete homework; and enjoy arts and crafts, sports, board games, free play, and more!

Programs operate when Montgomery County Public Schools is in session

Before Care: 7-9 a.m.

Resident: \$1,700 / non-resident: \$2,000

After Care: 3:30-6:30 p.m.

Resident: \$2,500 / non-resident: \$3,000

Bundle Discount: Resident: \$3,570 / Non-resident: \$4,250

Participants who register for both beforecare and aftercare at the same facility in one transaction will receive a discount.

Payment Plan: There is a 20% deposit due at the time of registration. The remaining balance will be divided into monthly payments through May.

Before the Bell and After the Bell

Takoma Park Recreation Center
7315 New Hampshire Ave.

Transportation will not be provided through the Recreation department. Staff will escort participants to the bus stop at Hampshire Towers and will wait with them at the bus stop. After school staff will wait at the bus stop for the arrival of After the Bell participants.

Morning Addition and Afternoon Addition Takoma Park Community Center 7500 Maple Ave.

Staff will escort participants to and from Takoma Park Elementary School and Piney Branch Elementary School

Fun Day

Fun Days are offered on specific days when Montgomery County Public Schools are not in session. The program is designed to provide recreational activities for children enrolled in Kindergarten through Fifth grade. Through structured, socially distanced activities, crafts and presenters, there are opportunities for socializing, unwinding, and releasing energy. Participants will meet at the Community Center, 7500 Maple Ave. Must bring a lunch, snacks, and labeled water bottle. Activities and performers are

subject to change. Registration is required. Paperwork will need to be completed prior to the first day of the program.

Takoma Park Community Center
7500 Maple Ave.

Grades: K-5

Wednesday, January 29: Spy Museum

Monday, March 31: Monster Mini Golf

Resident: \$55 / non-resident: \$65

SPORTS

Basketball Skills

This class will teach the fundamentals of the sport. Good sportsmanship will be emphasized. Participants will be provided with excellent coaching. You will learn proper dribbling, shooting, and defensive techniques. Instructor: Greg Harris

Takoma Park Recreation Center
(Gymnasium)

7315 New Hampshire Ave.

Ages 6-12

Saturdays, noon-1 p.m.

January 18-March 18

Resident: \$100 / non-resident: \$110

Futsal League 2025

Futsal, a sport that is similar to soccer, offers the perfect combination of learning and fun. It is designed to improve fundamental technique and skill development during the winter months. It's also a great opportunity to meet new friends, stay in shape, and prepare for the upcoming season. Please note that program registration is first-come-first-served. Parents are encouraged to volunteer as coaches. This is an eight-game season. Practices will be once a week and will begin in December 2024. Games are on Sundays and begin January 12, 2025. Game times are subject to change based on gym availability and number of teams in a division.

Takoma Park Recreation Center
(Gymnasium)

7315 New Hampshire Ave.

8-game season

Games on Sundays

January 12-March 16

Ages 7-8 division, noon-2 p.m.

Ages 9-10 division, 2:15-4:15 p.m.

Ages 11-12 division, 4:30-6:30 p.m.

Resident: \$100 / non-resident: \$110

Winter Basketball League 2025

The Winter Basketball League is a developmental, community league. The program will introduce children to the fundamentals of basketball and emphasize that playing the game and being a member of a team are more important than winning. The coaches in this league will focus on personal improvement, sportsmanship, and fun.

Practice times (1 hour per week) vary throughout the week at various local schools.

SPECIAL NOTICE

Library and Community Center Renovations

Due to the Library and Community Center Renovations, the Recreation department has made the following temporary changes:

- The Game room and Dance studio are closed to the public and will remain closed during the Library/Community Center renovations.
- Recreation administrative offices will be located at the temporary Library location at 7505 New Hampshire Ave., Suite 205.
- The Teen Lounge will remain open, and teens can enter and exit the space using the outside entrance near the basketball courts.
- To enter the Community Center, use the Grant Avenue doors.
- Beforecare and aftercare programs will remain as scheduled in the Azalea room.
- Parking at the Community Center is very limited; street parking is recommended.
- Please call the Recreation department at 301-891-7290 for additional information regarding programs and services.
- Maple Avenue trench work for the new library site continues. See takomaparkmd.gov for updates on the project.

RECREATION

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

RECREATION

■ From page 8

Games are held on Saturdays, times vary.

Coaching Information: Volunteer coaches are always needed. Please contact the Takoma Park Recreation Department if interested (240-687-2202).

Team Assignments: K–Grade 2 divisions will reflect gender equity based on number of participants.

Special Requests: Requests must be made in writing and submitted through ActiveNet at time of registration, though requests are not guaranteed.

Various Local School Gyms

Grades K–8

8-week season

Practices: weekday evenings

Games: Saturdays, January 11–March 1

Resident: \$100 / non-resident: \$110

TEENS

ART

CRAFT!

Welcome to Creative Recreational Arts for Teens! (CRAFT!) In this class, teens will explore mixed media art projects that cater to a variety of interests. Participants will get to work on different art forms, including painting, collaging, illustration, and even sculpting. This class will scratch that creative itch and expose teens to the endless possibilities of art. All experience levels are welcome! There is a non-refundable \$20 materials fee due directly to the instructor on the first day. Instructed by: Kelsey Joyce

Takoma Park Community Center

(Art Studio)

7500 Maple Ave.

Grades 8–11

Mondays, 6:30–7:30 p.m.

January 27–March 24

Resident: \$50 / non-resident: \$60

DANCE

Kolor Me Dance: Hip-Hop

Hip-hop dance incorporates aspects of modern dance, tap, and swing, integrating music and complex movements to form artistry. Teens will have the opportunity to make their own routines and explore other types of dance, such as ballet, jazz, and stepping.

Takoma Park Recreation Center

7315 New Hampshire Ave.

Grades 6–12

Saturdays, 1–2:30 p.m.

January 11–March 1

Free

DROP-IN

Teen Night

The Takoma Park Recreation Center provides quality, affordable, safe and FUN activities for teens. Nothing to do on Friday nights? Come on out to a night of games, activities and more. Bring your friends for a night out of the house. Free with a Recreation Center Teen membership.

Takoma Park Recreation Center

(Gymnasium)

7315 New Hampshire Ave.

Ages 12–16

Weekly on Fridays, 6:30–8:45 p.m.

Free with membership

TRIPS

Teens on the Move: Winter Break Edition

Teens on the Move is back! But this time, for Winter Break. Teens will enjoy Cirque ICE! At Gaylord National on December 26 and snow tubing at Avalanche Xpress on December 27. Those who register for BOTH trips will receive a discount on their registration! Please check out ActiveNet for additional information. Teens will meet in the Teen Lounge to depart for each trip. Don't miss out on all the fun!

Takoma Park Community Center

Meet at Teen Lounge

7500 Maple Avenue

Grades: 6–12

Cirque ICE!

Thursday, December 26

11:30 a.m.–5 p.m.

Resident: \$25 / non-resident: \$35

Avalanche Xpress Snow Tubing

Friday, December 27

11:30 a.m.–5 p.m.

Resident: \$20 / non-resident: \$30

Bundle Discount for both trips:

Resident: \$40 / non-resident: \$60

ADULT

EDUCATION & DEVELOPMENT

Writing Life Stories

Do you want to share important life experiences through your writing and during class discussion? Our stories are part of what makes us human. Whether you are a lifelong writer or a beginner, this class is for you. This class will help you to jump-start your memories, organize your ideas, and edit your work. Come and share your life experiences with the class. This class is held virtually. Prepare to have fun! Instructor: Barbara Rosenblatt



Virtual on Zoom

Ages 16 and up

Mondays, 7–8:30 p.m.

January 6–March 24

Resident: \$95 / non-resident: \$105

FITNESS

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.

January 11–February 15

Resident: \$60 / non-resident: \$70

Zumba New Ave.

Zumba is a total body workout, combining all elements of fitness with cardio, muscle conditioning, balance, and flexibility. Zumba takes the work out of the workout, by mixing low and high intensity moves. The class will incorporate Latin music that will easily move you through your workout. Drop-ins are welcomed. Instructor: Yesika Flores

Takoma Park Recreation Center

(Gymnasium)

7315 New Hampshire Ave.

Ages 16 and up

Saturdays, 9–10 a.m.

January 18–February 22

Resident: \$60 / non-resident: \$70

Everyday QiGong

Simple gentle movements to improve health, mobility, flexibility and general happiness, and peace of mind. We will share exercises from many different classes, culling the ones that we practice regularly in the morning and throughout the day. You will find benefits quickly as these QiGong exercises invigorate energy systems; open up joints; and relax our

bodies, minds, and spirits. Open to all—no experience needed. Your health is in your hands. Instructor: Patrick Smith

Virtual on Zoom

Ages 18 and up

Tuesdays, 7:30–8 p.m.

January 7–March 11

Resident: \$30 / non-resident: \$40

SPORTS



COACHES WANTED for Youth Winter Leagues

It is almost that time of the year, the start of the Winter Basketball League—and Futsal League is right around the corner. We still need some volunteer coaches. Practice is once a week and starts the week of December 16.

Winter Basketball League games on Saturdays, starting January 11. Futsal games on Sundays, starting January 12.

For more information contact John Webster at 240-687-2202 or TPSports@Takomaparkmd.gov

Adult Drop in Pickleball

Join other new players for drop-in pickleball. The entire magic and success of pickleball is the way it has been setup to be a welcoming sport in an informal setting—meaning, you can show up to the courts and pick up a game. *Please note that the area outside the court is less than what is recommended.*

Takoma Park Recreation Center

7315 New Hampshire Ave.

(Gymnasium)

Ages 16 & Up

Mondays, 6:30–8:30 p.m.

January 27–March 31

Resident: \$20 / non-resident: \$30

55+ ACTIVITIES

ART

Arts and Crafts with Alice

Brighten the winter days and get creative. The class meets once a month to learn a new skill and create different projects. Enjoy the supportive and positive atmosphere. Instructor: Alice Sims, Art for the People

Heffner Park Community Center

42 Oswego Ave.

Ages 55 and up

Wednesdays, 10–11 a.m.

January 15, February 19, March 19

\$6

EDUCATION AND DEVELOPMENT

Join Senior Planet, University of Maryland Extension, Digital Literacy, for the following tech lectures. More topics coming

RECREATION AND COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT COMMITTEE MEMBERSHIP AVAILABLE

Questions

Jessie Carpenter, City Clerk jessiec@takomaparkmd.gov

Mackenzie Brown, Committee Chair m.brown59.2@gmail.com

RECREATION

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throughout 2025. These free lectures introduce popular tech topics and themes in a clear and concise manner. Each presentation aims to explain the general purpose of a device or concept, its usefulness, and important tips and tricks. Registration is required.

Virus and Malware Removal

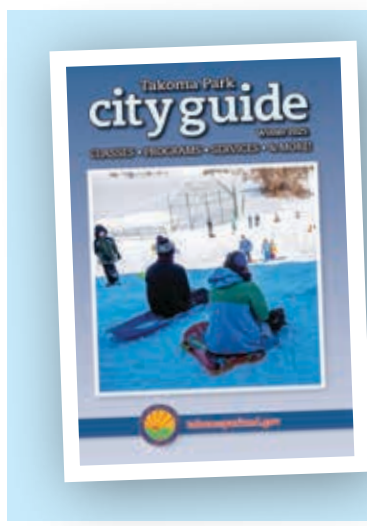
Did you know that viruses are only one type of malware that can harm your computer? In this lecture, we'll go over different types of malware and how they work. We'll also introduce some anti-virus programs and how malware remover software can prevent and get rid of malware infections to keep your device safe. Instructor: Aziz Hurtado Olson

Takoma Park Recreation Center
7315 New Hampshire Ave.
(Back Activity Room)

Ages 55 and up
Thursday, 2–3:30 p.m.
March 13
Free

Tips for Being News Savvy Online

In this digital age, anyone can publish anything on the internet, even if it's completely false. This lecture will explain the way technology has made it easier to spread misinformation. We'll discuss tools to evaluate news sources and review helpful fact checking sites. You'll learn



Winter is right around the corner, and that means it is time to sign up for our winter recreation classes and programs! Registration opens for all Takoma Park residents on December 16 at noon. From youth to seniors, we have something for everyone! Explore art classes, Spring Break Camp, Fun Days, fitness and dance classes, sports leagues, and much more. To see a full list of offerings, check out the Winter City Guide inserted in this newsletter and register on ActiveNet.

Winter Program Registration

December 9 for scholarship participants
December 16 for Takoma Park residents
December 23 for non-residents

why it's important to check sources before sharing! Instructor: Aziz Hurtado Olson

Takoma Park Recreation Center
7315 New Hampshire Ave.
(Back Activity Room)
Ages 55 and up
Thursday, 2–3:30 p.m.
March 27
Free

FITNESS

Iyengar Yoga for 55+

This class will introduce you to yoga as taught by the Iyengar method. The use of props and a step-by-step approach teaches alignment and brings strength and flexibility. The basic postures are introduced, whole body awareness is created, and energy is generated in order to bring into alignment the different parts

of the body to associate the breath and mind and release tension and stress. No experience needed. Students must bring their own yoga mat. Instructor: Tehseen Chettri

Takoma Park Recreation Center
7315 New Hampshire Ave.
(Gymnasium)
Ages 55 and up
Tuesdays, noon–1 p.m.
February 11–March 18
\$6

SPORTS

Pickleball Open Play

Join other players for pickleball practice and play in the Gymnasium. This is a drop-in activity; no registration is required. *Please note that the area outside the court is less than what is recommended.*

Takoma Park Recreation Center
7315 New Hampshire Ave.
(Gymnasium)
Ages 55 and up
Thursdays, noon–2 p.m.
January 16–March 20
Free

Table Tennis (Ping Pong)

Join your friends and neighbors for fun games of ping pong. This is a drop-in activity, no registration required.

Takoma Park Recreation Center
7315 New Hampshire Ave.
(Gymnasium)
Ages 55 and up
Mondays, 10 a.m.–noon
January 13–March 24
(No meetings January 20 and February 17)
Free

Coming soon!

Cat Adoption Event.

Sunday, January 26, noon–3. Come to the library for a fun afternoon of kitty cuddles and cozy reads! Local rescue group, A Cat's Life Rescue will bring some of their adoptable cats, ready for you to meet and to find forever homes. The Library will have a selection of cat-themed books ready for you to peruse and check out—perfect for a cold winter day!



AFTERMATH

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regardless of the source?

- Am I on Facebook/Reddit/X/*insert your social media platform of choice since they are all problematic*?
- Do I have enough time to adequately fact check this before I share it?

Escapism: The above questions are likely to make the time you spend consuming media more brain processing intensive. That's good; that means you are thinking critically. However, you might need some brain bleach to recuperate, or the equivalent of letting your brain lay out on a pool-side lounge for some R&R. That's where escapism comes in.

Escapism can use as much critical thinking as you want and doesn't cause harm in

its absence.

Example: If (when) I rewatch Bob's Burgers for the fifth time, I can try to get every terrible pun (like the One Flew Okra the Couscous Nest Burger), or I can just enjoy three animated children yelling at each other and getting into hijinks.

Another example: I could read a fantasy novel about dragons and necromancers, let myself get lost in it, and think about what spells I would cast if I could channel magic.

NOT an example: doomscrolling. Please try not to doomscroll.

Either way: For media recommendations, for information literacy check-ins, for interacting with community, the library is here. Our staff is trained and happy to help with both information literacy and escapism, whatever you need on a particular day.

BUTLER

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to package the presents; Tina Willey at the city fire department; and Police Chief Antonio DeVaul.

"And of course all the Takoma Park citizens for donating throughout the year," he says. We want people to know Takoma Park cares about them and there are people who love them. We want to put the smiles on people's faces because this can be a hard time and it's good to make people happy," he says.

New and unwrapped toys can be dropped off at the Takoma Park Volunteer Fire Department at 7201 Carroll Ave.; the Takoma Park Police Department at 7500 Maple Ave.; and the Takoma Park Library at 7505 New Hampshire Ave., Suite 205. If you are donating a gift card, please drop it off at the police administrative window in an envelope addressed to Lt. Joseph Butler, Toy Drive. Receipts are available for tax purposes.

The toy drive for this Christmas will run through December 13, but donations are accepted year-round.



For more information, visit takomapark-md.gov/government/police/services-and-programs/2021-toy-drive.

At Your SERVICE



Game Night with Santa

Be on the lookout for information for our Game Night with Santa event in December!

Happy Hanukkah, Kwanzaa, and Christmas

Wishing our community a joyful holiday season filled with peace, light, and togetherness! This year, December 25 brings us the celebration of both Hanukkah and Christmas—a special reminder of the warmth and joy that come from our diverse traditions. May your holidays be filled with love, laughter, and cherished moments with family and friends. Happy Hanukkah and Merry Christmas to all!

The Takoma Park Police Department offices will be closed on Wednesday, December 25 for the Christmas holiday. Please remember that the police department is open 24/7 for emergency services.

December 26 begins the celebration of Kwanzaa. Wishing our community a joyful Kwanzaa filled with unity, purpose, and celebration! As we honor the rich heritage and values of Kwanzaa, may each day bring warmth, reflection, and a renewed

sense of community. May this season be a time of joy, growth, and inspiration for all. Happy Kwanzaa!

For our officers and dispatchers who are working over the holidays, we thank you for your service. Stay safe!

New Year's Day

The Police Department offices will be closed on Wednesday, January 1, for the New Year holiday. Please remember that the police department is open 24/7 for emergency services. For our officers and dispatchers who are working over the holidays, we thank you for your service. Stay safe!

All Fireworks are Illegal in Montgomery County

At New Year's and all other times in Montgomery County, ALL fireworks, including sparklers, are illegal. Private use and possession of fireworks, including sparklers, carries a \$500 fine. Selling fireworks in Maryland is against the law and carries a \$1,000 fine.

Tips to Help with Pet Safety during New Year's Fireworks

As the New Year approaches, it is imperative to emphasize the significance of pet safety, especially in regions where fireworks are prohibited, such as Montgomery County. Despite legal restrictions, not all individuals may adhere to these regulations, posing potential risks to pets. In light of this, the following tips have

been compiled to assist pet owners in safeguarding their beloved companions during the festive season.

- **Secure a Safe Space:** Create a secure and comfortable environment for your pets indoors. Establishing a designated space where they can retreat when the fireworks become overwhelming can significantly reduce stress levels.
- **Identification/Microchipping:** Make sure your pet's identification tags are up to date, with current contact information. In the event your pet escapes or is separated from you, having a microchip can help speed up the process of locating you.
- **Noise Migration:** The loud sounds of fireworks can induce anxiety and fear in pets. Minimize the impact by closing windows, drawing curtains and playing soothing background music or white noise to drown out external disturbances.
- **Adequate Exercise:** Before the onset of New Year's celebrations, engage your pets in physical activities to help expend excess energy. A well-exercised pet is more likely to remain calm during periods of heightened noise and commotion.
- **Consult with a Veterinarian:** If your pet has a history of severe anxiety or fear associated with loud noises, consult with a veterinarian in advance. They may provide recommendations for anxiety-reducing products or prescribe medication to ease your pet's distress.
- **Distraction/Comfort:** Provide your pet with distractions, such as toys or treats, to redirect their attention from the noise outside. You can offer comfort and reassurance with gentle petting and soothing words to help alleviate anxiety.

Anxiety during fireworks is not as common in cats, but it can and does happen. Cats tend to hide when they are frightened. Check on your cats and have some quiet music on. If they are outdoor cats, keeping them indoors during the height of the fireworks is always a good idea.

Winter Coat Drive

Do you have coats, gloves or scarves that you don't need anymore...donate them!

The Takoma Park Police Department, in partnership with Adventist Church,

the Takoma Park Volunteer Fire Department and others, is collecting clean, gently used warm coats in any size from infant to adult. The coats will be donated to people in need. This coat drive can make a difference in the lives of others by simply donating coats and jackets that are no longer needed. We will also accept clean, gently used gloves/mittens and scarves.

A large box will be in the lobby of the Takoma Park Police Department, 7500 Maple Ave. until Friday, December 27. The Takoma Park Police Department will ensure that they are given to those in need during and after the drive. Thank you for your generosity.

If you have questions, please contact Cathy Plevy at cathyp@takomaparkmd.gov.

Out of Cold Shelter

For Montgomery County, if you need or see someone who needs shelter, call the Community Crisis Center 240-777-4000, Shelter Services 240-777-3289, Takoma Park Police non-emergency 301-270-1100 or Montgomery County Police non-emergency 301-279-8000.

Know Your Winter Storm and Extreme Cold Terms

- **Freezing Rain:** Rain that freezes when it hits the ground, creating a coating of ice on the roads, walkways, trees and power lines.
- **Sleet:** Rain that turns to ice pellets before reaching the ground. Sleet also causes moisture on roads to freeze and become slippery.
- **Winter Storm Watch:** A winter storm is possible in your area.
- **Winter Storm Warning:** A winter storm is occurring or will soon occur in your area.
- **Blizzard Warning:** Sustained winds or frequent gusts to 35 mph or greater and considerable amounts of falling or blowing snow (reducing visibility to less than a quarter mile) are expected to prevail for a period of three hours or longer.
- **Frost/Freeze Warning:** Below-freezing temperatures are expected.

Have a Heart!

Donate Blood on Saturday, December 7

Give the Gift of Life to others in our community. Takoma Park Police and Inova Blood Donor Services are once again teaming up to host a City of Takoma Park Blood Drive on Saturday, December 7, 11:30 a.m.–4:30 p.m. at the Takoma Park Community Center.

There is no substitute for human blood; it can only come from a volunteer blood donor. And the need for blood, especially around the holidays, does not stop. Your selfless act of donating blood can help save lives, and it only takes a short amount of time—just about one hour. And this blood drive will be located right here in our community!

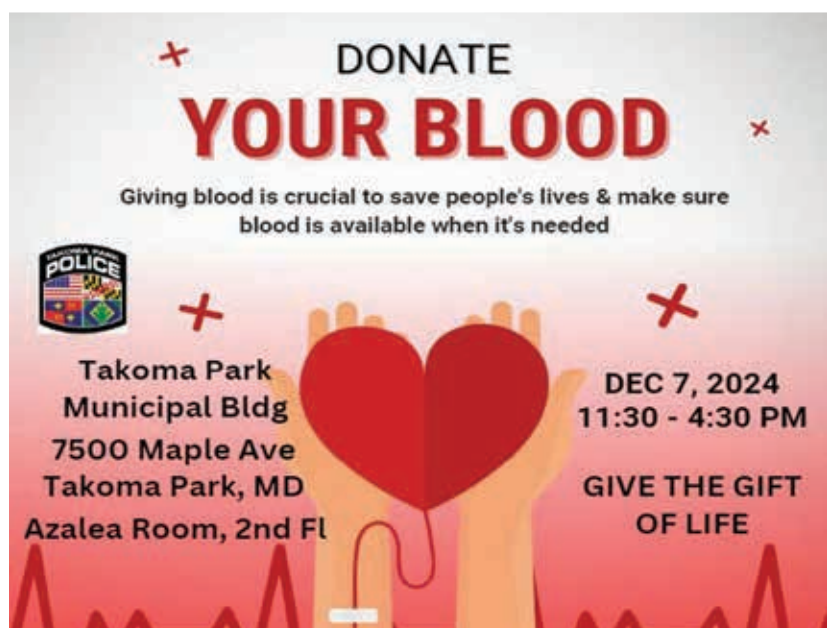
The team at Inova Blood Donor Services will efficiently check your vital signs, check your health to be sure

you are eligible, and safely take your blood—then provide snacks! They need about 250 units of blood per day to help ensure a safe, steady supply of blood for our community.

Register at bit.ly/3NSheh8. And ask a friend to join you! If you are not sure if you are eligible to donate blood or want to learn more about blood donation, see inovablood.org/donate-blood/eligibility/.

We look forward to seeing you on Saturday, December 7, 11:30 a.m.–4:30 p.m., at the Takoma Park Community Center, 7500 Maple Ave., Azalea Room. Thank you for your support!

For more information, contact Catherine Tunis, tunis.catherine@gmail.com, or Mark McNerney, markm@takomaparkmd.gov.



Gifts from Takoma Park Police

by Claudine Schweber, Chair
Takoma Park Emergency
Preparedness Committee

As we approach the end of 2024, it's time for holiday gifts! Here are some offered through the Takoma Park Police Department.

Have an Officer Watch Your House

Getting away for a while? Worried about leaving your house unoccupied for 4–30 days? Consider the Vacant House Check Program. A Takoma Park Police Officer will visit your home once a day during your absence and inspect the premises for any signs of suspicious activity. To take advantage of this program, call the Police Dispatcher at 301-270-1100 and request a vacant house check. Or register on the city website, takomaparkmd.gov (search for "vacant house check").

Engraving Your Valuables

Do you want to be able to identify and claim valuables that have been stolen? Sign up for the Engrave Your Valuables program

and borrow an engraving tool for up to two weeks. Information on the city website, takomaparkmd.gov (search for "engrave").

Track Your Vehicle

The Takoma Park Police has begun distributing free TileMate tracking tags that can aid in locating and recovering missing or stolen property. These tracking devices emit a Bluetooth signal that allows the Tile network to determine a rough GPS location. Once connected, the tracker can play a ringtone to assist in its retrieval. Information on the city website, takomaparkmd.gov (search for "tilemate").

Find our more about city programs at takomaparkmd.gov/government/police/services-and-programs.

Finally, Give Yourself the Gift of Visibility

During these dark months, it is more important than ever to be seen. Buy yourself some presents: reflective clothing, headlamps, and flashlights so that drivers can see you while you are out and about.

Happy Holidays

Community ACTIVITIES

Green Business Information Session

Tuesday, December 3, noon–1:30 pm, online via Zoom

Are you a business owner seeking more information on ways your business can be more sustainable? Then join us for a Green Business information session! Sector partners from Pepco, the EV sector, Green Business Certification program and more will help explain how you can take advantage of the number of incentive programs, tax credits, and free technical assistance, to help your businesses make the clean energy transition and reduce your carbon footprint. Registration is free at <https://bit.ly/greenbiztakoma>.

Takoma Park Crafters' 42nd Holiday Sale

Friday, December 6, noon–8 p.m.
Saturday, December 7, 10 a.m.–5 p.m.
Seekers Church 276 Carroll St. NW, Takoma D.C.

Celebrate the joy of the holidays with handcrafted gifts by local artists at the Takoma Park Crafters' 42nd Holiday Sale the first Friday and Saturday in December. Featured crafts include handmade yarn arts, textiles, woodworks, paper, ornaments, jewelry, upcycled objects, mosaics, pottery, soaps, honey, and baked goods. For more information, email tpholidaycrafts@gmail.com or call 301-455-5765.

Alternative Gift Fair

Saturday, December 7, noon–4 p.m.
Takoma Park Presbyterian Church
310 Tulip Ave.

Online through January 3 at aggw.org

Enjoy the true meaning of giving and savor this local tradition. With the Alternative Gift Fair, holiday "shopping" means donating to nonprofits in the name of your loved ones. Celebrate with family and friends at this in-person holiday festival as you listen to live music, purchase a delicious treat from our bake sale, play to win your favorite Downtown Takoma Shops raffle item, or receive a free 15-minute seated massage! Bring your children—at the Alternative Gift Fair, they'll learn firsthand how nonprofits make a difference and explore ways they can get involved. You will be able to speak with the volunteers from our 14 participating small nonprofits and learn fascinating details about the work they do in the world. aggw.org.



Kick off the December holidays with a concert from the Takoma Park Municipal Band on December 8 at 3 p.m. They will be playing a medley of Hanukkah favorites, selections from *The Nutcracker*, *Bugler's Holiday*, a rollicking *Sleigh Ride*, a flute feature, and more. This free concert will be held at the Takoma Park Community Center, 7500 Maple Ave.

Pajamarama Holiday Market

Sunday, December 8, 8 a.m.–4 p.m.
Participating Mainstreet Takoma businesses

Takoma Park's Roscoe the Rooster crows for this annual holiday shopping event. Pajama-wearing shoppers are rewarded with early morning discounts at participating Takoma businesses. Shopping is fueled with coffee, donuts, breakfast sandwiches and huevos rancheros at local restaurants. Holiday shopping continues into the afternoon at the Pajamarama Holiday Market at the Takoma Theater. Local artists, makers, and collectors set up outdoors with unique, handmade holiday gifts. mainstreettakoma.org.

Holiday Band Concert—Takoma Park Community Band

Sunday, December 8, 3–4 p.m.
Takoma Park Community Center
7500 Maple Ave.

The Takoma Park Community Band will present a holiday program to celebrate the season! A rousing medley of Hanukkah tunes! Don't miss the featured trumpets playing *Bugler's Holiday* and a flute ensemble, which includes the alto and bass flute, a very interesting sound! A narrator will take you through Charles Dickens' *A Christmas Carol* with sound effects! And much more!

An Afternoon of Board Games

Thursday, December 12, 1–3 p.m.
Heffner Park Community Center
42 Oswego Ave.

Join us for an afternoon of board games, with festive food and drink to celebrate the season. With an assortment of board games to choose from, there's something for everyone. villageoftakomapr.com.

Takoma Park Gift Market

Friday, December 13, 5–9 p.m.
201 Ethan Allen Avenue

Celebrate the holiday season under the stars and surrounded by holiday lights at the Takoma Park Gift Market, a curated guide to shopping small this holiday

season. Enjoy a special evening with a variety of local and handmade gifts, delicious foods, and festive libations. mainstreettakoma.org.

Winter Mercado

December 14, 1–5 p.m.
8746 Flower Ave., Silver Spring

Discover Long Branch will fill Flower Urban Park with local artisans, s'mores and fire pits and Santa will visit! Fun for the whole family you won't want to miss.

Takoma Cocoa Crawl

December 14, 1–4 p.m.

Enjoy cocoa at area restaurants and cafes during the Takoma Cocoa Crawl! Make one stop or many. Adult versions available too. Businesses will provide single use mugs or to-go cups. Prices and sizes vary by business. Cocoa Crawl is also a great day for holiday shopping. mainstreettakoma.org.

14th Annual Takoma Park Book Fair

December 14, 1–3:30 p.m.
Busboys and Poets
35 Carroll St., Takoma D.C.

Help us build our community of local authors and buy some great local books.

Old Town Holiday Brass

December 15, noon–1:30 p.m.

A wind ensemble featuring young musicians from in and around the Takoma Park are playing holiday classics under the Gazebo.

Celebrate Solstice at the Library

December 19, 6:30 p.m.
Takoma Park Maryland Library
7505 New Hampshire Ave.

Join us for dancing, storytelling, crafts, and refreshments as we celebrate winter and the return to the light. All ages, free.

Winter Solstice Morris Dance Performance

December 21, 5–6 p.m.

The Foggy Bottom Morris Men, the Washington region's longest-running

Morris Dance team, will celebrate the Winter Solstice at the Takoma Park Gazebo, continuing a long annual tradition. They will perform a variety of traditional winter dances from England, including the Abbots Bromley Horn Dance, sword dances and more! They will also reprise their annual Mummer's play with traditional characters, including an appearance by Father Christmas!

15th Mid-Winter Play Day

Saturday, February 16, 1–4 p.m.
Piney Branch Elementary School
7510 Maple Ave.

Join Let's Play America and the Takoma Park Recreation Department for a Play Day! It's time for you to let your hair down, put on your comfy clothes and get ready to PLAY! To see a full listing of activities and performances visit letsplayamerica.org. All ages, free.

Takoma Park Middle School Book Sale

Friday, February 28, 5–7 p.m.
Saturday, March 1, 10 a.m.–1 p.m.
Takoma Park Middle School cafeteria
7611 Piney Branch Road

Organized by the Takoma Park Middle School PTA, with a wide range of children's books, chapter books and young adult books. Also adult fiction and nonfiction. All at bargain prices! There will also be music performances, book readings, a bake sale, and other fun activities.

ONGOING

Takoma Park Farmers Market

Sundays, 10 a.m.–2 p.m.
6931 Laurel Ave.

Come out every Sunday behind the shops on Laurel Ave. for a mix of 25 vendors with seasonal produce, pasture-raised meat and eggs, artisan cheese, grains, bread, baked goods, and more. Find breakfast and lunch at the market, including empanadas, egg sandwiches, burgers, pastries, and more.

Parents of Special Needs Adult (POSNA) Support Group


First Thursdays, 7 p.m. |
Via Zoom

We advocate for supportive housing, jobs with dignity, safety, and recreation for adults with special needs, including those with autism and/or chronic/severe mental illness. For information about the meeting or about POSNA, please contact infoPOSNA@gmail.com.

Vote for Where to Spend Community Dollars

The Takoma Foundation has partnered with a group of young people in Wards 4 and 5 to develop proposals and budgets for spending \$20,000 in the community. Now it is your turn to vote on the two final proposals. Voting will continue until January 15, 2025. The winning proposal will be announced in early 2025. To learn more and to vote, visit takomafoundation.org/stories/about-community-dollars.html.

If you'd like to support *Community Dollars* (either through a financial contribution or supplying project materials) please contact us.



Questions, concerns, or ideas?

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