BIKE TO WORK DAY
May 8 - Meet at the Gazebo, 7 a.m.
For more info, waba.org

"Never doubt that a small group of thoughtful, committed citizens can change the world. . ."
Margaret Mead (1901-1978)

Takoma Park NEWSLETTER

BUDGET HEARING
Monday, May 5, 7:30
Community Center Auditorium

Published by the City of Takoma Park | www.takomaparkmd.gov | MAY 2008

FY '09 Budget Proposes Steady Tax Rate, Building Improvements

By Virginia Myers

City Manager Barbara Matthews' proposed $25.6 million FY09 budget features a $1.2 million increase in property tax revenues and a $4 million increase in expenditures from last year. The higher revenues are the result of an 11 percent increase in property values. Along with maintaining City infrastructure and financial reserves, big ticket expenditures include $2.14 million for design and renovation for the Public Works building, and $1.2 million for renovation of the auditorium in the Community Center, which would then be used for both performing arts and official city meetings.

Matthews proposes that the property tax rate remain constant, at $0.61 per $100 of assessed valuation. Even with no rate increase, property tax revenues increase by $1.2 million compared to FY08, as the property tax base has gone up by $164.8 million.

While recognizing the economic uncertainty registering across the country, Matthews, in her letter of transmittal to the City Council, notes that the City has not felt a significant impact from the downturn. Nevertheless, rising heating and cooling costs and fuel costs for City vehicles, plus cuts to interest on investments and budget limitations at the state and county level were taken into account as she formulated her budget proposal. Chief among her concerns were maintaining infrastructure and the City's vehicle and equipment fleet, and maintaining financial reserves.

Much of the City's spending goes toward staffing, and although there is no increase in the number of employees – and actually a .63 decrease in the number of full-time staff – the budget proposal includes a 14 percent increase in the cost of employee health insurance as well as an increased contribution rate to the Police Employees' Retirement Plan. The latter is affected not only by a higher contribution rate (proposed at 31 percent) but also by increased police staffing over the years. A review of employee compensation and position classification is currently underway, and if increases result from that study, funds to cover them would come from the proposed budget's unappropriated reserve.

The most concrete and significant expenditure proposed is the $140,000 to design and $2 million to renovate the City's aging Public Works facility. Since the design process is not complete, renovation costs are only estimated, but the idea is to expand the facility to accommodate an equipment fleet that has increased in both number and size since the facility was built in 1959. The rennovation would provide more covered storage for equipment, improve locker room and shower facilities, provide stormwater management on the site and alter some of the buildings to allow more efficient use of space. Opportunities to incorporate green building practices and enhance energy efficiency will be fully explored. Matthews proposes that the project be financed through a general obligation bond, and debt service on such a bond would begin in 2010.

Also among the proposals is a $1.2 million renovation of the council chambers, or auditorium, in the Community Center. This would be financed in part by state and federal funds, plus an anticipated contribution from Washington Adventist Hospital. The project would make the space friendlier for performing arts, but maintain its function as an official meeting place for City Council.

Other major items in the budget include a $500,000 contribution to the equipment replacement reserve (half of what a staff analysis indicated would be appropriate, since for several years the equipment reserve was unfunded); $60,000 for a community-wide strategic planning process; $100,000 for a design charrette for the Washington Adventist Hospital site; $55,000 for two speed cameras, which are expected to generate similar revenues; and $100,000 from the sale of City-owned property in FY '08 for the preservation and creation of affordable housing. There is also a $158,055 proposal for street improvements; and $358,651 for construction, maintenance

BUDGET continues on page 12

The Azalea City was bursting with greenery last month, as spring took over with new leaves and blossoms blocking this sign on Merwood Drive. Just a block away, a new traffic circle on Glenside Drive bloomed with bright red tulips and yellow daffodils.

Photos by Virginia Myers

Takoma Park Stars Make an Impact

Two Takoma Park award winners were recognized last month by Impact Silver Spring, a non-profit, community-building advocacy group, for their contributions to the area. Erwin Mack, executive director of the Takoma/Langley Crossroads Development Authority, received the "Explorer" award as "an established leader, group, or organization taking risks and acting to improve the quality of life for all." The award recognizes Mack's work helping to create a vibrant, safe community in the commercial area at New Hampshire Avenue and University Boulevard. Rolling Terrace Elementary School, just outside of Takoma Park, got the "Builders" award for its Padres Latinos en Accion, a Latino parent group that has been working to involve more families in the schools through fund-raising and volunteering. Another award winner, Silver Spring resident and youth leader Hawa Toure, is being honored for the Gandhi Brigade, a grassroots youth development organization she created to teach young adults to use video and other media to explore critical social issues, challenge injustice, and promote local dialogue. The three will be honored at the Spirit of Silver Spring event May 8.

Mack, well-known for what he calls "responsible persistence," has labored long over the Takoma/Langley Crossroads, a challenging commercial area where he ran a mattress store for years. He founded the Development Authority some 20 years ago as an association of property owners and tenants to address issues like heavy traffic and crime, and he has worked tirelessly for the $7 million pedestrian safety plan being implemented at the Crossroads. He also spearheaded efforts to bring more and multi-jurisdictional police protection to the area, helped form the Crossroads Youth Opportunity Center and works with the Adventist Community Services Vision Advocacy Council.

"I know I've done my best," he says. "I've helped others make this area a safer place to live in."

"Erwin is tireless in pursuing matters in the public interest," says Ronald J. Wylie,

WATCH TAKOMA PARK'S HEROES AT THE AZELEA AWARDS
April 26 event now on City TV, see page 11 for schedule.

IMPACT continues on page 4

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

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CITY COUNCIL AND COMMITTEE CALENDAR*

Monday, May 5 - Public hearings and City Council meeting (public hearing on the FY09 constant yield tax rate and on the FY09 proposed budget), 7:30 p.m. (CC Auditorium)

Wednesday, May 7 - Health Services Impact Committee meeting, 7 p.m. (CC Room TBA)

Thursday, May 8 - City Council budget worksession, 7:30 p.m. (CC Auditorium)

Monday, May 12 - City Council meeting, 7:30 p.m. (CC Auditorium)

Tuesday, May 13 - Committee on the Environment meeting, 7:30 p.m. (CC Forsythia Room)

Tuesday, May 13 - Tree Commission meeting, 6:30 p.m. (CC Atrium Room)

Tuesday, May 13 - Facade Advisory Board meeting, 7 p.m. (CC Hydrangea Room)

Thursday, May 15 - Emergency Preparedness Committee meeting, 8:30 a.m. (CC Atrium Room)

Thursday, May 15 - City Council budget worksession, 7:30 p.m. (CC Auditorium)

Monday, May 19 - City Council meeting, 7:30 p.m. (CC Auditorium)

Tuesday, May 20 - Arts and Humanities Commission meeting, 7:30 p.m. (CC Room Hydrangea Room)

Tuesday, May 20 - Safe Roadways Committee meeting, 7 p.m. (CC Atrium Room)

Tuesday, May 20 - Board of Elections meeting, 7 p.m. (CC Room TBA)

Thursday, May 22 - (tentative) City Council budget worksession, 7:30 p.m. (CC Auditorium)

Monday, May 26 - Memorial Day - City offices closed

Tuesday, May 27 - City Council meeting, 7:30 p.m. (CC Auditorium)

Wednesday, May 28 - Public Safety Citizens Advisory Committee meeting, 6:30 p.m. (CC Atrium Room)

Thursday, May 29 - (tentative) City Council budget worksession, 7:30 p.m. (CC Auditorium)

*For the most up to date information, check www.takomaparkmd.gov. Most meetings are held in the Takoma Park Community Center – Sam Abbott Citizens' Center, 7500 Maple Avenue (CC). Individuals interested in receiving a weekly Council agenda and calendar update by e-mail should contact the City Clerk at 301-891-7267 or clerk@takomagov.org.

The City of Takoma Park is committed to ensuring that individuals with disabilities are able to fully participate in public meetings. Anyone planning to attend a Takoma Park public meeting or public hearing, and who wishes to receive auxiliary aids, services, or accommodations is invited to contact the City Clerk at 301-891-7267, at least 48 hours in advance, at the telephone number listed in the notice or through the Maryland Relay Service (1-800-735-2258 TTY/Voice).

Speak with the Mayor

Mayor Bruce Williams welcomes community input and invites you to meet with him during his regular office hours on Tuesdays, 2-5 p.m. (by appointment only) and 5 -7 p.m. (for walk-ins), in the third floor Council Conference Room of the Takoma Park Community Center.

Walk-ins are requested to check in at the reception desk on the main floor.
For appointments, contact Peggye Washington, 301-891-7230 or peggyew@takomagov.org.

City Council Action

For further information, or to receive a copy of the legislation, contact the City Clerk's office, 301-891-7267 or e-mail clerk@takomagov.org.

March 24, 2008 - Regular Meeting

First Reading Ordinance 2008-12 was accepted, authorizing the installation of speed humps on the 7600 block of Hammond Avenue

First Reading Ordinance 2008-13 was accepted, authorizing the installation of speed humps on the 1100 block of Merwood Drive

First Reading Ordinance 2008-14 was accepted, amending Takoma Park Code, Ch. 16.04 - Stormwater Management, to require all commercial, industrial and institutional development activity to comply with the code and correct the omission of permit fees for multi-family, commercial, industrial and institutional development

Resolution 2008-23 was adopted, establishing the Washington Adventist Hospital Land Use Committee

The Consent Agenda was adopted. It consisted of:

- **Resolution 2008-24,** recognizing Arbor Day in Takoma Park
- **Resolution 2008-25,** reappointing Catherine Tunis to the Committee on the Environment

*Only negative votes and abstentions are noted. For additional information, contact the City Clerk at *Clerk@takomagov.org.*

CITY OF TAKOMA PARK, MARYLAND
NOTICE OF A PROPOSED REAL PROPERTY TAX INCREASE

The City Council of the City of Takoma Park, Maryland proposes to increase real property taxes.

1. For the tax year beginning July 1, 2008, the estimated real property assessable base will increase by 11.1 percent from $1,484,986,366 to $1,649,831,121.

2. If the City of Takoma Park maintains the current tax rate of $0.61 per $100 of assessment, real property tax revenues will increase by 11.1 percent, resulting in $1,005,553 of new real property tax revenues.

3. In order to fully offset the effect of increasing assessments, the real property tax rate should be reduced to $0.549, the constant yield tax rate.

4. The City of Takoma Park is considering not reducing its real property tax rate enough to fully offset increasing assessments. The City of Takoma Park proposes to adopt a real property tax of $0.61 per $100 of assessment. This tax rate is 11.1 percent higher than the constant yield rate and will generate $1,005,553 in additional property tax revenues.

A public hearing on the proposed real property tax rate increase will be held at 7:30 p.m. on Monday, May 5, 2008, in the Council Chambers of the Takoma Park Community Center - Sam Abbott Citizens' Center at 7500 Maple Avenue, Takoma Park, Maryland.

The hearing is open to the public, and public testimony is encouraged.

Persons with questions regarding this hearing may call Jessie Carpenter, City Clerk, at 301-891-7267 for further information.

Volunteers Needed

TO SERVE ON COUNCIL APPOINTED BOARDS, COMMITTEES, AND COMMISSIONS

There are positions available on many City boards, commissions, and committees. Please consider volunteering to serve. Additional information can be found at www.takomaparkmd.gov or contact the City Clerk for more information (301-891-7267 or Clerk@takomagov.org).

Arts and Humanities Commission (three vacancies, five terms expiring June 30, 2009; application deadline May 30)

Commission on Landlord-Tenant Affairs (four vacancies, terms expiring June 30; application deadline May 30)

Committee on the Environment (seven vacancies, one term expiring June 30; application deadline May 30)

Emergency Preparedness Committee (three vacancies)

Ethics Commission (two vacancies)

Facade Advisory Board (one vacancy)

Health Services Impact Committee (vacancies)

Montgomery College Neighbors Advisory Committee (two vacancies)

Noise Control Board (three vacancies)

Nuclear Free Takoma Park Committee (two vacancies)

Police Employees Retirement Plan Committee (one vacancy)

Public Safety Citizens Advisory Committee (three vacancies)

Safe Roadways Committee (three terms expiring June 30; application deadline May 30)

Tree Commission (one vacancy)

Washington Adventist Hospital Land Use Committee (vacancies)

OFFICIAL NOTICE OF COUNCIL ACTION ON SPEED HUMP PETITIONS

On April 14, 2008, the City Council voted to authorize the installation of one or more speed humps on the following blocks:

- 7600 Hammond Avenue (Ordinance 2008-12)
- 1100 Merwood Drive (Ordinance 2008-13)

Attest:
Jessie Carpenter, City Clerk

FY 2009 LIVING WAGE RATE ESTABLISHED

Ordinance 2007-55, amending the City Code to require the payment of a living wage by certain City contractors, became effective January 1, 2008.

Each year on April 1, the City Manager establishes the living wage rate, which shall be equal to the Montgomery County living wage rate established and published by Montgomery County pursuant to Section 11B-33A of the Montgomery County Code and any applicable regulations, as amended from time to time.

The current living wage rate is $11.95 per hour. Effective July 1, 2008, the rate will be $12.40 per hour.

A full copy of the Living Wage Ordinance may be found at www.takomaparkmd.gov.

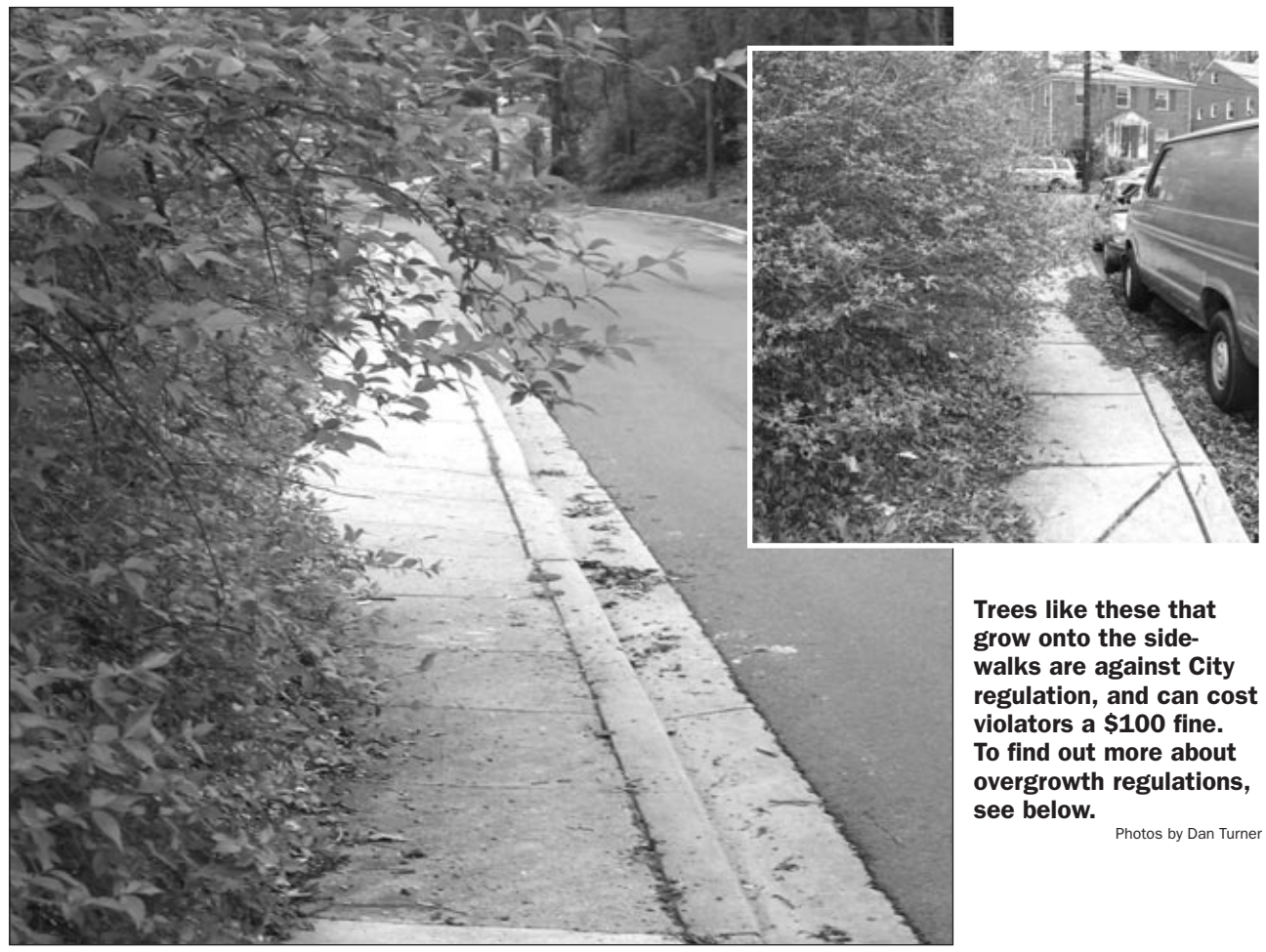
TASA DE COSTO DE VIDA FUE ESTABLECIDO PARA EL AÑO FISCAL 2009

Ordenanza 2007-55, cambio al Código de la Ciudad para requerir el costo de vida actual por contratistas de la Ciudad, fue efectivo el 1 de enero de 2008.

El 1 de abril de cada año, el Administrador de la Ciudad establece la tasa de costo de vida, el cuál será equivalente a la tasa de costo de vida establecida por el Condado de Montgomery siguiendo la sección 11B-33A de el Código del Condado de Montgomery y cualquier regulación aplicable.

Actualmente, la tasa de costo de vida es $11.95 por hora. Efectivo el 1 de julio de 2008 la tasa sera $12.40 por hora.

Para obtener una copia de la ordenanza de costo de vida visite la página web www.takomaparkmd.gov.



Trees like these that grow onto the sidewalks are against City regulation, and can cost violators a $100 fine. To find out more about overgrowth regulations, see below.

Photos by Dan Turner

Staying Trim: Clip That Overgrowth

By Dan Turner,
Safe Roadways Committee

We've all been there: walking down one of our beautiful Takoma Park streets when a tree branch or shrub swipes you in the face. Spring has arrived and the vegetation in Takoma Park has exploded in new growth. The Safe Roadways Committee would like to remind you to keep your vegetation trimmed from the sidewalks adjoining your property.

As the days grow warmer and longer, more children will walk on sidewalks to get to school in the mornings or to play in the evenings. When vegetation partially covers their path, they may be forced into the roadway where the risk of injury from cars increases. In fact, many neighborhoods have organized groups that encourage children to walk together to school. It becomes difficult to keep these groups together when vegetation obstructs the sidewalks.

Children are not the only ones affected. Adults routinely express frustration about the issue to Takoma Park's Code Enforcement Officer Marjorie Ciccone, who regularly receives complaints about vegetation on sidewalks. The situation is even worse for adults attempting to push strollers along overgrown sidewalks. Additionally, the City, local schools, and the Safe Roadways Committee are looking for ways to increase walking and biking within Takoma Park. Trimming vegetation is one way to encourage this activity.

Not only does cutting back growth contribute to the community, but it is also the law. Section 12.08.03 of the city code reads, "A person who permits any vegetation on private property to encroach on, impede vehicular or pedestrian passage upon, or to overhang within 8' above any street or sidewalk, or obstruct any traffic control device commits a Class D municipal infraction." The bottom line is that homeowners are responsible for keeping vegetation trimmed from sidewalks. Overhanging limbs and vegetation must allow an eight-foot high clearance. Likewise, residents should keep excessive leaves and mulch off sidewalks at all times.

Ciccone says her department follows up on complaints beginning with a courtesy notice in both English and Spanish that explains the problem and gives residents seven to 10 days to address it. According to Ciccone, her department then confirms that the problem has been corrected. In one recent case, her office issued an entire city block notices of encroaching vegetation on the sidewalk after receiving complaints. If the problem is not corrected after the courtesy notice, the City is authorized to levy a fine of $100 on each offending residence.

While Takoma Park doesn't have the resources to launch a ticketing campaign declaring war on rogue vegetation, it remains essential for neighborhoods to understand the issue and to take responsibility in their neck of the woods.

People concerned that cutting back vegetation might violate the city's strict tree policy have little reason to worry. Takoma Park requires a permit only if a significant portion of a tree's canopy (5 percent) is being trimmed. The restrictions apply to trees with a circumference of 18.3 inches in the historic district and 24 inches everywhere else. City Arborist Todd Bolton says, "Keeping vegetation off of sidewalks doesn't really interfere with the tree protection and permitting process directly." If you are concerned about trimming a tree, contact Bolton at 301-891-7612.

Before your azaleas, shrubs, and tree limbs obstruct a sidewalk near you, act now. Clip it and you might save yourself a ticket. Who knows what else or who else you may save as well?

For more information contact:
Code Enforcement, Marjorie Ciccone, 301-891-7234;
Arborist, Todd Bolton, 301-891-7612

THE TAKOMA PARK NEWSLETTER

Editor: Virginia Myers
Production: Electronic Ink
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The Takoma Park Newsletter is published 11 times a year as the official publication of the City of Takoma Park, www.takomaparkmd.gov.

The Newsletter does not accept commercial, classified, or political advertisements. Unsolicited materials by Takoma Park residents, including reports by community groups and articles that may contain opinion, will be considered for publication. Name, address and telephone number must accompany all submitted material. Pursuant to City Council Resolution No. 1992–36 of June 8, 1992 that sets forth the editorial guidelines of the Newsletter, the Editor reserves the right to edit all submitted copy for length, clarity, style, spelling and grammar.

Published material containing opinions does not necessarily reflect the views of the Newsletter or the City of Takoma Park.

The City of Takoma Park is an equal opportunity employer and does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, religion, ancestry or national origin, sex, age, marital status or physical or mental disabilities that are unrelated in nature and extent to job performance. The Newsletter is printed on recycled–content paper.

RENT STABILIZATION ALLOWANCE

(Annual Rent Increase) 4.7 percent

Effective July 1, through June 30, 2009

Takoma Park law (City Code Chapter 6.20 Rent Stabilization) maintains the affordability of rental units in the community by limiting the number and amount of rent increases that may be charged for a specific rental unit. Generally the rent may be increased only once in a given 12-month period and rent increases are limited to the annual increase in the Consumer Price Index. The rent stabilization allowance is calculated on an annual basis and applies to all licensed multi-family rental facilities and to all licensed condominium units.

The 2008-2009 Rent Stabilization Allowance is 4.7 percent and will be in effect beginning July 1, 2008 through June 30, 2009. Landlords required to comply with Takoma Park's Rent Stabilization laws cannot increase the rent on occupied units any higher than this allowance.

Multi-family rental properties and individually-owned condominium rental units are normally subject to Takoma Park's Rent Stabilization laws, however the following units may be exempt from many of the requirements of rent stabilization. The exemption is not automatic and is subject to the approval of the City.

Accessory Apartments certified by Montgomery County

Rental units leased to tenants under the Housing Choice Voucher Program

Any rental facility that is subject to a regulatory agreement with a governmental agency that controls the rent levels of one or more rental units so that they are available only to low and moderate income tenants

Newly constructed rental units for a period of five years after construction

All rental units in a building with two dwelling units where the owner occupies one or more of the units as his/her principal residence.

If you have any questions about the rent on your unit or Takoma Park's Rent Stabilization law, please contact Jean Kerr at 301-891-7216.

HOUSING *Mailbox*

By Moses A. Wilds, Jr.,
Landlord-Tenant Coordinator

When Can a Tenant Put Rent in Escrow?

A tenant wants to know if he can put his rent in escrow because his landlord has failed to respond to a request two weeks ago to repair leaking faucets in his apartment.

Rent Escrow is a legal remedy provided through the Montgomery County District Court which allows a tenant to pay his or her rent to the court when a landlord fails to repair conditions which may present a threat to life, health or safety. It may not be used as a remedy to withhold rent because of a landlord's failure to correct minor defects or housing code violations that are not considered to be serious and substantial defects and conditions. Section 8-211(e) of the Maryland Code notes that serious and substantial defects and conditions include but are not limited to:

- Lack of heat, light, electricity, or hot/cold running water, except when the tenant is responsible for the payment of these utilities;
- Lack of adequate sewage disposal facilities;
- Infestation of rodents in two or more rental properties;
- The existence of lead paint pigment on surfaces within the rental unit;
- The existence of any structural defect which presents a serious and substantial threat to the physical safety of the occupants; or
- The existence of any condition that presents a fire hazard or a serious and substantial threat to the life, health or safety of the occupants of the rental unit.

For a tenant to use rent escrow as a remedy, he/she must first give the landlord written notice of the conditions or defects by certified mail, show that the landlord has actual notice of the conditions or defects, or show that the landlord has received a written violation notice from a government agency about the condition or defect. Once the landlord receives notice of the condition/defect, he/she has a reasonable amount of time to take corrective action. The length of time deemed as reasonable is a question of fact for the court based on the severity of the defect/condition and the danger it presented. If the landlord fails or refuses to make the repairs or correct the condition within a reasonable time period the tenant may bring an action of rent escrow to pay the rent to the court until repairs are made or the dangerous condition is corrected.

Since leaking faucets are not a dangerous condition, rent escrow would not be an appropriate remedy. The tenant should provide his landlord with written notification of the problem and contact the city's Landlord-Tenant Office by calling 301-891-7215 for further assistance.

Foreclosure Prevention

How To Monitor Your Expenses or Fees
Maintaining your New Home/Condo
New State Sponsored Refinancing Programs

Wednesday, May 14, 2008
7:00pm - 8:30pm

Takoma Park Community Center
7500 Maple Avenue, Takoma Park

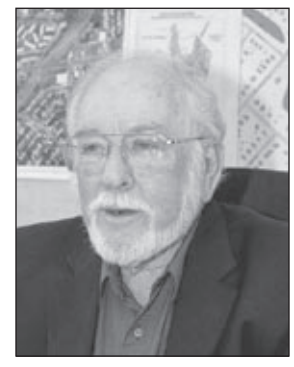
The Importance of Pre-Purchase Counseling **To Register, Call**
(301) 891-7222 or
e-mail LindaW@takomagov.org

IMPACT

continued from page 1

who nominated Mack for the award. "[He] never seems discouraged by momentary set backs, inaction, or even when colleagues despair. He works on."

At Rolling Terrace, the Padres Latinos en Accion and the Family Involvement Committee partnership has been a model collaboration between Montgomery County Public School staff and parents. In a school where 80 percent of the students are children of color, Title I coordinator Jennifer Lane saw a need to reach out to parents who might not respond to traditional backpack fliers and PTA newsletters. She and colleague Haydee Puertas, then the parent/community coordinator for the school, saw particular need to overcome language barriers and discomfort with large groups of English-speaking parents and teachers. Their awareness led to the creation of Padres Latinos en Accion, a group of almost 30 parents who meet monthly to discuss, in Spanish, school issues. The Padres also send representatives to the school's Family Involvement Committee, and they have testified before the Board of Education and the County Executive. Its members have also prepared and sold food at the school flea market to raise money for field trip scholarships, and have built a more collaborative spirit between staff and parents.



Erwin Mack

"I felt it was important for Latino parents to have a voice in the school their children attend, and that the Family Involvement Committee needed to try and build a true partnership with parents," says Lane. "This partnership is mandated as part of NCLB and Title I, but sometimes it seems that we follow the letter of the law, and neglect the spirit. The Padres have taken enormous strides to become true equal partners in their children's school experience. They embody the spirit of home/school partnership."

"I know that the groundwork for a true partnership has been laid, and the Padres Latinos en Accion can continue to be a voice for their children."

"Working as a team, these three women, have created an opportunity for normally marginalized parents to feel empowered, find their voice, and be heard within the decision-making structures of our school," says Victoria Roberts, who nominated the Padres for their award.

The Spirit of Silver Spring event will be Thursday, May 8 from 6:30 to 8:30 p.m. at the NOAA Auditorium, 1301 East-West Highway, Silver Spring. Tickets are $50 per person.

For more information go to www.impactsilverspring.org or contact Megan Rawson at megan@impactsilverspring.org or 301-495-3336.

Employees recognized for length of service

Takoma Park held its annual celebration to recognize its long-term employees on April 3. Following are recipients of recognition awards

FIVE-YEAR RECIPIENTS

Nicholas Carter, Police

Sara Daines, Housing and Community Development

Martha Johnson, Housing and Community Development

Denise Pullet, Police

Patrick Rittenhouse, Communications

Gregory Wolff, Police

10 YEAR RECIPIENTS

Richard Cannatella, Police

Wanda Hsiung, Library

Mike Welsh, Public Works

15 YEAR RECIPIENT

Bobby Rodriguez, Police

Taylor Wardrick, who is a long-term employee with Public Works, was recognized for his 30 years of service to the City at the award ceremony April 3.

Photo by Karen Hampton

20 YEAR RECEIPIENTS

Richard Skibicki, Police

Rebecca Brown, Library

Richard Cipperly, Police

Daniel Frishkorn, Police

30 YEAR RECIPIENT

Taylor Wardrick, Public Works

UPCOMING *Events*

Spring is for Poetry

Takoma Park's streets, public places, and school grounds will once more bloom with poster-size poems this spring.

Sponsored by the Friends of the Takoma Park Maryland Library, "Spring for Poetry" includes 34 poems, all individually designed as 13 x 19-inch color posters by typography students at the School of Art and Design at Montgomery College. The poems are framed and mounted on steel street sign poles "planted" along Carroll and Maple Avenues, on public school grounds, at bus stops and in parks.

City residents last year were enthusiastic about the city's poetry walk. "What a delight Spring for Poetry has been for me — I re-route my walks and reread the poems," Jane Williams-Grube wrote. "How much we love the poetry walk," wrote Dina Borzekowski. "My 11-year old daughter and 7-year old son are so familiar with the posters that when they were moved around, they could tell you where the poems had been previously."

The poets of "Spring for Poetry" range in time, from Emily Dickinson and Walt Whitman to the late Sterling Brown, Maryland poet Myra Sklarew, and U.S. Poet Laureate Charles Simic. Several poems by Latin American poets — Marjorie Agosin, Miguel Hernandez, and Alfonsia Stormi — are in the original Spanish with fine English translations. Among other U.S. poets are John Berryman, Elizabeth Bishop, Sterling Brown, Gregory Corso, Langston Hughes, Grace Paley and Reed Whittemore, former Maryland and U.S. Poet Laureate.

Among the many who have given their time and talents to "Spring for Poetry" are Professor Andrea Adams and her students at Montgomery College and the Takoma Park Department of Public Works, which is installing the poles.

A list of all the poems and locations will be available at the library and community center and on the Friends of the Takoma Park Maryland website (www.ftpml.org). The poetry posters will be up through summer and rotated every two months.

Annual House and Garden Tour — May 4

The 35th Takoma Park House and Garden Tour, sponsored by Historic Takoma, will take place from 1 - 5 p.m. Sunday, May 4, rain or shine. Its theme, "First Stop Takoma!" focuses on more than a dozen houses, gardens and other buildings in the Takoma D.C. neighborhood. The tour includes historic homes, as well as the first branch of the DC Public Library. Advance tickets, $15, are available at the Takoma Park Silver Spring Coop, American Craft, Now and Then, Mark's Kitchen and the Culture Shop. Tickets the day of the tour, $20, are available at the D.C. Public Library, 416 Cedar Street NW, where advance ticket holders can also get a brochure with property locations and descriptions for the self-guided tour, locations of the properties on the tour and an informative description.

See www.historictakoma.org or call 301-270-2831 for more information.

Trashing Old Electronics Just Doesn't Compute, Recycle Them Instead!

Takoma Park will host an Electronic Equipment Recycling Event on Saturday, May 10, from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. behind the Library at Maple and Philadelphia Avenues. Bring your old or unwanted electronic equipment to be refurbished or recycled. Recycling electronic equipment keeps hazardous metals out of the environment.

We will accept the following items: computers and all their related equipment (CPU, monitor, printer, keyboard, modem, mouse, speaker) cameras, TVs (non console type), electric typewriters, fax machines, answering machines, telephones, VCRs, radios, stereos, CD and tape players, scanners, copiers, fax machines and other small electronic equipment.

Most electronic equipment contains hazardous metals such as lead, mercury, cadmium and chromium. These materials need to be handled properly and not released into the environment.

For questions or additional information call the Public Works Department 301-891-7633 or visit www.cityoftakomapark.org.

Takoma Park Arts & Humanities News

celebrating the creative spirit of our community

The following events are brought to you by the Takoma Park Arts and Humanities Commission in partnership with the community.

"Reflected Glories" Opening Reception May 2

Please join us on Friday, May 2, from 7 p.m. to 9 p.m. as we celebrate "Reflected Glories: Trees in Sligo Creek," an exhibit of the work of local photographer Julius Kassovic. The exhibit illustrates the pleasure of reflecting on abstractions present in the natural world, catching "surrealism's face" in Sligo Creek. The exhibit can be viewed in the Atrium Gallery on the main floor of the Takoma Park Community Center throughout the month of May.

"Colorful Abodes" Exhibit

Stop by the Richard Dempsey Memorial Gallery on the main floor of the Takoma Park Community Center and take a moment to enjoy "Colorful Abodes," a collection of photographs of the bright and beautiful houses that can be found throughout Takoma Park. The exhibit features the work of local photographer Don Olson, the "Takoma Dragon." It will be up through the end of May.

"Assemblages and Collages" Exhibit

Discover the art of "Assemblages and Collages," a three-dimensional artistic composition made from putting together found objects of different forms. The creations of Katie Dell Kaufman and her students will be on display in The Corridor, between the Library and the Computer Learning Center, in May. A closing reception will be held Saturday, May 31 from 1 to 3 p.m.

Bathroom Poetry Project May 8

If you enjoy the unconventional, please join us in the women's bathroom at the Takoma Park Library on Thursday, May 8 at 7 p.m. as we kick off the "Bathroom Poetry Project," an exploration of poetry in non-traditional spaces. Listen to the work of local poets and learn more about the project and how you can get involved. For more information, check out the project's website at http://bathroompoet.net/Project.htm.

Poetry Workshop Opportunities

Anne Becker, Takoma Park Poet Laureate, will offer a series of free poetry workshops for Spanish-speaking adults beginning Tuesday, May 27 and continuing on June 3 and June 10. A second workshop series will be available for English-speaking adults Tuesday June 17 and continuing June 24 and July 1. The workshops will be held in the Hydrangea Room at the Takoma Park Community Center from 7:30 p.m. to 9 p.m.

Participants will write their own poems, read them to the group and receive feedback to deepen and enlarge their own understanding of what they have written. The poems generated by each of the workshops will be gathered into an anthology and published by the Arts and Humanities Commission. To register for either of the workshops, please call 301-891-7224.

Third Thursday Poetry Reading May 15

The poetry of Joe Hall and Nomi Stone will be featured at this month's "third thursday" poetry reading. The reading will be held on Thursday, May 15 at 7 p.m. at the Takoma Park Community Center.

Additional information on these and other upcoming events can be found online at www.takomaparkmd.gov or by contacting the Arts and Humanities Commission at 301-891-7224 or by email at ahc@takomagov.org.

RECREATION

MAY ACTIVITIES

Tremendous Trips

Grades 1 - 5 (as of September '08)
Sign up for one trip or pre-register for them all and get a discount. All trips are from 8:30 a.m.. - 5 p.m., and meet at the Takoma Park Community Center.

When: Monday - Friday, June 16 - June 20
(Pending the last day of school)
Mon., June 16: National Aquarium
Tues., June 17: Water Park
Wed., June 18: Port Discovery
Thurs., June 19: Water Park and Mini Golf
Fri., June 20: Rollerskating and Wheaton Regional Park

Fee:	T.P. Res.	$20/trip
	Non-Res.	$25/trip
Register for the whole week:		
	T.P. Res.	$90
	Non-Res.	$115

Camp TAKOMA

Grades 1 - 5 (as of September '08)
Plenty of opportunities to discover arts and crafts, games, swimming, nature activities, special events, and trips to various fun locations. The fee includes all field trips, special events, and a camp t-shirt. No camp July 4.

When: Mon. - Fri., June 23 - Aug. 8
Time: 9 a.m. - 4 p.m.
Before and after care available

Location: T.P. Comm. Ctr.
7500 Maple Avenue

Fees weeks 1, 3-7:
T.P. Res. $110/week
Non-Res. $125/week
Fee week 2:
T.P. Res. $95/week
Non-Res. $110/week

Special offer! Get week #2 FREE if enrolling for all seven weeks.

2008 Before and After Care Options

Extended care is available for those families who require or desire additional activities beyond the regular camp hours. The following camps may enroll: Camp TAKOMA, Extreme Horizons, Takoma Park Babe Ruth Baseball/Softball Camps, Basketball and Soccer camps.

A group of teens enjoys pizza served by Clayton White as they participate in the popular "Holla at Me" open forum that meets twice a month in the TZone.

Photo by Debra Haidivuen

When: Mon. - Fri., June 23 - Aug. 8
Fee per week for Before Care: 7 - 9 a.m.
T.P. Res. $30
Non-Res. $40
Fee per week for After Care: 4 - 6 p.m.
T.P. Res. $30
Non-Res. $40
No Program on July 4.

Extreme Horizons

Grades 6 - 8 (as of September '08)
Try your hand at rock climbing, horseback riding, mountain biking, and swimming. In addition, each week we will have a trip to a theme park. Fee includes a camp t-shirt, all field trips and special events. One day a week the camp will return at 8 p.m. No camp July 4.

When: Mon. - Fri., June 23 - August 8
Time: 9 a.m. - 4 p.m.
Before and after care available

Location: T.P. Comm. Ctr., 7500 Maple Ave.
Fees/weeks 1, 3-7:
T.P. Res. $180/week
Non-Res. $200/week
Fee week 2:
T.P. Res. $165/week
Non-Res. $185/week

Family Day Trips

Trips are geared for families with children 6 years and older. One family member must be 18 years or older. We will meet in the parking lot of the Takoma Park Community Center, 7500 Maple Avenue. Advance registration is required.
Minimum enrollment must be met by RSVP date.
Bringing a snack is recommended.

Trip: Boyds Bear Country, Gettysburg, PA
Come see what all the craze is about! Make your own bear, visit the bear nursery, eat a down home country lunch. Fee includes transportation and lunch. Bring money to purchase bears and other souvenir.

When: Sat., May 31
Time: 8:30 a.m. - 4 p.m.
Fee: T.P. Res. $10/person
Non-Res. $15/person
Need to register by May 23.

Mocha Moms and Cappuccino Caretakers

Looking for moms, dads and nannies to hang out with and chat? Want to get out of the house while the kids get to play? Join us every Thursday for coffee and tea in the Azalea Room while the children participate in a playgroup.

When: Tues., ongoing - June 10
Time: 10:45 a.m. - 11:45 a.m.
Location: Azalea Room, Community Center
7500 Maple Avenue
Fee: Free, but registration is required

Buggy Brigade

Grease those wheels and get moving. Join area dads, moms and nannies for a walking tour around Takoma Park. Take a stroll along the Sligo Creek. Stop by the playgrounds, go bird watching. A map will be available for suggested walks. Meet the lobby of the T. P. Community Center. In case of rain meet in the Azalea Room.

When: Thurs., ongoing - June 12
Time: 10:45 a.m. - 12 p.m.
Fee: Free, but registration is required

COUNSELOR IN TRAINING PROGRAM

Grades 9 and 10 (as of September '08)

Interested in gaining knowledge working with young children? Learn from professional camp employees at all levels, get trained in CPR and First Aid and receive on-the-job training. Fee includes CPR and First Aid certification, on-the-job training, special events, speakers and field trips. Must attend pre-training week and work at least two weeks over the summer.
Those who complete two years of experience may be eligible for employment at the age of 16 as a junior counselor. Service Learning Hours can also be earned during this time. Pick up an application from the Recreation Office. Please contact Karla Kelley 301-891-7283 or Carey Antoszewski 301-891-7233 for more information. Deadline for applications is June 6, 2008.

Mandatory Pre-Training: June 16 - 20
Time: 10 a.m. - 3 p.m.
Location: T.P. Community Center,
7500 Maple Avenue

On the Job Training: June 23 - August 8
Time: 9 a.m. - 4 p.m.
Fee: T.P. City Residents $150
Non-Residents $200

Y.E.S. Basketball Program

Come out and join the one and only Takoma Park "Youth Exposed to Success" Basketball League! Teams will be guaranteed eight games, and every player will receive a Y.E.S League jersey. Trophies will be handed out to the playoff champs. Every player must attend one workout in order to be drafted. NO REGISTRATIONS WILL BE ACCEPTED AFTER THE LAST WORKOUT! All workouts are held in the Piney Branch Elementary School Gym.

Grades 5-6	Mon. 6/2 - 7/21	
Workout Date:	Mon., May 12	
Time:	6 - 8 p.m.	
Grades 7-8	Tues. 6/3 - 7/22	
Workout Date:	Tues., May 13	
Time:	6 - 8 p.m.	
Grades 9-10	Wed. 6/4 - 7/23	
Workout Date:	Wed., May 14	
Time:	6 - 8 p.m.	
Grades 11-12	Thurs. 6/5 - 7/24	
Workout Date:	Thurs., May 15	
Time:	6 - 8 p.m.	
Fee:	T.P. Res.	$25
	Non-Res.	$35

T-Ball Program

Join us and learn baseball fundamentals right here in Takoma Park's T-Ball Program. Participants will be assigned to individual teams after registration and will be called by the League Director or Coach after team assignments are made. All participants will meet at Hodges Field on Saturday May 31 at 9 a.m.

When:	Sat., May 31 - July 19	
Time:	9 - 10:30 a.m.	
Location:	Jequie Park, Spring Park Hodges Field	
Fee:	T.P. Res.	$35
	Non-Res.	$40

Y.E.S League / T-Ball League Volunteers/Needed!

The Recreation Department is looking for coaches and volunteers for the Y.E.S Youth Basketball League, and the Youth T-Ball League. If you are interested and would like to hear more about these opportunities, please contact Matt Poorman by phone 301-891-7282, or by e-mail at MattP@takomagov.org.

Roadtripz Ages 11 - 18

Roadtripz takes teens on adult supervised trips to local destinations. Trips are scheduled for the 2nd and 4th Friday of each month and selected non-school days.

May 9	Baltimore Inner Harbor
May 23	Paint ball
June 13	Atlas Theatre "Step Afrika"
June 27	Nationals Baseball Game
July 11	Miniature Golf
July 25	Dave and Busters

Time: 6 - 9 p.m.

Transportation provided from:

T Zone — T.P. Community Center, 7500 Maple Avenue
and
T.P. Recreation Center — 7315 New Hampshire Avenue

Fee: Varies by trip

Takoma Park Teens Pitch in as Volunteers

By Karla Kelley
Recreation Manager, Teen Programs

Do you know what gleaning is? Well the teens involved in Takoma Park Recreation Spring Break Community Service Learning Camp now not only know what gleaning is but actually experienced the art of gleaning sweet potatoes one morning during their spring break.

Gleaning is the act of collecting left over crops from farmers' fields after the fields have been commercially harvested. The gleaned vegetables the day we volunteered were 1,100 pounds of sweet potatoes. Teens bagged the vegetables and they were made ready for the trip back to D.C. Central Kitchen in downtown Washington, D.C., to create meals for the homeless.

Takoma Park teens had a busy week. In addition to harvesting sweet potatoes for the homeless, but they prepared meals at D.C. Central Kitchen, painted water fountains and railings at the Tidal Basin with the National Park Service, delivered and prepared food at Food and Friends for people living with HIV/AIDS, and helped to clean and organize offices at the Wright House, a psycho- social treatment center for youth with HIV/AIDS. Finally, in an effort to focus locally, they prepared the Takoma Park Senior Club newsletter, Silver Ffoxes, for mailing.

Youth in Montgomery County Schools are required to complete more than 50 hours of community service to fulfill requirements toward graduation. Participation in Takoma Park Community Service Learning Camp provided 20 hours of service in four days. The teens showed a true commitment in following through by showing up ready to work every day.

Twelve youth 13 - 18 years of age from Takoma Park participated in the camp the week of spring break, March 24 - March 28. Each day the teens gathered at 8 a.m. to head out by metrorail or van to the volunteer assignment for the day. Teen program staff Allega Coates — Wallace, Clayton White and Corrine Bell provided supervision, support and leadership for the teens during the week.

Many of the agencies we visited need ongoing volunteers, in addition to those wishing to volunteer during holidays and special events. All of the agencies we volunteered with asked us to come back and volunteer again.

A pretest was given to the teens to determine their understanding of the importance of community service. At the beginning of the week, eight teens responded "strongly agree" when asked if they felt community service improves society. At the end of the week, after experiencing four very different agencies 11 teens felt that community service improves society. Many of the teens felt more committed to volunteering in their community after seeing people in need and listening to the various agencies talk about their mission. Each agency representative spoke to the group about the clients they serve as well as how important volunteers are to their agencies in order for them to be successful.

When asked to name one thing they will do in the next year to help their community, some of the responses were, "I will volunteer to help people," "I will try to volunteer and help out in our or other people's community," "I will pick up trash on the street." Each teen that participated seemed more committed to volunteering in the future.

The week of hard work ended with a fun trip to Kings Dominion, in Richmond, Virginia. The kids and staff had a great week giving back to others and having some fun while doing it. The teens enrolled in the camp unanimously agreed that they feel there is a positive relationship between community service and solving social issues in our communities.

Takoma Park Recreation teen programs will offer community service learning opportunities throughout the year and during school days out. For information on community service and teen recreation programs, please call Karla Kelley at 301-891-7283.

Takoma Park teens spent a week volunteering around the community during spring break this year. Right, they pose with pediatric AIDS/HIV care staff at the Wright House; below, they help paint water fountains at the Tidal Basin for the National Park Service.
Photos by Karla Kelley

COMMUNITY CENTER SPRING HOURS

Game Room
Monday through Friday
10:30 a.m.-12:30 p.m.
Senior citizens only

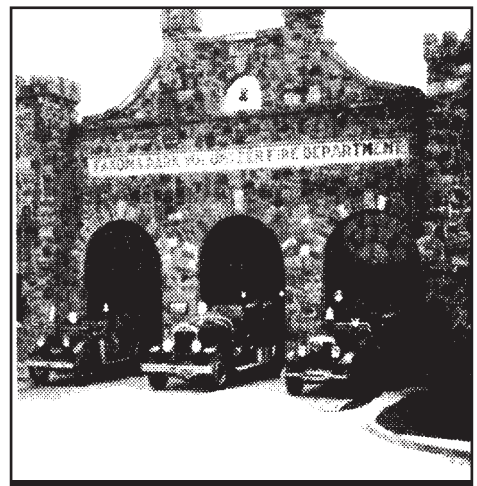
2:30-5:30 p.m. Ages 7-12
7:30-9:30 p.m. Ages 13-19
Saturday 1-5:30 p.m.
Sunday 2-5:30 p.m.

TZone (Teen Lounge)
Monday through Friday
2:30-9:30 p.m.
Saturday 1-5:30 p.m.
Sunday 2-5:30 p.m.

Community Center Closed
May 24, 25 & 26

Hours subject to change
Membership is required

7500 Maple Avenue
Takoma Park, MD 20912
301-891-7290
tprecreation.org



Firehouse REPORT

By Jim Jarboe

As of Mar. 31, the Takoma Park Volunteer Fire Department and the personnel of the Montgomery County Fire and Rescue Service assigned to the Takoma Park station have responded to 139 fire-related incidents. The department handled or assisted with 691 rescue or ambulance-related incidents for a total of 830 this year. Totals for 2007 were 241 and 680, respectively, for a total of 921, representing a decrease of 91 incidents.

A Few Safety Tips Regarding Electricity

Use electricity wisely and safely to avoid dangerous shocks, fires or explosions. Every year in the United States, more than a thousand people are killed and thousands more injured in electrical fire or shock accidents

When a fuse blows, don't just replace the fuse. First, find out the cause of the problem and take care of it. Always have a fresh supply of properly rated fuses on hand. And never substitute a penny or foil wrapped fuse. Never replace a fuse with one of a larger size. Also, avoid using several high wattage appliances on one circuit..

Ask a professional to replace any damaged cords or plugs. Don't even think about doing it yourself. The same goes for frayed, cracked, or hot wires. If safe to do so, unplug them immediately and call the right person. Otherwise, remove the fuse or open the circuit breaker and then remove the plug.

The Most Painful Burn Is The One You Could Have Prevented!

More than 4,000 children are scalded by tap water every year. Scald burns are most common among young children. And yet, these accidents are so easy to prevent if you'll just follow these simple steps.

1. Before putting your child in the bath tub, test the water by moving your hand around in the water to make sure it's not too hot.

2. Never leave your child alone, not even for a second. If you need to answer the phone or doorbell, take your child with you.

Remember, tap water scald burns can be as serious as burns from hot liquid spills from a stove top. And tap water burns usually cover a larger area of the body.

Make sure your water heater is set no higher than 120 degrees. Use a cooking thermometer to check the water temperature in your bath tub. If it's hotter than 120 degrees, turn down your water heater, or call a plumbing contractor to turn it down. If you live in an apartment building, have the building maintenance department check it for you.

Water doesn't have to be at the boiling point to harm a child. Infants are plump and cuddly, but their tender skin is a lot thinner than a grown up's, and can be scalded more quickly.

So protect your loved ones. Use common sense when dealing with scalding hot water. Be safe - not sorry!

What You Can Do To Prevent Falls...

Falls are not just the result of getting older. Many falls can be prevented. Falls are usually caused by a number of things. By changing some of these things, you can lower your chances of falling.

Four things YOU can do to prevent falls:

1. Begin a regular exercise program.
2. Make your home safer.
3. Have your health care provider review your medicines.
4. Have your vision checked.

The TPVFD is Still Looking for Members

Recently, the Takoma Park Volunteer Fire Department voted into membership, Josh Raeben and Thomas Lamole. If you would like to join them, contact Mike Livingston, Membership Committee at the fire station, 301-270-8209.

What is an emergency?

When a person cannot wake up, is hurt, cannot move, or there is smoke or fire in the home or building. That's when you need help!

What can you do in an emergency?

1. Be calm.
2. Dial 9-1-1.
3. Tell the emergency person what is wrong. Speak clearly.
4. Answer all questions.
5. Don't hang up until the other person tells you.
6. Never make prank calls to 9-1-1.

POLICE *Briefs*

Up-to-date Crime Info Available

Want to keep up with where and what sorts of crime events are happening in the City? The TPPD crime analyst puts out all sorts of information to the community, through email alerts, weekly summaries and press releases to newspapers and other media outlets. You can go to the police bulletin page of the City's web site to see all crimes occurring in the City, from drunk driving stops to armed robbery; weekly summaries highlight police department activity including crime prevention, training and administrative news. There's even a map of where crimes have occurred. Go to takomaparkmd.gov for more information. To sign up for email alerts, contact the police department at 301-270-1100.

Two Officers Promoted to Sergeant

Effective March 23, 2008, two Takoma Park Police officers were promoted to the rank of sergeant. They are Richard Poole, of the Criminal Investigations Division, and Tina Smith, Supervisor of Patrol Team 1. Chief Ronald Ricucci wishes Sgt. Poole and Sgt. Smith good luck in their new positions. A promotional ceremony will be announced in the near future.

Street Light Outages Patrolled

After citizens expressed concern over broken streetlights, City Manager Barbara Matthews asked police officers to note streetlight outages while they are on patrol, record the pole numbers and give the information to her office. Both the city manager's office and the police department report these outages to PEPCO or the County.

The City is pushing to get PEPCO to repair the outages and to be more responsive in general to our outage needs. One of the challenges is that PEPCO does not inform the city when a light is fixed, so we do not, at the moment, have a good way to close the loop. Matthews is in contact with the representatives of PEPCO to put a better reporting indicator in place.

Meanwhile, here is what residents can do if they notice a street light is out:

Get the pole number and the street address. The pole number is very important. If it is a wooden pole, it is a PEPCO street light. If it is a steel or fiberglass pole, it is a County street light.

If the broken light belongs to PEPCO, send an e-mail to City staff member Peggye Washington (peggyew@takomagov.org) with the information. She will in turn request PEPCO to fix the outage.

If you want to report the outage directly to PEPCO, you can also visit www.PEPCO.com/home/requests/outage/streetlight/outagereport/default.aspx or call 1-877-PEPCO62 (1-877-737-2662).

If it is a Montgomery County light, you can visit http://gis.montgomerycountymd.gov/ims/lights/submitform.htm or call 240-777-2190. The more people sending in a street light outage repair requests, the more likely it is that the light will be repaired quickly.

When the light is repaired, please again e-mail Peggye Washington with the pole number. If the light does not come back on in two to three weeks, repeat the steps given above.

This may seem a bit cumbersome, but at the moment, it is the best way to assure that the street light outages get repaired.

Officer of the Year Announced

By Catherine Plevy

The Awards Committee met on March 21, 2008, and considered a variety of factors before the final selection of the 2007 Officer of the Year: D/Pfc. Thomas Black.

Black was selected because of his overall outstanding performance of duties as an officer and his dedication to the Department in numerous additional tasks, including his new role as detective in the Tactical Enforcement Unit (TEU). His record of arrests was significant, covering a variety of charges.

D/PFC. Thomas Black

Black took the Oath of Office with the Takoma Park Police Department on October 24, 2005, after successful completion of the Prince George's County Municipal Police Academy. He successfully completed his field training on January 24, 2006. On April 11, 2007, he was promoted to Private First Class.

Black currently works in the Tactical Enforcement Unit (TEU) of the Takoma Park Police Department, assisting, among other things, in its newly formed plainclothes unit. His teamwork, persistence and efforts to take felons off the streets, to ensure the safety of others, is outstanding.

The Committee conducted extensive discussion, considering a few officers as candidates, who performed well in 2007. The committee will continue to review other officers and nominations for additional awards.

Going on Vacation?

Remember you can have the police come check on your vacant house while you are away.

Call 301-270-1100 for more information.

The Takoma Park Police Department K-9 Unit

By Catherine Plevy

Takoma Park has a special "officer" in the police department with four legs. Diesel, who joined the force four years ago, is a five-year-old black German shepherd from Hungary, and the only canine member of the force. Diesel's handler and partner, Officer Ernest Atwell, has been with the Takoma Park Police Department for four years. The partners are new to one another — Diesel was owned previously by another officer — but the new relationship is an easy one. Good thing — sometimes a previously owned dog won't take to a new handler. Diesel, who like all local police dogs, lives with his handler, will remain part of Atwell's family until one or both of them retire.

The canine unit has been up and running for approximately 15 years. Residents may remember Shadow, who retired in 2008 for health reasons. As with Shadow, the police department pays for Diesel's food and other maintenance costs like health care; the initial cost of bringing him on board was approximately $16,000, which includes training for the dog and his handler.

Takoma Park police believe the cost is well worth it. Diesel has already been responsible for numerous arrests in both the City of Takoma Park and Montgomery County. Diesel is especially good at at sniffing out drugs, evidence and looking for suspects who are running from a police officer. According to Pfc. Atwell, for every step a person takes, they lose approximately 30,000 dead skin cells. That, coupled with a suspect's adrenaline and perspiration, are what canines zero in on when in pursuit of a suspect.

Canines are capable of many things that humans are not. A dog's sense of smell is almost 50 times more sensitive than a human's. A dog can sniff out criminals, drugs, weapons and bombs, in situations where a human officer would have to search every inch -- a very dangerous task. A dog can stand outside a suspect vehicle and smell the scent of drugs coming from a glove compartment. In addition to sensitivity, a dog's sense of smell is precise. It can discern a specific scent even when there are dozens of other scents around. And when a conflict arises, dogs are faster and stronger than most humans, able to catch a fleeing criminal and clamp down with powerful jaws to apprehend the suspect until other officers arrive. Equally important is the impact that just a growl from the dog, with those sharp teeth, can have on a suspect.

Recently, Atwell and Diesel showed just how effective canine police work can be during a demonstration for the Brownies. While Diesel waited in the police cruiser, Atwell had one of the children walk through the backyard, through some dense brush, over a fence, around a tree and then drop an object. Atwell then retrieved Diesel from the vehicle, outfitted him with his ballistic vest and then commanded him to find the object.

Diesel took off with his nose to the ground, walking almost the exact path that the child did, and found the object. However, Diesel did not pick up or touch the object. He merely laid next to it signaling his partner that he found what he was commanded to find. This is very important to evidence handling so as not to taint a crime scene.

Diesel will be tracking down real criminals on a regular basis, responding on an as-needed basis to requests from county agencies like the Montgomery County Police as well as serving in his "own" Takoma Park police force. Watch for him as he rides in the police department car marked "K-9."

Diesel, Takoma Park's canine, poses with his handler, Officer Ernest Atwell, and a local Brownie troop after demonstrating his crime-fighting capabilities.

Photo by Cathy Plevy

TAKOMA PARK IS COOKIN'

The annual Tastes of Takoma took place on April 13 this year, with plenty of good food, the famous Acro-Airs gymnastics team, community information and health services booths, and a host of musicians to entertain the crowd.

Photos by TP Communications Office

Friends of Library to Hold Book Sale

The Friends of the Takoma Park Maryland Library used book sale will be held on the Library lawn on Saturday, May 17 from 10 a.m. to 3 p.m.

These twice-yearly book sales are a major source of funding for the Friends, and all proceeds go to the Library in the form of gifts that benefit public services.

Here are wonderful opportunities to find quality books at bargain prices, while you visit with your neighbors. Children's books, cookbooks, literary fiction and nonfiction in paper and hardback - there are books to satisfy all tastes and interests.

If you are interested in helping the Library by volunteering to work a couple of hours the day of the sale, contact Ellen Robbins at ellenr@takomagov.org Include a daytime phone number. Community service hours are available for students. The Library will accept book donations that are boxed, of general interest and in good condition through May 14.

"Goosebumps" Author Returns to the Series

By Karen MacPherson

Attention, all "Goosebumps" lovers! After an eight-year hiatus, "Goosebumps" author R.L. Stine has just published the first two books in a related new series called "Goosebumps HorrorLand." (Note: we've got copies at the library).

Recently, I had a chance to talk to Stine by telephone in my capacity as the children's book reviewer for Scripps Howard News Service. Here's the story that resulted:

For a man who makes his living scaring children, R.L. Stine seems like a pretty mild-mannered guy.

Known as Bob to his friends, Stine has a relaxed manner and an easy laugh. It's hard to believe that this is the same man whose "Goosebumps" series has frightened millions of kids around the world. But it's important to remember that he's also made them laugh themselves silly with his outrageous, often gross humor.

That's Stine's trademark: blending humor with fear in a way that makes it impossible for kids to stop turning the pages until they've reached the end of his books. That formula has brought fame and fortune to Stine, whose 87-book "Goosebumps" series have sold more than 300 million copies and been translated into 32 languages.

In addition, the "Goosebumps" television series has been a hit with young viewers, while the official "Goosebumps" website - www.scholastic.com/goosebumps -- receives more than two million page views each month, according to Scholastic.

Eight years ago, however, Stine, 64, decided he needed a break from "Goosebumps," and focused on writing other series for kids, including a series called "Rotten School." Kids liked that series, but still clamored for more "Goosebumps."

"Everywhere I went, kids asked me 'When are you going to write new 'Goosebumps' books?'" Stine said in a recent telephone interview from his New York home. "I thought that if I could do something different with the series, I would give it a try."

So Stine created "Goosebumps HorrorLand," a new, 12-book series that connects with a special Internet site, www.enterhorrorland.com. The first two books, "Revenge of the Living Dummy" and "Creep From the Deep" (Scholastic, $5.99 each), have just been published. Two more books will be published later in the summer.

Each of the books contains two separate stories. The first part of each book is a stand-alone tale featuring a couple of normal kids caught up in some terrifying adventures. In the second part of each book, the same characters head off to a mysterious theme park called HorrorLand, billed as a place "where nightmares come to life."

None of the kids know why they've been invited to HorrorLand, but figure it looks like a great place to scare themselves silly. The kids soon realize, however, that the scary stuff is for real and that the theme park is populated by some of the meanest villains from the original "Goosebumps" books.

The HorrorLand sections of each book are part of a serial, so readers won't know the entire story until Stine publishes Book 12 in 2010. Meanwhile, as each book in the "Goosebumps HorrorLand" series is published, readers can check on the website for further pieces of the story. The website also will offer readers other HorrorLand material not included in the books, including several Internet-only stories plus interactive games.

Fans of "Goosebumps" are sure to love the new books, which show Stine at the top of his form as he spins stories filled with creepy characters, graveyards, scary noises, cliff-hanging chapter endings and loads of wacky humor. The new series already has gotten a starred review from Publishers Weekly, which called it "deliciously chilling."

"It's fun to create these kinds of creepy worlds," Stine said. "And I get a wonderful response from my readers. We're also doing something that we couldn't do in the original 'Goosebumps' - we have a huge website for this new series."

Writing comes naturally to Stine. Born in Columbus, Ohio, Stine began writing at the

GOOSEBUMPS continues on page 11

LIBRARY *Briefs*

- **OUR T(W)EEN BOOK CLUB** will meet for the last time this school year on Friday, May 23, from 4-5 p.m. in the Takoma Park Community Center's Rose Room. Our book will be "Hoot" by Carl Hiaasen. We'll discuss the book and then have a "make your own ice cream sundae" party. Registration is limited to 12 students in the 6th, 7th or 8th grade. Thanks to the Friends of the Takoma Park Md. Library, we'll have copies of the book available for check-out for every participant. To register, please call 301-891-7259 or email takomag@gmail.com (put tween in the subject line, please).
- **NEED A NEWSPAPER ARTICLE FOR A RESEARCH PROJECT DUE AT MIDNIGHT?** No problem - just take out your Takoma Park Md. Library card and log onto our website: www.cityoftakomapark.org/library. We've got tons of information available to our patrons 24-7! For more information, pick up one of our new brochures outlining exactly what you can find via our electronic resources. The brochure was created by Christine Turner, who has spent this spring doing an internship at the library as part of her work towards a master's in library science from the College of Information Studies at the University of Maryland.
- **IF YOU HAVEN'T VISITED THE CHILDREN'S ROOM FOR A WHILE,** come by and see the transformation made by our artistic shelvers, Wanda Hsiung and Deborah Erwin. We've got flowering "trees" blooming everywhere, and the wall space over the picture books is bursting with colorful signs of spring. Wanda and Deborah now are hard at work coming up with signs/pictures that will make it easier for young patrons to find books about various subjects, from dolphins to baseball.
- **REGISTRATION BEGINS MAY 2 FOR OUR POPULAR "LAPSIT" PROGRAM**, which will take place on the four Wednesday mornings in June from 10-10:30 a.m. The program is geared for babies ages newborn through 12 months, and includes songs, rhymes and some simple stories. We have space for 15 babies and their grown-ups. Please register by calling 301-891-7259 or emailing takomag@gmail.com (put lapsit in the subject line, please).

Takoma Park Library CALENDAR

MAY 2008

Neighborhood Circle Time
Every Tuesday
10 a.m. OR 11 a.m. at the Library.

Twosies program for two-year-olds
Wednesdays
10 a.m. at the Library.
Space is limited, so you must register. Call 301-891-7259 or email takomag@gmail.com. (Please put twosies in the subject line).

Spanish Circle Time
Every Thursday
10 a.m. at the Library
Sponsored by the Friends of the Takoma Park Maryland Library

Graphic Novels: A Primer For Parents and Other Interested Folks
Tuesday, May 13
7:30 p.m. at the Library
Featuring Dave Burbank, library assistant and graphic novel expert
To register call 301-891-7259 or email takomag@gmail.com (put graphic novels in the subject line).

Friends of the Takoma Park Maryland Library Reading Group
Wednesday, May 14
7:30 p.m., Takoma Park Community Center
Our book is "Last Orders" by Graham Swift
All are welcome

Friends of the Takoma Park Maryland Library Book Sale
Saturday, May 17
10 a.m. - 3 p.m. (see story)

Bedtime Story Time
Monday, May 19
7 p.m. at the Library
Bring your teddy bears (or other stuffed favorites).
Pajamas, pillows and blankets are welcome.
Note: This program is aimed at babies, toddlers and preschoolers and their grown-ups.

T(w)eeen Book Club
Friday, May 23
4-5 p.m.
Takoma Park Community Center, Rose Room
Registration required. Please sign up by calling 301-891-7259 or by emailing takomag@gmail.com (put tween in the subject line).

GOOSEBUMPS

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age of nine when he found an old typewriter in his family's attic. He carried it down to his room and began writing stories and joke books.

After graduating from Ohio State University (where he edited the campus humor magazine), Stine headed to New York. He made a living writing joke and humor books for kids before publishing his first horror novel, a young adult thriller called "Blind Date," in 1986.

He followed that best-seller with a teen series called "Fear Street" before launching "Goosebumps" in 1992. Other Stine series include "Dangerous Girls," "The Nightmare Room" and "Mostly Ghostly." Altogether, Stine has sold more than 400 million books.

While some adults have long decried the "Goosebumps" books as too formulaic and low brow, many librarians and other children's book experts see the series as a great way to get kids interested in reading. In fact, Stine has gotten thousands of letters from readers and their parents who say the books have been a gateway into reading.

"That's the biggest thrill - meeting and hearing from so many kids who enjoy my books," he said.

Graphic Novels a Fresh Reading Experience

Kids are crazy for them, but graphic novels are new territory for many parents, who view them as merely "comics" starring superheroes. The best graphic novels, however, are far more than comics and can offer a richly-textured reading experience, complete with pictures. Even adults familiar with such important adult graphic novels as "Persepolis" by Marjane Satrapi and Art Spiegelman's Pultizer Prize-winning "Maus" may not know that graphic novels of similar quality are being published for kids and teens.

In any case, graphic novels are one of the fastest growing categories in book publishing, book selling and - yes - library circulation. Come learn more about them at a special library program on Tuesday, May 13 at 7:30 p.m. Library Assistant Dave Burbank, a graphic novel expert, will offer a primer on how blending words with illustrations creates a unique literary form. He and Karen MacPherson, children's/teen librarian, will give a brief overview of the history of graphic novels (including non-fiction selections), discuss their popularity, and explain the library's four categories for graphic books: comics; manga; graphic novels for all ages; and graphic novels for older readers.

There will also be a preview of the latest trends in graphic novels, thanks to Burbank's April trip to the Third Annual "Comic Con" in New York City, where 60,000 publishers, book sellers, librarians and others gathered to discuss graphic novels. Finally, all participants will leave with a reading list of suggested graphic novels for various ages, plus information about how they inspire interest in reading among reluctant readers.

Although this program is aimed at adults (both parents and other interested folks), schoolage kids also are welcome to attend. Please register by calling 301-891-7259 or emailing takomag@gmail.com (put graphic novels in the subject line, please).

Budget, Energy Audits, Azalea Awards Air in May

May is Budget month at City Hall, so special Budget Worksessions will be broadcast live on most Thursdays in May in addition to City Council meetings on Monday nights.

In case you missed their live presentations, replays this month will include Saving Energy at Home from April 23, and the Azalea Awards from April 26.

New music this month includes releases from the Folk Festival including Jawbone, Washington Revels, Lea and Sonia. New Jazz Band Brawl performances released this month include Speak Low and Kendra Holt Trio.

Takoma Snapshots in May will include:

- Community Oriented Policing: The Power of (crime) Analysis.
- Tastes of Takoma Highlights
- Arbor Day in Takoma Park
- Old Town Spring Clean-up
- Art Exhibit: Human Concept

Community and neighborhood groups may submit non-commercial notices regarding meetings or special events to City TV for inclusion on the bulletin board.

City TV is carried on Channel 13 on Comcast and RCN, and Channel 28 on the Verizon system. Many programs, including Council meetings and Snapshots, are available for on-demand viewing from the City website as well. Be sure to visit City TV's award-winning webpage at www.TakomaParkMD.gov/cable for specific program information.

All Council meetings and Snapshots episodes are also available for patron check out at the Takoma Park Maryland Library. VHS tapes of these shows, as well as other Takoma Park City TV events, may be purchased for $15 (pick up) or $18 (mail). Some programs are also available on DVD. Call 301-891-7118 or send an email to: cabletv@takomagov.org for more information.

CITY TV PROGRAMMING SCHEDULE - MAY 2008

	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday	Sunday
7:00 AM	Community Bulletin Board	The Road to Recovery	Takoma Park City TV Local Events	Community Bulletin Board	Takoma Snapshots	Community Bulletin Board	Déjà vu: Takoma Music Revisited
8:00 AM	Takoma Park Snapshots	PreSchool Power!		Takoma Park Snapshots	Community Bulletin Board	Takoma Park Folk Festival	
9:00 AM	Takoma Park Folk Festival	Takoma Park Snapshots	National Gallery of Art	Coffeehouse	NASA Programming		Takoma Park Snapshots
10:00 AM		Coffeehouse	City Council Meeting (Replay)	Music da camera	Government Focus	Takoma Park Snapshots	Coffeehouse
11:00 AM	Takoma Park City TV Local Events	CaribNation		Takoma Park Folk Festival	National Gallery of Art	Takoma Park City TV Local Events	Media Watch on Hunger
NOON		Community Bulletin Board			City Council Meeting (Replay)		
1:00 PM	The Road to Recovery	Takoma Park City TV Local Events		Takoma Park City TV Local Events			Takoma Park Folk Festival
2:00 PM	Media Watch on Hunger		Takoma Park Folk Festival			Media Watch on Hunger	
3:00 PM	Takoma Park Snapshots	NASA Programming		Music da camera			Takoma Park City TV Local Events
4:00 PM	PreSchool Power		Takoma Park Snapshots	Coffeehouse	Takoma Park Folk Festival	Déjà vu: Takoma Music Revisited	
5:00 PM	Music da camera	Takoma Park Snapshots	Government Focus	Government Focus			
5:30 PM	Chinese News						
6:00 PM		Community Bulletin Board	Chinese News	Community Bulletin Board	Takoma Park Snapshots	Takoma Snapshots	Community Bulletin Board
7:00 PM		National Gallery of Art		Takoma Park Snapshots	Takoma Park City TV Local Events	Coffeehouse	Takoma Park Snapshots
7:30 PM	City Council Meeting (LIVE)						
8:00 PM		Coffeehouse	City Council Meeting (Replay)	Takoma Park Folk Festival		Takoma Park City TV Local Events	Takoma Park Folk Festival
9:00 PM		Takoma Park City TV Local Events			Takoma Park Folk Festival		
10:00 PM				Government Focus		Takoma Park Folk Festival	Coffeehouse
11:00 PM		CaribNation		Takoma Park City TV Special Events	Coffeehouse		Takoma Park City TV Local Events
12:00 Midnight	Takoma Park Snapshots	City Council Meeting (Replay)	Takoma Park Snapshots		Déjà vu: Takoma Music Revisited	Takoma Park Snapshots	
1:00 AM	Road to Recovery		Community Bulletin Board			Déjà vu: Takoma Music Revisited	

Programming subject to change without notice. CITY TV is carried on Channel 13 on Comcast and RCN and channel 28 on Verizon.

BUDGET

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and repair of storm drains, inlets, channels and ditches.

Other significant projects from the general fund, which covers day-to-day operational activities, include $25,000 to support the Crossroads Farmer's Market and $14,700 for marketing and analysis to improve the New Hampshire Avenue corridor; and $25,000 for software that will allow residents to pay bills on-line.

Besides the general fund, the budget includes the stormwater management fund, the community center fund, and the special revenue fund, which tracks grant-funded projects. Among special revenue projects are the Collaborative Supervision and Focused Enforcement (CSAFE) program in Takoma/Langley, education and infrastructure initiatives for pedestrian safety near schools; and enhancement of the New Hampshire Avenue corridor.

In her budget proposal, Matthews notes the discussion of still-unfinalized City Council priorities – namely, sustainability, livable community, and engaged, responsive and service-oriented organization. These possible priorities are partly a reflection of feedback from the 2007 resident survey, and Matthews points out a number of places where the budget responds to that survey: resident requests for more police visibility, for example, are addressed through a new traffic team and bike patrol. Sustainability could be increased through a tree ordinance review, increased green purchases and a possible green roof on the deck over the police parking area; and an indication that many residents rely on the newsletter for information led to a proposal for a twelfth edition of the publication (in January, when traditionally the newsletter has not published) and the occasional 16-page issue (rather than the usual 12 pages).

City Council will consider the budget proposal over the next two months, and will finalize their budget by July 1. Residents will have opportunities to comment at public hearings (see box).

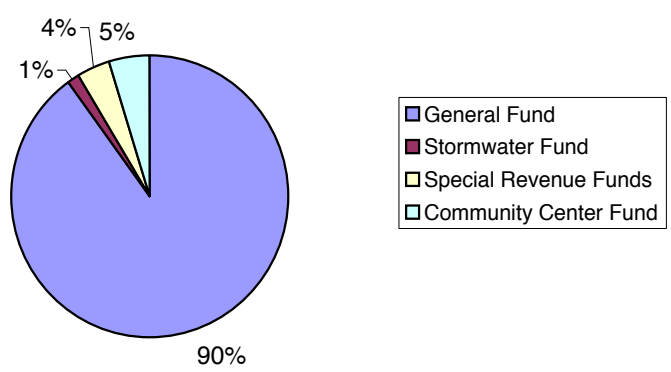
FY09 Budget Hearings

Public Hearing on the Constant Yield Tax Rate
Public Hearing on the Proposed FY09 Budget
Monday, May 5, 7:30 p.m.
Community Center Auditorium

Residents are urged to attend the hearings to express their views. Written comments addressed to City Clerk, City of Takoma Park, 7500 Maple Avenue, Takoma Park, MD 20912, will also be made part of the record. For further information, contact the City Clerk at 301-891-7267 (or e-mail JessieC@takomagov.org).

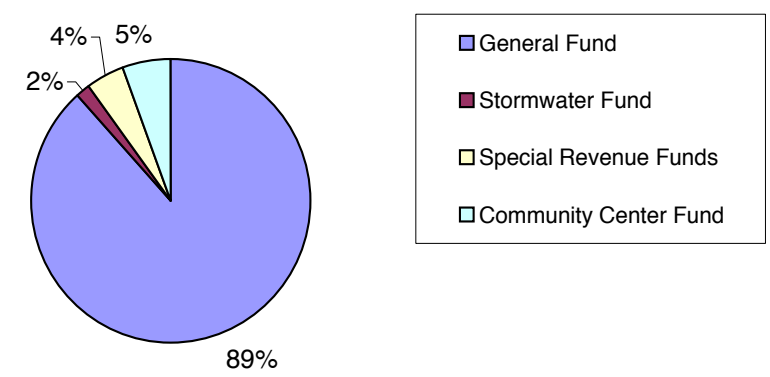
FY 09 Budget
Combined Expenditures by Fund

TOTAL	$25,642,553
General Fund	$23,104,296
Stormwater Fund	$358,651
Special Revenue Funds	$979,606
Community Center Fund	$1,200,000



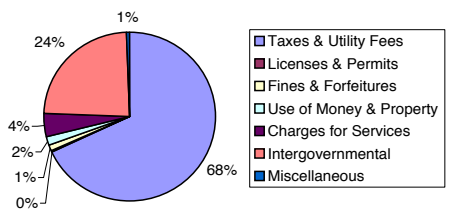
FY 09 Budget
Combined Revenues by Fund

TOTAL	$22,071,228
General Fund	$19,518,945
Stormwater Fund	$365,000
Special Revenue Funds	$987,283
Community Center Fund	$1,200,000



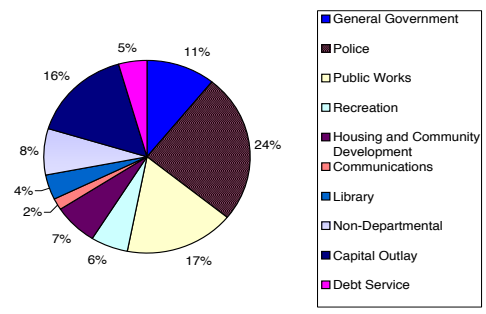
FY 09 Budget
General Fund
Revenues by Type

TOTAL	$19,518,945
Taxes & Utility Fees	$13,264,407
Licenses & Permits	$58,954
Fines & Forfeitures	$231,500
Use of Money & Property	$330,000
Charges for Services	$841,000
Intergovernmental	$4,680,404
Miscellaneous	$112,680



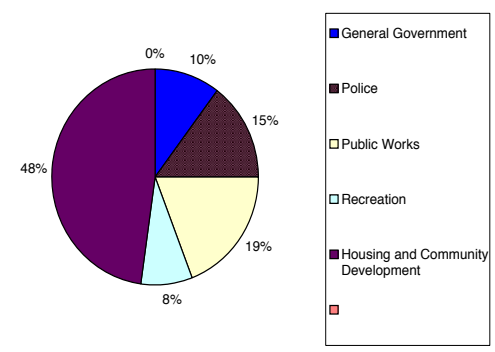
FY 09 Budget
General Fund
Expenditures by Department

TOTAL EXPENDITURES	$23,104,296
General Government	$2,486,559
Police	$5,772,026
Public Works	$3,974,775
Recreation	$1,347,631
Housing and Community Development	$1,644,639
Communications	$429,820
Library	$971,478
Non-Departmental	$1,820,262
Capital Outlay	$3,601,690
Debt Service	$1,055,416



FY 09 Budget
Special Revenue Funds
Expenditures by Department

TOTAL EXPENDITURES	$979,606
General Government	$100,500
Police	$144,306
Public Works	$187,500
Recreation	$80,000
Housing and Community Development	$467,300



Summary of Proposed Expenditures, FY 2009

Fund	Budgeted FY 2008	Estimated FY 2008	Proposed FY 2009
General	$19,941,108	$18,863,048	$23,104,296
Stormwater Management	356,084	358,869	358,651
Special Revenue	1,372,770	995,747	979,606
Community Center	46,161	46,161	1,200,000
Total Expenditures	$21,716,123	$20,263,825	$25,642,553

The variance between FY 2008 and FY 2009 is primarily attributable to increased personnel costs, design and renovation of the Public Works facility, and the renovation of the Council Chambers/Auditorium.