EN ESPAÑOL:
Información sobre elecciones, pagina 3.

Takoma Park NEWSLETTER

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

NO TRASH HOLIDAYS
Trash collection on schedule this month.

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City suffers half million in state budget cuts

Further cuts anticipated

By Virginia Myers

State budget reductions have slashed Takoma Park's FY 2010 budget by more than half a million dollars, leaving city officials searching for creative ways to make up the shortfall. City Council is expected to make some decisions about how to cover the losses over the next several weeks; City Manager Barbara Matthews has outlined several possibilities that will cover at least part of the gap.

The $28 million budget, adopted by the City Council in May, lost $577,523 in combined revenue from Highway User Revenues and State Police Aid. Cuts to the Maryland budget have been handed down to municipalities, and the money is no longer available.

Both Highway User Revenues and State Police Aid are tied to their designated services: the first, primarily to debt service on bonds issued in 2004 for road repair, and also to general road maintenance; and the second, to police safety programs. Most of the highway funds have already been spent on non-negotiable debt service and road maintenance that was scheduled early in the year, according to Matthews. If maintenance such as repairing potholes and cracks is left too long, she says, "it just remains; your roads get in worse condition and you spend more later." She has always advised the City Council against deferring maintenance for that reason.

Matthews is hoping to save some money that would help cover the lost revenues through a new, lower rate the City has been able to negotiate for employee health insurance. To avoid dramatic increases in health insurance costs, the City recently switched carriers from Aetna to United Health Care; the dollar amount saved is still being calculated, but "that will certainly help," says Matthews. She also expects that some vacant positions will add to City coffers, as the City will defer replacing workers.

"There is some indication that the state is not yet done with us, and that we might get cuts in other areas."

— City Manager Barbara Matthews

To cover police aid losses, Matthews is proposing that a regular patrol officer be transferred to a new position as traffic officer; this would allow the City to pay that officer from funds earned through speed camera fines, which are limited to paying for traffic and pedestrian safety measures. The traffic officer would still respond to patrol calls, but his or her primary responsibility would be traffic safety, according to Chief of Police Ronald Ricucci.

Some residents have pointed to the renovations at the Public Works building and the Community Center auditorium as possible places to cut back. "At this juncture, we're still moving ahead with Public Works," says Matthews, explaining that a "very favorable bidding climate and low financing rates" are serious considerations weighing against deferral of the project. The auditorium renovation, she says, is being paid for with state and federal monies, and with a donation from the Washington Adventist Hospital.

The state budget reductions were not exactly a shock, says Matthews, but they did come earlier than anyone anticipated. "The fact that the shoe was going to drop some time during fiscal year 2010 wasn't a total surprise," she says. "I think many of us were surprised that it came so soon in the fiscal year." And, she adds, the amount of the cuts – 90 percent of highway revenues – was higher than expected.

Worse, says Matthews, "There is some indication that the state is not yet done with us, and that we might get cuts in other areas." Income tax revenues are expected to be lower, for example. She also expects that savings from vacant positions will add to

BUDGET CUTS
continues on page 2

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Mayor & Council
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Takoma Park, MD 20912

The 32nd Annual Takoma Park Folk Festival drew happy crowds on September 13, with sunny weather and plenty of music, arts and crafts, games and food — plus neighbors who met up at the event. Next up is the Takoma Park Street Festival, October 4 in Old Town. For more photos of the Folk Fest, see page 12; for more info on the Street Fest, page 5.

Photo by Lonni Moffet

Elections Draw Few Challengers

By Virginia Myers

It looks as though it will be a sleepy election in Takoma Park next month. Of the six City Council wards, just one had registered any competition for the City Councilmember's seat by press time. That one, Ward 6, anticipates a race between two candidates for a vacant seat.

None of the incumbents in the five other wards, or the mayor, has been challenged to date. Nominations will be taken at the nominating caucus on September 29, and while that event may hold some surprises, most campaigns start far earlier.

In Ward 6 (which covers the area between Carroll Avenue and 14th Avenue, University Boulevard and just south of Glenside Drive, including neighborhoods west of New Hampshire Avenue and the Takoma-Langley area), two candidates have plans to run for the seat vacated by Doug Barry in May. Councilmember Donna Victoria has been an interim member, but will not run for the two-year term. Prospective candidates are Navid Nasr, who has lived in Hillwood Manor apartments since 2007; and Fred Schultz, a 23-year resident of New Hampshire Gardens.

It is not unusual for elections to draw so little attention in Takoma Park; one recent year, 1995, there were no challengers at all. In four of the last 10 elections, there were races for three Council spots (including Mayor); the most active year was 1993, when every seat was contested.

According to interviews with a handful of residents who have been active in city politics, this year's lack of interest may be due to general satisfaction with current councilmembers, combined with the absence of any controversial issues, and the intimidating load of work required to keep up as a councilmember, once elected.

"I've always thought it had to do with whether there's a specific controversy that would generate interest within the City," says Ed Sharp, who served as mayor from 1990 to 1997. "It does not appear that there's any particular overriding questions like the citizens' center, or . . . a question about unification. It seems that for whatever reason we've gotten [into] some type of doldrums."

"You've got to have reasons to run, and I think that's always been a challenge," agrees Marc Elrich, who served nine and half two-year terms on City Council before he was elected to the Montgomery County Council in 2006. "The city's small, and a lot of the budget and [other] decisions are locked in place . . . at the end of the day you make it clear that unless I'm really going to propose

CITY ELECTIONS
continues on page 9

INSIDE:

TILE ART ..... *Page 5*
CRIME STATS ..... *Page 8*
LEAF COLLECTION ..... *Page 12*

CITY COUNCIL AND COMMITTEE CALENDAR*

Tuesday, September 29 - Nominating Caucus, 7:30 p.m. (CC Azalea Room)

Thursday, October 1 - Ethics Commission meeting, 8 p.m. (CC Hydrangea Room)

Thursday, October 1 - Nuclear Free Takoma Park Committee meeting, 7:30 p.m. (CC Rose Room)

Monday, October 5 - City Council meeting, 7:30 p.m. (CC Azalea Room)

Monday, October 12 - City Council meeting, 7:30 p.m. (CC Azalea Room)

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

Tuesday, October 13 - Takoma Park Board of Elections meeting, 7 p.m. (CC Council Conference Room)

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

Monday, October 19 - City Council meeting, 7:30 p.m. (CC Azalea Room)

Monday, October 19 – (tentative) Public Safety Citizens Advisory Committee meeting, 6:30 p.m. (CC Hydrangea Room)

Tuesday, October 20 - Washington Adventist Hospital Land Use Committee meeting, 7:30 p.m. (CC Hydrangea Room)

Monday, October 26 - City Council meeting, 7:30 p.m. (CC Azalea Room)

Tuesday, October 27 - Arts and Humanities Commission meeting, 7:30 p.m. (CC Hydrangea Room)

Monday, November 2 - No City Council meeting due to the November 3 City Election

Tuesday, November 3 - City Election. Polls Open 7 a.m. to 8 p.m.

*For the most up to date information, check http://www.takomaparkmd.gov/clerk/agenda/. 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).

City Council Action*

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

September 8, 2009 – Special Session

- First Reading Ordinance 2009-46 was accepted, providing for the 2009 City Election
- First Reading Ordinance 2009-47 was accepted, authorizing FY 2010 Budget Amendment No. 1
- Single Reading Ordinance 2009-49 was adopted, awarding a contract for a legislative advocate/lobbyist
- Resolution 2009-52 was adopted, approving the development of housing in the City (Gilbert Highlands, 8508-8510 Flower Avenue) to be financed either directly by the Maryland Department of Housing and Community Development or through the Department's Community Development Administration

The consent agenda was adopted.
It consisted of:

- Single Reading Ordinance 2009-48 approving the purchase of a leaf collection vacuum
- Resolution 2009-53 supporting Montgomery County's purchase of 8312 and 8316 Flower Avenue

Volunteers Needed to Serve on Council-Appointed Boards, Committees, and Commissions

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

Arts and Humanities Commission (one vacancy)
Takoma Park Board of Elections (vacancies)
Takoma Park Ethics Commission (one vacancy)
Facade Advisory Board (one vacancy)
Noise Control Board (vacancies)
Nuclear-Free Takoma Park Committee (vacancies)
Recreation Committee (vacancies)
Safe Roadways Committee (vacancies)

November 1 | December 1 | January 1 | February 1 | March 1 | April 1

Six Months to Census Day!

Census Day is April 1, 2010.

All U.S. residents must be counted – citizens and non-citizens. Only ten questions – no long form. Personal information is completely confidential. No identifying information can be shared with police, immigration, housing officials or anyone else. **Be Counted so your community gets the services it needs**. Census Jobs Available: Go to www.2010census.gov, click jobs tab.

2010 CENSUS: IT'S IN OUR HANDS

Speak with the Mayor

Bruce Williams

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. If a holiday falls on a Monday, office hours move to Wednesday, same time.

BUDGET CUTS

continued from page 1

City coffers.

The decision about where to cut the City budget will ultimately be up to City Council, and technically the savings could come from anywhere in the budget. Matthews already reviewed with each department head possible places to pare back expenditures, when she prepared the current budget. She is reviewing those notes to share with Council, and she hopes residents will come forward to Council with opinions about what programs are most important and which are more dispensable. Matthews plans to recommend to City Council alternatives to conventional public hearings, to collect resident feedback on how best to spend, and save, the City's money, but no plans have yet been made in that regard. Next year's budget is expected to be challenging as well, with the possibility of lower property values and a corresponding dip in tax revenue.

The biggest question, says Matthews, is "How much can we deal with the problem without drastically impacting any service levels? I think that's part of a community conversation, and I think that's going to take some time."

To register your thoughts on budget cuts, contact your council member; for contact information, see takomaparkmd.gov.

"How much can we deal with the problem without drastically impacting any service levels? I think that's part of a community conversation, and I think that's going to take some time."

— City Manager Barbara Matthews

LETTERS *to the Editor*

Leaf Blowers Dispute Continues

Dear *Takoma Park Newsletter*:

A story on the front page of the September *Newsletter* offered a misleading picture of a citizen-sponsored proposal to ban gas-powered leaf blowers.

First, the headline, "City Considers Ban on Gas-Powered Leaf Blowers," is inaccurate. Had the newsletter written about the first work session on this issue, in January 2009, that may well have been true. But the City Council has made it clear it is not interested right now in taking the bold and well-justified step of prohibiting gas-powered leaf blowers. Instead, as reported in the article, the Council has "punted" the issue — along with any other environmental issue one can think of — to the Environmental Action Task Force.

I question the premise of the story as expressed in the first paragraph, which says leaves "ultimately must be removed" from lawns. Actually, they don't. Instead of using gas-powered machines to blow everything to the curb, homeowners could use mulching mowers or rake their leaves into a mulch pile. Reusing leaves that fall on one's property is an earth-friendly way of addressing the leaf issue. It's also a way of saving precious tax dollars and reducing the hassles of negotiating city streets when the leaf trucks are out.

The assumption that blowers are primarily used in fall, and only to clear leaves, also is incorrect. They are used throughout the warm months, mostly to clear grass clippings but also as high-powered brooms in residential and commercial parking lots.

The article calls me a member of the "self-proclaimed 'Rake Brigade,' which turns out *en masse* in local parks to rake leaves before the leaf blowers arrive." I wish. In fact, I formed the *Circle Woods* Rake Brigade, a group of hardy folk who have raked leaves for the past few years in Spring Park. One fellow Takoma resident (and leaf blower ban supporter), Sat Jiwan Ikle-Khalsa, has done the same in Forest Park. (See circlewoods.blogspot.com for some pics of the brigade marching in the 2008 July 4 parade.)

Council member Donna Victoria continues to assert that future EPA regulations obviate the need for a ban. Unfortunately, she's got her facts wrong. First, EPA is not going to publish new rules in 2011. It already published new regulations in 2008, which will take effect in 2011 and 2012. But those regulations will not change the exhaust emission requirements for backpack and hand-held leaf

LEAF BLOWERS continues on page 9

THE TAKOMA PARK NEWSLETTER

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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, or letters to the editor will be considered for publication if sent to tpnewseditor@takomagov.org or Newsletter, City of Takoma Park, 7500 Maple Avenue, Takoma Park, MD 20912.

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.

ELECTIONS 2009

City Election Dates

Tuesday, September 29, 7:30 p.m. - Nominating Caucus

Friday, October 2, 5 p.m. - Deadline for candidates nominated at Caucus to withdraw.

Monday, October 5 - Voter registration cut-off date.

Tuesday, October 27, 4 p.m. - Last day to make application for regular absentee ballot

Wednesday, October 28 - Late absentee balloting begins

Friday, October 30, 5 p.m. - Any write-in candidate for Mayor or Councilmember who wishes to be pre-registered as a write-in candidate and to have his/her name posted in the voting booth for the purpose of identifying him/her as a candidate for office, must file his/her name with the City Clerk by this deadline.

Tuesday, November 3, ELECTION DAY, Polls open 7 a.m. to 8 p.m. at the Community Center. Absentee ballots must be received by the City Clerk prior to the closing of the polls.

Wednesday, November 4, 7:30 p.m. - Special meeting of the City Council to receive the certification of the election results.

Monday, November 16, 7:30 p.m. - Inauguration - Mayor and Councilmembers take office

El Calendario de la Elección Municipal del 2009

martes, 29 de septiembre, 7:30 p.m. – Reunión Electoral

viernes, 2 de octubre, 5 p.m. – Fecha límite para retirarse como candidato nominado en la reunión electoral.

lunes, 5 de octubre – Fecha límite para registrarse para votar.

martes, 27 de octubre, 4 p.m. – Fecha límite para solicitar papeleta regular de voto ausente.

miércoles, 28 de octubre – Comienza la votación de emergencia por boleta en ausencia.

viernes, 30 de octubre, 5 p.m. – Fecha límite para cualquier candidato autonominado para el puesto de Alcalde o Miembro del Consejo que desee ser pre-registrado como candidato autonominado y para tener su nombre colocado en la cabina electoral para identificarlo/la como candidato, tendrá que someter su nombre a la Oficina de la Sectretaria Municipal.

martes, 3 de noviembre, DIA DE LA ELECCIÓN MUNICIPAL, las urnas de votación estarán abiertas desde las 7 a.m. a 8 p.m. en el Centro Comunitario de Takoma Park. Esta es la fecha y hora límite para someter boletas en ausencia a la Secretaria Municipal.

miercoles, 4 de noviembre, 7:30 p.m. – Junta especial del Consejo de la Ciudad para recibir certificación de los resultados de la elección.

lunes, 16 de noviembre, 7:30 p.m. – Inauguración – Alcalde y Miembros del Consejo tomarán puesto.

Voter Registration Deadline: October 5

United States Citizens: Any resident of the City of Takoma Park who is a United States citizen must be properly registered to vote at an address in the City in accordance with state law in order to vote in City elections.

Non-United States Citizens: Any resident of the City who is not a United States citizen, but who is otherwise qualified to be a registered voter in the State of Maryland may register with the City Clerk to vote in City elections. The City Clerk shall maintain a supplemental voter roll, separate from the list of registered voters in the City generated by the Montgomery County Board of Elections, which shall include the names of those non-United States citizens who are registered to vote in City Elections.

To vote in the November 3 election, the voter must be a qualified voter of the city and must have resided within the corporate limits of the City of Takoma Park for 30 days immediately preceding the election. **The voter registration cut-off date is October 5.** Changes of address must also be filed by this date. Voter registration or change of address forms are available in the Takoma Park Community Center – Sam Abbott Citizens' Center and online at *www.takomaparkmd.gov.*

If you are already registered through the Montgomery County Board of Elections, or with the City Clerk (for non-U.S. citizen residents), you do not need to do anything further.

Fecha Limite para Registrarse para Votar: 5 de octubre

Ciudadanos Americanos: Cualquier residente de la Ciudad de Takoma Park que sea ciudadano Americano tiene que estar registrado apropiadamente para votar en la elección municipal.

Ciudadanos No-Americanos: Cualquier residente de la Ciudad de Takoma Park que sea ciudadano No-Americano pero que cualifique para ser un votante registrado en el Estado de Maryland, puede registrarse con la Secretaria Municipal para votar en la elección municipal. La Secretaria Municipal mantendrá una lista separada de votantes que sean ciudadanos No-Americanos y que puedan votar en la elección municipal.

Para votar en las elecciones el 3 noviembre, el votante tiene que ser un votante cualificado de la Ciudad y haber residido en los predios de la Ciudad de Takoma Park 30 días presidiendo las elecciones. La fecha limite para registrarse para votar es el 5 de octubre. Cambios de dirección tienen que estar registrados para esta fecha. Formularios de registro para votar o cambio de dirección están disponibles en el Centro Comunitario de Takoma Park – Sam Abbot Citizens' y en la página web *www.takomaparkmdg.gov.*

Si usted ya esta registrado a través de la Junta Electoral del Condado de Montgomery o con la

2009 ELECTIONS continues on page 7

HOUSING *Mailbox*

by Jean Kerr and Moses A. Wilds

A tenant contacted the Housing Office and asked, "How much can my landlord increase my rent?"

A landlord can only increase the rent by the Rent Stabilization Allowance which is established each year by the City of Takoma Park and is equal to 100 percent of the Consumer Price Index (CPI). The Rent Stabilization Allowance for this year is 0.4 percent, effective 7/1/09 - 6/30/10. For example, if the rent was $850, a 0.4 percent increase would bring the rent to $853.40.

If a landlord files a fair return rent increase petition with the Commission on Landlord-Tenant Affairs (COLTA) and an increase is granted, a landlord may be able to increase the rent by up to 15 percent. A two-month written notice of any rent increase is required. There are also some properties that are exempt from the Rent Stabilization law.

For further information or if you would like to know if you are paying a legal rent, contact

Jean Kerr at 301-891-7216 or e-mail at JeanK@takomagov.org.

A tenant contacted the mailbox regarding whether the city's landlord-tenant office resolves tenant-to-tenant disputes that do not involve their landlord.

The city's landlord-tenant office attempts to resolve disputes arising under the City's Landlord-Tenant Law. Disputes between tenants, housemates, roommates and or family members are referred to the Conflict Resolution Center of Montgomery County, Inc., which has a 20-year history of providing a venue for resolving disputes that do not involve a landlord and tenant.

Utilizing professional mediators and facilitators, the Center's mission is to assist Montgomery County residents in constructively managing conflict by offering affordable dispute resolution services. The Center's services also include community conferencing, group facilitation, neighborhood problem solving and training. A partial listing of the types of disputes the Center has handled includes:

Neighbor to neighbor issues
Family member disputes
Consumer and merchant disputes
Roomate/housemate disputes
Small claims and selected other court referral

The Conflict Resolution Center of Montgomery County, Inc. is located at 2424 Reedie Drive, Ste. 301, Wheaton, MD 20902, telephone 301-942-7700.

City tenants and landlords having questions regarding the Takoma Park Landlord-Tenant Law are requested to call 301-891-7215 and/or contact Moses Wilds at MosesW@takomagov.org.

Free Classes for Renters, Homeowners and Home Buyers

The following classes are being offered free of charge. Pre-registration is required. Please call 301-891-7222 to register for a class.

Your Rights as a Tenant in Takoma Park

Can a landlord charge me for repairs in my apartment? What can I do if the manager of my building enters my apartment without giving me notice? My landlord kept my entire security deposit when I vacated. He said I damaged the unit, but that damage was there before I moved in. My rent was increased by $60 but I thought my apartment was under rent stabilization. These are just some of the issues that will be discussed during this workshop on your rights as a tenant. Learn more about city and county resources available to tenants and how you can form a tenant association to better deal with problems in your building.

When: Wednesday, October 14
Time: 7 - 8:30 p.m.

Post-Purchase Home Ownership

Are the costs for owning and maintaining your new home, whether it be a condominium or a single family house, escalating? Here is a great class on:

Developing a realistic housing budget

The importance of developing good saving habits for home repairs.

How to maintain your home for the long term

How best to add value to your home

When: Wednesday, November 4
Time: 7 - 8:30 p.m.

First Time Home Buyer Seminar (English)

Buying a home is one of the most important decisions you will make in your lifetime. Here is an opportunity for you to do it right, with all of the knowledge of the process. Class limited to 25 people. A nonprofit affordable housing organization will conduct a First Time Home Buyer seminar that will include information on:

- The importance of pre-purchase counseling
- Establishing credit, maintaining good credit, facts about the credit scoring system
- How to obtain a mortgage loan -understanding the terms of the loan
- The role of the real estate agent and how to identify a good one
- Information on Montgomery County and Maryland home loan programs

When: Saturday, October 24
Time: 8:30 a.m. - 1:30 p.m.

Seminario Para Quien Compra Casa Por Primera Vez

El comprar una casa es una de las decisiones más importantes que tomará en su vida. Esta es una oportunidad para que usted lo haga correctamente con toda la información del proceso. La Coorporación del Desarrollo Económico del Latino (LEDC), una organización a beneficio para quienes quieren comprara una casa por primera vez, dara un seminario el cual incluirá información como:

- La importancia de tener consejo profesional antes de comprar una casa.
- Establecer su crédito, mantener su crédito y sistema de mantener record de su crédito.
- Cómo obtener un préstamo y entender los términos del préstamo.
- El papel del agente de ventas
- Información acerca de los prógramas de préstamo en Maryland y el Condado de Montgomery

Fecha: sábado, noviembre 14
Hora: 8:30 a.m. - 1:30 p.m.
Costo: Gratis! Pero necesita inscribirse anticipadamente ya que la clase

Earned Income Credit Program: Are You Eligible?

This year has been particularly difficult for many families. Some have lost their homes, others have lost their jobs or have had their hours reduced. The Earned Income Credit (EIC) is a refundable tax credit designed to supplement wages for low-moderate income workers. Workers can claim the earned income credit, even if they do not owe income tax, simply by filing federal and state income returns. Although it is a federal program, 22 states including Maryland, additionally offer their own earned income credit program which you may qualify for, especially if you qualify for the federal EIC program. The EIC does not affect food stamps, Medicaid, public housing benefits, cash assistance or SSI. Even workers with no children may qualify for a small EIC.

In 2008, more than 24 million taxpayers used the federal EIC program to claim $48 billion. Amazingly enough, IRS reports that an additional 25 percent of taxpayers who are eligible never apply. Don't let this happen to you! Check to see if you might be eligible for the federal and the Maryland EIC programs. Eligibility is tied to your income. Below are some of the guidelines:

If you read through these questions and can answer "yes," then stay tuned for the criteria that will be finalized for the 2009 programs sometime in January or February 2010. The exact income qualifiers may change somewhat before the tax year ends.

1. Were you a U.S. citizen or resident alien in 2009?
2. Have you lived in the U.S. for more than half a

EARNED INCOME continues on page 9

COLTA's CORNER

by Jean Kerr, Housing Specialist

The Commission on Landlord-Tenant Affairs (COLTA) recently issued an Opinion and Order on four combined illegal rent complaints for a rental property in Takoma Park.

Nicolas, et. al v. 8708 Bradford Road, LLC (2009-10T, 11T, 12T and 14T)

On August 26, 2009, COLTA issued a decision on a complaint filed by four tenants that their landlord had charged illegal rents ranging from $1,300 to $1,660 when they moved into the apartments. The complaint included a defective tenancy allegation that the boiler did not work during the 2008-2009 winter months and that there were no working mail boxes at the property. COLTA found that the landlord charged illegal rents and that the legal rents on the units should be no higher than $797 - $820. COLTA further found that the landlord caused a defective tenancy for the lack of sufficient heat and inoperable mail boxes. COLTA ordered that the tenants' rents be reduced and that they withhold a total of $28,802 from subsequent rent payments as damages for charging illegal rents and causing a defective tenancy. (Unit #1 - $3,418.00; Unit #3 - $8,509.40; Unit #4 - $9,188.38; and Unit #5 - $7,687.00.)

Local Artist Mounts a History in Tiles

By Virginia Myers

In early September, months of preparation became reality as tiles crafted by local artist John Hume were finally mounted on the pillars of the structure at B.Y. Morrison Park, at Takoma Junction. The public art project, called *Tales of Mystery and Imagination,* and funded by the Takoma Park Arts and Humanities Commission (FY08), not only repairs the crumbling structure; it beautifies a little pocket park at this increasingly busy intersection of commercial and residential neighborhoods.

B.Y. Morrison Park's concrete shelter has been many things: a Shell gas station, a thrift shop (Sister City Thrift Shop once supported student exchanges with Takoma Park's sister city, Jequié, Brazil), and an urban park. It frames an iconic mural of musicians, "Guardians of the Neighborhood," painted by Jim Colwell in 1995. And now it is also a monument to the city's history.

Several of the tiles, made just down the street in Humes' home studio, Sligo Creek Tiles, represent pieces of Takoma Park's past. He says he wanted to build a memorial unlike conventional statues to historical figures, and instead honor "individuals who were great, but not necessarily famous, and really give the absolute minimum of data because I think we're avalanched with data these days. I'm much more interested in the stories that people come away with."

"We all know what happened last week, and with a little bit of research we can find out what happened a century ago, but what happened 10 years ago is quite often the unknown world." To remedy that, here is a quick course in hyper-local history, tile by tile. For more entertaining history-in-tiles, visit the park, at the intersection of Carroll and Ethan Allen Avenues.

Edgar Allen Poe poetry

Hume's premise, of "mystery and imagination," is the title of an Edgar Allen Poe book. Poe has been part of Humes' life for years: the poet gave his last public lecture at Humes' high school, attended to his college, and is buried in nearby Baltimore. Like Poe, Hume hopes he's left "a secret message for the ages," in his tile stories.

Root Boy Slim

Icon of bad-boy, late-1970s rock and roll, Root Boy Slim, aka Foster Mackenzie III, lived and played in Takoma Park. Among his more popular tunes: *Boogie 'Til You Puke*, *I'm Not Too Old for You*, and *Hey, Mr. President*, a plea to the White House to help the homeless. The musician lived in an apartment above the House of Musical Traditions, and worked at Sister City Thrift Shop. Says Hume, "There was nothing on earth quite like a Root Boy Slim and the Sex Change Band concert" – sometimes the star would show up late, or not at all. Hence the tile of a once-popular bumper sticker: "Root Boy Slim Owes Me Money."

Motor Cat

For years during the late 1980s and 1990s, the uber-hip tabby cat known as Motor Cat rode around town on a Suzuki with its owner, known as J. Cat Man. Outfitted with a miniature helmet, the feline from the fast lane was a favorite around town. Hume calls her "a motorcycle mama cat."

Motor Cat

Photo by Elizabeth Brinkama

Circus Elephant

During the first part of the 20th century, a traveling carnival would unload its games of chance, its ferris wheel, and at least one elephant in the lot where the temporary firehouse now stands. Hume chose to include a tile with a baby elephant, to bring the animal down to a human scale, and to recall the nomadic existence of the quirky traveling fair.

Roscoe the Rooster

From 1989 to 1999, Roscoe the Rooster, a living rooster, strutted the streets of Old Town right around the intersection of Carroll and Eastern Avenues, near the current farmer's market location. Now the Junction adds a commemorative tile to the collection of memorials to this town mascot (other Roscoe landmarks include Roscoe's Neapolitan Pizzeria and the bronze Roscoe sculpture at the corner of Laurel and Carroll Avenues). Hume calls Roscoe "A sort of iconoclastic individual. He didn't follow proper procedures, he wasn't even supposed to be in town, animal control couldn't catch him." His sort of "diffused sense of outrage" is meant to recall similar feelings of human residents: "Roscoe wanted things to be more the way he wanted them, and less like they really are," says Hume.

Trolley Car

More than a hundred years ago, the Dinky Line Trolley rattled along Carroll Avenue from Old Town to the Glen Sligo Hotel, near Sligo Creek and New Hampshire Avenue. It slowed at the Junction, which was then called "Halfway," since it occupied the spot halfway down the line. Then it continued and dropped off visitors to the resort-like hotel for recreation at the creek and vaudeville shows.

CALL FOR ARTISTS

Takoma Park
Arts and Humanities Commission

4TH ANNUAL HOLIDAY ART SALE

Saturday, December 12, 2009
10 a.m. to 4 p.m.

The Takoma Park Arts and Humanities Commission (TPAHC) is pleased to announce a Call To Artists to participate in the annual Holiday Art Sale. The sale will he held on Saturday, December 12, from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m., at the Takoma Park Community Center. All local artists are eligible to participate. However, all items offered for sale must be created and produced by the artist. Past years have featured, but were not limited to, painting, photography, pottery, jewelry, textiles and glass.

Registration will be open until November 16, 2009, or until all slots are filled. There is no cost to participate, as costs are covered by TPAHC. Slots will be filled on a first come, first served basis, though there will be limits on the numbers of participants for each artistic media, to maintain a diversity of offerings.

To register for the sale, or to receive more information, contact Rob Rudick at robrudick@yahoo.com or at 301 270-2323.

Beer Fest Barrels into Takoma Park

Takoma Park's culinary universe will expand on October 17, when the Takoma Foundation's first beer tasting will be held at the Cady-Lee Mansion.

"It will be beer-tasting, Takoma Park-style: nuclear-free and organic," promised Peter Feiden, a member of the Takoma Foundation board and coordinator of the event. "We'll have great beers and some light food to go with them, plus music from local performers."

Chris O'Brien, author of *Fermenting Revolution: How to Drink Beer and Save the World*, will be the master of ceremonies, so to speak. O'Brien is arranging for the selection of organic beers, using his contacts with local breweries and distributors. Known as a "beer activist" and an accomplished home brewer, O'Brien also will share some of his findings about beer's surprisingly influential role in history.

"We were searching for a fundraiser that would be different than what's been done before in town. We thought this would be casual and fun," said Takoma Foundation President Kathy Porter.

While Takoma Park's many home brewers will be attracted to the event, Feiden emphasized that "this isn't about making beer; it's about enjoying interesting beers and visiting with friends."

The beer tasting will be held from 4 to 7 p.m. The event will cost $35 per person.

"This is a fundraiser, but we feel that it's moderately priced," said Porter. "The proceeds will enable the Takoma Foundation to support local organizations in our fall grant cycle." The Foundation has contributed to food programs for low-income families and seniors; cultural arts programs such as the mosaic at the Takoma Park, Maryland Library, and Lumina Theatre; and after school programs like sports, tutoring and dance. It has postponed its fall grant cycle "due to financial constraints caused by the recession," but expects to continue to contribute to community projects in the spring. For more information, go to www.takomafoundation.org.

— Kevin Adler

Street Fest Celebrates Takoma Park

Some of Takoma Park's favorite musicians, along with a few new ones, will gather for the 28th Annual Takoma Park Street Festival Sunday, October 4 from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. from the Farmer's Market on Laurel Avenue toward the Metro Station on Eastern Avenue and on down toward the Firehouse on Carroll Avenue. The event, which includes not just musicians but also artists and activists, will be held rain or shine.

Among the 18 bands on three different stages are well-known acoustic roots-rock locals like The Nighthawks, Chopteeth, Tom Principato, and Prabir and the Substitutes. Between sets, visitors can wander through displays from more than 170 artists and community groups lining the festival route, sample from multiple food booths or watch the kids do arts and crafts, dance in the moon bounce or climb an inflatable climbing wall.

"The Takoma Park Street Festival celebrates Takoma Park," says Old Town Busienss Association's vice president and music coordinator, David Eisner. "We are an independent, quirky, fun-loving bunch, celebrating local arts, foods and culture."

The festival is sponsored by OTBA, a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization. For more information visit www.takomafestival.com.

OCTOBER RECREATION

Jalen Alleyne navigates through the obstacle course at the TPRC during wacky water week at Camp Takoma last summer.

Photo by Debra Haiduven

Ladies Boot Camp
Ages 16 and older
A total body program that includes a circuit of drills ranging from jumping jacks, running, push-ups, squats, crunches and weight training. A challenging workout completed in an hour. Eight weeks.
When: Tues. and Thurs.
Sept. 29 – Nov. 19
Time: 6:30 - 7:30 p.m.
Location: TP Recreation Center
7315 New Hampshire Avenue
Fee: $85

Double Dutch
Ages 6 - 14
This program will inspire and encourage youth to be fit. Youth will be able to develop the technical skills of Double Dutch. This program will promote fitness, teamwork, build self esteem, develop leadership and encourage good sportsmanship while assisting in the promotion of the sport of jump rope.
When: Tues. and Thurs. Ongoing
Time: 7 – 8:30 p.m.
Location: TP Recreation Center
7315 New Hampshire Avenue
Fee: Free

Family Fun Day
When: Sat., Oct. 17
Trip: Clark Elioak Farm, Howard County.
Pet and feed the animals in the petting zoo. Take a hayride through the farm fields. Pick a pumpkin. Find your way out of the enchanted forest maze. Check out the farm museum.
Time: 10:30 a.m. - 3 p.m.
Fee: TP resident $5
Non-resident $10
Register by Oct.10.

Fun Day Program
Ages 5 - 11
The Fun Day Program offers exciting field trips on scheduled whole day school closings and activities and performances on scheduled half day closings. Participants will meet at the Community Center, 7500 Maple Avenue. On half days only, students attending Takoma Park Elementary will be picked up from their bus stop and children attending Piney Branch Elementary will be picked up in the gym by a Recreation staff member. On full days, pack a lunch. On half days bring a snack! Trips, activities and performers are subject to change. Space is limited, sign up early. **Half day program is already included in Afternoon Addition fees.
When: **Fri., Oct.2
Activity: Incredible Insects - hands on experience with live insects
Time: 1 - 5:30 p.m.
Fee: TP resident $15
Non-resident $20
When: Fri., Oct.16
Activity: Clark Elioak Farm - Pick a pumpkin, ride the hayride, Find your way out of the for est maze.
Time: 9 a.m. – 5:30 p.m.
Fee: TP resident $25
Non-resident $30

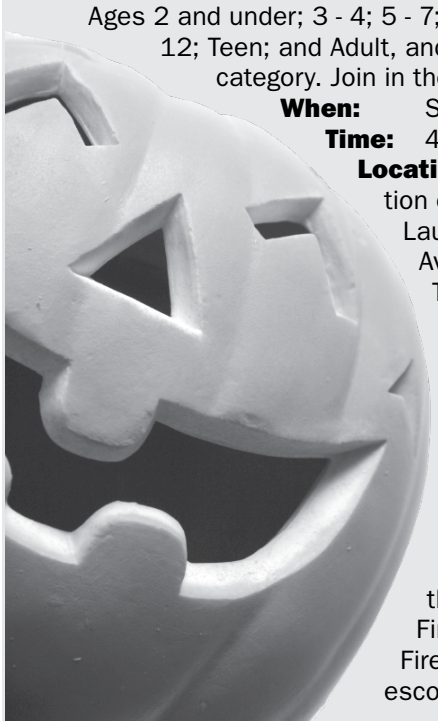
Cardio Fusion
Ages 16 and older
A complete workout for the entire body. Kick up your energy levels and decrease body fat through an infused mix of hi/lo cardiovascular conditioning and resistance training. Exercise modifications ensure effectiveness for any fitness level. Bring 3lb – 5 lb hand weights. Instructor Denise Pullet. Maximum of 20, minimum eight. Five weeks.
Days: Mon. and Wed., Oct.5 – Nov. 4
Time: 6:30 – 7:30 p.m.
Location: Dance Room – T.P. Comm. Ctr.
Fee: TP resident $50
Non-resident $55
No class on Nov. 11.

Campfire Chaos
Ages 11 -18
Don't let the fall chill keep you indoors! Come join us for some campfire chaos. We're heading to the Greenbelt Campgrounds where you're never too old to make s'mores, sing karaoke and engage in some good ol' childhood games.....with a twist. Transportation from the TP Community Center is provided. This activity is free but registration is required. Space is limited.
When: Fri., Oct. 2
Time: 5:30 p.m.
Location: Depart from Teen Lounge - TP Community Center
Fee: Free

Mind Your Own Business (Cake Decorating)
Ages 13- 18
Mind your own business is designed to introduce teens to the world of business and entrepreneurship. Our goal is to help participants develop basic skills by offering various workshops. Every month a different skill will be introduced to the teens. During the month of October, we will be introducing the basics to decorating cakes. Each participant will be able to decorate their own personal cake. This activity is free but registration is required. Space is limited.
When: Wed., Oct. 7
Time: 4:30 p.m.
Location: Teen Lounge - TP Community Center
Fee: Free

Halloween Fun: Parade, Costume Contest October 31

Annual Costume Contest
The FREAKS come out in the afternoon. Get all decked out and strut your stuff. Categories include most original, funniest and scariest. Ages 2 and under; 3 - 4; 5 - 7; 8 - 10; 11 - 12; Teen; and Adult, and overall group category. Join in the fun!
When: Sat., Oct.31
Time: 4 p.m.**
Location: Intersection of Carroll and Laurel Avenues, Old Town Takoma Park



Halloween Parade
All are welcome to participate in this walking parade. Follow the Takoma Park Fire Department Fire Truck as it escorts you down the parade route. Beginning at Carroll and Laurel Avenues, following Carroll Avenue to Fire House, left onto Philadelphia Avenue and ending at Piney Branch Elementary School.
When: Sat., Oct.31
Time: Approximately 4:45 p.m. **
(Immediately following the Costume Contest)

Halloween Award Ceremony
Join us for refreshments, sponsored by the Takoma Park Lions Club, at Piney Branch Elementary School, Multipurpose Room, following the Halloween Parade for the announcement of the Contest Winners. We'd like to thank the Takoma Park Lions Club, who graciously served the Takoma Park community for several decades with its kindness and support.
When: Sat., Oct.31
Time: Approximately 5:15 p.m. **
(Immediately following the parade)
Location: Piney Branch Elementary School
7510 Maple Avenue

**NOTE THE TIME CHANGE because the event falls on Halloween we are starting early this year so you have time to go Trick-or-Treating.

RECREATION
continues on page 7

RECREATION

continued from page 6

Seniors Open Arts Studio
Ages 55 and older
Expand your art skills or learn new techniques in an open art studio with instructor Alice Sims. Classes include instruction on drawing, painting and working with clay. Be creative in a relaxed atmosphere and have fun. Call 301-891-7280 to register.

When: Mon., Oct. 26
Time: 11 a.m. - 12:30 p.m.
Location: Art Studio, TP Community Center
Fee: No Cost, but registration is required to participate.

Special Bingo
Ages 55 and older
Come try your luck. Win a prize. Light Refreshments.

When: Thurs., Oct. 22
Time: Noon - 2 p.m.
Location: Senior Room, TP Community Center
Fee: No Cost

Faceoff Floor Hockey
Ages 7 – 9 and 10 - 12
Looking for a fun new sport to play during those cold winter months? Look no further than Takoma Park Faceoff Floor Hockey. The participants will be taught the rules and skills of the game and after each session there will be a scrimmage to practice these skills. Maximum 16, minimum 10. Six weeks. Instructor Carey Antoszewski.

Ages 7 - 9
When: Mon., Nov. 9 – Dec. 14
Time: 5 - 6 p.m.

Ages 10 - 12
When: Wed., Nov. 11 – Dec. 23
Time: 5 - 6 p.m.
Location: Piney Branch Elementary School Gym
7510 Maple Avenue
Fee: TP resident $25
Non-resident $30
No class on Nov. 11 and 25.

Flag Football Fun
Ages 8 – 10
Hey parents, remember when you were young and had fun playing football in the yard with your friends? Now your children can enjoy the same fun with the Takoma Park Recreation Department. Don't just watch football, get involved and play football! This program is a great way to stay healthy through exercise. Instruction will be given by qualified recreation staff. Maximum 20, minimum six. Four weeks. Registration is required.

When: Wed., Oct. 7 – 28
Where: Ed Wilhelm Field
(behind Piney Branch Elementary)
Time: 3:45 – 4:45 p.m.
Fee: TP resident Free
Non-resident $10

Flu Shots

Adventist Healthcare will be providing Flu Shots to individuals 18 years of age and older. Flu shots should not be given to those who: have a fever or acute respiratory infection, have an allergy to eggs, are younger than 18 years of age, or have Guillian Barre syndrome. Pregnant women are required to have consent from their physician prior to receiving a flu shot.

When: Fri., Oct. 9
Time: 10 a.m. - 1 p.m.
Location: Azalea Room, TP Comm. Center
Fee: Flu $25, Pneumonia $35.
Cash or check payable to Adventist HealthCare.
Medicare Part B will be accepted as payment.

2009 ELECTIONS

continued from page 3

Secretaria Municipal (para ciudadanos No-Americanos), no tiene que hacer nada adicional.

New This Year: Any City Voter May Apply to Vote by Absentee Ballot

Absentee Ballots. Any Takoma Park resident who is registered to vote may vote by absentee ballot.

Regular Absentee Ballot. Registered voters may request an application for a regular absentee ballot from the City Clerk or download the application from *www.takomaparkmd.gov/clerk/election/2009* . Completed applications must be filed with the Clerk not later than seven days prior to the election (4 p.m., October 28). Upon verification of a voter's eligibility, an absentee ballot will be issued — either by mail or in person. The completed ballot must be received by the Clerk prior to the closing of the polls at 8 p.m. on Election Day.

Late Absentee Ballot. Beginning October 28 and continuing through November 3, voters may apply in person for a late absentee ballot. If the applicant cannot apply and vote in person, he or she may designate in the application a registered voter of the City to act as agent in picking up and delivering the ballot (candidates and their families may not act as agents). The application must be completed and filed with the City Clerk prior to issuance of a ballot to the agent. As with regular absentee voting, a ballot cannot be issued until the voter's eligibility has been established, and the ballot must be returned to the City Clerk prior to the closing of the polls on Election Day.

Special Note Regarding Potential Flu Outbreak. In the event of a pandemic flu outbreak or other emergency, the Board of Elections and City Clerk will make every effort to facilitate voting by absentee ballot. If such an emergency occurs, voters are encouraged to consider voting by absentee ballot. If you are issued an absentee ballot and find that you are able or wish to come to the polls to vote, you may return your absentee ballot to the City Clerk and vote in person by provisional ballot.

Instant Runoff Voting

The City Council amended the City Charter in 2006 to adopt an instant runoff voting system for Takoma Park elections. Voters will have the opportunity to rank candidates by order of choice (1, 2, 3, and so on). The candidate receiving a majority of votes in each race shall be declared elected.

More information on instant runoff voting is available on the City of Takoma Park website: *www.takomaparkmd.gov.*

Scantegrity Verified Voting

This year, the Board of Elections is working with Scantegrity to provide voters the opportunity to verify online that their votes were counted. This system will only be applicable for those who vote in person.

When marking their ballot, voters will receive a confirmation code that they can write down, take home, and check online to make sure their votes were counted. The confirmation number does not say how the voter voted, and the vote remains private. What it does say, however, is that the vote is included in the final tally and that the scanner read the vote correctly. The system is paper-based and works like an optical scan voting system, making it easy to use. The only difference is that when voting, voters will see a confirmation number instead of a completely black mark. Writing down and checking the confirmation number is optional.

More information about Scantegrity can be found at *www.takomaparkmd.gov*

Nuevo Este Año: Cualquier Ciudadano de la Ciudad Puede Votar Mediante Boleta para Votantes Ausentes

Boletas para Votantes Ausente - Cualquier residente de Takoma Park que este registrado para votar puede hacerlo mediante boleta para votantes ausentes.

Boletas Regular para Volantes Ausentes - registrados pueden solicitar una aplicación para una boleta regular para volantes ausentes de la Secretaria Municipal o bajar la aplicación en la página web *www.takomaparkmd.gov/clerk/election/2009.* Aplicaciones completas tienen que estar registradas con la Secretaria Municipal no más tardar de siete días previos a la elección (4 pm., octubre 28). Sobre verificación de la elegibilidad del votante, una boleta de voto ausente será emitida-por correo o en persona. La boleta completada tiene que ser recibida por la Secretaria antes de cierre de urnas a las 8 p.m en el Día de Elección.

Boletas Tardia para Votantes Ausentes. Comensando el 28 de octubre y continuando hasta el 3 de noviembre, votantes podrán aplicar por una boleta tardia para votantes ausentes. Si el votantes no puede aplicar en persona, el o ella podrá designar un persona, registrada como votante en la Ciudada de Takoma Park, como su representante para poder recibir la boleta y entregar la boleta (candidatos y familiares no podrán ser representantes). Despúes de llenar la aplicación, tendra que someter la aplicación a la Oficina de la Secretaria Municipal antes de que se entregue la boleta al representante. Con la boleta regular para votantes ausentes, la boleta no se podrá enviar hasta que se verifique la elegibilidad del votante. La boleta tendrá que ser sometida a la Oficina de la Secretaria Municipal antes que cierre las cabinas electorales el día de la elección

Aviso Especial Sobre el Posible Brote del Flu. En caso de un brote epidemico del flu u otra emergencia, la Junta Electoral de la Ciudad de Takoma Park y la Secretaria Municipal va ser todo lo posible para facilitar votos por medio de boletas para votantes ausentes. En caso de un emergencia, se les aconseja votar por medio de boleta para votantes ausentes. Si recibió una boleta para votantes ausentes y decide votar en persona, usted puede entregar la boleta a la Oficina de la Secretaria Municipal y puede votar en persona por medio de una boleta provisional.

Segunda Vueltas de Elecciones Inmediatas

El Consejo enmendó la Carta de la Ciudad de Takoma Park en el 2006 para adoptar una segunda vuelta de elecciones inmediatas a través de un sistema de votos para las elecciones de Takoma Park. Votantes tendrán la oportunidad de clasificar candidatos por orden de preferencia (1, 2, 3, sucesivamente). El candidato recibiendo la mayoría de votos en cada carrera será declarado elegido.

Para más información sobre segunda vuelta de elecciones inmediatas visite la pagina www.takomaparkmd.gov.

Votos Verificados con Scantegrity

Este año, la Junta Electoral de Takoma Park esta trabajando con la Compañía Scantegrity para proveer a los votantes la oportunidad de verificar por medio del internet que sus votos sean contados. Este sistema será aplicable solo para aquellos que voten en persona.

Al marcar las boletas, los votantes recibirán un código de confirmación que pueden anotar, llevárselos a las casas, y verificar por medio del internet que su voto haya sido contabilizado. El número de confirmación no revela como votó el votante, y el voto se mantiene privado. Sin embargo, lo que si indica, es que el voto está incluido en el conteo final y el escáner leyó el voto correctamente. El sistema es basado en papel y trabaja como un sistema para votar de escáner óptico, haciendo fácil de utilizar. La única diferencia es cuando se está votando, los votantes verán un número de confirmación en vez de una marca negra. Escribiendo y verificando el número de confirmación es opcional.

Para más información sobre la Compañía Scantegrity puede visitar la página www.takomaparkmd.gov.

Halloween Safety Tips

By Catherine Plevy

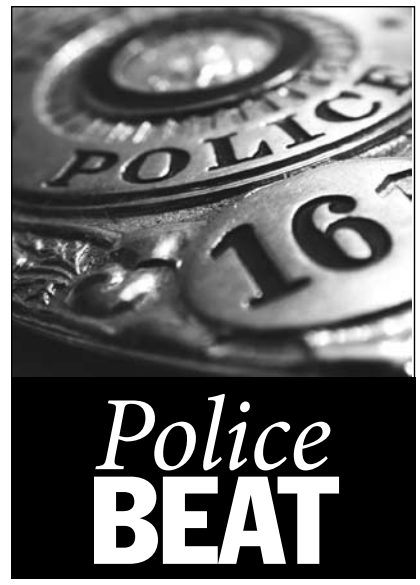
It's that time of year again: time to start thinking about Halloween safety. The following safety tips and little bit of common sense can help you make the most of your Halloween season.

1. Make sure your child's costume is bright and reflective since it will become dark outside during the course of trick or treating. If the costume is not reflective, consider applying reflective tape or stripping. Make sure children's shoes fit well and costumes are short enough to prevent tripping.
2. Be sure your child carries his or her written name, address and phone number, especially for little ones, in case they get separated from you.
3. Review with your child "Stop-Drop-Roll" in case a costume does come in contact with fire.

When trick-or-treating, remind your child(ren):

- By using a flashlight, they can see and be seen by others.
- Stay in a group, walk slowly and communicate where you are going.
- Only trick or treat in well known neighborhoods at homes that have a porch light on.
- Remain on well-lit streets and always use the sidewalk.
- If no sidewalk is available, walk at the farthest edge of the roadway facing traffic.
- Never cut across yards or use alleys.
- Never enter a stranger's home or car for a treat.
- Obey all traffic and pedestrian regulations.
- Always walk. Never run across a street.
- Only cross the street as a group in established crosswalks (as recognized by local custom).
- Remove any mask or item that will limit eyesight before crossing a street, driveway or alley.
- Don't assume the right of way. Motorists may have trouble seeing trick or treaters. Just because one car stops, doesn't mean others will.
- Never consume unwrapped food items or open beverages that may be offered.
- No treats are to be eaten until they are thoroughly checked by an adult at home.
- Law enforcement authorities should be notified immediately of any suspicious or unlawful activity.

Police CompStat System Helps Illuminate Crime



Now that the Police Department has established a popular email and press release system to report recent crimes and dole out safety advice, it's gone a step further to keep the public informed. The new CompStat system, which lays out maps and visuals highlighting crime hot spots and other statistics, has not only helped officers target and solve crimes, but will now provide more information to interested residents as well.

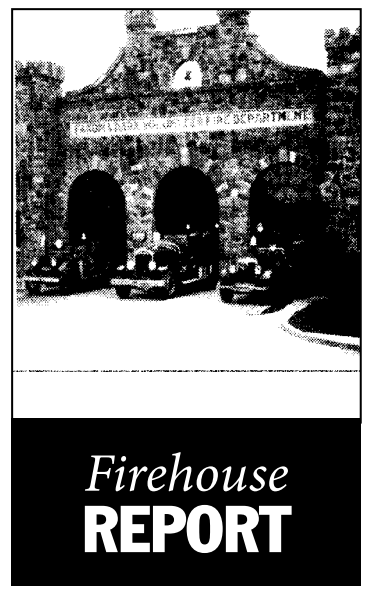
The system is simply corralling existing resources – primarily the crime statistics collected by the police department – and presenting them on a regular basis, and in a way that is clear and easy to interpret. For police officers, monthly, all-staff CompStat meetings supplement meetings of beat officers. For interested residents, a variation of police staff meetings – minus the investigation-sensitive information like names and ages of suspects – will be held for the first time this month. The first CompStat meeting will be held at 7:30 p.m. on Wednesday, September 30, at 7:30 p.m. in the Azalea Room of the Takoma Park Community Center.

The police department began the CompStat program in March 2009, meeting monthly to share information about crime, look for patterns and trends that might illuminate how best to target criminals, and strategize and brainstorm solutions in problem areas. The specific goals of CompStat, developed by the department, are to reduce street robbery, theft from auto, burglary and disorder or quality of life issues (e.g. loitering, fights, alcohol violations) citywide.

The meetings also serve to ensure accountability. If patterns are established – for example, if there are numerous robberies in one particular area – Chief of Police Ronald Ricucci can point to the officers assigned to that beat and hold them responsible for doing everything they can to prevent the crimes from continuing. Opening the meetings up to the public will carry that accountability further, as residents who are affected most by crime in their neighborhoods will have the opportunity to ask questions of the officers in attendance, and to hear specific ways they can protect themselves.

The CompStat system has already proved itself effective, playing a signif-

COMPSTAT
continues on page 12



By Jim Jarboe

Takoma Park VFD members Jim Jarboe and Steve Novik at the Jerry Lewis Labor Day Telethon, to benefit the Muscular Dystrophy Association. This was the 36th year for Jarboe, and the 30th year for Novik. This year, the Metro area received by phone $1,804,153 in telephone pledges. On the national level, it was $,60,481,231.

As of August 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 504 fire-related incidents in 2009. The department handled or assisted with 1,869 rescue or ambulance-related incidents, for a total of 2,373 this year. Totals for 2008 were 484 and 1,925 respectively, for a total of 2,409, representing a decrease of 36 incidents.

Fire Extinguishers Have Limits

A portable fire extinguisher can save lives and property by putting out a small fire or containing it until the fire department arrives. Portable extinguishers are not designed to fight a large or spreading fire. Even against small fires, they are useful only under the right conditions.

- An extinguisher must be large enough for the fire at hand. It must be available and in working order, fully charged.
- The operator must know how to use the extinguisher quickly, without taking time to read directions during an emergency.
- The operator must be reasonably strong to lift and operate the extinguisher.

When To Fight A Fire

Fight a fire only if all the following are true:

- Everyone has left or is leaving the building.
- The fire department is being called (911).
- The fire is small and confined to the immediate areas where it started (wastebasket, cushion, small appliance, etc.).
- You can fight the fire with your back to a safe escape route.
- Your extinguisher is rated for the type of fire you are fighting, and is in good working order.
- You have had training in the use of the extinguisher and are confident that you can operate if effectively.

If you have the slightest doubt about whether or not to fight - **DON'T!**

Instead, get out, closing the door behind you. Don't take chances - be prepared!

New Takoma Park VFD Members

At the August membership meeting, the following were voted into membership - Daniel Riordan and Tiera Curry. All we need from you, is time and a commitment. If you are interested, please contact Membership Chairman Mike Livingston at the fire station, 240-773-8954.

LETTERS *to the Editor*

continued from page 3

blowers — the models commonly used by homeowners and landscape crews.

EPA opted not to impose tighter standards on that class of blowers because it concluded that manufacturers have done as much as they can to reduce their exhaust emissions. EPA did, however, impose tougher "evaporative emission" requirements, which target leaks from the devices.

I got my information by reading the 2008 rule and talking with an EPA regulatory official who oversaw development of the rule. I am happy to share all of this information with Councilmember Victoria.

Lastly, I never said "Lawn equipment accounts for a healthy percentage of ozone *depletion*." I said that gas-powered lawn care equipment contributes significantly to ground-level ozone *pollution*. Ground-level (or tropospheric) ozone is formed when nitrogen oxides (NOx) and Volatile Organic Compounds react with sunlight. Leaf-blowers, lawn mowers, edgers, trimmers and chain saws all emit NOx and VOCs. Ozone is a proven health threat, a fact that our city lawmakers seem unwilling to acknowledge.

Councilmember Victoria says she wants a "national approach." That's wishful thinking. EPA will never ban gas-powered leaf blowers. Only local governments can take that step. Given the ozone pollution in our area, doing so is a practical way to *begin to address* the pollution. Shouldn't we use our local authority instead of relying on a federal agency whose boss can change any time (and sometimes stay for a loooong time — See Bush, George W.)?

Residents who are interested can find a lot of information at http://greenourcity.org.

Sincerely,
Steve Davies
Green Our City
Poplar Avenue

Tangling with Trash Cans

Greetings:

I am writing regarding the difficulty of keeping my garbage can lids, and the garbage and recycling boxes in one piece, and still there after the trash trucks go down our narrow back street, Edinburgh Lane. These trucks have broken part of a neighbor's wall, and have damaged the bushes on my property.

We take our paper trash to one recycling box, and our aluminum, plastic and glass to another box. Both have been run over and damaged on a pick up day. Back in the days of Hechinger's, I managed to find a trash can with the top attached, which I promptly purchased, expecting to have a good trash can for five years, given the warranty. Within about a month a truck had run over the can, causing the top to break off, leaving the bottom barely useable, so this is not a new problem. I've lost at least one of the traditional garbage can covers this summer.

Unless I am the only one with problems, this is an issue that should be addressed by whoever hires the people or who is responsible for the program.

Disappointed in Takoma Park,
Kathleen (Kitty) M. Tucker, Esq.
Kennebec Avenue

Response from Public Works Director Daryl Braithwaite

Edinburgh Lane is indeed a very narrow road. I am sorry to hear about the damage to your trash containers. The Public Works Department does place a high value on training our staff to properly pick up and restore trash and recycling containers during collection. I have not heard of the problem with containers being run over before - although I have certainly heard complaints regarding them not being placed back at the curbside appropriately. We will continue to work with the staff and drivers to assure a high quality of service.

EARNED INCOME

continued from page 4

year? (living in U.S. territories does not qualify you)

3. Do you (and your spouse, if filing jointly) have valid social security numbers?
4. Do you have earned income in 2009 from a job?
5. Based on your family size, was your earned income and adjusted gross income less than IRS limits established for the EIC? (e.g. single with no children=$13,440; single with one child=$35,463 and single with two or more children= $40,295. Married with no children=$18,440; married with one child $40,463 and married with two or more children $45,295)
6. Are you at least 25 years old and under 65?
7. Did you earn investment income of $2,950 or less for the most recent tax year?

Married and filing separately is the one filing status that disqualifies you for the EITC.

For further information about the Earned Income Credit and locations where you can obtain free tax preparation, please call 1-800-492-0618.

CITY ELECTIONS

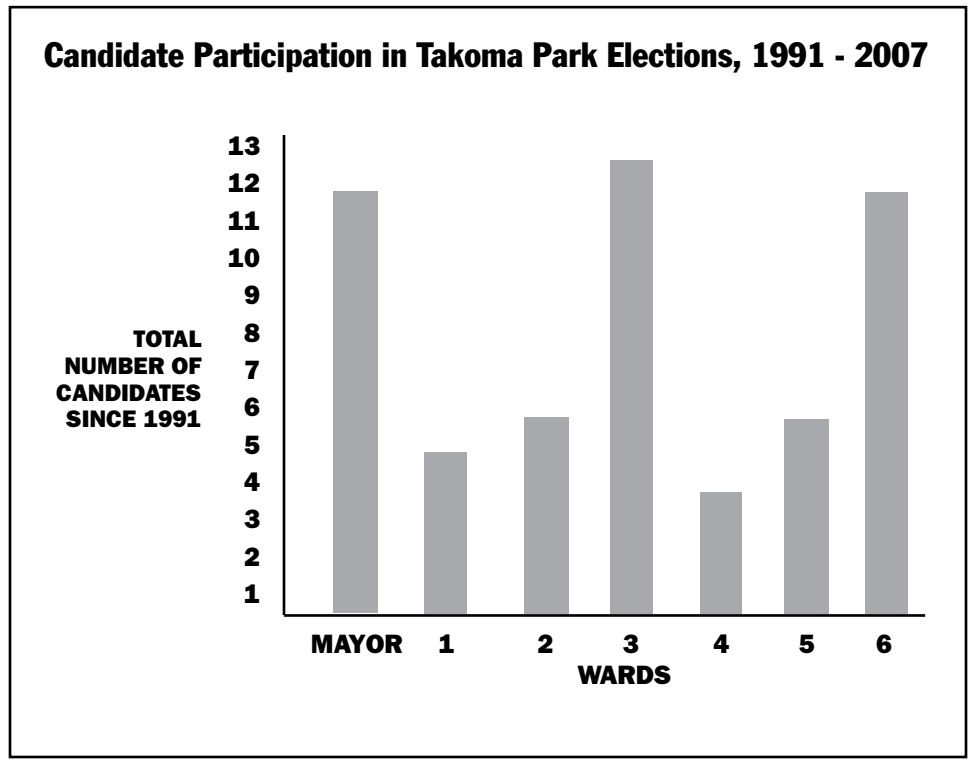
continued from page 1

a fundamental change, like getting rid of the police department or trash service, then there's not much that gets changed."

"I'm sure there's some degree of satisfaction [with current councilmembers]," adds Hank Prensky, who served two terms from 1989-1993. In addition, "There's no controversy or scandal currently going on. People are tremendously preoccupied with trying to get by."

Seth Grimes, who ran for mayor in 2005, also sees general satisfaction with incumbents. "Residents think the city does a good-enough job regardless who serves on the Council," he says. "Folks see that the most pressing issues – schools, transportation, healthcare, immigration policy, etc. – are the purview of county and state officials, whom we can interact with directly, several of whom live right here in Takoma Park." Grimes decided against a run this election because, he says, pressing issues like Community Center construction, police, street-maintenance and city management have improved under current leadership. "There's still a lot I'd like to do – we've gotten nowhere on tax duplication issues and we're still getting into expensive projects without understanding the full cost or having funding in hand – but this year isn't my year."

Bridget Bowers Holmes, another former candidate, blames busy lives for preventing more candidates from coming forward. Holmes ran for the Ward 3 seat in 1997. Although she remains engaged with the Pinecrest Community Association, she is now occupied with full-time work, writing a doctoral dissertation, and focusing on family. "Quite simply, in a world of competing priorities: careers, volunteer activities, family, friends, education, etc., most people find it difficult to dedicate the time and energy to a campaign."



Long-time community member David Eisner recently quipped that Takoma Park could be called "In-a-coma Park." Is it true that residents are asleep at the wheel? Here is a look at activity in past city elections.

Not to mention the work it takes to keep up once in office. According to Prensky, it takes a tremendous amount of time and energy just to sift through the packet of information distributed to each councilmember before weekly meetings; then there are community meetings and other events to attend. "To do it really well is difficult," he says, though he adds that his service on City Council was "one of the best things I did in my life. It ranked up there with being a peace corps volunteer."

City Clerk Jessie Carpenter confirms that the work load is substantial: "It's so much more than sitting here through the meetings," she says. "You have to be willing to make a commitment."

And, residents sometimes find other ways to contribute to the community. Eileen Sobeck, who ran for Ward 2 in 2005, has since become chair of a city committee and a member of the non-profit Historic Takoma. "There's a lot of work to be done. . and everybody can't do everything," she says. Besides, she is satisfied with her councilmember.

Still, a few people are disappointed that there is not more action in the upcoming elections. "I would love to see more diversity on the Council and at least contested races, so that issues are discussed and debated to the fullest extent possible," says Bowers Holmes. "There's definitely less debate than there should be, debate that might change the direction of city governance," says Grimes, who believes discussions about police understaffing, during the 2005 election season, helped spur improvements in the police department. Contested races this year could have prompted more discussion of such issues as the Public Works renovation project, the auditorium renovation and tax duplication, he adds.

Ed Sharp adds that another issue may come up before the next election: redistricting. Though the issue is relatively obscure, he points out a debate that took place in 2000 regarding the census, and possible ward redistricting. A change in ward boundaries could either 1) create a larger concentration of minority residents in one ward, thereby increasing the possibility of there being a minority elected to City Council, or 2) further integrate the wards so that each ward's population had more opportunity to interact across racial lines. With the 2010 Census approaching, the debate could come up again.

Whatever controversy might eventually be raised, a heated race for City Council or Mayor is unlikely – but not impossible – at this point. "I keep saying to everyone that I would very much like to have several names on the ballot," says City Clerk Carpenter. "We have IRV [instant runoff voting], it would just be nice to see a little more action." And she hasn't discounted a race entirely: "I wouldn't be surprised to see at least one other person to run in one of these wards," she says. There is always the possibility of a last-minute write-in campaign. "Anything's possible."

Takoma Park Library CALENDAR

Registration required for some events, as indicated in listing. For a few events, it is encouraged, but not required, as noted. You can register online by going to www.takomapark.info/library/registration.html or by calling 301-891-7259. Events take place in the Library unless otherwise noted.

Neighborhood Circle Time

Every Tuesday
Two times: 10 a.m. OR 11 a.m.

Saturday Circle Time

Saturday, Oct. 3, 10:30 a.m.
Rhymes, fingerplays, songs and a book. Ages infant-5.

Bedtime Stories

Monday, Oct. 5, 7 p.m.
Come in p.j.s, bring your teddy bear or other stuffed favorites as we read some stories and sing some songs and rhymes in this half-hour program. Perfect for babies, toddlers, preschoolers and their grown-ups.

College Bound/The College Selection Process

Tuesday, Oct. 6, 7 p.m.
Dr. Lori Potts Dupre, a certified educational planner, will present an overview of the college selection process for students and their parents. Registration required.

Friends Reading Group

Thursday, Oct. 8, 7:30 p.m., Community Center
Our book is *Rabbit Run* by John Updike. Books available at the Library.
All are welcome.

Banned Books Club

For kids grades 6 and up.
Monday, Oct. 12, 7:30 p.m.
Our book is *Death Note*, by Tsugumi Ohba. Copies are available for check-out, thanks to the Friends of the Takoma Park Maryland Library.
All welcome; registration required.

College Bound/Financial Aid

Tuesday, Oct. 13, 7 p.m.

LIBRARY CALENDAR
continues on page 11

Elephants and Magic: DiCamillo's Books Inspired by Hope

By Karen MacPherson

For the weekly column I write for Scripps Howard News Service, I recently interviewed children's author Kate DiCamillo. Here's the story that resulted:

Several years ago, Kate DiCamillo was waiting for a friend in a lobby of New York City hotel. Suddenly, she had a moment of pure inspiration, as she saw a picture in her mind of a magician and felt his desire to perform some extraordinary magic.

Desperate to capture this image in writing, DiCamillo rummaged in her handbag to pull out her notebook. As she did, she caught sight of another, fancier notebook – a gift for a friend – that she also was carrying in her bag. On the cover of that notebook was an elephant.

Thus was born the newest novel by DiCamillo – *The Magician's Elephant*. In the book's first chapter, a magician tries to conjure a bunch of lilies during a performance at the local opera house in a city called Baltese. Instead, he somehow conjures an elephant, who crashes through the ceiling of the opera house and lands in the lap of a noblewoman, crushing her legs and crippling her for life.

That tragedy, however, sparks a chain of events that will reunite a boy to his long-lost sister, bring new life to a barren couple, and produce happy endings for a number of people who need them. It is the elephant that somehow brings them together, helped by the courage and perseverance of a boy named Peter Augustus Duchene, who refuses to believe his little sister is really dead.

As a fortuneteller tells Peter at the beginning of the book, "Truth is forever changing" and by the end of the book, readers understand how the impossible can become possible, with luck, hard work, faith and yes, a bit of magic.

Once again, DiCamillo – the Newbery Medal-winning author of *The Tale of Despereaux* – has fashioned a compellingly readable story that combines the qualities of a fairy tale with characters whose joys and sorrows will ring true to young readers. DiCamillo's writing is poetic yet spare, while the ethereal, black-and-white drawings by artist Yoko Tanaka add a haunting quality to the text.

In a recent telephone interview, DiCamillo discussed how her moment of inspiration in that New York City hotel – in effect, a bit of magic — led to her latest novel.

"It's always a mystery to me as to how these things happen," she said. "And I wish I could make it happen more frequently!"

If readers think, however, that DiCamillo, 45, took that moment of inspiration and just sat down and wrote her book, they are quite mistaken, she added.

"It took a year and a half of weeping in front of my computer," she said. After writing the initial draft, DiCamillo then had "my usual miserable experience of writing draft after draft after draft. And I had doubt after doubt.

"Yet, for all of that suffering, the story itself had shifted something inside of me…. Even though I was terrified, I was also, in a strange and wonderful way, healed by the telling of this story."

Interestingly, *The Magician's Elephant* continues DiCamillo's tradition of featuring animals in her books, from the dog in her first novel, *Because of Winn-Dixie*, to Mercy Watson, the pig who stars in her popular easy reader series.

"It's become a joke," she says. "So many adults think that writing for children is all about writing about ducks and bunnies. And I do!"

DiCamillo never planned to become a writer for children. Born in Philadelphia, she moved to Florida as a young child. After graduating from the University of Florida, DiCamillo worked in various jobs before deciding, in her twenties, to move to Minneapolis. There, she worked as a "book picker" in a book distribution warehouse and, by chance, was assigned to the floor where children's books were shelved.

"That was a huge turning point," she says now. "I entered into that job with that prejudice that a lot of literate adults have, that children's books are somehow a lesser form of literature, and then I began reading the books."

DiCamillo decided to try writing a children's book herself and wrote *Because of Winn-Dixie*. Candlewick Press purchased the manuscript, and the book went on to win a 2001 Newbery Honor. DiCamillo's place in the world of children's literature was firmly established in 2004, when she won the Newbery Medal for *The Tale of Despereaux*.

Now, she can't imagine doing anything else.

"The thing I love about writing for kids is that you are duty-bound to offer hope. And I also love that books for children allow for magic – either implicit or explicit – in a way that is hard to do in stories for adults… although that's something we need just as much."

LIBRARY *Briefs*

Parents: are you worried about your kid's love of comics?

Wondering whether your kids should be reading "graphic" novels? Concerned about whether these illustrated books will rot their brains? Come to the Library on Monday, Oct. 19 at 7:30 to learn more about this increasingly popular literary genre. Library Assistant Dave Burbank, our resident graphic novel expert, will be our guide, along with Karen MacPherson, the children's/teen librarian. We'll look at the different kinds of graphic novels and discuss how Library folks decide if a graphic novel is appropriate for "all ages," "older readers," or adults. We'll also talk about why graphic novels actually can provide a real workout for your kid's brain, and conclude the program by sharing some favorite graphic novels – both classic and new. Participants will take home a graphic novel booklist. Registration is encouraged for this program. Children ages five and up also are welcome to attend with their parents.

Master storyteller Candace Wolf returns to the Library on Monday, Oct. 26 at 7:30 p.m. to present her annual program of scary stories. Just in time for Halloween, Wolf will tell tales designed to chill her listeners. Parents: this program is appropriate for children ages 5 and up. Thanks to the Friends of the Takoma Park Maryland Library for sponsoring this program. Registration encouraged.

Two popular Library events for kids and parents will return in October. First, we will offer our "Comics Jam" program on Friday, Oct. 23, at 4:30 p.m. Bring a favorite comic or graphic novel and we'll use our ELMO projector – purchased by the Friends of the Library — to share them with the group. We call this our "comic books book club"; just as in a book club, we'll read and discuss our comic books after reading them aloud together. No registration required – just come and prepare to have some reading fun!

Then, on Saturday, Oct. 24, our French Circle Time will take place at 10:30 a.m. Come join Madame Marie in singing songs, doing rhymes and fingerplays and hearing stories – all in French. No registration required; program aimed at children ages infant through 5 and their families. Thanks to the Friends of the Library for sponsoring this program.

To celebrate Teen Read Week, Oct. 18-24, we're asking middle school and high school students to tell us their favorite book right now. During the week, teen readers can write a brief review telling us why a particular book is such a favorite and who else might like to read it. We'll take a picture of each teen holding his/her favorite book and display these photo/reviews in the library. The list of favorite books also will be shared on our Teen Book Buzz Blog. We'll be providing review forms and taking photos after school, Monday, Oct. 19 through Thursday, Oct. 22. Any questions, call Karen MacPherson, children's/teen librarian, at 301-891-7262.

LIBRARY BRIEFS
continues on page 11

LIBRARY BRIEFS

continued from page 10

Guest speaker Rebecca Rainof Mas, professor of 19th and 20th century British literature at Catholic University, will kick off the Friends Reading Group for its first discussion, of George Eliot's *Middlemarch*, on Thursday, October 22. Mas has done research on the history of the novel, religion and literature, and literature and the visual arts. Her publications include articles on Virginia Woolf, and a book in progress on Victorian concepts of purgatory. All are welcome to join us for this introductory discussion of Eliot and a context for *Middlemarch*. The meeting will take place in the Azalea Room of the Community Center at 7:30 p.m. Mas joins us courtesy of the Friends of the Library.

LIBRARY CALENDAR

continued from page 10

Dr. Herm Davis, author of *College Financial Aid for Dummies*, will discuss the basics of college financial aid.
Registration required.

Graphic Novels 101 for Parents and Educators

Monday, Oct. 19, 7:30 p.m.
Come get a primer on this increasingly popular genre. Registration encouraged.

College Bound/ SAT Tips

Tuesday, Oct. 20, 7 p.m.
Dr. Ilhan Cagri, who has designed and taught SAT prep classes, demystifies the dreaded test for students. Registration required.

Animal Dreams

Wednesday, Oct. 21, 7 p.m.
Poets Liz Rees and Roseanne Singer will lead a program of art and poetry focused on animal dreams.
Ages 4 up. Registration required.

Friends Reading Group

Thursday, Oct. 22, 7: 30 p.m., Community Center. Our book is *Middlemarch* by George Elliott. Books are available at the Library. All are welcome.

Comics Jam

Friday, Oct. 23, 4:30 p.m.
Come enjoy our "comic books book club"!

French Circle Time

Saturday, Oct. 24, 10:30 p.m.
Join Madame Marie as she offers songs, rhymes and stories in French.

Scary Stories for Halloween

Monday, Oct. 26, 7:30 p.m.
Storyteller Candace Wolf tells scary stories. Program appropriate for ages 5 up. Registration encouraged.

Friends of the Library Board Meeting

Tuesday, Oct. 27, 7: 45 p.m.

City TV Films from Azalea Room

City TV will start broadcasting live from the Azalea Room in the Community Center while the Auditorium is under construction. Starting with the City Council meetings on September 21 and 28, followed by the Nominating Caucus on September 21 and 29, and the Police CompStat meeting on September 30 (see article page 8), City TV will be giving the new location a workout right from the start. The following weekend, join City TV at the 28th Annual Takoma Park Street Festival on Sunday, October 4, from 10 a.m.-5 p.m. for daylong coverage of all three stages.

The next edition of Takoma Snapshots will feature:

- Folk Festival Highlights
- Green Takoma: Where Does My Recycling Go?
- Rec. Department fall and winter sports
- Community Gardens
- Closet Opera Art Exhibit
- HLC Diabetes Awarness

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

Many City TV programs, including Council meetings and Snapshots, are available for on-demand viewing from the City website. Much of City TV programming is streaming live on the website as well. Be sure to visit City TV's award-winning webpage at www.TakomaParkMD.gov/cable for more information.

All Council meetings and Snapshots episodes are also available for patron check out at the Takoma Park Maryland Library. Dubs of Takoma Park City TV events may be purchased on VHS or DVD. Call 301-891-7118 or send an email to: cabletv@takomagov.org for more information.

CITY TV PROGRAMMING SCHEDULE - October 2009

	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday	Sunday
7:00 AM	Community Bulletin Board	PreSchool Power!	Education TV	PreSchool Power!	Takoma Park Snapshots	National Gallery of Art	Deja vu: Takoma Music Revisited
8:00 AM	Takoma Park Snapshots	Takoma Park Folk Festival	Takoma Park City TV Local Events	Takoma Park Snapshots	Takoma Park Folk Festival	Takoma Park Folk Festival	
9:00 AM	Takoma Park Folk Festival	Takoma Park Snapshots		Coffeehouse			Takoma Park Snapshots
10:00 AM		Coffeehouse	Takoma Park City Council Meeting (Replay)	Takoma Park Folk Festival	Takoma Park City TV Local Events	Takoma Park Snapshots	Coffeehouse
11:00 AM	Takoma Park City TV Local Events	Takoma Park Folk Festival				Road to Recovery	Takoma Park Folk Festival
NOON				Takoma Park City TV Local Events	Takoma Park City Council Meeting (Replay)	Takoma Park City TV Local Events	
1:00 PM	Education TV	Takoma Park City TV Local Events					
2:00 PM	NASA 360		Takoma Park Folk Festival			Media Watch on Hunger	Music da Camera
3:00 PM	Takoma Park Snapshots	Music da Camera		Road to Recovery			Takoma Park City TV Local Events
4:00 PM	Preschool Power	National Gallery of Art	Takoma Park Snapshots	Coffeehouse	Takoma Park Folk Festival	Preschool Power	
5:00 PM	Takoma Park City TV Local Events	Takoma Park Snapshots	NASA 360	Takoma Park City TV Special Events		Education TV	
6:00 PM		Takoma Park Folk Festival	Takoma Park City TV Special Events		Takoma Park Snapshots	Takoma Park Snapshots	National Gallery of Art
7:00 PM				Takoma Park Snapshots	Takoma Jazz Night	Coffeehouse	Takoma Park Snapshots
7:30 PM	Takoma Park City Council Meeting (LIVE)						
8:00 PM		Coffeehouse	Takoma Park 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					
10:00 PM							Coffeehouse
11:00 PM		Takoma Jazz Night		Takoma Park City TV Special Events	Coffeehouse	Takoma Park Folk Festival	Takoma Park City TV Local Events
12:00 Midnight	Takoma Park Snapshots		Takoma Park Snapshots		Deja vu: Takoma Music Revisited		
1:00 AM	Takoma Park Folk Festival		Takoma Park Folk Festival			Deja vu: Takoma Music Revisited	

MAKE A DIFFERENCE
PLANT A TREE
Discount Trees Available to Beautify Yards, Replace the Canopy

The season is right to plant trees, and in Takoma Park that means you could be saving the aging tree canopy in the City. If you're interested in replacing old growth in your yard, or adding to greenery outside your door, you can save through the City's bulk buy tree sale.

Acting as a purchasing agent with Arbor Nursery, the City is making a number of species available at wholesale prices. Residents can purchase sugar maple, sweet gum, black gum, white oak or willow oak — all native shade trees that usually retail for about $400 – for $195, installed. Sale dates run through October 23.

Order Form

Please include check written to City of Takoma Park and be sure to draw a map of the property and locations for installation (see order form). Submit to Todd Bolton, Takoma Park Department of Public Works, 31 Oswego Avenue, Silver Spring, MD, 20910 by close of business October 23. Someone will be in touch regarding installation dates.

Name _____

Address _____

Phone _____

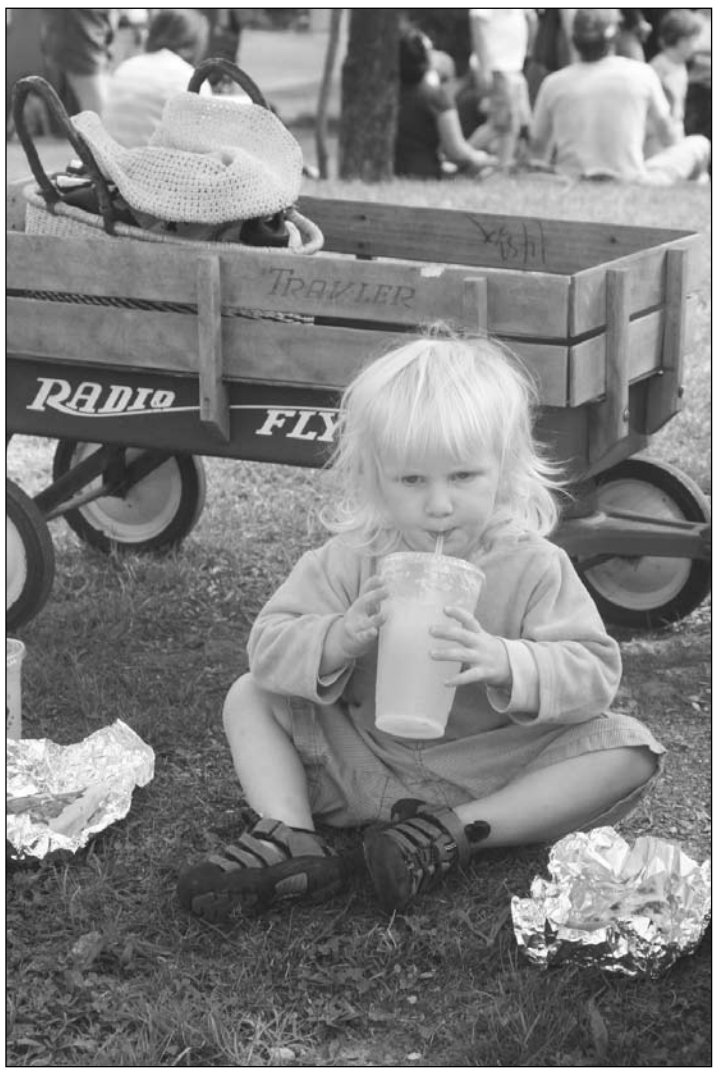
Please attach a map of property/tree installation locations

Species	Price	Quantity	Total
Sugar Maple (2")	195		
Sweet Gum (2")	195		
Black Gum (2")	195		
White Oak (2")	195		
Willow Oak (2")	195		
6 % Sales Tax			

Total amount enclosed _____

For Quick City Service Use My TKPK

Email your questions about city services or find answers on FAQs
www.takomaparkmd.gov/customer_service/index.html



Celebrating Takoma Park Folks

The music may have come from all over the world, but the Takoma Park Folk Festival retained its distinctly local flavor during the September 13 celebration. Clutches of neighbors and visitors lounged together on the grass, playing or listening to music, browsing through paintings and pottery, chatting with political activists at community information tables or gathering in the middle school gym to learn Swedish footwork or contra dancing. You can catch any acts you might have missed on City TV; see page 11 for schedule.

Photos by Lonni Moffet

COMPSTAT

continued from page 8

icant role in the stopping a rash of burglaries in the SOSCA and Long Branch neighborhoods. After CompStat meetings revealed a string of burglaries taking place during the daytime in July, the meetings were increased to once a week, says Kyleen Luy, Takoma Park Police Department crime analyst. "They had a detail that officers signed up for, and it put more bodies out there," she says. One officer, driving through the crime-targeted area along a side street, spotted a suspicious person looking in the windows of homes, wearing gloves and carrying a backpack. The juvenile was stopped and arrested with stolen property from a burglary that had occurred earlier that day. The individual was ultimately linked to a least three other incidents.

The department closed at least four additional burglary cases with an arrest in August as well.

"We're pretty pleased with our CompStat program at this point" says Chief Ricucci. The accountability it requires has helped improve performance, and the public aspect of upcoming meetings should strengthen community partnerships, he says.

"By showing the community what we're doing, we allow them to question us on our techniques and methods and to understand how we go about our jobs on a daily basis" says Ricucci. Though he's heard of only one other city that has adopted a community element to the program, he adds that with residents who are as involved as those in Takoma Park, "If it'll work anywhere, it'll work here."

Fall Leaf Collection Program

Loose leaf collection will be provided by the City from November 16 through December 31. Residents can rake leaves out to the curb at their convenience. Most City streets will not have an assigned collection day. However, every street in the City will receive at least two collections. The goal of the program is to collect leaf piles within two weeks of their appearance at the curb. Leaf collection is dependent on the weather. Rain and freezing conditions can slow collection.

There are five streets that will have assigned and posted collection dates, due to the heavy traffic volume on the streets. Carroll Avenue from the 7000 to 7800 block, Ethan Allen Avenue, and Flower Avenue from the 7900 to 8600 block will have collection on Monday, November 30 and Thursday, December 17. Piney Branch Road and Philadelphia Avenue will have collection on Thursday, December 3 and Monday, December 21. On these dates, only these streets will receive collection.

There are several holidays during the collection period. Veteran's Day will be celebrated on Wednesday, November 11, Thanksgiving holiday is Thursday and Friday, November 26 and 27, and Christmas on Friday, December 25.

For the month of November, the crews will concentrate on picking up large piles of leaves. In December, when the crews are making the last collection on each street, they will thoroughly collect all remaining loose leaves from the gutter and grassy strip.

The Public Works Department welcomes your comments and suggestions about the service we are providing. Please contact Public Works by phone: 301-891-7633. You can also call the leaf collection hotline at 301-891-7626 to notify us when your leaves have been raked out. We plan to collect reported piles from the hotline calls within a week to 10 days of the call.

Please follow these guidelines:

1. Rake leaves into a pile at the edge of the curb. Do Not rake leaves into the street. Leaf piles can create traffic hazards.
2. Do Not park your car in front of a leaf pile and when raking please try to avoid piling leaves where cars are likely to be parked.
3. The vacuum leaf collection is for leaves only. Do Not include branches, brush, rocks or debris. These items can seriously damage equipment and delay collection.
4. Do Not pile leaves near storm drain inlets. Leaves can block the drains and cause flooding problems.

The City also operates the weekly Monday collection for bagged grass, leaves, branches and brush all year long. The Monday collection requires leaves and loose yard materials to be in paper bags, trash cans or stiff-sided containers. Plastic bags cannot be used for yard material because these items are composted and the plastic interferes with the composting process. Branches must be less than four feet long and less than three inches in diameter and tied into small bundles or stacked in a trash can. The Monday yard waste collection is cancelled on weeks with a Monday holiday.

LEAF COLLECTION HIGHLIGHTS

- Collection will occur continuously from November 16 to December 31.
- Residents can rake leaves at their convenience, there is no assigned collection day (except for the five state highways in the City which have assigned collection days).
- Rake leaves just to the curb – not in the street.
- Do not put branches, brush, rocks or other debris in the leaf piles.
- Vacuum leaf collection will end December 31, if weather has not delayed collection.
- Snow and freezing rain can significantly delay collection.
- Leaf Collection Hotline for reporting when your pile is at the curb, 301-891-7626.