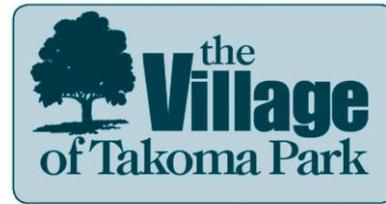


VILLAGE OF TAKOMA PARK NEWSLETTER, # 5, November 2015



What is happening in the Village of Takoma Park?

September and October were very active months for outreach in the life of the Village. We had tables at three community events: the Folk Life Festival (Sept. 20), the Lifelong Takoma Event (October 10) and the rescheduled Street Festival (October 18). The weather was not pleasant on all these outdoor events. Strong winds blew our paper away and it became pretty cold in October. But, the experience was also very encouraging. One needs a certain skill to attract and engage people at those public events, but some new volunteers and some new members did not need to be

engaged. They just came directly to our booth and signed up. That is so great!

We also had a **fundraising event at Mark's Kitchen**. We are very grateful to owner Mark Choi, who donated 15% of his lunch and dinner profits on October 20, and to all who supported us by visiting Mark's Kitchen for lunch or dinner.

We hosted a **Volunteer Recognition** luncheon on Sunday, October 25, to thank the volunteer drivers that supported the Village Rides program (giving 350 rides from Oct. 2014 to Oct. 2015), the volunteers that support the "Seniors and Those Who Care for Them" events, and the volunteers in the "Friendly Visitor Program" who provide company to home bound seniors. Thanks to all.

Rethinking: The late fall will give us time and opportunity to rethink the Village concept and approach. We will meet with our **Advisory Board** to get critical input from them and the **Board** continues to work on establishing committees that will manage the affairs of the Village of Takoma Park.

These are the committees: the Volunteer Recruitment and Management Committee, the Program Committee, Membership Committee, the Finance and Fundraising Committee, the Communication Committee, and the Service Delivery Committee. The Village of Takoma Park currently has more than 100 members. That is a significant growth within one year.

Thoughts about Community and Publicity, by Robert Ginsberg:

1. The Welcome Wagon is an old tradition of neighbors welcoming new residents in the community. About thirty new households come to Takoma Park annually. Their name, address, and phone number can be obtained upon request from the four principal realtors in town. Two representatives of the Village then would call upon the newcomers, offering directories of local services, maps, flyers on such things as leaf collection, senior services, and restaurants, as well as offering a free one-year membership in the Village. Such a visit would make newcomers feel welcome to our community and appreciative of the Village. They increase our membership numbers, and in subsequent years their dues will add to our treasury. Three or four new families have moved into my block on Maple Ave., but I have never met them, do not know their names, and could not recognize them on the street. The newcomers, in turn, might not know the people on the street on which they now live. The Welcome Wagon directed by the Village's Membership Committee would remedy such urban anonymity.

2. The Welcome Table at the weekly Farmers Market from 10 AM to 2 PM on Sunday in Old Town, Takoma Park, is an excellent opportunity for the Village to increase visibility, to greet interested persons, and to distribute flyers, including membership applications. No cost is involved for setting up a folding table just outside the market proper. Residents from all over the city come to this market. By seeing the Welcome Table each week, even if they do not go to the Table, people will gradually recognize the existence of the Village. The Table should have some free take-away items with the Village name, logo, and motto ("Neighbors Helping Neighbors"), such as pencils and pin-on buttons, maybe cookies baked by volunteers. Also sale items, such as t-shirts, baseball caps, pennants, shopping bags.

3. Public Visibility. While the Village is known and appreciated by its insiders (its organizers, volunteers, and members), the expansion of membership should give priority to making the Village widely and frequently visible to outsiders. This can be done by sponsoring a Village float or marching group in the Fourth of July Parade, co-sponsoring the House and Garden Tour, first Sunday in May (with flyers on tables of Village members whose homes are on the tour), staffing a booth on the Folk Festival and the Street Fair, participation in city art exhibits, poetry readings, library talks, walking tours, television interviews. Shops in Takoma Park can be invited to mount posters declaring their support for the Village. Bumper stickers. Stickers on house doors. Let the Village be present everywhere in Takoma Park! The Village can thereby move from its little-known and quiet existence to a major feature of the quality of life of Takoma Park.

4. Funding: These public steps require funding, which may be sought from grants and donations, but the new members attracted to the Village by this increased visibility will bring in more dues to the treasury.

Senior Groups that we sponsor:

POSNA: The village of Takoma Park supports two groups that pursue interests related to senior concerns. One support group is called “Parents of Special Needs Adults” or short POSNA. This group of older parents who have adult children tries to develop a three-pronged program. First they reach out for safety for their children. The goal is a special program, which lets Police and other recognize the needs of these adults. Second, they try to find jobs for these adults that consider their special needs and also give security. And, third, they are seeking therapeutic exercise programs that address their physical well being.

Support group for seniors with motor disabilities: This group tries to bring together seniors and their caregivers with Parkinson’s disease, Multiple Sclerosis, and similar diseases. The effort is that members can learn from each other to manage their daily life. Speakers from Associations are also invited to provide insight.

Both groups are open for new members. Both care givers and patients can join.

The Village of Takoma Park	
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