



Village of Takoma Park Newsletter

January – March 2017

Helping Neighbors Age in Community

Message from the President



Dear members of the Village of Takoma Park and friends,

What do most of us do when we need something outside the home (medicine, dry cleaning, a package at the post office, a photocopy of a document, for example)? We get into the car and drive, or we walk.

What if you have stopped driving or are not able to get around easily? This can be very painful and limiting. For this reason, members of the Village of Takoma Park have suggested that we establish an "Errand Service." We have found volunteers to provide this service. We held an orientation session for 10 of them and are ready to go.

We've also started a "senior stroll" program. On December 15, we posted a request for volunteers to walk with several of our members who want to get fresh air and exercise, but aren't comfortable walking alone. Within 24 hours we had 5 volunteers! You can read more about both services in this edition of the newsletter.

Finally, we're so grateful to the many people – members and non-members alike – who responded to our end-of-year plea for funds. We're pleased to announce we received \$5,105 in donations in 2016. This will help defray the costs of insurance, our website, mailings to those without email, refreshments at events, and more. We regret that for privacy reasons, we're unable to acknowledge each of you here by name, but please know how very much we appreciate your support.

We also want to recognize two craftsmen who donated their professional expertise – Liam Rutan (Liamselectric@gmail.com) and Jim Maguire of Maguire Build (Jim@maguirebuild.com).

It's thanks to all of you and to our wonderful volunteers that we're able to continue to fulfill our mission and help our neighbors "age in community."

- Wolfgang J. Mergner

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WEBSITE NEWS

We've made some changes to our website. The pages formerly listed under "Resources" have been replaced with a single page – **Links and Resources** -- on the home page's main menu. See villageoftakomapark.com/links_and_resources.

This page includes many of the tips and links you've seen in past newsletters -- information on classes, events and programs of potential interest to our members; tips on access to food resources, transportation, delivery services, and much, much more.

We'll be adding more to this page and hope you'll let us know if you have suggestions or corrections. Email villageoftp@gmail.com.

Facts and Figures:

Membership: 193 active members (as of 2/6/17)

Friendly Visitors: 19

VillageRides: 80 riders and 33 volunteer drivers (as of 2/8/17)

1,000 rides as of January 20
(since we started counting in April 2015)

AGING WELL (and other) EVENTS:

NOVEMBER: SCAMS AND FRAUD

On Tuesday, November 29, 30 people gathered for a lively discussion on scams and frauds and how to protect yourself from becoming a victim. Our knowledgeable speakers were Jeannine Robinson-Hurley from the MD Attorney General's Office Department of Consumer Protection and Takoma Park Police Department Senior Crime Analyst Andrea Artero. See page 6 and/or the Links and Resources section of the website (villageoftakomapark.com/links_and_resources), for links to publications describing common scams and suggestions for how to report scams, identity theft, etc.

DECEMBER: SEASONAL CELEBRATION

Thirty-five people gathered to "celebrate the season" -- Winter Solstice, Hanukkah, Christmas, Kwanzaa and the New Year -- on December 27, sharing food and customs from their cultures. (Did you know that in Spain, eating 12 grapes as the clock strikes 12 on December 31 will guarantee a prosperous new year)? The musicians of the group DeJohn led the gathering in a holiday sing-along.

JANUARY: MONEY MANAGEMENT

On January 31, Leah Nichaman, founder and president of Everyday Money Management, presented a wealth of tips for day-to-day management of your paperwork and financial affairs. Ms. Nichaman is a "daily money manager," a member of a profession who work with individuals who need help managing their day-to-day affairs. She specializes in working with seniors and those with mental illness or disability.

She discussed record retention guidelines; provided suggestions for simplifying your life by consolidating accounts and automating bill payment; gave tips on ways to cut down on paperwork, keep track of your financial information, protect your accounts and your identity; and urged everyone to maintain "The List," a detailed outline of all the personal information your heir(s) or some trusted person would need to know if you die or become incapacitated. In addition to creating "The List," make sure the trusted person in your life knows it exists, and knows where to find it! For more details on the presentation, go to Villageoftakomapark.com/Documents, click on **Resources**, and open the document entitled "Getting your financial life in order."

FEBRUARY: "HIDDEN FIGURES" AT AFI/SILVER THEATER

In celebration of Black History month, join us for the February Aging Well event, a screening of the award-winning film "Hidden Figures."

Place: American Film Institute Silver Theater, 8633 Colesville Rd, Silver Spring, MD.

Date/Time: Tuesday, February 28. Arrive by 10:00 am for a start time of 10:30 am.

Advance registration required. Register online at the Village of Takoma Park website's calendar (villageoftakomapark.com/calendar) or contact Kathie Baker: baker.kathie.66@gmail.com or 301-270-8451. This event is open to all, but there is a **charge for admission**. Sign in and pay (**cash only**) for your ticket at the theater. If we have a group of 25 or more, the ticket price will be \$8 (otherwise \$10). The theater has a variety of food and drink for sale.

Transportation options:

Ride-on bus 17 or Metrobus F4 in the direction of Silver Spring

(free with a Senior SmarTrip card or Medicare ID after 9:30 am)

Need a ride? Call 301-646-2109 a week or more in advance (Village of Takoma Park members only).

Those driving have a choice of several municipal parking lots.

From the AFI website:

HIDDEN FIGURES is the incredible untold story of Katherine Johnson (Taraji P. Henson), Dorothy Vaughan (Octavia Spencer) and Mary Jackson (Janelle Monáe)—brilliant African-American women working at NASA, who served as the brains behind one of the greatest operations in history: the launch of astronaut John Glenn into orbit, a stunning achievement that restored the nation's confidence, turned around the Space Race, and galvanized the world. The visionary trio crossed all gender and race lines to inspire generations to dream big.





MARCH: CLARA BARTON – AN AMERICAN LIFE

In celebration of Women’s History Month, join us for an illustrated presentation on Civil War heroine and founder of the American Red Cross Clara Barton. You’ll hear Kevin Patti, a Park Ranger at the Clara Barton National Historic site in Glen Echo, MD, describe how Clara Barton overcame adversity and prejudice against women to become a pioneer of emergency preparedness, natural disaster relief work, and public education, as well as an advocate for the rights of African-Americans and women.

Date/time: Tuesday, March 28, 10 am – 12 noon **Place:** Takoma Park Community Center’s Azalea Room

APRIL: PUTTING YOUR HOME IN ORDER

Professional organizer Candy Speight will offer a presentation entitled “Keeping Order and Beyond.”

Date/time: Tuesday, April 25, from 10 am to 12 noon **Place:** Takoma Park Community Center’s Azalea Room

OTHER EVENTS:

The Takoma Park Recreation Department sponsors many events and services of interest to those 55 and over, and to residents of all ages. So does *We Are Takoma*. To stay up-to-date on the cultural offerings sponsored by *We Are Takoma*, subscribe to their newsletter at takomaparkmd.gov/initiatives/arts-and-humanities/arts-newsletter-sign-up/.

Occasionally we post events of potential interest to members on the Village of Takoma Park website’s calendar, but to see the full array of local offerings, check the relevant websites, read the calendar in the Takoma Park Newsletter, and look for flyers in the Community Center.

“Aging Well” events are held monthly, usually on the last Tuesday of the month from 10 AM to noon.

Look for more details in emails to members and on the Village’s website (villageoftakomapark.com) and Facebook page (facebook.com/villageoftakomapark).

We welcome ideas for topics or potential speakers. Email villageoftp@gmail.com.

The Village is planning a picnic for members in the month of May! We need volunteers to serve on the planning committee. Can you help? If so, please contact sandyeganretired@gmail.com or call 301-646-2109.



VOLUNTEERS / SERVICES:

We’re happy to announce two new services – errands and “senior stroll”!

Errand Service

The Village is now ready to provide “errand service” for members who need something outside the house for which no delivery option exists, and who can’t easily get to the needed destination. For example, you may need to drop off or pick up drycleaning, have a document photocopied, or pick up or mail a package at the post office. If you are a current member of the Village of Takoma Park and interested in the “Errand Service,” call 301-646-2109. We hope to fill all requests within three days, but will respond faster if there is an emergency, such as getting a replacement oxygen valve or picking up medications.

What if there is payment involved? Members will be expected to pay the volunteer messenger by cash or by check at the time a delivery is completed. The volunteer will leave a receipt as proof of payment.

Because we're limiting this new service to errands for which there are no delivery options, we want to help those who can't easily drive or walk to shops and services become more aware of delivery services. See the "Links and Resources" page of the Village of Takoma Park website; the October-December 2016 Village newsletter for a list of grocery delivery services; and later in this newsletter for a list of pharmacies that deliver. Another option is Amazon, which delivers items of all kinds (including non-perishable groceries through Amazon Pantry), and with no shipping and handling charges for those who pay an annual membership fee (\$99) for Amazon Prime.

What if the only delivery options require ordering online and you don't have a computer? We would ask you to see if a family member or friend with online access can order the item for you.

Senior Stroll



In response to a request from a member, we're now prepared to match volunteers with members who want to get fresh air and exercise, but aren't comfortable walking alone. As of January 18, Senior Stroll is up and running (or perhaps we should say "up and walking"), with 6 volunteers paired with three members looking for walking partners. There have been countless articles and studies extolling the benefits of walking for both physical and mental health. This is a win-win venture, as both parties get some extra exercise, along with the pleasure of being in the company of someone else. For more information, if you'd like to volunteer, or would like someone to walk with you, call 301-646-2109.



Our other services: VillageRides, Friendly Visitors/Callers, and Small Home Repairs / In-home help

The Village currently has 19 volunteers trained to provide visits to Takoma Park elders or homebound residents. Our VillageRides service remains our most active, heavily used service, with 80 riders. We have 33 volunteer drivers, but can always use more. And we would welcome more volunteers for the "Small Home Repairs" service that is still in its "pilot project" stage.

For more information, or to sign up as a volunteer for any of our services, please contact the Village of Takoma Park at 301-646-2109 or email Sandy Egan at sandyeganretired@gmail.com. Upcoming volunteer orientations:

Friendly Visitors - February 23rd 9:30 - 10:30 a.m., TP Community Center, Rose Room

Village Rides Drivers - March 6th 7:00 - 9:00 p.m., TP Community Center, Rose Room

SUPPORT GROUPS

The Village of Takoma Park has fostered the development of two support groups and helps to promote them.

The Movement Disorder Support Group was started in response to interest from Takoma Park residents with Parkinson's disease, Multiple Sclerosis, and similar conditions. Members, ideally together with the caregiver, meet once a month, usually at 2 PM on the second Wednesday of the month (with some variations), to exchange information, and hear from guest professionals. For more information, contact wolfgang.mergner@gmail.com or call 301-646-2109.

Parents of Special Needs Adults (POSNA) is a Takoma Park advocacy and support group for parents and other loved ones of adults with developmental and/or chronic psychiatric challenges. The group is especially interested in securing jobs, supportive housing, safety, and recreation for their loved ones. Meetings are the last Thursday of the month at 6:30 PM. For more information, contact Mary Muchui (muchui@aol.com) or call 301-646-2109.

DID YOU KNOW?



Did you know there are pharmacies that deliver prescriptions?

In the Oct-Dec 2016 newsletter, we listed grocery delivery services. Now we bring you a list of local pharmacies that deliver.

Bradley Drugs
6900 Arlington Rd, Bethesda, MD 20814
301-654-6776 or 301-351-5769 – delivery inquiries
Bradleydrugs.com
No charge for delivery to Takoma Park addresses

The Medicine Shoppe Pharmacy of Silver Spring
12838 New Hampshire Ave, Silver Spring, MD 20904-3352
P: (301) 622-0744 F: (301) 625-8514
<http://www.medicineshoppe.com/pharmacy-locations/maryland/silver-spring-new-hampshire-ave/home>
No charge for delivery within 7-mile radius

The Medicine Shoppe Pharmacy of Silver Spring
10313 Georgia Avenue, Silver Spring, MD 20902
P: 301.681.5878 F: 301.681.5962
<http://www.medicineshoppe.com/pharmacy-locations/maryland/silver-spring-georgia-avenue/home>
\$6 delivery fee to Takoma Park

You may have access to a mail order prescription service through your employer, health plan, or Medicare Part D. If not, the following also will fill prescriptions and deliver by mail. Note that delivery could take 5-10 days for standard shipping. Check their websites for more details:

CVS cvs.com

Walgreen's walgreens.com/topic/s/mail-service-pharmacy.jsp

Walmart walmart.com/cp/pharmacy-home-delivery/1042239

Did you know you may qualify for free income tax preparation assistance?



The RSVP/AARP Tax-Aide Program offers free tax preparation assistance for low-to-moderate income Montgomery County taxpayers by trained volunteers. Help is by appointment only. To make an appointment, go to montgomeryserves.org/tax-aid or call 240-777-2577 (Mon-Fri 9:30 am – 3 pm).
Book by March 1 to guarantee availability.

Did you know about the following lifelong learning opportunities?

Georgetown University's Senior Citizen Non-Degree Auditor Program offers adults 65 years and older in the DC area the opportunity to audit undergraduate level courses for \$50, if space is available. For more information, see scs.georgetown.edu/departments/33/senior-citizen-non-degree-auditor-program/home or call Anne Ridder at (202) 687-5706.

Montgomery County Public Libraries offer a wide array of **free** 6-week online courses to residents with a valid library card and access to a computer. Here's a small sampling: Beginning Writer's Workshop; Web Design; Mystery Writing; Start Your Own Edible Garden; Low-Fat Cooking; Meditation; Drawing; Write Your Life Story, and Introduction to Guitar. There are many, many more. See education.gale.com/l-rock21695 for more information. Note that Montgomery College offers the same courses, but for a fee.

See the Village of Takoma Park website's "Links and Resources" page -- Villageoftakomapark.com/links_and_resources -- for a longer list of sources of free or reduced-tuition learning opportunities.

Did you know the National Park Service offers a lifetime pass for anyone 62 or older?

According to AARP, the cost of the Senior Pass (formerly the “golden passport”) is going up sometime in 2017 from \$10 to \$80. It's worth it if you visit one park once or twice in your lifetime. For instructions, information, and application see: store.usgs.gov/pass/senior_pass_application.pdf



Do you know how to protect yourself from scammers?



Older Americans are prime targets for scammers and con artists, losing over 12 billion dollars every year. To learn more about a host of scams and how to protect against them, see *Consumer Guide for Marylanders*, a very informative 35-page booklet from The MD Attorney General's office. It's available online (<http://www.marylandattorneygeneral.gov/CPD Documents/Tips-Publications/ConsumerGuideForMarylanders.pdf>) or request a free copy by calling 410-576-6500 or toll-free 1-888-743-0023.

The *Consumer Guide for Marylanders* and the following tips for reporting or avoiding scams are also posted on the Village website's "Links and Resources" page at villageoftakomapark.com/links_and_resources:

To report scams or find out if something could be a scam, call the MD Attorney General's Consumer Hotline: 410-528-8662 or toll-free 1-888-743-0023.

For identity theft information and assistance, contact MD Attorney General's Identity Theft Unit at 1-410-576-6491.

To stop receiving pre-approved credit card offers, call 1-888-567-8688 or go online to optoutprescreen.com.

To register your phone number on the Do Not Call List, call the FTC at 1-888-382-1222 or go to donotcall.gov.

Report IRS scams to the following:

US Treasury Department 1-800-366-4484
Federal Trade Commission 1-877-FTC-HELP

Some other useful publications:

"A New Breed of Con Artists: Today's scammers are on the phone, at your door and online. Here's how to fend them off" by Joe Kita, *AARP Bulletin*, January/February 2016
aarp.org/money/scams-fraud/info-2015/scams-and-frauds-to-avoid.html

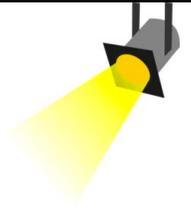
"Top Ten Financial Schemes Targeting Seniors," National Council on Aging,
ncoa.org/economic-security/money-management/scams-security/top-10-scams-targeting-seniors/

And here's a tip from one of our Village members: A spam phone call blocker called Nomorobo will hang up on robot calls after one ring. It is free for landlines. Register at nomorobo.com/.

Do you know of other scam-related resources? Send them our way (email villageoftp@gmail.com) and we'll consider including them on our "Links and Resources" page.

SPOTLIGHT ON THE BOARD:

Meet our two newest board members:



Jacquette Frazier has been a resident of Takoma Park for about 18 years, and finds it reminiscent of Berkeley, where she attended the University of California. She worked in a variety of federal agencies, and retired from the U.S. Department of Agriculture, Civil Rights Division. Her strong commitment to community service includes a special interest in children and the elderly. She envisions programs in which both groups could interact in mutually enjoyable and beneficial ways. In 2013, Jacquette developed the Lunch and Learn program, which provides food and educational experiences over the summer months for Takoma Park area children who might otherwise go hungry. That program, which began with 40 children, continues to grow, serving 196 in Summer

2016. Additional community activities have included serving on the Board of CHEER (Community Health and Empowerment through Education and Research); serving as coordinator of the 2017 Takoma Park Martin Luther King, Jr. Day, Service Day and Evening Celebration; establishing and managing the Educare food distribution site at the Essex House location; and serving in a leadership role for a variety of events for Essex House residents.



Hank Prensky has been in the DC area since 1972--13 years in Mt. Pleasant, DC, and 32 years in Takoma Park, where his son, Sol Prensky, was born and raised. Hank served two terms on the Takoma Park City Council, during which he was a member of TP's official delegation travelling to our Sister City, Santa Marta, Cabanas, El Salvador, to deliver medical relief supplies. He has a broad history of community involvement: Youth Soccer, Basketball, and Baseball coach; The Friends of Takoma Park Library Board Member; Folk Festival main stage Master of Ceremonies (for many years); Nuclear Free Takoma Park committee member; House and Garden Tour sponsor; and assisting with the Washington Adventist University Film Series on Social Justice. Hank is active with Takoma Park Mobilization, a recently formed local political organizing effort, including serving as spokesperson for its Electoral/Constitutional Committee. He is semi-retired from his career as a residential realtor, and is currently working with Get

Money Out-Maryland in the Maryland State Legislature to demand a Constitutional Amendment to overrule Citizens United v FEC (Federal Election Commission). Hank and his wife, Susan Ogden, live along the Sligo Creek.



Say hello to some of our board members and other key contributors to the Village – left to right: Ruth McGoff, Sandy Egan, Pazit Aviv, Martha Feldman, Doris Duarte, Paul Huebner, Gertrud Mergner, Wolfgang Mergner, and Kathie Baker.

HOW TO GET INVOLVED:

JOIN OR RENEW:

Sign up or renew online at our website – villageoftakomapark.com.
Don't have access to a computer? Call 301-646-2109 to request a membership form.
Membership dues are \$10 per year per person.
Pay online at our secure site or mail your check to:
Village of Takoma Park, PO Box 11420, Takoma Park, MD 20912

VOLUNTEER:

Volunteers are essential to the success of the Village.
There are two types of volunteering, both important:

- Direct service to members
- Volunteering to help the organization

In most cases you may serve on a regular or periodic basis, giving as much or as little time as fits your schedule. Anyone age 18 or older is welcome.
Note: Our insurance coverage requires that all volunteers join as members as well.
Let us know if the \$10 annual dues are a hardship.

To volunteer, go to villageoftakomapark.com, **Join** and **Member Signup**.
Or email Sandra Egan at sandyeganretired@gmail.com.

SUPPORT:

Village of Takoma Park is a non-profit, tax-exempt 501 (c) (3) organization.
We rely on grants and donations to supplement income from dues.
All contributions are tax-deductible.

Donate online by credit card at villageoftakomapark.com or send a check payable to Village of Takoma Park, PO Box 11420, Takoma Park, MD 20912.

We greatly appreciate your support.

Mission Statement:

Village of Takoma Park's mission is to provide intergenerational support to seniors and persons with disabilities who wish to live actively in the Takoma Park community by:

- providing assistance, advice and neighborly support;
- facilitating access to needed service providers;
- advocating on behalf of Village members and informing them about relevant issues and policies;
- organizing and managing Village volunteers who provide services and assistance; and
- collaborating with the City of Takoma Park, Montgomery County, and other organizations

Officers

President: Wolfgang Mergner
Vice-President: vacant
Secretary: vacant
Treasurer: Gertrud Mergner

Additional Board Members

Pazit Aviv
Kathie Baker
Marisa Cruz
Doris Duarte
Jacquette Frazier
Andy Kelemen
Joseph Khabbaz
Erwin Mack
Ruth McGoff
Hank Prensky
Laurie Welch

The Advisory Board

Bruce Baker
Seth Grimes
Peter Kovar
Moses Wilds
Deborah Zuckerman

Ex Officio

Paula Lisowski

Committee Chairs

Communications: Linda Carlson
Finance: Hank Prensky
Membership: Wolfgang Mergner
Programs: Kathie Baker
Service Delivery: vacant
Volunteers: Sandra Egan

Newsletter editors

Linda Carlson and Paula Ottinger