



Village of Takoma Park Newsletter

Helping Neighbors Age in Community

Volume 5, no. 2

April - June 2019

Dear members and friends of the Village of Takoma Park,

At its March meeting the Village Board of Directors unanimously elected board members Laurie Welch and Andy Penn to serve as Co-Presidents of the Village; they are stepping into the very big shoes of President and Village founder Wolfgang Mergner.

Laurie has lived in Takoma Park for almost 34 years. For better than half of that she says she probably thought of herself as a New Yorker, having grown up in Manhattan. But now she is 100% proud to live in Maryland, the fantastic state district 20, and of course in Takoma Park. She's a retired physician and still practices with Mobile Medical Care which provides health care to Montgomery County residents without health insurance. Village founder and past President Wolfgang Mergner is a neighbor, and she admired his dedication to the Village and the work of the Village, so about two years ago, when she was retiring, she asked him if she could help. She has been a member of the Board for two years.



Andy is also a long-time Takoma Park resident. He is a recently-retired attorney who spent most of his career advocating for the civil rights of senior citizens and people with disabilities, to help them receive the community services required to avoid being sent unnecessarily to nursing homes and other institutions. Working with the Village provides a great opportunity for Andy to continue in this endeavor.

Laurie and Andy write:

The Village has made great gains over its first several years, largely through the efforts and generosity of community volunteers. We'd like the Village to continue to thrive by developing additional events and services that will bring in even more members and volunteers.

We've met some amazing people through the Village whom we might never have met otherwise. We're looking forward to meeting and working with additional members who can join together across generations and across our various communities within Takoma Park.

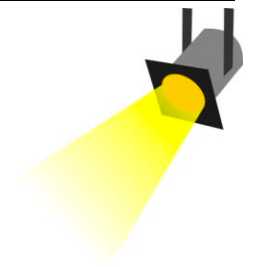


Welcome to new board members Pat Matthews and Bindu Hickson and to our new part-time accountant, Ismenia Peña-Romero. And **heartfelt thanks** to Village member J-Lee Newell, who has for several years been generously donating her time to perform the Village's bookkeeping needs.

Spotlight on the Board:



New board member Pat Matthews is a lifelong Takoma Park resident and with her community spirit carries on the legacy of her father Lee Jordan, a prominent community activist and founder of the Takoma Park Boys & Girls Club. She cares for her 95 year old aunt (the Village of Takoma Park's eldest member), looks after her 3 grandchildren before school, and is active in a range of church and community projects.

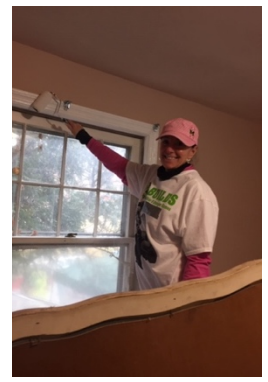
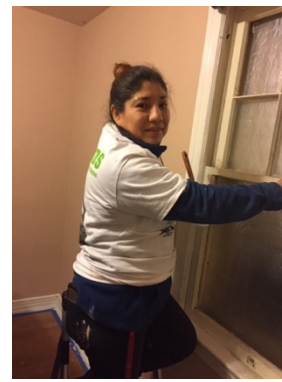
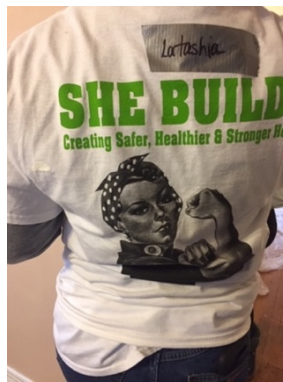


As one who has used and benefited from Village services, Pat looks forward to helping to serve as the "eyes and ears" of other Village members in need of services.

A Village Success Story!

With the help of the Village, a member applied through Lifelong Homes Coalition, a partnership of Rebuilding Together and Habitat for Humanity, for help to declutter her home and to convert one floor to an apartment for herself and one floor to a living space for a caretaker. Thirty-six women, team named "She Builds," accomplished all this in one day!

To apply for services, receive more information regarding eligibility requirements, to volunteer, or to donate, contact **Rebuilding Together Montgomery County** at rebuildingtogethertmc.org/ or call (301) 947-9400.



A benefit for Village members: reduced rate for Washington Consumers' Checkbook






Village of Takoma Park has partnered with **Washington Consumers' Checkbook** to offer Village members a **reduced rate subscription**. Interested members can sign up for a rate of \$18 a year for online and print access (a \$10 savings) by going to www.checkbook.org/TakomaPark or by using the enclosed form if you are receiving a print copy of the newsletter. You can also find the order form on our website. Go to our main menu, click on *About the Village*, then *Documents*, then *Forms*, then *Washington Consumers' Checkbook Order Form*.

Washington Consumers' Checkbook is an independent, nonprofit consumer advocacy organization that has been helping people in the Washington, D.C. metro area make smarter choices for more than 40 years. *Checkbook* surveys consumers and evaluates the quality and prices of local service providers and products, and reports these findings both online and in a magazine printed twice yearly. *Checkbook* also provides comprehensive advice to further help people save time, money, and hassle.

Unlike other ratings organizations, *Checkbook* carries no advertising on its websites nor in its publications, nor accepts any referral fees from the companies and professionals it evaluates, so there can be no question of bias.

AGING WELL: Upcoming Village Events

<p>MAY 30 Thursday 12:00 – 2:00pm</p> <p>TP Community Center: Hydrangea Room</p>	<p>The Exciting World of Travel</p> <p>We all know how much we learn from travel, whether it be our own experiences or those of others. Please join us as Village member and skilled photographer Lewis Morris shares some of his vast knowledge, experiences, and photos with us. He will narrate slideshows of his trips to the Grand Canyon, down the Colorado River, and to Morocco. He will also provide practical information such as how to choose a destination, how and whether to go with a travel group, and how to prepare and pack. Lewis' wife Louise Jung will join him and demonstrate how to pack a carry-on bag that will last for three weeks. Whether you're an armchair traveler or an actual traveler, you will learn and be inspired.</p> <p>Pre-registration required. Contact Kathie Baker at baker.kathie.66@gmail.com or 301-270-8451 to be on the waiting list.</p> 
<p>JUNE 1 Saturday 5:00 – 7:00pm</p> <p>Takoma/Piney Branch Park: 2 Darwin Avenue</p>	<p>Potluck Picnic</p> <p>Please join us for our annual picnic. All members and friends of the Village are invited. Meet some of our new leadership and honor Village founders Wolfgang and Gertrud Mergner.</p>  <p>Please bring a main dish, side dish or dessert to share. We will provide beverages, paper plates, napkins, cutlery, and glasses. If you no longer bake or cook, come anyway! We'll have plenty of food. This event will take place rain or shine. The picnic area is sheltered.</p>
<p>JUNE 18 Tuesday 7:00 – 9:00pm</p> <p>TP Community Center: Rose Room</p>	<p>VillageRides Volunteer Orientation</p> <p>Orientation session for those interested in driving Village of Takoma Park senior members to appointments and activities. Please register by calling The Village of Takoma Park at 301-646-2109 or email sandyeganretired@gmail.com.</p> <p>We need more drivers – please help spread the word!!</p> 
<p>JUNE 27 Thursday 12:00 – 2:00pm</p>	<p>Aging Well Event: Maintaining Fitness for Health and Joy</p> <p>More details to come -- watch our website and emails.</p> <p>Note: This event will take place at the Seventh Day Adventist Church Center at 6810 Eastern Avenue NW, DC. Parking and entrance at rear of building.</p>
<p>JULY 25 Thursday 12:00 – 2:00pm</p>	<p>Aging Well Event: Senior Independence and Home Care</p> <p>Lylie Fisher of Montgomery County Aging and Disability Services will discuss home care services available through both county and private agencies in Montgomery County; available caregiver support including education, support groups, respite, transportation, and adult day programs; how to navigate finding home care; and the role of the Adult Protective Services program and when and how to contact them. Village member Cathy Surace, retired attorney for Disability Rights Maryland, will briefly discuss the role of Medicaid and Medicare.</p> <p>Note: This event will take place at the Seventh Day Adventist Church Center at 6810 Eastern Avenue NW, DC. Parking and entrance at rear of building.</p>
<p>Questions? Need a Ride?</p>	<p>Call 301-646-2109, email villageoftp@gmail.com, or visit villageoftakomapark.com/calendar. Call 301-646-2109 a week in advance (Village members only). Aging Well events are free (unless noted) and open to all. Refreshments are provided.</p>

FOLLOW-UP: Past Aging Well Events

FEBRUARY: history of school segregation in Montgomery County

We partnered with Historic Takoma to host a presentation on the history of school segregation in Montgomery County. Ralph Buglass, a Montgomery County native and avid history buff, spoke. The presence of several Takoma Park residents who shared memories of attending the city's all-black two room schoolhouse on Geneva Avenue enhanced the event.



MARCH: reducing health care costs

Rafael Espinoza of the State Health Insurance Assistance Program spoke on ways to reduce health care costs, with a special focus on prescriptions.

APRIL: enjoying nature

The Village of Takoma Park offered an opportunity to revel in the beauty of nature at Brookside Gardens in Wheaton. Thanks to the City of TP Recreation Department for providing transportation.



COMMUNITY EVENTS



City of Takoma Park's 6th Annual Adult Play: Come dance and sing to Granny and the Boys, one of the hottest local bands; play some games; and have fun! This is a **FREE** event for **ages 21 and over**. Food and beverages will be available to purchase.

When: Saturday, June 15, 2019, 7 - 10pm

Where: Takoma Park VFW Hall, 4th & Orchard, Takoma Park

Ongoing Events

FOREVER YOUNG: The Takoma Park Recreation Department publishes *Forever Young*, a newsletter describing a host of programs for residents age 55+. Many of these (especially trips and special events) are NOT listed in the Recreation Department guide which the City mails to all residents. You can find the newsletter at the Community Center and online at takomaparkmd.gov/news/forever-young-newsletter/.

WE ARE TAKOMA: The City's *We Are Takoma* series offers free art shows, lectures, films, theater, poetry readings, and other performances. Go to takomaparkmd.gov/initiatives/arts-and-humanities/ for details and to sign up for their e-newsletter.

TAKOMA PARK INTERGENERATIONAL STRATEGY GAME CLUB is a free program for all ages. Join fellow strategy game enthusiasts every Tuesday for board game night! Guests of all ages are welcome to pit their skills against one another and have fun! Don't know how to play something? We'll teach you! Have a game you want to play? Bring it! We hope to see you there. For more information, contact John at 301-270-0648, hagoluk2@gmail.com.

When: Tuesdays, 7:00 – 9:00pm **Where:** Victory Tower, 7051 Carroll Avenue, Takoma Park





FRIENDS OF THE TAKOMA PARK MARYLAND LIBRARY sponsor two book groups. Village members who are interested but who cannot easily get to meetings can request a ride (as always, a week in advance) by calling 301-646-2109.

The Takoma Park Big Book Club, which meets during the fall and in the spring, is dedicated to reading and discussing books that are among the greatest ever written. For each selection, the group generally meets several times to do full justice to the text. Recent selections include the Book of Genesis, Charles Dickens' *Our Mutual Friend*, Goethe's *Faust*, and George Eliot's *Daniel Deronda*. The Spring 2019 selection was *One Hundred Years of Solitude* by Gabriel Garcia Marquez.

The Friends Book Group selections are diverse, covering a wide range of genres, time periods, and places. The Group meets for a lively hour-and-a-half discussion every other month.

Visit ftpml.org/upcoming-events/ for information on upcoming book group meetings and other Friends of the Library events. To be put on the email list, send a message to pschewe@umd.edu.

KUDOS to VillageRides and its Drivers!

The Jewish Council for the Aging reports that

- the number of rides the Village provided increased from 262 in the 4th quarter of 2018 to 291 rides in the 1st quarter of 2019, an 11% increase!
- the percentage of requests unfulfilled due to no driver decreased from 1.98% in 4th quarter of 2018 to 0.83% in 1st quarter of 2019.

An outstanding completion rate from the Village of Takoma Park drivers!

And the JCA just sent us results of a survey of riders and drivers. Here are a few comments from drivers:

- The system and the people who run it are excellent.
- It always works smoothly for me. Sandy is a gem.
- I think it is just about perfect as is. Sandy is awesome.

Here are a few comments from riders:

- Now I don't have to worry about how to get to my appointments; it's such a relief.
- It has helped me to have a measure of independence.
- I can now go to doctor's appts, grocery store and church without having to take 2 or 3 busses for my arrival. Also, you begin to have friendships with your frequent drivers. For me, when I'm riding with drivers, I'm riding with a friend even though I know "It's The Village of Takoma Park Program." It's the best thing that happened for me because I'm getting older and I don't walk as fast as I used to. All I can say is "what a blessing!"
- I am able to attend church services every Sunday. Attending church service on Sundays is very important to me.

Errand Service: If you have stopped driving, can no longer get around easily, and need something that you (or a friend or family member) are unable to order online or from a delivery service, we can help if you are a Village member. You may, for example, need to pick up a prescription, a package from the post office, or dry cleaning. Call 301-646-2109 and let us know what you need. We will try to fill requests within three days, sooner if there's an emergency. Note that for insurance reasons, errands are done by volunteers alone; not in a car with the member requesting the errand.

Friendly Visitors/Callers: Village volunteers provide visits to Takoma Park elders who cannot get out as much as they might like as well as offer phone calls several times a week. If you would like to receive calls or to volunteer to make friendly visits or phone calls, please contact the Village of Takoma Park at 301-646-2109 or email Sandy Egan at sandyeganretired@gmail.com. To sign up to receive a "friendly visitor," call EveryMind at 301-424-0656 ext. 507 to be matched with a Village of Takoma Park volunteer. Village membership is not required for those receiving visits. *Please share this information with anyone you know who might welcome the visits. We have visitors ready and waiting to be matched!*

Senior Stroll: How easy is it for you to go out for a walk? Some people are concerned about tripping, falling, or getting lost. The Village of Takoma Park has a senior stroll program which matches a volunteer or two with a senior who wants to go for a walk once or twice a week. Each volunteer is a member of the Village of Takoma Park and has had a criminal background check. If you are interested in this program or know someone who might be, please contact sandyeganretired@gmail.com or call 301-646-2109.

Small Home Repairs/Tasks: The Village of Takoma Park has a team of volunteers ready to do small home repairs and tasks around the house for members who have no other access to help for minor repairs or chores (moving furniture, replacing high light bulbs, etc.). If you are a Village member in need of help, call 301-646-2109. Volunteers will contact you to arrange an evaluation of the job and determine if it can be done by the small home repair team. When a Village team is unable to perform a repair or a task, the homeowner or apartment resident who meets certain income requirements will receive an application form that goes to Rebuilding Together Montgomery County, a non-profit organization that works with community volunteers to provide free home repair and accessibility modification to help low income homeowners live safely and independently in their homes. These repairs may include minor plumbing and electrical work; roofing, floor, and ceiling repair; interior and exterior painting; installation of grab bars; and building of ramps.

VillageRides: VillageRides remains our most active, heavily-used service. **We can always use more drivers!** To learn more, to volunteer, and/or to register for or request a ride, call 301-646-2109.

SUPPORT GROUPS: The Village of Takoma Park fostered the development of the following support groups and continues to promote them, though they are independent of the Village.



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 every other month to exchange information and hear from guest professionals on recent advances. For more information, contact Lewis Morris at IamLewmo@gmail.com or 301-367-8383, or Larry Ravitz at Larry@Ravitz.com or 301-332-3622.

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 1st Thursday of the month at 7:00 pm at the Takoma Park Community Center. For more information, contact Mary Muchui at 240-582-6199 or muchui@aol.com.

INTEREST GROUP

WALKING GROUP: Please join us! No need to register in advance – just show up in your walking shoes. Scheduled walks are posted on our website: villageoftakomapark.com/calendar.

WHEN: First and third Wednesday of every month, at 10:30 AM

WHERE: Meet at the TP Community Center inside the Maple Ave. entrance, for a walk on Sligo Creek.

LENGTH OF WALK: 1 hour, approximately **PACE:** To be determined by walkers present

LEADER: Susan Rogers, 202-243-9230 or GJPgroup@yahoo.com (please call or email; do not text.).

NOTE: We need a walking group leader for July and August. Please contact Susan if you can help.

CANCELLATION POLICY: Walks will be cancelled in case of inclement weather. Watch the Village website's [calendar](http://villageoftakomapark.com/calendar). If in doubt, contact Susan Rogers.



If you would like to help form another interest group, please contact us at

villageoftp@gmail.com or 301-646-2109.



of Village of Takoma Park membership, even if you don't need any services

- **Support your neighbors.** Give a ride! You don't need to commit to a specific schedule, the sign-up is easy, and you meet wonderful folks in the community you might never otherwise meet.
- **Get a discount** on a *Washington Consumers' Checkbook* subscription, with more discounts to come.
- **Hear about many great events and resources** in Takoma Park and Montgomery County through our email news, quarterly newsletter, and website.
- **Help create new groups or events** -- a language conversation group, a chess club, a movie-going club. Anything you've wanted to do and just need some new friends to get it off the ground! The Village can help coordinate such events with outreach, sign-up options, reminders, and more.
- **Help sustain the organization** so it will be there when you do need a ride, home repair, or more.

Dues are only \$25/year; visit our website to join or to renew your membership.

villageoftakomapark.com/



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 \$25 per year per member. Please contact us if this is a hardship. 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.
The two types of volunteering are:

- 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.

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

SUPPORT

Village of Takoma Park is an all-volunteer, 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/donation or send a check payable to Village of Takoma Park to Village of Takoma Park, PO Box 11420, Takoma Park, MD 20912.

We greatly appreciate your support.

BOARD MEMBERS:

Mary Akers
Kathie Baker
Bindu Hickson
Pat Matthews
Andy Penn, Co-President
Susan Rogers
Lois Weinberg, Treasurer
Laurie Welch, Co-President

ADVISORY BOARD:

Bruce Baker
Ken Flemmer
Seth Grimes
Peter Kovar
John Urciolo
Moses Wilds

EX OFFICIO:

Paula Lisowski

COMMITTEE CHAIRS:

Communications: Linda Carlson
Finance: Lois Weinberg
Membership: Wolfgang Mergner,
Past President
Programs: Kathie Baker
Small Home Repairs: Lewis Morris
Volunteers: Sandra Egan

NEWSLETTER EDITORS:

Linda Carlson and Maria Tokic'

Contributors:

Margo Stevens

STAFF:

Part-time Program Coordinator
Bernadette Badio
Part-time Accountant
Ismenia Peña-Romero

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.