



Village of Takoma Park Newsletter

Helping Neighbors Age in Community

Volume 4, no. 4

October - December 2018

Message from the President



I want to tell about two of our many volunteers.

One I first met at a City event, amidst many tables for interest groups, shows on the stage, and a festive crowd. I was struck by the strength of his enthusiasm and his passion for helping those who needed a helping hand. The idea of the Village of Takoma Park's "small home repair" service was born - an entrance door that got stuck, burned-out ceiling lights that made it hazardous to walk in the house, a water spout dripping. He has a lot of experience as former supervisor of Christmas in August and knows how to approach a job with all the precaution that prevents a pro from making serious mistakes.

Another stopped me on the sidewalk to share her experience as a friendly visitor. She said, "I have to tell you, I have so much fun as a friendly visitor! The woman I am visiting is super. First we sit down and talk. Then she pulls out the cards and we play, laugh, and play some more. In the beginning, it was very difficult. She would not answer her phone; she was so depressed. But then we discovered the cards and it's been so much fun ever since."

Our volunteers, both those who provide services to members and those who provide administrative support, are the backbone of our success. Still, we now find ourselves at a crossroads, as the Village's provision of high quality services and programs has expanded beyond the capacity of a core group of committed volunteers. Our Board of Directors has agreed that the time has come to recruit a part-time staff person, and has formed a search committee. Please look for our ad (still to come) on our website and share it with anyone you know who may be a good candidate.

We also hope you'll consider a tax-deductible donation to support our efforts. If you haven't already received a letter or email from us, you soon will. Any amount helps! You can 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.

With many thanks,

Wolfgang Mergner



to new Board members **Andy Penn**, **Mary Akers**, and **Susan Rogers**. Look for profiles of Andy and Mary on page 6 and for Susan in the next newsletter.

We're so grateful to the **Jewish Council for the Aging (JCA)** for their ongoing support and generosity. In addition to supporting the software used for VillageRides, they recently provided funding for our new refrigerator magnets and for paper, envelopes, and labels for mailings. Thank you, JCA!



UPCOMING AGING WELL EVENTS:

<p>NOVEMBER 30 Friday 12:00 – 2:00 pm <i>(rescheduled from October 25)</i></p>	<p>Emergency Preparedness for Seniors</p> <p>Speakers: Wolfgang Mergner, President, Village of Takoma Park Claudine Schweber, Sr. Co-Chair, TP Emergency Preparedness Committee</p> <p>Where: Takoma Park Community Center, 7500 Maple Ave., Azalea Room</p> <p>Join us to gain knowledge about how to be better prepared for and safely manage two types of emergencies. Wolfgang Mergner will address personal emergencies related to falls, illness, food, and finances. Claudine Schweber will discuss emergencies in the community, including natural disasters, power outages, sheltering in place, and evacuations.</p> <p>This event is free and open to all; no pre-registration is required. Refreshments will be provided.</p> 
<p>DECEMBER 27 Thursday 12:00 – 2:00 pm</p>	<p>Exchanging Memories of Holidays Past</p> <p>Where: Takoma Park Community Center, 7500 Maple Ave., Azalea Room</p> <p>Join us for an informal gathering in celebration of the December holidays and the new year. Please try to bring a photo of yourself as a child, taken at holiday time. Tell a holiday story from your tradition or bring a written story to read aloud. Festive Foods provided, however donated holiday foods will be welcomed. Enjoy live music from the musical duo DeJohn.</p>
<p>Questions? Call 301-646-2109, email villageoftp@gmail.com, or visit villageoftakomapark.com/calendar. Need a Ride? Call 301-646-2109 For more information, visit villageoftakomapark.com.</p>	

FOLLOW UP: Past AGING WELL Events

<p>AUGUST 30</p>	<p>Living Well – Eating Well: Good Nutrition for Older Persons</p> <p>Nutrition and Wellness consultant and dietitian Shirley Blakely shared recommendations for healthful eating, including: choosing foods from all five food groups (fruit, vegetables, protein, grain and dairy), eating fruit whole (limiting juice intake to 6 oz. a day), eating at least three vegetables a day, and limiting meat consumption. She stressed the importance of eating simply, eating a variety of foods, and avoiding overeating, especially when eating in restaurants.</p>
<p>SEPTEMBER 27</p>	 <p>Medicare: What You Need to Know for 2019</p> <p>Rafael Espinoza, Director of SHIP (State Health Insurance Assistance Program) provided attendees with an abundance of handouts and a review of Medicare options in preparation of the open enrollment period (Oct. 15 to Dec. 7). If you missed the session and need advice, contact Medicare’s free counseling service in Maryland at 301-255-4250 or SHIP@AccessJCA.org. Or call 1-800-Medicare. If your annual income is less than \$36,180 (for an individual) or \$48,720 (for a couple), you may qualify for reimbursements or reduced rates.</p>
<p>OCTOBER 25</p>	<p>Fourteen people enjoyed a Potluck lunch as well making new acquaintances.</p>

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.

County Council Cable News has produced a 23-minute video on aging-in-place villages in Montgomery County. Watch it at <https://youtu.be/6McKeWkpek0> and look for shots of some of our members.



CHECKOUT

THE FOLLOWING RESOURCES

AGING-IN-PLACE SERVICES VIA HABITAT FOR HUMANITY



Habitat for Humanity Metro Maryland offers **Aging-in-Place services** for income-qualified individuals in Montgomery and Prince George's Counties.

Services may include the following based on availability:

- help with functional limitations
- fall prevention and recovery strategies
- assistive devices to improve mobility such as raised toilet seats and seats for showers
- structural adaptations such as grab bars and securing cords and rugs
- minor home repairs such as fixing holes in floors, tightening handrails on stairways, and improved lighting

To be eligible, one must:

- be at least 65 years old
- reside for at least one year in a home covered by current homeowners policy
- have difficulty performing at least one activity of daily living (dressing, bathing) or difficulty with instrumental activities of daily living (e.g., housework, meal preparation, taking medicine as prescribed)
- be income-qualified (income for individual participant cannot exceed \$41,050 per year)

Click here or go to <https://tinyurl.com/HHMM-Aging-in-Place> for more information, including how to apply.

FREE AUDIOBOOKS, E-BOOKS, MUSIC, MOVIES, AND TV SERIES



Did you know that if you have a Takoma Park MD Library card or a Montgomery County Public Library card, you have access to an enormous collection of audiobooks, e-books, music, TV, and movies for free? To access these sites online, you'll need to choose the library name from a menu of participating libraries/institutions and enter your library card number. Library staff will be happy to help if needed.

The Takoma Park MD Library

Hoopla (hoopladigital.com) offers movies, music, TV (including Great Courses, programs on Acorn TV and more), e-books, and about 20,000 audiobooks. Most of the titles are not listed in the Library's online catalog, so browsing or searching the Hoopla site is the best way to see what's available.

AudioBookCloud allows you to stream audiobooks right to your browser. The collection is relatively small, about 1,400 titles, but very select.

Freading is a large collection of e-books.

Montgomery County Public Library

Kanopy (www.kanopy.com) allows streaming of over 30,000 films of all kinds – independent films, classics, international, documentaries, and more. You can watch the films on your computer, iPad, etc. Or, if you have a “smart TV”, a Roku device, or other streaming device, you can download the Kanopy app and watch on your TV.

Maryland Digital Elibrary Consortium includes 20,000 e-books, 10,000 audiobooks, and over 200 magazines.

Both libraries offer

RBdigital – audiobooks



Braille and audio service for the visually impaired

<p>Library of Congress's National Library for the Blind or Physically Handicapped</p>	<p>a free Braille and talking book library service for people with temporary or permanent low vision, blindness, or a physical disability that prevents them from reading or holding the printed page. They offer books in Braille or audio, instantly downloadable, or mailed to your door for free. They will provide (free) an easy-to-use listening device as well. Call 1-888-NLS-READ (1-888-657-7323) or see https://www.loc.gov/nls/.</p>
<p>Metropolitan Washington Ear</p>	<p>a service that enables those with low vision to hear the newspaper (Washington Post and others) and some magazines read aloud, using a touch-tone telephone. The service is free and available 24/7. For more information, email information@washear.org or call 301-681-6636. They also welcome volunteer readers.</p>

DIFFERENCE MAKERS Help with Yardwork



photo by Bryan Goehring

If you've received help via the Village of Takoma Park with outdoor tasks such as leaf-raking, you may have the Difference Makers, a youth program based in Takoma Park Middle School, to thank.

The group, which operates under the dedicated supervision of adult Bryan Goehring, started in 2009 and now has about 160 student members, generally from 10 to 14 years old.

Difference Makers engage in a broad range of community and charitable activities, including food and clothing drives, community cleanups, and raising money for good causes like Special Olympics.

Probably one of the biggest positive results Difference Makers achieves is building character, caring, and a sense of community among its young members. In addition, work with Difference Makers meets the schools' requirement that students do community service, which helps assure that there are many volunteers.

Village of Takoma Park has partnered with Difference Makers to receive help for its members with leaf-raking, lawn-mowing, and other light outdoor tasks on scheduled Community Service Days. The Difference Makers also participate in a program run by the City of Takoma Park called Snow Angels (available to any Takoma Park senior), in which young people clear snow from driveways and sidewalks. If you're interested in Snow Angels, contact Paula Lisowski of the City's Recreation Department at 301-891-7280. However, you should know that the program has a waiting list.

For more information, see www.difference-makers.org. And if you'd like to help these Good Samaritans achieve their goals, you may want to visit their Winter Crafts Show, Saturday, Dec. 15, 10 am to 4 pm at Piney Branch Middle School, 7611 Piney Branch Road, Takoma Park.

SEWING CRAFTS PROGRAM at The Franklin Apts. Needs Donations & Volunteers



Senior volunteers Sue Bracey and Alice Sims, both board members of the TP non-profit organization Art for the People, are leading an arts project at The Franklin Apartments which teaches sewing and other needlework crafts to the residents. The program is free. They currently have only 3 sewing machines and would welcome donations of working machines so they can include more participants. The project also welcomes donations of fabric, yarn, thread, notions, machine accessories and other art-related materials. Sue says that "the projects we do are driven by what is donated. When someone gives us yarn, we knit and crochet; when we get fabric, we sew."

In addition to needing equipment and supplies, Sue and Alice are happy to have volunteers who can help teach skills and work one-on-one with participants. A volunteer who could help with cleaning and small repairs of sewing machines would be especially appreciated. At present Art for the People must pay for those services. The classes meet on many Fridays at one o'clock but email Alice beforehand to be sure there is a meeting. The Franklin Apartments are located at 7620 Maple Avenue on the corner of Ritchie Avenue. For information on donations or volunteering, contact Alice Sims at alicesims@aol.com. or call Art for the People 301-891-3616 and leave a message.

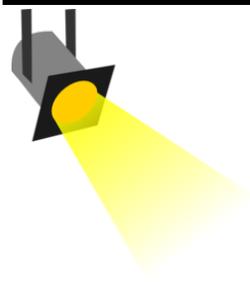
Pictured are Sewing Crafts Program participants Anita at a sewing machine and Viola trying on a new outfit which is the first she has made.



SPOTLIGHT on the Board



Andrew Penn is a recently retired attorney who specialized in the civil rights of senior citizens and people with disabilities. During his 40-year career at non-profit law centers, the Justice Department and elsewhere, he focused primarily on ensuring that his clients received the community services they needed to avoid being unnecessarily institutionalized in nursing homes, psychiatric hospitals, and other long term care facilities. Andy holds a BA from the University of Pennsylvania and a JD from the University of California at Berkeley.



Mary Akers has been a resident of Takoma Park since 1993, when she completed her Peace Corps service, first as a volunteer in the Dominican Republic, then as a trainer for the first group of volunteers in Ukraine. Mary also worked with Peace Corps Headquarters to develop outreach to trainers, directors, and volunteers in the field. As an independent contractor, she worked for several international agencies, including the World Bank, InterAmerican Development Bank, and Booz Allen Hamilton, for whom she developed management procedures, projects, proposals, and publicity. Having grown up as a daughter of a Foreign Service Officer for the Department of Agriculture, Mary was an active member of Global Nomads International, an organization for children who grew up outside their home country. This gave her a perspective of people from different cultures. Mary used this as one of the initial trainees for the Conflict Resolution Center of Montgomery County, for whom she then volunteered as a mediator, fundraiser, and communication advisor. She also volunteered to mediate for Sharing Neutral, an interagency mediation program for federal agencies. She did outreach and proposal writing for Project Helping Individual Prostitutes Survive (Project HIPS). Mary recently retired from her job as Management Analyst for the Department of Health and Human Services' Administration for Children and Families, and is now adjusting to her retirement by volunteering for the Village of Takoma Park and Meals on Wheels.



Congratulations

to Lifelong Homes Coalition, a group helping older adults age in place by providing home repairs, accessibility modifications, and supportive services. On November 13, they received an award from the National

Association of Counties for Leveraging Community Resources! Village of Takoma Park is proud to be one of their partners, along with Habitat for Humanity Metro MD, Silver Spring Village, Montgomery College, Montgomery County Health and Human Services, and Rebuilding Together Montgomery County.

It's always gratifying to receive words of appreciation from Village of Takoma Park members! One of them wrote,

"Thanks...for a wonderful program. It has certainly made my life so much easier."



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.

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 member of the Village. 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 all requests within three days, sooner if there's an emergency.

Friendly Visitors/Callers: Village volunteers provide visits to Takoma Park elders who can't get out as much as they might like, and we offer phone calls several times a week as well. If you would like to receive calls, or if you'd like 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 and connect to ext. 507 to speak to the Director of the Friendly Visitor program. EveryMind will match you 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!***

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.

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.

SUPPORT GROUPS: The Village of Takoma Park has fostered the development of the following 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 every other month, usually from 1:00 to 2:30 pm on a weekday, to exchange information and hear from guest professionals on recent advances. The next meeting is Wednesday, December 19, at 1:30 pm. 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 fourth Thursday of the month at 6:30 pm. For more information, contact Mary Muchui at 240-582-6199 or muchui@aol.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.

Officers

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Vice-President: vacant

Secretary: Laurie Welch

Treasurer: Lois Weinberg

Additional Board Members

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Kathie Baker

Doris Duarte

Jacquette Frazier

Ruth McGoff

Andy Penn

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Peter Kovar

John Urciolo

Moses Wilds

Ex Officio

Paula Lisowski

Committee Chairs

Communications: Linda Carlson

Finance: Lois Weinberg

Membership: Wolfgang Mergner

Programs: Kathie Baker

Volunteers: Sandra Egan

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Linda Carlson and Maria Tokic'

Contributors:

Bob Guldin

Margo Stevens

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.