



# Village of Takoma Park Newsletter

## *Helping Neighbors Age in Community*

Volume 5, no. 1

January – March 2019

### The Village: It is a-Changin’

The times really are a-changin’ at the Village of Takoma Park. Two noteworthy developments are signs of the Village’s longevity and growth. One change is bittersweet and the other very exciting. The Village Board, recognizing that change can be challenging and that there likely will be a period of adjustment for all of us, is available to support Village members and volunteers as we move forward together. Stay tuned for an announcement about new leadership.

**The first major change** is the conclusion of Wolfgang Mergner’s term on the Board of Directors. Many of you have met Wolfgang, who has served as the President of the Board since the Village was established in 2014, but even if you haven’t, you probably know that he, along with his wife Gertrud, has been the moving force behind the Village’s creation and evolution. He also chairs the Membership & Outreach Committee and has been actively involved in seeking grants and other financial support; planning programs; reaching out to members; and representing the Village before the County, the City, other Villages, the business community, and so many other groups. In fact, Wolfgang’s fingerprints can be found on almost everything the Village has accomplished. His shoes will be hard to fill. We know that he will remain active in the Village and that we will continue to draw on his expertise and institutional memory.



**The second change** also illustrates how much the Village has grown and will help fill some of the gaps created by Wolfgang’s absence from the Board. We are very excited to announce that the Village has hired Bernadette Badio as Program Coordinator, our first paid staff position. In addition to working 20 hours per week for the Village, Bernadette is a consultant at McBrenn Business Associates, where she strives to foster collaborative partnerships to address complex business needs. Bernadette has 20+ years of experience in profit and nonprofit administration, and is committed to developing and implementing best practices, innovative solutions, and results-driven management strategies.

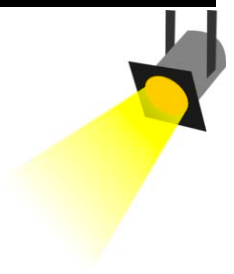
Bernadette previously was the Director of Operations for Grantmakers for Children, Youth and Families (GCYF), a non-profit whose mission is to increase the effectiveness and capacity of grant-makers to improve the well-being of, and opportunities for, children, youth and families. She provided administration, operations, and human resources management, and helped sustain program and membership initiatives.

In her spare time, Bernadette enjoys traveling, spending time with family and friends, reading, and satisfying her super sweet tooth for cheesecake! She looks forward to helping the Village to expand its services and to enhance its ability to provide a valuable resource to members who enjoy its programs, to those who need support and services, and to the volunteers who assist them. We are sure you share our excitement at having Bernadette’s assistance as we continue to grow and expand our programs and services. Please take the opportunity to introduce yourself at an upcoming Village meeting or program.

# The Village Welcomes New Board Member Susan Rogers



Susan Rogers has lived in Takoma Park for the last four years and spent most of her life in the New York/New Jersey area. She is a retiree from the field of international development and enjoys the out-of-doors, singing with the DC Labor Chorus, and engaging in social activism. She is also a hospice volunteer helping those who are nearing the end of life. She cares deeply for all Takoma Park stands for and looks forward to serving on the Village Board. Thanks to Susan for leading our new walking group!



**The Village of Takoma Park Needs New Board Members:** This is a great opportunity to be involved in an organization that makes a difference in the community; to work with good people; to apply skills you may have developed in other parts of your life, or to develop new skills. If you or someone you know might be interested, or to learn more, contact Laurie Welch at [laurawelch123@gmail.com](mailto:laurawelch123@gmail.com) or Susan Rogers at [GJPgroup@yahoo.com](mailto:GJPgroup@yahoo.com).



StriaNews, a “new media platform for the longevity market,” published an article on Villages that features Village of Takoma Park. Read “Can the Village Movement Scale to Support Aging in Place?” at <https://strianews.com/the-village-movement-supports-aging-in-place/>.

## VILLAGE FACTS, FIGURES, and FEEDBACK

As of February 2019		In 2018, the Village of Takoma Park provided	
Members	220	Rides	1015
Village Rides: Riders	112	Friendly Visitor Visits	336
Village Rides: Drivers	52	Senior Stroll Companion Walks	144
		Errands	38
		Small Home Repair	47 hrs delivered by 8 volunteers

**We asked our riders how they feel about VillageRides. Here are some of their comments:**

“Gave me peace of mind knowing I could be at my appointment on time.”

“My driver was so accommodating and friendly that she impacted my mental condition.”

“It has made getting to doctors’ appointments easier and more convenient/comfortable.”

“Because I travel by bus, Metro or walk, I would sometimes not go places because it would take too long to get there, and if you go, coming back you’re exhausted when you reach home. It’s made my life so much easier.”



**And here’s some feedback from some of our drivers:**

“... the program is great. I can’t think of any improvements.”

“I think VillageRides is a remarkable program. I am so glad I am a part of it.”

“I am so impressed by the website and the software you use.”

## AGING WELL: Upcoming Events

<p><b>FEBRUARY 28</b> Thursday 12:00 – 2:15pm</p>	<div data-bbox="386 142 636 394">  </div> <p><b>STILL STANDING: The Relics of School Segregation in Montgomery County*</b></p> <p>Education, denied to slaves, was one of the highest priorities of emancipated African Americans. But in Montgomery County, where slavery existed, public education was not extended to black children until a decade after it was instituted for white children. Even then, the practice of “separate but equal” schools was anything but equal, and no black high school was built until well into the 20th century. A surprising number of these African American schools still exist in the County, including several built through a partnership between Booker T. Washington and philanthropist Julius Rosenwald.</p> <p><b>SPEAKER:</b> <b>Ralph Buglass</b>, a Montgomery County native and avid history buff, speaks frequently to community groups and at national conferences and has taught at lifelong learning institutes associated with Johns Hopkins, American University, and Montgomery College. He is a volunteer with the Montgomery County Historical Society’s Speakers Bureau.</p> <p><b>Where:</b> Takoma Seventh Day Adventist Church Center, Fellowship Hall, 6810 Eastern Ave., Washington, DC. Parking and entrance at the rear of building</p> <p>* This event is presented in partnership with Historic Takoma</p>
<p><b>MARCH 28</b> Thursday 12:00 – 2:00pm</p>	<p><b>Medicare Senior Savings Seminar</b></p> <p>Wondering about how to reduce health care costs in 2019? How to lower out-of-pocket Rx expenses? How to obtain prescriptions not covered by your insurance? Learn about programs and strategies to help you benefit more from Medicare.</p> <div data-bbox="1247 835 1546 987">  </div> <p><b>SPEAKER:</b> Rafael Espinoza, of the State Health Insurance Assistance Program. He has served in the healthcare industry for 28 years, specializing in Medicare and Medicaid and working in both the private and public sectors.</p> <p><b>Where:</b> Takoma Park Community Center, 7500 Maple Ave., Azalea Room</p>
<p><b>Questions?</b> Call 301-646-2109, email <a href="mailto:villageoftp@gmail.com">villageoftp@gmail.com</a>, or visit <a href="http://villageoftakomapark.com/calendar">villageoftakomapark.com/calendar</a>.</p> <p><b>Need a Ride?</b> Call 301-646-2109 a week in advance (Village members only)</p> <p>All Aging Well events are free and open to all, no pre-registration required. Refreshments are provided. For more information, visit <a href="http://villageoftakomapark.com">villageoftakomapark.com</a>.</p>	

## COMMUNITY: Upcoming Events

### Friends of the Takoma Park Maryland Library Annual Meeting

<p><b>MARCH 25</b> Monday 7:30pm</p>	<p><b>Featured speaker:</b> Bob Mondello, NPR senior arts critic</p> <p><b>Where:</b> Takoma Park MD Library, 101 Philadelphia Avenue, Takoma Park</p> <p>Refreshments will be served after the presentation. There also will be a brief FTPML membership meeting to elect the new board of directors.</p>
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<b>MARCH 13</b> Wednesday 2:00 – 3:30pm	<b>Feng Shui: It's Not About The Furniture.</b> <b>Speaker:</b> Robin Buck
<b>APRIL 10</b> Wednesday 2:00 – 3:30pm	<b>Fake News and How to Spot It.</b> <b>Speaker:</b> Thomas Meehan of the Newseum
<b>Where:</b> Silver Spring Civic Building, 1 Veterans Plaza, Silver Spring, MD  <b>RSVP</b> via the Silver Spring Village website calendar ( <a href="http://silverspringvillage.org/calendar">silverspringvillage.org/calendar</a> ), by email to <a href="mailto:programs@silverspringvillage.org">programs@silverspringvillage.org</a> , or by phoning the Silver Spring Village at 301-503-7401. Programs are free, but registration is required. *SPARKLE = Senior Programs Aimed at Re-Kindling Lifetime Engagement	

## COMMUNITY: 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/](http://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/](http://takomaparkmd.gov/initiatives/arts-and-humanities/) for details and to sign up for their e-newsletter.

## FOLLOW-UP: Past Aging Well Events



### NOVEMBER: Emergency Preparedness for Seniors

Our speakers were Wolfgang Mergner, President, Village of Takoma Park, and Claudine Schweber, Sr. Co-Chair, Takoma Park Emergency Preparedness Committee. Attendees received a wealth of potentially life-saving information and safety tips. Did you miss the event? Notes from Wolfgang Mergner's presentation are at <https://tinyurl.com/emergency-prep-VofTP>.

Notes from Claudine Schweber's are at <http://tinyurl.com/emergency-prep-VofTP-2>

### DECEMBER: Exchanging Memories of Holidays Past

A small but festive group gathered for tasty dishes from Takoma Park's Middle Eastern Cuisine as well as donated food items. The musical group DeJohn (Debby and John with their friend Charlie) enhanced the gathering with their live music and leading of a sing-a-long.

### JANUARY: Home sharing

The topic of our January Aging Well event was home sharing for older adults. About 25 people gathered to hear a presentation from Lisa Smith of Silvernest, an organization that promotes and facilitates home sharing as a way to provide added security and help around the house, companionship, extra income (for the homeowner) and/or rent savings (for the renter). For more details, including Takoma Park home sharing regulations, see <https://tinyurl.com/homesharing-VofTP>.





## Check It Out!



**WALKING GROUP:** The Village is excited to announce a new 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](http://Villageoftakomapark.com/calendar).

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

**WHERE:** Meet at the Takoma Park Community Center inside the front entrance on Maple Ave., 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](mailto:GJPgroup@yahoo.com) (please call or email; do not text)

**CANCELLATION POLICY:** Walks will be cancelled when temperatures are below 35 degrees, or in case of inclement weather. Watch the Village website's [calendar](http://Villageoftakomapark.com/calendar). If in doubt, contact Susan Rogers.

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**Long Branch Senior Center:** Did you know the nearby Long Branch Senior Center at 8700 Piney Branch Rd. offers a wealth of classes and programs for seniors? Most are FREE. Classes and programs include beginning Spanish, Better Bones, Tai Chi, Board Games, Yoga in Spanish, Ceramics, Senior Fit Exercise, Zumba Gold, and much more. Visit the Center or call them at 240-777-6975 for questions or more details.

For their newsletter and calendar, see:

<https://www.montgomerycountymd.gov/rec/Resources/Files/seniors/LBNewsletter.pdf>

For information on free curb-to-curb transportation see:

<https://www.montgomerycountymd.gov/rec/activitiesandprograms/Seniors/Transportation.html>

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**Free income tax preparation assistance** by trained volunteers is available through the RSVP/AARP Tax-Aide Program for low-to-moderate income Montgomery County taxpayers. Help is by appointment only. To make an appointment, go to [montgomeryserves.org/tax-aide](http://montgomeryserves.org/tax-aide) or call 240-777-2577 (Mon-Fri 9:30 am – 3:30 pm). **Book by March 1 to guarantee a spot.** Sites include the Takoma Park Community Center (Wednesdays and select Saturdays) and Silver Spring Library (Tuesdays).



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**Property Tax Credit:** If you are over 65 and have lived in the same Montgomery Co. home for at least 40 years or are over 65 and a veteran of the U.S. military, you can get a **20% property tax credit** for each of the next 5 years. If you're a veteran, your house must be assessed at less than \$500,000 to be eligible. If you're not a veteran but have lived in your house over 40 years, the assessed value must be less than \$650,000. For information, [click here](http://www.montgomerycountymd.gov/Finance/bill-42-16.html). Apply by April 1.

<https://www.montgomerycountymd.gov/Finance/bill-42-16.html>



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**The Washington Consumers' Checkbook most recent issue** (Fall 2018/Winter 2019, vol. 19, no.3) has a series of articles on Aging in Place. Take a look:

<https://www.checkbook.org/washington-area/aging-in-place/articles/Resources-and-Help-for-Seniors-7169>



**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. 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](mailto: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](mailto: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.

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**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. For more information, contact Lewis Morris at [lamLewmo@gmail.com](mailto:lamLewmo@gmail.com) or 301-367-8383, or Larry Ravitz at [Larry@Ravitz.com](mailto: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 fourth Thursday of the month at 6:30 pm. For more information, contact Mary Muchui at 240-582-6199 or [muchui@aol.com](mailto:muchui@aol.com).



## JOIN OR RENEW

**Sign up or renew** online at our website – [villageoftakomapark.com](http://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](http://villageoftakomapark.com) and click on **Join** and **Member Signup**, or email Sandra Egan at [sandyeganretired@gmail.com](mailto:sandyeganretired@gmail.com).

## SUPPORT

Village of Takoma Park is a non-profit, tax-exempt 501 (c) (3) organization, run by volunteers and one part-time staff member. 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](http://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:**

**President:** vacant

**Vice-President:** vacant

**Secretary:** Laurie Welch

**Treasurer:** Lois Weinberg

**Past President:** Wolfgang Mergner

### **BOARD MEMBERS:**

Mary Akers

Kathie Baker

Doris Duarte

Jacquette Frazier

Andy Penn

Susan Rogers

Lois Weinberg

Laurie Welch

Deborah Zuckerman

### **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

**Programs:** Kathie Baker

**Volunteers:** Sandra Egan

### **NEWSLETTER EDITORS:**

Linda Carlson and Maria Tokic'

### **Contributors:**

Margo Stevens

Deborah Zuckerman

### **STAFF:**

**Program Coordinator**

Bernadette Badio

## 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.



## to all who supported the Village with financial donations in 2018

Mary Akers  
Anonymous  
Anonymous,  
in gratitude to Movement  
Disorders Group  
Anonymous,  
in memory of Olivia Dworkin  
Anonymous,  
in gratitude to all you do to help  
our community  
Anonymous,  
in thanks to Village of Takoma  
Park  
Anonymous,  
in gratitude to the volunteers who  
make VTP possible.  
Beth Baker  
Katherine Baker  
Judith A. Barr  
Suzanne Berman,  
in memory of Sarah Ferris  
Rose Brown  
Emily Bryan  
Linda Carlson & Larry Himelfarb  
Deborah Chalfie  
Marisa Cruz  
Nancy Currier  
Annie Dais  
Lessie Joyce Daniels,  
in gratitude for a ride to church  
every Sunday  
Bob Davis,  
in recognition of Martha B.  
Feldman  
Jacqueline Davison  
Akele Desta  
Colleen DiPaul,  
in honor of Wolfgang & Gertrud  
Mergner  
D. Doley

Kathleen W. Dorman,  
in recognition of Sandy Egan  
Rachel C.H. Epps & Thomas Epps  
Daphne Fauconier  
Joycie Faison  
Kenneth Flemmer  
Joyce Fuller,  
In gratitude to Kathy Surace,  
Andrew Penn, Margaret  
Stevens, and Dean Riechard  
Truetella Fuller  
Esther Geiger  
Valerie S. Grant,  
in honor of Rose and Leroy  
Brown, Jr.  
Lawrence Gwozdz  
Sainguri Henkai  
Esther and Gene Herman  
Steven J. Hoffman  
Ann Hoffnar,  
in recognition of good work  
Paul Huebner,  
in gratitude to Wolfgang and  
Gertrud Mergner  
Laurie Kelly,  
in honor of Bill Kelly  
Barbara Knox-Seith  
Emily Koechlin  
Linda B. Kolko,  
in honor of Clair Garman &  
Michele Morgan  
Susan J. Levi  
Ronald Levine  
Mr. and Mrs. Jay Levy,  
in memory of Jonah Levy  
Roberta Light,  
in memory of family members  
Katherine Mack  
Rita Marth  
Ruth McGoff  
Gertrud & Wolfgang Mergner

Carol Mermey & Erik Lichtenberg  
Julia Misplon  
Sunni Morgan  
Judy Mounty  
Stanley Namovicz  
Steven & Stephanie Ney  
Menbere Nigatie  
Cherwanda Oliver  
Paula Ottinger  
Andrew Penn & Cathy Surace  
Linda C. Pentz Gunter,  
in honor of George Moore  
Kathy Porter  
Arnetta Ramsey  
Larry C. Ravitz  
Dean Reichard  
Susan Rogers  
Susan Rosenblum  
Andrea G. Savoye  
Nancy C. Schallhorn  
Eula M. Seals  
Joyce Seamens  
Steve Shapiro  
Bob Sheldon  
Elzbieta Sikorska  
Melissa & Peter Smith  
Dolly Sparkman  
Norman Strike,  
in memory of Gwendolyn Ellison  
Strike  
Takoma Park Friends Meeting  
Judy Treible  
Asma Hamarneh Trey  
Mary Tyler  
Victory Tower Senior Association  
Lois N Weinberg  
Ellen Weiss  
Laura Welch  
John Williams  
Deborah M. Zuckerman,  
in memory of Celia Zuckerman