

VILLAGE OF TAKOMA PARK

NEWSLETTER # 3, August 2015



VILLAGE RIDES UPDATES:

Interview with Village Rides volunteer Mr. Clair Garman, by Ms. Trey Johanson, Marketing Director for Village Rides:

Mr. Garman, a longtime Takoma Park resident and good neighbor, grew up in Pennsylvania Dutch country. He embodies the traditional values of helping those in his community and honoring the elderly. After a full professional life that began with service in the Navy, and spanned the fields of teaching and computers, Mr. Garman retired from “working for money.” For the past 13 years, he has instead “worked for love.” In addition to many other acts of service, Mr. Garman is a volunteer driver for the Village of Takoma Park. The Village connects Senior citizens with volunteers who provide rides essential to their health and well-being, as well as with neighborly visits. A few years ago, Mr. Garman began giving occasional rides to a neighbor who needed to visit the doctor for regular eye treatments that disabled him from driving. When Mr. Garman came across the Village volunteer rides program, it just felt natural to him to do this for others, too.

These days, he says he probably gives “the Gift of a Lift” about three times a week. The Village sent him to a free orientation to learn to use a software program that makes it easy to accept rides requests. “What I do is go to the website and compare the rides that are needed with my schedule as displayed in my Google calendar. The rides are mostly half an hour. It’s really easy.” One of the best things about giving rides to his neighbors, says Mr. Garman, is meeting interesting new people. He’s met neighbors from Sierra Leone and small-town South Carolina. He frequently drives a 90-year-old neighbor to the Sligo Senior Center who talks about being a pilot in World War II.

If there’s one thing Mr. Garman hopes potential volunteers will hear about this program, it’s that it really takes so little time. “Mostly, I’m giving rides within Silver Spring, to the doctor or senior center, 15 minutes out and 15 minutes back. And, you’re not bound to any schedule. You only volunteer for the rides you have the time to give.” Garman adds, “You’re helping people who just don’t have the... sometimes it’s finances, but it’s simply age and infirmity that limits what people can do for themselves. Playing around with buses to get where you want to go is just not easy for a senior, not to mention that the scheduling is inexact. They’re spending an enormous amount of time and energy to get where they need to go. And, what about the lady who has a walker? She has to run a marathon to get to a bus stop at the end of her street. It’s simply a good deed. I hope more of my neighbors who can, will volunteer.”

Village Rides Statistics: Since April 1, 2015 drivers from the Village of Takoma Park have completed 155 rides. As of August 12, 2015, there are 24 new ride requests. Typical requests may be for a doctor’s visit, shopping, or going to an adult Daycare center.

Volunteers needed: The Village of Takoma Park needs volunteers to deliver the services that we offer citywide. The 155 rides mentioned above were done by 5 drivers. This small group might burn out without more help! **Want to be a driver? Call 301-646-2109 or 301-255-4212.**

VILLAGE BENEFACTORS:

A \$10 annual membership fee is designed to allow all residents, regardless of financial background, to join the Village. But this means we also depend on other support through donations and grants to pay expenses such as insurance, the operation of the website, a telephone system for call requests, office supplies, and postage for mailings.

Support from local businesses:

The Village of Takoma Park appealed to local businesses to support awards recognizing the volunteers who contribute to the mission of the Village of Takoma Park. We're grateful to the following businesses who have responded:

- Tabletop DC, 6927 Laurel Avenue (crafted earrings)
- House of Musical Traditions, 7010 Westmoreland Ave (gift certificate)
- Capital City Cheesecake, 7071 Carroll Avenue (gift certificate)
- Mark's Kitchen, 7006 Carroll Avenue (gift certificate)

Special thanks to the Takoma Park businesses for their trust and support.

UPCOMING EVENTS:

Seniors and Those Who Care for Them Series:

August 27, 2015, Takoma Park Community Center Azalea Room, 7500 Maple Ave., 10:00 AM to 12:00 Noon: "What to do when older parents and children disagree about living arrangements, or driving"

SPOTLIGHT ON EDUCATION:

The Adventist University (7600 Flower Ave., Takoma Park) offers free tuition for students ages 70+.

It's never too late to learn something new, or earn a degree that will open the door to meaningful and rewarding work or personal fulfillment. For anyone at least 70 years of age, all tuition costs are waived, and there's no limit on the number or the types of courses that may be taken at the School of Graduate and Professional Studies (SGPS). The SGPS offers accelerated courses and degree programs for adults of all ages in the evenings and on Sunday afternoons. For more information, call the SGPS staff at 301-891-4091 during office hours (Mondays - Thursdays, 8:30 a.m. – 6:30 p.m.; Fridays, 8:30 a.m. – 12 noon) or go online to www.wau.edu.

For additional nearby educational institutions offering discounts to seniors, see the "Resources – Beyond Takoma Park" page on the Village of Takoma Park website:

<http://villageoftakomapark.com/resources/beyond-takoma-park/>

VILLAGE GOVERNANCE:

Minutes of Village of Takoma Park Board Meetings are posted at: <http://villageoftakomapark.com>. Click on the "Documents" page.

CONTACT US:

email: villageoftp@gmail.com / **phone:** 301-646-2109 / **web:** <http://villageoftakomapark.com>

Join: <http://villageoftakomapark.com/membership/membership-application/>

Volunteer: <http://villageoftakomapark.com/volunteering/volunteer-application/>

Request a Ride: 301-255-4212

Our goal: Neighbors helping Neighbors