

TOWN NOTES

News from La Plata Town Hall



MAYOR'S CORNER

Since January 2006 I have visited 13 businesses in order to host "Chat with the Mayor" sessions. I am grateful for the hospitality of these business owners who have allowed me to offer these meetings monthly. The date, time and location for each "Chat" are announced in the *On the Agenda* section of the [Maryland Independent](#). This has given the public an opportunity to speak with me regarding issues which are important to them either as a town resident, business owner, or visitor to La Plata. I have enjoyed the chance to meet new people and to discuss their concerns. I still hear people say they want to see La Plata maintain the small town atmosphere by diminishing the amount of development in town. Please be aware that La Plata has a five member council where each member has one vote, including the Mayor. The Mayor does not have any veto power and each member is equal in legislative power. In May 2007, there will be an election for council members in Wards 1 and 2. If you think you have the desire to serve your community and want to help to shape the future of La Plata, please consider running for a council seat. Contact Judy Frazier for more information.

How La Plata Got Its Name

Submitted by Councilman Wayne Winkler

For so many years people have questioned where the name La Plata came from. All roads seem to take us to La Plata, Argentina and the La Plata River that the natives call "river of silver." What you are about to read is an article written in the Times Crescent newspaper dated April 12, 1978 and the column was called Eleanor's Diary. Here goes:

"This all started last summer, the idea of doing an article or two on 'How La Plata Got Its Name.' The thought, I must confess, was not mine but that of a friend, Kathryn 'Kittie' Newcomb, who had just returned from an extensive vacation (driving) through the Ozarks. To her surprise, about midway between Chillicothe and Hannibal (shades of Mark Twain and Tom Sawyer) and heading due north, she arrived at the Town of—Hold on folks—La Plata, Missouri. That's where your mail goes when your friends neglect to make a firm 'D' on MD, and/or forget to use the zip code. Quite a coincidence!

"Well, Kittie said she and her son drove into the town and asked some directions of a gentleman they saw there. When he discovered they were from the only other city in the United States named La Plata, he was very interested and invited them to come as his guests to a Lion's Club Ladies night that evening. They hadn't really intended to stay, but how could they refuse such a warm offer? It was the beginning of a friendship between the two towns.

"La Plata, Missouri, has sent information on the choosing of its name, and it comes from the same source as ours. I'm going to, with Mrs. Newcomb's permission, lift bodily sections from her notes and also an article done by her for the Bicentennial Committee. I could paraphrase, but the story is told so well. Since my friend gave me her permission, I should like to quote verbatim except where some small updating needs to be done (one article was written in 1975).

Continued on page 7

Town Hall Closed

The Town Hall will be closed on the following day in observance of the holiday listed:

President's Day Monday, February 19, 2007

If you have a **water or sewer emergency** after hours, call 301-934-8421 and follow the instructions given to report your emergency. The automated response system will alert the appropriate department to respond to you.

TOWN OF LA PLATA ELECTION 2007

PRIMARY AND GENERAL ELECTION INFORMATION

WARDS I AND II COUNCILMEN—2-YEAR TERMS OF OFFICE

Primary Election

If more than two (2) candidates file for the office of Ward I Councilman or for the office of Ward II Councilman, a Primary Election will be held on Monday, March 19, 2007, at the La Plata Town Hall, 305 Queen Anne Street, La Plata, Maryland, between the hours of 12:00 noon and 8:00 p.m. For each office requiring a Primary Election, only registered voters in the affected ward(s) are eligible to vote, and the two (2) candidates receiving the highest number of votes shall be named and considered as nominees at the general municipal election following.

General Election – Tuesday, May 1, 2007

The Town of La Plata will hold a General Election on Tuesday, May 1, 2007, at the La Plata Town Hall, 305 Queen Anne Street, La Plata, Maryland, between the hours of 12:00 noon and 8:00 p.m. This election will give registered voters in Ward I and Ward II the opportunity to vote for Ward I and Ward II Councilmen to a 2-year term.

Filing Deadline – 4:00 p.m., Monday, March 5, 2007

Certificate of Nomination must be filed at the La Plata Town Hall no later than 4:00 p.m., Monday, March 5, 2007. Certificate of Nomination forms are available at the La Plata Town Hall, Monday through Friday, between 9:00 a.m. and 4:00 p.m.

Eligibility to Vote

Town Charter Sections C-7-1 and C-7-5 provide information for registering to vote with the Board of Supervisors of Elections of Charles County (“the County Board of Elections”) **OR** with the Board of Supervisors of Elections of the Town of La Plata (“the Town Board of Elections”) in the Town’s supplemental system of registration. **If you are already registered to vote with the County Board of Elections, you are eligible to vote in Town elections.** Registering to vote with the Town Board of Elections in the Town’s supplemental system of registration is for Town residents who wish to vote only in Town elections and are not already registered to vote with the County Board of Elections.

If registering to vote with the County Board of Elections:

To vote in the Primary Election, if one must be scheduled (on Monday, March 19, 2007), you must be registered to vote with the County Board of Elections by Monday, February 12, 2007.

To vote in the General Election (on Tuesday, May 1, 2007), you must be registered to vote with the County Board of Elections by Monday, April 2, 2007.

NOTE: A person may register with the County Board of Elections after the February 12, 2007 deadline but may only vote in the General Election scheduled for May 1, 2007.

If registering to vote only with the Town Board of Elections:

To vote in the Primary Election, if one must be scheduled (on Monday, March 19, 2007), you must be registered to vote with the Town Board Elections by February 16, 2007.

To vote in the General Election (on Tuesday, May 1, 2007), you must be registered to vote with the Town Board of Elections by March 30, 2007.

If a Primary Election is required, the Voter Registration Books for the Town Board of Elections will be **closed at 4:00 p.m. on Friday, February 16, 2007.** If only a General Election is scheduled, the Voter Registration Books for the Town Board of Elections will be **closed at 4:00 p.m. on Friday, March 30, 2007, and will not be reopened for new registrations until Monday, May 14, 2007.**

For your convenience, registration forms are placed in the lobby of the La Plata Town Hall and at the Charles County Board of Elections. Registration forms will be mailed to you upon request. For additional information, or if you wish to verify what voter ward you reside in, you may call the Town Hall during normal business hours of 9:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m., Monday through Friday: 301-934-8421.

LA PLATA TOWN SERVICES

Special Trash Pickup

Bulk items are picked up the **first Monday of each month**, or the following Monday if the first one is a holiday. Large amounts of loose material (such as brush) should be bundled or bagged in such a manner that the weight is less than 50 lbs. The Town reserves the right not to pick up items too heavy to safely handle. General construction cleanup and hazardous materials are not eligible. Items must be at curbside by 7:30 a.m. on pickup day. Call Town Hall before pickup day to be placed on the list. Minimum

fee: \$11.00 for 5 minutes loading time; each additional minute is \$1.00. A fee of \$6.00, or the current Landfill disposal fee, shall be charged for each tire collected. *Billing for special trash pickup is included on your quarterly utility bill.*

Yard Waste Pickup

Containers of yard waste **ONLY**—leaves, grass and shrub clippings, brush

or branches—may be put out on your regular trash day for pickup that day **or the next day**. The containers must be marked “Yard Waste.” Brush or branches must be bundled, weigh no more than 50 lbs. per bundle, and the branches may not be larger than 4 inches in diameter or more than 4 feet long. *Plastic bags are not allowed—if you bag yard waste you must use paper bags.*

Trash Collection Schedule Adjustment

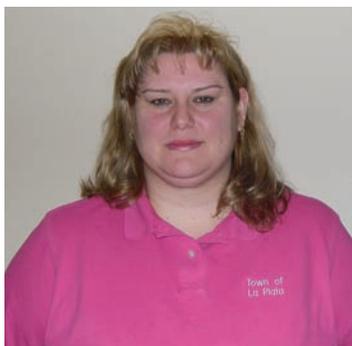
(There are no changes to the trash collection schedule for February and March 2007.)

HOME IMPROVEMENT CONTRACTORS MUST BE PROPERLY LICENSED BY THE STATE OF MARYLAND

Home improvement contractors doing business in the Town must be properly licensed by the State of Maryland Division of Occupational and Professional Licensing/Maryland Home Improvement Commission (MHIC). The MHIC licenses and regulates home improvement contractors, subcontractors and salespersons. Home improvement work includes alteration, remodeling, repair or replacement of a building or part of a building used as a residence. Home improvement also includes work done on individual condominium units. Home improvement does not include work done on apartment buildings that contain four or more single family units or work done on the commonly owned areas of condominiums. The MHIC investigates complaints by homeowners, and prosecutes violators of the home improvement law and regulations. The MHIC has a Guaranty Fund established by assessments to licensed contractors. This fund compensates homeowners for actual losses due to poor workmanship or failure to perform a home improvement contract by licensed contractors.

For more information, including finding license status of home improvement contractors, call the MHIC at 410-230-6409 or 1-888-218-5925, or visit the MHIC's web site at: <http://www.dlir.state.md.us/license/occpof/homeim.html>

MEET THE TOWN STAFF—LORRIE SUTO



Lorrie Suto has worked for the Town of La Plata since November of 2005 as permit clerk/receptionist. Other duties include secretary to the Building Inspector for rental properties and she also acts as a liaison between the Town and Middle Department Inspection agency for building and plumbing permits. Born in Washington, DC and raised in Charles County, Lorrie decided to explore her horizons and moved to Las Vegas, Nevada in 1991, where she graduated from Chaparral High School in 1993. In 1996 a job relocation and family brought her back home to the east coast, where she has worked as an insurance agent, toll collections supervisor, and bank manager before coming to the Town of La Plata. She currently resides in King George County, Virginia with her son Joseph, who is 8 years old. In her spare time she likes to read and spend time with her son.

LA PLATA BUSINESS ASSOCIATION



The Center for Children receives donations qualifying for Community Investment Tax Credits

The Center for Children, the largest mental health facility in Southern Maryland, has recently received \$15,000.00 from the Allegis Group, Inc., and \$500.00 from Mirant, for the Building Blocks for Success program. In turn, both the Allegis Group and Mirant will receive the equivalent of half of their donation in Community Investment Tax Credits.

The Building Blocks for Success program incorporates family support services, parenting skills, mental health counseling, and child abuse prevention and treatment services for the most vulnerable, at-risk families in Charles County, and the program provides an opportunity to match corporate resources to the needs of some of the community's most critical program.

The Community Investment Tax Credit is a program of the Maryland Department of Housing and Community Development which allows a business donating at least \$500 to receive 50% of their donation in State Tax credits. For more information on the Community Investment Tax Credit program contact Ann Seely, Development and Marketing Coordinator, at 301-609-9887 ext 129.

United Way of Charles County's annual Golf Tournament

United Way of Charles County's annual Golf Tournament at Swan Point Yacht and Country Club will take place on Wednesday, April 18. There will be two tournaments back-to-back. The morning tournament will end with lunch and awards; the afternoon tournament will end with dinner and awards. Sponsorship opportunities are available. For more information, call 301-609-4844, or e-mail vburchuwcc@comcast.net.

PRIDE IN PLACE DESIGN AWARD



On December 20, 2006, local architect Ron Litten was presented with a plaque commemorating a second place win in the 2006 Maryland Downtown Development Association's Pride in Place design contest. The award was given for La Plata's entry in the "White Elephant" category of the contest for The Carrico Building. This contest category was judged on successful rehabilitation or redevelopment of existing buildings. Mr. Litten served as the consulting architect and provided construction management and oversight on the post-tornado renovation of the building. During the presentation, Design Review Board Coordinator Carol Rollins expressed the appreciation of the Board for his work on this specific project, for his years of service to the Town as a member of the Design Review Board and other committees, and for his on-going contribution to excellence in architectural design in the Town of La Plata.

AND A GOOD TIME WAS HAD BY ALL...



Anthony Crooks, 7 weeks old, enjoying a visit with Santa.

Spirits were high when Santa came to the Town Hall for breakfast on December 9. The Town sponsored the annual Breakfast with Santa, which hosted over 100 children to donuts and juice and a visit with the man himself—Santa Claus.

FEBRUARY 2007

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
				1	2	3
4	5 Special trash pick-up day (Call by 4:00 p.m. Fri., 2/2 to schedule)	6 7:00 p.m., Planning Commission meeting	7 9:00 a.m., Design Review Board meeting 7:30 p.m., Crime Watch Council meeting	8	9	10
11	12 5:00 p.m., Beautification Commission meeting (Rescheduled from 2/19)	13 7:00 p.m., Town Council work session	14 5:00 p.m., Parks and Recreation Commission meeting	15	16	17
18	19 PRESIDENTS' DAY - TOWN HALL CLOSED (No change to trash schedule.)	20 7:00 p.m., Town Council work session	21 9:00 a.m., Design Review Board work session	22	23	24
25	26	27 7:00 p.m., Town Council regular meeting	28			

MARCH 2007

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
				1	2	3
4	5 Special trash pick-up day (Call by 4:00 p.m. Fri., 3/2 to schedule) 4:00 p.m., filing deadline for nominations for Wards I and II Council seats	6 7:00 p.m., Planning Commission meeting	7 9:00 a.m., Design Review Board meeting 7:30 p.m., Crime Watch Council meeting	8	9	10
11	12	13 7:00 p.m., Town Council work session	14 5:00 p.m., Parks and Recreation Commission meeting	15	16	17
18	19 12:00-8:00 p.m., Primary Election IF ONE IS REQUIRED 5:00 p.m., Beautification Commission meeting	20 7:00 p.m., Town Council work session	21 9:00 a.m., Design Review Board work session	22	23	24
25	26	27 7:00 p.m., Town Council regular meeting	28	29	30	31

TOWN OF LA PLATA SNOW POLICY

County Plowed Roads	Town Plowed Roads	State Plowed Roads
Hawthorne Drive east from Route 301 to Washington Avenue St. Mary's Avenue from Route 6 to Route 301 Washington Avenue from Route 301 to Route 6 Radio Station Road	Quailwood Parkway from Hawthorne Drive to Route 6* Hillary Court, Aura Court, May Day Street, Morgan's Ridge Court, Morgan's Ridge Road* *portions or all in County (Town has a joint agreement with the County to plow some streets that are out of town and vice versa.)	Route 301 Route 6 - Charles Street Route 225 - Hawthorne Drive west beginning at Route 301 Route 488

Snow Preparation Procedures

- Snow removal crews will be put into action at the call of the Director or Assistant Director of Public Works.
- Snow removal will begin when 2" of snow has accumulated on roadways.
- Snow removal efforts will be ongoing during the event and will continue until all streets in the Town are cleared.
- It may be necessary to pile snow in front of mailboxes, especially in smaller courts and cul-de-sacs.

Plow Routes

- The Town will normally plow to provide better access to the higher traveled streets first (Primary Roads, Collector Streets and Major residential roads). In addition, the Town has agreed to provide snow removal and salting for treatment of ice accumulation from all roadways, parking areas, vehicle entrances, sidewalks, and bus stop location at the MTA lot located on Washington Avenue.
- Second, secondary streets and municipal buildings are plowed.
- Last, cul-de-sacs and dead-end streets are plowed.

Icy Conditions

- Salt distribution will be determined based on the following criteria and priority:
 - Main Collector Streets
 - Streets with hills
 - Difficult intersections – stop lights and stop signs
 - Major residential roads
- Cul-de-sacs and courts may not receive salt treatment.

Sidewalks

- Town crews are responsible for clearing sidewalks at public facilities, Town Hall and Parks.
- Town of La Plata property owners are responsible for keeping all sidewalks along their property clear and free of snow and ice.

Parking

- Residents are asked not to park vehicles on any street.
- If you must park on the street, park as close to the curb as possible and on one side of the street.

Examples of Street designations

Primary Roads	Collector Streets	Major Residential	Secondary
Agricopia Drive East Patuxent Drive Oriole Lane Shining Willow Way	St. Mary's Avenue Washington Avenue Heritage Green Parkway	Llano Drive Martin Drive Laurelwood Court	Baltimore Street Cecil Street Calvert Street Howard Street

HOW LA PLATA GOT ITS NAME CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

“Colonel Samuel Chapman, whose rank was obtained in the Continental Army, received a grant from the early Colonial Governors of 6,000 acres in the area of La Plata and Port Tobacco. ‘Colonel Sam,’ as he is referred to by the Chapman family, had several children, one of whom, a son, George, contracted tuberculosis. Hoping to improve his health, he took his son to Colorado for this malady. Here he remained for some months but later traveled with him to Central and South America. Records do not show where George died, but ‘Colonel Sam’ returned to his 6,000 acres in Charles County. His two remaining children were John Grant and Jane Etheldra, who married Morgan Harris and lived at Waverly.

“The manor house in which ‘Colonel Sam’ lived was located near the area where the new La Plata High School was built. The house was destroyed by a tornado on November 9, 1926, at which time the existing La Plata public elementary school located on the same property was also destroyed. (This house was occupied by the Della family at the time of its destruction). Thirteen school children were killed in this tragedy, nine of them in the third grade which was taught by Mrs. Ethel Graves Cooksey (Mrs. Fairfax Cooksey, Jr.). Mr. Edward Turner, former Curriculum Coordinator and Instruction Director of Charles County, was also injured in this tornado at the La Plata school site. A bronze plaque commemorates the loss of these children and is located at the front entrance of the present Milton Somers School.

“Colonel Sam” had been quite impressed with the beauty of South America during his travels, particularly with the La Plata River which the natives call ‘river of silver.’ One morning, upon arising at an early hour, he looked down some of the ravines surrounding his property here and they reminded him in appearance of ‘a river of silver’ with the early morning sunrise reflected in the dew upon the many cobwebs spun across the vegetation. He

decided at that moment to name this portion of the property ‘La Plata’ for the beautiful river he so much admired. La Plat was his winter home, while Glen Albin, also destroyed by fire in the 1920’s was the summer residence.

“The property of Colonel Samuel Chapman became divided into four parts in the next generation of the Chapman family. The law of primo geniture gave to John Grant his father’s inheritance and in the next generation it went to HIS four children. John Grant, who received Glen Albin; Andrew Grant, who received Normandy; Marshall Chapman, who inherited Ellenwood and Robert Fergusson, who inherited the La Plata portion.

“Dr. Robert Fergusson Chapman practiced medicine in New York City in the second half of the nineteenth century. Late in the century, Dr. Chapman came back to La Plata to live. He became very much interested in the development of the town that was growing around La Plata Station. When the town was laid out on a plat, he donated all of the land and the right of ways for the streets. He was also the first postmaster of the town. In his will he left the La Plata Farm to his son, if he produced an heir, otherwise the property was to revert back to the heirs of the other three-fourths of the original grant. This did occur and the Chapman family at Glen Albin, Ellenwood and Normandy acquired this land.

“A portion of the La Plata farm was sold by Mr. Henry Chapman, a descendant of Andrew Grant, and whose home was Normandy Farm, to

the Board of Education for the site of the present La Plata High School, which building was completed and opened in September 1964. In 1980 this La Plata High School will be moved to the Radio Station Property and the present building will be renamed the Milton M. Somers Middle School.

“The present Walter Mitchell Elementary School is built on part of the land which was the old La Plata Farm.

“Now you know where the town of La Plata got its name. How romantic it is to live in a place called ‘The River of Silver!’”

Some updates to this story: Several people who were in the tornado of 1926 are still alive, including my mother, beside whose home I, along with my lovely wife Paula, have the pleasure of residing. La Plata High School did move from its Oak Avenue site and that school building was renamed Milton M. Somers Middle School. The County purchased the building on Baltimore Street which was the site of the original La Plata High School and then the Milton M. Somers Middle School when the high school moved to the Oak Avenue site, and it is now the Charles County Government Building. Near the old school on Baltimore Street were the wonderful homes on Washington Avenue of Professor Somers and Professor Wright. These homes were demolished for parking lots. It’s a shame what progress does to history.

TOWN OF LA PLATA OFFICIALS

Mayor: Gene Ambrogio
Council:
Wayne Winkler Ward 1
C. Keith Back Ward 2
Paddy Mudd Ward 3
Vic E. Newman. Ward 4

Acting Town Manager:
Joseph W. Norris
Assistant Town Manager:
Patricia L. Bembe
Assistant Town Manager:
Michelle D. Miner
Town Clerk: Judith T. Frazier

Project Manager: Steven F. Schroeder
Director of Planning and Zoning:
Catherine N. Flerlage
Director of Public Works:
Stephen A. Murphy
Police Chief: Cassin B. Gittings
305 Queen Anne Street,
La Plata, Maryland 20646
Monday-Friday 9:00 a.m.—4:00 p.m.
Telephone: 301-934-8421 / 301-870-3377
La Plata Police Department: 301-934-1500
Email: mminer@townoflaplata.org
Website: www.townoflaplata.org

COUNCIL COLUMN

Councilman Wayne Winkler Ward 1

In May of this year my term as Councilman ends and I will not seek re-election at this time. I have been given the opportunity to meet some wonderful people and made many new friends. If you ever enter into the political arena then you will have some of the most satisfying experiences of a lifetime when you have the opportunity to help people.

One of the projects I had hoped to be able to accomplish was getting a sidewalk on Washington Avenue. My mother was on the Council for approximately 19 years and couldn't get it done and in my tenure I couldn't either. As life would have it, the Mayor and Council have allocated funds, we have probably had more than 3 engineering studies, gotten rights-of-way and yet, for some reason, it can't happen. Hopefully, I will have the opportunity to walk on it in the near future. This sidewalk has been recommended by the Vision Team as well as the Planning Commission, and one of our tasks is to make La Plata have a walking downtown.

I will remain active with the Town of La Plata and want to work with the Business Association to make the Town more business friendly. I recently opened an office in the Town and have hit some of the roadblocks that other businesses have complained about. We can make La Plata more business friendly.

When you have the chance to meet or work with Town Staff you need to thank them for the wonderful job they are doing. They are some of the greatest and hardest working people I have ever known. I will deeply miss them as part of my day to day duties as Councilman.

Thanks for the confidence you had in me and it was a pleasure serving you and your families. May God bless and watch over each and every one of you and also this little Town of La Plata.

Councilman Keith Back Ward 2

There has been a lot written recently in the Maryland Independent about the Town of La Plata's Smoking Ban for restaurants and bars and the proposed amendment that was recently not approved by the Town Council. Much of what has been reported has been slanted towards the opinions of those who are opposed to the ban on secondhand smoke. This is despite the overwhelming response that was received by the Town from citizens who are pleased that this ban was passed and that La Plata's restaurants, bars and other public places are now free of secondhand smoke.

Four out of five of La Plata's elected officials had the leadership courage to vote for the original measure to protect the health of all patrons and employees of restaurants and bars in the Town. The recent amendment to allow smoking in private clubs within the Town was defeated by a 3 to 2 margin. I would just like to set the record straight on why I opposed this change. A member of the Council expressed that I do not respect our veterans and that I wanted to punish the American Legion, and that I was leading a group of "raiders" to defeat this change.

As I said at the November Town Council meeting, the original smoking measure was adopted to protect the employees of the establishments as well as the patrons from the effects of secondhand smoke. If the Council had passed the amendment as proposed by the Mayor, the Council would have eliminated this protection from employees of private clubs that choose to allow smoking in the bar areas of their establishments. I said that I did not think we should remove that protection from these employees and therefore I would vote against this ordinance. It had nothing to do with my support or respect for veterans or veterans' organi-

zations. I have the highest respect for our armed forces and all those who have served our country.

If the American Legion can propose a compromise that protects the rights of both its smoking and non-smoking members and that protects its employees, I am sure that the Town would be receptive to this idea.

On the issue of leading a "band of raiders", the only person I discussed my vote with before the Council meeting was the Mayor (who called me to discuss my opinion on his amendment), and I told him my concerns about protecting the health of employees. Contrary to his statements of being surprised by the vote, the Mayor was well aware before the meeting of the concerns I would bring up and how I would vote. I did not organize a vote to defeat this ordinance. If anyone wishes to know why the other members of the Council voted for or against the amendment, they will have to ask them individually.

And to counter the idea as implied by the newspaper that the majority of the Town of La Plata does not support the Smoking Ban: the next time you eat or drink in one of the Town's restaurants or bars, thank the owner or Manager for the clean, smoke-free environment you and your family can now enjoy.

Councilwoman Paddy Mudd Ward 3

Many people have approached me with thanks for my position on public health and our smoking ban. It looks as if the state legislature will be taking up this issue in this session. We have Commissioner Bob Fuller to thank for starting Charles County on this path – many good wishes to him in his retirement!

La Plata residents have also spoken out and raised questions for and against our

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COUNCIL COLUMN (CONTINUED)

growth. I want to once again remind everyone that the annexations took place in the 80's and 90's for our town to grow to 25,000 residents. This council has taken steps to moderate and control this growth and to set up the infrastructure to support it, but we cannot stop it. I greatly hope to retain the small town feeling that is so special to La Plata. Also, everyone needs to know that we have no control over how a property is used if the proper zoning is in place. Many people have asked, "Why do we need another drug store or Mexican restaurant? How about a book store?" We have voiced our preferences and those that we hear from you—but market research studies prevail. Our Design Review Board must approve the outside design of the building and the signage, but not the type of business within.

Kudos to the La Plata Garden Club and all who helped with the Tornado Memorial Garden. This is a wonderful addition to our town. The dedication will be on April 28th, the 5th anniversary of the tornado and a very special day for La Plata. Plan to come out to join in the remembrance and the festivities of our regrowth on this 5th anniversary.

Councilman Vic E. Newman Ward 4

Wow, another year gone by. It's that time again when the Council will start the Budget Process, and you can be a

part of it. There will be time during the process in which you can get involved about how the Council and Town Staff spend your tax dollars. Please visit your Town website (www.townoflaplata.org) to check for those dates, or e-mail me at laplatacouncil@comcast.net.

As the Town grows there will be additional needs to ensure we have recreation facilities for you in years to come. I have asked that the Council review the Ordinance on how the Town receives funds to build additional parks. The Council now has agreed to change the Ordinance that only called for fees to be paid for single family homes; now the Council will call developers to pay a fee towards each dwelling they build regardless if it is a Single Family, Townhouse, Condominium, etc. This change will guarantee funds for years to come for building new parks.

The Council has proactively increased personnel and equipment of your Police Department. Due to this increase we are striving to put more foot and bicycle officers in and around our business and residential communities. Your Officers are constantly working hard to make La Plata a safe place to live in light of the uncontrolled/developer lead growth coming towards us from Northern Charles County. One such success that your Police Department Officers were instrumental in was the attempted Bank Robbery (BB&T) in early January in which your Officers had a major role

in the apprehension of the subject. On another note, please be very careful at crosswalks. There are still a lot of motorists not stopping when pedestrians are crossing. Your Officers have given several citations and Chief Gittings will continue to monitor the situation. Let's not have a La Plata citizen be one of those violators; we must set an example for all who pass through our Town.

This year we expect more and more retail wanting to build in La Plata. Although we cannot tell a land owner what they can build, you can be assured that the Council, Planning Commission, and the Design Review Board will work together to ensure that developers/land owners adhere to the high standards that we expect here in La Plata.

The new Town of La Plata Water and Sewer Advisory Committee has done a fantastic job thus far. They have started by addressing some of the problems that La Plata has had for years, and are working with developers to ensure that future growth is not a hodge-podge of systems but one system that will intertwine throughout La Plata. I am very proud of the volunteers who have taken on this much needed challenge.

I would also like to thank the Town Staff, Commissions, and Boards for all their hard work this past year and am looking forward to another year of progress for all our families.

COMMUNITY ANNOUNCEMENTS

Spring Craft Fair

The Ladies Auxiliary to the La Plata Volunteer Fire Department, 911 Washington Avenue, will be holding their Spring Craft Fair on **Saturday, March 31, 9:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m.** There will be a variety of crafts, baked goods, and food items for purchase. If you would like more information, please contact Leslie Chaplin at 301-392-9066, or by e-mail at dragongr@msn.com.

Councilman Winkler Receives Platinum Certificate from National League of Cities

More than 300 people joined the Leadership Training Council on December 6 during the Congress of Cities to recognize the National League of Cities (NLC) newest leadership certificate recipients for their dedication to leadership and learning. Councilman Wayne Winkler was one of sixteen local officials recognized for his achievements as he received his Platinum Certificate. Through the Certificate of Achievement in Leadership Program, local elected officials can develop and foster the critical skills necessary for effective leadership, as well as personal development. These skills are developed around 5 core competencies: Cornerstone, Competent Practitioner, Communicator, Collaborator and Catalyst.

Only sixty-one NLC members have attained the Platinum level of achievement since the program's inception in 1999. In order to obtain the Platinum level, the participants must complete a minimum of 67 credits by attending four seminars in each of the five core competency areas, as well as serve in a national leadership role outside of their elected position.

Town Notes is a publication of the Town of La Plata. If you would like to submit a Community Announcement item (subject to Town approval and space availability), please send it by e-mail to jfrazier@townoflaplata.org.

TOWN OF LA PLATA
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P. O. Box 2268
La Plata, Maryland 20646-2268

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