

TOWN NOTES

News from La Plata Town Hall



MAYOR'S CORNER

I trust that everyone had a great Christmas Season and will have a very good new year as we settle into 2010. If we start off with a story, it is a step in the right direction.

On a warm spring day, a young boy was walking along a gravel road in a far western state. Resting on his right shoulder was a fishing rod and in his left hand was a tin can filled with rich brown soil and some of the best night crawlers that could be found in that special place under the family barn. Walking a few paces behind was his best friend; his dog.

The boy turned off the road and onto a path that led to the river. At the river's edge, he kicked off his shoes and socks, baited his hook, and waded into the cold water. Looking around for something to chase, and finding nothing, the dog stretched out on the river bank and watched his young friend. After awhile, the boy began to reel in his first catch of the day, a fair-size Rainbow Trout. Determined to land this fish, the boy ventured further out into the river, stepped on some slippery rocks and ended up sitting on the river bottom. Now totally wet, he raised his fishing pole into the air, displaying his catch for all to see, of course only his dog, and broke into a laugh.

Learning to fish standing up came in time, but truthfully, it never was as much fun as sitting in that cold water

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Christmas Decorations Contest winners

Congratulations to the winners of the 2009 Christmas Decorations Contest, and thank you to all who decorated your homes and businesses.

Traditional Residential

James & Teresa Dugan	623 Clarks Run Road	1st Place
Dallas & Megan Cogle	116 Tall Grass Lane	Honorable Mention
Ralph & Ina Connatser	510 Scarlet Oak Road	Honorable Mention
Carl & Bobbie Baldus	8870 Old Stage Coach Road	Honorable Mention
Jim & Cathy Cox	603 Wicomico Street	Honorable Mention

Whimsical Residential

Debra Washington	309 Oak Avenue	1st Place
Ashley Martin	1024 Glen Oak Court	Honorable Mention
Francis & Chris Lightheart	506 Dogwood Court	Honorable Mention

Commercial

Baldus Real Estate	6700 Crain Highway	1st Place
Apple Spice Junction	6750 Crain Highway, Suite H	Honorable Mention
The Optical Shoppe	403 Charles Street	Honorable Mention
Jonson Fine Jewelry & Home Boutique	113 La Grange Ave.	Honorable Mention
Custom Kitchens	6750 Crain Highway, Suite E	Honorable Mention
Green Turtle	6 St. Mary's Avenue, Suite 104	Honorable Mention
Candy Clark Boutique	305 Centennial Street	Honorable Mention
Martin's	309 Charles Street	Honorable Mention
Hour Glass	6 St. Mary's Avenue, Suite 100B	Honorable Mention
Lawrence Abell & Associates Ltd	314 E Charles St	Honorable Mention
The Husick Building	11 N. Maple Avenue	Honorable Mention

Town Hall Closed

The Town Hall will be closed on the following days:

Monday, February 15
Friday, April 2

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.

COUNCIL COLUMN

Councilman Wayne Winkler, Ward 1

I would like to start off by wishing each and every one of you a happy and prosperous New Year. I did not write an article for the last edition because I underwent shoulder surgery and had my arm taped to my stomach for 6 weeks. The good news is that I lost 10 pounds because I had to eat with my left hand. The bad news is that I found those 10 pounds again.

As we start the New Year we will be starting our budget process. We all know that houses in Charles County, as well as the entire United States, have been devalued which has a direct impact on Federal, State, County, and Town Budgets. Over the years the Mayor, Council, and staff have carefully guarded the Town funds and because of this we should be OK. Can we take on new projects? I don't know but I feel confident that we will be able to maintain all of the services we currently provide.

We now have a wonderful opportunity to work with the County, State, and other Municipalities to see what they are doing and see if we can share ideas on finding ways to help each other out in these difficult times. Hopefully, the economy will turn soon and we will be wiser and all work together better.

Over the last year we have had several new businesses open in La Plata that give all of us more shopping opportunities. Local businesses are what support our school programs, the scouts, and many local organizations. Please support them.

2010 is a very important election year for County, State, and Federal Officials. I hope all of us will pay close attention to what each candidate has to say and especially how they will work to eliminate this recession and get jobs back. Working together we can get the job done. The United States has to be the greatest place to live in the world. God Bless and stay safe.

Councilman Keith Back, Ward 2

Winter is still with us here in La Plata for a bit longer and this one has been one for the record books already with the massive storm we received the weekend before Christmas. This storm was a challenge for the Town in that it was much worse than the normal snows we receive in Southern Maryland and dropped a massive amount of snow in a short time period. While everyone in the Town may not have gotten their roads cleared as fast as they would have liked, I want to send out a thanks for the efforts put out by our Public Works crews and everyone else who pitched in to get the snow removed as quickly as they did. These crews put in long hours during the storm and in the days that followed to make it safe for the rest of the residents to then get out and go wherever they needed.

The major item that will take up a major portion of the Town Council's time in the next few months is the preparation for next year's budget for La Plata. The Town Council will start by having discussions about service priorities for the coming year. If you have ideas or concerns, please pass them along to one of us. While we cannot meet all desires for new services because of the constraints of our Town's budget, it is important that the residents make it known what is important to them. The large challenge for us this year will be the continuation of declining revenues including support we have received in the past from the state government. With the problems the state legislature will be having with balancing the state budget, we cannot depend on those revenues for next year.

In this time of continuing economic hardship for our local and national economy, I want to once again encourage everyone to support our local busi-

nesses when you are out shopping or taking your family out to eat. We have many wonderful specialty shops and restaurants in La Plata that need your support now more than ever. Spend local and the money stays here in the community to build a better La Plata for the future.

Councilwoman Paddy Mudd, Ward 3

The pre-Christmas snowfall that blanketed our Town created a beautiful scene. Our Town Hall outdoor tree, wreaths, and flags surrounding the property were accentuated by the snow. The lamp post wreaths and snowflakes throughout the town were a joyous seasonal welcome to La Plata. Many of our residences and businesses were also beautifully decorated. A big thanks to all who contributed to these efforts!

Now it's mid-winter and work has begun on our Willow Lane pump station project and most of our 2010 budget initiatives have been addressed. Our 2011 budget planning sessions began on January 16th and continue into February. All budget sessions are open meetings and the public is welcome to hear the discussion of the Town Council and Staff members. We welcome input from all. Please address your concerns to anyone on the Town Council, our Town Manager, or during the public forum at our monthly business meeting.

A happy and prosperous New Year to all of you!

Councilman Joseph W. Norris, Ward 4

New Years Blessings to everyone. At the time I am writing this it certainly has been an interesting and cold winter so far. I am especially grateful at this time of year for our Public Works

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COUNCIL COLUMN (CONTINUED FROM PAGE 2)

personnel. It is usually at a time when we are home snug in our beds that they have to be out clearing the streets in the worst of conditions or in some cold wet and muddy pit fixing a water main break. Thank you to all our Town personnel who keep the Town running. I would be remiss if I didn't also thank the many volunteers who serve on our various boards and commissions. These generous people give many hours of their time addressing a variety of matters for the Town. Please visit the Town website, townoflaplata.org and click on the commissions tab to learn more. You can find out what each

commission or board is responsible for, when they meet and who the members are. Also please consider submitting an application for one of the groups that you would have an interest in. From time to time there are vacancies and it would help to have a reserve of interested persons.

Please note that the Town now has a battery recycling program. As you may know, disposing of batteries in the trash is harmful to our environment. The heavy metals and chemicals poison the soil. We have a container in the lobby of Town hall to receive the batteries, and then we will properly

dispose of them. This is a simple and cost effective way to deal with this hazard. Thanks in advance for using this service.

As always If you have any questions or issues, I may be reached by phone at 301 934-9230 or by email at jnorris@townoflaplata.org. Thank you for allowing me to serve.

BAGGAGE CART DONATION

There is a new addition to the train station, a baggage cart. Randy Hill donated this baggage cart to the Town of La Plata. Mr. Hill received it from his former employer, Mr. John Parran, father of former Maryland State Senator John Thomas Parran, Jr. Mr. Parran acquired the original horse drawn

baggage cart from Union Station in Washington D.C. The Town has had the cart restored and it is proudly displayed at the train station located on Kent Avenue.



BATTERY RECYCLING

Got Batteries?

Rechargeable batteries are a cost effective way to power all types of electronic devices. So what do you do with all your dead batteries, rechargeable or otherwise?

Recycle them!, The Town Hall is a recycling station for your old AA, AAA, C, D, 9-volt,

cell phone and button batteries. Bring your old, dead batteries into the Town Hall and place them in the designated container in the front lobby and we will do the rest. Please don't throw your old batteries away in the trash. La Plata will make sure they are properly processed and don't end up in the landfill.

TOWN OF LA PLATA OFFICIALS

Mayor: Roy G. Hale

Council:

Wayne Winkler Ward 1

C. Keith Back Ward 2

Paddy Mudd Ward 3

Joseph W. Norris Ward 4

Town Manager:

Daniel J. Mears

Treasurer: Robert W. Oliphant

Assistant Town Manager:

Michelle D. Miner

Town Clerk: Danielle Mandley

Project Manager: Steven F. Schroeder

Police Chief: Cassin B. Gittings

Director of Inspections: Jorge A. Thompson

Director of Municipal Development:

David M. Jenkins

Director of Planning and Zoning:

Catherine N. Flerlage

Director of Operations: Robert F. Stahl, Jr.

Director of Public Works:

Jeffrey S. Garner

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: mmminer@townoflaplata.org

Website: www.townoflaplata.org

MAYOR'S CORNER (CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1)

with a prize fish at the end of your line and your dog barking for joy in the background.

A boy and his dog going fishing, which may seem strange to many today, if not unsafe, was back then, a way of life. For some it was the best of times, a nine-year-old holding a fishing rod; for others, it was the worst of times, since the economy was the issue of the day then as it is today. The vast improvement in telecommunications, a world economy and shifting energy resources, over these many years, may have changed the face of the nation, and our way of life, but in the final analysis, it is still people working with people to find solutions to common problems that make the most impact.

As we move into a new year and a new decade it is important to look back as well as look forward. Starting in January the Town Council will commence an annual review dedicated to maintaining a way of life you chose when you selected La Plata as your hometown. We will reinforce the policies that are working and improve on those that need to be revised. We will continue to review and expand, where applicable, our special events and programs. Our focus on Green Initiatives will continue into this year and well beyond. Improvements in our water and sewer systems will continue to be a major area of focus. Working together, the Town Council will strive to make 2010 a very good year.

As your Mayor, I will always welcome your comments, be they positive or critical. You can reach me at the Town Hall (301-934-8421) or at home (301-934-4850).

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: \$12.50 for 5 minutes loading time; each additional minute is \$1.10. 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 on Mondays and Fridays

Effective April 1, 2009, a change was made to when residential yard waste pickups will occur. Yard waste pickups will only take place on Mondays and Fridays. If a holiday falls on one of those pickup days, there will be no yard waste pickup on that day.

Containers of yard waste ONLY - leaves, grass and shrub clippings, brush or branches - may be put out on Mondays and Fridays. 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

If your regular trash collection day is:
Monday, February 15
Friday, April 2

Trash will be picked up on:
Tuesday, February 16
Thursday, April 1

AND A GOOD TIME WAS HAD BY ALL



Santa Clause relaxing with some of the volunteers from the La Plata High School Key Club that assisted with the Olde Tyme Holiday gathering.

Attendees enjoyed a wide variety of music, entertainment, crafts and food.

Email addresses wanted



The Town is compiling a database of resident email addresses in order to expand its use of email communication within the Town. Residents who send their email address to the Town will be able to receive information easily, quickly, and cost-effectively. Providing your email address to the Town is completely voluntary. The Town is simply seeking an additional means to be able to communicate with residents.

If you would like to have your email address included in our database for future communication, please send your email address to Carolyn at cjohnson@townoflaplata.org along with your name and street address.

SPECIAL EVENTS

Easter Fun!

Monday, April 5, 2010
Noon to 2:00 p.m.
Inside the Town Hall

Create your own Ice Cream Sundae to eat with the Easter Bunny, and when you are full, enjoy making a variety of Easter crafts to keep or share. Don't forget your camera, have your picture taken with the Easter Bunny.

Celebrate La Plata

Saturday, April 17, 2010
Noon to 4:00 p.m.

Local entertainment, children's activities, La Plata Bed races, variety of food vendors.

Mark your calendars and look for more details in the April edition of the Town Notes.

EMPLOYEE PROFILE



David Swann has worked for the Town in the Public Works Department for over 24 years. Born in Washington, D.C. David was raised in Charles County along with his four brothers and five sisters. David is always at the ready to help anyone with anything. He enjoys just hanging out with his family and friends.

FEBRUARY 2010

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY			
	Special trash pickup day (Call by 4:00 p.m. Fri., 1/29 to schedule.) Yard waste pickup day	1	2	8:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m., Farmers' Market 9:00 a.m., Design Review Board meeting 7:30 p.m., Crime Watch Council meeting	3	4	5	6	8:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m., Farmers' Market
7	Yard waste pickup day	8	9	10	11	12	13	8:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m., Farmers' Market	
14		15	16	17	18	19	20		
	Town Hall Closed (Mon. trash will be picked up on Tues., 2/16)	7:00 p.m., Town Council work session	8:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m., Farmers' Market 9:00 a.m., Design Review Board meeting		Yard waste pickup day	8:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m., Farmers' Market			
21	4:00 p.m., Beautification Commission meeting Yard waste pickup day	22	23	24	25	26	27		
		7:00 p.m., Town Council regular meeting	8:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m., Farmers' Market		Yard waste pickup day	8:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m., Farmers' Market			
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MARCH 2010

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY			
	Special trash pickup day (Call by 4:00 p.m. Fri., 2/26 to schedule.) Yard waste pickup day	1	2	8:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m., Farmers' Market 9:00 a.m., Design Review Board meeting 7:30 p.m., Crime Watch Council meeting	3	4	5	6	8:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m., Farmers' Market
7	Yard waste pickup day	8	9	10	11	12	13	8:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m., Farmers' Market	
14	4:00 p.m., Beautification Commission meeting Yard waste pickup day	15	16	17	18	19	20		
		7:00 p.m., Town Council work session	8:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m., Farmers' Market 9:00 a.m., Design Review Board meeting		Yard waste pickup day	8:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m., Farmers' Market			
21	Yard waste pickup day	22	23	24	25	26	27		
		7:00 p.m., Town Council regular meeting	8:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m., Farmers' Market		Yard waste pickup day	8:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m., Farmers' Market			
28	Yard waste pickup day	29	30	31					
			8:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m., Farmers' Market						

Conservation Corner



Spring is almost upon us and now is a great time to consider starting a garden. Not only would starting a garden be a great activity for you and your family, but it is a great way to help the environment as well. Gardening is a common practice from human history, it has only been more recently that people have tended to go to stores to purchase their fruits and vegetables.

While many of us don't have enough space for a garden to supply all of our food needs, our backyards are a terrific place to supplement our groceries by growing some of our own food. Not only is this rewarding, it can serve to help save us money as well.

You don't need a lot of space to start a garden, but it should be in a location that gets an appropriate amount of sun for the crop you will be planting. You can use your garden as an opportunity to remove turf, which relatively requires a lot of water compared to other plants, and also pick a low area to serve as a rain garden to help reduce the

amount of precipitation runoff from your property. Instead of planting a large variety of plants you can work with your neighbors to each plant a different crop, and each can share in the harvest. Often, when tomatoes, or zucchini, or peppers come in, they grow faster than a family can consume their fresh pick. Sharing with neighbors is a great way to ensure your bounty does not go to waste.

Be certain to pick fruits and vegetables that grow well in this climate and do not require significant amounts of water, or fertilizer. Your garden may be attractive to rabbits, deer, and other wildlife. Keep this in mind as you start your garden and be certain to protect your new plants, if you do not want to share them with nature.

Consider your plants well, and choose items you like, are easy to grow, and will supplement your groceries. Local food does not need to be transported as far, and cuts down on the amount of food miles that imported food causes. To supplement your garden, be sure to visit the La Plata Farmer's Market in season to take advantage of local fruits and vegetables. When shopping in the grocery store, choose fruits and vegetables that are in season to avoid food that has been transported long distances. The closer to home your food comes from; the better it will be for our whole environment.

Also, if you are considering adding trees to your property, try fruit or nut bearing trees. You will get the double benefit of the tree and a convenient source of food as well.

CENSUS 2010: BE COUNTED!

In 2010, the U.S. Census Bureau will take a count of every resident of the United States. The U.S. Constitution mandates that a Census of every resident be conducted every 10 years. The Census counts people living in the U.S. of all ages, races, ethnic groups, citizens and non-citizens.

YOUR PARTICIPATION IN CENSUS 2010 MATTERS!

Why should you fill out the Census questionnaire?

Help La Plata get our fair share of Federal funds.

Every year, more than \$435 billion in federal funds are allocated to states and communities based on Census data. Census data is used to allocate billions of dollars in government funding and guide local decision-makers on where to build new government funded projects: roads, schools, job training centers, and more. In addition, businesses use Census

data to locate retail stores, new housing and other facilities.

That's why it is so important that everyone in your community is counted. The more residents in your community that complete and return the Census questionnaire, the more money your community will be eligible to receive.

Ensure your community's interests are fairly represented.

Data collected from the 2010 Census will determine how many seats Maryland will have in Congress and impact redistricting of state and local voting districts and school districts. A complete response to Census 2010 will ensure your community makes its voice heard at all levels of government.

CENSUS 2010 FACTS:

IT'S EASY. The 2010 questionnaire consists of a few simple questions.

It takes just a few minutes to complete and return by mail.

IT'S SAFE. The Census Bureau protects information that identifies respondents and their households for 72 years.

IT'S COMING IN MARCH! Census questionnaires will be mailed to each household in March 2010. Be sure that everyone in your household completes and returns their questionnaires.

To view a copy of the Census 2010 questionnaire, visit this link:

<http://census.maryland.gov/>

There is a local Census office in La Plata, located at the Baldus Building on Charles Street (Phone: 240-776-3120). The Census is hiring for temporary jobs. The website for jobs is http://census.maryland.gov/jobs/Census2010_Jobs.shtml or call the toll-free number 1-866-861-2010.

NOW OPEN IN LA PLATA AND COMING SOON TO LA PLATA

Commercial Building Permits Issued

Game Stop
232 Rosewick Road

McDonalds
109 Drury Drive

Commercial Occupancy Permits Issued

McDonalds (Rebuild)
6385 Crain Highway

Education Station Early Learning Center
700 E. Charles Street

Town Mouse (New Ownership)
6390 Crain Highway

Chattabox Salon
140 Drury Drive

MS Vicky's Therapeutic Bodyworks
6 St. Mary's Ave. #101

La Plata Family Chiropractic
203 Centennial Street, Unit 5

Southwestern Jewelry of La Plata
600 Charles Street

WEBSITE POLL

Visit the Town of La Plata's website at <http://www.townoflaplata.org> to participate in an online poll. Click on the 'Snap Poll' link on the left side of the web page to go to the poll and see the results to date. The current question is:

La Plata has been making significant investment in its sewer and water systems to ensure the infrastructure is in good condition. *How do you feel about the level of effort and progress with the upgrades?*

Very Satisfied

Somewhat Satisfied

Neither Satisfied nor Dissatisfied

Somewhat Dissatisfied

Very Dissatisfied

Don't Know

December Website Poll Results

Below are the website 'Snap Poll' results from the last issue. The question and results are:

Where do you work?

In La Plata – 19%

In Charles County but not

in La Plata – 19%
In Southern Maryland but not
in Charles County – 5%
In Maryland but not in
Southern Maryland – 7%
In Washington DC – 27%
In Northern Virginia – 3%
Other Location – 7%
Retired/Don't work – 14%

For many years La Plata has been a growing community with new homes and news residents finding the community is a desirable place to establish a home. While La Plata has some large employers, like Civista, Facchina, Southern Maryland Oil, Social Services, Charles County Government, and over 400 other employers, many of our residents work outside of the community.

La Plata residents work all over the region, as these survey results show. The Metro bus lot on Washington Avenue is near capacity with commuter vehicles, residents utilize the VanGo service provided by Charles County, but most of our residents drive to work each day. Transportation is a critical issue for La



Plata residents who use 6, 301, 210, 488, 225, and many other of a number of roads on a daily basis. La Plata works with the County and State government on transportation planning issues for not only our residents, but also the many people who come to our community to shop, dine, work, and recreate.

La Plata works with the other government agencies to improve our transportation network, and the Town also looks for opportunities to have services and employment opportunities close to home. In La Plata's recently updated comprehensive plan, transportation objectives as well as opportunities for economic development were explored. These are just two elements of what is needed to make La Plata an attractive place to live, and work.

BLUE CRABS TO HOLD LA PLATA REMEMBRANCE NIGHT ON MAY 6

Team Asking Fans To Submit Their Photos & Memories Of April 2002 Tornado That Devastated Town

When the Southern Maryland Blue Crabs take on the Camden Riversharks May 6 at 7:05 p.m. at Regency Furniture Stadium in Waldorf, it will mark one of the most special nights in the team's history. The evening's promotion has been coined "La Plata Remembrance Night", in regards to the April 28, 2002 tornado that left much of the town in ruins and devastation.

As a relatively new member to the Southern Maryland community, the Blue Crabs felt it was time to pay proper tribute to the citizens of La Plata who were

so adversely affected by the tornado, and most importantly to those who worked tirelessly to help others and overcome the event.

The Blue Crabs are asking fans to begin submitting their materials regarding the tornado, in order to compile a satisfactory tribute in the ballpark on May 6, and the team is seeking any and all contributions. Submissions can range from, but are not limited to:

Photographs

Newspaper clippings

Videos

A written story or memory that you would like to share

Any appropriate memento

Materials may be dropped off at Regency Furniture Stadium, at 11765 St. Linus Drive in Waldorf. Anything provided to the Blue Crabs for this event will be strictly on loan, and the team will return everything as soon as possible. Fans submitting are asked to clearly mark their materials with name, address and phone number. Digital photographs may be emailed to Marketing Manager Courtney Freeland at cfreeland@somdbluecrabs.com. Videos are especially sought after, as content for the video board for the evening is needed.

For more information, please feel free to contact the Southern Maryland Blue Crabs during usual office hours at 301-638-9788.

CITIZEN SURVEY

In October 2009 1,200 households in the Town of La Plata were asked to participate in The National Citizen Survey. The survey and its administration are standardized to assure high quality research methods and directly compare results with hundreds of jurisdictions in the United States where the National Citizen Survey has been conducted. Results are statistically weighted to reflect the proper demographic composition of the entire community. A total of 409 completed surveys were obtained, providing an overall response rate of 35%, up from 32% in 2008.

Survey questions cover the spectrum of Town services and deals with resident perception about the quality of community life, community characteristics, perceptions of safety, community participation, public trust, services, and impressions of Town employees. This is the Town's third year having the survey conducted. The Town Council uses these survey responses to help evaluate service provisions and assist in the development of Council priorities and to guide the elected body in making decisions in regards to the budget.

Overall quality of community life may be the single best indicator of success in providing the environment, services, and amenities that make for an attractive community. Most residents experience a good quality of life in the Town of La Plata and believe the Town is a good place to live.

The overall quality of life in the Town was rated as "excellent" or "good" by 81% of respondents.

When residents are civically engaged, they have the opportunity to participate in making the community more livable for all. Residents in the Town of La Plata were civically engaged. While only 26% of respondents had attended a meeting of local elected public officials or other local public meeting in the previous 12 months, 95% had provided help to a friend or neighbor. La Plata is a community and neighbors and friends helping, supporting, and encouraging one another is a hallmark of our community. There are many ways to help, and the Town is glad to have that strong spirit within it.

La Plata asked a policy question about what extent do residents support or oppose La Plata developing a downtown square. A very high percentage (87%) of residents support the development of a Downtown Square. Of those 42% strongly supported it, and 45% somewhat supported the goal. La Plata officials have been working to coordinate interested parties in the community to bring that goal to reality. There is a lot of work and coordination needed to get to that point.

Recycling is important to the Town as part of its green initiatives, but also to reduce the cost of landfill expense. When residents were asked why they did not re-

cycle, some mentioned they did not know recycling was available to all residential customers, and included in the utility bill. Residents who need a recycling container may obtain one from Town Hall. There is also a list of materials eligible for recycling on the Town website. The survey showed 67% of residents regularly recycle. Please do your part to recycle, and recycle more of the materials eligible to be recycled.

The employees of the Town who interact with the public create the first impression that most residents have of the Town. Those residents who had interacted with an employee of the Town in the previous 12 months gave high marks to those employees. 88% of respondents rated their overall impression as "excellent" or "good". La Plata is proud of its employees and the service provided to citizens. We will continue to work to maintain this strong perception and meet the basic service needs of the community.

This is just a sampling of results from the survey. The complete survey with additional results in regards to transportation, housing, land use & zoning, economic sustainability, public safety, environmental sustainability, parks and recreation, culture, arts, and education, community inclusiveness, information and awareness, social engagement, resident priorities, and policy questions can all be viewed on the Town's website at www.townoflaplata.org.

GREEN BUILDING MINI-GRANTS

The La Plata Green Building Committee awarded five projects Green Building Mini-Grants in late 2009. Those projects have begun and are adding to the green benefit of La Plata. Each of the recipients was awarded \$500 toward the completion of their green project. The projects cover a variety of areas including storm water, energy efficiency, green landscaping, conservation education, and involve many people throughout the community.

Recipients from the first round of Mini-Grants include Archbishop Neale School, the Clark's Run Home Owner's Association, the Hawthorne Greene Home

Owner's Association, the Andrew Bennett Eagle Scout Project, and Scout/Venture Crew 1321. These were the first five recipients out of nine Mini-Grants available in this year's budget for the Town of La Plata. The Town has a second grant round that will award several more grants of up to \$500 for projects that positively benefit La Plata environmentally.

You can still participate this year and find a way to inspire action, educate the community, or directly benefit our environment. This is a great outlet for Home Owner Associations, school projects, scout groups, civic organizations, individuals, businesses,

and other community members to do something that benefits you, the Town, and the environment. Applications for the second round will be due by February 10, 2010.

Grant applications will be available for download from the Town's website, or you may get them directly from Town Manager Daniel Mears at 301-934-8421 or dmeears@townoflaplata.org. Grant applications will be reviewed by La Plata's Green Building Committee and successful projects will receive up to \$500 to help implement the idea. Thank you for your interest in helping our community by focusing on its environment.

LEGISLATION RECENTLY ENACTED BY THE TOWN COUNCIL

(Full text copies of legislation are available at the Town Hall, 305 Queen Anne Street, or on the Town's web page at www.townoflaplata.org under "Legislation".)

Ord. No.	Description	Section	Date Adopted	Effective Date
09-7	Town of La Plata FY2009-2010 Financial Plan/Budget	[not codified]	5/26/09	7/1/09
09-8	Fee Schedule	101-1 – 101-15	5/26/09	7/1/09
09-9	ICMA Retirement Corporation Retirement Plan	[not codified]	6/23/09	7/9/09
09-10 EMERGENCY	Extension of Temporary Moratorium on Enforcement of Certain Sign and Fee Regulations	[not codified]	6/23/09	7/1/09
09-11	FY 2009-2010 Fee Schedule (correcting an error in the amount of a certain refuse collection)	101-7.E.(2)	8/25/09	9/9/09
09-12 Emergency	Extension of Temporary Moratorium on Enforcement of Certain Sign and Fee Regulations	[not codified]	8/25/09	8/25/09
09-13	2009 Comprehensive Plan	[not codified]	9/22/09	10/8/09
09-14	2009 Comprehensive Rezoning Map	[not codified]	9/22/09	10/8/09
09-15	Issuance of Bonds, Notes or Similar Instruments with Respect to the Heritage Green Special Taxing District, and Related Matters	[not codified]	9/22/09	10/8/09
09-16	Homestead Tax Credit	[not codified]	10/27/09	11/24/09
09-17 Emergency	Amendment to Town of La Plata FY2008-2009 Financial Plan/Budget	[not codified]	10/27/09	10/27/09
09-18 Emergency	Amendment to Town of La Plata FY2009-2010 Financial Plan/Budget	[not codified]	11/24/09	11/24/09
09-19	Issuance of General Obligation Bond to Maryland Water Quality Financing Administration for Wastewater System Improvements	[not codified]	12/15/09	12/15/09

Resolution No.	Description	Date Adopted	Date Effective
09-3	Bond Counsel	6/16/09	6/16/09
09-4	Contract for Willow Lane Stimulus Project Engineering Work	6/23/09	6/23/09
09-5	Charter Amendment – Term of Employment of Town Manager; amends Article V, Town Manager, Sections C5-1 and C5-4	8/25/09	10/14/09
09-6	Center for Children MDHCD invest tax cred pro	7/28/09	7/28/09
09-7	Water Tank Repainting Bid Award 081809	8/25/09	8/25/09
09-8	Heritage Green Special Taxing District	9/22/09	9/22/09
09-9	Debt Policy	9/22/09	9/22/09
09-10	Amendment to Employment Agreement between the Town of La Plata and Daniel J. Mears	10/27/09	10/27/09
09-11	Approval of La Plata Manor Project and Project Financing	12/15/09	12/15/09

TOWN OF LA PLATA

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Town Notes is a publication of the Town of La Plata.

THE MARYLAND LIFE MAGAZINE GEOCACHE DASH!



The Maryland Municipal League and the Maryland Geocaching Society has partnered with Maryland Life

magazine to foster new interest in discovering municipal geocaches along the Maryland Municipal League Geocache Trail.

During 2010, each of the six issues of Maryland Life magazine will feature Maryland Cities and Towns for you to discover and enjoy. For the January/February issue, the Town of La Plata is one of the featured communities. Escape “cabin fever” and go out and explore these great Towns and participate in the “Cabin Fever Dash” for a chance to win some cool prizes!

How to Play:

1. Visit www.MarylandLife.com or www.mdgps.com or read Maryland Life to pick up the GPS coordinates of the Towns and their caches.
2. During each contest, visit the Towns and locate the cache. The “Cabin Fever Dash” runs from January 1 to March 15, 2010.
3. The caches will contain coupon sheets listing the participating businesses in each Town. Take one sheet, visit the participating businesses (eat and/or shop while you’re there), and have your coupon stamped by each one.
4. Turn in the stamped coupon sheet at the specially designated box at the La Plata Town Hall (located in the front entrance atrium and accessible 24 hours a day)
5. Each contestant who completes the dash is eligible for a prize. If more than one contestant completes the dash, a drawing will be held to select the winner.
6. In addition, each participant (individual, family, or group) who completes the dash wins a free six-month subscription to Maryland Life.
7. The contestant who completes the most dashes throughout the year receives the grand prize, an overnight stay and spa package at the Hotel at Turf Valley in Howard County.

Contest sponsored and coordinated by Maryland Life magazine. For more information contact Ross Peddicord at 301-696-1060 or ross@MarylandLife.com