

# TOWN NOTES

*News from La Plata Town Hall*



## MAYOR'S CORNER

I trust that everyone is enjoying our beautiful spring. This is a wonderful time of year in our area and I hope everyone has the opportunity to get out and about and enjoy the greenery, beautiful flowers, and overall scenery.

At Town Hall, we are finishing our budget process for the next fiscal year, which commences on July 1, and I am pleased to report that your Town Council has been able to hold the Town tax rate constant at 32 cents per \$100 of assessed property value. This is the same rate that you have paid for several years. When you compare La Plata to many municipalities in the State of Maryland that assess rates in excess of 60 cents per \$100 of assessed value, our Town stands out very well. When you factor in the state of the economy, the loss of most of our state highway user funds and a sizable portion of our police protection aid, we all must do more with less. Your Town government has been able to hold services at their current level and still provide the events and functions that you have come to enjoy as part of the fabric of La Plata.

Having the opportunity to meet and talk with Town residents is one of the best parts of being Mayor. Getting to know more people and finding out what their feel we are doing right and may be not so right is an uplifting experience. During these discussions many common questions are asked, such as: Why do we have so many stores of one type and why do we not have stores of another type? Why is La Plata trying so hard to become another Waldorf? These questions are just a sample of the more common questions asked and I will use this column from time

Continued on page 3



Your Mayor and Council are looking for members of the community who are dedicated to help form the future of La Plata

**If you are motivated to make a difference in your community you are invited to apply for a position on one of the various Boards, Commissions and Committee's.**

**Currently there are vacancies on the Design Review Board and Parks and Recreation Commission**

*Citizen volunteers are a valuable part of the decision making process.*

Please contact Danielle Mandley via phone (301) 934-8421 or email [dmandley@townofaplata.org](mailto:dmandley@townofaplata.org) if you have any questions. Applications may be downloaded from the Town web site [www.townofaplata.org](http://www.townofaplata.org).

## Willow Lane Pump Station

On April 1, 2011, the Town accepted the new Willow Lane Pump Station as substantially complete. The station began pumping sewage in early March and replaces the 56 year old pump station that has caused numerous recent problems including major Sanitary Sewer Overflows, that had challenged the Town. This project was critical for the Town to address one of the main objectives of a Consent Decree with the Maryland Department of the Environment. The Town applied for and was awarded up to \$6 million in stimulus loan for the construction of this pump station. This was the entire allocation of wastewater stimulus funding available for all of Charles County. The project also utilized Federal grant funds, and the loan is being repaid in part by a Special Tax Assessment on property only within the proposed Heritage Green development.

This new station has two pumps, each capable of handling 2,200 gallons per minute through a 12 inch force main and a 24 inch gravity main all the way to the wastewater treatment plant. This compares to the old station which had two pumps that each pumped 450 gallons per minute through a 6 inch force main. The new station is state of the art technology and is monitored through the internet by the Mission System which gives supervisory control and data acquisition.

The new station is located across from the intersection of Willow Lane and Charles Street in the building designed to look like a barn.

## COUNCIL COLUMN

### Councilman Keith Back, Ward 2

One of the items that will be discussed in the next few months by the Town Council is related to an annexation. There has been a lot of discussion and feedback about this at previous meetings, in the press, and through letters sent to the Town. I want to briefly address this and hopefully clarify a few issues.

The developers of the planned La Plata Crossing shopping center which contains the proposed Wal-Mart Supercenter have resubmitted a petition for Annexation by the Town of La Plata. This was denied in its first attempt last year. I cannot speak for the other members of the Council, but the main reason I voted against the original annexation was that the developers and Wal-Mart did not provide enough for the Town to feel comfortable that the old store would quickly have a new tenant. There was a concern that it would become an abandoned empty property for many years and create a problem for the Town and the surrounding businesses. I was not voting against Wal-Mart or against business growth in this part of La Plata, but against having a very large abandoned storefront in the middle of our commercial district. This has been a problem in the past with other stores that have relocated and continues today with at least one property.

Some have asked why we are going through this process again if the Town Council has already voted against the annexation. The Town is required to go through the process for any applicant that submits what is determined to be a valid annexation petition.

The developers have submitted a revised annexation package to the Town that attempts to provide a plan to ensure that the old property is quickly leased and occupied by new businesses if Wal-Mart moves to the new location. The annexation process will continue for the next few months as it is discussed by the Town Council and multiple Public Hearings are held. When the public hearings are announced, please come out and make your thoughts known. The Town Council needs to hear from the public on how they feel on this topic and why they feel that way. This is an important issue and the Town Council needs to hear from a broad range of the Town's citizens not just the few people that typically come out to voice their concerns on all issues.

## 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:

*If there is a need to enhance my community and I can help, I would volunteer some of my time.*

- Strongly Agree
- Somewhat Agree
- Neither Agree nor Disagree
- Somewhat Disagree
- Strongly Disagree

### April Website Poll Results

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

What type of device do you primarily use for mobile computing?

- Laptop PC – 40%
- Laptop Mac – 4%
- Netbook – 2%
- Android Phone – 15%
- iPhone – 6%
- iPad – 0%
- iPod / iPod Touch – 4%
- Blackberry – 4%
- Other Devices – 4%
- Don't do mobile computing – 19%

According to this poll 81% of respondents do mobile computing. Most use the traditional Laptop PC, with the newest crop of handheld devices sharing the field. This is a dramatic difference from the devices that are connecting to La Plata's WiFi system in downtown.

Since expanding across downtown in mid February, almost a thousand unique devices have connected to La Plata's WiFi. La Plata's system is dominated by users with Apple devices, accounting for over 63% of devices accessing the free system. Intel, HTC, Motorola, and other devices, are pretty evenly split with the remaining 36%.

Over the past month the Apple iPhone has been the top operating system on the network representing 30.9% of users. iPods account for 20.1% of access, iPads have 8%, and the Mac OS has 2.2% of network connections. Windows powered devices account for 22.5% of La Plata's WiFi access, and Android enabled devices are 11.7%.

In this quickly changing world, there has been an explosion of small devices that are designed to aid mobile computing. Nearly, 1,000 people in La Plata have discovered the WiFi network provided by the Town and Library partnership, that covers much of downtown. Bring your device with you to a summer concert, when getting a bite to eat, or completing errands downtown. La Plata offers opportunity to enhance your mobile lifestyle, and stay connected to your friends and family.



## Code Corner

### Article III. Weed Control

With the onset of summer residents are reminded:

....occupant or person in control of any lot or parcel of land within the town may not permit or maintain on such lot or parcel of land any growth of grass, weeds or other rank vegetation to a height over one (1) foot, nor may any such owner, occupant or person in control of such lot or parcel of land permit the growth of ragweed, poison ivy or any other noxious weeds which are generally known to be either allergenic or otherwise toxic, either topically or when ingested.

# BEAUTIFICATION GRANT



*Do you have a summer project idea to make La Plata a better place for you and the community?*

There's still time to apply for one of the Beautification Grants sponsored by the Town's Beautification Commission. The Town has a summer grant round that

will award **grants of up to \$500** each for projects that positively benefit La Plata.

The Beautification Commission started the Beautification Grant program in an effort to improve the community for our residents, visitors, and businesses. What will you do to benefit the community?

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 all who visit La Plata. Applications for the summer round will be due by July 5, 2011.

Grant applications will be available for download from the Town's website, or you may get them directly from Danielle Mandley at (301) 934 – 8421

or [dmandley@townofaplata.org](mailto:dmandley@townofaplata.org). Grant applications will be reviewed by La Plata's Beautification Commission and successful projects will receive up to \$500 to help bring the idea to life. Thank you for your interest in helping our community by focusing on ways to make La Plata a better place.

The May 2011 recipients include Hemlock Court, Prospect Street, Washington Square, Phoenix Run, and Hawthorne Greene HOA.

## MAYOR'S CORNER (CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1)

to time to respond so that everyone has the same opportunity to hear a reply.

The stores that opt to build in La Plata have performed their market research. They generally understand the demographics of our area and realize that we are a strong community that has a large residential base that will grow in the future. Your Town Council does not have the authority to select specific stores for property that is already a part of the Town, we can only mandate that the new store complies with existing zoning requirements. When stores that offer similar products or services build in La Plata it is usually because they feel the market is strong enough to warrant head-to-head competition. Again, the market will determine whether or not this is true.

I can say truthfully that La Plata is not trying to become another Waldorf. We are a small town with strong residential communities that support a central and highway business community. Since the tornado of 2002, we have experienced the development of a business community that is truly remarkable. We were not as self-sufficient prior to the tornado as we are today when we consider the wide variety of shopping and dining opportunities available in 2011 as compared to 2002. And the new businesses did not arrive due to the extensive construction of new homes since 2002: the residential base was already here, waiting to be discovered. The availability of land will dictate what new business ventures will try to locate in La Plata in the future and our Comprehensive and Vision Plans will play a major role in defining these areas of development. Our dedication to comprehensive planning sets La Plata apart from other communities.

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.

## NOW OPEN IN LA PLATA AND COMING SOON TO LA PLATA

Commercial Building Permits Issued  
(3/1/11-4/30/11)

**Tilghman Lake Bathroom Facility**

Commercial Occupancy Permits Issued  
(3/1/11-4/30/11)

**Dairy Queen Grill & Chill**  
22 Shining Willow Way

**Alter Ego Salon & Spa**  
80 Drury Drive

**Studio "M" Salon**  
6770 Crain Highway

**GroovYoga Dharma Center LLC**  
107 Centennial Street

## Town Hall Closed

The Town Hall will be closed on the following days:

**July 4th** **Monday 4, 2011**

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 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 Planning and Community

Development: David M. Jenkins

Director of Operations: Robert F. Stahl, Jr.

Director of Public Works:

Jeffrey S. Garner

Senior Planner: Theresa C. Dent

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@townofaplata.org](mailto:mminer@townofaplata.org)

Website: [www.townofaplata.org](http://www.townofaplata.org)

## Conservation Corner

### Cigarette Litter

In the past Conservation Corner has focused on litter that is a challenge for our environment and degrades our water quality. This edition focuses on the most common form of litter, cigarette butts. Even though smoking in America has decreased 28% in the past ten years, cigarette butts are still the most littered item in our community.



Keep America Beautiful has a specific emphasis on Cigarette Litter Prevention, and it is important to understand what you can do to help Keep La Plata Beautiful too. Cigarette butts on the ground and in our waterways are litter. If you are dropping them, you are littering. Almost two thirds of all cigarette butts become litter; it is a significant problem that creates 38% of all roadway litter.

Contrary to common perception, cigarette butts do not biodegrade. Cigarette filters are made of cellulose acetate, a form of plastic that stays in the environment for a long time. Discarded butts get blown and washed by rain into storm drains and waterways. Not only do the chemicals in cigarettes impair the environment, but marine animals can mistake butts for food, damaging our aquatic life.

Cigarettes accumulate in gutters, outside doorways, on sidewalks, in playgrounds, and parks. Chances are you see them every day. They simply make the La Plata community look trashy. La Plata residents have pride in their community, and should not be burdened by the impact of those who litter.

If you smoke, please plan ahead for how you will dispose of your cigarette waste. Do not throw cigarettes from your vehicle window. Please don't drop them on the sidewalk outside our stores, restaurants and businesses. Visit the Keep America Beautiful website at <http://www.preventcigarettelitter.org> for other ideas on how you can help. Consider applying for a Beautification Grant to start a program to reduce cigarette litter. The Town of La Plata spends \$20,000 each year on street sweeping to clean up after litterers, and that is not enough. Consider what else those funds could be used for to improve our community if littering would end. Please, Keep La Plata Beautiful.

## MEET THE TOWN STAFF



The Town said good bye to two retiring employees. Jorge Thompson, Director of Inspections and Tommy Daniels, Code Enforcement Officer. Jorge and Tommy had each been employed with the Town for 7 years. We wish them both well in retirement.

## 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. Billing for special trash pickup is included on your quarterly utility bill.

### Household Hazardous Waste Collection



Household hazardous waste collection days for 2011 are on the first Saturday of each month through December from 9 a.m.-3 p.m. in the parking lot of the Department of Public Works building, located at 10430 Audie Lane, off of Radio Station Road in La Plata. This site relocated from the recycling center at the landfill on Billingsley Road. Household hazardous waste collection is a contracted service and items cannot be accepted when the

contractor is not on site.

Items accepted free of charge include pesticides, herbicides, fertilizer, gasoline, motor oil, antifreeze, paint, cleaning supplies, pool chemicals, batteries, expired prescription drugs, and other poisons that are around your house. Please keep the materials in their original containers whenever possible, and bring them to the collection site in cardboard boxes to ease unloading.

For more information, call the Charles County Department of Public Facilities, Environmental Resources Division at (301) 932-3599.

### Trash Collection Schedule Adjustment

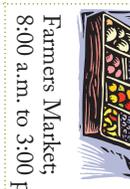
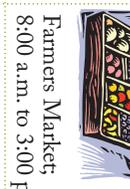
If your regular trash collection day is:

Monday, July 4, 2011

Trash will be picked up on:

Tuesday, July 5, 2011

# JUNE 2011

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
			1 Design Review Board meeting; 9:00 a.m. Crime Watch Council Meeting; 7:30 p.m. Farmers Market; 8:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m. 	2	3 Yard Waste Pick Up "Four of a Kind" band, your favorite oldies, classic rock, southern rock, county; 7:00 p.m. 	4 Farmers Market; 8:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m. 
5 Yard Waste pick up Special Pick up, please call by 4:00 June 3 to be put on list	6 Yard Waste pick up	7 Planning Commission meeting; 7:00 p.m.	8 Parks and Recreation Meeting; 5:00 p.m. Farmers Market; 8:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m. 	9 Yard Waste Pick Up US Navy Band "The Commodores"; the Navy's premier jazz ensemble; 7:00 p.m. 	10 Yard Waste Pick Up "Port Tobacco Pickers" band; traditional blue grass with a twist; 7:00 p.m. 	11 Farmers Market; 8:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m. 
12	13  Mayor and Council Work session; 7:00 p.m. Flag Day	14 Design Review Board Meeting; 9:00 a.m. Farmers Market; 8:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m. 	15 Design Review Board Meeting; 9:00 a.m. Farmers Market; 8:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m. 	16 Yard Waste Pick Up "Port Tobacco Pickers" band; traditional blue grass with a twist; 7:00 p.m. 	17 Yard Waste Pick Up "Nutrin' Fancy" band classic rock, country and southern rock; 7:00 p.m. 	18 Farmers Market; 8:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m. 
19  Father's Day	20  Yard Waste Pick Up Beautification Commission Meeting; 4:00 p.m.	21 Mayor and Council Regular Meeting; 7:00 p.m. 1 <sup>st</sup> Day of Summer	22 Farmers Market; 8:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m. 	23 Yard Waste Pick Up "Nutrin' Fancy" band classic rock, country and southern rock; 7:00 p.m. 	24 Yard Waste Pick Up "Nutrin' Fancy" band classic rock, country and southern rock; 7:00 p.m. 	25 Farmers Market; 8:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m. 
26	27 Yard Waste Pick Up	28 No Council meeting	29 Farmers Market; 8:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m. 	30		

# July 2011

SUNDAY

MONDAY

TUESDAY

WEDNESDAY

THURSDAY

FRIDAY

SATURDAY

						1 Yard Waste Pick Up "The Wise Guys" band; strong soulful vocals and hot guitar licks; 7:00 p.m.	2  Farmers Market; 8:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m.
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3 No Yard Waste Pick Up Town Hall closed July 4 <sup>th</sup> watermelon bash No Special Pick Up	4  Planning Commission meeting; 7:00 p.m. July 4 trash pick up	5 Design Review Board meeting; 9:00 a.m. Crime Watch Council Meeting; 7:30 p.m. Farmers Market; 8:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m.	6  Parks and Recreation Meetings; 5:00 p.m. Farmers Market; 8:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m.	7 Yard Waste Pick Up US Naval Band "Electric Brigade"; high energy show of pop and rock; 7:00 p.m.	8 Yard Waste Pick Up "Appaloosa" band; versatile rock and pop classics; 7:00 p.m.	9  Farmers Market; 8:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m.
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10 Yard Waste pick Up Special Pick Up, call before 4:00 p.m. on July 8 to be put on list	11 Yard Waste Pick Up	12 Mayor and Council Work session; 7:00 p.m.	13  Farmers Market; 8:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m.	14 Yard Waste Pick Up "Roadhouse" band; classic and contemporary rock and country; 7:00 p.m.	15  Community Yard Sale; 8:00 a.m. to noon Farmers Market; 8:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m.	16  Community Yard Sale; 8:00 a.m. to noon Farmers Market; 8:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m.
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17  Yard Waste Pick Up Beautification Commission Meetings; 4:00 p.m.	18 Yard Waste Pick Up	19 Mayor and Council Work session; 7:00 p.m.	20  Design Review Board Meetings; 9:00 a.m. Farmers Market; 8:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m.	21 Yard Waste Pick Up "Eastern Tradition" band; hard driving bluegrass; 7:00 p.m.	22  Yard Waste Pick Up "Eastern Tradition" band; hard driving bluegrass; 7:00 p.m.	23  Farmers Market; 8:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m.
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24/31 Yard Waste Pick Up	25 Mayor and council regular meeting; 7:00 p.m.	26 Farmers Market; 8:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m.	27 	28 Yard Waste Pick Up	29  Yard Waste Pick Up "Appaloosa" band; versatile rock and pop classics; 7:00 p.m.	30  Farmers Market; 8:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m.
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# SPECIAL EVENTS

## Blendini with the Bunny



Town of La Plata special events for 2011 began in late April with the arrival of the Easter Bunny. The Monday after Easter, children from the



community stopped by with parents and grand parents for



crafts, snacks, and a photo op with the bunny. Children decorated visors or tiaras. Rita's was serving their Blendini frozen treats, balloons filled Town Hall, and everyone got favors and balloons to take home.

## Celebrate La Plata



Celebrate La Plata, the Town's annual Spring festival

took place the last Saturday in April at Town Hall. The east lawn was buzzing with activities for children of all ages, such as gymnastics, rock climbing wall, art lessons, tips on eating well and planting vegetables, inflatable activities, crafts for sale, and



good selection of delicious things to eat. Entertainment

began with a presentation from the Port Tobacco Encore Kids, fol-



lowed by great, live music from Road House. The day was finished with the Bed Races, sponsored by the Charles County Chamber of Commerce. Teams competed on a "race course" set up on La Grange Avenue in front of Town Hall as the crowd cheered them on. Congratulations to Sherry's Angels, who took home the trophy for the fastest bed!

## Community Yard Sale

The first La Plata Recycles Communi-



ty Yard Sale of 2011 was held on May 7<sup>th</sup> with over 60 vendors and a steady stream of buyers. The next community sale is schedule for Saturday July 16<sup>th</sup>, 8AM to 12 Noon. A fall sale will take place on October 8<sup>th</sup>, combined with the National Costume Swap. Applications for the July sale are available at [www.TownofLaPlata.org](http://www.TownofLaPlata.org). Click on "Events," then click on "Community Yard Sale."

## 4th of July Watermelon Bash



Our Town of La Plata tradition takes place from 11AM to 2PM on the grounds of La Plata Town Hall. We'll have games and activities for young and not so young, wet fun to cool off the July heat, and lots of hot dogs and watermelon! Get more details at [www.TownofLaPlata.org](http://www.TownofLaPlata.org).

## Summer Concerts

Join us on the lawn at Town Hall every Friday night through September for a FREE concert. Bring your blanket or lawn chairs. Bring a picnic or pick up something to eat from one of our local eateries (no alcohol, please). Bring the kids, there's a play area in view of the concert audience, so that you can keep an eye on them while you enjoy the show. We've included a complete schedule in this newsletter with a brief description of each band scheduled to perform. You can also get a sample of the music on our website. Go to [www.TownofLaPlata.org](http://www.TownofLaPlata.org); click on "Events," click on "Concerts" then click on each band name to see a video.

## More Information

We have a lot of information about our special events on our website at [www.TownofLaPlata.org](http://www.TownofLaPlata.org). But anytime you have a question or if you have comments you'd like to share, please don't hesitate to contact our Town of La Plata Special Events Coordinator, Marcia Keeth, at [MKeeth@TownofLaPlata.org](mailto:MKeeth@TownofLaPlata.org) or (301) 934-8421 ext 142.

# ADULT MOSQUITO CONTROL

The Maryland Department of Agriculture recognizes that the annoyance caused by moderate to large numbers of mosquitoes can adversely impact the quality of life for citizens and visitors in Maryland. Control of populations of mosquitoes in residential areas will be conducted in accordance with this policy. The Town of La Plata contracts with the Maryland Department of Agriculture to provide mosquito control.

The guidelines used for control are: The adult mosquito population must meet, or exceed, a minimum density to justify the application of pesticide. Two measurements of adult mosquito density are used in Maryland: (1) landing rate counts, and (2) light traps. The minimum landing rate threshold to initiate spraying of insecticide with ULV ground application equipment is 1 mosquito landing on an inspector in a 1-minute period. The minimum light trap collection to warrant ground spraying is 10 female mosquitoes, of a species known to feed on humans, per night. The minimum action thresholds for aerial application of an insecticide for nuisance adult mosquito control are: (1) an average landing rate count

of 12 mosquitoes per minute; or (2) a light trap collection of 100 female mosquitoes per night.

Tips to Rid Your Community of Mosquito Breeding Sites

- ◆ Clean rain gutters to allow water to flow freely.
- ◆ Remove old tires or drill drainage holes in tires used for playground equipment.
- ◆ Store plastic wading pools inside or turn them upside down when not in use.
- ◆ Turn over or remove clay pots and plastic containers.
- ◆ Dispose of all empty beverage containers, plastic wrappers, discarded toys, etc.
- ◆ Check for trapped water in plastic or canvas tarps used to cover boats, pools, etc. Arrange the tarp to drain the water.
- ◆ Replace water in bird baths at least twice a week.
- ◆ Remove pet food and water dishes that are not being used.
- ◆ Don't leave garbage can lids lying upside down. Be sure water does

not collect in the bottom of garbage cans.

- ◆ Flush water in the bottom of plant holders twice a week.
- ◆ Fix dripping outside water faucets.
- ◆ Turn wheelbarrows upside down when stored outside.
- ◆ Check around construction sites or do-it-yourself improvements to ensure that proper backfilling and grading prevent drainage problems.
- ◆ Check ornamental ponds, tree holes and water-holding low areas for mosquito larvae. Call the nearest Mosquito Control Office (see below) if you find, or suspect, mosquito larvae are present.
- ◆ If ditches do not flow and contain stagnant water for one week or longer, they can produce large numbers of mosquitoes. Report such conditions to a Mosquito Control Office. Do not attempt to clear these ditches because they may be protected by wetland regulations.

## LA PLATA FARMERS' MARKET



Featuring fresh fruits and vegetables;  
local, Southern Maryland seasonal  
produce; hand-crafted items;  
and homemade goods



Open all year  
Every Saturday 8AM to 3PM  
Every Wednesday 8AM to 6PM  
In the parking lot of the Charles County Courthouse, Washington Avenue in La Plata



For more information, contact Marcia Keeth at [MKeeth@TownofLaPlata.org](mailto:MKeeth@TownofLaPlata.org) or call 301-934-8421 x 142

[www.TownofLaPlata.org](http://www.TownofLaPlata.org)

Support provided by the Southern Maryland Agricultural Development Commission

## MAKING LA PLATA MORE EFFICIENT

With resources strained by challenges in the economy, it is vital that the Town explore ways to make its operations more efficient to save money, time, and add value to the services provided. Town staff is charged with funding new ways to improve services, and the Town regularly invests in technology or implements process changes to drive efficiencies.

In May the Town received approval from Maryland Department of the Environment for its procurement of a new water meter system. The new system is an automatic meter reading system manufactured by Mueller Systems, one of the oldest water system manufacturers in the country. Every water meter in

Town will be replaced or have the new meter reading technology added to newer meters. This new technology will allow residents to check their water consumption online and help the Town to check for leaks and reduce water loss. Meter reading will all happen remotely, and no longer require Public Works staff to drive throughout Town to collect meter readings. This project is major success for the Town, in that it is 50% funded by a green grant awarded through the State of Maryland's Department of the Environment. The funding comes from stimulus dollars from the Federal Government, of which the Town was able to take advantage. This project replaces a meter

replacement program the Town was previously involved in, that was solely at Town expense, and with older technology. This effort will reduce unaccounted water loss and save labor on meter reading. Both of these two items will reduce long term cost of water to our residents, and improve customer service.

In the coming weeks, the Town will be working with the installation contractor to inform the entire Town about how the system will be installed. Your kind assistance will be appreciated in ensuring the smooth upgrade of meters located at your home. Please look for those details, as we work to improve utility service in the community.

## TRASH SYSTEM

The Town Council approved the purchase of a new trash collection system that will change both how we collect trash and how we monitor our efficiency. Each of the Town's trash trucks will be equipped with an automatic dumper, to lift and empty cans into the truck. The system requires a specific type of a 1 yard rolling container with an integral lid. A new container will be provided to every residential trash customer, and each customer will have an option to select a smaller container if desired. These new containers will be dumped automatically

into the back of our refuse trucks, reducing the need for our Public Works staff to lift containers. The major benefit to this is the ability to reduce Worker's Compensation claims related to on the job injuries.

The system will also be able to track, through the use of GPS technology, the location of our trucks, when each receptacle was emptied, and the timing of different trash collection routes. This will provide the ability to track efficiency of our operation and make changes to routing to improve service.

In the coming weeks we will be provid-

ing the details of the no cost receptacle delivery. The Town will be working with the receptacle contractor to inform residents about the new containers, coordinate delivery, and geolocate your personal container. Your kind assistance will be appreciated in ensuring the use of the new receptacles at your home. Please look for those details to come, as we work to improve the quality and efficiency of La Plata's highly rated trash service. Associated with this improved service, the Town Council is approving a reduction in residential trash rates by 5%.

## WASTEWATER TREATMENT PLANT UPGRADE

In May, the Maryland Department of the Environment approved the Town's procurement of its construction contract for the upgrade of the Wastewater Treatment Plant to Enhanced Nutrient Removal standards. The proposed contractor is Johnston Construction and the proposed contract amount is \$8.152 million.

This upgrade is paid for using 94% Bay Restoration funding and 6% low interest loan. The project is required by the State of Maryland for all wastewater treatment plants that are rated to treat over one million gallons of sewage per day, in an effort to further remove nutrients that impact the Chesapeake Bay. La Plata's Wastewa-

ter Treatment Plant will remove nutrients from sewer water about ten times better than a typical septic system in operation in the County. Construction will commence this summer and will continue for two years. The plant will remain fully functional during the upgrade.

### Schools Out

Within the next few days, schools in our community will close for summer break. This annual event brings numerous children out in the community to enjoy their well-earned summer vacations.

The La Plata Police Department congratulates all of our area students on their academic achievements this past year and encourages safety in crossing streets. Children are reminded to always cross at the corner, stop and look both ways, and never cross between parked cars!

Motor vehicle operators are reminded to be extra cautious around playgrounds, parks, residential areas, and recreational facilities where children play. Oftentimes children are excited and preoccupied with play. It is our responsibility as motor vehicle operators to pay special attention for young people.

Drive slowly, obey the speed-limit, and watch out for the little ones!

Citizens are encouraged to immediately report erratic or dangerous driving to 9-1-1. Officers will respond.

Thank you and have a safe and enjoyable summer.

# TOWN OF LA PLATA

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



## Town of La Plata *July 4th WATERMELON BASH!*

At La Plata Town Hall

**Monday July 4th,  
11AM to 2PM**

Join us for hot dogs, games, wet fun,  
and plenty of watermelon.

More details at  
[www.TownofLaPlata.org](http://www.TownofLaPlata.org)

