

# TOWN NOTES

*News from La Plata Town Hall*



## MAYOR'S CORNER

A large WELCOME to Daniel Mears, the new Town Manager of La Plata. Mr. Mears brings with him a vast array of experience which he gathered while working in the state of Missouri. The Town Council looks forward to working with him regarding the many issues affecting our town. I feel confident Mr. Mears will lead the development programs and plans which will benefit our town.

We are very pleased with our police department's implementation of the bicycle patrol. Our officers will have more visibility in the central part of town by using this program.

I was recently appointed to the "Blue Ribbon Commission on Diversity and Inter-Group Relations" by the Charles County Commissioners. The Blue Ribbon Commission will focus on opinion gathering; the review and exchange of ideas; the sharing of practical proposals and long-term visions from citizens at all levels.

Take advantage of the starry nights by coming out to a Friday night concert or one of the remaining movies.

The members of the Town Council are always available for your input. There are many ways to have your voice heard. Please take advantage of the opportunity to write an e-mail to a Council member, to speak during the public forum part of our business meeting, or to talk with me at my monthly "Chat with the Mayor" sessions at various businesses in town.

## National Night Out 2007

August 7, 2007 marks the 24th annual National Night Out celebration and the 17th year for the Town of La Plata.

What is National Night Out? It's "America's *Night Out* Against Crime," and it can be anything your neighborhood wants—from a street gathering, flashlight walk, pizza party, cookout, dessert or ice cream social, or music and a moon bounce. National Night Out is not as much about the **what** as it is the **why**. National Night Out **is** about neighborhoods, and neighbors meeting neighbors. This excerpt is from the national news article:

*"It's a wonderful opportunity for communities nationwide to promote police-community partnerships, crime prevention, and neighborhood camaraderie. While the one night is certainly not an answer to crime, drugs and violence, National Night Out does represent the kind of spirit, energy and determination that is helping to make many neighborhoods safer places throughout the year. It [NNO] is a night to celebrate safety and crime prevention successes—and to expand and strengthen programs for the next 364 days."*

Last year there were over 11,000 communities worldwide, with a record number of 35.2 million people taking part. In our Town we had seven communities and two business participating. While this is just a small number of the communities and businesses in La Plata, the attendees all had a great time.

If you would like to know more about National Night Out and how you can help make this year a success please call D/Sgt. Brooks at 301-934-1500.

If your community is not on the list **YOU** can make it happen!!

Help McGruff "take a bite out of crime."

## Town Hall Closed

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

**Labor Day** Monday, September 3, 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.

# COUNCIL COLUMN

## Councilman Jim Goldsmith, Ward 1

I have been on the job for two months and am attempting to build my knowledge base. I have been doing that by discussions with various Town staff members and attendance at the Maryland Municipal League Convention in June. The convention provided numerous valuable lectures and work sessions on issues that will improve my knowledge base. It was very valuable to review the vendor shows to see what type things are available that might be needed by the Town. The more I learn the more I realize I don't know. But I will continue to make myself available for additional training.

I have been assigned to the Planning Commission as the Town Council representative. I had my first meeting on the 5<sup>th</sup> of June. The major discussion at that meeting was the request by CVS to upgrade their parking lot to increase the size of travel lanes. They were also requesting approval for a left turn lane from Hawthorne Drive. When CVS was constructed, the Town had a major concern about an entrance from Hawthorne Drive causing a backup onto Rt. 301 if traffic was blocking the entrance to CVS. CVS provided a traffic study that documented the traffic use for a specified day during the week. The traffic study concluded that the odds of

a backup taking place were very, very, very small. The intersection of Rt. 301 and Hawthorne Drive is scheduled to be widened slightly for the Walgreens drugstore construction. The Planning Commission approved a left turn capability contingent upon CVS paving the complete waiting/turning area of Hawthorne Drive east of Rt. 301. There will be new pavement and specific striping to direct traffic to a left turn from Hawthorne Drive to Rt. 301 and a left turn from Hawthorne Drive into CVS. I think we saw this as a win-win situation. CVS got its left turn entrance and the Town got new paving and striping.

Again, I will invite any organization/association in my Ward to have me attend your meetings to respond to your questions and/or bring you up to speed on things happening in your Town. Please call me at 301-752-3578.

## Councilman Scot D. Lucas, Ward 2

As you may have read, a recent vote was taken by the Council to donate \$5,000 to the Civista Health Foundation. First, let me reiterate that I believe Civista provides an excellent service not only for the residents of the Town of La Plata, but also the surrounding areas and many visitors each year. Second, the purpose of the money the Foundation is raising is for furnishing

the new wing of the hospital, not to buy new equipment for the hospital or help those less fortunate to pay their medical bills. It is because of that fundamental reason I did not vote for the donation. I do not want to use taxpayers' dollars for something that I did not believe would benefit the residents of the Town. If the donation had been for that new life saving machine or helping the residents who can't afford to pay the hospital, my vote would have been different. Remember, we, the taxpayers of Charles County, already gave once to the Foundation when our County Commissioners donated \$1 million. I did offer and continue to offer to have a charity golf tournament or a social so those residents who want to donate to the Foundation have an additional opportunity instead of forcing every resident of La Plata to donate. I, however, was in the minority when the last vote was counted. If you have questions or comments please e-mail me at [lucas4laplata@yahoo.com](mailto:lucas4laplata@yahoo.com) or call me at 301-481-7740.

## Councilman Vic E. Newman, Ward 4

### Significant Accomplishments with Water and Sewer

*Financial* – The Council, along with recommendations from the Water and Sewer Advisory Committee, agreed that major repairs and upgrades were needed and that current residents should not fund the significant portion of these projects. A plan was developed to increase the Major Facilities Fee paid by developers and property owners to pay for needed improvements to the sewer and water system, the Major Facilities Fee being the greatest portion of funding for these repairs and upgrades.

*Inflow and Infiltration* – This was and still is one of our greatest concerns when designing and upgrading your sewer capability. Inflow and infiltration (I & I)

## TOWN OF LA PLATA OFFICIALS

Mayor: Gene Ambrogio

Council:

Jim Goldsmith . . . . . Ward 1

Scot D. Lucas . . . . . Ward 2

Paddy Mudd . . . . . Ward 3

Vic E. Newman. . . . . Ward 4

Town Manager:

Daniel J. Mears

Assistant Town Manager:

Patricia L. Bembe

Assistant Town Manager:

Michelle D. Miner

Town Clerk: Judith T. Frazier

Treasurer: Joseph W. Norris

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](mailto:mminer@townoflaplata.org)

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

Continued on page 4

# LA PLATA TOWN SERVICES

## Household Hazardous Waste Collection

The Charles County Sanitary Landfill, on Billingsley Road East, between Piney Church Road and Rt. 5, accepts household hazardous waste products the **first Saturday of each month during April through December, 9 a.m. to 3 p.m.: August 4, September 1, October 6, November 3 and December 1.** Items accepted free of charge include pesticides, herbicides, fertilizer, gasoline, motor oil, antifreeze, paint, cleaning supplies, pool chemicals, batteries, expired prescription medicines and other poisons that are around your house. They ask that you keep the materials in their original containers whenever possible, and bring the items to the collection site in cardboard boxes for ease in unloading. *For more information call the Charles County Dept. of Public Facilities: 301-932-3599 or 301-870-2778; Landfill information service: 301-932-5656.*

## 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.*

## Courtesy Copy of Utility Bill Late Notice

Upon request by a property owner, the Town Finance Department will mail to the property owner a courtesy copy of the utility bill late notice that is sent to the renter of their property. Call the Utility Billing Office to arrange for this service: 301-934-8421.

## Trash Collection Schedule Adjustment

If your regular trash collection day is:

**Labor Day**  
Monday, September 3

Trash will be picked up on:

Tuesday, September 4

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

[This information is current as of July 1, 2007, and correct to the best of our knowledge. For more information, please contact Carol Rollins, Development Coordinator, Town of La Plata, at [crollins@townoflaplata.org](mailto:crollins@townoflaplata.org) or 301-934-8421, ext. 116.]

The following businesses were issued Commercial Occupancy Permits during May and June 2007:

### Hot Dog Cart

309 Charles Street

### Devine Inspirations

6 St. Mary's Avenue

### Title Company

9375 Chesapeake Street

### Target

60 Shining Willow Way

### NDG Communication

105 Centennial Street

has been plaguing the Town for decades, by allowing groundwater and stormwater to enter the sanitary sewer system. When this water enters into our sanitary sewers, it must be moved and treated like sanitary waste. Too much clear water often causes sewer backups and overflows when it rains, as well as taking up much needed capacity at our plant. An improper connection permits water from sources other than sanitary fixtures and floor drains to enter the sanitary sewer system. That water should be going to the storm sewer or allowed to soak into the ground without entering the sanitary sewer, so we have lined 4,000 feet of sewer line, rehabilitated 11 manholes, installed inserts in 125 manholes, and purchased and installed 7 portable flow meters for analysis. These changes alone have greatly decreased our I & I issues but have not totally eliminated it. This Council is committed to bringing this issue under control and will continue to monitor and fix our system.

*Sewer Collection System* – The Water and Sewer Advisory Committee has created 8 Sewer Service Areas and has estimated flow in each one based on the number of dwellings and water consumption. They have worked with developers to design and install a system that will convey the sewage to the treatment plant without any overflows when the Town has completely developed. During their review, the Water and Sewer Advisory Committee discovered and replaced a section of 8 inch line at the wastewater treatment plant (WWTP) with a 16 inch pipe. This greatly enhanced the flow into the WWTP by taking out a badly designed section.

*Wastewater Treatment Plant* – The Council and our Advisory Committee are working hard to ensure that our treatment plant is run and updated accordingly. We have changed operating personnel, applied for a grant and selected an engineering firm to begin a feasibility study to upgrade the treat-

ment plant. As studies continued, the Town realized that the way the plant was designed and operated it consumed 65,000 gallons of drinking water every day. The Council and our Advisory Committee immediately took steps and made changes, thus reducing it to 2,500 gallons per day – an EXCELLENT job by the Town's Water and Sewer Advisory Committee.

*Water System* – The Council and our Advisory Committee are working with County and State officials to ensure continuity. The Town has laid out its short and long term plans. Our short term plan includes: Bring our new 750,000 gallon water tank on Box Elder Road in service; install new pump house and controls on Well 8; reactivate Well 5 on Kent Avenue; and make improvements at Rosewick Crossing by drilling new Well 11 and adding an elevated storage tank (paid by developer.) Our long term plan includes: Completing model of Town water system; develop comprehensive plan for the water system; adopt Water Supply Capacity Management Plan; and integrate new developments into the water system.

The Council, Town staff, and the Water and Sewer Advisory Committee will continue to work hard to ensure that the Town's water and sewer capability is not outpaced by future growth.

### **Parks and Recreation**

During the latest Maryland Municipal League (MML) Convention held in June, I made contact with Maryland officials to discuss a teaming agreement to turn Tilghman Lake into an educational and recreational center. I have asked the Parks and Recreation Commission to start looking into what the Town can do to start this process. The Council will be working with the State, County, and local educational entities to make this a reality. The Council will also be looking into acquiring land and installing new recreational equipment

throughout the Town.

### **Tidbits**

❖ During the MML Convention, members of the Council were introduced to an innovative technology that would take our household and recyclable waste and turn it into an environmental friendly byproduct. This byproduct can then be sold to various industries thus helping to eliminate the need for larger landfills. I hope the Council and manufacturer can facilitate a meeting with local officials (County and other nearby municipalities) to discuss a possible teaming agreement.

❖ The Town is still receiving complaints about motorists not stopping for pedestrians trying to use crosswalks. PLEASE stop for anyone waiting to cross. Law enforcement officials will be making periodic checks and will fine anyone who does not follow the law. The Council has asked for zero tolerance by your law enforcement officials on this issue.

❖ I know, summer was too short and back to school is coming soon. Please be diligent in your commute and watch for all our children as they are waiting for their buses and crossing our busy intersections.

❖ During the month of June a request for your tax dollars was made by a local organization. I voted "NO" and was immediately criticized during the meeting and in the local paper. Ironically, two of the individuals who wanted your tax dollars to be donated were not even residents. The County has already given a donation of \$1 million of your tax dollars over the next 3 years. By a 3-2 vote, the residents of La Plata have now contributed twice (County and Town tax dollars.) There may be times where the use and donations of tax dollars are appropriate, but this was not one of those. This Councilman will continue to be a proper steward of your tax dollars.

# AUGUST 2007

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY	
			8:00 a.m. – 6:00 p.m., Farmers' Market 9:00 a.m., Design Review Board meeting 7:30 p.m., Crime Watch Council meeting	1	2	3 7:00 p.m., Concert – <i>United States Navy Band "The Cruisers"</i>	4 8:00 a.m. – 3:00 p.m., Farmers' Market
5	6 Special trash pick-up day (Call by 4:00 p.m. Fri., 8/3 to schedule)	7 6:00 p.m. to 9:00 p.m., National Night Out	8:00 a.m. – 6:00 p.m., Farmers' Market 7:00 p.m., Planning Commission meeting (rescheduled from 8/7) 5:00 p.m., Parks and Recreation Commission meeting	8	9	10 7:00 p.m., Concert – <i>Sam Grow Acoustic</i>	11 8:00 a.m. – 3:00 p.m., Farmers' Market 8:30 p.m., Screen on the Green – <i>The Sisterhood of the Traveling Pants</i> (Rain date: August 18)
12	13	14 7:00 p.m., Town Council work session	8:00 a.m. – 6:00 p.m., Farmers' Market 9:00 a.m., Design Review Board work session	15	16	17 7:00 p.m., Concert – <i>Air Force Band "Silver Wings"</i>	18 8:00 a.m. – 3:00 p.m., Farmers' Market
19	20 5:00 p.m., Beautification Commission meeting	21 7:00 p.m., Town Council work session	8:00 a.m. – 6:00 p.m., Farmers' Market	22	23	24 7:00 p.m., Concert – <i>Southern Maryland Concert Band</i>	25 8:00 a.m. – 3:00 p.m., Farmers' Market 8:30 p.m., Screen on the Green – <i>Ant Bully</i> (Rain date: September 1)
26	27	28 7:00 p.m., Town Council regular meeting	8:00 a.m. – 6:00 p.m., Farmers' Market	29	30	31 7:00 p.m., Concert – <i>United States Navy Band "Sea Chanters"</i>	

# SEPTEMBER 2007

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY	
						1 8:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m., Farmers' Market	
2	LABOR DAY – TOWN HALL CLOSED (Monday's trash will be picked up on Tuesday, September 4.)	3	4 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	5	6	7 7:00 p.m., Concert – <i>The Winstons</i>	8 8:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m., Farmers' Market 8:30 p.m., Screen on the Green – <i>Charlotte's Web</i> (Rain date: September 15)
9	10 Special trash pickup day (Call by 4:00 p.m. Fri., 9/7 to schedule)	11 7:00 p.m., Town Council work session	8:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m., Farmers' Market 5:00 p.m., Parks and Recreation Commission meeting	12	13	14	15 8:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m., Farmers' Market
16	17 5:00 p.m., Beautification Commission meeting	18 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 work session	19	20	21	22 8:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m., Farmers' Market
23/30	24/31	25 7:00 p.m., Town Council regular meeting	8:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m., Farmers' Market	26	27	28	29 8:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m., Farmers' Market

## Meet the Town Staff – Steve Murphy



Steve Murphy began working for the Town of La Plata in August of 1972 as a laborer on the trash truck. Over Steve's 35-year career with the Town he has worked in all positions within the Public Works Department and is currently the Director of Public Works. Over his career Steve has received many awards and commendations for his work and attitude, and has completed various classes and received certificates in a variety of public works-related fields.

Steve was born and raised in Faulkner and currently resides in Newburg with his wife Janie. They have two daughters and 3 grandchildren. Bowling is one of Steve's hobbies and he just recently returned from a bowling tournament in Texas, where his team placed 11th out of 125 teams.

## 2007 Summer Concert Series

All concerts are free and open to the public. Concerts begin at 7:00 p.m. on the west lawn of the Town Hall. Please bring a lawn chair or a blanket. Refreshments are available for purchase. An after-hours recorded message will advise of concert cancellations due to threatening weather: call (301) 934-8421. **Please do not bring pets or alcoholic beverages to the concerts.**

August 3	<i>United States Navy Band "The Cruisers"</i>
August 10	<i>Sam Grow Acoustik</i>
August 17	<i>United States Air Force Band "Silver Wings"</i>
August 24	<i>Southern Maryland Concert Band</i>
August 31	<i>United States Navy Band "Sea Chanters"</i>
September 7	<i>The Winstons</i>

## Maryland Municipal League Board of Directors

Congratulations to Councilman Vic Newman who was elected to the MML Board of Directors. The Maryland Municipal League is governed by a 31-member Board of Directors comprised of elected and appointed officials from throughout the state. Board members are elected at the Maryland Municipal League's annual business meeting in June and serve one-year terms. The Board meets six times during the year unless a special meeting is called.

**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 [frrazier@townoflaplata.org](mailto:frrazier@townoflaplata.org).

**TOWN OF LA PLATA**  
305 Queen Anne Street  
P. O. Box 2268  
La Plata, Maryland 20646-2268

PRESORTED  
FIRST CLASS MAIL  
U.S. POSTAGE  
PAID  
LA PLATA, MD  
PERMIT NO. 131