

TOWN NOTES

News from La Plata Town Hall



MAYOR'S CORNER

Today we are feeling the severe effects of a major recession that impact our lives in many ways. This impact is not limited to individuals but affects our towns, cities, and institutions. La Plata is not exempt.

The Town receives a substantial portion of its revenue from property taxes and a share of State income taxes. With decreasing property values and high unemployment rates, the amount of revenue that La Plata receives from these two sources will be reduced in the future. We also receive highway user funds (derived from state gasoline taxes) and police protection aid from the State. For the current fiscal year, the highway user funds have been cut 90% and our police protection aid has been reduced by 35%. The cuts will impact our street resurfacing program for the current fiscal year but will not have a major impact on our police protection.

Although we do not know for certain the degree of revenue reduction in the future, La Plata is in a position to weather short reductions in intergovernmental revenue from the State because we have been, and still are, fiscally conservative. The fact that we were able to build a new Town Hall and pay the full cost, without any borrowed debt, demonstrates the degree to which the Town has practiced

Continued on page 3



Choo! Choo!

Weather and years had severely faded the caboose at the La Plata Train Station. La Plata High School N.J.R.O.T.C. students recently spent two days priming the caboose in preparation for two coats of True Red paint. They also detailed the caboose with black paint. The paint job not only makes it more attractive, but it helps protect the caboose from weather and deterioration. The caboose looks great! Stop by the train station on Kent Avenue and admire their work.



And a Good Time Was Had By All



The 2009 "Salute to Veterans" Parade and Ceremony was a spectacular event with picture-perfect weather! Hundreds of spectators were treated to a wonderful parade filled with Veterans, motorcycles, antique vehicles, Boy and Girl Scouts of all ages, marching bands and JROTC groups from local high schools, and so much more. The ceremony that followed

the parade was also well attended. The guest speaker, Commander Dennis Quick, gave a very moving speech and poem that brought some to tears, including himself. The Port Tobacco Players Encore Kids gave a wonderful performance during the ceremony, as well. We look forward to next year's "Salute to Veterans" Parade and Ceremony and we hope to see you there!

Town Hall Closed

The Town Hall will be closed on the following days:

Thursday, December 24

Friday, December 25

Friday, January 1

Monday, January 18

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 Keith Back, Ward 2

The holiday season is almost here and I want to wish all of the residents of La Plata and the hard working Town staff a safe and happy season. I always look forward to the Christmas holiday. Since moving to this area, I have always loved the look of our town over the Christmas holidays. The decorations over the streets in the downtown area and the lights in the neighborhoods always brighten the spirits of both young and old. This is truly a season for family and friends and reflecting back on all of the blessings we enjoy. Take time during your busy holiday season to put aside the worries of the economy and other issues for a short while and enjoy the small things in life that in the long run mean the most anyway. Enjoy time off with your family or a quiet moment talking with a relative that you have not seen for a while. If you have the opportunity, please take time to thank those who are serving our country in the armed forces, police, or emergency services. They deserve our thanks everyday but especially during the holidays when many must be away from their families in order to keep us safe. Keep in mind those families that have members serving in Iraq and Afghanistan, those that have lost loved ones this past year, and those that, for whatever reason, are going through hard times this holiday season.

There have been a lot of things going on in La Plata this year and many more things to come in 2010. The Town Council is taking action on many infrastructure improvements to our parks, water, and sewer. The Town Council will be starting to have discussions about service priorities for next year's budget. If you have ideas or concerns, please pass them along to one of us.

Please support our local businesses as you do your Christmas shopping so that La Plata continues to be seen as a viable place for new businesses to open. If you will be traveling for the

holidays, please be extremely careful on the highways. Also, please watch out for your neighbors and visitors once the weather becomes cold, clean your sidewalks of snow and ice to help prevent accidents.

I look forward to a wonderful holiday season here in La Plata and I wish you and your family all the best for the coming New Year.

Councilwoman Paddy Mudd, Ward 3

Our Town has so far made it through very tough economic times with the loss of only a few businesses. Our hope is that La Plata as well as our nation is beginning to see better times ahead. The Vision Team is hard at work looking at the next 50 years of growth and development. My wish is that we maintain our small town values and atmosphere while meeting the needs of all our residents and visitors. The future introduction of Wi-Fi to our Town in a partnership with the Charles County Public Library is a perfect example of this.

The Council begins the 2011 budget process in January. Much time and effort is put into this by our staff before and after the Council makes its priorities known. Please come to us early with your budget concerns and requests. We hope to continue to listen to and consider all of your ideas as we begin another budget cycle. You can reach us individually by the addresses on our web site or collectively through the public forum at our business meeting as well as through our Town Manager.

The holiday season has begun! Please come out to our Olde Tyme Holiday Gathering on December 6th for a wonderful time for the entire family. Breakfast with Santa for children under 10 will be on December 12th. Make your reservations early for this popular event. Also come by the Town Hall any time during the season to see our decorations and exchange holiday greetings with our outstanding staff!

Councilman Joseph W. Norris, Ward 4

The colorful leaves of fall are leaving us and I am looking forward to the colorful lights and decorations of the coming holiday season. The tradition of the beautiful decorations along our main streets goes back many years, and is something I always look forward to. It is another thing that makes our Town special.

Do not forget to join in Sunday December 6th, for the annual "Olde Time Holiday Gathering" at Town Hall. There will be entertainment including storytelling, holiday crafts, miniature train rides, Santa's arrival on a fire truck, and lighting of the Town Tree. There will be light refreshments and we encourage everyone to bring a canned food item for our less fortunate neighbors. Breakfast with Santa takes place on December 12th for children 10 years or younger. As always more details are available on the town website at www.townofaplata.org.

The Design Review Board has not had any new projects recently but has approved new signage for several locations. We have also been very busy working on recommended amendments to the Sign Ordinance for the Town Council. I must commend Cathy Flerlage our Planning Director and Bob Turgeon Chairman of the DRB for all of their efforts. They have spent a lot of time to try and produce a useful document.

In late October, I had the opportunity to attend the Maryland Municipal League Fall Conference. There were numerous educational sessions on various subjects including Municipal Issues in Court, Budgeting with an emphasis on dealing with our current economy, Legislative Issues, Employment Issues, and Dealing with the Media and improving getting information to our citizens. Overall it was educational and I believe will help me be a better representative for the citizens of La Plata.

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

NOW OPEN IN LA PLATA AND COMING SOON TO LA PLATA

[This information is current as of November 1, 2009.]

The following businesses were issued Building Permits and/or Commercial Occupancy Permits during the period of September through October 2009:

Commercial Building Permits

Color Couture Salon

505 Charles Street

Outsource IT

6810 Crain Highway

Office Space

204 Washington Avenue

Occupancy Permits

ANS Daycare

106 Port Tobacco Road

Massage Therapy

15 S. Maple Avenue, Apt. #7

Retail Offices

116 La Grange Avenue

Hug Bug Clothing Boutique

6501 Crain Highway

Island Music (relocation)

403 Charles Street

Taco Bell

5995 Crain Highway

Color Couture Salon

505 Charles Street

GJ Dance Studio

122 Drury Drive

Illusions Salon (2nd location)

6541 Crain Highway

Benny's Sub Shop

6505 Crain Highway

Netlocity (IT consultant)

105 Centennial Street, Ste. 310

ARTWORK IN THE TOWN HALL



The La Plata Town Hall atrium has beautiful artwork for the public to enjoy. The paintings on display were created by former Town Clerk/Treasurer, Betty Musial. Betty has always had a talent for painting and after her retirement from the Town of La Plata



in 2003, she has had more time to create her beautiful paintings. Betty's art has been showcased throughout Charles and St. Mary's Counties over the years. Thank you, Betty for sharing your art with the Town and allowing us to appreciate your talents.

MAYOR'S CORNER (CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1)

sound financial management. We are better situated than many communities due to our fiscal practices.

Albeit all reductions in income will have some impact on the Town, we are determined to maintain our high level of services. Not knowing what the future will bring and what future cuts the State will apply to municipalities, we must use our limited resources in very productive ways by channeling the resources to the areas that will produce the most benefit for our residents. By doing so, we should be well-positioned to recover as the national economy improves. Our goal has been and will continue to be to make wise investments in the community that leads to future fiscal strength and the ability to provide and maintain quality public services.

As we all work through these difficult times, and as this unique year draws to a close, the expression Happy New Year carries a lot more meaning. And on this note, I wish everyone a very merry Christmas and a happy and bountiful New 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).

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: mminer@townoflaplata.org

Website: www.townoflaplata.org

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.*

La Plata Farmers' Market

The Farmers' Market offers for sale fresh produce, flowers and handcrafted items. It is located in the north parking lot behind the Charles County Courthouse on

Washington Avenue. The Market is open on Wednesdays, from 8:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m., and on Saturdays, from 8:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m. Farmers interested in selling at the market can contact the Town Hall for an application (301) 934-8421.

Household Hazardous Waste Collection

The Charles County Sanitary Landfill accepts household hazardous waste products the **first Saturday of each month during April through December, 9 a.m. to 3 p.m.: August 1, September 5, October 3, November 7, and December 5.**

The landfill is located at 12305 Billingsley Road East, Waldorf. For driving directions from your location, visit their web page at <http://www.charlescounty.org/pf/sww/landfill/default.htm>. Items accepted free of charge include pesticides, herbicides, fertilizer, gasoline, motor oil, antifreeze, paint, cleaning supplies, pool chemicals, batteries, fluorescent lights, expired prescription

medicines, and other poisons that are around your house. They advise that you should keep the materials in their original labeled containers whenever possible, and bring the items to the collection site in cardboard boxes for ease in unloading. *If you need more information, please call the Charles County Dept. of Public Facilities at 301-932-3599 or 301-870-2778, or the Landfill information service at 301-932-5656.*

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:
Friday, December 25
Friday, January 1
Monday, January 18

Trash will be picked up on:
Thursday, December 24
Thursday, December 31
Tuesday, January 19

WHEN IT SNOWS!



When it snows, the town will concentrate on keeping primary and major residential streets passable. These streets are cleared down to bare pavement as soon as possible after the storm is over. Plowing generally begins when snow becomes 1 to 3 inches deep and the temperature indicates there will be no

melting. Even after plowing, snow that has been hard packed by traffic often remains on the street, and the plows are unable to remove it. In this type of situation, sand and or salt is spread to provide adequate traction. To view the town's snow removal policy, go to our web site www.townoflaplata.org.



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.

DECEMBER 2009

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
		1 7:00 p.m., Planning Commission meeting	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 Yard waste pickup day	5 8:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m., Farmers' Market
6 3:00 p.m. to 6:00 p.m., Olde Tyme Holiday Gathering	7 Special trash pickup day (Call by 4:00 p.m. Fri., 12/4 to schedule.) Yard waste pickup day	8 7:00 p.m., Town Council work session	9 8:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m., Farmers' Market 5:00 p.m., Parks and Recreation Commission meeting	10	11 Yard waste pickup day	12 8:00 a.m. to 1:30 p.m., Breakfast with Santa 8:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m., Farmers' Market
13	14 Yard waste pickup day	15 7:00 p.m., Town Council work session	16 8:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m., Farmers' Market 9:00 a.m., Design Review Board meeting	17	18 Yard waste pickup day	19 8:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m., Farmers' Market
20 4:00 p.m., Beautification Commission meeting Yard waste pickup day	21	22	23 8:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m., Farmers' Market	24 Christmas Eve Town Hall Closed	25 Christmas Day Town Hall Closed (Fri. trash will be picked up on Thurs., 12/24.) No Yard Waste pickup	26 8:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m., Farmers' Market
27 Yard waste pickup day	28	29	30 8:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m., Farmers' Market	31		

JANUARY 2010

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
					1 New Year's Day Town Hall Closed (Fri. trash will be picked up on Thurs., 12/31.) No Yard Waste pickup	2 8:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m., Farmers' Market
3 Special trash pickup day (Call by 4:00 p.m. Thurs., 12/31 to schedule.) Yard waste pickup day	4 7:00 p.m., Planning Commission meeting	5 7:00 p.m., Town Council work session	6 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	7	8 Yard waste pickup day	9 8:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m., Farmers' Market
10	11 Yard waste pickup day	12 7:00 p.m., Town Council work session	13 8:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m., Farmers' Market 5:00 p.m., Parks and Recreation Commission meeting	14	15 Yard waste pickup day	16 8:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m., Farmers' Market
17 Martin Luther King, Jr. Day Town Hall Closed (Mon. trash will be picked up on Tues., 1/19.) No Yard Waste pickup	18 7:00 p.m., Town Council work session No Yard Waste pickup	19 7:00 p.m., Town Council work session No Yard Waste pickup	20 8:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m., Farmers' Market 9:00 a.m., Design Review Board meeting	21	22 Yard waste pickup day	23 8:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m., Farmers' Market
24/31 4:00 p.m., Beautification Commission meeting Yard waste pickup day	25 7:00 p.m., Town Council regular meeting	26	27 8:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m., Farmers' Market	28	29 Yard waste pickup day	30 8:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m., Farmers' Market

Conservation Corner – Storm Water Regulations



The Town is in the process of developing a new storm water ordinance to comply with a new State of Maryland law adding more regulation of storm water. In April 2007, Governor O'Malley signed the Storm Water Management Act of 2007. Prior to this Act, environmental site design (ESD), was encouraged through a series of credits found in Maryland's Storm Water Design Manual. The

Act requires that ESD, through the use of nonstructural best management practices and other better site design techniques, be implemented to the maximum extent practicable. Charged with implementation, the Maryland Department of the Environment (MDE) is in the process of addressing the requirements of the Act including changes to regulations.

In October 2009 MDE published the 2009 Model Standard Storm Water Management Plan. All local governments are required to adopt ordinances for development review, approval processes, and inspection of storm water control facilities by May of 2010. Although the new regulation provides a significant new burden on the Town of La Plata and other local governments across the State, the goal is to improve the quality of the waters of Maryland, and ultimately the Chesapeake Bay.

Agricultural runoff, litter, fertilizers, chemicals, and impervious surfaces all contribute to the quality of our streams, rivers, and waterways. Residents and businesses are encouraged to do their part to prevent contaminants from entering the storm water system, and the Town will soon be required to do even more as well. From pipes underground, to storm water control structures, to topography, and site design, many things impact the quality of surface water. La Plata will work to improve the quality of the water system and comply with State law, while maintaining the principles of smart growth within the community.

GREEN BUILDING MINI-GRANTS

Since December of 2007, La Plata's Conservation Corner has been giving you ideas and information to help conserve resources, save money, and make La Plata a better place for you and the environment. The Town has also pursued green options for how it does business by conserving water, using recycled and other green products, and constructing its Town Hall as a LEED Certified building, among other activities.

In order to help the community turn more ideas on helping our environment into reality, the La Plata Town Council

approved funds to provide Conservation Mini-Grants. 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.

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 en-

vironment. Applications for the second round will be due by February 1, 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 dmears@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.

LA PLATA FOR THE HOLIDAYS



Support our local businesses. This is the time of year when most of our consum-

er spending occurs. We purchase gifts, entertain, dine out, and treat ourselves and families more during this season than any other month of the year. This Holiday Season when getting together with family and friends look to the Town of La Plata for opportunities for entertaining, shopping, and dining. Out of town guests will find unique places in La Plata, so please show off your hometown. From major retailers to unique local establishments found only in La Plata there are many great options to satisfy everyone on your shopping list.

Bring your family out to explore downtown, view the holiday decorations and see what our unique stores have to offer.

The Town of La Plata encourages your support for our local businesses and small business owners. There are many to choose from and whether you support an independent business or a chain, often the owners of the business live right in our community.

By shopping and dining in La Plata you help to support your neighbors and your community, keeping and multiplying our local resources. This helps maintain the character and vitality that all our establishments provide to the Town. Thank you and Happy Holidays.

WEBSITE POLL

Visit the Town of La Plata's website at <http://www.townofla-plata.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:

Where do you work?

- In La Plata
- In Charles County but not in La Plata
- In Southern Maryland but not in Charles County
- In Maryland but not in Southern Maryland
- In Washington DC
- In Northern Virginia
- Other Location
- Retired/Don't work

Website Poll results from last issue of *Town Notes*

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

Ownership of wireless computing devices is steadily increasing. Would you support the Town of La Plata facilitating the expansion of a wireless system like Wi-Fi to be developed in its downtown?

- Strongly Support – 56%
- Somewhat Support – 17%
- Neither Support nor Oppose – 10%
- Somewhat Oppose – 2%
- Strongly Oppose – 15%
- Don't Know – 0%

Technology is quickly changing what people can do, and ultimately where they are able to do it. The trend toward mobile computing and wireless devices is increasing. Stores, hotels, restaurants, and other places see a benefit to providing wireless

internet connectivity, as it provides a service and serves to attract and retain customers. A community's downtown is a place for people to congregate, dine, shop, and participate in community functions. The ability for public spaces to be more dynamic and meet the modern needs of the population encourages people to those spaces.



The Town of La Plata Council has a Service Priority Goal of providing a Wi-Fi system in Town. The Charles County Public Library has also been looking for opportunities to improve information access to the community. With these two compatible goals, the Town and Library are now discussing options for pursuing a Wi-Fi system over a portion of La Plata's downtown.

At its first meeting in October, the La Plata Town Council heard a presentation from Charles County Public Library Director Emily Ferren. The presentation included a proposal for the Library and Town to partner in establishing a municipal Wi-Fi system over a portion of the downtown. The area to be covered has not been defined, however the backhaul node would be located at the La Plata Library branch and coverage would be determined by the number and location of Wi-Fi repeaters. The Library proposal included \$25,000 for hardware costs to set up the system, with technical services provided by Library staff.

A complete plan is under development, and there is intent to work together to deliver municipal Wi-Fi and information access over a small scale public system covering a portion of La Plata's downtown. The Town of La Plata strives to have a pedestrian friendly downtown, and providing this service will help meet the goal of getting more people on the street and interacting in the community.

TESTING OF EARLY WARNING DEVICES/SIRENS

The Town of La Plata will be testing our early warning devices/sirens on Saturday, December 5, 2009, at approximately 10:00 a.m. The testing will last about a half hour. The tests will consist of both siren alerts and audible notifications. This test will be conducted in conjunction with the Charles County 911 Communications Center, which controls and operates the system for the Town. *The text of the pre-recorded message that accom-*

panies the siren can be found on the Town's website, <http://www.townoflaplata.org>, under Siren Testing.

The devices are installed at the following locations: on Charles Street in front of the Charles County Courthouse, on Curley Hall Road at the Town's Wastewater Treatment Plant (near Quailwood Subdivision), in Clarks Run Subdivision, in King's Grant Subdivision, and on Shining willow Way next to the La Plata

Volunteer Fire Department.

Emergency Management Officials remind you that in the event of a real emergency to stay tuned to local radio stations for more information, to have emergency supplies on hand – including a radio which can be operated during a power outage, and to know where the safe haven is in your home. It is everyone's responsibility to plan for an emergency.

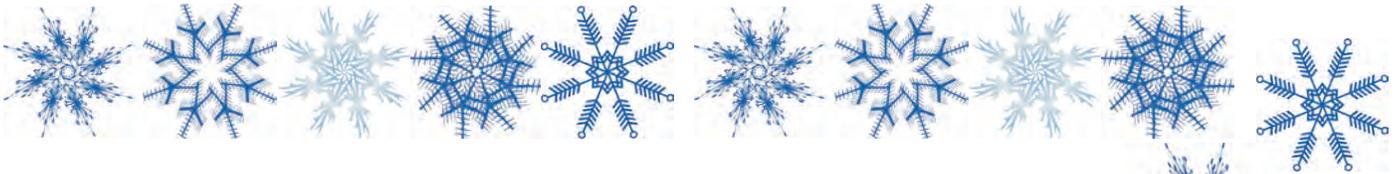
MEET THE TOWN STAFF



Katherine Winstead

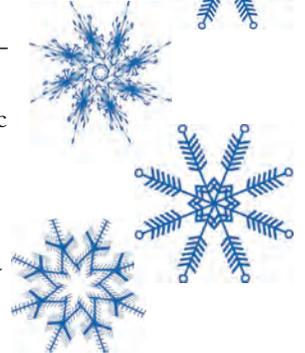
Katherine has recently joined the Town as the Accounts Payable Clerk. Katherine grew up along the beautiful Wicomico River and her days on the waterfront farm were filled with crabbing, fishing, swimming and just hanging out on the beach. Her family raised corn, hay, a gigantic garden, dairy cows for fresh milk, chickens, pigs, and ran a boat rental business. After marriage and moving to Newport, she raised six children and involved herself with boy scouts, 4-H, a majorette and drum corp and many organizations focusing on children. As her children matured she began taking classes at the College of Southern Maryland. When not working she enjoys listening to country music, working outside, learning new crafts, baking and helping others.

TOWN CODE CORNER: LET IT SNOW! LET IT SNOW!



Winter is upon us and the Farmer's Almanac predicts some precipitation in December. If the temperatures are right, that could mean snow. Every year the Town Hall receives inquiries regarding the removal of snow on sidewalks. According to the Town Code section 170-16B "It shall be the duty and obligation of the owner of property abutting a sidewalk in a public right-of-way to

remove the snow from the sidewalk within forty-eight (48) hours after the snow has fallen. Any owner of property abutting a sidewalk in a public right-of-way who fails to remove snow from the abutting sidewalk within forty-eight (48) hours after snow has fallen shall, upon conviction, be guilty of a misdemeanor and shall be subject to a penalty."



Seeing Red

Residents and visitors to La Plata have been seeing red a lot more lately. The Town has been working in its last two fiscal years on a visibility campaign to improve road markings and traffic control signs. A big portion of the program has been the addition of a red reflective strip to the post below stop signs. This two inch reflective strip assists in drawing a driver's attention to stop signs that they may not be familiar with, are partially obscured, or are difficult to see in adverse weather conditions.

The increased visibility can help reduce speeds on approach to stop signs, encourage motorists to stop completely, and reduce the times when motorists roll through a stop sign. Traffic control signs are placed for motorist and pedestrian safety. Adherence to traffic rules helps make La Plata a safer community by reducing injuries and property damage.

The visibility campaign will continue with more reflective strips on stop signs, and other roadway markings. Higher volume roadways, intersections, and accident locations have been the priority for installing the reflective strips. The program will be proposed to continue in the Town's 2011 fiscal year budget. Please drive safely, and mind all the rules of the road.

SPECIAL EVENTS

Olde Tyme Holiday Gathering



**Sunday, December 6,
3:00 p.m. to 6:00 p.m.
La Plata Town Hall**

The Town Council will be hosting the fifth annual Olde Tyme Holiday Gathering at the Town

Hall. There will be entertainment inside and outside, including holiday storytelling, free kids holiday craft stations, miniature train rides, Santa's arrival by fire truck, lighting of the Town Tree at 3:00, light refreshments, and more. Don't miss the incredible Illusion Show at 3:30! Enjoy delightful live holiday music performed throughout the event. All who are attending are encouraged to bring a canned food item, which will be donated to an area food bank. For more information contact Amy Peña at 301-934-8421 or apena@townoflaplata.org.

Breakfast with Santa



**Saturday, December 12,
8:00 a.m. to 1:30 p.m.
(Reservations required)
La Plata Town Hall**

Children 10 years old and under are invited to have Breakfast with Santa at the La Plata Town Hall. Each child

is asked to bring at least one Holiday card. Handmade cards are encouraged, and children may bring as many cards as they wish. The cards are taken to the residents of the nursing homes in La Plata. Reservations are required and spaces are limited to 20 per time slot. Please choose one of the following time slots: 8:00 a.m. – 9:00 a.m., 9:30 a.m. – 10:30 a.m., 11:00 a.m. – 12:00 p.m., and 12:30 p.m. – 1:30 p.m. Call Town Hall by noon on Friday, December 11, so Santa's helpers will know when you'll be here. For more information contact Amy Peña at 301-934-8421 or apena@townoflaplata.org. Hurry, time slots are filling fast!

Morning Creations at La Plata Town Hall

**Saturday, January 9, 9:00 a.m. to 11:00 a.m.
La Plata Town Hall**

Wake up your creative side! Come out to the La Plata Town Hall the first Saturday of each month (second Saturday if the first one is a holiday) and create a fantastic craft project! Each month's FREE class will feature a craft that is appropriate for the season or holiday and will be suitable for all skill levels. So don't worry if you are not a "crafty person", this is the perfect time to learn a great craft and show off your new-found talent to your friends and family. Classes are led by the Town's Event

Coordinator, Amy Peña. Throughout the year, we will have guest instructors who will teach us the art of scrapbooking, cake decorating and more. Be sure to read the Town Notes Newsletter and check the website www.townoflaplata.org often for updated information and photos of the upcoming projects. Spaces are limited and are open to ages 16 and older. Once you have made your reservation, a list of materials that you will need to bring to the class can be emailed to you or picked up at the Town Hall.



January's craft project will feature a delightful snowman centerpiece. Display this plump, snow-covered cutie proudly, because you will make it yourself! *Reservations are required* and can be made by calling 301-934-8421 or emailing apena@townoflaplata.org, spots will fill quickly. Once you have made your reservation, you will receive a list of materials that you will need to purchase and bring with

you to class. Call your friends and make it a friend's morning out! Register by January 6, 2010.

Snow Day!

**Date and Time to be determined
La Plata Town Hall**



Southern Maryland is not known for getting a lot of snow, but kids of all ages love to play in the frozen fun. If the weather gets cold enough this year, La Plata will bring manmade snow to La Plata Town Hall for a Snow Day. La Plata staff will watch the weather for days when it will

be cold enough to create a winter scene on the Town's Concert Lawn. All you need to do is let us know if you are interested in joining the *snow-filled* fun.

To be included, get yourself on our email notification list, by calling Town Hall at 301-934-8421 or emailing "Snow Day!" to apena@townoflaplata.org.

We will give as much advance notice as possible as to when the snow will fall at Town Hall. Notice will go out via email and will be announced on our website, www.townoflaplata.org. Then just bundle the kids up and bring them to Town Hall to enjoy making igloos, snowmen, and snow angels, and we will provide all of the supplies. There will be plenty of hot chocolate and yummy cookies to warm up with. We look forward to a fun winter!

TOWN OF LA PLATA

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