

TOWN NOTES

News from La Plata Town Hall



MAYOR'S CORNER

The Holidays are over and winter has arrived. This time each year we seriously contemplate what it is we want to accomplish for our Town and our community in the current year. We bring to the table ideas and comments heard throughout the Town and in our formal meetings and match these with the limited resources that will be available during the year. There is always more we would like to accomplish than our financial resources will permit in any given year so we look for grants and other available means to continue improving our Town.

I have been on the Town Council and lived in the Town of La Plata long enough to see many changes within and outside our Town boundaries. Some we have initiated on our own and others have been forced upon us by nature and agencies outside our control. We are less than 10,000 in population and by most measures still a small town and we strive to retain the small town atmosphere. Still, we must address many of the problems and concerns faced by much larger towns and cities. Balancing these two critical areas and their complexity drive our strategic plans for each and every year.

We are privileged to be the county seat of Charles County and thereby

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Neighborhood Event Mini-Grant

Interested in getting to know more people in your neighborhood? If so then help is here. Town of La Plata Neighborhood Event Mini-Grant is designed to provide an opportunity for Town of La Plata residents to strengthen their neighborhoods through producing special events. The Town of La Plata invites neighborhood associations and communities to submit the neighborhood grant application for review. There will be 5 grants awarded up to \$500 each. Deadline to submit application is March 11, 2016. Grant applications are available for download from the Town's website or email Colleen Wilson, Special Events Coordinator at cwilson@townoflaplata.org or (301) 934-8421 ext. 142. The Town will offer a grant opportunity specifically for National Night Out events in May.

Martin Luther King, Jr. Breakfast

Councilman Lynn Gilroy joined Chief Carl Schinner and Captain Bill Brooks at the Charles County Chapter of the NAACP's 21st Annual Dr. Martin Luther King Day Prayer Breakfast on Monday, January 18, 2016.



Left to right: Councilman Lynn Gilroy, Chief Carl Schinner, Captain Bill Brooks

Reverend Doctor Delman

Coates delivered an inspiring keynote address. Also in attendance to honor Dr. King's legacy were United States Senators Mikulski and Cardin, as well as United States Representatives Hoyer and Van Hollen.



Town of La Plata



La Plata Police Department

COUNCIL COLUMN

Councilman Lynn Gilroy, Ward 3

By the time you read this we should be well into 2016. I wish all of you a very happy and prosperous new year.

As always we are starting our budget process. It is always challenging to maintain quality services with limited resources.

The start of the new legislative year is always interesting and with the Governor, Delegates and Senators settled in from last year's new start we hope that we will see more positive work on the highway user revenues (HUR) that is still on top of the agenda. These revenues will help us maintain our roads and sidewalks.

We continue to work with the La Plata Business Association to foster a better relationship and encourage people to "Shop La Plata". This years "Shop Small La Plata" was an outstanding success. I think the weather had something to do with it.

We are working on improvements to Wills Park and also restoration of the shore line and the floating dock as well

as other improvements at Tilghman Lake.

Finally, stay in touch with us on the Town's web site and receive notices of special events by our staff. Go to www.townofaplata.org and sign up.

I look forward in hearing from you so we can try and solve our future issues together. Please feel free to contact me at lgilroy@townofaplata.org, by calling Town Hall at 301-934-8421 or by cell at 301-653-1440.

Councilman Joseph Norris, Ward 4

New Years blessings to all who read this. Though you won't read this until February the New Year is still very much in my mind. I hope you have many blessings and opportunities in the New Year. I already feel grateful and blessed that our winter has not been too harsh so far. I must remember it is early yet.

A word of thanks to our many volunteers who serve on various boards and commissions. These generous people give many hours of their time addressing a variety of tasks for the Town of

La Plata. Please visit the Town website www.townofaplata.org and click on the Commissions tab to learn more. You can find out what each board or commission is responsible for when they meet and who the members are. Also please consider submitting an application for one of the groups you would be interested in. From time to time there are vacancies and it would help to have a reserve of interested persons.

Please remember that the Town has several recycling programs to take advantage of. We have our weekly recycling using the recycling bins. We also have a battery recycling program. This is important because it keeps a lot of heavy metals from our soil and environment. Just drop off your batteries to the container in the Town Hall lobby. We also have electronic recycling from time to time. Watch the newsletter and website for dates and other information.

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

24TH ANNUAL ANTIQUE SHOW & SALE AT LA PLATA HIGH SCHOOL

Saturday February 13th 9am-5pm

Sunday February 14th 11am-4pm

Door Prizes and Refreshments

Admission \$5

Info: (301) 259-2411 or laplataantiqueshow@gmail.com

Proceeds benefit the programs and scholarships for La Plata High School Band and Orchestra

WINNERS OF THE 2015 HOLIDAY DECORATIONS CONTEST

Thank you to all who entered this year's contest! The following stood out as deserving recognition for demonstrating tremendous community spirit!

Shop La Plata Celebration Small Business Saturday People's Choice Awards:

Illusions Hair & Nail Salon	1st Place Traditional
The Loft Salon & Scrub Bar	2nd Place Traditional
Optical Shoppe of La Plata	1st Place Whimsical
Centerpiece Boutique & Design	2nd Place Whimsical

Commercial:

Davis Florist (called in)	1st Place Commercial
Alchemy Salon	2nd Place Commercial

Residential:

Cavalier Family	Kings Grant	1st Place Traditional
Will & Mary Ann Yeckley	Quailwood	2nd Place Traditional
Rich & Maria Poletis	Haldane	3rd Place Traditional
Joel and Julie McCowan	Kings Grant	1st Place Whimsical
McCourt Family	Kings Grant	2nd Place Whimsical
Christopher Young, Jr.	Clarks Run	3rd Place Whimsical
Donna Flickinger, Ben Hanson, Krista Jones	Agricopia	Honorable Mention
Steve & Erin Mruk	Charleston Terrace	Honorable Mention
Sean Mayhew	Clarks Run	Honorable Mention
Kamienski Family	Haldane	Honorable Mention
Scott & Meg Herlihy	Haldane	Honorable Mention
Pat & Dan Brennan	Kings Grant	Honorable Mention
Mary & Marty Bowling	Kings Grant	Honorable Mention
Turner Family	Phoenix Run	Honorable Mention

BUILDING PERMITS ISSUED

Commercial building permits issued 11/1/15-12/31/15

200 Rosewick Road – Indian Cuisine Restaurant
 30 Shining Willow Way – Mr. Eye Dr
 601 Charles Street – Dash In
 204 Washington Ave, Ste 1B – Meredith Mgmt office space

Commercial occupancy permits issued 11/1/15-12/31/15

6257 Crain Highway – Arcadian Computers
 3 La Grange Ave – Holi-Pop Art Gallery
 6643 Crain Highway – Vapor Lounge
 102 Centennial St, Ste 100 – The Wills Group office space

TOWN OF LA PLATA OFFICIALS

Mayor: Roy G. Hale

Council:

Wayne Winkler Ward 1
 C. Keith Back Ward 2
 Lynn D. Gilroy 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

Police Chief: Carl H. Schinner

Director of Planning:

Jeremy D. Hurlbutt

Director of Operations: Robert F. Stahl, Jr.

Director of Public Works:

Jeffrey S. Garner

Manager of Inspections: James Q. Yates

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

Website: www.townofaplata.org

MAYOR'S CORNER (CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1)

have many large stakeholders within our Town. The county office building and courthouse complex, the regional hospital, and our business community help make our Town strong but they have needs that impact the Town and must be addressed on a regular basis. All of us together make the Town and all of us working together ensure that we never lose what it was that brought you to La Plata originally.

As we review and update our strategic plan for 2016 and the years to come, starting in February, we will take a hard look at what has been accomplished to date and the work that still needs to be done. Fortunately, we have already addressed major water and sewer issues, added sidewalks and some street improvements, upgraded our water meter system, and improved our parks and our police department. Pedestrian safety issues, traffic flow, storm water management concerns, internal and external growth issues, redevelopment of our downtown area, and a host of other issues will all be on the table. Please contact your Councilman or me and let us know what concerns you may have. Again, it is all of us working together that produce the best results.

As your Mayor, I am always open to your comments, whether they are positive or critical. You may reach me at Town Hall (301) 934-8421 or at home (301) 934-4850.

Town Hall Closed

The Town Hall will be closed on the following days:

Monday, February 15, 2016

Friday, March 25, 2016

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.

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.

Yard Waste Pick Up

Residential yard waste pick ups will only take place on Monday and Fridays. 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 50lbs. per bundle, and the branches may not be larger than 4 feet long. *Plastic bags are not allowed – if you bag yard waste you must use paper bags.*

New Smaller Wheeled Recycling Container Sizes:

The Town of La Plata has been ordering large 95 gallon recycling containers to meet demand. In response to requests, the Town has ordered a small supply of smaller size recycling containers. An order with 65 gallon and 35 gallon wheeled recycling containers is being delivered to La Plata, and residents will be able to request one of the new sizes.

The new containers match the sizes available for trash containers in the Town, and are convenient for residents with less room to store the large 95 gallon container. If you are interested in the small or medium sized wheeled recycling container, please contact Mary Trollinger at the Public Works Department (301) 934-8421 or email mtrollinger@townoflaplata.org.

Recycling containers are now available in wheeled 95 gallon, wheeled 65 gallon, wheeled 35 gallon, and 18 gallon carry containers. The three wheeled options all come with an integrated lid.

Over 1,500 95 gallon recycling containers have been distributed in Town to date. The containers have been very well received because the wheels make it easy to move the container, the large size



allows some residents who only need to put out their recycling every other week, since there is no garbage in the container. The containers also encourage more recycling and divert more material from the landfills. Diverting recyclables from the landfill saves customers money, because landfill tipping fees are lower for every ton of waste that is recycled.

You must contact the Town if you are interested in a wheeled recycling container. Due to a limited budget, wheeled recycling containers are only being ordered to meet demand. Thank you for your interest.

Trash Collection Schedule Adjustment

If your regular trash collection day is:

Monday, February 15, 2016
Friday, March 25, 2016

Yard Waste Pick Up Schedule Adjustment

Monday, February 15, 2016
Friday, March 25, 2016

Recycling Pick Up

Trash will be picked up on:

Tuesday, February 16, 2016
Thursday, March 24, 2016

No Pick Up

No Pick Up

As Scheduled



FAMILY CAMPING AT TILGHMAN LAKE Friday, March 11 and Saturday, March 12, 2016.

Space is limited to the first 50 registrants. Permit form is available at www.townoflaplata.org or by calling 301-934-8421. Reservation deadline March 8, 2016.

La Plata's Largest Park! 40 Acres of nature to explore Located at 10598 Box Elder Road off of Radio Station Rd Take the opportunity to camp with your family and friends close to home. You can bring charcoal to cook out dinner and breakfast on one of the many grills located in the park. Eat under the large beautiful pavilion overlooking Tilghman Lake. Enjoy fishing from the dock or lakeside. Walk the trail loop, or walk the connection to Laurel Springs Regional park where there is a playground, ball fields, and sport fields.

For more information, visit the Family Camping page at www.TownofLaPlata.org.

FEBRUARY 2016

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
	1 Yard Waste Pick Up Special Pick Up (please call by 1/29 to be put on list)	2 Planning Commission meeting; 7:00 p.m.	3 Design Review Board meeting; 9:00 a.m. Crime Watch Council meeting; 7:00 p.m.	4	5 Yard Waste Pick Up	6
7	8 Yard Waste Pick Up	9 Mayor and Council work session; 7:00 p.m.	10 Parks and Recreation Commission; 10:00 a.m.	11	12 Yard Waste Pick Up	13
14  Valentine's Day	15 Town Hall Closed for President's Day No Yard Waste Pick Up No Trash Pick Up (trash pick up 2/16)	16 Mayor and Council work session; 7:00 p.m.	17 Design Review Board meeting; 9:00 a.m.	18	19 Yard Waste Pick Up	20
21	22 Yard Waste Pick Up	23 Mayor and Council business meeting; 7:00 p.m.	24	25	26 Yard Waste Pick Up	27
28	29 Yard Waste Pick Up					

MARCH 2016

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
		1	2	3	4	5
		Planning Commission meeting; 7:00 p.m.	Crime Watch Council meeting; 7:00 p.m.		Yard Waste Pick Up	
6	7	8	9	10	11	12
Yard Waste Pick Up Special Pick Up (please call by 3/4 to be put on list)	Mayor and Council work session; 7:00 p.m.	Parks and Recreation Commission; 10:00 a.m.		Family Camping at Tilghman Lake Yard Waste Pick Up Beautification Commission meeting; 10:00 a.m. 	Family Camping at Tilghman Lake	
 13	14	15	16	 17	18	19
Daylight Savings	Yard Waste Pick Up	Mayor and Council work session; 7:00 p.m.	Design Review Board meeting; 9:00 a.m.	St. Patrick's Day	Yard Waste Pick Up	
20	21	22	23	24	25	26
	Yard Waste Pick Up	Mayor and Council business meeting; 7:00 p.m.			Town Hall Closed No Yard Waste Pick Up No Trash Pick Up (pick up 3/24)	
27	28	29	30	31		
	Yard Waste Pick Up					

SPECIAL EVENTS

Olde Tyme Holiday Gathering

The Olde Tyme Holiday Gathering ushered in the holiday season at Town Hall on Sunday, December 6th. Music filled the council chambers while children made crafts and listened to story time provided by the Charles County Public Library in the outdoor tent. Horse drawn carriage rides were enjoyed by many who attended the event. La Plata Volunteer Fire Department delivered a very special visitor to greet all the children – Santa Claus! Thank you to all who attended and volunteered at the event!



Breakfast with Santa

Santa took a break from his busy schedule to visit with the children at Breakfast with Santa.



TO DO LIST

- Post the pull out calendar on your refrigerator
- Contact Town Hall for a 95, 65, or 35 gallon wheeled recycling container
- Sign up to be on the Town's Constant Contact email list
- Get a second Town trash container for extra heavy trash days
- Set up your utility bill for automatic payment
- Complete the latest Snap Poll question
- Make your home more water efficient
- Attend a Town Council meeting
- Say hello to a La Plata Police Officer
- Submit a Beautification Mini-Grant application
- Get alerts on your water consumption
- Buckle your seat belt
- Pick up your pet's waste when walking them on a leash
- Like the Town's Facebook Page
- Receive Electronic Meeting Agendas
- Like the La Plata Police Department Facebook page
- Visit <http://www.townoflaplata.org> for more information on all of these

Toys for Tots

The Toys for Tots bin was overflowing at the Town Hall. The toys were collected and taken to the Jaycees in Waldorf to be distributed. Thank you to all who contributed.



La Plata police officers and Town employees helped load up gifts for the Toys for Tots campaign. The gifts were donated by Town citizens, business owners, and Town employees. It is always an honor to help Santa with his workload to ensure every child in Charles County has a new toy to open.

SPECIAL EVENTS (CONTINUED FROM PAGE 7)

Ready Set Go!



Grab some teammates and sign up for the Town of La Plata Bed Races. Bed Races take place on Saturday, April 30th at 3 pm as part of the Celebrate La Plata event. Your team will race on La Grange Ave as the crowd cheers you on.

It's easy to participate – no registration fee and the Town has beds that can be used for the races. Get your creative juices flowing and make your own

team bed! Each team must have four participants that are 16 years or older. Don't miss out on the chance to come dressed in team t-shirts or costumes to promote your business or organization. The annual bed race is a great way to do some marketing while having a lot of fun. Prizes will be awarded to the top teams and best team attire.

Registration deadline is April 15. For more information or to register for the Bed Races, contact Colleen Wilson at (301) 934-8421 or cwilson@townoflaplata.org. Participation form is available on the Town's website www.townoflaplata.org.

Fill out the interest form below to receive more information.

Your Name: _____

Teammate 1: _____

Teammate 2: _____

Teammate 3: _____

Contact email: _____

Contact number: _____

We are interested in racing our own bed.

We are interested in using a Town bed.

(Town beds will be shared among teams so only decorations that can be quickly and easily removed will be allowed.)

Please return the form to:

Town of La Plata

Colleen Wilson, Special Events Coordinator

PO Box 2268

La Plata, MD 20646

Or email the information to cwilson@townoflaplata.org



UPCOMING EVENTS

The 2016 Special Events Calendar Coming Soon! Information will be posted on the Town's website in early March. Stay up to date on what is going on in the Town of La Plata by signing up for our weekly email and liking the Town of La Plata's face book page. If you would like to receive email notifications about upcoming Town of La Plata news and events please send your email to Special Events Coordinator Colleen Wilson at cwilson@townoflaplata.org



Ice Cream with the Easter Bunny

Monday, March 28th:
11 AM to 1 PM

Hop on in for ice cream with the Easter Bunny! Stop by the La Plata Town Hall on the Monday after Easter, March 28th from 11

AM to 1 PM. Bring the kids for sweet treat, crafts and visit with the Easter Bunny.



Celebrate La Plata

Saturday April 30th:
12 noon to 4 PM

The Town of La Plata will come together for a day of family fun at the annual Spring Festival, Celebrate La Plata on Saturday, April 30th. Enjoy a day

of activities for children of all ages at Celebrate La Plata; face painting, displays, entertainment, refreshments for sale from local favorites and ever entertaining Bed Races!

WEBSITE POLL



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

The current question is:

Many of La Plata's special events are free or mostly free. Does this affect whether you choose to attend or not?

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

December Website Poll Results

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

What is your main source of information about La Plata's Special Events?

	2011	2015
Town Notes Newsletter	- 26%	- 36%
TownofLaPlata.org	- 40%	- 20%
Special Events Brochure	- 0%	- 0%
Town of La Plata Facebook page	- 0%	- 13%
Town email list	- 3%	- 10%
Word of Mouth	- 3%	- 10%
Newspaper	- 23%	- 3%
Other publications	- 4%	- 6%

Town of La Plata events serve the residents of this community, and often draw from outside of Town as well. Many people have come to Town events for the first time, joining friends and

family, who have been attending for years. For the past few years, La Plata has increased its efforts to communicate events, and what will be happening at them by trying to reach audiences in a variety of communication methods.

The responses show people's sources of information have been changing right along with technology. Information that is immediate and directly pushed to residents has increased. Facebook and the Town email list both rose in responses, while going to the Town's web page fell.

The most comprehensive source of information on Town events is the Events section of TownofLaPlata.org. The site contains information on upcoming events, video from past events, participation forms, general information, and more. In the past year the Town put a new look and a new organizational layout to the website to have a more modern feel for navigation. Many of the other communication media direct people to the Town's website for more information, which will always be the best place to find out more.

Three sources of print material have a wide distribution in the community. The Town Notes is the Town's newsletter which is distributed to every utility customer every other month. It contains some information on events coming in the next couple months. Through press releases, news stories, and ads in the local

newspapers there are details and stories in the week before and week after La Plata's larger events. A special events brochure listing event dates and times is available at events, Town Hall, and some locations in Town.

Electronic communication will continue to grow as a tool in communicating with the public. Through the email list maintained by the Town, residents receive regular updates on events and other announcements through Constant Contact. Those emailed announcements come at least weekly during the Town's event season. Email cwilson@townoflaplata.org to be added to the list. The email links recipients to the freshest content on the Town's web page, the Facebook account, and new videos on the Town's YouTube channel.

In May 2011 the Town started its own Facebook page. Just search for Town of La Plata, and the page with the Town Seal as the profile image is the Town's page. Like the Town to be connected to the Town's posts. Whether it is this new media, or another more traditional form of communication, there are lots of ways to find out what is going on in La Plata throughout the year.

Efficiency Corner

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 finding new ways to improve services, and the Town regularly invests in technology or implements process changes to drive efficiencies.

Records Center

The Town of La Plata was incorporated in 1888. During its long history the Town has accumulated a large number of

permanent records. These are documents that are intended to be kept for as long as they serve a purpose to the community. When La Plata moved into the new Town Hall in 2005, the building had a third floor which was dedicated to the storage of not only the Town's permanent records, but many other files, invoices, and sundry office paperwork. As the Town has embarked on its implementation of permit tracking software, the integration with permanent records was seen as an important part of complementing the digital tracking system.

Continued on page 10

Spring Cleaning - Keep Your Home Beautiful and Code Compliant

Proper maintenance of your home helps extend its life, improves the quality of your residence, and adds value to your neighborhood. Property maintenance is part of the Town code. In the Town Code - Sections 117 and 152, and in the International Property Maintenance Code - Sections 301 through 308 there is a good overview of the maintenance requirements for your home's exterior and interior structure. Here is a spring cleaning "Top Ten List", to help get your home looking great!

- Siding – Mold and mildew, loose or missing panels, peeling paint
- Windows – Broken glass, missing screens, missing caulking and peeling paint.
- Doors – Peeling paint, loose weather strips, loose hardware.
- Painting – Exterior and interior walls and trim.
- Gutters – Clean-out and re-attach as needed. Flexible down spout extensions help keep water away from the foundation.
- Decks and Porches – Remove leaves and debris, repair or replace decking boards as needed, don't forget to check the deck supports and attachments to the house for any structural defects. Cleaning and re-sealing a deck can add years to its life.
- Power Washing – This is a quick and easy method to clean your home's exterior, gutters and deck.
- Storage – Don't forget to take care of your shed and any other outbuildings.
- Outside Electrical Outlets – Do they have covers, are they working and do they have Ground Fault Protection (GFI)? GFI is designed to protect you from receiving a shock injury.
- Sump Pumps – Be sure to check your sump pump for proper operation. If it is an older model, consider replacing it, BEFORE it fails during a storm.

These are just a few items to help get your home ready for the spring. Please be sure to follow safe practices while cleaning and working around the house. Consider a licensed contractor for big projects. If you have any questions about the code, please contact Aaron Mosrie, Asst. Manager of Inspections at (301) 934-8421 ext. 132.

Sign Up for Our Email List



Stay up to date on what is going on in the Town of La Plata by signing up for our weekly email. If you would like to receive email notifications about upcoming Town of La Plata news and events please send your email to Special Events Coordinator Colleen Wilson at cwilson@townoflaplata.org .



EFFICIENCY CORNER (CONTINUED FROM PAGE 9)

In order to accomplish this, decades worth of old records needed to be organized in the same manner, to aid staff in locating plats, building permits, ordinances, and many other vital records of the government. Since over the decades the storage systems were organized by the preferences of the staff at the time, there was a need for improved consistency.

While the Town has been digitally scanning plans, documents, and ordinances for years, there is a large cache of older documents. The older paper documents will be kept for redundancy, or they are valuable for keeping as they are. To aid the integration of digital storage along with paper files, the Town has set up a record center in expansion space on the Town Hall's second floor. To manage the permanent records, the Town Clerk has relocated her office to the records center, to aid in the custodial responsibilities of the Town's records. Through significant work of the Town Clerk, Planning Department, and the assistance of Public Works in setting up the records center, the Town's use of space is more efficient, as well as the increasing ease of locating the Town's records.

CONSERVATION CORNER – TREE CARE

Trees are a valuable resource for our community. Trees provide shade which cool our buildings, paved surfaces, lawns, and ourselves. They provide visual appeal to our neighborhoods, downtown, and help connect us to our natural environment. They can be a source of food for people, as well as wildlife habitat. They can serve as elements for recreation and as visual barriers to screen unsightly areas. Trees clean the air, provide oxygen, and serve a valuable role in carbon sequestration. We must all take a role in planting and caring for the trees in our community, for the benefit they provide to our town.

Trees are a cost effective, low maintenance, and attractive addition to our landscapes. The biggest key to success is to research the trees on your property and those you are considering to plant. Be sure to choose trees that are native to this area, so they will have the greatest chance of survival and growing well, this will also reduce your long term maintenance needs.

When planting trees:

- Consider the size of the tree and space it a reasonable distance from buildings, utility lines, driveways, sidewalks, roads, and other trees to ensure the branches and roots do not become maintenance problems later.
- Dig a wide hole to plant the tree to loosen soil and give roots room.
- Do not dig the hole deeper than the root ball.
- On root balls always remove cages, twine, and burlap.
- Fertilizer and other additives are not necessary.
- Water absorbing crystals can aid in retaining moisture in the soil during drier periods.

Mulching trees has many benefits beyond the aesthetic appeal.

- Inhibits growth of weeds.
- Provides a barrier to reduce damage from lawnmowers and other equipment.
- Conserves moisture in the soil.
- Removes competition for rain by turf or other plants, allowing more moisture to get to the roots.
- It helps maintain the soil temperature.
- Mulch up to four inches deep.
- Do not place mulch against the bark. A mulch volcano is incorrect and can lead to tree health problems. Pull mulch away from the trunk.

Pruning trees may be done when needed for safety of people or property, to remove disease or insect infestation, to stimulate fruit production, or for aesthetic appeal.

- Do not top trees or over prune. This causes significant stress to the tree.
- Do not prune in the summer. Tree branches and leaves protect the tree, conserve its moisture, and the tree shades itself.
- Only prune select branches.
- Do not prune branches near utility lines, instead contact the utility.
- Prune safely or contact a professional service.

For more tips visit www.arboday.org. Consider adding a fruit tree to your property to not only add value to your property, but food for your family and neighbors. Properly caring for trees will improve our environment and our community. Thank you for your concern for trees and their positive impact on our community.



TOWN OF LA PLATA

305 Queen Anne Street
P. O. Box 2268
La Plata, Maryland 20646-2268

PRESORTED
FIRST CLASS MAIL
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PERMIT NO. 10131

NEVER MISS ANOTHER TOWN EVENT
CALENDAR PULL-OUT ON PAGES 5 & 6. PUT ME ON YOUR
REFRIGERATOR FOR EASY REFERENCE.

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

SAYE • THE • DATE

Celebrate La Plata

SATURDAY, APRIL 30th
12 PM to 4 PM at La Plata Town Hall

Free Family Fun!

CRAFT & FOOD VENDORS • MOON BOUNCE • KIDS ART ACTIVITIES • FACE PAINTING



La Plata Bed Races start at 3 PM!

For more information or to register for the La Plata Bed Races please contact
Special Events Coordinator, Colleen Wilson at 301-934-8421 or cwilson@townoflaplata.org.