



# FOREST HEIGHTS NEWS

## One Community—Many Cultures

January 2005

Incorporated 1949

52nd Year, Issue No. 1

The Town of Forest Heights celebrates  
Black History  
Saturday, February 19, 2005  
10:00 a.m.—12:00 noon—Municipal Building

### MAYOR'S JOURNAL

“There is, nevertheless, a certain respect and a general duty of humanity that ties us, not only to beasts that have life and sense, but even to trees and plants.”

~ Michel Eyquem de Montaigne (1533-1592)

Dear Neighbor,

Happy New Year – 2005! Have you made your new year's resolutions? There is a new year's resolution that I propose to the community - increase healthy living. Healthy living is a vital resolution that we should strive to maintain every day. Healthy living does not pertain strictly to the well being of our body. One vital part of healthy living is respect. The respect that we have for each other – neighbor to neighbor, the respect that we have for our community – keeping our yards cleaned, the respect that we have for our Administration, Public Works and Police Force – the people working to assure that the routine tasks of the town are completed, the streets are cleaned and our community safe. The respect for the government – the people elected to serve the needs of the community.

There is a serious problem in the Town of Forest Heights. The problem can be resolved with your cooperation. The problem is lack of respect for our community streets and private yards. Every street has litter either tossed from cars or thrown on the ground from pedestrians.

Automobiles are parked in the yards instead of on the street. Residents

.....continued on page 2

#### TOWN MEETING

JANUARY 19, 2005 @ 8:00 P.M.  
MUNICIPAL BUILDING

JACK B. JOHNSON  
COUNTY EXECUTIVE

The Adult Health Program Prince George's  
County Health Department

Free Community Wellness Program  
“Facts about arthritis and its management”  
Tuesday, January 25, 2005

10:00 am to 12:00—Municipal Building  
RSVP by January 21, 2005, (301) 839-1030

Mayor Paula R. Noble

[mayor.fh@verizon.net](mailto:mayor.fh@verizon.net)

#### TOWN COUNCIL:

##### Ward I

Lynn Smith-Barnes—(301) 749-9741

[WARDIHandinHand@aol.com](mailto:WARDIHandinHand@aol.com)

George Wiggers—(301) 839-3712

[wiggers@forestheights.biz](mailto:wiggers@forestheights.biz)

##### Ward II

Clifton Atkinson—(301) 567-4839

Joyce Beck—(301) 567-0084

##### Ward III

Worthington Ross—(301) 567-5016

[wsross@comcast.net](mailto:wsross@comcast.net)

Larry Stoner—(301) 839-9040

#### ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICES

Phone: (301) 839-1030

Cynthia H. Farrar, *Town Administrator*

[townadministrator@verizon.net](mailto:townadministrator@verizon.net)

Dennis Bobo, *Town Treasurer*

[towntreasurer.fh@verizon.net](mailto:towntreasurer.fh@verizon.net)

Bonita Anderson, *Town Clerk*

[townclerk.fh@verizon.net](mailto:townclerk.fh@verizon.net)

Gloria Wallace, *Receptionist*

#### PUBLIC WORKS DEPARTMENT

Phone: (301) 686-1432

William Clarke, *Supervisor*

#### POLICE DEPARTMENT

Phone: (301) 839-4040

Michael Eubank, *Acting Chief of Police*

[fhpd2004@verizon.net](mailto:fhpd2004@verizon.net)

Latessa Crawford, *Police Clerk*

[policeclerk.fh@verizon.net](mailto:policeclerk.fh@verizon.net)

*Mayor's Journal continued.....*

pass through the yards of neighbors destroying shrubbery and plantings. The sad note is that people have not come into the community – we are already here. There are trash receptacles, but some do not bother to use them. There are abandoned cars in driveways and on the streets. There has been dumping on some streets.

The cause of the problem is lack of respect for the community in which we live. The solution is simple – respect. Friends and family should know that the Town of Forest Heights will not tolerate disrespect of its community. Tell your friends who visit to throw trash in the receptacles. If we pledge to not dump in the town, to park automobiles on the street, and to remove abandoned vehicles from driveways and streets, then the community will be a healthier place.

Crime statistics in Forest Heights are minimal. Acting Chief Eubank, Corporal Waithe, Officers Blake and Heberlig are diligently working to eliminate all crime in Forest Heights. Unfortunately, our neighbors in surrounding communities are not experiencing the same statistics. We must be proactive in our pursuit against crime in Forest Heights. A community forum is planned to solicit input and determine how we as a community can work together to “knock out” crime in Forest Heights. Flyers will be distributed to let you know the place, time and participants.

The State of Maryland contributes monetary funds to the town for the cars registered in the state. The revenue is used to enhance town services for its residents. There are residents who live in the town and take advantage of these services, however, their cars are registered in Washington, DC & Virginia . This hurts the town. The town pleads with you to change your out of state tags to the State of Maryland. The Town Council will be enacting legislation to enforce violations of the ordinance regarding out of state tags. For more information please contact the Town of Forest Heights Police Department at (301) 839-4040.

At the December town meeting, one of the residents requested that the town solicit its residents to contribute (or exchange) services to the town. If you have a business and/or skills that you are willing to contribute to the town, please contact Gloria Wallace at (301) 839-1030. The list will be compiled.

The initial construction phase of the work has finally begun on the Municipal Building. The first floor will at last be handicap accessible allowing residents to enter the front of the building. The construction includes building a handicap accessible restroom.

This year, in the Town of Forest Heights, neighbors, let’s respect our community, its neighbors, its streets and its environment. This year, in the Town of Forest Heights, neighbors, let’s pledge to give back to the community, its schools – Flintstone Elementary and Forest Heights Elementary as well as the local middle and high schools. This year, in the Town of Forest Heights, neighbors, let’s support our local businesses. This year, in the Town of Forest Heights, neighbors, let’s stop criticizing and start proposing solutions. This year, in the Town of Forest Heights, neighbors, let’s be neighbors and stop living next door to each other. This year, in the Town of Forest Heights, let’s live “One Community – Many Cultures.”

Paula R. Noble  
Mayor

**2004 INCOME TAX**  
**MAKE SURE THAT ON YOUR STATE INCOME TAX FORM YOU**  
**SPECIFY THAT THE INCORPORATED MUNICIPALITY IN**  
**WHICH YOU LIVE IS FOREST HEIGHTS.**

### Informational Session & Town Meeting Schedule/Highlights



**COUNCIL WILL MEET EVERY MONDAY. TIMES WILL BE POSTED. PLEASE CALL TOWN HALL.**

*Next Town Meeting  
January 19, 2005*

Town Meetings are always held on the third Wednesday at 8:00 p.m. during the months of September - June. Mayor/Council Informational Sessions are held on the first Monday of the month (Tuesday when Monday is a holiday or as absolutely necessary). Meetings are open to the public. The next Informational Council Session will be Monday, February 7, 2005 at 6:30 p.m.

#### December 15th, 2004

##### Town Meeting Highlights

- ◆ Ordinance No. 1-2004—Public Ethics Ordinance Article 14 (please stop by the municipal building to obtain a copy of the final ordinance)
- ◆ RESOLUTION 12-04—Department of Family Services Grant (6-0-1 vote)
- ◆ RESOLUTION 18-04—To sell Police Motorcycles (6-0-1 vote)
- ◆ RESOLUTION 19-04—To adopt Forest Heights Strategic Plan (table until next meeting)

\*\*\*\*\*

### Forest Heights Author Releases Second Book

FOREST HEIGHTS, MD -- Tahira Mahdi, a 1994 graduate of Oxon Hill High School and resident of Arapahoe Drive, is releasing her second book at the end of January. This nonfiction work, entitled *How to Be Queen of the Universe*, is a fun survival guide for women and deals with spiritual, relationship, career, health and social issues.

Ms. Mahdi has been receiving critical acclaim for her first book, *God Laughs, Too* (fiction), since its initial release in 2001. She has been featured in the *Washington City Paper*, the *Washington Afro-American* Newspaper, the Prince George's County *Gazette* and many more publications, television shows and radio programs nationwide.

The year 2005 finds Tahira Mahdi on her second national book tour. Both of her books are available at bookstores everywhere including Caravan Books & Imports at Rivertowne Commons. They are appropriate for ages 15 and up. Visit her website at [www.tuffcrowd.com](http://www.tuffcrowd.com).

\*\*\*\*\*

### ENERGY ASSISTANCE FOR ELIGIBLE MARYLAND RESIDENTS



Low-income Maryland residents may be eligible to receive a discount on a portion of the natural gas they use through a new Residential Essential Service (RES) pilot program. Depending on the amount of natural gas used during

the winter heating season, this credit could be worth as much as \$135.

For eligibility please contact the Maryland Department of Human Resources Energy Hotline at 1-800-352-1446 or [www.dlhr.state.md.us/meap](http://www.dlhr.state.md.us/meap).

\*\*\*\*\*

**Our Town Commitment**  
***Equal Housing Opportunity***  
**The Fair Housing Amendments Act of 1988: "We Do Business in Accordance With the Federal Fair Housing Law" Urban Assistant Secretary for Fair Housing: 1-800-669-9777.**

\*\*\*\*\*

### EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITIES

The contractor for the Handicapped Accessibility project, making the Municipal Building ADA compliant is Inner City Residential and Commercial Development Group, LLC. There will be employment opportunities for qualified construction workers. Please contact Mr. Joseph Gaskins, President, (301) 423-0524.

\*\*\*\*\*

### PRINCE GEORGE'S CABLE COMCAST

The Prince George's Cable Commission meets the third Tuesday at 6:00 p.m. The meeting is held at the Largo Government Center. The next meeting is scheduled for Tuesday, January 18, 2005, 1-800-COMCAST

**CRIME REPORT**  
**POLICE CHIEF UPDATE**  
**December 2004**

Theft .....	2
Property Damage .....	2
Vehicle Impound .....	1
Theft from Auto .....	1
Stolen Tag .....	0
Robbery .....	0
Stolen Auto.....	0
Vandalism to Auto .....	1
Assault .....	0
Recovered Stolen Vehicle ..	0
Residential B & E.....	1
Arrest .....	1

**Forest Heights Police Dept.**  
**(301) 839-4040**  
**Eastover District IV Police**  
**(301) 749-4900**  
**Maryland Park Police**  
**(301) 459-9088**

**POLICE DEPARTMENT**  
**OFFICE HOURS**

**Monday—Friday**  
**8:30 a.m.—4:30 p.m.**  
**Closed Saturday and Sunday**



**PLACES OF WORSHIP**

Abundant Life Ministries  
 5533 Livingston Road  
 Forest Heights, MD 20745  
 (301) 839-7993  
 Bishop Albert I. Chatman

Forest Heights Baptist Church  
 6371 Oxon Hill Road  
 Forest Heights, MD 20745  
 (301) 839-1166  
 Dr. James A. Langley, Pastor

St. Mark AME Church  
 5427 Indian Head Hwy  
 Forest Heights, MD 20745  
 (301) 567-9509  
 Rev. Henry D. Harper, Pastor

The Prepared Table Baptist Church  
 5508 Arapahoe Drive  
 Forest Heights, MD 20745  
 (301) 702-9482  
 Rev. Edward A. Smith  
 \*\*\*\*\*

**OXON HILL FOOD PANTRY**

The Oxon Hill Food Pantry, located at Our Savior's Lutheran Church, 4915 St. Barnabas Road, provides emergency food rations to needy individuals and families in Forest Heights and the surrounding area. It operates on Tuesday and Saturday from 10 a.m. to 1 p.m. and on Thursday evening from 6 to 8 p.m. Phone (301) 899-8358 during hours of operation.



**SHARE PROGRAM**

Orders are due by February 12, 2005, \$16 per value package/regular package  
 Package includes:  
*Meat, fruit, vegetable and dessert*  
 Please contact Ms. Wallace for more information @ 301-839-1030  
 \*\*\*\*\*



To the citizens of Forest Heights and everyone who contributed and volunteered in spreading the holiday cheer at the December 18th Santa's Workshop. It was once again a big success.

*Mrs. Doris Stephens*

The Town of Forest Heights would like to thank Mr. Kennedy & his son for donating the copier to the Forest Heights Police Department.

\*\*\*\*\*

**TRASH COLLECTION SCHEDULE**

**PICK-UP DAYS BEGIN AT 6:30 a.m.**

**MONDAY**—Recycling

**TUESDAY**—Trash

**WEDNESDAY**—Bulk & Yard Waste

**FRIDAY**—Trash

**PLEASE CONTACT WASTE MANAGEMENT AT (301) 702-3558 OR**

**TOWN CLERK AT (301) 839-1030, WITH ANY TRASH COMPLAINTS**

**Deadline to submit articles for the February 2005 newsletter is January 21, 2005. Articles are to be turned in via email to [townclerk.fh@verizon.net](mailto:townclerk.fh@verizon.net) or mailed to the Municipal Building at 5508 Arapahoe Drive, Forest Heights, MD 20745.**

## Toastmasters: Communication and Leadership in Action

Aref Dajani, Lieutenant Governor Marketing

District 27 Toastmasters

Recently, Mayor Noble asked me to write a short article about the Toastmasters organization. She plans to start a chapter of Toastmasters right here in Forest Heights.

I don't want to sell you a bill of goods. We've all seen advertisements, billboards, and commercials that want to sell you everything. Instead, let me tell you what Toastmasters is and what Toastmasters is not, so you can decide for yourself whether you would like to join a brand new Toastmasters club, right here in Forest Heights.

Many people who have heard of Toastmasters think that it is a public speaking organization. It started that way, but Toastmasters teaches much more than public speaking.

Toastmasters is a non-profit organization that teaches communication and leadership. Communication includes giving speeches in front of an audience, as well as speaking off the cuff, like when you're interviewing for a job. We also focus on active listening, where you learn how to give and receive feedback. Leadership includes learning how to run meetings and how to inspire others to achieve success.

Many of you may feel terrified about having to give a speech in front of an audience. Some of you may think that you have nothing to say. I have great news for you: in Toastmasters, you don't speak in front of strangers. You speak in front of neighbors, co-workers, and friends. You talk about yourself, your

life, your family, and whatever you want to talk about. In Toastmasters, we help each other. We are going to give you so much support and encouragement that you won't feel as nervous as you thought you would. We will help you unlock your voice, so you can move one step closer to achieving your goals in life, whatever they may be.

A long time ago, I took a public speaking course where the teacher had everyone come up front and give a speech. After criticizing everything she didn't like, we each received a letter grade for our speech. In Toastmasters, we don't have teachers, tests, or grades. We don't criticize each other, either. We practice the Golden Rule. We treat each other the way we want to be treated. We show courtesy and celebrate diversity. We learn to speak by speaking and we learn to lead by leading. Best of all, we learn from each other, because all of us has something to offer.

I believe that Toastmasters has something to offer you. Mayor Noble plans to start a club right here in Forest Heights. We invite you to our very first meeting. I hope to see you there.

Toastmasters is communication and leadership in action. We learn by doing and we learn from each other.

Toastmasters has 10,000 clubs and 200,000 members in 80 countries. We hope that Toastmasters will work for you.

Many communities (maybe the one you live in) have serious problems with gangs. There are many kinds of gangs, but whatever kind your community is dealing with, gangs spell trouble. They cause fear, destroy property, threaten or hurt peaceable residents, and drive out businesses.

### **SHARPEN YOUR SKILLS AS A PARENT**

Many gang members say they joined because the gang offered them support, caring, and a sense of order and purpose – all the things that most parents try to give their kids. The odds are that the better you meet these needs, the less need your children will see for gangs. Here are some parenting skills that are especially important:

- Talk with and listen to your child. Spend some special time with each child.
- Put a high value on education and help your child to do his or her best in school.
- Do everything possible to prevent dropping out.
- Help your kids identify positive role models and heroes – especially people right in your community.
- Do everything possible to involve your children in supervised, positive group activities.
- Praise them for doing well and encourage them to do their very best – to stretch their skills to the utmost.
- Know what your children are doing and whom they are with. Know about their friends and their friends' families.

Don't forget to talk about gangs. The best time is before there's a major problem.

Tell your child that

- your disapprove of gangs
- you don't want to see your child hurt or arrested
- you see your child as special, and worth protecting
- you want to help your child with problems
- family members don't keep secrets from each other, and
- you and other parents are working together against gangs

### **HELP KEEP GANGS OUT – FOUR THINGS YOU CAN DO**

Gangs are often violent and intimidating. What can you do in the face of this?

**FIRST**, develop positive alternatives. Are there after school and weekend activities kids can enjoy? Can the school offer its facilities? Can parents organize clubs or sports? Can older kids tutor or mentor younger ones? Can the kids themselves help with ideas?

**SECOND**, talk with other parents. For one thing, you'll find out what everyone else's parent really said. For another, you can support each other and share knowledge that will help spot problems sooner than you can on your own

**THIRD**, work with police and other agencies. Report suspicious activity, set up a Neighborhood Watch or a community patrol; let the police know about gang graffiti, get (and share with other parents) the facts on the gang problem in your community, find out what local services – non-profit as well as government – will work with communities against gangs.

**FOURTH**, get organized against the gang organization. Use your neighborhood association or a new group. Get help from a variety of sources right in your community. Try these kinds of people in addition to the police, religious leaders, family counselor, community association, school counselor or principal, athletic coach, Boys & Girls Clubs, YMCA/YWCA, Scouts, drug abuse prevention groups, youth-serving agencies, and community centers – just to name a few.

### **LEARN ABOUT GANGS**

Young people (as young as nine or ten) join gangs for reasons that make sense to them, if not to adults. They give reasons like these:

- to belong to a group
- for excitement
- to get protection
- to earn money
- to be with friends

Gangs leave signs of their presence. Your child may adopt some of those signs as either a gang member or an imitator:

- specific colors or emblems
- special hand signals
- gang symbols on walls as graffiti or on books or clothing
- major and negative behavior changes such as:
  - o worse grades
  - o staying out without good reason
  - o "hanging" with known or suspected gang members
  - o carrying weapons
  - o wearing certain kinds and colors of clothing in very specific ways
  - o possessing unexplained relatively large sums of money