



# Twenty years ago — a look back at the year 1988.

The images of 2008 have been seared into our collective memory and pundits continue to spout analysis. Twenty years ago, in 1988, the Takoma Voice completed one year of publishing as a local community paper. Revisiting the events of that year proves that no matter how much things change, in many ways they hardly change at all.

## Silver Spring development: Facing the first test

The County agreed to fund a proposed \$23 million parking structure between Ellsworth Avenue and Pershing Drive in Silver Spring. Citizens Referendum on Over-Development gathered 18,000 signatures to force a vote on the question. Takoma Park answered “No” by a resounding 74%. But the measure passed countywide with 54% in favor.

Moore received conditional approval from the Planning Board to turn the Silver Triangle into a mall twice the size of Tyson’s Corner Center. It fell through when he failed to secure two “acceptable” department stores to serve as anchors.

But other developers moved forward: “Early next year construction will begin on a new retail project, City Place with 60 shops, half the size of White Flint.” Folger Platt had already completed the first of four office buildings to house the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA).

## Maryland’s unique approach to gun control

On May 23, Maryland enacted the first law in America prohibiting the manufacture and sale of Saturday Night Specials and non-detectable handguns, by creating a handgun register of banned weapons. In the November election, voters re-affirmed the measure, and it remains on the books,

## Setting the National Scene.

In 1988 President Reagan traveled to Moscow. The Soviet Union was still two years from collapse. Jesse Jackson left his mark on the campaign trail before George Bush the First obliterated Michael Dukakis in a lackluster presidential race.

Oliver North was indicted for Iran-Contra. Nelson Mandela turned 70 in a South African prison cell. The space shuttle resumed flights in the wake of Challenger disaster. And at the holidays, Pan Am Flight 103 was blown up over Lockerbie Scotland.

For the first time, a major computer virus struck via the Internet and MS-DOS 4.0 was released. Prozac and laser eye surgery were the new medical wonders. A writers strike delayed the start of the fall TV season for one month and Miami Vice set the style for cop shows. *Who Framed Roger Rabbit* and the first *Die Hard* were box office hits.

It is worth remembering that gas was 91 cents a gallon...postage stamps cost 24 cents...Dr. Koop compared nicotine to heroin and cocaine...and sales of CDs first outsold vinyl records.

Ironically, high finance bailouts were part of the picture...RJR Nabisco’s leveraged buyout cost \$25.07 billion...the federal government stepped in with \$2 billion in aid to help the Bass Group buy American Savings and Loan...and the federal reserve interest rate was 10.5% at the close of 1998.

Perhaps most ominously, by year’s end the Soviet Union’s Red Army had withdrawn

making Maryland one of the strongest states on gun control.

## Carroll Avenue delays anger City

“A car ride across parts of Takoma Park’s Carroll Avenue rivals a drive over the worst back roads of Appalachia.”

The worst blocks were between Flower and Garland Avenues where miscommunication between the city and WSSC meant that sewer work was done after the roads were newly-resurfaced.

Bob Berger lamented that “For the time being, Takoma Park appears to have no option but to deal with the WSSC. Their relationship is mandated by an act of the

state legislature which put Takoma Park in the WSSC’s jurisdiction.”

*2008: Sounds familiar to drivers who spent much of the year negotiating a chopped-up Carroll Avenue from Old Town to Sligo Creek as sewer lines were once again replaced.*

## Takoma Park recycles

On August 29, the City of Takoma Park hired Daryl Braithwaite as its first recycling coordinator. She helped push for passage of the 1988 state recycling legislation and helped create the city guidelines. Her appointment came as the City completed its first year of recycling — which includes only newspapers (700 tons were collected,

the equivalent of 2800 cubic yards of landfill space). In those days, the County had no program.

*2008: Twenty years later, Braithwaite continues to oversee recycling from her post as head of Public Works. The expanded program now covers mixed paper, glass, metal cans and most plastics except wide-mouthed #1s and polystyrene (#6) packaging. Unlike the County, where collection is done by private contractors, the City uses its own trucks, then turns the collected material over to the County for processing. More details are available on the city’s website: www.takomaparkmd.gov.*

## Take note

• The Takoma Park Farmers Market was only open May 15-November 20.

• The Women’s Health Center, at 7005 Carroll Avenue, celebrated its second anniversary on October 27, 1988.

*2008: The center was forced to close and the space remains vacant.*

• Peter Franchot lost a tough battle to unseat Republican Congresswoman Connie Morella.

*2008, Franchot is State Comptroller and Chris Van Hollen sits in Morella’s seat.*

• Spring Knolls Cooperative School, founded in 1949, turned 40.

*2008: Now located at 8900 Georgia Ave, it remains a local institution at 60 with classes for ages 3-5. Interested parents are invited to tour the school at open houses set for Tuesday, January 27, 2009: (9:30 am-Noon), Wednesday, January 28, 2009: (9:30 am-Noon), and Thursday, January 29, 2009: (9:30 am-Noon or 12:30-3 pm). Call 301-650-0086 for an appointment.*

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