

The City of Portsmouth Community Newsletter Issue 10 Nov. 30, 2005

This City of Portsmouth Community Newsletter includes information about City-sponsored events, projects and special announcements and is part of our continuing effort to communicate more extensive and timely information to the public. Editions are e-mailed every other Wednesday. To join the distribution list, or be removed, go to www.cityofportsmouth.com. – *City Manager John P. Bohenko*

HOLIDAY EVENTS

The Christmas Tree Lighting ceremony in Market Square will be at 6 p.m. Friday (Dec. 2). The illuminated Holiday Parade is Saturday night (Dec. 3). Marching bands, floats with the theme “Peace in Portsmouth,” and Santa Claus will leave Plaza 800 at 6 p.m. and head toward downtown via Islington Street to Congress Street to Market Square and then turn right down Pleasant Street to the South Mill Pond area. A list of the streets to be closed to parking and/or traffic between 4 p.m. and 9 p.m. is at <http://www.cityofportsmouth.com/holidayparade.html>. Contact: 610-7275.

PARADE NIGHT PARKING

A \$3 flat-rate parking fee will be collected from each vehicle entering the High-Hanover Parking Garage on Saturday, December 3, between 3 p.m. and 7 p.m. Payment upon entry to the facility is expected to reduce delays for those leaving after the Holiday Parade and other downtown activities.

REC DEPARTMENT

Basketball registration for boys and girls in Grades 7-12 ends Friday (Dec. 2) at the Connie Bean Center. For costs and program specifics, call 766-1483, or see the Rec Department’s brochure at <http://www.cityofportsmouth.com/recreation/fallprogram2005.pdf>. The youth basketball schedules for younger grades are posted at <http://www.cityofportsmouth.com/recreation/programs-basket.htm>.

MEDICARE SYMPOSIUM

On Saturday, December 3, City government cable TV Channel 22 will rebroadcast the recent symposium held at City Hall that explained the changes facing seniors under the new Medicare Prescription Drug Plan. It will be shown at 7 p.m. Speakers at the two-hour Nov. 17 symposium included Dr. Charlotte Yeh, Boston regional administrator for Medicare and Medicaid Services; U.S. Department of Health and Human Services Regional Director Brian Cresta; and Social Security Administration regional officers.

EARLY RELEASE

A reminder: Wednesday, December 7, is an early release day for Portsmouth Public Schools.

COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

The CDBG Citizens Advisory Committee will hold a public hearing Thursday, Dec. 8, at 7 p.m. in City Hall Conference Room A to receive citizen input for development of the 2006-2007 Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) budget. CDBG funds must be used to benefit Portsmouth families who earn very low, low or moderate incomes. CDBG dollars can be used for public facility projects in neighborhoods where over half of the residents earn low or moderate incomes and to remove architectural barriers in order to improve accessibility for those with disabilities. Contact: 610-7226.

ARTIST CONVERSATION

The Library holds another of its “Conversations with Artists” on Thursday, Dec. 8, at 7 p.m. Local painter Shiao-Ping Wang will share slides of her work, discuss the creative process and answer questions. Wang works with mixed media, and creates hanging reliefs that use recycled materials. Contact: 427-1540.

FREE PASSES

The Portsmouth Public Library now offers free passes to the newly transformed Peabody Essex Museum in Salem, Mass., which presents art and culture from New England and around the world. That brings to

ten the number of museums and attractions you can visit for free or a discount by reserving the Library's passes. The full list, which ranges from such Boston attractions as the New England Aquarium, to local spots like the Children's Museum, is at <http://www.cityofportsmouth.com/library/MuseumPasses.htm>.

FLU INFORMATION

Portsmouth Regional Hospital has a web site, portsmouthhospital.com, listing updated information on area clinics offering influenza vaccines, as well as a hotline: 436-5110, ext. 4FLU. The State of New Hampshire also has a toll-free hotline to answer flu questions from the public and health providers at 1-866-273-6453. Information also is on the State's Web site <http://www.dhhs.nh.gov/DHHS/CDCS/flu.htm>.

ASSESSOR VISITS

Assessor's Office representatives continue to work in the neighborhoods off of Woodbury and Maplewood Avenues, and will move next to the area including Leslie Drive and Cutts Street, to check properties for the 2006 citywide revaluation required by State law. Specific streets are listed at <http://www.cityofportsmouth.com/assessors/index.htm>. Every property owner is notified by letter in advance of the arrival of a data collector to measure their property's exterior and seek permission to inspect the interior and other buildings. Information will be used to make each property reflect fair market value, effective April 1, 2006, for the Nov. 1, 2006, tax bills. Contact: 610-7249.

HELP THE NEEDY

With the holidays coming, some have asked how they might help their less fortunate Portsmouth neighbors. The City Welfare Department has a list of families unlikely to benefit from various traditional organizations' food and gift programs. Teenagers are often overlooked by such programs. Gift cards are especially welcome. Contact: 610-7267 or etully@ch.cityofportsmouth.com.

DID YOU KNOW...?

You can learn to play simple Mah Jongg, an all-ages game that basically is Chinese Gin Rummy played with tiles, at the Portsmouth Public Library on Saturdays from now through Dec. 17. The games begin at 10 a.m. and go until noon. Come early to learn within 15 minutes how to play this fast, furious and fun game. Contact: 427-1540.

MEETINGS

To see a list of upcoming City-related meetings, agendas for future meetings and minutes of past meetings, always check the City's Web site, www.cityofportsmouth.com, or the Meetings Calendar at <http://www.cityofportsmouth.com/calendar/2005/index.htm>

HOURS

Portsmouth City Hall (431-2000) is open from 8:30 a.m.-5 p.m. The School Department Central Office (431-5080) is open from 8 a.m. until 4 p.m.

The City of Portsmouth Community Newsletter is published by the City of Portsmouth. It is not intended to provide legal advice. It is a compilation of the best available information at the time of publication. Events may be subject to change without notice in the time between publication of this e-newsletter and the actual event. Whenever possible, changes will be posted on www.cityofportsmouth.com or on the local government cable channel Channel 22.