

This City of Portsmouth Community Newsletter includes information about City-sponsored events, projects and special announcements. Visit www.cityofportsmouth.com to join the distribution list, or be removed. – *City Manager John P. Bohenko*

EARLY RELEASES

Today (Nov. 14) is a scheduled early release day for Portsmouth Public Schools. They also will release early Wednesday, Nov. 21, for the Thanksgiving holiday. Contact: 431-5080.

DRUG-FREE ZONES

The Portsmouth Housing Authority, in partnership with the Police Department and Public Works, today unveiled the posting of drug-free zone signs to be placed within 1,000 feet of all 10 Portsmouth Housing Authority properties. As established by the City Council, the initiative is in compliance with a City ordinance related to posting the zones. The signs warn that violating the State's Controlled Drug Act within the Zones will result in "severe criminal penalties" under that statute and an additional \$1,000 penalty.

ISLINGTON MEETING

Tonight (Nov. 14) is the "public visioning" session regarding Islington Street corridor improvements and the possible establishment of an Arts District in the area. The public is invited to provide input at the 6:30 p.m. to 8:30 p.m. meeting in the Library's Levenson Room. Contact: 610-7220.

WOODBURY MEETING

A public informational meeting is scheduled tonight (Nov. 14) regarding possible "traffic calming" changes in the Woodbury Avenue corridor between Dennett Street and Market Street Extension. The Public Works session begins at 6:30 p.m. in City Hall Conference Room A. The Frank Jones Neighborhood Association asked the City to find ways to reduce travel speeds, improve pedestrian safety and eliminate through truck travel. Contact: 766-1415.

PARADE DEADLINE

Monday (Nov. 19) is the application deadline for the City's Dec. 1 Illuminated Holiday Parade and to submit recommendations for parade grand marshal(s). No floats will be accepted after Monday. This year's parade theme is "Vintage Christmas in Portsmouth." The parade begins at 6 p.m. Application forms and a map of the parade route are at www.CityofPortsmouth.com. Contact: Parade@CityofPortsmouth.com or 610-7281.

HOLIDAY EXPRESS

The "Holiday Express" doesn't arrive at Portsmouth elementary schools until Sunday, Dec. 16, but there's a planning meeting Monday, Nov. 19, at 6:30 p.m. at Portsmouth High's Little Theatre for those interested in volunteering. Children and their families will board the Express for a magical journey to the "North Pole" for food, fun, and to experience the holiday story of the Polar Express. Tickets go on sale Monday, Nov. 26, at the elementary schools. Interested volunteers also may contact Kent LaPage at 834-3083.

TALKING BOOKS WITH IRELAND

The Library's Adult Book Discussion adopts an international flavor tomorrow (Nov. 15) at 1 p.m. when the group joins the Iveagh Gardens Book Group in Dublin, Ireland, to discuss T.C. Boyle's book "Talk Talk." The discussion will be conducted via laptop computers using Voice Over Internet Protocol (VoIP). More info can be found at www.cityofportsmouth.com/library/lib-programs-talktalk.htm.

GREASE

The Portsmouth High School Drama Department production of "Grease" opens tomorrow night (Nov. 15) and continues through Sunday afternoon with a touch of Portsmouth flavor. PHS Class of 1958 graduates are invited to a reception Sunday and can buy reduced price tickets for the afternoon performance. For more info on the show, see www.cityofportsmouth.com/school/phs/grease.htm.

THURSDAY NIGHT MOVIES

The Library will show the 2006 film "Away from Her," starring Julie Christie as a woman slipping into Alzheimer's, tomorrow night (Nov. 15) as part of its Thursday evening series. The free movie begins at 7 p.m. in the Levenson Room. The series schedule is at www.cityofportsmouth.com/library/lib-programs-films.htm.

MIDDLE SCHOOL DANCE

The next Portsmouth Middle School dance is Friday (Nov. 16), 7:30-10 p.m. at the Connie Bean Center. Cost is \$4, or \$3 with a Merit Card. See www.cityofportsmouth.com/recreation/programs-5.htm or call 766-1483.

"FOWL" SHOOT

The 17th Annual Turkey Shoot basketball "fowl" shooting contest is Saturday morning (Nov. 17) at the Connie Bean Center. Portsmouth children in Grades K-5 shoot 10 foul shots each, with the winner in each grade level receiving a free turkey. Everyone gets a certificate and lollipop. The contest is free, but please donate a non-perishable food item for a less-fortunate family. Contact 766-1483 for specific grade-level competition times.

DRAMA AND BOOK DISCUSSION

The first-ever "Drama and Book Discussion," a collaboration between the Library and New Hampshire Theater Project, is Sunday (Nov. 18) after the 2 p.m. performance of "Someone Who'll Watch Over Me" at the NHTP on Islington Street. The discussion is free with show admission and will compare and contrast the play with Ann Patchett's novel "Bel Canto." For more info, see www.cityofportsmouth.com/library/lib-programs-111807.htm.

LIBRARY BROWN BAGGING

The Library launches its "Brown Bag Lunch Program" next Monday (Nov. 19) with local mystery author Felicia Donovan reading from her new book "The Black Widow Agency" and signing copies for sale. Bring your lunch. The Library will provide drinks and dessert. Donovan, a Portsmouth Police employee, is a recognized expert in the field of law-enforcement technology. See www.cityofportsmouth.com/library/lib-programs-donovan.htm.

PHS VOLLEYBALL

The PHS girls' volleyball finals game against Milford on Saturday, Nov. 3, will be shown at 7 p.m. on November 17. All the PHS athletic schedules are at www.cityofportsmouth.com/school/phs/athlsch.htm.

FOOD BANK HELP

The Welfare Department reports that food banks in Portsmouth and across the state face severe shortages as the holidays approach. If you can donate an item or two, or more, visit the United Way's Web site, www.uwgs.org, and click on the link to "Area Food Pantries" at the bottom of the Web page to find one near you. Needs include fresh/frozen/canned vegetables and fruits, soups, tuna, cereals, granola bars and instant pudding mixes.

THANKSGIVING SCHEDULES

City offices, the Library and schools are closed Thursday, Nov. 22, and Friday, Nov. 23, for the Thanksgiving holiday. Schools dismiss early on Wednesday, Nov. 21. The Library will close at 5:30 p.m. Wednesday. All Rec Department facilities are closed on Thanksgiving. There are some changes to curbside collection due to the holiday: Thursday's curbside collection of solid waste and recycling takes place on Wednesday and there is no yard waste collection Wednesday, Thursday or Friday of Thanksgiving week. See below for more yard waste info.

FALL CLEANUP

The City's weekly curbside collection of fall yard waste continues through Nov. 30. Use only paper yard waste bags, plastic yard waste bags specifically labeled "biodegradable," or plastic barrels clearly labeled as "yard waste." None can weigh more than 50 pounds. Loose brush must be tied into bundles no larger than 4 feet in length and 1 foot in diameter. Yard waste pickup is the same day as trash and recycling collection. Bring yard waste to the Recycling Center year-round. See www.cityofportsmouth.com/publicworks/fallcleanup.htm or call 437-1530.

STREET TREES

The City's Public Works Department and the Mayor's Committee on Trees and Greenery are seeking recommendations for locations for the planting of trees along city streets in 2008. If you would like a tree planted in

front of your property or know of another location that could benefit from the planting of a street tree, call 766-1428 or email eskern@pw.cityofportsmouth.com.

SPECULATIVE END

The concluding book discussion in the Library's "Speculative Fiction" series co-sponsored with the New Hampshire Humanities Council is Nov. 29 at 7 p.m. The book is "Midnight Robber" by Nalo Henderson. See www.cityofportsmouth.com/library/lib-programs-speculate.htm.

HOLIDAY AID

The holiday season is rapidly approaching. This year the Welfare Department is collecting gift cards in small increments to distribute to local needy families. An area agency that previously distributed gifts to Portsmouth families in need won't be doing so this year so the Welfare Department is expecting a much greater number of requests for holiday help. Gift cards for \$25 or less to the mall, department stores, and toy, music, electronics and book stores will allow needy families to buy gifts for their children of all ages. Contact Ellen at 610-7267 or etully@ch.cityofportsmouth.com for more info.

HOLIDAY DECORATING

It's time to start thinking about the 2007 Citywide Neighborhood Holiday House Decorating Contest. Individual neighborhood contests will be judged before Dec. 15. Winners will be submitted to a Citywide Judging Committee with the citywide winners announced Dec. 19. Contact citywideneighborhood@comcast.net.

MORE HOLIDAY INFO

The annual Market Square holiday tree lighting sponsored by Pro Portsmouth is Friday, Nov. 30, at 6 p.m. The Holiday Parade is Saturday, Dec. 1, at 6 p.m. The High-Hanover Parking Facility will offer a set \$3 parking fee between 3 p.m. and 7 p.m. on Parade day. The Rec Department will make sure Santa Claus responds to letters received between Dec. 1 and Dec. 20. For info on the month-long "Vintage Christmas in Portsmouth" celebration, see www.portsmouthchamber.org/vintagechristmas.cfm. Additional holiday event details will be in the City's Nov. 28 e-newsletter edition.

GOLD MEDAL BAND

The PHS Clipper Marching Band earned a gold medal at the Maine Band Directors Association Championships in Sanford, Maine. The 85-member Clipper Band, under the direction of Eric Gagnon, Steve Cirillo and Courtney Randall, received excellent ratings for Drum Major, Percussion, Music, Visual, and General Effect.

POLICE EXPLORERS

Members of the Police Department's Explorer Post won several awards at a recent NH Exploring Council ceremony. Detective Robert Munson, Post coordinator, received the Leadership Award and a Lifetime Achievement Award. Cadet Kyle Brake earned the state's Young American Award and will compete nationally. Awards also went to Explorers Matthew Alper, Cam Holt-Corti, Clay Demarco and John Hailey, and ex-Explorers Sgt. Corey McDonald and Officer Michael Kotsonis. The post is open to teenagers who want to learn more about law enforcement and is raising funds to compete nationally. Contact 610-7506.

REC PROGRAMS

The Indoor Pool and Spinnaker Point Adult Center have numerous programs and classes underway. Call the Pool at 427-1545 and Spinnaker at 766-1483, or see www.cityofportsmouth.com/recreation/programs.htm, to learn more.

ROADWORK

The Middle Street sidewalks project is scheduled to wrap up this week, to be followed by sidewalk repairs on Pleasant Street from Court Street to Richmond Street through the end of the month. Information on all city road projects can be found at www.cityofportsmouth.com/projects/index.htm.

BOARD OPENINGS

The Building Code Board of Appeals has two openings and there is also a vacancy on the Economic Development Commission. Information on the City's volunteer boards and how to apply, is at www.cityofportsmouth.com/cityclerk/boardscommissions.htm.

Did you know...?

The Portsmouth Fire Department handled almost 5,000 fire service and Emergency Medical Service calls in Fiscal Year 2007, 323 more than the previous year. Of the 2,332 EMS calls, 1,874 resulted in emergency transports. Of the 2,595 fire service calls, almost half were rescue calls. The Department also recorded 792 calls for Fire Prevention, Inspection and Education Services. To learn more, see the Annual Report now online at www.cityofportsmouth.com/annualreport/index.htm and available at the Library.

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 www.cityofportsmouth.com/calendar/2007/index.htm.

HOURS: Portsmouth City Hall (431-2000) is open from 8 a.m.-4:30 p.m. The School Department Central Office (431-5080) is open from 8 a.m. until 4 p.m. Library hours are: 9 a.m.-9 p.m. Monday through Thursday; 9 a.m.-5:30 p.m. Friday; 9 a.m.-5 p.m. Saturday; and closed Sunday.

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