

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

YARD WASTE PICKUP

Weekly curbside collection of yard waste has resumed. It is collected by Department of Public Works crews on the same day as the trash and recycling pickup for each residence. Residents are reminded to use only paper yard waste bags or plastic yard waste bags specifically labeled as “biodegradable” or plastic barrels clearly labeled “yard waste.” They should weigh no more than 50 pounds each when filled. Yard waste also may be brought to the Recycling Center behind the Department of Public Works at 680 Peverly Hill Road. For the Recycling Center hours, see www.cityofportsmouth.com/publicworks/solidwaste-recycle-rc.htm. Contact: 427-1530.

TAX EXEMPTIONS DEADLINE

The deadline to apply for elderly and disabled exemptions for the December 2008 tax bill is April 15. The City Council recently increased income limits from \$30,600 to \$31,640 for single taxpayers and from \$37,740 to \$39,030 for married couples. Total assets for the exemptions increased from \$102,000 to \$105,470, whether single or married. See www.cityofportsmouth.com/assessors/news030708.htm or call 610-7249.

CITY BUDGET HEARING

The City Council will hold a public hearing April 16 on the City Manager’s proposed budget for Fiscal Year 2009, which begins July 1, 2008. The hearing beginning at 7 p.m. in the Eileen Dondero Foley Council Chambers will include presentations from the Police, Fire, School and Municipal Departments. The hearing will be broadcast live on local government access cable Channel 22. The budget document is scheduled to be available online at www.CityofPortsmouth.com on April 14.

MARKET STREET EXTENSION

There will be a presentation and public input opportunity on the conceptual plans for the Market Street Extension streetscape improvements on April 14 from 6:30 p.m. to 7:30 p.m. in the Library’s Levenson Room. Representatives of the Cecil Group Inc., the consultants for the project, will present a conceptual design and stakeholder comments for improvements to the road segment from Exit 7 to Deer Street. This project is part of infrastructure projects included in the City’s Capital Improvement Plan. Contact: 610-7220.

SUSTAINABILITY FAIR

The City of Portsmouth, Portsmouth Listens, the Portsmouth School District and the Piscataqua Sustainability Initiative are planning the first annual Portsmouth Sustainability Fair on Saturday, April 19, from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. at the Portsmouth Middle School. The fair will feature numerous exhibitors, speakers, an organic food court, a scavenger hunt, live entertainment, and more. See www.cityofportsmouth.com/sustainability/fair.htm for more info. Residents wishing to participate in sustainability study circles can attend a meeting in the Library’s Levenson Room from 9 a.m. to 10 a.m., followed by the Sustainability Fair opening.

DOG LICENSE RENEWALS

It’s time to license your dog or renew its license. There is a May 1 deadline to renew all dog licenses with the Office of the City Clerk or face financial penalties as of June 1. If there has been a change to the status of your dog, please contact the Clerk’s Office at 610-7245 or cityclerk@ch.cityofportsmouth.com so the database can be updated and you can avoid receiving further notices.

31 BOARD VACANCIES

Citizen volunteers are needed to fill 31 vacancies on the City’s Boards and Commissions. Information on the boards and how to apply is at www.cityofportsmouth.com/cityclerk/boardscommissions.htm. The vacancies are: Building Code Board of Appeals (2); Cable Television & Communications Commission (3); Conservation Commission (4); Economic Development Commission (1); Portsmouth Housing Authority (1); Board of Library Trustees (1); Citywide Neighborhood Steering Committee (5); PEDLP Review Committee (1); Recreation Board (6); Taxi Commission (3); Traffic & Safety Committee (3); and Trustees of the Trust Fund (1).

PAY & DISPLAY CHANGE

The City of Portsmouth has reduced the minimum coin purchase for parking at Pay & Display meters from 25 cents to 5 cents. The minimum 5 cents pays for four minutes of parking. A programming change was arranged with the manufacturer to accommodate requests to reduce the minimum parking time for the pilot program parking meters. See www.cityofportsmouth.com/transportation/paydisplay.htm to learn more about the Pay & Display Program.

PARKING WARNING

The Old Library on Islington Street is under lease by the Portsmouth Historical Society and the parking lot will be for their exclusive use from April through November. The lot will be signed accordingly and any vehicles parked in the lot without permission from the Portsmouth Historical Society will be subject to removal by towing at the owner's expense.

ISLINGTON STREET

The three conceptual ideas proposed for the Islington Street Improvement Action Plan Project can be viewed online at www.cityofportsmouth.com/economic/islingtonstreet.htm. Approximately 45 people attended the March 27 public meeting where the plans were presented for discussion. The next step is for the consultant and city to review the comments and plans, and develop a preferred alternative for presentation at a future date to be announced.

SPECIAL OLYMPICS

The NH Special Olympics is sponsoring a Seacoast Regional Swim Meet hosted by the Portsmouth Recreation Department at the Portsmouth Indoor Pool on Saturday (April 5). Come support the athletes beginning at 9 a.m. If you are interested in volunteering for this event, call 427-1546.

SPANISH COLLECTION

The Portsmouth Public Library recently added a collection of books for adult Spanish language speakers and those learning Spanish. Ready to be checked out, this fiction collection that includes popular American authors in addition to less well-known Spanish authors, is on display on the first floor. Find the new titles in the Library's catalogue by searching for "Spanish language – reading materials" or "Spanish fiction." Contact: 427-1540.

EARLY RELEASE DAY

Next Wednesday (April 9) is an early release day for Portsmouth Public Schools. Spring Recess is the week of April 28.

SWIM LESSONS

The Indoor Pool's final set of spring swim lessons begins April 14. Classes are offered on either Mon/Wed or Tues/Thurs beginning at 4 p.m. Courses will include all levels of Red Cross Learn-to-Swim for ages from 6 months to 18 years. For more info, call 427-1546, stop by the pool located next to Portsmouth High School or see www.cityofportsmouth.com/recreation/indoor.htm.

LIFEGUARD COURSE

The Indoor Pool will be running a Lifeguard Course for ages 15 and over that begins May 6 and goes for approximately two weeks. Call the Indoor Pool at 427-1546 for more info.

NYC TRIP

Registration opens soon for the May 17 spring trip to New York City sponsored by the Recreation Department. You can sign up beginning at 1 p.m. Monday, April 14, at the Connie Bean Center. The cost is \$45 and includes round-trip coach bus service. For more info, see www.cityofportsmouth.com/recreation/programs-3.htm.

SCHOOL REGISTRATION

Kindergarten and new student registration for the next school year will be held in two weeks. Make an appointment now at the school that your child will be attending and also to receive paperwork that should be completed prior to registration. Registration is April 16 at New Franklin Elementary School (436-0910), April

17 at Dondero (436-2231) and May 13 at Little Harbour (436-1708). Kindergarten students must be 5 years old by September 30 and must reside in Portsmouth.

SPRING/SUMMER RECREATION

The new Spring/Summer Recreation Department brochure is available at all Rec Department facilities and online at www.cityofportsmouth.com/recreation/programs.htm. Take a look at all the programs being offered.

PUPPETS FOR ADULTS

A free comedic puppet show for adults entitled “We Stayed Together for the Puppets” will be performed at 7 p.m. Thursday, April 16, at the Library’s Levenson Room. It features local actor and puppeteer Pat Spalding, who performs with Liz Korabeck-Emerson in the new show. See www.cityofportsmouth.com/library/lib-programs-041708.htm for details.

“ALTERNATIVES TO SURRENDER”

Local poets Pat Parnell and Tammi Truax will host a reading and discussion on the value of reading and/or writing poetry when dealing with cancer on Tuesday, April 29, at 7 p.m. in the Library’s Levenson Room. They will read from the recently published anthology “Alternatives to Surrender” that includes their poetry, as well as other works. There also will be readings from Portsmouth Poet Laureate Liz Knies and Hugh Harter. People who have no experience reading or writing poetry are strongly encouraged to attend. See www.cityofportsmouth.com/library/lib-programs-042908.htm to learn more.

Mark Your Calendar... (5 items)

- The Little Harbour School 4th and 5th Grade Art Show is Wednesday, April 16, from 6 p.m. to 8 p.m.
- The Little Harbour 5th Grade Musical “The Nightingale” is April 23 at 7 p.m.
- The Oscar-winning film “Juno” will be shown free Thursday, April 24, at 7 p.m. in the Library’s Levenson Room.
- Household Hazardous Waste Day will be Saturday, May 10, from 8 a.m. until noon.
- For those looking ahead to summer, the Peirce Island Pool opens Monday, June 23.

Did you know...?

Portsmouth Public Works employees will be planting 33 new trees along city streets this spring as part of the annual “street trees” program co-sponsored by the City of Portsmouth and the Mayor’s Committee on Trees and Greenery. A total of 111 trees have been planted since the program began in 2003. The City accepts suggestions year-round for street tree planting for the following spring. Requests may be made by calling 766-1428 or emailing eskern@pw.cityofportsmouth.com and providing the address and a contact name and phone number.

School Fundraisers (4)

There will be a Yard Sale Saturday (April 5) to benefit the Portsmouth Alternative Secondary School (PASS) senior trip. It’s at PASS’s 35 Sherburne Road location from 7 a.m. until 2 p.m. and there will be breakfast and lunch items available. To donate to the yard sale, email bmascio@portsmouth.k12.nh.us or call Bryan or Erika at 427-2901.

Order a custom-made ice cream cake between now and April 25 to benefit the Portsmouth Alternative Secondary School (PASS) senior trip. The \$30, 10-inch cakes will feed 15-20 people. Order at least one week in advance. Email bmascio@portsmouth.k12.nh.us or call Bryan or Erika at 427-2901.

A Decade Dance - The 80s will be held by the New Franklin School PTO on Saturday, April 19, from 7 pm. until 11 p.m. at VFW Post 168 to help students attend environmental school. Tickets are \$15, or 2 for \$25, and can be purchased at New Franklin School or by calling 373-0494. Space is limited. Prizes for best costumes.

The Friends Project plans a Cinco de Mayo fundraiser May 10 to benefit the program creating social and recreational opportunities for people with disabilities. Enjoy food with a Mexican flair, watch Latin/Salsa dancing demos and learn a few steps while supporting a great cause. Doors at the Elks Club open at 6 p.m. for appetizers and a silent auction. The live auction is at 7:15 p.m. followed by dancing. Tickets are \$35. Contact: Heidi Chase at 436-7100, ext. 2919, or hchase@portsmouth.k12.nh.us or Nancy Clayburgh at 436-6525.

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/2008/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 1 p.m.-5 p.m. Sunday.

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