

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*

THANKSGIVING SCHEDULES

Schools dismiss early and the Library closes at 5:30 p.m. today for the Thanksgiving Holiday. The regular Thursday collection of solid waste and recycling is being conducted today, but there is no yard waste collection today or the remainder of the week. Friday's solid waste and recycling collection will be the same as normal. City offices, the Library, Recycling Center and schools are all closed tomorrow (Thursday, Nov. 27), and Friday, Nov. 28, for the Thanksgiving holiday. All Rec Department facilities are closed on Thanksgiving. The Connie Bean Center and Indoor Pool are closed on Friday, but Spinnaker Point will be open.

THANKSGIVING SAFETY

What is on your holiday menu? A little turkey and *Salmonella*? Green onions and *Cryptosporidiosis*? Some oysters and *Campylobacter* perhaps? Learn about the causes of these actual holiday outbreaks, the proper cooking temperature for turkey with stuffing, and other important tips to avoid serving your guests more than you intend at <http://www.cfsan.fda.gov/~dms/fdholida.html>. Also, the USDA's meat and poultry hotline at 1-800-535-4555 will be staffed from 8 a.m. to 2 p.m. on Thanksgiving Day to answer food safety questions.

THANKSGIVING GAME

The annual Thanksgiving Day football game between Portsmouth High and Dover at 10 a.m. at PHS will be broadcast on Channel 22 at 7 p.m. on Thanksgiving Day and rebroadcast at 7 p.m. on Saturday (Nov. 29).

ANNUAL REPORT HONORS

The City's Annual Report recently received first place for Excellence in Annual Reports in the NH Local Government Center's annual competition for its report for the 2007 budget year, the City's first submission to the competition. Prior to Fiscal Year 2005, there had been no annual report in Portsmouth for almost two decades. Portsmouth's annual reports are posted online at www.cityofportsmouth.com/annualreport/index.htm.

AFFORDABLE HOUSING

The City's Blue Ribbon Committee on Housing has issued a report entitled "A Road Map to Affordable Housing: Housing Issues and Solutions and Background Information on Housing." It can be viewed online via the link at www.cityofportsmouth.com/community/announcements.htm.

HOLIDAY HELP

Do you feel like you are able to give a little extra during the holidays? Adopting a family for the holidays may be more than you can offer from your time or your pocketbook. Local programs are often unable to provide Christmas gifts to older children and teenagers and many of their parents seek help from the Welfare Department. Gift cards, in any denomination, from any store, are always appreciated. Hats, gloves, and socks for adults would be most welcomed. Your donations will go directly to needy Portsmouth citizens. Contact Ellen at 610-7267 or etully@ch.cityofportsmouth.com.

TREE LIGHTING & PARADE

Everyone is invited to the annual Holiday Tree lighting ceremony and 2008 Illuminated Holiday Parade on Saturday, Dec. 6. The Market Square tree lighting is on Saturday this year and begins at 5 p.m. with holiday music, followed by the countdown to the lighting that ushers in the start of the downtown holiday season. Floats, walking units, seven bands and, of course, Santa Claus will step off from Plaza 800 at 6 p.m. and travel through downtown. The route is at www.cityofportsmouth.com/mayor/holiday-parade.htm. Streets closed to parking and/or traffic between 4 p.m. and 9 p.m. will be listed at www.CityofPortsmouth. Postal patrons should pick up their mail downtown by 4 p.m. Contact: 610-7281.

HOLIDAY EVENTS PARKING

A \$3 flat-rate parking fee will be collected from each vehicle entering the High-Hanover Parking Garage on Saturday, December 6, between 3 p.m. and 7 p.m. Payment upon entry to the facility is expected to reduce delays for those leaving after the Tree Lighting, Holiday Parade and other downtown activities.

INDEPENDENT SHORT FILMS

Local artists and filmmakers Mitchell Rosenzweig and Flynn Donovan will present original documentary short features next Wednesday (Dec. 3) at 7 p.m. in the Library's Levenson Room. Donovan will screen "A Mark in the Sand," a 13-minute short about local artist Paul Charles Pollaro, and the 15-minute short about local artist Mark Fenwick entitled "Shadow of a Smile." Rosenzweig will screen the 15-minute New York City-based "Subway Film" and the 13-minute "False Summits" filmed in New Mexico. Contact: 427-1540.

YOUTH BASKETBALL INFO

Registration for boys and girls in grades 7-12 who want to play recreation league basketball this winter will be held December 1-5 at the Connie Bean Center from 1 p.m. to 7 p.m. The cost is \$30 for residents and \$50 for non-residents from Newington, Newcastle, Rye and Greenland, only. Contact: 766-1483. The Connie Bean is now open on Sundays for open court basketball play from 10 a.m. to 1 p.m. for children in grades K-5 and from 1 p.m. to 4 p.m. for grades 6-12.

INSIDE THE MOVIES

Did you know that we wouldn't have had VCRs were it not for Bing Crosby? That Thomas Edison invented the fore-runner of the video iPod? In an illustrated spin through Hollywood history, Boston Globe columnist and author Scott Kirsner will be in the Library's Levenson Room at 5:30 p.m. on Dec. 10 to discuss how innovators like Edison, the Warner Brothers, Pixar, George Lucas and Steve Jobs transformed the movie industry while facing enormous resistance to their revolutionary ideas. The talk is based on his new book "Inventing the Movies: Hollywood's Epic Battle Between Innovation and the Status Quo." Contact: 427-1540.

CITYWIDE DECORATING

The Portsmouth Holiday House Decorating Contest is back! Portsmouth Citywide Neighborhood Committee Chair Sharon Morrison calls the contest "one way to bring residents together and build pride in our City's neighborhoods." Neighborhood groups will submit their "Top Three" choices by Dec. 14 and on Dec. 16, members of Citywide Neighborhood Committee will travel through Portsmouth to judge all the homes on the "Top Three" lists, with the winners announced Dec. 17. Contact: sharonmorrison@comcast.net.

GREEN HOLIDAYS

There are many ways to make the holiday season more "green." Avoid using disposable dishes and utensils when entertaining. Place easily identifiable recycling and compost containers at your celebration so guests can recycle soda cans, bottles, and paper products, and compost food scraps. When shopping, tell store clerks you don't need a bag for small or oversized purchases, or bring your own, to help reduce the thousands of shopping bags that end up in landfills every year. To learn more about the City's sustainability initiatives, visit www.cityofportsmouth.com/sustainability/index.htm.

HOLIDAY CONCERTS

The Middle School Concert is Wednesday, Dec. 10, at 7 p.m. in the Portsmouth High School auditorium (snow date Dec. 11). The All-City Concert is Wednesday, Dec. 17, at 7 p.m. in the PHS auditorium (snow date Dec. 18).

ALL ABOARD!

Tickets for the Dec. 13 "Holiday Express" are now on sale for \$6 each at all three elementary schools and the Portsmouth Middle School. The North Pole has been busy preparing for the trains to arrive this year, so don't miss your chance to see the holiday classic from author Chris Van Allsburg, "The Polar Express" come to life before your eyes! All proceeds go toward literacy programs in our schools and the Patricia N. Wojnar Scholarship. Tickets won't last long. Contact: Amy Noble at the Central Office at 431-5080.

HOLIDAY CRAFTS

The Library will offer holiday crafts workshops for kids of all ages every Saturday in December. Drop by the Activity Room between 10 a.m. and noon to make something festive for the holidays. The workshops are free and open to all Library cardholders. Children under 10 must bring their adults. Contact: 766-1740.

FREE METERS DOWNTOWN

The City Council has authorized the traditional free holiday parking period at downtown meters from Monday, Dec. 15, through Saturday, Dec. 27. However, posted time limits at metered spaces will be enforced. If you want to spend more time downtown than meters allow, consider using the High-Hanover Parking Facility. Downtown merchants with a blue sticker with the letter "P" in their storefront windows belong to the Downtown Parking Validation Program and can provide customers with up to four hours of free garage parking. Contact: 766-1440.

LETTERS TO SANTA

Santa is waiting to hear from your children! If they write to him between Dec. 1 and Dec. 19, Santa will send a letter in reply. Send letters to: Santa Claus at the North Pole, 135 Daniel Street, Portsmouth, NH, 03801. Make sure your child's letter includes a full name and return address so that Santa can write back!

BOOKS EVERYWHERE

Looking for a book or an article not owned by the Portsmouth Public Library? The Library cooperates with libraries all over the world to borrow materials not held locally. Visit the Library Information Desk on the 2nd floor, or fill out the online Interlibrary Loan Request form on the web page at www.cityofportsmouth.com/library/borrowing-il.htm.

REC NEWS

With the holidays approaching, consider telephoning Recreation Department facilities to check for holiday-related closures or changes in hours of operation. See www.cityofportsmouth.com/recreation/staff.htm for contact information. Check out the Indoor Pool and the new swim lessons schedule. Call the pool at 427-1545 for more info. Spinnaker Point continues to be a popular workout spot as the weather turns cold. Stop by or call 766-1483 for any further information.

LINCOLN AVE. PROJECT

Crews have begun checking the basements of homes in the area bounded by Richards Avenue, Middle Street and South Street as part of the City's long-term plan to separate older combined sewage and stormwater pipes. The in-home surveys are being conducted Monday through Saturday over the next few weeks in preparation for the design phase of the Lincoln Avenue area project to reduce flooding and sewage backups. The purpose of the survey is to locate important sewer, water and drain information on the property so the new infrastructure will be designed to accommodate existing services. Contact: 766-1416.

PARKING CHANGES

The City Council has approved an ordinance establishing two new 24-hour loading zones on Porter Street. One is a 40-foot section on the northerly side of Porter, 15 feet west of Fleet Street. The other is a 45-foot zone on the southerly side, 145 feet east of Middle Street. These zones may only be used for unloading product, merchandise or equipment. The Council also recently established the westerly side of Pearl Street as a "No Parking" area between 8 a.m. and 5 p.m., Monday through Friday.

YARD WASTE

Weekly curbside collection of fall yard waste ends next Friday, Dec. 5. Yard waste pickup is the same day as trash and recycling collection. Bring yard waste to the Recycling Center year-round, although the extended Recycling Center hours on Tuesdays have ended for the year. See www.cityofportsmouth.com/publicworks/solidwaste-recycle-ywi.htm or call 427-1530.

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 2009. 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.

MORE EXPLORER HONORS

The Police Department's Explorer Post recently received the Special Olympics New Hampshire Organization of the Year award for involvement in various activities to support Special Olympics programming and competitions, including establishing a basketball team of special needs athletes to be part of the Police Athletic

League and play teams comprised of city officials and employees. The Explorers Post, which recently won several Explorer awards, is open to teenagers who want to learn more about law enforcement. For more info, contact: 610-7506 or rmunson@pd.cityofportsmouth.com.

BOARD OPENINGS

There are six openings to be filled on the Recreation Board and several other vacancies on the City's volunteer boards and commissions. See www.cityofportsmouth.com/cityclerk/boardscommissions.htm.

PARKING COUPONS

With winter approaching, Portsmouth residents are urged to obtain coupons now that will allow them to pay just \$3 if they park at the High-Hanover Parking Facility during snow emergencies and snow removal periods. Proof of residency is required to obtain the coupons from the Parking Office at City Hall (open 8 a.m.-4:30 p.m.). The coupons can be used only by the person to whom they are issued. Residents must present a coupon and show identification to the parking attendant to receive the \$3 rate payable upon exiting the garage. Contact: 610-7229.

ROADWORK

Gove Construction will be working on Gates Street from Marcy to Mechanic Streets, performing water and sewer construction. The road will be closed to all but local residents. Contact Tom Richter at 766-1412 with questions. Information on all City road projects is at www.cityofportsmouth.com/projects/index.htm. Weather and other factors may cause schedule delays. Contact: 498-4747.

Did you know...

The Health Department has links to the latest food recalls on its web page at www.CityofPortsmouth.com. For example, consumer complaints and an injury have prompted the latest recall of Lean Cuisine Pesto Chicken with Bow Tie Pasta, Lean Cuisine Chicken Mediterranean, and Lean Cuisine Chicken Tuscan. If you have any of these in your freezer, visit www.cityofportsmouth.com/health/foodrecalls.htm. Contact: 610-7273.

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 Monday through Friday, 8 a.m.-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 Sunday from 1 p.m. to 5 p.m.

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