

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*

TODAY'S EVENTS

Today (Dec. 10) is an early release day for Portsmouth schools. The Middle School Concert is at 7 p.m. at the Portsmouth High School auditorium (snow date tomorrow, Dec. 11). The Library hosts the author of “Inventing the Movies: Hollywood's Epic Battle between Innovation and the Status Quo” at 5:30 p.m. tonight (see story below).

INSIDE THE MOVIES

Boston Globe columnist and author Scott Kirsner will be in the Library’s Levenson Room at 5:30 p.m. tonight (Dec. 10) to discuss how innovators like Thomas 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.

“JAWS” AT THE POOL

The Indoor Pool is holding a movie night featuring “Jaws” at 5 p.m. tomorrow (Thursday, Dec. 11) where spectators 13 and over can watch from inner tubes in the darkened pool if they can pass the deep water test, or from the pool deck. The cost is \$5 for pool members and Portsmouth residents, and \$8 for everyone else. Pizza slices and drinks will be sold for \$1 each. The event is limited to 40 participants who must buy their tickets in advance at the pool’s front desk. Contact: 427-1546.

RECYCLING ON THE RADIO

The City’s solid waste coordinator, Silke Psula, will be interviewed Friday (Dec. 12) on the New Hampshire Public Radio program “The Exchange” about the City of Portsmouth’s recycling efforts. The one-hour program begins at 9 a.m. It can be heard locally at 103.9 FM or over the Internet via the “Listen Live” link at www.nhpr.org. Information on the city's recycling program can be found at www.cityofportsmouth.com/publicworks/solidwaste-recycle.htm.

HOLIDAY PARADE BROADCAST

A videotape of the 2008 Portsmouth Illuminated Holiday Parade will be broadcast at 7 p.m. Saturday (Dec. 13) on local government cable Channel 22. More than 60 floats, bands, vehicles and walking units participated in the Dec. 6 event. The parade broadcast is 37 minutes long.

HOLIDAY EXPRESS SATURDAY

Tickets are going fast for Portsmouth’s “Holiday Express” on Saturday (Dec. 13). “Trains” leave New Franklin, Little Harbour, and Dondero Elementary Schools, as well as the Community Campus, at approximately 4 p.m. All the “train cars” will form one long “train” to parade through downtown with Police and Fire Department escorts to the North Pole. Trains are expected to depart the North Pole around 6:15 p.m. for the return trip. Tickets are \$6 but no more than \$24 per family. Watch the holiday classic “The Polar Express” come to life before your eyes! Call Amy Noble at 431-5080 for more information.

HELP YOUR NEIGHBORS

Every year, the Welfare Department receives requests from needy Portsmouth residents seeking help to buy holiday gifts for their children who do not qualify for other traditional holiday assistance programs. There are more requests than ever this year, but fewer donations. Please consider donating a gift card for \$5, \$10, \$15 but no more than \$25 to help these families. Contact Welfare at 610-7267 or etully@ch.cityofportsmouth.com.

FREE PARKING

Parking is free at downtown meters beginning Monday (Dec. 15) through Saturday, Dec. 27, thanks to the City Council. However, the posted time limits at metered spaces will be enforced. If you want to spend more time downtown than the 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.

GARAGE WORK

The first of two phases of a light replacement project will begin December 22 in the High-Hanover Parking Facility. Work will commence each day at 7 a.m. Parking spaces under the light fixtures will be coned off each morning. As the work progresses throughout the day, the spaces will open for parking. Little disruption is expected for parking in the garage.

MEETING HOUSE REPAIRS

Contractors are scheduled Monday (Dec. 15) to begin repairs to the slate roof at South Meeting House, which formerly housed the Children’s Museum. Also, the city is reviewing proposals for temporary moisture protection repairs to the bell tower and clock faces, which leak profusely when it rains because of deterioration and poor design. The goal is to keep water out of the building until a determination is made on the ultimate disposition of the City-owned building.

ALL-CITY CONCERT

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

PARENTS NIGHT OUT

Bring your children ages 6 to 11 (12 if attending with a younger sibling) to the Indoor Pool for swimming and fun for 3 ½ hours next Thursday (Dec. 18) while you shop or have dinner exactly a week before Christmas. Drop them off between 5:15 and 6 p.m. and pick them up at 9 p.m. The \$10 cost includes pizza, snacks and drinks. Kids can swim until 7:15 p.m. and then watch a movie or decorate holiday cards. The event is limited to 30 children and parents must sign up and pay in advance at the pool’s front desk. Contact: 427-1546.

WRITE TO SANTA

Santa wants to hear from your children this holiday season. He’ll send a reply to any child who writes to him between now and next Friday (Dec. 19). Letters should be sent to: Santa Claus at the North Pole, 135 Daniel Street, Portsmouth, NH, 03801. Make sure the letter includes a full name and return address so Santa can write back!

FIT GIFT

Both the Spinnaker Point Adult Recreation Center and the Indoor Pool are offering gift certificates for the holidays. Stop in at either facility and pick up gift certificates to help you and your loved ones stay fit.

HOLIDAY CLOSINGS

City offices, the Library, Recreation Department facilities and the Public Works main office will be closing at 3 p.m. both on Christmas Eve, Wednesday, Dec. 24, and New Year’s Eve, Dec. 31. All City departments will be closed on Christmas Day, Dec. 25, and most also will be closed the day after, Dec. 26, as well as on New Year’s Day. The Spinnaker Point Adult Rec Center will be open Dec. 26 and New Year’s Day, however. Portsmouth schools are closed Dec. 24 through Jan. 5.

CHRISTMAS TRASH

There will be some changes to curbside collection related to the Christmas holiday. The Thursday (Dec. 25) curbside collection of solid waste and recycling has been rescheduled for Wednesday, Dec. 24. Christmas trees will be collected from the curbside from January 7 through January 18 on the same day that trash and recyclables are collected. Residents also may bring Christmas trees to the Recycling Center for disposal. For hours and more info, see www.cityofportsmouth.com/publicworks/solidwaste-recycle-rc.htm.

CITYWIDE DECORATING

The Citywide Neighborhood Committee is sponsoring the annual Holiday House Decorating Contest. The neighborhood groups will submit their “Top Three” choices by 9 a.m. Sunday (Dec. 14) and on Dec. 16, members of the Citywide Neighborhood Committee will travel through Portsmouth to judge all the homes on

the “Top Three” lists, with the winners announced Dec. 17 by Mayor Tom Ferrini on Portsmouth Community Radio WSCA LP 106.1. Contact: sharonmorrison@comcast.net.

HOLIDAY CRAFTS

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

VACATION BASKETBALL CAMPS

Registration is underway for the youth basketball camps for boys and girls in Grades 2 to 4 being held Dec. 29 and 30, and will continue until the camps are filled. Register at the Connie Bean Center. More info is at www.cityofportsmouth.com/recreation/programs-3.htm or call 766-1483.

SNOW BAN INFO

When a storm drops two inches of snow or more, the City may declare a ban on on-street parking to facilitate snow removal. The Public Works Department announces the ban on Cable Channel 22, through a recording on the snow phone at 766-7669 (SNO-SNOW), at www.cityofportsmouth.com, in announcements in the local media and on signs at all entrances to the City. The ban’s end is announced the same way. A map of parking lots open during bans is at www.cityofportsmouth.com/transportation/snowbanparkinglots.htm or contact: 610-7229. Residents may obtain coupons now from the Parking Services Office at City Hall to park for just \$3 at the High-Hanover Parking Facility during a snow ban or official snow removal period.

REC DEPARTMENT NEWS

The Connie Bean Center is open all day on Sundays for open court play from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. Grades K-5 have the court from 10 a.m. to 1 p.m. and grades 6-12 from 1-4 p.m. Spinnaker Point and the Indoor Pool will be renewing memberships at the first of the year. For further info, contact the pool at 427-1545 or Spinnaker at 766-1483. With the holidays approaching, consider telephoning Rec Department facilities to check for holiday-related closures or changes in hours of operation. See www.cityofportsmouth.com/recreation/staff.htm for contact information. Also, signups open Monday (Dec. 15) at the Indoor Pool for January swim lessons and a Red Cross Lifeguard Training Course. Contact: 427-1546.

PARKING CHANGES

The City Council has approved two new 15-minute parking spaces on Marcy Street, easterly side, between South Mill Street and South Street. There are now four spaces in front of 367 Marcy Street designated as 15-minute parking from 8 a.m. to 4 p.m., Monday through Saturday.

WOODBURY AVE. PROJECT

The Woodbury Avenue project has been placed on hold until the end of winter. In the spring, final paving, lane (and bike lane) striping, loam work and cleanup will complete the project. The roadwork is being done as part of a traffic calming construction project requested by area residents. Contact: 766-1412.

ROADWORK

Gove Construction will be continuing water and sewer work on Howard Street and Lower Gates Street (from Marcy to Mechanic) over the next two weeks. These streets will be closed to through traffic but residents will always be allowed access. Anyone with questions or concerns should contact Tom Richter at 766-1412.

BOARD OPENINGS

There are several openings on the City’s volunteer boards and commissions. To learn more, see www.cityofportsmouth.com/cityclerk/boardscommissions.htm.

Did you know...

Police Chief Michael Magnant and the men and women of the Portsmouth Police Department remind everyone to drink responsibly, especially during the holidays. Use a designated driver, utilize public transportation, or call a cab if you drink alcohol. Even if you are not planning to drive, please be mindful that problems also occur when people drink too much even when they are not driving. The Police Department wants to make this holiday season the safest one for our community. Please help them accomplish that goal.

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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