

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*

CITY BUDGET HEARING --TONIGHT

The City Council will hold a public hearing on the City Manager's proposed budget for Fiscal Year 2010, beginning at 7 p.m. tonight (Wed., April 15) in the Eileen Dondero Foley Council Chambers. The hearing will be broadcast live on local government access cable Channel 22. It will include presentations from the Police, Fire, School and Municipal Departments. The budget document is online at www.CityofPortsmouth.com.

EXEMPTIONS DEADLINE--TODAY

The deadline to apply for elderly and disabled exemptions for the December 2009 tax bill is the end of business today (April 15). The income limits for the elderly and disabled exemptions are \$32,589 for single taxpayers and \$40,201 for married couples. Total assets for both exemptions are \$108,634, whether single or married. Applications are at www.cityofportsmouth.com/assessors/index.htm or contact the Assessor's Office at 610-7214 or 610-7249 by 4:30 p.m. today.

PORTSMOUTH KUDOS

BusinessWeek has named Portsmouth as the best city in NH for starting up a business. The magazine's national list was based on a variety of demographic, business, and geographical variables that affect probable success of a business start-up. City Manager John Bohenko says Portsmouth offers a supportive environment for early-stage businesses, including an active lending community, educated workforce, relatively large number of fellow entrepreneurs, a passionate "buy local" group, several local colleges, a diverse real estate market and a committed Chamber of Commerce. See zoomprospector.com/CommunityDetail.aspx?id=17010&f=1 for the profile of Portsmouth's demographic and business data. For economic development info, contact: 610-7220.

CITYWIDE CARBON CHALLENGE

The Portsmouth vs. Keene carbon challenge goes citywide on Earth Day next Wednesday (April 22) and all residents of Portsmouth are invited to be part of this fun competition aimed at enabling households to easily reduce their energy consumption and carbon footprint. As of next Wednesday, Portsmouth residents can go to www.nhcarbonchallenge.org to "take the challenge" to help Portsmouth beat Keene. More details will be coming soon on the program that initially pitted municipal employees of the two cities against each other. Contact: 610-7215.

POLICE WARNING

Portsmouth Police are warning residents to beware of anyone requesting entry into a home posing as a surveyor, city employee, salesperson or utility worker, especially those who do not display identification. Police say a man posing as a surveyor recently distracted an elderly homeowner long enough for an accomplice to gain access to jewelry in the second-story of the house. Residents are urged not to allow anyone access if they have doubts and to call the Emergency Dispatch Center at 436-2145 to report suspicious persons who approach their homes.

CENSUS PREPARATIONS

Beginning Monday (April 20), U.S. Census Bureau employees will begin visiting every dwelling in Portsmouth to verify the address and physical location in preparation for mailing out 2010 Census questionnaires next year. Workers wearing U.S. Census badges will be attempting to verify that the addresses are the same as those on the Census Bureau's list. If no one is home, the employees will leave a note and try to verify the address from such things as a number on the door or the mailbox. Using a handheld computer, they will capture the dwelling's address and GPS coordinates. The task is expected to continue through July. Contact: (603) 573-9470.

FLUSHING MAINS

The spring program to flush sediment from Portsmouth Water Department mains has begun and will last approximately six weeks until all mains are flushed. If you see Water Department trucks in your neighborhood between 8 p.m. and midnight, Monday through Thursday, refrain from drawing water as it may have a reddish tint. Let the water run until it becomes clear again. Contact: 427-1552.

HAZARDOUS WASTE

The spring Household Hazardous Waste Collection Day for residents of Portsmouth, Greenland and Newington will be Saturday, May 16, from 8 a.m. until noon. Bring unwanted household chemicals to the Portsmouth Department of Public Works facility at 680 Peverly Hill Rd. Proof of residency is required. A list of chemicals is at www.cityofportsmouth.com/publicworks/solidwaste-recycle-hhw.htm. Contact: 427-1530.

AUTHOR READING

Tomorrow evening (April 16) the author of “Deep Cinema: Film as Shamanic Initiation,” Mary Trainor-Brigham, will read and sign books, as well as show film clips, beginning at 7 p.m. in the Library’s Levenson Room. The Library is co-sponsoring the event with RiverRun Bookstore. Contact: 427-1540.

SAGAMORE CREEK WALK

The Second Annual Walk on the Sagamore Creek land off Jones Avenue is Saturday afternoon (April 18). Longtime residents Dick and John Adams will lead the walk, accompanied by local naturalists Davis Finch and Don Green, who will interpret the wildlife along the trails and show points of special interest. Meet at the gate on Jones Avenue at 2 p.m. The walk will be canceled in bad weather. Contact: (603) 373-8288.

PUBLIC DOCKING

There is an April 27 deadline to submit an application for the lottery selection for seasonal rental of 10 boat slips at Prescott Park on the Piscataqua River. Applications are available online and must be submitted to the City Clerk’s Office. More information on the seasonal slips, as well as hourly and overnight rentals of docking spaces, can be found at www.cityofportsmouth.com/prescottpark/docks.htm. Contact: 610-7245.

SPRING BREAK

Portsmouth Public Schools are on spring recess during the week of April 27. Registration for the Rec Department’s April vacation camp for grades K-5 is underway and will continue at Spinnaker Point Adult Recreation Center until the camp is full. Cost is \$105 and includes all transportation. Contact: 766-1483.

FREE MOVIES

Free movies continue at the Library on April 30 with the R-rated “Frost/Nixon” beginning at 6:45 p.m. in the Library’s Levenson Room. The movie is a dramatic retelling of the post-Watergate television interviews between British talk-show host David Frost and former President Richard Nixon. There also will be a Special Saturday Matinee at 1 p.m. on May 2 with the showing of the 2008 epic movie “Australia” starring Nicole Kidman and Hugh Jackman. Contact: 427-1540.

DOG LICENSE REMINDER

Dog owners must renew their dogs’ licenses by May 1. All dogs that have received a first rabies shot must be registered with the City Clerk’s Office. Puppies 3 to 7-months-old are charged \$6.50. Licenses are \$9 for male or female dogs, but \$6.50 for dogs with proof they have been neutered or spayed. Senior citizens over 65 may register one dog annually for \$2. Contact: 610-7245.

IMPORTANT SCHOOL DATES

The Portsmouth Alternative School (PASS) graduation is Friday, June 5, at 10:30 a.m. at Sherburne School. Middle School graduation is Thursday, June 11, at 6 p.m. at Portsmouth High School. High School graduation is Friday, June 12, at 5:30 p.m. If there are no more cancellations between now and the end of school, the last day of school for students will be Friday, June 19. Contact: 431-5080.

SUNDAY SANDLOT BASEBALL

Boys and girls ages 6 to 9 are invited to participate in sandlot baseball games at New Franklin School baseball field from 12:30 p.m. to 3 p.m. on Sundays through June 14 (with the exception of May 10 and 24). The Rec Department provides the equipment and supervision, but the kids make the rules and play baseball just for fun. In case of inclement weather, call 766-1483.

REC NEWS

Registration is underway for the May 16 spring trip to New York City. This trip fills fast so sign up now at the Connie Bean Center. Cost is \$55 and includes round-trip bus service. The second set of spring swimming lessons at the Indoor Pool begins next week and a lifeguard training class is planned May 8-21. Peirce Island Outdoor Pool opens June 29. Swim lesson info is at www.cityofportsmouth.com/recreation/programs-11.htm. The Spring/Summer brochure is available online at www.cityofportsmouth.com/recreation/programs.htm and at all Rec Department facilities. Also, check out Spinnaker Point Center's new, modern hot tub. Spinnaker is open over 80 hours a week with great classes and workout equipment. Contact: 766-1483.

"TWO OLD FRIENDS"

Fishtraks recording artists "Two Old Friends" will perform songs from Ireland, the mountains and the sea accompanied by banjo, guitar, mandolin, concertina, bodran (Irish frame drum), and octave mandolin on Sunday, May 3, at 2 p.m. in the Library's Levenson Room. This musical event for the whole family will be presented by Mac McHale and Emery Hutchins, the original founders of Northeast Winds. It will include ballads, foot-stomping shout tunes, gospel sing-alongs and story-telling. Contact: 427-1540.

WRITING GROUP

The Library's Thursday night Writers' Group is seeking new members from all levels of writing and genres. The group meets from 7 to 8:45 p.m. two Thursday evenings a month and is limited to eight participants. Rotating facilitators from within the group begin each meeting with a short discussion on various topics, followed by an extemporaneous exercise. The group's goal is to improve and edit writing, have fun, motivate each other and enjoy the writing process. Contact: 427-1540.

MORE LIBRARY NEWS

You can now check the Library catalogue for the availability of current New York Times bestsellers. In addition, the Library now offers the ability to download some audio books to Macintosh computers, which can then be listened to on MP3 players, including iPods. Audio books remain available for downloading to PCs. To use these Library services, visit www.cityofportsmouth.com/library/index.htm.

ROADWORK

Work has begun to reconstruct 19 handicapped ramps to meet today's standards, with an emphasis on those in Market Square. The project is expected to take four weeks to complete. Any traffic interruptions are expected to be minor. In addition, paving work is planned on the portion of Market Street near the salt piles, Maplewood Avenue in the vicinity of Dennett Street, State Street near the Rockingham, and on Aviation Avenue at the Pease Tradeport. Information on all City road projects is at www.cityofportsmouth.com/projects/index.htm. Weather and other factors may cause delays. Contact: 766-1411.

Mark Your Calendar

- The Second Annual Portsmouth Sustainability Fair is Saturday, May 9.
- The 14th annual Mother/Son Dance sponsored by the Rec Department is Saturday evening, May 9, for boys in Grades K-5 and their mothers (or other important women in their lives).
- The All-City Concert featuring the Dondero chorus is May 13 and the All-City Concert featuring the New Franklin Chorus will be May 20.
- Local songwriter and recording artist Lucie Therrien will read from her new book "Dual Citizen—Deux Citoyennetés" and perform original songs at the Library May 14 at 7 p.m.
- The Rec Department's final Middle School Dance of the school year is May 15 at the Connie Bean Center.
- The PHS Spring Musical "Charlie Brown" is May 15 and 16.
- The Portsmouth Middle School Spring Concert will be May 27.

Did you know...

Rafael de los Santos, a second-year culinary student at Portsmouth High's Career and Technical Education Center, recently won first place at the Skills USA New Hampshire State Culinary Competition and will compete at the national level in Kansas City in June. This is the second straight year the PHS student has won the NH

gold medal. The six-hour competition required competitors to exhibit skills in knife cuts, meat fabrication and preparation of a soup, salad, entrée vegetable and starch. Last year, he placed 17th nationally.

BOARD VACANCIES

The most recent list of openings on the City's volunteer boards and commissions can be found at www.cityofportsmouth.com/cityclerk/boardscommissions.htm.

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/2009/index.htm.

SCHOOL CALENDAR: The School Department's Activities Calendar for all schools is at www.cityofportsmouth.com/school/allschoolactivitiescalendar.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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