

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

TAX EXEMPTIONS

The City Council has just increased the income and asset limits for both the elderly and disabled tax bill exemptions. Income limits will increase from \$30,600 to \$31,640 for single taxpayers and from \$37,740 to \$39,030 for married couples. Total assets for both exemptions have increased from \$102,000 to \$105,470 whether single or married. Applications are due to the Assessor's Office no later than April 15 in order to receive the exemptions for the December 2008 tax bill. Contact: 610-7249.

LIBRARY OPENING SUNDAYS

Sunday (March 9) marks the first day of Sunday service at the Portsmouth Public Library. The Library will offer all regular services to the public from 1 p.m. to 5 p.m. on Sundays through May 18. During the summer months of June, July and August, the Library will return to six-day-per week service. Sunday hours will resume in September on the Sunday after Labor Day. Contact: 427-1540.

ISLINGTON STREET CORRIDOR

The Islington Street Corridor Action Plan is the focus of a joint work session Monday evening (March 10) between the City Council and the Economic Development Commission. The meeting, which is scheduled from 6:30 to 8:30 p.m. in the Eileen Dondero Foley Council Chambers, will be televised on Channel 22. Consultants Richardson and Associates will present options for action items based on analysis of public and City staff input, and past corridor study recommendations. Contact: 610-7220.

MARCH MOVIE MADNESS

It's March Movie Madness time at the Public Library. Tonight's (March 6) feature is "Gone Baby Gone" shown at 7 p.m. in the Levenson Room. Filmed in Boston, the movie centers around the search for a missing child. Next up will be "3:10 to Yuma" based on the Elmore Leonard novel on March 13 and "Michael Clayton" will be shown March 20. For more info, see www.cityofportsmouth.com/library/lib-programs.htm.

MIDDLE SCHOOL DANCE

The next Middle School Dance for Portsmouth residents and chaperoned by Rec Dept. staff is tomorrow (Friday, March 7) at the Connie Bean Center from 7:30 to 10 p.m. The cost is \$4. Contact: 766-1483.

AUTOMATED METER READING

The first phase of implementation of the City's new Automated Meter Reader system begins later this month and will involve 1,250 water meters in the central business district and residential area between Richards Avenue and the Piscataqua River. Property owners will be notified by mail on how to schedule an installation appointment. The system uses radio and Ethernet connections and will eventually be expanded to nearly 8,000 meters in Portsmouth, Newington, New Castle, and Rye as well as locations in Greenland, Madbury, Dover and Durham.

PORTSMOUTH EXPLORERS

The Police Department's Explorer Post has received the 2007 Northeast Explorer Post of the Year award, competing against posts from New York, New Jersey, Rhode Island, Vermont, Massachusetts, Maine, Connecticut and New Hampshire. Portsmouth Explorer Post Coordinator Detective Robert Munson received the Director's Award for the Post's Can ID program. See www.cityofportsmouth.com/police/explorer/news.html to learn more or call 610-7506.

NEW POOL PROGRAMS

A new set of swim lessons, lifeguard courses and other aquatic programs begins the week of March 17. Register at the Indoor Pool for all levels of Red Cross Learn-to-swim, Lifeguarding, WSI, Jr. Lifeguarding, Infant/Toddler, Springboard Diving, Adapted Aquatics and much more. The full schedule is at www.cityofportsmouth.com/recreation/indoor.htm or call 427-1546.

SCHOOL MUSIC

Portsmouth will celebrate Music in our Schools Month on Wednesday, March 19, with a 7 p.m. concert at Portsmouth High School for the Middle School choral and band groups. The snow date is March 21. The concert is scheduled to be broadcast March 22 at 7 p.m. on local government cable Channel 22. Contact: 431-5080.

GOOD FRIDAY

City offices will close early Friday, March 21, in observance of Good Friday. City Hall will close at noon and the Library closes at 12:30 p.m. but there will be no change to curbside collection of rubbish and recyclables or to the public school schedule.

EASTER EGG HUNT

The Recreation Department's annual Easter egg hunt is Saturday, March 22, at Langdon Park located across from Portsmouth City Hall. Preschool children hunt at 10:30 a.m., followed by the K-Grade 2 crowd at 11:30 a.m. If it rains, the event moves to the Portsmouth Middle School gym. There will be eggs and prizes for everyone. Contact: 766-1483.

SPRING SPORTS

Portsmouth High School spring sports tryout information is at www.cityofportsmouth.com/school/phs/athsch-tryout.htm.

YOUR POLITICAL PARTY

Voters who want to change their political party status to undeclared or to a different political party must do so by June 3. No political party changes will be allowed after that date for the Sept. 9 State Primary election. Make the change at the City Clerk's office in City Hall Room 218. Contact: 610-7245.

TREE LOCATIONS WANTED

If you would like a tree planted along the street 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 and provide your name, address and a contact phone number. The Public Works Department and the Mayor's Committee on Trees and Public Greenery are seeking recommendations for locations for the planting of trees along city streets.

BOARD OPENINGS

Information on the City's volunteer boards, vacancies and how to apply can be found on the City's web site at www.cityofportsmouth.com/cityclerk/boardscommissions.htm.

Mark your calendar... (2 items)

- Portsmouth High School students will "take over" the City in the roles of City officials and City Council and School Board members on Wednesday (March 19). Their meetings will be broadcast on Cable Channel 22.
- The Recreation Department's Spring/Summer brochure will be out March 24.

Booster Club Fundraisers (3 items)

CHOCOLATE EXTRAVAGANZA -- Indulge your love for chocolate while benefiting Portsmouth High Music Program Scholarships with an evening of "Magical Musical Chocolate" next Wednesday (March 12), 6 p.m. to 8:30 p.m., in the PHS cafeteria. Enjoy delicious and decadent chocolate desserts donated by local restaurants, along with vocal and instrumental performances by PHS and Middle School students. Tickets are \$5 in advance and \$7 at the door. For discounted advance tickets to be held at the door, send cash or a check by tomorrow (March 7) to PHS Music Boosters, PHS, Alumni Drive, Portsmouth, NH 03801. Snow date is Thursday, March 13.

SMART FUN -- What do the Mayor, a City Councilor, an assistant superintendent, the Middle School principal and assistant principal, and the Portsmouth schools reading director have in common? They've all signed up to play the "Are You Smarter than a Dondero Fifth Grader?" game show March 28 at the Portsmouth High auditorium from 6 p.m. to 8 p.m. Tickets will be available at the March 19 Dondero Elementary Pasta Dinner or

at the door on the night of the event. Proceeds help Dondero Fifth Graders attend environmental school at Camp Calumet in Ossipee. Contact: Elizabeth Valway, 431-7894, ext. 1154, or elizabeth.valway@heinemann.com.

SPAGHETTI DINNER -- The Portsmouth High School Baseball Boosters are hosting a Spaghetti Dinner fundraiser Saturday, March 29, 4 to 7 p.m., at the North Church Parish House at 355 Spinney Road. Tickets can be purchased in advance (adults \$7, seniors and children 12 & under \$4.50) at the High School, Middle School, Dondero, Crown Trophy, Seaport Fish, and The Golden Egg. Tickets will also be available at the door (adults \$8, seniors and children 12 & under \$5). Contact: 436-2015.

Did you know...?

The City of Portsmouth received 859 applications for employment and filled 73 full-time and part-time positions in Fiscal Year 2007. The employment turnover rate for City employment was 8.2 percent, slightly less than the previous year. For more information on the City's Human Resources Department and other city departments, see the City's most recent annual report at www.cityofportsmouth.com/annualreport/index.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/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 closed Sunday.

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