

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

Schools and the School Department's Central Office close at noon today (Dec. 24, Christmas Eve). City offices, the Library, Recreation Department facilities and the Public Works main office close at 3 p.m. Tomorrow's scheduled curbside collection of solid waste and recycling is being conducted today.

HOLIDAY HOURS

City offices, the Library, Recreation Department facilities and the Public Works main office are closed tomorrow (Christmas Day). Most also will be closed Friday (Dec. 26) and New Year's Day. However, the Spinnaker Point Adult Rec Center will be open Dec. 26 and New Year's Day. Schools reopen Jan. 5. The School Department's Central Office is open Monday, Tuesday and Friday of next week. The Indoor Pool has added a holiday open swim time for next Tuesday, Dec. 30, from 5:30 to 7 p.m.

HOLIDAY TRASH

There will be some changes to curbside collection related to the holidays. Tomorrow's (Dec. 25) Thursday curbside collection of solid waste and recycling is being conducted today. Friday's collection will proceed as normal. The New Year's Day Thursday collection will instead be conducted next Wednesday, Dec. 31. Christmas trees will be collected curbside January 5 through January 16 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.

FREE PARKING ENDS

Saturday (Dec. 27) is the final day of free holiday parking at downtown meters. As always, if you need more time downtown than the meters allow, consider the High-Hanover Parking Facility. Many merchants offer up to four hours of free parking at the High-Hanover garage as part of the Downtown Parking Validation Program. These merchants display a blue sticker with a "P" in their storefront windows. Contact: 766-1440.

HOLIDAY PARADE BROADCAST

A videotape of the 2008 Portsmouth Illuminated Holiday Parade will be rebroadcast at 7 p.m. Saturday (Dec. 27) on local government cable Channel 22. The videotape of the Dec. 6 event lasts approximately 40 minutes.

ALCOHOL REMINDER

The Portsmouth Police Department urges everyone to drink responsibly during the holiday season, and please use a designated driver, utilize public transportation, or call a cab if you have been drinking alcohol. Police will have increased DUI patrols during this time as they work to make sure the holiday season is safe for everyone.

NEW YEAR'S CRAFTS

Drop by the Library's Youth Activity Room Saturday (Dec. 27) between 10 a.m. and noon to make New Year's hats and noisemakers. The workshop is open to all Library cardholders. Children under 10 must bring their adults. Contact: 766-1740.

SHELTER LOST & FOUND

Bedding and several coats were left behind at the Portsmouth Emergency Shelter at the High School during last weekend's power outage. Residents may call the Portsmouth Health Department at 610-7273 to retrieve them.

RECYCLING STICKERS

It's time to get your 2009 sticker to use the City's Recycling Center. Residents may apply for and receive the free stickers at the Recycling Center on Tuesdays, Wednesdays, and Thursdays from 8 a.m. until 3:30 p.m. by filling out an application and showing proof of residency. Stickers are issued on an annual basis and must be placed on the driver's side window. Contact: 427-1530.

AUTHOR EVENT

Kelly Link, who writes short stories fused with fantastical elements, is coming to the Portsmouth Library on Jan. 7 for an event co-sponsored with RiverRun Bookstore. Link will meet with readers in a book group format at 6 p.m. in the Levenson Room to discuss her short story collection "Magic for Beginners." RSVP to riverrunevents@gmail.com or call 431-2100. At 7 p.m., she will read from her new collection "Pretty Monsters." Link's stories have won three Nebula, a Hugo, and a World Fantasy Award. Contact: 427-1540.

INPUT SOUGHT

The City of Portsmouth's Citizens Advisory Committee will hold a Jan. 8 public hearing to seek ideas for new Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) projects. The hearing begins at 6 p.m. in City Hall Conference Room A and is part of the development of the FY 2009-2010 CDBG Annual Plan and Budget. CDBG projects must benefit Portsmouth families who earn very low, low and moderate incomes. CDBG funding also can be used to carry out projects in neighborhoods where more than half of the residents earn low or moderate incomes, and to improve accessibility for people with disabilities. For more info or to offer input, contact: 610-7226.

MIDDLE SCHOOL DANCE

The next Middle School dance is Friday, Jan. 9, from 7:30-10 p.m. at the Connie Bean Community Center. Cost is \$4, \$3 with Merit Card. Open to all PMS students/Portsmouth residents. Contact: 766-1483.

REC DEPARTMENT NEWS

Over the holidays, please call Rec Department facilities to check for holiday-related closures or changes in hours of operation. 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. For additional information about Rec facilities, contact www.cityofportsmouth.com/recreation/staff.htm.

SWIM LESSONS

Registration has begun for Red Cross swim lessons beginning in January at the Indoor Pool. Most classes are on Tuesdays and Thursdays, but some Saturday morning lessons are available. A Lifeguard Training Class also is scheduled for Sundays and Thursdays in January. Participants must be at least 15 and able to pass the entrance test. Space is limited. Sign up for all classes at the Indoor Pool during normal pool hours. The schedule and more info are at www.cityofportsmouth.com/recreation/indoor.htm. Contact: 427-1546.

PARADE WINNERS

Mayor Tom Ferrini has announced the 2008 Portsmouth Illuminated Holiday Parade winners, beginning with the Kiwanis Club of the Seacoast's old-fashioned sleigh that won the "Mayor's Award." Other awards from the Dec. 6 "Vintage Christmas in Portsmouth" parade were Best Commercial Entry: The Portsmouth Herald's portrayal of early 1900s Portsmouth; Best Non-Profit Entry: Portsmouth Christian Academy's "Silent Night, Holy Night"; and Best Community Entry: the Harmon's Company of Snowshoemen re-enactment group. Contact: 610-7281.

ENERGY-SAVING PROJECT

The City of Portsmouth has begun replacing 275 lighting fixtures at the High-Hanover Parking Garage as part of a project anticipated to result in an energy savings of at least 25 percent. The first phase of the work, which began this week and continues at least through next week, involves replacing 130 fixtures, or approximately 20 a day. The 40 to 50 spaces underneath those 20 fixtures will be coned off each day beginning at 6:30 a.m., Monday through Saturday. As the work progresses throughout the day, the spaces will open for parking. Little disruption is expected. The remainder of the fixtures will be replaced in January.

VOLUNTEER VACANCIES

Why not make a New Year's resolution to become more involved in the community? There are several openings on the City's volunteer boards and commissions. For more information about the boards and their openings, see www.cityofportsmouth.com/cityclerk/boardscommissions.htm.

SNOWSTORM INFO

Coupons are available to Portsmouth residents to allow them to pay just \$3 to park in the High-Hanover Parking Facility during snow emergencies and snow removal periods. Proof of residency is required to obtain the

coupons at no cost from the Parking Office at City Hall (open 8 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.). 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.

Did you know...

Residents shouldn't put newspapers into a plastic bag before placing them in the recycling bin for pickup by City crews. Newspapers should be put in a paper bag instead. Request paper instead of plastic bags at the grocery store and reuse them to store newspapers in the bin. Residents who take reusable grocery bags to the store can use one recycling bin for commingled containers and another for paper waste. Stack the commingled bin atop the paper bin to prevent paper from blowing into the street. Or use a cardboard box as a paper waste collection receptacle, close it up and leave it curbside. To learn more about the City's recycling program, visit www.cityofportsmouth.com/publicworks/solidwaste-recycle.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 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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