

The Message



Issue 314

December 2013/January 2014

Mount Rainier's Art of Crafting its Holidays

By Paul Ruffins

Children may believe that Hanukkah or Christmas or New Year's Eve just happens, but every adult knows that creating a meaningful celebration takes work, resources and planning. The same is true of our town. Individuals are shopping and cooking and volunteering but the overall community is also working on its holiday plans. The police department is anticipating thieves. The fire de-



Saint John's Choir Performs Christmas Carols.
PHOTOS: PAUL RUFFINS

partment is concerned about candles. Clergy are word-smithing sermons and merchants are merchandizing. Afterwards, Public Works will truck away Christmas' trees to be made into mulch.

Since our community has art in its heart, it's fair to say that our much of our celebrations are "hand crafted." So, in the spirit of the season, The Message visited three long-standing Mount Rainier institutions: St John's Anglican Episcopal Church, Nisey's Boutique, and The Craft Fair, to see how their parishioners, principals, patrons, and participants were making this period their own.

St. John's congregation consists of people from 17 different countries, mostly immigrants from former British Colonies in Africa and South America. It's Priest-in-charge, Reverend Daniel Darko, is from Ghana. "We changed our sign to include the term "Anglican" to reach out more people from overseas, who didn't realize that "Episcopal" was just the new name that their "Anglican" Church of England started using in the U.S. after the American Revolution," he explained.

St. John's hosts a roster of deeply familiar Christmas events including a children's pageant. But, Reverend Darko believes that his parishioners are far less likely than other to simply go through the motions on automatic pilot. "Very few of our members worship here just because they were born nearby," he declares. "Most sought us out by word of mouth, and come here to actively participate because it helps re-create the feelings of home and community that they experienced overseas.

This is particularly true during Christmas when services focus on the birth of a child to travelers in a foreign land. Our parishioners have a strong desire to make familiar liturgical rituals come alive with an African accent. We welcome our neighbors to come in and feel the spirit, and we hope to host some joint services with other nearby churches in 2014."

HOLIDAYS, Continued on page 12

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**CITY COUNCIL
MEETINGS
AND SPECIAL DATES**

Unless noted, all City Council meetings occur at 7 pm at City Hall, One Municipal Place

DATE	EVENT
Tuesday, January 7, 2014	Regular Meeting of the Mayor and Council
Tuesday, January 21, 2014	Work session Meeting of the Mayor and Council
Tuesday, February 4, 2014	Regular Meeting of the Mayor and Council

This Year, Use Sober Ride

Twenty-five percent of all drunk driving deaths occur in the month of December. Over the Christmas and New Year's holidays there is a 40-60% spike in alcohol-related traffic fatalities



Don't drink and drive this holiday season! From December 14th to January 1st you can call 1-800-Sober Ride for a free taxi ride home. Remember YOU choose your ride. Either a free ride in a police cruiser under arrest or free ride home in a cab.



News and Information

Wanted! MRTV needs up to four (4) volunteer writers, reporters, camera operators to be "On Air" host and production crew for MRTV's current show, "CitiScape...What You Need to Know, What You Want to Know".

CitiScape is a monthly (to be weekly if we get the help!) news and information show covering the events, issues and people of the City of Mount Rainier, MD. This is perfect for students majoring in TV Production and Journalism. Practice what you are learning! Experience in Final Cut Pro editing, (other editing software okay) studio and field production would be preferred.

MRTV has a small studio, studio and field production equipment and a Final Cut Edit Suite. MRTV programs appear on Comcast 71, Verizon 21, "On Demand" at City's website mountrainiermd.org, and live streamed at mrtv.pegstream.com to computers and mobile devices.

Contact MRTV Department Director at 301-985-6585x 28 or email her at gcarbogcarbonell@mountrainiermd.org.

Questions, comments and submissions to the Mount Rainier *MESSAGE* should be sent to **Michael Jackson, Assistant City Manager, via mail at One Municipal Place, Mount Rainier, MD 20712 or via e-mail at mjackson@mountrainiermd.org**. All submissions for the February 2014 *MESSAGE* must be received by close of business on Wednesday, January 15, 2014. Submissions received after that time will be considered on a space available basis. The Mount Rainier Message is published monthly except for the combined July-August and December-January issues. Electronic version available.

The Mayor and Council of the City of Mount Rainier will host a community forum on the proposed development/rehabilitation of three properties:

3300 Rhode Island Avenue, AKA "The Singer Building,"
Mount Rainier, Maryland 20712

The adjacent white stucco properties:

3308 Rhode Island Avenue, formerly a pawn shop, Mount
Rainier, Maryland 20712

3310 Rhode Island Avenue, once a bank, Mount Rainier,
Maryland 20712

The forum will take public comment on possibilities for redevelopment of this site, and discuss various development options presented in an initial assessment by the Redevelopment Authority. All of these properties are currently owned by the Redevelopment Authority of Prince George's County, who worked with the city for the last year to acquire these long neglected properties.

This initial public forum is the first step in the Redevelopment Authority's process to find a development partner for the site. It is proposed that within approximately 30-60 days of this forum, the Redevelopment Authority will issue a Request for Proposals (RFP) to potential developers and that a selection will be made within 90 days of the closing date of the RFP.

The community forum is scheduled as follows:

When: Tuesday, January 14, 2014, 7:00 pm
Where City of Mount Rainier Municipal Building
One Municipal Place
Mount Rainier, Maryland 20712

Fiscal Year 2015 Budget Calendar

DATE	EVENT
Tuesday, January 7, 2014	First Reading/Vote Fiscal Year 2015 Budget Calendar
Friday, January 10, 2014	Budget instructions issued to All City Departments and Community groups (including Bunker Hill Fire Department)
Tuesday, February 4, 2014	Staff Presentation to Mayor and Council on revenue and expenditure analysis based on current property assessments and other data
Friday, February 7, 2014	Deadline for all City Departments (including Bunker Hill Fire Department) to submit FY 2015 budget requests to City Manager.
Tuesday, February 11, 2014	Special Meeting of the Mayor and Council to hear public comment on budget priorities and community groups proposals/requests
Thursday, February 20, 2014	Deadline for Notice to <i>Port Towns Gazette</i> about FY 2015 Budget Presentation Scheduled for March 4, 2014. Notice to appear February 27, 2014
Thursday, February 27, 2014	Notice in <i>Port Towns Gazette</i> about March 4, 2014 FY 2015 Budget submission and March 4, 2015 Budget Presentation.
Tuesday, March 4, 2014	Regular Meeting of the Mayor and Council; City Manager presents proposed FY 2015 Budget and Capital Improvement Plan (CIP) for all city departments
Tuesday, March 18, 2014	FY 2015 Budget work session and discussion on proposed constant yield tax rate
Thursday, April 3, 2014	Deadline for submission of April 10, 2014 display ad on proposed Constant Yield Tax Rate and notice of public hearing on FY 2015 Budget
Thursday, April 10, 2014	Notice in <i>Port Towns Gazette</i> about Public Hearing on proposed FY 2015 Budget and Constant Yield Tax Rate scheduled for April 22, 2014
Tuesday, April 15, 2014	Mayor and Council Meeting; special work session on FY 2015 Budget
Tuesday, April 22, 2014	Public hearing and public comment on proposed FY 2015 Budget and Constant Yield Tax Rate; Special Meeting for First Reading on FY 2015 Budget
Tuesday, May 6, 2014	Mayor and Council Meeting; Second Reading and Vote on FY 2015 Budget and Constant Yield Tax Rate

Message from the Mayor

With the grant from the Department of Aging Secretary, Gloria Lawlah, the Whatcha Doin Seniors' Club (WDSC) will hold its first official meeting on Monday, January 6 at 11:30am at the Mount Rainier Police Station. Lunch will be served. The purpose of the first meeting is to get ideas and set up activities for senior residents. Transportation will be made available to those who need it. If you have not signed up to be a member of this newly forming Club, you should call Miss Janis Lomax immediately so that you can be a founding member! Miss Lomax can be reached at 301-985-6585. There are no fees to join, but you MUST be a senior (60 years and over). See the October issue of the "Message" to learn more about the Whatcha Doin Seniors' Club.

Third update on Bunker Hill Road and other streets in Mount Rainier.

Reconstruction work has started on Bunker Hill Road. Sidewalks, curbs and gutters are being installed



(and from what I have seen, they are looking good). With this warm weather, I am hopeful that we will see an entirely new street in the not too distant future. Special thanks to former Mayor Bryan Knedler for taking off from work to oversee some of the reconstruction work on Bunker Hill. There still tend to be some rule violations, but we have been on top of them and will continue to monitor this project until it is completed.

Your Councilmembers, Brent Bolin, Ivy Thompson and I continue to walk and monitor the area to ensure compliance, but we need those pictures, and other infor-

mation about issues of concern to you. You are our eyes and ears. We were assured that they will strive to complete their work prior to winter setting in, but everything depends on the weather and no more unexpected surprises.

Washington Gas has completed its work on Bunker Hill Road. However, there are still some issues on 31st with the soil replacement in our tree boxes. That issues has been called to their attention for correcting. As of Monday, December 2, all of the work being done on Bunker Hill Road is being done by Washington Gas Company. They are in the reconstruction phase, i.e., rebuilding our street, sidewalks, and gutters. Bunker Hill will soon be done.

Thirtieth Street has had most, if not all of the work done to prepare it for milling next spring. Washington Gas will be doing that work. HOWEVER, I have noticed that there has been some additional work being done, and that portion of 30th that was done first now looks as if it was never redone. I will be discussing this with both utility companies to make sure that when one is finished they are all finished so that our streets will remain in good shape for a while.

Additional work is planned in the City. Michael Jackson and I will soon be meeting on that project. It is a big project similar to the one on Bunker Hill Road, but we will apply what we have learned from Bunker Hill Road as we begin this project. We will keep you posted on where, when, what, how long

MAYOR, continued on page 11

Go Talk to the Principal! (Part one): *Thomas Stone Elementary Hilda Morad*

By Paul Ruffins

In 2012, Mount Rainier welcomed two new school principals. This edition, The Message sits down with Ms. Helda Morad of Thomas Stone. (In February we'll profile Shawn Hintz of Mount Rainier Elementary.) Morad grew up in Columbia, South America, and graduated from the University of Central Florida. In 2006, she joined Teach For America and worked in Baltimore public schools. She has been coordinator of language immersion at Cesar Chavez Elementary in Hyattsville, and Resident Principal at Springhill Lake. In 2010-2011 she was nominated for P.G. Teacher Of The Year.

The Message: Over 60% of Stone's Students are Hispanic, often immigrants. What is the impact of having a principal from Columbia?

Principal Morad: It's powerful. Speaking fluent Spanish completely changes my communications with parents. Until now, many have had to speak with a principal through an interpreter. Now there are no excuses- they know what I mean, and I understand exactly what they said. In addition, many of my female students grew up in cultures where men go out into the world, but women just stay home and raise children. When they meet me, they see that an immigrant girl like themselves can succeed in America, can go to college, and can take charge of things.

The Message: What are some specific challenges of running Stone?

Principal Morad: First, it's a large school. We have 800 students and 80 staff. Cesar Chavez had about 300 kids. In addition, we have a comprehensive special education program with 120 students. We've also recently switched to the national Common Core Curriculum which is not as closely aligned to Maryland's Student Assessment tests as our old curriculum. So, our data do not reflect the progress that I feel we've been making.

The Message: What are the biggest changes taking place?

Principal Morad: We've established a student government. The officers are 6th graders who have spoken about every student's rights and responsi-



PHOTOS: PAUL RUFFINS

bilities. Fortunately, we've had almost no serious discipline problems like fights. But in January, we'll start systematically rewarding positive behavior, and kids can exchange the points they earn for fun items from our school store.

TheMessage: How can Mount Rainier increase its support for our children in your school?

Principal Morad: First, we could use help with traffic control on 34th street when school lets out. Our teachers must stay in the classroom until 1:50 pm, but parents start driving in to pick up children at 1:30 and the parking lot is a mess. The Mount Rainier and Brentwood police have promised coverage, but they are very busy. So, we could really use a city employee or a local volunteer to act as a crossing guard for an hour or so.

Then, it would be great for the community to

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Community Happenings



Do you need assistance paying your heating bill? Do you need help affording groceries? Do you have enough warm clothing? Is your house winterized? Do you need home repairs, your gutters cleaned out, or branches removed? If you need assistance, we're here for you.

We're the Mount Rainier Neighborhood Task Force Team, a group of volunteers dedicated to helping our neighbors in need of support. If you need a helping hand, call or text 240-389-4118 or email mountrainierneighbors@gmail.com with your first name, phone number and a brief description of why you are contacting us.

Don't hesitate to reach out - we're here for everyone in Mount Rainier!

Principal *continued from page 8*

create more after-school activities for neighborhood kids whose parents have to work. Most of our families can't afford to pay for their kids to go to the Y. On Fridays, we get mentors from the First Baptist Church of Brentwood, but it would be fantastic if 3 or 4 neighbors helped us organize more outdoor sports.

Finally, we can always use good clean donated clothes that match our uniforms; blue pants and blue, baby blue, and white polo shirt for boys and girls up to the sixth grade.

Support Our Schools

Volunteer with the local Mount Rainier Parent Teacher Organizations (PTO)! Our local schools are only as great as the people involved!

The Thomas Stone Elementary PTO meets every third Wednesday of the month at 6 p.m. in the school cafeteria. Contact PTO President Ms. Kristen Hayes at k_hayes2008@hotmail.com and Vice-President Mr. Daniel Rivas at dbr81@yahoo.com.

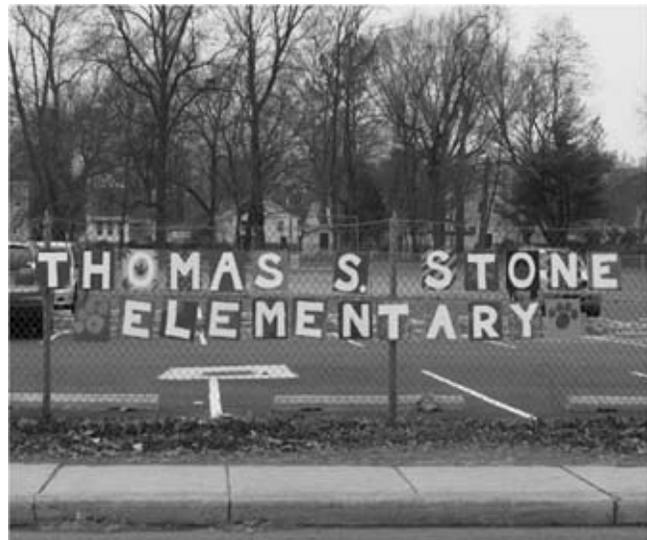
The Mount Rainier Elementary PTO meets the first Tuesday of every month at 7 p.m. in the school library. Contact Ms. Yvette Barnes at b527@gmail.com to volunteer.

You can also support our local schools by registering your Giant bonus card at www.giantfood.com/our_stores/bonus_bucks/index.htm. The schools earn money each time you use your card. You can select up to 3 schools. You must re-register every school year (no automatic rollover occurs).

School Supplies Needed

Please consider donating the following supplies to both Thomas Stone Elementary and Mount Rainier Elementary Schools:

printer cartridges	construction paper,
scotch tape	copy paper
pencils	hand sanitizer
tissues	paper towels
Notebook paper	composition books



CHIEF'S BLOG

Time to Prepare for Winter Weather

It's that time of year when residents should be attuned to weather alerts that may affect where you park and how you travel, whether by car or by public transportation. It is important that when listening to weather reports and advisories you know the buzzwords and what they really mean.

Freezing rain – rain that freezes when it hits the ground, creating a coating of ice on roads and walkways.

Hail – rain that turns to ice while suspended and tossed in the air from violent updrafts in a thunderstorm.

Sleet – rain that turns to ice pellets before reaching the ground.

Winter Weather Advisory – cold, ice and snow are expected.

Winter Storm Watch – severe winter weather such as heavy snow or ice is possible within a day or two.

Winter Storm Warning – severe weather conditions have begun or are about to begin.

Blizzard Warning – heavy snow and strong winds producing blinding snow (near zero visibility) and life threatening wind chills for three hours or longer.

Frost/freeze Warning – below freezing temperatures are expected.



When weather conditions warrant the declaration of a snow emergency the City of Mount Rainier follows the District of Columbia, NOT Maryland or Prince George's County. Residents should be aware that when a winter weather advisory is announced the chances of a snow emergency being declared is a distinct

After You've Opened the Gifts

Burglars know that many households have new, and oftentimes expensive, items in their homes following the December holidays – especially items such as new computers and peripherals, stereo components, televisions, cameras and other electronic equipment. In too many cases, residents make it easy for burglars to figure out which homes to target by putting boxes that identify their new gifts out with their other garbage or recyclables. Avoid becoming an easy target for post-holiday burglars – *do not* leave boxes from new electronics and other valuable items out in plain view. Instead, break down any boxes you are throwing out, put them in garbage bags and place the bags inside a trash can. Most cardboard packing boxes can and should be recycled. They can be broken down, placed in garbage bags and set out for pick-up on recycling day (it is a bad idea to burn cardboard boxes in a fireplace or wood stove!). Styrofoam packing materials are not recyclable and should be disposed of with regular trash. In many cases, especially with computer equipment, you might consider keeping the boxes for storage, shipping or a future move. Some burglars like to look inside trash cans and recycle containers for evidence of holiday gifts, so if you see anyone suspicious please call Mount Rainier Police Communications at 301-985-6565/6566.

possibility and you should tune in to news and weather reports for updated information.

The Alert DC system is an excellent resource for obtaining emergency information including snow emergency declarations. By signing up for this service, you can receive emergency notifications in a variety of ways such as e-mail, cell phone text message, Blackberry or wireless PDA. **You can sign up for the Alert DC service at the following web site: <https://textalert.ema.dc.gov/index.php?CCheck=1>.**

The Mount Rainier Police Department will also notify residents of snow emergency declarations via Twitter (@MRPDChief) and on the Chief's Blog at www.mrpchief.blogspot.com.

The City has established the below listed streets as snow emergency routes. When a snow emergency is declared, parking along these streets is automatically prohibited for the duration of the snow emergency.

Mount Rainier Snow Emergency Routes:

- * **34th Street from Eastern Avenue to Arundel Road;**
- * **Chillum Road from Arundel Road to the City boundary at Queens Chapel Road (MD Rt. 500);**
- * **Rainier Avenue from 34th Street to Upshur Street;**
- * **Upshur Street from Rainier Avenue to 28th Place;**
- * **28th Place from Upshur Street to Russell Avenue;**
- * **Russell Avenue from 28th Place to Arundel Road;**
- * **Varnum Street from Russell Avenue to Eastern Avenue;**
- * **Arundel Road from Russell Avenue to 34th Street**

Vehicles found parked on a snow emergency route after a snow emergency has been declared by the DC government are subject to a \$100 fine (City Code §13A-107) and to being impounded at the owner's risk and expense. Vehicles that become stalled on a snow emergency route, impede the flow of traffic, or interfere with snow removal operations are also subject to being impounded at the owner's risk and expense.

Vehicle Warm-ups

Each year, 40% of the motor vehicles stolen in this country had the keys in the ignition when the thief drove off with it. Some cold weather thieves get an added bonus – a nice warm car!

Look down the block in the pre-rush hour dawn and you're likely to see the telltale smoke signals that let you know which of your neighbors doesn't like to drive a cold car. They either have the mistaken belief that you have to warm up the car's engine to avoid excessive wear or damage, or they just like to be warm and toasty as they drive off on their daily commute to work, drop the children at school, or run necessary errands.

Car thieves love these people; they drive the environmentally conscious nuts; and, police officers see a crime waiting to happen. They risk losing an expensive asset or getting a \$70 ticket so they don't have to shiver for the first five minutes of their ride. This winter, Mount Rainier police officers will be on the lookout for those telltale smoke signals in our neighborhoods; so, if your shiny new \$300-a-month dream car is idling away waiting to be stolen, wasting gas and polluting the atmosphere you're likely to have an officer at your door with a warning and some crime prevention advice. The stubborn may actually receive that \$100 ticket, but that's better than a thief getting your car!

Keep your headlights clear with car wax. Just wipe ordinary car wax on your headlights. It contains special water repellents that will prevent that messy mixture from accumulating on your lights. Lasts up to six weeks.

Squeak-proof your wipers with rubbing alcohol. Wipe the wipers with a cloth saturated with rubbing alcohol or ammonia. This one trick can make badly streaking and squeaking wipers change to near perfect silence and clarity.

Ice-proof your windows with vinegar. Frost on its way? Just fill a spray bottle with three parts vinegar to one part water and spritz it on all your windows at night. In the morning, they'll be clear of icy mess. Vinegar contains acetic acid, which raises the melting point of water and prevents water from freezing.

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MAYOR, continued from page 5

and the extent of the work to be done once we have more information.

A lot happened in Mount Rainier this year, and I cannot recap it all, but a few of the highlights include:

- The Cultural Academy For Excellence (CAFÉ) a 501©3 corporation moving into our neighborhood with activities for all ages. CAFÉ began in 1996 with a grant from the Kaiser Permanente Building Hope Foundation. Founder and Executive Director Lorna Green together with a Board of Directors, committed professionals, parents and community leaders lend their expertise to keep CAFÉ'S program innovative and creative.
- Bill Updike leaving the Council and New Councilmember Jesse Christopherson elected in Ward 1.
- Another awesome Mount Rainier Day in spite of the rain
- Mayor and Council coming together to learn about TIFs and hiring an expert to lead us through the process of developing the Bass Property
- The completion and opening of the 36th Street Park.
- Halloween party jointly sponsored by the Mayor and the Mount Rainier Police Department
- The first Veterans Celebration on November 10 honoring Mount Rainier's Veterans
- Four new police officers sworn in with two of them being females bringing our police force back up to seventeen (17)
- Construction work on our aging infrastructure on Bunker Hill Road continued to plague our residents
- New telegraph polls installed in the City raising PEPCO lines higher above our tree canopy
- Our tree canopy continued to be improved with the planting of more than 30 new trees in the City
- Council meeting are now being streamed on our website so that if you do not have cable you can still watch your Council at work
- Updated website with more tools and equipment for residents to stay in touch with what

is going on in the City

- New police cars added to our fleet, and our officers equipped with body camera to better protect themselves, record the event, and provide a video recording for future use.
- Code Enforcement has gone high tech. They are recording and reporting events and incidents while in the field. No longer having to go back to the office to write up the reports.
- Electronic recycling has become a part of the City regular routine to help reduce our foot print on the environment.

This is just a snippet of what your City has been doing to make life better for all residents. With a budget of less than five (5) million dollars, our staff, led by Ms. Jeannelle Wallace has managed to compete on all levels for keeping our community safe, clean, livable, and a destination by most visitors in the Washington Metropolitan area.

Your Mayor and Council have met regularly (for regular, special, and closed session) to make sure that appropriate policies and procedures are in place for staff to carry out their functions. Spending has been held down, and minimum tax raises have been the order of the day. As your Mayor, I have enjoyed serving you tis past year, and look forward to serving you again in 2014.

In the spirit of the season and those who would be politically correct, I hereby declare the rest of 2013 as Mount Rainier's Season of love, caring, and giving; and wish that neighbors will help one another not only during the remainder of December 2013, but throughout 2014.

Happy Holidays

Merry Christmas

Happy Kwanza

And peace and blessings to all!

Visit the Mount Rainier Branch Library

Public libraries are the place to join a free summer reading club that offers programs and reading for fun to children and teens from birth through high school. Last summer more than 150,000 children and teens in Maryland participated in the Summer Reading Club. The Mount Rainier Library is open Monday—Thursday 11 am to 7 pm and Saturday 10 am to 5 pm.

Community Happenings



Creative Call

All Prince George's County

Students and Parents!

President Barack Obama and First Lady Michelle Obama will be hosting the first White House Student Film festival highlighting the importance of technology in the classroom.

Concept Development:

January 8, 7 - 9 p.m.

Bonnie F. Johns Building, Room 206

8437 Landover Road,

Landover Maryland 20785

Student Hands-On Video Production Workshops:

Charles Herbert Flowers HS TV Studio
7 - 9 p.m. January 16 & 23

For Complete Guidelines, visit <http://www.whitehouse.gov/filmfestival>.

Student Contact:

301.386.1619 or dwayne.brown@pgcps.org
and **301.817.0092** or maria.saldana@pgcps.org.

General Information:

301.277.1402 or rdallas@pgahc.org.

Take advantage of the end of the year tax breaks before they expire and consider making a year-end donation to local organizations working to improve the quality of life of our youth and all residents throughout Mount Rainier and the Arts District!



- à The Cultural Academy For Excellence (CAFÉ)
- à Joe's Movement Emporium
- à Artworks
- à Little Friends for Peace
- à Mount Rainier Community Fund
- à Prince George's African American Museum and Cultural Center
- à Gateway CDC
- à Neighborhood Design Center

WARM UPS, *continued from page 9*

Prevent car doors from freezing shut with cooking spray. Spritz cooking oil on the rubber seals around car doors and rub it in with a paper towel or micro fiber towel. The cooking spray prevents water from melting into the rubber.

Fog-proof your windshield with shaving cream! Spray some shaving cream on the inside of your windshield and wipe it off with paper towels. Shaving cream has many of the same ingredients found in commercial defoggers.

De-ice your lock in seconds with hand sanitizer. Just put some hand sanitizer gel on the key, work the key in the lock and the problem is solved.



How Do You Craft Your Holiday Mount Rainier?

Holidays, continued from page 1



TOP: Ayo Bryant shows off her desserts inside Nisey's Boutique.. BOTTOM: Eugenie Anderson with her centerpieces. RIGHT: Vernon Sears makes hand-painted Christmas bulbs. PHOTOS: PAUL RUFFINS

Nisey's Boutique.

"Invoking a positive holiday experience has been a little bit tougher this year because of the incessant construction outside our door on 34th street," said Nisey. "Whoever planned to disrupt traffic on our main street during Christmas never had a small business." Nevertheless, she's



cheered by visits from the many repeat customers who seek her out looking for items they can't find in the large chains and department stores. "I guess the best way I'm creating a genuine Christmas/Kwanzaa vibe in my store is by sharing it as an incubator for other small entrepreneurs."

This season Nisey's Boutique has hosted at least two other small local businesses who have set up outside her door during November and December. They are Old School Classic Desserts, owned by Ayo Bryant, which features homemade, 100% natural breads cakes and breads, (202-812-2556) and Flowers by Eugenie, which offers centerpieces of flowers and fruits created by Eugenie Robinson of Upshur Street (240-731-7833). "Almost all of my centerpieces are bought by people who live in Mount Rainier, Brentwood, or pretty close by," she said, "it makes me very happy to know that my creations are right there, smack in the middle of my neighbor's family gatherings."

The Annual Craft Fair.

Mount Rainier's largest holiday ritual is probably the annual craft fair which proudly affirms our town's identity as an Arts District. In recent years, it has been held at Joe's Movement Emporium, but it got its start almost two decades ago at the home of



Mimi McKinley-Ward, a potter and ceramicist. She notes that, "At a time when so much of what we consume is mass-produced by giant soulless corporations, I feel that creating, selling, and buying handmade items has a special role in a bringing a community like this closer together. It allows artists to express their creativity, supports the immediate local economy, and enables buyers and collectors to enjoy beautiful things made by people they can actually meet."

TREE COMMISSION WORK'S TO INVENTORY VACANT TREE SITES

On November 16, fifteen volunteers helped to inventory vacant street tree sites around Mount Rainier. The citizen volunteer Tree Commission keeps records of street trees in the City and the volunteers helped to validate and correct information.

This information will be used to identify planting locations for over 500 young trees to be planted in the next several years. As part of the impending Allison Street Levee Project, the County will remove 278 trees from the Arundel Canal area to comply with U.S. Army Corps of Engineering vegetation requirements. As partial compensation for this loss, new trees will be planted throughout the City.

In addition to vacant tree locations, volunteers gathered information about overhead wires, the width of the available space and other possible planting obstructions.



Photo Credits: Livia Navon

The extent of the levee construction will stretch from 30th St. to 34th St., northeastward behind the Queenstown Apartments, ending at the 7-11 on Chillum Rd. All trees and bushes within 15 feet of the levee structure will be removed. This includes the oak and plane trees that line Arundel Rd., most of the trees in Richardson Park on 31st St., woody areas around the Nature Center on Arundel Rd. and behind Standard Pressing Machine Co. on Queens Chapel Rd. The levee system construction will begin in the winter of 2014 and is estimated to take 16 months.



The Tree Commission is actively working with the county via the City Council to determine the locations of the new trees, the timing of the plantings and the maintenance of the

trees.

The City's street trees help to improve air quality, dampen noise pollution and improve the aesthetic value of the Mount Rainier. Shade trees moderate climatic extremes and help homeowners save energy by reducing cooling costs. In addition, trees and forests reduce stormwater runoff by capturing and storing rainfall in the canopy and releasing water into the atmosphere through evapotranspiration. Tree roots and leaf litter create soil conditions that promote the infiltration of rainwater into the soil.

The Tree Commission is a volunteer-based committee charged with the task of helping the City of Mount Rainier protect and develop the tree canopy. For more information on the Tree Commission visit <http://trees.20712.org/>.

Greening Mount Rainier in 2013

The Mount Rainier Green Team has been busy in 2013. Working with the Mayor and Council the team has produced a series of strategic plans and sustainability projects to help make the city a healthier, more sustainable home for Mount Rainier residents. These projects include:

Community Garden: Green Team members Jacquyn Riposo and Joe Robbins and a team of residents have worked hard to get a community garden built in the park at 31st and Arundel Road. Plots in the garden are just \$30 per year. For more information visit mountrainiercommunitygarden.org.

Bike Plan: Green Team member Jarrett Stoltzfus has produced a detailed bike infrastructure plan for the city. The plan, which the city council is finalizing now, will focus on low-cost, practical ways that Mount Rainier can make our streets safer for cyclists.

Green Infrastructure Plan: Working with the Low Impact Development Center the Green Team, led by former council member Bill Updike, has crafted a plan to guide the city's future implementation of green infrastructure projects. The plan, which is currently under consideration by the city council, is intended to reduce our stormwater impact on the Anacostia River, and help Mount Rainier comply with federal water quality regulations.

Composting Program: In an effort to save money and reduce waste generated by the city, Mount Rainier has started a composting program. The Green Team has been working on a detailed rollout of this program, which will begin in early 2014, but reduced price compost



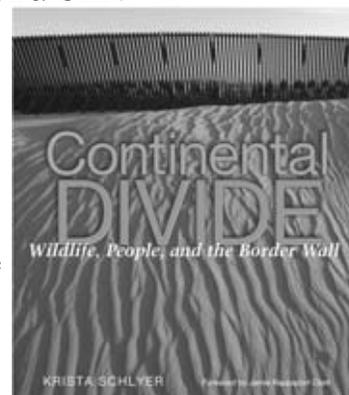
Green Team member MaryLee Haughwout worked to get this rain garden installed near the Nature Center. If you haven't seen it, take a walk and learn a bit about the work these beautiful plants are doing to protect the Anacostia River.

bins are available now to city residents. Bins are only \$20 and can be bought by calling Ruth Sandy at 301-985-6582.

Follow the work of the Green Team on Facebook! Just search for Mount Rainier Green Team and "like" our page!

National Outdoor Book Award Goes to City Resident

Mount Rainier resident Krista Schlyer has won the 2013 National Outdoor Book Award for her book *Continental Divide: Wildlife, People and the Border Wall*. The book is a collection of photographs and essays about the wildlife, ecosystems and people of the US-Mexico borderlands. Published by Texas A&M University Press the book has been



recognized with several regional and national awards, including the American Library Association's "Best of the Best of 2013."

Book reading and signing event: Krista will be doing a slideshow presentation about the book at **Joe's Movement Emporium on Friday, January 24 at 7:30 pm**. All are welcome to this free event with refreshments and community dialogue.



Effective January 1, 2014, All yard waste must be in brown bags or cans for collection.



RECYCLE YOUR ELECTRONICS

Public Works RECYCLE, BULK TRASH AND YARD WASTE COLLECTION TIPS

All recyclables (aluminum cans, bottles, paper and cardboard) can be put in the same yellow recycle bin which will be picked up Friday of each week. These items will be taken to the County recycle plant as they now have the capability to separate the items.

All BULK TRASH appointments must be made before 12 Noon on the Friday preceding the pick up day. All bulk trash items must be set out before 7 AM on pick up day. Call 301-985-6558, select option 2.

Beginning December 2nd all Yard Waste collection will be the second Monday and by appointments only. All appointments must be made before 12 noon on the Friday preceding the pick-up day.

December 25	Christmas Day (City Hall and Public Works Closed)
December 26	Regular Trash Pick Up
December 27	Recycle Pick UP
December 28	Electronic Recycle
January 1	New Year's Day (City Hall and Public Works Closed)
January 2	Regular Trash Pick Up
January 3	Recycle Pick UP
January 6	Bulk Trash (call 3019856558 for appointments)
January 8	Regular Trash Pick Up
January 10	Recycle Pick UP
January 13	Yard Waste Collection (call 3019856558 for appointments)
January 15	Regular Trash Pick Up
January 17	Recycle Pick UP
January 20	Martin Luther King Jr. Day (City Hall and Public Works closed)
January 21	Bulk Trash (call 3019856558 for appointments)
January 22	Regular Trash Pick Up
January 24	Recycle Pick UP
January 29	Regular Trash Pick Up
January 31	Recycle Pick UP
February 3	Bulk Trash (call 3019856558 for appointments)
February 5	Regular Trash Pick Up
February 7	Recycle Pick UP
February 10	Yard Waste Collection (call 3019856558 for appointments)

www.mountrainiermd.org

Mayor
Malinda Miles
301-699-1378
mayormiles@gmail.com

City Manager
Jeannelle B. Wallace
301-985-6585, ext. 22
fax: 301-985-6595
jwallace@mountrainiermd.org

Asst. City Manager
Michael D. Jackson
301-985-6585 ext.30
mjackson@monutrainiermd.org

City Treasurer
Vijay Manjani
vmanjani@mountrainiermd.org

Councilmembers
Ward 1

Jimmy Tarlau
301-335-6099
jtarlau@gmail.com

Jesse Christopherson
301-985-6585
jschris@gmail.com

Ward 2
Ivy Thompson
friendsforivy@gmail.com

Brent Bolin
301-744-9465
brentbolin@gmail.com

Message

Michael D. Jackson
mjackson@mountrainiermd.org

Important Numbers

City Hall open: Mon.–Fri., 9:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. Police Department admin. offices open 9:00 a.m. to 11 p.m.
Public Works open 7:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m.

47th District Reps
Senator Victor Ramirez
301-858-3745

Del. Doyle Niemann
Del. Jolene Ivey
Del. Michael Summers
301-858-3326

Call-A-Bus 301-985-6586
(hours M–F, 9 am–2 pm)

City Code Enforcement Office
301-985-6551

Alex Brown
301-674-9175
Kevin Simpson
240-508-4187

City Hall
301-985-6585; fax: 301-985-6595

City Police Department
Chief Michael E. Scott
mescott@mountrainierpd.org
301-985-6565 (emergency calls)
301-985-6566 (nonemergency calls)
301-985-6590 (administrative)
City Public Works 301-985-6583,
Bulk Trash Appts. 301-985-6558

Child Abuse
and Neglect Hotline
301-699-8605

Congresswoman Donna Edwards.
Prince George's County Office
5001 Silver Hill Road
Suite 106
Suitland, Maryland 20746
301-516-7601 main
301-516-7608 fax

Washington, D.C. Office
2445 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515
202-225-8699 main
202-225-8714 fax

Consumer Affairs
301-470-7534

County Animal Control
301-780-7200

County Building Permits
301-883-5784

County Executive
Rushern Baker
301-952-4131

County Councilman
Will Campos
301-952-4436

CSX railroad
1-877-Tell CSX

Energy Assistance
301-422-5110

Family Services
301-699-2680

Fire Department
301-985-5406 (non-emergency)
911 (emergency)

Gateway CDC
4102 Webster Street
301-864-3860

Gazette Circulation
301-670-7350

Health Department
301-386-0300

Library 301-864-8937
Hours: M–Thursday 11-7:00 (closed 2-2:30)
Sat. 10-5

Landlord-Tenant Commission
800-487-6007

Mt. Rainier Nature/Rec Center
4701 31st Place
301-927-2163

M–National Capital
Park and Planning, Park Permit Office
301-699-2400

North Brentwood Comm. Ctr
4012 Webster St.
301-864-0756

Office of Handicapped Services
TDD 301-627-3352

Park Police
301-459-3232 (emergency)
301-459-9088 (non-emergency)

Parks and Recreation
301-699-2407

Pepco
Lights Out
1-877-737-2662
(you must give the 10-digit phone number
or 10-digit account number for location of outage)
Live Wire, Other Emergency
202-872-3432

P. G. Animal Control
3750 Brown Station Road
Upper Marlboro, MD 20772
(301) 780-7201

Post Office
301-699-8856

Public Defender
301-699-2760

Public Schools
301-952-6000

State's Attorney
301-952-3500

Washington Gas Light
703-750-1000

WSSC
301-206-8000
301-206-4002 (emergency)

The City of Mount Rainier is an equal opportunity employer, without regard to race, color, religion, national origin, sex, ancestry, marital status, age, sexual orientation, disability, political or union affiliation.

Postal Customer
Mount Rainier, MD 20712



December/January 2013 Message
City of Mount Rainier
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