



The Message

Issue 269

July/August 2009

MOUNT RAINIER SKATE PARK DEDICATION

**SATURDAY, JULY 25, 2009, AT 10 A M
AT MOUNT RAINIER SOUTH NEIGHBORHOOD MINI PARK
AT THE CORNER OF OTIS STREET AND WELLS AVENUE
MT. RAINIER, MARYLAND 20712**

Palace 5 Skate shop will provide a free demonstration at the grand opening with free giveaways and light refreshments

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Mayor and Council Passes Speed Camera Legislation

On June 16th, the Mayor and Council passed legislation that would allow speed camera to be placed at different places within the city. This local legislation follows the state legislation that was passed earlier this year in Annapolis. It allows municipalities "to use photo speed monitoring systems in school zones to issue citations or warnings to vehicle owners who speed at least 12 miles above the posted speed limit."

Since 95% of Mount Rainier is within ½ mile of an elementary school, almost the whole City is covered by this legislation. The bill does not become effective until October 1 and the speed cameras can only be used between 6 AM and 8 PM. During the first thirty days of the program, violators would only be given a warning (after, a violation incurs a \$40 fine with no points). Before activating a speed camera, the City would have to publish the notice of the camera on the City's

website and put up a sign that indicates that speed monitoring systems are in use.

FROM THE DESK OF THE MAYOR JULY 2009

The Maryland Municipal League (MML) represents the 157 towns, cities, and special districts in the State of Maryland. Annually, it hosts, on behalf of the municipalities and special districts, a convention that consists of workshops, vendors and exhibitors, and special sessions on issues that impact local governments. This year, core workshops included the following topics:

- Consensus and Team Building
- Basic Risk Management
- Impact of Foreclosure on Code Enforcement
- Municipal Officials Liability
- Structure of Municipal Government
- Using Geocache for Economic Development
- Issues and Answers: MDE and State Planning
- Traffic Calming 101
- Why We Need Urban Pocket Parks
- Speed Cameras Are Finally Legal, Now What?
- Employee Wellness Programs
- Green Building Codes
- Roundtable: Cabinet Secretaries
- Maryland Public Information Act
- Overcrowding Forum
- Smart Growth
- Strategies for Reducing the Waste Stream
- Non-Point Source Pollution

In addition to workshops and networking, the MML also recognizes municipalities for their accomplishments during the year. This year, Mount Rainier received a standing ovation for the gallant and heroic work of Corporal Eddie Murphy. Last year, Corporal Murphy saved the life of a small child in our community. The child had stopped breathing when he arrived on the scene. He immediately took charge of the situation, rendered CPR until the EMS unit arrived and took over, and worked with the parents to make sure that they were okay. For this heroic moment, Corporal Murphy received the "Employee of the Year Award." Mount Rainier is proud to have such dedicated employees. KUDOS Officer Murphy.

Yes, there were parties, receptions, business meetings, and a host of other activities

available to all participants. I must say, however, that yours truly attended many of the workshops as possible, as well as the various business meetings and elections. As a result, I was re-elected to serve on MML's Board of Directors, and appointed to serve as chairperson of the MML's Communications Committee. Being on the MML Board of Directors provides another opportunity for Mount Rainier to be recognized as a "City on the Move." It also gives us a voice in determining what legislative items should be vigorously pursued (speed cameras, highway user fees, etc.) by MML during the legislative session.

As chair of the Communications Committee, I will have the opportunity to work with other legislators from around the State to come up with a theme or program that promotes municipal government while reaching out to help our children learn more about local government through the "If I Were Mayor Contest."

By attending this year's Convention, I was able to hear first-hand from County Executive Jack B. Johnson that the City would be awarded 8 to 12 summer jobs for some of our youths. Janis Lomax will be heading up the summer youth employment program. Since there will only be 8 to 12 slots this year, PLEASE make sure that your child registered with the County's Youth Employment Services and Summer Jobs Program, 9400 Peppercorn Place, Room 110, Largo, Maryland 20774, Tel: (301) 883-599, M-F 8:30am to 5:00pm.

Residents can learn more about the Maryland Municipal League by visiting their website at <http://www.mdmunicipal.org>. It is also a good site to help teach our children facts about Maryland. Thank you for letting me represent you at MML.

Mayor and Council on Recess. If you have not already heard, the Mayor and Council voted at its last meeting that it would recess until the first Tuesday in September (September 1). Although we are on recess, we will be minding the shop. Special meetings of the Mayor and Council will be called as necessary to conduct business, and of course our staff will continue to carry out

assigned functions. If you need any member of the Mayor and Council, do not hesitate to call. Our information is listed in this report, "The Message," Channels 21 and 70, as well as on our website www.mounrainiermd.org. We want to hear from you.

People who often go unnoticed in City government. Mount Rainier has the most die-hard staff in municipal government. They respond to residents at the drop of a hat. They take verbal abuse (should have to, but they do). They do an outstanding job for the City for really low compensation, and they stay with us, year after year. The following persons (employees) are to be commended on their services to this City:

Graciella Carbonnel and Robert (Bob) Paige, the un-sung husband and wife team of Mount Rainier -- Graciella and Bob have been with Mount Rainier for more than 20 years. This husband and wife team have worked behind the scenes with our cameras and television equipment for years. They produce and run our television productions. If it is on channel 21 or 70, they produced and recorded it. If there is a display for any event, including Main Street at the MML Convention, they designed and produced it. If there is an event going on in the City and shown on our local channel, they were there to record it. Our recorded historical history is a product of their love, labor and work for the City of Mount Rainier. In addition to their work in the studio, Graciella can be found driving our call-a-bus and performing other tasks for the City. See the MRTV report on our website for more details about the work of this fine couple, and our very fine employees. Thank you to both of you for all that you do!

Charles Stewart -- Charles is a long-time resident and employee of the City of Mount Rainier. Charles was one of the first to get his LCD licenses to drive our trash truck. He can be seen around the neighborhood cutting grass for our seniors, and working with other public work employee to ensure that our City stays clean. He is an un-sung worker that most will not know, because he is not on the front line, he is behind the scenes. Thank you Charles for not only working for the Great City of Mount Rainier, but loving it enough to also live in it.

Captain Jimmy Stoots -- Home grown proof that you can raise um right in Mount Rainier. Captain Stoots came up through the ranks to become second in command in our police department. He did code enforcement, parking tickets, and went to the academy for police officers, he was in the police union, and now, we can be proud of his nearly twenty years in the employment of the City of Mount Rainier. Captain Stoots mother still resides in the Great City of Mount Rainier. She is also the widow of our former chief of police Denny Husk. Captain Stoots comes from a family of dedicated public servants, and we are honored to have him in our employ. Kudos to you for the service that you render to our Great City.

What you should know about Cable Television. Many years ago, the mayor and council voted unanimously to bring a cable franchise to our City. A few years back, the City confirmed its decision to give exclusive cable rights to Verizon and Comcast. What does that mean to you? Well, it means that the dish, and any other service that wishes to do business in Mount Rainier cannot. Why did the City make this decision? One of the reason given at the time was those awful looking grey dishes that are popping up in yards, on roofs, and everywhere else without any consideration for others or the aesthetics of our neighborhoods. Back then the dishes were huge and even more noticeable. Now, they are smaller, but comes in twos and threes. Another reason for the decision, was the revenue cable generates for the City. Currently the City receives almost \$100,000 each year in revenue. This constant flow of revenue help the City to provide better communications to the community through our cable channels (which are free to the City). It provides the cameras needed to tape events and broadcast them so that those who are unable to attend can watch in their homes. All in all, the City has a twenty plus year commitment to Comcast and Verizon, and those dishes violate our contract. If you have services other than with Comcast and/or Verizon, you are in violation. Please take the necessary actions to correct this violation immediately. Thank you.

Mayor and Council passes Fiscal 2010 budget. The Charter requires that the City passes a budget for each fiscal year. Our fiscal year is July 1 to June 30 of each year. This year for the first time, in my history with the City, Mayor and Council passed its budget weeks before the due date. The budget highlights for the year are:

1. Continuation of the Homeowner's Property Tax Credit Program for residents who meet the Maryland State Homeowner's Property Tax Credit program and whose income is below \$60,000.
2. Setting aside funding to continue improvements in youth recreation programs.
3. Funding to continue working with the removal of dead trees, limbs, branches and stumps.
4. Keeping our downtown area neat, clean,

and welcoming.

5. Repayment on the new trash truck, patrol car, and the property acquisition loan for the Bass property.

(NOTE: There is also \$10,000 in the budget for the preservation of windows and other maintenance of City Hall. Because of our approval for a grant from the Maryland Energy Administration, these funds will be used for other work in the City.)

There no increase in taxes again this year. In addition, Mayor and Council will not be decreasing any of the services currently enjoyed by our residents. In fact, over the past year, we have increased services and will continue to retain those services, e.g., the longer hours at the police station.

From the Desk of the City Manager Jeannelle B. Wallace

MML Convention Report

The annual Maryland Municipal League Convention was excellent this year. Staff and council members attended numerous sessions which proved to be quite beneficial. Of particular interest was the workshop entitled **Employee Wellness Programs** which focused on high risk criteria, setting up a wellness committee, health challenges for employees with the ultimate goal of improving health and happiness of employees which has a direct positive impact on the city's financial health and reduction of health costs. There were some excellent ideas on developing competitions between departments which will be implemented soon.

The workshop entitled **Overcrowding and Illegal Occupancy** was met with enthusiasm and lively discussion. Several municipal representatives were speakers/presenters including the Town of Salisbury and the City of College Park. The Town of Salisbury has been very aggressive in developing legislation defining a "Restrictive Family" allowing only two unrelated persons to reside in a single family home and in 2000 rewrote the definition of family. The restrictions in the legislation may appear a little too aggressive, and most attendees at the workshop agreed that the ultimate goal in terms of alleviating problems with overcrowding was not to place undue pressure on occupants particularly in light of current economic and housing crisis, but to abate code violations, i.e., elimination of large accumulation of trash and debris, improve property maintenance, eliminate the infringement on neighbors' peace (quality of life issues) and numerous vehicles creating neighborhood parking dilemmas. The suggestions were to adopt vacant property code provisions including fees and penalties (which the City of Mount Rainier adopted several years ago and regularly enforces), consider the issuance of parking permits, and investigate and enforce the laws surrounding appropriate sleeping areas including window egress and smoke detectors.

To assist with the ever rising foreclosure crisis, two organizations have collaborated together. They are the Mortgage Bankers Association (MBA) and the Mortgage Electronic Registration System (MERS) which was established to serve the needs of municipal code enforcement officials to address vacant property issues. Municipalities can register with MERS at no cost and any

vacant properties listed with them through various financial institutions will provide local governments with ownership contact information for vacant properties.

Information was obtained for the City Treasurer who was also attending a conference with the Government Officer's Finance Association in Seattle, Washington. The information packet is entitled **Managing the Bottom Line in a Fiscal Crisis** which hopefully will prove useful for us.

The opening session on Monday was also very exciting. The keynote speaker – Bill Strickland, is the CEO of Manchester Bidwell, Corporation and the founder of the Manchester School in Pittsburgh, PA. Mr. Strickland's book – **"Make the Impossible Possible"** is behind his philosophy in building the school for persons who have not exceeded well in regular school environments and those who previously were dependent upon the public welfare system. His students excel in art, culinary skills, etc. I actually toured the Manchester School during a field demonstration at the ICMA annual conference in Pittsburgh in 2007.

Centennial Celebration Committee Report

Next year, 2010, will be the 100th anniversary of the incorporation of Mt. Rainier. The City is planning a bunch of events to commemorate the anniversary and I have been appointed as the chairperson of our Centennial Celebration Committee. We held our first meeting on June 9th and there were a lot of good ideas which I would like to share with the community and ask that people write back with suggestions.

The Committee felt that each month we should highlight a different aspect of our city. The twelve months might include: public safety, the Latino community, African-Americans in our City, our religious institutions, women in our community, our artists, our peace activists, our environmental community, the gay community, religious institutions, young people, and our rental community. This is not a hard list but just our thoughts.

We discussed having three or four big events spread out throughout the year. A bigger and better Mount Rainier Day, an artist studio tour, a tour of historic houses in our city, and a taste of Mount Rainier. The year might start with some dignitaries unveiling flags and banners that would be up all year and end with a big dinner dance in December. Perhaps we could have commemorative items, like a Mount Rainier 100th anniversary souvenir key chain.

We are looking for your ideas and participation to turn next year into a great celebration of our city. Please e-mail me if you would like to be on our committee. The next meeting is Tuesday July 14th.

PS: Let me know if you have any old pictures of Mount Rainier. We want to borrow them so we can make a copy and eventually put them up on our web site.

MESSAGE FROM MICHAEL E. SCOTT, CHIEF OF POLICE



National Night Out 2009

Please come and join us for this year's **National Night Out Against Crime** on Tuesday, August 4th. Plan to attend this annual celebration with your family and friends. Again this year we will have live entertainment, plenty of food, and lots of fun things to do for the whole family. Please keep an eye on the City's web site, and on the police chief's Blog (www.mrpdchief.blogspot.com) for details and updates as plans for this exciting night evolve.

In addition, the City of Mount Rainier is proud to announce that the United States Army Drill Team will perform their intricate and inspiring drill routine at this year's National Night Out on August 4th. Their performance will begin at 7 pm so come out and enjoy an exciting evening of military precision!



The U.S. Army Drill Team, one of the 3rd U.S. Infantry's renowned specialty units, has earned international acclaim through its breathtaking routines with bayonet-tipped 1903 Springfield rifles.

Organized to support The Old Guard's ceremonial commitments, the Drill Team has thrilled millions of youngsters and proud Americans for more than 25 years with their daring and complex performances. When not performing for the President or visiting dignitaries and heads of state, the Drill Team travels extensively supporting Army recruitment, acting as "good-will ambassadors" for the Army and participating in major military and civic functions.

Preventing Thefts from Auto

Thefts from motor vehicles are strictly crimes of opportunity that can be prevented if you take away the opportunity. Thieves generally won't waste their time breaking into cars, trucks and vans that don't have valuables in plain sight.

- The best way to prevent theft from your auto is to always keep valuables out of sight. Never leave cell phones, briefcases, suitcases, GPS units, or small electronic devices (personal music devices, digital assistants, etc.) in your car in plain view. Take these items with you, or secure them — all the time, every time!
- If your car has a trunk, use it. Put valuables in there or in a locked glove compartment. Hiding items under seats is better than leaving them in plain view, but securing them inside the glove compartment or trunk is a far better deterrent.
- Any time you're shopping, place packages in the trunk, not on the passenger seats or floors.
- Look for car radios or other sound systems that can operate only in the vehicle in which it was originally installed. This reduces the risk of theft.

- If you can unfasten your sound system and take it with you, or lock it in your trunk, do so. And don't forget to do the same with your CDs and tapes.
- Always lock your doors even if you plan to be away from your vehicle for only a minute such as running in to pay for gas.
- If you don't have the luxury of parking your vehicle in a garage at night and have to leave it parked in the driveway or on the street in front of the house, make sure to remove the garage door opener. This is a key to your home!!
- Wheel and tire thieves usually work as a team, much like a NASCAR pit crew. They can have your wheels and be gone in just a couple of minutes! If you have spent a small fortune on custom wheels and Z rated low profile tires, make sure you use a tamper proof wheel lock to secure each wheel to the vehicle. Do not leave the wheel lock key inside the vehicle – take it with you and keep it in a safe place. If your wheels didn't come with security locks, you can purchase them at most automobile parts supply stores. They are inexpensive insurance against losing your investment to thieves.
- The best advice is to not leave anything in your vehicle, or at least in plain sight, that you would not want taken. Even the smallest most insignificant items, even a small amount of change in a center console, left in plain view could result in a window being smashed and the item(s) stolen. If you eliminate the opportunity, you have a greater chance of eliminating the crime.

Out of State Tags

Sections 13-402 and 13-402.1 of the Maryland Transportation Article establish the law for vehicles that must be registered in Maryland. These laws are generally known to those who have been Maryland residents for some time or who

have purchased a motor vehicle using a Maryland address. However, individuals who relocate to Maryland and have a vehicle already registered in another state are usually unfamiliar with Maryland's vehicle registration laws. Since state and local governments do not routinely hand out welcome packets that inform new residents of Maryland's laws, rules and regulations, they sometimes run afoul of their new home state's vehicle registration requirements.

Simply put, once you establish a permanent residence in Maryland you have 60 days to surrender your former state's tags and register the vehicle in Maryland. There are a slew of exceptions to the registration requirements and most are outside the scope of this article. The two most likely to occur here in Mount Rainier are the exceptions for students and military personnel.

Students enrolled in an accredited school, college, or university of this State or a bordering state, or persons serving a medical internship in this State do not have to register their vehicles in Maryland as long as they have a valid registration in another state and have the requisite insurance coverage.

Members of the U.S. armed forces or the U.S. Public Health Service stationed in Maryland and DC also do not have to register their vehicles in Maryland as long as the vehicle is registered in their home state and they have insurance coverage. Students, armed forces personnel and USPHS personnel do however need to obtain a non-resident permit within 30 days of occupying a dwelling in Maryland.

The bottom line is this: if you are not a member of Congress from another state; or you have a golf cart that you only intend to drive on Smith Island (with headlights if you drive it between dusk and dawn), you need to get down to MVA and register your vehicle in Maryland

**APRIL 2009 SELECTED OFFENSES
BY TEAM POLICING AREA**

Date	Offense	Location			TPA
07-Apr-09	Arson - Vehicle	3107	BL	QUEENS CHAPEL RD	1A
23-Apr-09	Assault - Aggravated		BL	37TH ST	1A
21-Apr-09	B & E - Residential	3001	BL	QUEENS CHAPEL RD	1A
14-Apr-09	Rape	3300	BL	BUCHANAN ST	1A
17-Apr-09	Robbery - Citizen	3200	BL	CHILLUM RD	1A
10-Apr-09	Robbery - Citizen	3700	BL	35TH ST	1A
22-Apr-09	Robbery - Citizen	3706	BL	37TH ST	1A
04-Apr-09	Robbery - Citizen	3723	BL	35TH ST	1A
27-Apr-09	Robbery - Citizen		BL	36TH ST	1A
21-Apr-09	Stolen Vehicle	3100	BL	QUEENS CHAPEL RD	1A
21-Apr-09	Stolen Vehicle	4023	BL	37TH ST	1A
17-Apr-09	Stolen Vehicle	4105	BL	31ST ST	1A
27-Apr-09	Vandalism to Auto	3837	BL	34TH ST	1A
20-Apr-09	Vandalism to Auto	3837	BL	34TH ST	1A
08-Apr-09	B & E - Residential	3413	BL	RHODE ISLAND AV	1B
05-Apr-09	Robbery - Citizen	3400	BL	RHODE ISLAND AV	1B
25-Apr-09	Robbery - Citizen	3700	BL	36TH ST	1B
23-Apr-09	Assault - Aggravated		BL	30TH ST	2A
11-May-09	B & E - Residential	4309	BL	RUSSELL AV	2A
20-Apr-09	Robbery - Citizen		BL	TAYLOR ST	2A
09-Apr-09	Robbery - Commercial	2310	BL	VARNUM ST	2A
11-Apr-09	Stolen Vehicle	4513	BL	31ST ST	2A
29-Apr-09	Theft - From Auto	2300	BL	KAYWOOD DR	2A
29-Apr-09	Theft - From Auto	2300	BL	KAYWOOD DR	2A
22-Apr-09	Theft - From Auto	2705	BL	ALLISON ST	2A
24-Apr-09	Theft - From Auto	4501	BL	EASTERN AV	2A
21-Apr-09	Theft < 500	2506	BL	ARUNDEL RD	2A
21-Apr-09	Theft < 500	4501	BL	EASTERN AV	2A
30-Apr-09	Theft > 500	4700	BL	27TH ST	2A
02-Apr-09	Vandalism	2712	BL	WEBSTER ST	2A
04-Apr-09	Vandalism	4304	BL	28TH PL	2A
25-Apr-09	Vandalism to Auto	2703	BL	UPSHUR ST	2A
06-Apr-09	Vandalism to Auto	4600	BL	29TH ST	2A
21-Apr-09	Arson - Vehicle	3300	BL	RHODE ISLAND AV	2B
27-Apr-09	Assault - Aggravated	3200	BL	RHODE ISLAND AV	2B
11-Apr-09	B & E - Residential	3405	BL	EASTERN AV	2B
23-Apr-09	Stolen Vehicle	3300	BL	33RD ST	2B
15-Apr-09	Stolen Vehicle	4505	BL	30TH ST	2B
09-Apr-09	Theft - Vehicle Tags	3210	BL	RHODE ISLAND AV	2B
15-Apr-09	Theft > 500	3302	BL	OTIS ST	2B



MRTV

Mount Rainier Television

Comcast Channel 71 Verizon Channel 21

***MRTV* Program Schedule**

Monday – Friday, 4pm, (see *MRTV* Bulletin Program Schedule)
1st Tuesday of each month, 7pm Live telecast of City Council Meetings
3rd Tuesday of each, 7pm Live telecast of City Council Work Sessions
Program schedule and shows subject to change without notice

MRTV needs volunteer producers, on-camera talent, digital editors and production crews for all *MRTV* productions. We tape on selected Wednesdays and Saturdays. Call *MRTV* at 301-985-6585 ext. 28, leave a message or email us at mrtvchannel71@yahoo.com for details.

TAX CREDITS FOR MOUNT RAINIER

Below you will find information on historic tax credits, homeowner's tax credit, homestead tax credit, and federal credits to help with energy efficiency.

HISTORIC RENOVATION TAX CREDITS

Maryland offers a tax credit for rehabilitation of historic structures. See <http://mht.maryland.gov/>

The Maryland Heritage Structure Rehabilitation Tax Credit Program is administered by the Maryland Historical Trust and provides Maryland income tax credits equal to 20% of the qualified capital costs expended in the rehabilitation of a "certified heritage structure." The credit is available for owner-occupied residential property (homeowner) and income-producing property (commercial).

You MUST get prior approval from the HMT before beginning work. The lag time in approval of applications can be several weeks or more. Several homeowners in the City of Mount Rainier have successfully gone through the process and received the tax credits. To be eligible, you must spend a minimum of \$5,000 on the project.

Tax credits are one time reductions of the amount of taxes you owe to the State of Maryland. For rehabilitation projects, you can receive a tax credit equal to 20% of the qualified work you undertake on your historic home, provided that the building has both been certified as historic AND the work has been approved by the Maryland Historical Trust prior to starting. Nearly all the older homes (built prior to 1945) in the City of Mount Rainier are certified as historic. Each home in the city has been graded as to its historic value. If your home is a "contributing" resource to the historic district, then it will qualify. Contact City Hall for help in determining how your home is graded.

For example - you decide to replace the roof. Prior to starting construction you get approval from MHT and MHT certifies that the work is consistent with the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation. The total cost of the roof replacement ends up being \$10,000, and you send MHT all of

the receipts and photographs necessary to verify the expenses and that the work is consistent with the initial approval. If everything checks out, you may now deduct \$2,000 (20%) from the amount of Maryland state income taxes that you owe for the year that you completed the project. If you owe less than \$2,000 in income taxes that year, you will receive a refund check from the Comptroller of Maryland.

CITY TAX CREDIT FOR HISTORIC REHABILITATION

The City of Mount Rainier now offers a property tax credit for homeowners who restore their homes.

In order to qualify for the city tax credit, you must first be approved for the state's Heritage Structure Rehabilitation Tax Credit Program, administered by the Maryland Historical Trust. The state provides a tax credit of 20 percent of the certified project costs. The signed certification form will provide the approved final project costs that can be used to calculate the city tax credit (10 percent of the total state-approved costs). To be eligible for the City tax credit, the signed state certification form must be provided to the City Manager within 90 days of the date on the state form. Information on the state program can be found at: <http://mht.maryland.gov/>

The city reduces the city property tax you owe for up to five years by drawing down on the total city credit you received. For instance, if you have a total state certified project amount of \$100,000, you will get a state credit of \$20,000. Plus, you will get a city tax credit of \$10,000. The city will use your \$10,000 credit to pay your city property tax bill for up to five years. If you owed \$2,000 each year in city property taxes, you will not pay any city property tax for five years.

Also see City Code Chapter 2A.

CITY TAX CREDIT FOR WINDOWS AND DOORS

Homeowners who replace existing windows or exterior doors, or install new windows or exterior doors are eligible for a city tax credit if the windows/exterior doors are deemed historically and/or architecturally compatible with the style and period of a house that has historical or architectural value. The tax credit will be 10 percent of the cost of the windows/doors. The project requires prior approval from the City Manager. Generally, the City Manager will have the property owner meet with the city's Design Review Board. Once a project with prior approval has been completed, the applicant will submit "properly documented expenses" (materials and labor) to the City Manager for the final approval of the project. The City Manager may inspect the completed project or ask the Design Review Board to inspect the completed project. Note: for this city tax credit, you do not need to participate in the state tax credit program.

The homeowner is not eligible for the city preservation tax credit for windows/exterior doors, if the homeowner has already included the windows/doors in a project approved by the Maryland Historical Trust and the homeowner will receive or has received a city preservation tax credit for the MHT approved project.

Windows and exterior doors are defined to include storm windows and storm doors. The tax credit is available for installation or repair of storm windows and doors that have been approved using the same criteria as for windows and exterior doors.

What is a structure with architectural value? This includes: (i) a structure with architectural value, but that does not meet the age requirements of the Mount Rainier National Register Historic District; (ii) a structure that has been so altered as to fail the test as a contributing resource to the Mount Rainier National Register Historic District, but which through sensitive restoration might recapture the architectural value previously lost; and (iii) a structure outside of the Mount Rainier National Register Historic District boundaries, but within the City limits that has architectural value. Structures with

architectural value would include those that are representative of a recognized style and retain a significant amount of exterior features to remain representative of that style.

Remember-- Failure to obtain approval from the City Manager prior to purchase of the windows or doors (as determined by the date on the sales receipt) will make the project ineligible for the city tax credit.

Also see City Code Chapter 2A.

HOMESTEAD TAX CREDIT (state tax credit)

Another tax relief program is the Homestead Tax Credit. First enacted in 1977, the program has been amended so that homeowners may be eligible for a State tax credit if the assessment of their owner-occupied principal residence increased more than 10% over the prior year. State law requires that county and municipal governments set a Homestead Credit Percentage between 0% and 10% for purposes of local property taxation. Beginning in 2008, homeowners are required to submit a one-time tax credit application that is included in that year's Assessment Notice sent to one-third of the property owners.

HOMEOWNERS TAX CREDIT (state and city tax credit)

Concerned about increased property taxes? The State of Maryland has a program that sets a limit on the amount of property taxes any homeowner must pay based upon his or her income. This program is available to all homeowners regardless of their age. To be eligible, your combined gross household income cannot exceed \$60,000. Your net worth, not including the value of your real property nor any qualified retirement savings or IRAs, must be less than \$200,000. For purposes of the tax credit program, "income" means the combined gross income before any deductions are taken. Income from all sources must be reported whether or not the monies received are included as income for Federal and State income tax purposes. Nontaxable retirement benefits such as Social Security and Railroad Retirement must be reported as income for the tax credit program. The tax credit is based upon the amount by which the property taxes exceed a percentage of your income according to the following formula: 0% of the first \$8,000 of the combined household income; 4% of the next \$4,000 of income; 6.5% of the next \$4,000 of income; and 9% of all income above \$16,000. Example: If your combined household income is \$16,000, your tax limit is \$420. You would be entitled to receive a credit for any taxes above the \$420. If your actual property tax bill was \$990, you would receive a tax credit in the amount of \$570 -- this being the difference between the actual tax bill and the tax limit. Applications are available at most public libraries, or by calling the Tax Credits Telephone Service at 1-800-944-7403. Or visit the Web site: <http://www.dat.state.md.us/sdatweb/htc.html>. At the website there is a chart that provides the tax caps for each income level.

Plus, the City of Mount Rainier provides an automatic supplement to the Homeowners Tax Credit. The amount of the homeowners' property tax credit local supplement is equal to 10% of the eligible homeowners state homeowners property tax credit. If you receive the state tax credit, the city will check your eligibility and send you a check for the amount of the city credit. Remember, in order to get the city homeowners tax credit, you MUST be enrolled in the state program first.

FEDERAL ENERGY EFFICENCY TAX CREDITS

On Feb. 17, 2009, President Obama signed a stimulus bill (The American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009) that made some significant changes to the energy efficiency tax credits. Tax credits are

available for windows, exterior doors, storm doors and windows, insulation, asphalt/metal roofs, biomass stoves (including corn stoves), etc. etc. The highlights are:

The tax credits that were previously effective for 2009, have been extended to 2010 as well.

The tax credit has been raised from 10% to 30%.

The tax credits that were for a specific dollar amount (ex \$300 for a CAC), have been converted to 30% of the cost.

The maximum credit has been raised from \$500 to \$1500 for the two years (2009–2010). However, some improvements such as geothermal heat pumps, solar water heaters, and solar panels are not subject to the \$1,500 maximum.

See the Energy Star Web site, http://www.energystar.gov/index.cfm?c=products.pr_tax_credits

CITY SEEKS COMMITTEE MEMBERS AND VOLUNTEERS

Our committees need you! Several of our committees are in need of members. I am sure that there is a committee in our City that maybe of interest to you and their meeting schedules are sure to fit your schedule. If you are interested in becoming a member of a committee in our city please feel free to contact Michael Jackson, assistant city manager at City Hall at 3014-985-6585 extension 30, to find out more information about the following committees:

- Tool Shed Committee
- Design Review Board
- Youth and Recreation Council
- Bike Coop (volunteers)

TREE COMMISSIONERS NEEDED

Openings exist on the city's Tree Commission. The Commissioners review permits for trimming and removal of street trees and trees in the city-owned parks. They also help choose what trees to be planted in the available locations, plan Arbor Day events, and help raise money for tree purchases through grant writing. If you are interested in serving, please forward a letter of interest and/or resume to City Manager, Jeannelle Wallace, City Hall, One Municipal Place, Mount Rainier, 20712. Or e-mail her at jwallace@mountrainiermd.org.

Administrative Assistant

The Mount Rainier Business Association is hiring a part-time administrative position (approximately 30 hours monthly) to support its mission to serve the business community of Mount Rainier. Strong administrative and communication skills required, as well as access to your own computer, and attendance to meetings. Pay is \$13-15 per hour depending on experience.

Please submit resume and interest to: Brooke Kidd @ brooke@joesmovement.org

DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC WORKS RECYCLE AND TRASH COLLECTION NOTICE

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.

PUBLIC WORKS CALENDAR

Listed hereunder is the scheduled pick up dates for trash in the City of Mt. Rainier, for July and August 2009

DATE	PARTICULARS	DATE	PARTICULARS
July 1	Regular Trash Pick Up	August 3	Bulk Trash Pick Up (By appointment only, call 301 985 6558) Yard Waste Pick Up
July 3	Public Works and City Hall Closed (4 th of July observance)	August 5	Regular Trash Pick Up
July 6	Bulk Trash Pick Up (By appointment only, call 301 985 6558) Recycle Pick Up	August 7	Recyclables Pick Up
July 7	Yard Waste Pick Up	August 10	Yard Waste Pick Up
July 8	Regular Trash Pick Up	August 12	Regular Trash Pick Up
July 10	Recyclables Pick Up	August 14	Recyclables Pick Up
July 13	Yard Waste Pick Up	August 17	Bulk Trash Pick Up (By appointment only, call 301 985 6558) Yard Waste Pick Up
July 15	Regular Trash Pick Up	August 19	Regular Trash Pick Up
July 17	Recyclables Pick Up	August 21	Recyclables Pick Up
July 20	Bulk Trash Pick Up (By appointment only, call 301 985 6558) Yard Waste Pick Up	August 24	Yard Waste Pick Up
July 22	Regular Trash Pick Up	August 26	Regular Trash Pick Up
July 24	Recyclables Pick Up	August 28	Recyclables Pick Up
July 27	Yard Waste Pick Up	August 31	Yard Waste Pick Up
July 29	Regular Trash Pick Up		
July 31	Recyclables Pick Up		

All bulk trash appointments made before 12 noon on the Friday preceding bulk pick up day