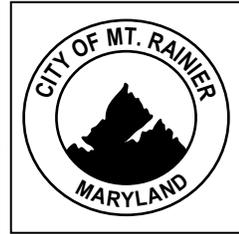


# The Message



Issue 294

December 2011 January 2012

## Development advances on Rhode Island Avenue in 2012

In December, the Council voted to advance two long discussed projects along the Rhode Island Avenue corridor, the Civic Center and the properties located at the 3200 block of Rhode Island Avenue.

The Council voted to appropriate \$211,000 to complete the construction drawings for the proposed Civic Center which combines the current City Hall with the Star-Potts Hall and a new building to replace the former city hall/police station/library. The City has design drawings which were reviewed by the public and approved by previous Councils. Among other things, the proposal would create a new library space, operated by the Prince George's Memorial Library System, with a multi-purpose room on the second floor move the city

AVENUE CONTINUED ON PAGE 15



## A Great Team Effort: 2011 in Review

By Jeannelle Wallace, City Manager

The 2011 year was very challenging and rewarding in many aspects. The year began with historical snow events from December 2010 through February 2011 that shut down the entire Metropolitan region. The Federal, District, Prince George's County, and municipal governments all closed due to hazardous conditions. Metro rail and bus service were not in service for a few days. The one exception to these closures was the City of Mount Rainier which remained open during the entire time in efforts to clear the streets, respond to emergencies, citizen questions, complaints, and concerns. The public works department did a yeoman job working around the clock to stay on top of snow accumulation, working with contract companies to literally move hundreds of pounds of snow and ice.

TEAM CONTINUED ON PAGE 14

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# Mount Rainier Schools & Students



Prince George's County School Board member Amber Waller is pictured with Thomas Stone Elementary students Lillian Hernandez and Adriana Ochoas dressed in typical attire for a dance to a folklore song "Las Cortadoras", which was just one of the presentations at the International Potluck Dinner in November.

The Mount Rainier Giving Project matches families in need with individuals and families who can help them make this holiday a special time. We are looking for those special people are able and willing to help a family. If you are interested please contact MRE PTO president, Yvette Barnes at [ysb527@yahoo.com](mailto:ysb527@yahoo.com) or Mario Cisneros at [cisnerosmf@aol.com](mailto:cisnerosmf@aol.com).

## School Supplies Needed

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

printer cartridges  
scotch tape  
pencils  
tissues

construction paper,  
copy paper  
hand sanitizer  
paper towels

**2012-2013**

**Adolescent Parenting**  
Biotechnology  
Career Research and Development  
Creative & Performing Arts  
Foundation of Automotive and Construction Technology for Students (F.A.C.T.S.)  
Visual & Performing Arts  
French Immersion  
IMAGINE Schools  
International Baccalaureate (IB)  
Middle College  
Montessori  
Project Lead the Way (PLTW)  
Public Charter Schools  
Talented and Gifted

**CAREER ACADEMIES:**  
Architecture & Design  
Business & Finance  
Engineering & Science  
Environmental Studies  
Global Studies  
Graphic Arts, Media & Communications  
Health & Sciences  
Hospitality & Tourism  
Information Technology  
Law, Education & Public Service  
Military Science  
Performing Arts  
Transportation Technologies

**Specialty Programs,  
Public Charter Schools and  
Career & Technical Education Programs**

# SHOWCASE

**CHARLES HERBERT  
FLOWERS HIGH SCHOOL**  
10001 Ardwick Ardmore Road  
Springdale, Maryland

**JANUARY 17, 2012**

**6 p.m. to 8 p.m.**

- 2012-2013 Lottery information and applications will be available.
- 2012-2013 Career and Technical Education program applications will be available.
- Program representatives will be available to share information and answer questions.

PRINCE GEORGE'S COUNTY PUBLIC SCHOOLS

**PGCPS**  
[www.pgcps.org](http://www.pgcps.org)

14201 School Lane  
Room 211  
Upper Marlboro, MD 20772  
301-453-6300

**FREE ADMISSION**

Inclement Weather Make-Up Date: January 24, 2012

## SCHOLARSHIPS

Apply for the Kappa Scholarship sponsored by the Bowie-Mitchellville (MD) Diamond Foundation. Application Deadline: April 6, 2012. You must be a graduating senior or GED recipient and reside in Prince George's County. Download the Program information and Scholarship application at <http://www.Kappa-Alfa-Psi-Scholarship-Application>.

View more scholarships here at:  
<http://www1.pgcps.org/scholarships/scholarshiplist.aspx>

The Washington Post Young Journalists Development Program (YJDP) and the Washington Association of Black Journalists present the Urban Journalism Workshop (UJW). The workshop gives high school students in the Washington area an inside look at careers in journalism. Three scholarship awards will be presented to seniors who excel during the workshop and demonstrate strong research, reporting and writing ability. There is no fee to apply or attend.

To download an application or learn more about the workshop, visit [www.washingtonpost.com/community-relations/young-journalists](http://www.washingtonpost.com/community-relations/young-journalists) or [www.ujwonline.org](http://www.ujwonline.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](mailto:mjackson@mountrainiermd.org). All submissions for the February 2012 *MESSAGE* must be received by close of business on Wednesday, January 18, 2012. 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.



**MRTV Programs appear on Comcast 71, Verizon 21, and “On Demand” daily.**

MRTV now provides a 24/7 programming schedule. Watch for the daily Program Guide for a list shows and times. This month watch for the following:

**LIVE Programs – City Council Meetings and Work Sessions – 7pm the 1st and 3rd Tuesday of each month.**

**People, Places & Possibilities** – Mount Rainier resident Adrienne Charles is the host and producer of this new original MRTV program. Her guest is Mount Rainier resident, Merlene Alicia Vassell, author of “The Vampire and the Vegan” Book 1: Food. During this 30 minute show Ms. Vassell talks about the story and the characters of this exciting new twist on an old plot. What is “Necromantic Energy”? Find the answer when you hear Ms. Vassell explore the attraction between humans and vampires in her development of her story.

**Mount Rainier “Then & Now”** – The local history show with host Jimmy Tarlau. The featured guest is former City Council member and current business owner, Brooke Kidd of Joe’s Movement Emporium.

**Mount Rainier Day 2011**—highlights of the very exciting day including the parade, dance performances and interviews with attendees.

**Maryland Municipal League’s 75th Anniversary**— A video presentation produced and presented by MML at the June 2011 convention. It contains a variety of new and historical photos of past political attendees and MML events. Mount Rainier’s Main Street Exhibit is featured in this production.

Upcoming programming includes the Mount Rainier Nature Center Rain Garden installation featuring interviews with organizers and volunteers; the Reopening of the Mount Rainier Tool Shed and the Day of the Dead Observance.

**For MRTV comments, suggestions and show ideas:**  
[mrtvchannel71@yahoo.com](mailto:mrtvchannel71@yahoo.com) or call 301-985-6585.



Photograph by Tom Wolfe used with permission

Bill Holton, one of the first African Americans to move to Mount Rainier, passed away in December. He was the owner of Odds n Even thrift store on the Circle and a long time resident of Taylor Street. A gentle soul, Bill Holton will be missed by many in the community.

## COUNCIL MEETINGS AND SPECIAL DATES

Unless noted all council meetings occur at 7 pm at City Hall

JANUARY 3, 2012

JANUARY 10, 2012

JANUARY 17, 2012

\*FEBRUARY 7, 2012

\*Meeting at Rainier Manor

## HELP WANTED

Nisey’s Boutique, 4007 34th Street, is looking for a part-time sales weekdays or weekends. This is a flexible employment opportunity. For more information e-mail Nisey’s Boutique at [Kennise1@aol.com](mailto:Kennise1@aol.com).

# Leave the car behind and take the Route 1 Ride

One of the many initiatives taken to revitalize the Route 1 Corridor has been the “Route 1 Ride” project that involves the Route 17 Prince George’s County bus (*TheBus*) serving the Route 1 Corridor from Mount Rainier to North College Park.

It is no secret that the Route 1 Corridor is in the midst of a renaissance, with new construction and activity occurring along many parts of this boulevard.

The Arts District is home of new galleries, artist housing, and other non-profit organizations promoting the arts, entertainment, and community. The EYA development has many new eateries and service stores, and a recently opened organic grocery.

Farther north along the corridor there are high-rises being erected for student housing and additional restaurants and shops now opened to serve local residents and visitors alike. Plans are also being redrawn for the East Campus redevelopment in downtown College Park, and a new pedestrian-friendly commercial center to be built on the Cafritz property in Riverdale Park that will likely include a Whole Foods Market.

Along with most new development, though, traffic and congestion will follow, especially with a thoroughfare like Route 1 that has so much “through” traffic, and little possibility to construct additional lanes due to right-of-way limitations.

However, the long-term vision



for Route 1 includes a transportation system that provides connectivity to every part of the Corridor, coordinating entities like the University of Maryland, WMATA, and others to avoid duplicity and overlapping service routes as much as possible. This service will have very limited wait times, extended hours, weekend service, and use of modern buses.

Foresight from several community leaders and the Department of Public Works & Transportation (DPW&T) modified certain bus routes about two years ago so that *TheBus Route 17* ran the entire length of the Corridor from Mount Rainier to North College Park.

Again through the urging of community leaders, an additional bus was recently added to the route and service was extended

to the College Park Metro Station. Headway times have been reduced to about 25 minutes at each stop, and ridership is up 35% from last year’s data.

Our next phase of the project is to “brand” the service so any regular or potential rider can recognize the unique “Route 1 Ride” symbol and know that this “branded” bus can take them to virtually any point on the Corridor.

Branding will include distributing brochures that provide the basics of the bus service, including schedules and many of the locations of interest. It will also include “wrapping” one or more buses with a creative design that promotes the Arts District, municipalities, and points of inter-

CONTINUED ON PAGE 5, BUS

# Green Happenings

**C**ontinuing our efforts to green the city and save taxpayer money, the Mount Rainier city council recently moved to purchase 100 percent wind-powered electricity. The city signed up our public buildings with Clean Currents, a Maryland based clean energy provider, and one of the first certified B Corporations in the state. By choosing Clean Currents to supply the city's electricity, Mount Rainier is reducing electricity costs by 16% and the total electricity savings during a 2-year period is estimated at more than \$22,000!

Not only does wind power work, but it's affordable. And your home can be wind powered too. It's easy to switch, there will be no additional bills, and no change in the reliability of your electricity. **If you make the switch to Clean Currents green power, mention the Gateway Arts District in the application form and \$50 will be donated to support this year's Joe's Movement Emporium Sweeping the Avenue event!** Visit [www.cleancurrents.com](http://www.cleancurrents.com) or call them at 240-704-9444 for more information and to sign up.

Signing up will also help Mount Rainier compete with other cities like Hyattsville and Greenbelt in Clean Currents' Green Neighborhood Challenge—the winning city receives additional donations for its green nonprofits. The city is also looking into becoming an EPA Green Power Community, and every clean energy sign-up helps.

Additional wind energy suppliers in the area include Washington Gas, Viridian, and others. So there's even an opportunity to shop around. Signing up for clean renewable power has never been easier!

## BUS, CONTINUED FROM PAGE 4

est along Route 1. Later we plan to create and distribute marketing brochures called "Z-Cards" that will list everything from places to eat, hotels, historic sites, retail stores, and grocery markets.

All this information will be placed online, and we will also be working with the University of Maryland to develop an electronic application program or "app" that can be utilized by mobile phones for bus service information. In addition, we are planning on having the Route listed on the NextBus service which allows for a mobile phone user to be texted a message of when the next bus arrives at a certain bus stop, and to add the Route to programs like "Google Transit" which specializes in public transportation options.

Moving forward, we are working on more ways to provide excellent service to all patrons with the Route 1 Ride.

For example, we are working with DPW&T to provide for "day passes"—a small fee by a patron would allow them to ride the bus all day. This is ideal for residents who may need to make several stops regularly on the bus, or visitors who want to park their vehicles in one place and utilize the bus and visit several sites along the corridor.

In addition to purchasing 100% clean energy for our city buildings, the community has also crafted a draft sustainability plan. We will be applying in the Spring to become one of the first Sustainable Maryland Certified communities, and our sustainability plan is the key piece of the application. We are asking for comments on the plan with a deadline of January 3, 2012.

The plan can be found at this web address (scroll to the bottom of the page):

[www.mountrainiermd.org/reports\\_and\\_documents.html](http://www.mountrainiermd.org/reports_and_documents.html)

Please send all comments to Bill Updike at [updikew@yahoo.com](mailto:updikew@yahoo.com). We also will be having a community forum on the sustainability plan on Tuesday **January 10, 2012**, starting at 7:00 p.m. at City Hall. Please come and let your voice be heard.

## Wellness Day at Joe's Movement Emporium

**January 7, 2012, 12-4 pm**

Start your new year off with better health and well-being! Come and explore various wellness methods through presentations and hands-on sessions with local practitioners. Try reiki, yoga, acupuncture and more. Get a FREE massage! Learn about naturopathy, herbology, Alexander technique, chakras and crystals, and healthful eating. For more information, contact Monica Huber at Joe's, 301-699-1819 or [monica@joesmovement.org](mailto:monica@joesmovement.org).

# Upshur Street Park

By Jodi Beder

**T**he wonderful newly planted park and playground, on 34th and Upshur Street, created this past year by PG Parks and Planning and opened early in the summer, has made it through six months. The park includes a strip of land along 34<sup>th</sup> St belonging to Mount Rainier, but is mostly county land.

The old park was badly in need of a facelift, overgrown with brambles and poison ivy and with little equipment. PG Parks left the Kwanzan Japanese cherry trees along 34<sup>th</sup> and added two more, but they also listened to the community and planted a wonderful collection of plants native to the Chesapeake Bay watershed: sweetbay magnolias and shadblow serviceberry trees, summersweet and ink-berry bushes, switchgrass and sedges, Christmas fern and sensitive fern, irises, St Johnswort, wood asters, foamflower and green-and-gold and golden groundsel and blue-eyed grass, and a huge planting of black-eyed susans.

In addition – and with some help from the kids and parents of the science summer camp directed by Anna Bernanke and hosted at Joe's – we've added some native petunias, native sedum, spiderwort, NY ironweed, rose mallow, Northern river oats, and other goodies.

The summer has been rough on the park. The new plants are especially vulnerable to drought, and are also small so that kids don't always see them. Both PG Parks and our town's Public Works were overwhelmed with the task of watering during our hot, dry summer, and had no staff for weeding; it was left to a small handful of volunteers to make sure the plants survived – thanks especially to Steve McKindley Ward, Bill Updike, and Krista Schlyer, and to park neighbors Kathryn Naylor and Judith St Fort, and another neighbor whose name I don't know, for contributing many gallons of water; to Vickie Leonard for courageously removing poison ivy, and to anyone else who poured water on a thirsty plant, kept dogs clear of the plantings, etc. (One or two of the older cherry trees may also have been lost – the ones closest to Upshur St. were looking very bad by August, probably a combination of drought and root damage during park construction.)

The park has also been a victim of its own success: it gets many visitors, and in the course of children's play it gets a bit battered.

We had a wonderful Thanksgiving morning cleanup hour, raking wood chips, returning the river stones to their curbside places, picking up trash,



removing leaves from the pavement (to be shredded and returned as plant mulch), and trimming broken tree branches.

The park needs our enjoyment – and everyone's help. Now that we're at the end of the growing season, weeding is at a minimum, and we don't need to water, but there's plenty to

be involved with. Here are things you can do:

1. **Enjoy the park:** Come and use the park. Bring a book and sit and read, have a chat with friends, play chess and checkers at the tables (built-in checkerboards!), bring kids.
2. **Help keep it neat and clean:** Pick up a few pieces of trash – and ask kids who are there to help you, including kids you don't know, and especially kids who are unsupervised. Put back the round river stones that get moved around – they belong in sections on the Upshur Street side, not scattered around.
3. **Talk to Parks people:** They are rarely around, so if you catch them, talk to them, ask questions, offer help. The more communication we have with the people doing upkeep, the better. Point out problems you see such as trees in distress.
4. **Talk to kids:** Especially unsupervised kids. Alert kids to plants they may be harming. Encourage them to use the trash bin. When you pick up trash or water plants, ask for help.
5. **Supervise:** If you see kids riding bikes through the plants, trampling plants, throwing stones, breaking tree branches, say something to them. They need to hear that it matters. Some of them are just oblivious. (Some adults are too.)
6. **Become a plant buddy:** Adopt a specific plant or group of plants – just to keep an eye on it and see that it gets what it needs to survive.
7. **Stay in touch:** Join the Upshur Street Park Friends facebook page, [facebook.com/groups/upshurstreetparkfriends](https://facebook.com/groups/upshurstreetparkfriends), and post photos, observations, comments. Post to the Mount Rainier listserv. Contact me directly, [jodicello@gmail.com](mailto:jodicello@gmail.com), 301-864-4508, or through City Council member Jimmy Tarlau.
8. **Look for events at the park:** We will have future cleanup sessions and other events.

# Community Building




**Mount Rainier's**  
Youth and Recreation Committee

**MEETING**  
December 17, 2011  
4:00 p.m. -5:30 p.m.  
at Mount Rainier Police Department

The Mount Rainier Recreation Committee aims to facilitate multi-generational recreational opportunities in the areas of sports, appreciation of our natural environment and the arts. The committee supports the work of activity specific recreational committees and ad hoc interest groups as needed. The Committee is the steward for the City of Mount Rainier recreational resources insuring that residents have full access and take full advantage of our neighborhood treasures.

This and all other City Committee meetings are open to the public, we hope to see you

For More Information E-Mail the committee @ [yandrmrm@gmail.com](mailto:yandrmrm@gmail.com) or Tyrese Robinson @ [11KRobinson@yahoo.com](mailto:11KRobinson@yahoo.com)

follow us on  **twitter**       Find us on **Facebook**



Citizens and volunteers led by your own local "watershed stewards" plant a rain garden on the grounds of the Mount Rainier Nature Center. The rain garden planted sits between the Nature Center's large parking lot and a stormwater ditch that flows into the nearby concrete culvert.




**FREE  
FUN  
FAMILY-  
FRIENDLY  
FLICKS &  
POPCORN**

**WINTER MOVIE NITES  
FRIDAYS  
JANUARY 6TH, 20TH  
FEBRUARY 3RD, 17TH  
MARCH 2ND, 16TH**  
AT THE  
MOUNT RAINIER NATURE & RECREATION CENTER  
4701 38TH PLACE, MOUNT RAINIER, MD 20712  
301-927-2163; TTY 301-699-2544

Sponsored by M-NCPPC Mount Rainier Nature Center & the City of Mount Rainier

# 'Tis the Season to Rake Leaves

By Dana Grabiner

**R**aking autumn leaves is an American tradition. Bagging the leaves and placing them at the curb for pickup used to be the only option. But now we know what our country cousins have always known: that decomposed leaves are great “nutrition” for your lawn or garden. As leaves decay, they gradually create beautiful, lush, dark soil – compost! – that is like black gold for plants. You can use it to enrich your garden or as a mulch around your trees and shrubs. It’s natural ... and no cost.

Here is what we do at our house: first, we pile up the leaves in a corner of the yard. After the kids have romped in the pile for a little bit, we run the lawnmower over the pile a few times to shred the leaves and jump-start the decay process, and then sprinkle some water from a hose or bucket to tamp everything down.

You don’t have to build an official compost container – although it’s easy to make a 3-sided one by standing pallets on end and nailing them together. You can get discarded pallets from a hardware store, grocery, or construction site like we did. (Ask permission first!) Then watch your pile slowly shrink over the next few months as the leaves decompose and transform.

If you like, over the winter you can throw your kitchen waste into the pile, such as carrot scrapings, potato skins, coffee grounds, banana peels, melon rinds, apple cores, and egg shells – all the discards from your holiday meal preparation (but no meat or fats). Use a shovel or pitchfork to turn the pile over so the new materials make contact with the composted materials. As you mix everything in, you’ll feel the heat from the natural decomposition underway.

By spring, you should have a tidy pile of rich soil that will feed your plants without the need for any store-bought fertilizer. An extra benefit is that your kids will learn about nature’s cycle: from decay comes new life.



## Pepco Tree Trimming

Pepco will soon be sending contractors from Asplundh Tree Expert Company into Mount Rainier to trim and remove trees near electric wires. Pepco's arborist determined which trees need to be trimmed after a survey earlier this year. Mount Rainier's Tree Commission has met with Pepco officials twice recently and has a list of trees to be trimmed.

Recognizing criticism of past trimming cycles, Pepco's lead arborist assured the Commission that crews are better trained now. They will follow arboricultural standards by taking each limb back to the trunk so that the tree can heal.

In the past, Pepco has trimmed trees on a two-year cycle, meaning that the amount of trimming was enough for a two-year period. After great criticism about outages during major storms, Pepco is now trimming four years of limb growth. They will remove enough to keep branches away from wires for four years. This means you will see more being removed than in the past.

TRIMMING CONTINUED on page 10



**Department of Public Works  
RECYCLE, BULK TRASH AND  
YARD WASTE COLLECTION**

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 pick-up appointments must be made before Noon on the Friday preceding the pick up day. All bulk and yard waste must be set out before 7:00 AM on pick up day.

Yard Waste pick-up occurs on the **2<sup>nd</sup> Monday of each month by appointment only** call 301 985 6558, selection 2.

**D**o you

want a tree in front of your house?

Thank you to the volunteers who helped to keep Mount Rainier green

this summer by watering trees through the dry spells.

Last year, the Mount Rainier Tree Commission members and volunteers planted 100 trees, far more than usual. With the help of community volunteers and Mount Rainier's Public Works Department 90 of them made it through the heat. The other ten were under warranty and will be replaced.

This year Mount Rainier was awarded a Prince George's County ReLeaf grant that will be used to plant 25-30 trees in addition to the ten replacements. If you would like for the Mount Rainier Tree Commission to consider a particular public location for a new tree such as a tree box or park near your home, please contact City Council Member Brent Bolin by phone, 301-744-9465, or e-mail, [brentcbolin@gmail.com](mailto:brentcbolin@gmail.com).



**PUBLIC WORKS CALENDAR**

DATE	PARTICULARS
December 16	Recyclables Pick Up
December 19	Bulk Trash Pick Up (By appointment only, call 301 985 6558)
December 21	Regular Trash Pick Up
December 23	Recyclables Pick Up
<b>December 26</b>	<b>Christmas Holiday City Hall and Public Works Closed</b>
December 28	Regular Trash Pick Up
December 30	Recyclables Pick Up
<b>January 2</b>	<b>New Year's Day Holiday City Hall and Public Works Closed</b>
January 4	Recyclables Pick Up
January 9	Bulk Trash Pick Up (By appointment only, call 301 985 6558)
January 11	Regular Trash Pick Up
January 13	Recyclables Pick Up
<b>January 16</b>	<b>MLK, Jr. Holiday City Hall and Public Works Closed</b>
January 18	Regular Trash Pick Up
January 20	Recyclables Pick Up
January 23	Bulk Trash Pick Up (By appointment only, call 301 985 6558)
January 25	Regular Trash Pick Up
January 27	Recyclables Pick Up
January 30	<b>Yard Waste Pick Up</b> (By appointment only, call 301 985 6558)
February 1	Regular Trash Pick Up
February 3	Recyclables Pick Up
February 6	Bulk Trash Pick Up (By appointment only, call 301 985 6558)
February 8	Regular Trash Pick Up
February 10	Recyclables Pick Up
February 13	<b>Yard Waste Pick Up</b> (By appointment only, call 301 985 6558)
February 15	Regular Trash Pick Up
February 17	Recyclables Pick Up

# 2011 Legislation Passed by Council

## City Ordinances

Ordinance 6-2011 - An ordinance appointing members to the City of Mount Rainier Ethics Commission

Ordinance 5-2011 -An ordinance amending Chapter 1D Ethics of the Mount Rainier Code striking sections 1D-101 through 1D-108 and replacing it with new language as indicated in this ordinance.

Ordinance 4-2011 -An Ordinance Establishing the Tax Rate, Adopting an Annual Budget, and Appropriating Funds for Fiscal Year 2012, Beginning July 1, 2011 and ending June 30, 2012. **(Adopted 05/03/11)**

Ordinance 3-2011 -An Ordinance Establishing Mount Rainier Green Initiatives **(Adopted 04/05/11)**

Ordinance 2-2011 -An Ordinance Amending Mount Rainier Election Procedure Manual **(Adopted 03/15/11)**

Ordinance 1-2011 - An Ordinance Amending Mount Rainier Code Chapter 13A, Snow Emergency Routes, adding 13B, City Emergencies, for all types of hazardous conditions.... **(Adopted 04/05/11)**

## TRIMMING CONTINUED from page 8

The Asplundh crews will work on private property and along the public streets. You should have received a notice on your door weeks ago if the crews need to trim or make a removal on your property.

The trees to be removed from public streets are marked with an orange spray paint dot. The Tree Commission has reviewed the proposed removals and agreed to them. The Commission has no authority to review removals or trimmings on private property.

The Asplundh crews will work in orange trucks with a white sign that says "Pepco Contractor."

Pepco is concerned with the electric power lines, which are usually at the tops of the poles. Wires low on the poles are usually cable and telephone wires. The Tree Commission in recent years has avoided planting tall trees under electric wires, but the city has a legacy of tree plantings that stretches back to the at least the 1930s.

The trimming will result in large amounts of wood chips. Residents who want wood chips delivered for personal use should call Asplundh at (410) 519-9900. The city also may find locations where chips can be deposited for residents to pick up.

Pepco provides information on how the crews trim at [http://www.pepco.com/res/documents/trees\\_reliable\\_svc\\_brochure.pdf](http://www.pepco.com/res/documents/trees_reliable_svc_brochure.pdf). If you have a comment about the Asplundh work, call the Pepco arborist at (301) 967-5338.

## City Council Resolutions

Resolution 1-2011 - A Resolution setting the calendar of events for preparation of the Fiscal Year 2012 Budget. **(Adopted 01/04/11)**

Resolution 2-2011 - A Resolution appointing members for a two-year term to the City of Mount Rainier Design Review Board. **(Adopted 01/04/11)**

Resolution 3-2011 - A Resolution appointing members to the City of Mount Rainier Board of Elections for period of March 7, 2011 to March 4, 2013. **(Adopted 03/01/11)**

Resolution 4-2011 - A Resolution to appoint Maria Paoletti and Jesse Christopherson to the Mount Rainier Tree Commission. **(Adopted 03/24/11)**

Resolution 5-2011 - A Resolution declaring Mount Rainier a Gateway Arts and Entertainment District. **(Adopted 06/21/11)**

Resolution 6-2011 - A Resolution to appointing members to the Mount Rainier Ethics Commission. **(Adopted 06/21/11)**

Resolution 7-2011 - A Resolution to appoint Bryan Knedler as Mount Rainier Tree Expert. **(Adopted 06/21/11)**

CONTINUED ON PAGE 11

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Resolution 8-2011 - A Resolution supporting participation in the Sustainable Maryland Certified Municipal Certification Program. **(Adopted 06/21/11)**

Resolution 10-2011 - A Resolution to appointing members to the Mount Rainier Ethics Commission. **(Adopted 11/01/11)**

Resolution 11-2011 - A resolution approving the City of Mount Rainier and applying for the designation of Rhode Island Ave. and 34th St. by application and to receive Main Street Maryland designation. **(Adopted 09/06/2011)**

Resolution 12-2011  
011 - A resolution to approve a project to train low-income teens in the technical theatre trade. **(Adopted 09/06/2011)**

Resolution 13-2011 - A resolution to approve a project to provide after school tutoring and enrichment yp children in the Queens Manor Apartments. **(Adopted 09/06/2011)**

Resolution 14-2011 - A resolution declaring the City-owned personal property consisting of two vehicles as surplus need by the City of Mount Rainier. **(Adopted 09/06/2011)**

Resolution 15-2011 - A resolution appointing two citizen volunteers to the City of Mount Rainier Youth and Recreation Committee. **(Adopted 09/20/2011)**

Resolution 16-2011 - A resolution of the City of Mount Rainier approving the application and receipt of financing for a Community Legacy Project. **(Adopted 10/04/2011)**

Resolution 17-2011 - A resolution appointing a citizen volunteer to the City of Mount Rainier Youth and Recreation Committee. **(Adopted 10/04/2011)**

Resolution 19-2011 - A resolution appointing citizen volunteers to the City of Mount Rainier Youth and Recreation Committee. **(Adopted 11/01/2011)**

Resolution 20-2011 - A resolution appointing members to the Emergency Preparedness Committee **(Adopted 11/01/2011)**

Resolution 21-2011 - A Resolution to appointing members to the Mount Rainier Environmental Protection Board. **(Adopted 11/01/11)**

Resolution 22-2011 - A Resolution approving the City to enter into cable franchise renewal negotiations with Comcast **(Adopted 12/06/11)**

Resolution 23-2011 - A Resolution approving the recommended amendments to the Eighth Amended and Restated Local Government Insurance Trust Agreement as approved by the Board of Trustees **(Adopted 12/06/11)**



# PUBLIC SAFETY REPORT

The crime statistics for the month of November 2011 show an overall decrease in crime of just about 1% during the first eleven months of 2011. We have seen a steady decline in our crime rate over the last three months, down from a 12% increase in August to this month's decrease of 1%.

During November we were down over 61% from November 2010. Vehicle related crimes (stolen vehicles, thefts from auto and vandalism to auto) continue to drive our 16% increase in overall larceny/theft cases.

During November, 18 of the 27 crimes listed on the Team Policing Area report were vehicle related crimes. The majority of these cases involve vehicles that were left unlocked or where valuables were left in plain sight inside. Residents are reminded to take the basic pre-

caution of locking their vehicles when unattended and not leaving valuables, particularly loose change, inside. Always take valuables with you or lock them out of sight in the trunk. During the period of November 1st through November 30th MRPD officers handled 921 calls for police service. Of those, 458 were calls that were dispatched by Communications and 463 were self-initiated by officers on patrol. During the same period officers made 175 traffic stops and 18 arrests.

The cumulative totals for the year show that our officers have made 374 arrests (a 10.65% increase over the same period in 2010) and issued 4,885 traffic related citations (a 63.76% increase over last year). Our Parking Enforcement Officer and Code Enforcement Officers have issued an additional 2,627 parking citations (a 5.42% in-



## Mount Rainier Police Department 2011 Annual Crime Statistics Part I Offenses November 2011

2011	Jan	Feb	March	April	May	June	July	August	September	October	November	December	TOTALS	% CHANGE
HOMICIDE	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0		1	0
RAPE	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0		0	0
ROBBERY	7	3	4	2	1	3	3	0	3	0	2		33	-41
AGGRAVATED ASSAULT	4	2	0	3	1	3	0	4	3	0	2		22	47
BURGLARY	2	7	11	0	0	3	4	0	4	0	1		44	-17
LARCENY	11	10	10	13	20	22	17	14	10	10	19		104	10
AUTO THEFT	3	4	0	4	0	3	13	12	0	0	3		54	0
ARSON	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0		2	0
TOTAL	29	31	37	27	34	34	37	41	33	14	37		344	-4.86

2010	Jan	Feb	March	April	May	June	July	August	September	October	November	December	TOTALS
HOMICIDE	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0		0
RAPE	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0		1
ROBBERY	6	2	1	2	11	8	2	5	7	6	6		56
AGGRAVATED ASSAULT	1	1	2	1	2	1	1	1	1	2	2		15
BURGLARY	5	4	1	4	3	6	8	1	6	4	11		53
LARCENY	16	4	16	13	16	20	10	13	0	10	10		100
AUTO THEFT	0	2	0	0	0	4	1	0	10	0	0		21
ARSON	0	0	0	0	0	0	2	0	0	0	0		2
TOTAL	30	13	20	20	37	44	30	20	30	30	44		347

## 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.

# 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 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.mrpdchief.blogspot.com](http://www.mrpdchief.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:**

**34<sup>th</sup> 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 34<sup>th</sup> Street to Upshur Street;**

**Upshur Street from Rainier Avenue to 28<sup>th</sup> Place;**

**28<sup>th</sup> Place from Upshur Street to Russell Avenue;**

**Russell Avenue from 28<sup>th</sup> Place to Arundel Road;**

**Varnum Street from Russell Avenue to Eastern Avenue;**

**Arundel Road from Russell Avenue to 34<sup>th</sup> 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.

TEAM CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

We were very fortunate that the city had power during the storms unlike our neighboring communities in Montgomery County. There were no fatalities, just people who were suffering from cabin fever and very anxious to get out of the house. The department of public safety also worked around the clock to ensure that no vehicles obstructed snow

ing requirements. A councilmember referred the contractor selected for the project to the City, Assistant City Manager Michael Jackson oversees the contractual obligations including the bid advertisement, and timely completion of the project, and the city manager secured the funding of \$101,574 from the FTA including the application submission, justification, and reporting require-

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***One of the most crucial benchmarks for determining success in any organization is its ability to maintain its fiscal fiduciary responsibility, its fiscal integrity, self-sufficiency, and productivity within a fiscal year.***

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emergency routes in addition to their normal public safety duties.

Through the efforts of the management team (administration, police, and public works,) the city was awarded approximately \$1.25 million in grant funds from the federal, state, and county governments as well as Local Government Insurance Trust.

Projects that have been completed as a result of this funding include the city's Green Home Initiative where 15 homeowners received Energy Star appliances, windows, doors, and/or furnaces in addition to a home energy audit that recommended additional energy saving measures that families could implement to reduce their carbon footprint and energy usage; the installation of solar panels on the municipal building; 21 new lights installed at the Kaywood Garden Apartments; curbs, gutters and sidewalks replaced on 29<sup>th</sup> Street; 30 new city trees planted; pervious pavers installed on the Perry Street parking lot and 35<sup>th</sup> Street alley; and a Maryland Energy Audit conducted on all city buildings.

The projects that are on-going include repairs to the city's four bridges and the re-pavement to the Perry Street parking lot, and the Façade Improvement Program for the city's commercial business districts.

The city increased its assets with the purchase of the former Blue Bird Cab lot on Perry Street, which will increase parking availability in the downtown. It will be used as a "Kiss and Ride" lot for bus operators and bus passengers for compliance with the Federal Transit Administration (FTA) grant fund-

ments. What a great team effort!

The city received a Silver Level Plant Award in recognition of the great work it does in planting trees every year to preserve the city's tree stock. Injured Worker's Insurance Fund (IWIF) which is the employee's Maryland injury protection insurance congratulated the city for the great job it is doing in terms of injury claims as well as for 25 years of partnership ensuring employee safety.

In March 2011 the city manager and city treasurer submitted a balanced budget to the mayor and council providing a 5 year Capital Improvement Plan for vehicle and equipment needs for the departments of public safety and public works.

The budget submission for Fiscal Year 2013 will also include infrastructure needs for the city's buildings and streets. Many of the city streets are in need of repair, some more critical than others. The public works department has identified those streets that are in the most need of immediate repair. The council has elected to pursue state funding for the majority of the infrastructure needs.

One of the most crucial benchmarks for determining success in any organization is its ability to maintain its fiscal fiduciary responsibility, its fiscal integrity, self-sufficiency, and productivity within a fiscal year.

The Fiscal Year 2011 Audit for the period ending June 30, 2011 found no management or material weaknesses, and no misappropriation of funds; the city met its deadline for reporting fi-

financial statements and submission of the Uniform Financial Report to the State of Maryland for the 3<sup>rd</sup> consecutive year.

Management was once again aggressive in terms of revenue collection, and was conservative and very cautious in terms of spending. As a result, the fiscal year ended with more revenues than expenditures. This helped the city maintain a healthy reserve balance. In a climate of recession and economic downturn, and for a full service municipality with only \$4.5 million in operating funds, this is no small feat.

Electronic recycling events were held throughout the year (some in partnership with the Town of Brentwood) encouraging residents to participate from both municipalities, providing a safe and healthy way to discard electronic equipment and devices. The city has also partnered with the Town of Brentwood to assist with their snow removal capability.

The city has submitted new grant applications to the State of Maryland for a Bicycle Share Program similar to the one implemented in Baltimore City and the District of Columbia. Applications have also been submitted for Main Street and Sustainability Designations.

The management team also worked diligently on the draft of the city's Environmental Sustainability Plans and Assessment which highlight the efforts of the council, the city's workforce, and volunteer community in preserving our waterways, improving energy efficiency and creating an overall cleaner environment. The Environmental Protection Board is working to ensure that the City receives Maryland Certification for its sustainability programs. What a great team effort!

The city administrative staff collaborated with the Mount Rainier Business Association (MRBA) on many projects including the Welcome Package for new and existing businesses. There was much success with the new branding campaign and advertisements as well as membership outreach.

The Better Block Project held in April of this year, spruced up the business district and is a model that will be replicated again this year and will be an on-going effort. A new staff person has been hired by the association specifically to target more participation among association members and to work with city staff to accomplish Main Street objectives. One of the goals of the city and

MRBA is to increase our efforts to fellowship with other cities and associations. What a great team effort!

City staff also developed a brand new Welcome Package for city residents which summarizes city services and city regulations.

On behalf of the management team, I want to express our sincere appreciation for the opportunity to continue to provide quality services to you, our residents. *May you experience a healthy, safe, and happy Holiday Season, and a prosperous New Year!*

#### AVENUE CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1



council chambers to the second floor of the Star-Potts Hall, and reconfigure the current City Hall to create more office space. A new entrance to the complex would be created facing the Municipal Plaza. The City has received \$225,000 in grants from the State for the project. The transition from design to construction drawings is key to the Council's ability to obtain additional funding from the State for the Civic Center as this becomes a bricks and mortar project.

The ultimate cost of the civic complex is estimated to cost \$5 million. The City is pursuing funding at the State, County and Federal levels to make the project possible. The City has submitted a matching bond bill to the State Legislature for \$2.5 million to fund the project. The City's match will come from the proceeds of the development of the 3200 block of Rhode Island Avenue.

The Council also voted to seek development proposals for the 3200 block of Rhode Island Avenue from two innovative development companies - Streetsense, the developers behind the Arts District in Hyattsville and the Holladay Corporation, a DC based real estate development company best known for quality residential and mixed-use projects. Representatives from both organizations have expressed an interest in developing mixed-use projects at the site. The Council hopes to receive proposals in January for review.

[www.mountrainiermd.org](http://www.mountrainiermd.org)

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**City Treasurer**

**Vijay Manjani**

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**Bill Updike**

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## 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  
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  
Michael Warrick  
240-882-9788

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

**City Police Department**  
Chief Michael E. Scott  
[Mscott@mountrainiermd.org](mailto:Mscott@mountrainiermd.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

Congressman Chris Van Hollen's  
Satellite Office:  
6475 New Hampshire Ave, Suite C-201  
Hyattsville MD 20783  
301-891-6982 (voice)  
301-891-6985 (fax)  
Monday–Friday 9:00 a.m.-5:30 p.m.

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–W 10-6:30 (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  
301-864-5168

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)

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