



# Message

**Issue 221**  
**September 2004**

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**Deadline for the October Message is September 17.**

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

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## County Council Special Election, September 14

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A special primary election will be held on Tues., Sept. 14, to choose candidates to run for the county council District 2 seat left vacant by the recent resignation of Peter Shapiro. The general election will be held Tues., Nov. 2. Mount Rainier Elementary and Thomas Stone Elementary schools are the polling places. Check your voter registration card if you are unsure where to vote. For an absentee ballot or further information, call 301-952-3270. The candidates are as follows (in the order they registered as candidates): Malinda Miles (D); Derrick M. Posey (D); Tommy S. Priestley (R); Amber Waller (D); Karren Jo Pope-Onwukwe (D); Will Campos (D); Jennifer Mitchum (D); Anthony Cicoria (D); Chris Currie (D).

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## Health Department Reports Probable Case of West Nile Virus

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*(Press Release. For more information contact Patricia Sullivan, Press Information, Prince George's County Health Department, 301-883-7851 or 240-417-8443.)*

**LARGO, MD** — The Prince George's County Health Department today announced that, pending confirmatory test results, an individual residing in Prince George's County has been determined to have West Nile virus (WNV). Final test results will be available in 2-3 weeks. The individual is recovering at home.

West Nile Virus (WNV) is transmitted to humans by the bite of an infected mosquito. While most people infected with WNV will not feel ill or will experience only mild flu-like symptoms, the virus can cause encephalitis, an inflammation of the brain. It cannot be directly transmitted from one person to another or from birds to people.

"Educating our residents is the key to preventing West Nile virus," said Prince George's County Health Officer, Frederick J. Corder, M.D. "I want our residents to be aware of the steps they can take to both protect themselves from exposure and prevent mosquitoes from breeding."

### Protect Yourself and Your Family from Mosquito Bites

Take steps to avoid mosquito bites

- Stay indoors at dusk and at dawn when mosquitoes are most active
- Wear long-sleeved shirts and long pants when outdoors
- Use insect repellent when outdoors, following product directions
- Use screens on open windows, and repair any holes

*West Nile Virus, continued on page 5*

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## Mayor's Report

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by Mayor Bryan Knedler

**FORMER MAYOR PRUSCH DIES.** Former mayor Stanley Prusch passed away in July. He was 92. He and his wife Pauline were leaders in the community for many years. They helped establish the "pocket park" program for older neighborhoods and also the Call-A-Bus service. Last year, the park at the corner of 30th and Arundel was dedicated to them.

**BASS UPDATE.** The Bass Restaurant remains closed and the renovations unfinished. The liquor store and check cashing are open. In August, the City sent a complaint letter to the Liquor Board which had given the owners 90 days to complete the renovations. The Board promises to conduct an investigation. City Code Enforcement is scheduled to reinspect the premises in August to see if the owners have fixed all the violations noted from the last inspection. Meanwhile, the Circuit Court has scheduled a January 2005 hearing on the appeal to the nonrenewal of the license. Kerry (Bass) Bedard is now managing the property. Borak and Gould Inc. has reportedly asked to transfer the liquor license back to the Bass family trust. It is unclear to me how a nonrenewed license could be transferred. Bedard, who has experience in restaurant management, is looking into bringing in a national chain. Questions about the profitability of the business without a liquor store (or check cashing) remain. She has also requested to meet with the City Council in September. Citizens are encouraged to continue to monitor the property and report illicit activity to the Council and the Liquor Board.

**AMERICA IN BLOOM CONTEST.** The America in Bloom contest judges were here in July; regardless of the competition's outcome, the City has reaped a huge benefit in how great it

looks! We will not know the final outcome until October. *America in Bloom* is a national contest that evaluates communities on various aspects of landscaping, community volunteerism, tree care, environmental sensitivity, and history. Kudos first to resident Jack Engel for getting this whole thing off the ground, working with the judges, raising money, coordinating the seed growing and planting, and walking nearly every block in the City to look at gardens. We also have benefited in the spirit that was generated by the competition. Please be sure to thank the entire public works staff for working extra hard on getting the town spruced up during the month of June. Numerous residents helped weed and mulch during the last few weeks, and several of our gardeners opened their yards to the judges. Special thanks to City Hall staff for pitching in and filling some gaps that always come up at the last minute. The police department staff worked with the team to provide the van and host the lunch for the judges. Special thanks to Malinda Miles and the Community Tool Shed project for providing the food. Charmane Truesdale from the County Beautification Committee attended as well. To those of you who did presentations for the judges, a big thank you (including Jan Townsend of the Neighborhood Design Center; Nick Francis of Gateway CDC; City Manager Jeannelle Wallace; Councilmember Malinda Miles; former mayor Fred Sissine; and Peggy Dillon of the Town Center Design Review Committee). Stephanie Proestel of Housing Initiative Partnership provided a guided tour of the HIIP Artist Apartments and explained the various "green" features. Adjua Williams, local artist, explained her artwork-in-progress at Richardson Park. It was

great to have a variety of citizens, elected officials, and community development folks bring the background information. Again, it showed the judges the teamwork, volunteerism, and commitment to the community. And I very much enjoyed driving the judges around for two days to show off our great City.

**CORRECTION:** Last issue I said that Ajua Williams had worked at the Corcoran School. Actually she was a student there.

**ANACOSTIA BIKE PATHS FEATURED.** The Prince George's Extra noted the many bike paths in our area. City resident and businessman Steve Shaff was quoted: "The quality of life in our community increased tremendously when bike paths opened." For entire article, go to: <http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/articles/A47073-2004Jun16.html>.

**SEN. GWEN BRITT FEATURED IN POST.** The Washington Post did a nice article about our State Senator, Gwendolyn Britt, and her involvement in the civil rights movement of the 1960s. The AARP and the Leadership Conference on Civil Rights are creating a permanent, comprehensive archive of the civil rights struggle. The results will be online at [www.voicesofcivilrights.org](http://www.voicesofcivilrights.org) and held in the Library of Congress. Britt's involvement started at the lunch counters at Woolworth's and Drug Fair in Arlington and Fairfax. In mixed-race groups of five, six, or seven, they would sit down and wait for a waitress to close the counter and call the police. Britt was arrested four or five times in a single year. The charge was trespassing. She met her husband, Travis, while picketing

**Mayor, continued on page 6**

## From the Police Chief

### How to Reach Us

**Neighborhood Watch Grant.** Our grant request to the State to fund our program was not approved. We are however pursuing funding through the County and should hear something soon on our application.

**Teachers Aides Needed.** We have once again been awarded grant funds to operate our After School Program. The program operates Monday through Friday from 3–6 p.m. during the school year (exclusive of school closings). If you are interested in working with students in the 4<sup>th</sup>, 5<sup>th</sup> or 6<sup>th</sup> grades please mail you're a resume to the attention of Angela Davis. Interested in receiving our weekly crime report? Just send us your e-mail address requesting to be placed on the mailing list. E-mail the request to [FKeeney@mountrainiermd.org](mailto:FKeeney@mountrainiermd.org). The weekly crime report that is e-mailed contains only verified reports of crimes or incidents and does not reflect the total calls for service officers responded to during the week.

**National Night Out a Success—Volunteers make the Difference.** We held our annual National Night Out on August 3 at the Mount Rainier Nature and Recreation center. This year's program was a huge success thanks to the efforts of our staff, volunteers and donors. POFC Andre Williams led the committee efforts of Ophelia Baxter, Barbara Goliday and Robert Taylor to make our program a success. In addition to our volunteers, corporate sponsors made the difference this year. Edgewood Management, AHD, Incorporated and Party Time Liquors all contributed to this year's event. A special thanks to the staff and volunteers and in particular the residents that attended the event and walked Varnum Street to "Take a Bite Out of Crime."

**Department Receives Grant to Enforce Alcohol Related Violations.** We were approached by the State Highway Administration late last year and offered a grant opportunity because of the memorandum of understanding (MOU) and on-going relationship with the police depart-

ments in the cities and towns Bladensburg, Hyattsville, Greenbelt and Riverdale Park that we have. This MOU allows officers from all the jurisdictions to render aid and assistance and share resources with each other. It is the only one of it's kind in the County. We along with these cities and towns have received joint funding to conduct alcohol-driving check-points. The grant provides training, equipment and pays for the overtime to our officers to run the operations. Operations are scheduled over a several week period and usually operate for about six hours. During the operations, anyone passing through the checkpoint is stopped for a brief period of less than 30 seconds and if no alcoholic beverage is detected on their breath they are allowed to proceed. Persons under suspicion of having been drinking are pulled over for additional testing to determine whether they are impaired or intoxicated. We have worked extensively with the Maryland Attorney General's Office and the County State's Attorneys Office to insure that we conduct our operations in a lawful manner. Both of these Offices have given their approval of the operation.

Unfortunately, we do not have the staff to dedicate fulltime to this or other traffic enforcement issues. Therefore, we must direct some of our enforcement under special circum-

stances such as grant funds. The overtime use of our officers is minimal especially considering the return that the community will receive. We have seen that accidents in the roundabout on Rhode Island Avenue not only destroyed the artwork but also the curbing and surrounding buildings. Our residents that live along or travel along the 2500–3200 block of Queens Chapel Road are all too familiar with the accidents with injuries that occur along this strip of highway and how difficult it is to walk along or across this road. These checkpoint programs are designed to remove the impaired and intoxicated driver from our street. This will make the community a safer place to live.

### Crime Report

The 6-month reported crime in the City fell by 17 percent. Although we continue to see auto theft as our toughest problem, all other categories fell. Of particular note are the crimes of assault reduced by 61% and robberies which fell by another 30%. Congratulations to our officers for reducing crime in the City.

### JULY 2004 CRIME STATISTICS

*Part I Only (Part I Offenses only as reported to the FBI UCR)*

*Robbery-(5)  
3300 blk. of Rhode Island Ave.  
3300 blk. of Chillum Rd.*

	Jan	Feb	March	April	May	June	TOTALS	CHANGE
HOMICIDE	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	-100%
RAPE	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	-100%
ROBBERY	7	4	6	4	2	1	23	-30%
ASSAULT	4	0	1	2	0	1	7	-61%
BURGLARY	3	9	7	2	5	4	26	-40%
LARCENY	18	9	21	18	22	13	88	-17%
AUTO THEFT	17	16	12	20	22	20	87	14%
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>49</b>	<b>38</b>	<b>47</b>	<b>46</b>	<b>51</b>	<b>39</b>	<b>231</b>	<b>-17%</b>
	Jan	Feb	March	April	May	June	TOTALS	
HOMICIDE	1	0	0	0	0	0	1	
RAPE	0	0	1	0	1	0	2	
ROBBERY	7	3	4	9	4	6	33	
ASSAULT	2	3	0	2	4	7	18	
BURGLARY	10	5	6	9	5	8	43	
LARCENY	14	14	13	28	19	18	106	
AUTO THEFT	7	7	7	21	14	20	76	
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>41</b>	<b>32</b>	<b>31</b>	<b>69</b>	<b>47</b>	<b>59</b>	<b>279</b>	

Police, continued on page 9

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## Synopsis of Proposed Resolution 21-2004

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A resolution supporting same-sex marriage, educating the public, and calling upon all public and private entities to give legal recognition to same-sex marriages. Full text available on the city website and at City Hall.

WHEREAS, marriage is recognized as one of the fundamental elements of individual liberty; the opportunity to commit publicly and legally to share one's life with a person of one's choice is one of the most central aspects of the human experience; the denial of marriage to same-sex couples is a denial of their fundamental civil rights; same-sex marriage, as any other marriage, provides family stability, legal protections, and personal happiness to gay and lesbian couples, their children and extended families; the U.S. Constitution guarantees that no laws will be made depriving any person of life, liberty or property without due process of law and that no person will be denied the equal protection of the laws; the equal protection provision of the Declaration of Rights of the Maryland Constitution flatly prohibits gender-based classifications and the basic principle of Maryland's Equal Rights Amendment is that sex is not a permissible factor in determining the legal rights of women, or men, so that the treatment of any person may not be based upon the circumstance that such person or their spouse is of one sex or the other; denying civil marriage to gay and lesbian couples deprives them of certain rights, privileges, immunities, protections, and responsibilities afforded to heterosexual couples; discriminatory marriage laws undermine the United States' and State of Maryland's constitutional commitment to equality, privacy and justice for all of its citizens; the City of Mount Rainier has by local practice, policy and ordinance shown its commitment to

fair and equitable treatment of all and by affording equal rights and benefits to the numerous gay and lesbian couples residing in the City has consistently been striving to set an example of excellence in the non-discriminatory treatment of all persons and the promotion of the ideal of diversity; the City opposes the President's proposal for a federal Constitutional Amendment to ban same-sex marriage because the Constitution of the United States is not an instrument of discrimination but our charter of guaranteed liberties; the City calls upon the State and its county governments to legalize same-sex marriages and to issue such marriage licenses; the City calls upon public and private entities, particularly insurance companies and other benefit providers, to recognize same-sex marriages as lawful and desirable; the City urges the repeal of the federal Defense of Marriage Act, which violates the equal protection guarantee of the U.S. Constitution by restricting marriage to a union between a man and a woman, and also violates the full faith and credit clause by purporting to restrict states from recognizing lawful same-sex marriages and civil unions performed by sister states; NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE MAYOR AND COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF MOUNT RAINIER, THAT the concept of same-sex marriage is hereby supported both in public law and in private practice; and THE CITY will give full recognition up to the limits of its legal authority to out-of-state and foreign same-sex marriages; and THE CITY will direct its energies to a public campaign of education about equality in marriage; and THE CITY supports, in principle, any legal challenge by lesbian and gay Marylanders to secure their equal rights to marry.

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## Councilmember Briones' Comments on Resolution 21-2004

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Friends & Neighbors,

This past July I introduced Resolution 21-2004 supporting same-sex marriage. The resolution is a non-binding, largely symbolic and completely cost-free show of support for Mount Rainier's vibrant lesbian and gay community. Within one block of my home, for example, there are 14 gay households. Quite by coincidence, we have an openly gay majority on our Council, and during our last city election, my sole opponent campaigned openly with his (same-sex) partner. It makes me proud to live in a City as welcoming and diverse as Mount Rainier. While in some parts of America gay folks are still beaten to death or tied to fences to die in the cold, it warms my heart to know that our neighbors accept Dale and me as equal, contributing members of the community. Resolution 21-2004 would send a very simple message: we think your family has equal value and merits legal recognition, and we are glad that you have made Mount Rainier your home. This message could not be more timely—the marriage debate has now come to Prince George's County with the recent filing of a lawsuit against the state for denying civil marriage licenses to nine lesbian and gay couples, including a College Park couple. As legal and political subdivisions of the state, and as employers themselves, Maryland municipalities have a strong voice in informing family law and civil rights matters. We would not be issuing marriage licenses; Maryland municipalities are not empowered to do so. We should take this opportunity, however, to send a strong message to policy makers in Annapolis and Upper Marlboro.

Gay folks want the legal right to marry because they are in loving, long-term, committed relationships. The issue is not religious, but legal. I would encourage folks to read the Human Rights Campaign's (HRC) pamphlet,

Answers to Questions about Marriage Equality, Washington, D.C., 2004, available at [www.hrc.org](http://www.hrc.org). According to HRC, 3.1 million people in the United States live in same-sex relationships; one out of three lesbian couples is raising children; one out of five gay male couples is raising children; and nearly one in four same-sex couples includes a partner 55 years old or older, while nearly one in five same-sex couples is composed of two people 55 or older. Marriage would automatically entitle these couples to a vast number of federal and state rights, including hospital visitation, social security benefits, immigration, health insurance, estate taxes, retirement savings, family leave, and pensions benefits. Unfortunately, there are major misconceptions about same-sex marriage. Some folks fear that churches could be sued for not performing same-sex marriages.

This is emphatically not so. The First Amendment strongly protects religious institutions in this regard. Given our strong constitutional commitment to separation of church and state, and in the face of all the secular, legal rights and privileges associated with marriage, it is simply not enough to oppose equal marriage rights because "the bible says it's wrong" and or that allowing gay folks to marry will "destroy marriage." When so many marriages these days end in divorce, when celebrities marry as gags and publicity stunts, while reality television shows make a mockery of marriage, where is the logic in denying committed and stable couples the right to equal enjoyment of this legal family structure and all the protections incident to it?

I urge you to contact us and let us know how you feel about Resolution 21-2004. I hope we vote to pass this important show of support for our diverse community. The text of the resolution is posted at City Hall, is also available on our city website at <http://www.mountrainiermd.org/>.

Pedro E. Briones, Esq.  
Council Member, Ward 2  
Mount Rainier, Maryland

**West Nile Virus**, *continued from page 1*

### Eliminate Mosquito Breeding Sites

Eliminate standing water where mosquitoes lay their eggs

- Remove discarded automobile tires and put drainage holes in playground tires
- Remove or turn over buckets and other containers that can collect rain water
- Turn over children's wading pools, wheelbarrows, canoes and garbage can lids
- Clean roof gutters and downspout screens regularly
- Flush bird baths and potted plant drainage trays twice weekly
- Fix dripping outdoor water faucets, and eliminate puddles under air conditioners
- Store pet bowls indoors when not in use
- Clean and chlorinate swimming pools
- Adjust tarps over pools, boats, etc. so that rain water will not collect

Most individuals infected with West Nile virus will not have any symptoms. People that do develop illness will usually have any combination of the following mild symptoms: fever, headache, body aches, skin rash and swollen lymph glands. These symptoms generally appear three to 15 days following the bite of an infected mosquito.

According to the Maryland Department of Health and Mental Hygiene, less than one percent of persons exposed to the virus will develop more severe infections with symptoms such as headache, high fever, neck stiffness, stupor, disorientation, coma, tremors, convulsions, muscle weakness and paralysis. In some instances, WNV can be *fatal*.

Persons older than 50 years, and those who are immunocompromised have the highest risk of developing more severe disease.

General information on West Nile virus can be found on the Internet at the following Web sites:

- Prince Georges County Health Department, [www.co.pg.md.us/government/health](http://www.co.pg.md.us/government/health)
- Maryland Department of Health and Mental Hygiene, [www.dhmh.state.md.us](http://www.dhmh.state.md.us)
- Maryland Department of Agriculture, [www.mda.state.md.us](http://www.mda.state.md.us)
- Maryland Department of Natural Resources, [www.dnr.state.md.us](http://www.dnr.state.md.us)
- Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, <http://www.cdc.gov/>

NOTE FROM MAYOR KNEDLER: The Health Department press release does not reveal that the confirmed case was here in Mount Rainier. The Health Dept. suggested that the exact location of this year's first case not be identified. Perhaps they suggested this so that all county residents would be vigilant. As the season progresses, other infections will likely be found in the county as has been the case in prior years. However, the person who contracted the virus has asked that the neighborhood be alerted so that city residents pay particular attention to preventative measures and possible symptoms. The resident was hospitalized and actually had a difficult experience at a local hospital emergency room where the doctors refused to consider the possibility of WNV as the cause of the symptoms. Knowing that the virus is present in our immediate neighborhood is an added bit of information that may help someone convince a doctor to at least consider the possibility of infection. You should also be aware that not all hospitals are equipped to conduct blood tests for the virus. Some residents are asking for pesticide spraying to reduce the mosquitoes. The effectiveness of such spraying is in doubt because the most voracious species, the Asian tiger mosquitoes (they are black with white stripes and bite all day long) is little affected by the nighttime spraying. Spraying is not done during the day to reduce contact with humans, and perhaps to reduce the killing of bees, butterflies, spiders, and other creatures. However, the county will conduct treatment of storm drains to kill mosquito larvae, and we are on a list to be considered for spraying which is conducted by the state and/or county. Please contact a councilmember or code enforcement if you know of places with standing water.

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**Mayor**, continued from page 2

the Department of Justice. The couple spent 40 days and nights on mattresses in Parchman Penitentiary after refusing to leave the train station in Jackson, Miss., their destination on a freedom ride from New Orleans. Full Post article at <http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/articles/A38209-2004Aug3.html>.

**NEW MURAL AT ROUNDABOUT.** Have you noticed the decorative mural made by area high school students? The Gateway Public Mural Project began on June 9 with a community meeting where eleven high school students and three professional artists met with community members and heard stories about the history of Mount Rainier, Brentwood, North Brentwood, and Hyattsville and what residents believe are the unique characteristics of these communities. Over the past six weeks, the students spent time researching history of the communities and collaborated with each other and lead artists to design and paint a 160 ft. mural.

This project was sponsored by Gateway CDC, The Prince George's Department of Housing and Community Development, the Redevelopment Authority of Prince George's County, ArtSpace Inc., and the Prince George's County Department of Family Services. Additional support provided by Byron Peck of City Arts Inc. and Thomas Stone Elementary School.

**ARTS DISTRICT IS DRAWING NATIONAL ATTENTION.** The Port Towns Gazette reports that Gateway Arts and Entertainment District has become one of the major county attractions. In July, nearly 60 public arts administrators from around the country toured the district to see how communities could be revitalized by the arts. The administrators were in the metropolitan area for the Americans for the Arts and National

Alliance of State Art Agencies art convention.

The group traveled to the Weitzman Studios in Brentwood, Thomas Stone Elementary School, the roundabout, the Bunker Hill Fire Station, the Hyattsville Justice Center and Franklin's Microbrewery.

For the entire article, go to: <http://www.gazette.net/200432/porttowns/news/229634-1.htm>.

**E-MAIL NOTICES OF CITY EVENTS.** I provide announcements of local events, agendas of council meetings, and updates on important events via an e-mail list. If you would like to receive such information, send your e-mail address to [mtrainiernews@aol.com](mailto:mtrainiernews@aol.com).

**ROLLING AGENDA ITEMS.** The Council keeps a running list of items we expect to take up in the near future. Here are some of those items: FY04 city audit contract; personnel manual; city manager priorities; Community Legacy application; Priority Places application; COLA and budget adjustments; election procedures; committee appointments; police union contract; gay marriage resolution; sobriety MOU/resolution; property development workshop; second read/vote on commercial vehicle parking restrictions; LGIT trust agreement; set date for hearing on dog permits; election procedures; charette for 3409 Rhode Island proposal; appoint personnel grievance board; ethics ord. review; Centennial Committee; Message/website Spanish translations.

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## **Community Tool Shed/ Lending Library Volunteers Needed**

The City of Mount Rainier, through the Prince George's County Livable Communities Initiative, has created the Community Tool Shed/ Lending Library. The Tool Shed is located at 3601 Bunker Hill Road. Various tools for landscaping, carpentry, home repair and improvement, and gardening will be available for use by residents starting in early October 2004. The program will provide tools and training.

The Tool Shed Committee meets regularly. Please contact City Hall if you would like to volunteer for the program or attend committee meetings.

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## **Christmas in April 2005**

Applications for next April's Christmas in April program must be received no later than Nov. 1, 2004. Christmas in April is an annual, one-day project to repair homes of those who due to age, disability and financial hardship, cannot do the work for themselves.

Repairs may include interior/ exterior painting; minor carpentry; plumbing and electrical work; replacing stoves, refrigerators, and hot water heaters; cleanup and yard work.

The program does have some limitations. The home repair project must be done in one day (April 30, 2005) and the volunteers cannot undertake structural repairs (call if you are unsure as to what is structural).

The home to be repaired must be owned and occupied by the homeowner and the homeowner must be elderly and/or disabled. There is no income requirements but income is taken into consideration.

For an application or more information, call 301-868-0937; e-mail: [cinapg@aol.com](mailto:cinapg@aol.com); website: [www.christmasinaprilpg.org](http://www.christmasinaprilpg.org).

Christmas in April is a nonprofit organization supported entirely by voluntary contributions of time and money. Skilled and nonskilled volunteers give six to eight hours of service to help with repairs. If you would like to volunteer, use the contact information above.

## City Seeks Business Members for Town Center Design Review Committee

The City is currently seeking two business and/or property owners to be members of the Town Center Design Review Committee. The Committee is composed of two resident members, two municipal members, and two business and/or property owner members. **Business and/or property members** must own either a business or property within Mount Rainier's Mixed-Use Town Center Zone.

The members review all new development projects and exterior renovations in the Mixed-Use Town Center Zone. This Zone extends along Rhode Island Avenue from the City limits into the 3400 block, and along 34th Street from the 3700 block into the 4000 block. The Zone also includes part of Bunker Hill Road.

Each Committee member receives a copy of the Mount Rainier Town Center Development Plan, which contains the design guidelines that the Committee uses to review applications, as well as a copy of the Committee Rules of Procedure and other relevant documents.

The City is looking for participants who have a sense of fairness in reviewing applications and who are interested in the ongoing revitalization of the downtown business area. Committee members should be willing to encourage appropriate building construction, alterations, and signage among business and property owners and to help educate rather than regulate applicants.

To obtain an application to be on the committee, please call Assistant City Manager James Booth at 301-

985-6585. Applications should be accompanied by a resume and a brief cover letter stating your interest in joining the committee. Please mail or deliver all materials to Mr. Booth at City Hall, 1 Municipal Place, Mount Rainier, MD 20712.

### Who Needs to Consult the Committee?

Anyone planning to make changes to the exterior of their building within the Mixed-Use Town Center Zone—regarding color, signage, awnings, shape or size of building, or other exterior changes—first needs to present those plans to the Town Center Design Review Committee to ensure that the proposed changes are within the guidelines of the Mount Rainier Town Center Development Plan.

This plan establishes a framework for property owners, tenants, the local municipality, and Prince George's County officials and staff to review proposed development or redevelopment of buildings in the Mount Rainier downtown area. The many citizens, businesspersons, and government officials who participated in the creation of the plan more than a decade ago intended that property owners and tenants use the Design Guidelines within the plan to make changes to their properties in order to further the revitalization of the city's downtown commercial core.

For more information, please call Assistant City Manager James Booth at 301-986-6585.

## City Recommendations for Controlling Rodent Population

*Tulip Nicol, Code Enforcement*

The City of Mount Rainier is experiencing a serious increase in the population of rodents. This comes from the wake of complaints from residents concerning rodents seen in back yards, around trash containers, and in the area of storm drains. These rodents are in search of food. Open trash containers without lids, trash containers that are damaged exposing contents, and disposing of trash in or around the City or storm drainage or sewer systems are all contributing factors.

Current efforts to combat the growing population of rodents is a serious challenge. Prince George's County and animal control have been contacted. Poison cannot be used in the County's storm drain because of the danger to our waterways and other fish. To assist the City's Code Enforcement Division, we urge all residents to comply with the following recommendations:

1. Maintain metal trash containers with lids or covers (metal is recommended because rats chew through other containers)
2. Dispose of trash only in approved containers
3. Maintain or keep surroundings clean and free from accumulation of yard waste or trash
4. Cut all low growing shrubs around the residence
5. Remove all low growing fruits from trees
6. Do not mix compost on vegetation or flowers with any fruit
7. Remove all bird feeding apparatus, bird food, grass seeds, and

*Rodents, continued on page 8*

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## Ward One Report

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*Carol A. Gandee, Council Member*

There is much to be done on the City Council. While the Council has not met during the month of August, we still are busy working on issues and concerns of citizens.

Recently, the Council passed a resolution to reduce crime by targeting nuisance crimes, such as, drinking alcohol in public, public urination, speeding and running of stop signs. Our officers have been quick to respond and have made some progress with the Rhode Island Ave. issues; however, some of the problems that existed at Bass Liquor are now in front of City Hall at the bus stop and in front of Chuck's Liquor Store. I have encouraged the Chief to look into better utilization of the Metro Police since some of the activity is occurring at the bus stop.

I personally, along with my colleague, Council Member Haamid, continue to press for these laws to be enforced.

I have been meeting with the Senior Emergency Preparedness Committee to continue to develop a more comprehensive emergency plan for the City. While the title reflects the emphasis on seniors, the plan addresses the entire City. I will continue to ask residents with specialized skills in the medical field, persons with a background in law enforcement, and fire fighters to contact me if you would be interested in being on our resource list. Also, I have started to approach our churches in the City to commit to shelter space, canned food, and water in the event of an emergency.

I am very pleased with the progress we have made in organizing our financial department. The new Treasurer, Mr. Vijay Manjani has

worked very hard to make our finance department compliant with Maryland State Law, accurate in reporting of our revenue and expenditures, and bringing our Accounts Receivable and Accounts Payable up to date. He is currently addressing the hiring of a full charge bookkeeper to assist him in the department, finally completing the total complement of our finance department.

I am also pleased with our new Assistant City Manager, Mr. James Booth, who has hit the ground running and taken on many responsibilities at City Hall.

The Council still has some loose ends to address from budget season, and it is my hope we will do this as soon as we return to session. The budget adjustments for the previous fiscal year have not been voted on by Council. We need to finish the salary adjustments for Public Works for this fiscal year in order to make our City competitive with other municipalities, and set caps for management to prevent the continued disparity between the rank and file employees and supervisory positions.

Council Member Haamid has continually supported and insured that the children have access to the skate truck. I have not been able to help her on a regular basis, and she deserves all the credit for seeing this project completed.

While I support the effort by the Police Department to participate in the State Highway Grant to set up sobriety check points in Mt. Rainier and other municipalities, I am concerned that our officers are working too much overtime given all the extra efforts Council has asked of

them. In the future I will encourage staff to bring these types of commitments to the Council before going forward with a project we may not be able to fully support.

Mt. Rainier is on the move, with the Artspace Building going up, 34<sup>th</sup> St. being repaved, and the insistence of accountability at all levels of government by the Council. I will continue to exhibit strong leadership in my Council Seat, and insist on a fair and open process on all issues brought before this City.

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### **Rodents**, *continued from page 7*

flower seeds that rodents have access to

8. All burrows around the residence should be filled with rat poison for ten days and sealed. The sealing will determine if rats are still in the hole alive. The food poison should be mixed with a little sardines oil, peanut butter or chocolate. This will attract the rodents or rats. Children or pets should not be left outside unsupervised during this process
9. All animals or pet feces around the residence should be removed as rodents and rats feed on dog and cat feces. Rats feed on the vegetable contents of dog feces.

By effectively cutting off the source of food supply, in conjunction with traps and extermination, we hope to stop the rodent population growth and simultaneously get rid of them..

Your cooperation in this effort is greatly appreciated. If you have any questions please contact the Code Enforcement Department on 301-985-6551.

## City to Participate in Mosquito Control Program

*City Manager Jeannelle Wallace*

The City of Mount Rainier will participate in the County's Mosquito Control Program during the remainder of the summer season. This program will involve the treatment of storm drains and areas of standing water in public places. The City will determine next year following discussion and public testimony whether it will participate in the full spraying of the various mosquito species during the next breeding season.

Since humans cannot be sprayed, the full program involves spraying pesticides at night usually after 10 pm when most people have gone in for the night. The Maryland Department of Agriculture that coordinates the program will notify residents in the area prior to any spraying application. The Asian Tiger species most commonly known for biting while one attempts to garden, enjoy an evening on the front or rear porch or other outdoor activities, are unaffected by this treatment because they are usually gone by the late evening hour.

As in the past, the Public Works Department has listed a few tips for how to deal with the mosquito population for the remainder of the summer season:

- Clear your property of any potential breeding sites for mosquitoes by getting rid of old tires, tin cans, buckets, drums, bottles, or water holding containers
- Fill in or drain any low places (puddles, ruts) in yard
- Keep drains, ditches, and culverts clean of weeds and trash so water will drain properly

- Cover trash containers to keep out rain water
- Repair leaky pipes and outside faucets
- Empty plastic wading pools at least once a week and store indoors when not in use
- Make sure backyard pool is properly cared for while on vacation
- Fill in tree rot holes and hollow stump that hold water with sand or concrete
- Change the water in bird baths and plant pots or drip trays at least once each week
- Keep grass cut short and shrubbery well trimmed around the house to eliminate additional places where adult mosquitoes can hide

Your cooperation and willingness to follow these recommendations, should help everyone to enjoy a relatively mosquito free summer.

## MRBA Meeting Notice

### Quarterly Meeting

- Date: Wednesday, September 8, 2004
- Time: 6:30 p.m.
- Location: Mount Rainier Police Station
- All Business and Property Owners Are Invited
- Discussion on City Code on Inspections and Property Maintenance

For more information, contact Larry Solomon, 301-927-0014.

### Police, continued from page 3

3300 blk. of Chauncey Pl.  
2500 blk. of Queens Chapel Rd.  
4300 blk. of Russell Ave.

#### *Burglary-(8)*

2700 blk. of Webster St.  
4500 blk. of 31<sup>st</sup> St.  
3700 blk. of 35<sup>th</sup> St.  
3700 blk. of 37<sup>th</sup> St.  
4300 blk. of 28<sup>th</sup> Pl.  
3800 blk. of 31<sup>st</sup> St.  
3400 blk. of Rhode Island Ave.  
3500 blk. of Otis St.

#### *Assault-(10)*

3300 blk. of Buchanan St.  
3400 blk. of Rhode Island Ave.  
2700 blk. of Webster St.

#### *Thefts-(26)*

2300 blk. of Varnum St.(4)  
4600 blk. of 30<sup>th</sup> St.(2)  
3400 blk. of Newton St.(2)  
3100 blk. of Queens Chapel Rd.(2)  
3400 blk. of Bunkerhill Rd.  
3200 blk. of Chillum Rd.  
3700 blk. of 35<sup>th</sup> St.  
4300 blk. of 28<sup>th</sup> Pl.  
4200 blk. of Kaywood Dr.(2)  
3500 blk. of Newton Pl.  
3300 blk. of Buchanan St.(2)  
4100 blk. of Russell Ave.  
4200 blk. of 31<sup>st</sup> St.  
4400 blk. of 29<sup>th</sup> St.  
3200 blk. of Rhode Island Ave.  
3200 blk. of Queenstown Dr.  
28<sup>th</sup> Pl. @ Upshur St.  
34<sup>th</sup> St. @ Windom St.

#### *Stolen Autos-(21)*

2900 blk. of Allison St.  
3300 blk. of Chauncey Pl.(2)  
2900 blk. of Arundel Rd.  
2500 blk. of Arundel Rd.  
2700 blk. of Allison St.  
4000 blk. of 32<sup>nd</sup> St.(2)  
4300 blk. of 28<sup>th</sup> Pl.(2)  
4100 blk. of 30<sup>th</sup> St.  
3300 blk. of Buchanan St.  
3100 blk. of Shepherd St.  
4700 blk. of 27<sup>th</sup> St.  
3300 blk. of Perry St.  
4300 blk. of Russell Ave.(4)  
3200 blk. of Queens Chapel Rd.(2)

We have just received notice that we have been named a finalist in the International Association of Chief's of Police (IACP) and ITT Industries Community Policing Award for our community team policing program. The winner of the awards will be announced shortly. It is an extreme honor to receive notice that we are a finalist for the award and that our program is receiving international recognition. Other agency finalists in our category of a population of 20,000 or less come from California and India. Congratulations to our staff that has worked so hard during the past eighteen months to make the "Team Policing" program a success.

All finalist along with the winner will be recognized at the IACP Conference in November.

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## Council Highlights

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### June 1, 2004 Work Session

#### Discussion items

- **FY 05 Budget**—Mayor and Council amended draft reducing expenditures for vehicle replacement and vehicle repair in public works, and adding a new line item for Abatement of Properties in the code enforcement division; additional funds were appropriated for Highways and Streets line item in public works.
- **July 5, 2004**—Mayor and Council approved City closure
- Discussion also included an update on Mount Rainier Day festivities scheduled for June 5, 2004, Urban Renewal Plan, Tool Shed Update and closed meeting procedures.

### June 1, 2004 Regular Meeting

- Council approved to postpone final vote of FY 2005 budget
- **Resolution 19-2004**—Public Works Auction of surplus equipment; passed 4-0

### June 8, 2004—Mayor and Council Meeting

- **Ordinance 3 -2004—FY 2005 Real Property and Personal Property Tax Rate** (second reading/vote) passed 3-2
- The rate of taxation on real property was approved at \$.0.79 on each \$100 of assessed valuation; the business personal property tax rate was approved at \$1.60 per \$100 of assessed valuation; the property tax rate for railroad and utilities remains at the FY 04 level of \$2.50 per \$100 of assessed valuation.
- **Ordinance 6-2004 Urban Renewal Plan** – first reading
- **Ordinance 5-2005 – Amending vacant building registration fees** - first reading

### June 15, 2004—Work Session

- **FY 2005 Budget**—Council agreed to add administrative assistant position to public works department as a part-time position; also agreed to move \$10,000 out of reserve; **Ordinance 5-2004 – Vacant building registration fees** - added \$1,500 to revenue for vacant building registration. Discussed further amendments - / 2<sup>nd</sup> reading to occur June 22, 2004.
- Other items focused on annexation update, America in Bloom competition. Judges scheduled for July 8, 2004.

### June 15, 2004—Regular Meeting

- **Ordinance 7-2004 FY Fiscal Year 2005 Budget**—First Reading
- Adjourned to closed session to discuss Police Union contract negotiations.
- **June 22, 2004**—Council passed 4-0 to suspend meetings August 2004.
- Council agreed to move forward with University of Maryland students conducting a feasibility study and survey concerning annexation. Discussion also focused on security and renovations at 3601 Bunker Hill Road – site for Tool Shed project.
- **Ordinance 6-2004 Urban Renewal Plan**—2<sup>nd</sup> reading—passed 4-0
- **Ordinance 5-2004—Vacant Building Registration Fees**—2<sup>nd</sup> reading—passed 4-0

### June 30, 2004—Mayor and Council Meeting

- **Ordinance 7-2004 FY 2005 Budget**—Second Reading; passed 5-0.; Council adjourned to closed session to discuss pending or potential litigation.
- **Resolution 20-2004—Adding CDBG Project PY 30—Resurfacing of Chillum Road between Arundel Road and Queens Chapel Road to City's Contract**; first reading/vote; passed 5-0.

### July 6, 2004—Mayor and Council Meeting

- **Resolution 21-2004 Gay/Lesbian Marriage Resolution**—First Reading. Council member Briones gave background summary. Motion / 2<sup>nd</sup> to schedule a special meeting for Friday, July 9, 2004 to discuss this resolution. Resolution tabled until after further discussion in September 2004.

### July 6, 2004—Work Session

- **Discussion Items**—Personnel Policy Manual, Committee Appointments, Next Steps following adoption of Urban Renewal Plan; explanation of eminent domain powers with City Attorney Linda Perlman, and Jim Gatto, Maryland Department of Planning.

### July 13, 2004—Work Session

- **Discussion Items**—Personnel Manual, Resolution 21-2004—Supporting Same Sex Marriage, Commercial vehicles, Community Legacy application process.

### July 20, 2004—Mayor and Council Meeting

- Bass Liquor Store update concerning the hearing held July 14, 2004.
- Update was given concerning the America in Bloom competition; judges should forward their decision sometime in September 2004.
- **Resolution 22-2204** – amending the parking restrictions for commercial vehicles, first reading. Council suggested looking at all recreational vehicles and the state code to see if they are currently being enforced.

### July 27, 2004—Mayor and Council Work Session

- **Discussion Items**—Mount Rainier Tool Shed Update; animal control approval request. The council voted to have a public hearing on this matter in September 2004. The current code restricts anyone from having more than two dogs without a breeding license. Council will entertain public comments at a meeting in September to be announced.

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## Street Trees Available

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The Mount Rainier Tree Commission is planning a joint tree planting with the Anacostia Watershed Society (AWS) for October 2. This planting beautifully fulfills each of the organizations' goals: city beautification and improving the Anacostia River watershed. The trees are being donated and will be planted in sidewalk tree boxes throughout the city. If you would like to volunteer to help plant trees, or if you would like a tree planted in your tree box, please contact Tree Commissioner Juliellen Sarver at 301-277-2688 or Hannah Grisar at 301-699-0725. The Commission will be contacting residents whose tree boxes have been selected for a planting in the next few days to discuss the planting.

**Council Meetings**

1st and 3rd Tuesdays, 7 pm  
City Hall lower level

**Town Center Design Review**

Committee—2nd Weds., 6:15 pm  
MRBA—2nd Weds., 6:30 pm

**Gateway Municipalities CDC—2nd**  
Thurs., 7:00–9:00 pm,  
4102 Webster St.

**Friends of Library**  
(mtrainierfol.org)—Monday,  
7:30 pm, Community Vision, 34th St.  
**Yard Waste**

In Dec., Jan., and Feb., yard waste  
collections will occur on the second  
Mon., by prior appointment only. Call  
301-985-6558 to make an appt.

# September–October calendar

Sept. 1	Regular Trash Pick Up	Sept. 29	Regular Trash Pick Up
Sept. 3	Recyclables Pick Up	Oct. 1	Recyclables Pick Up
Sept. 6	LABOR DAY. CITY HALL CLOSED.	Oct. 2	Street Tree Planting, Tree Commission and Anacostia Watershed Society
Sept. 7	Bulk Trash Pick Up By Appointment and Yard Waste Pick Up	Oct. 4	Bulk Trash Pick Up By Appointment and Yard Waste Pick Up
Sept. 8	Regular Trash Pick Up Mount Rainier Business Association Quarterly Meeting, 6:30 p.m. at the Police Station	Oct. 6	Regular Trash Pick Up
Sept. 10	Recyclables Pick Up	Oct. 8	Recyclables Pick Up
Sept. 13	Yard Waste Pick Up	Oct. 11	Columbus Day
Sept. 14	Special Election for County Council District 2 Seat	Oct. 12	Yard Waste Pick Up
Sept. 15	Regular Trash Pick Up Parking Task Force Committee Meeting, 7 p.m.	Oct. 13	Regular Trash Pick Up
Sept. 17	Recyclables Pick Up	Oct. 15	Recyclables Pick Up
Sept. 20	Bulk Trash Pick Up By Appointment and Yard Waste Pick Up	Oct. 16	Gorgeous Prince George's County Day
Sept. 22	Regular Trash Pick Up Mount Rainier Mixed-Use Town Center Design Review Committee Meeting, 6:15 p.m. at City Hall	Oct. 18	Bulk Trash Pick Up By Appointment and Yard Waste Pick Up
Sept. 24	Recyclables Pick Up	Oct. 20	Regular Trash Pick Up
Sept. 27	Yard Waste Pick Up	Oct. 22	Recyclables Pick Up
		Oct. 25	Yard Waste Pick Up
		Oct. 27	Regular Trash Pick Up
		Oct. 29	Recyclables Pick Up

**Recycling Saves Money**

Help keep City expenses down, and benefit the environment by recycling on Fridays. The City saves on the fee charged for dumping regular trash (charge per ton) when we divert items to the recycling bins. The fee for recycled materials is much less.

Use your yellow bins for mixed glass, plastic, and metals (no need to separate them). Bundle newspapers or put them in boxes or paper bags. Also recycle "junk" mail, cardboard, cereal boxes, magazines, and those heavy telephone books. If Friday is a holiday, save it for the next Friday. If you need a new bin, call Public Works, 301-985-6583.

**Bulk Trash Policy**

Bulk trash may be picked up by appointment only on the first and third Monday of each month. Appointments are made by calling 301-985-6558 and leaving your address and telephone number any time up until 12:00 noon on the Friday before the Monday bulk trash collection. Only three cubic yards of trash are allowed per resident. Demolition spoils from building renovation and hazardous materials or chemical are not allowed.

**Yard Waste Policy**

During and between the months of December through February, yard waste pick up is by appointment only on the second Monday of each month. Appointments may be scheduled by calling 301-985-6558. Leaves and grass clippings must be placed in bags. Branches no longer than four feet and no thicker than three inches in diameter must be tied up in manageable bundles. No more than three cubic yards of yard waste will be collected per resident on any collection day.

www.mountrainiermd.org

*Mayor*

**Bryan K. Knedler**  
301-699-3134

bknedler@mountrainiermd.org

*City Manager*

**Jeannelle B. Wallace**  
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*Asst. City Manager*

**James Booth**  
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*Councilmembers*

*Ward 1*

**Carol Gandee**  
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*Intisar Haamid*

301-864-3418

IHaamid@mountrainiermd.org

*Ward 2*

**Malinda Miles**  
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MMiles@mountrainiermd.org

**Pedro Briones**  
301-277-1833

PBriones@mountrainiermd.org

*Message*

**Terry Kelly**  
301-779-7857

tkelly60@aol.com

# Important Numbers

City Hall open: Mon.-Fri., 9:00 am to 5:00 pm. Police Department admin. offices open 9:00 am to 5:00 pm. Public Works open 7:00 am to 3:00 pm.

47th District Reps  
301-858-3745

Sen. Gwendolyn Britt  
301-858-3326

Del. Doyle Niemann  
Del. Rosetta Parker  
Del. Victor Ramirez

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

City Code Enforcement Office  
301-985-6551

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

**City Police Department**  
FKeeney@mountrainiermd.org  
301-985-6565 (emergency calls)  
301-985-6566 (nonemergency calls)  
301-985-6591 TIPS/COPS line  
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  
Mount Rainier Office Information:  
3409 Rhode Island Avenue  
301-927-5223 (voice)  
301-927-6122 (fax)  
Monday-Friday 9:00 a.m.-5:30 p.m.

Consumer Affairs  
301-470-7534

County Animal Control  
301-499-8301

County Building Permits  
301-883-5784

County Council  
Distric 2 Office  
301-952-3700

County Executive  
Jack Johnson  
301-952-4131

Energy Assistance  
301-422-5110

Family Services  
301-699-2680

Fire Department  
301-927-8657 (non-emergency)  
911 (emergency)

Gazette Circulation  
301-670-7350

Health Department  
301-386-0300

Library 301-864-8937  
Hours: M-W 10-7 (closed 2-3)  
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  
301-918-8111

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

Post Office  
301-864-5168

Public Defender  
301-699-2760

Public Schools  
301-952-6000

State's Attorney  
301-952-3500

Washington Gas Light  
703-750-2500

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.*

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