



# Message

Issue 234

December 2005/January 2006

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## City of Mount Rainier Passes Critical Legislation

The Mayor and City Council and its regular meeting held on December 6, 2005, passed **ORDINANCE 9-2005**, revising the building permit provisions of Chapter 3, Building Code, of the *Mount Rainier Code*.

Essentially this legislation amends the regulations pertaining to the requirements for obtaining a City Building Permit, describes the application process, including the required contents of the permit application, and the documents that must be submitted with the application.

A summary of the amendments of Chapter 3, Building Code are:

- That the City Manager or his/her designee shall be the building inspector responsible for administration and enforcement of the Building Code;
- A City Building Permit is required for every construction, enlargement, permanent paving, removal or demolition within the City that requires a permit from the Department of Environmental Resources of Prince George's County;
  - Examples of construction which requires a City building permit, whether or not a County building permit also is required include, but are not limited to: paving the surface of a lot, or portion of a lot with an impervious material such as brick,

asphalt, or concrete, if the new pavement area will exceed 150 square feet.

- Stoops or decks that are over eight inches in height;
- Sheds or gazebos with a floor area of 150 square feet or more;
- Retaining walls over two feet in height;
- Structural changes to the building.
- The application for the City building permit shall be made by the owner or lessee of the building or structure, or the agent of either by the licensed engineer or architect employed in connection with the proposed work.
- The application for a City building permit shall include: a description of work, plans and specifications, two copies of specifications and plans drawn to scale, two copies of a detailed site plan or plot plan, two copies of an elevation drawing, if elevation is not shown on the site plan;
- The applicant shall provide a copy of the County building or other permit(s) issued for the work;
- The applicant shall provide an estimate cost of the proposed work, projected start date for the work, and the name, address, telephone number, and license number if applicable of all contractors;

*Legislation, continued on page 2*

**The deadline for submissions for the Message is the 20<sup>th</sup> of each month. City Hall closed on December 25.**

*Happy Holidays!*

Legislation, continued from page 1

- Any application for proposed construction valued in excess of Fifty Thousand Dollars (\$50,000.00) shall be reviewed by the Mayor and Council prior to issuance of a City permit;
- The application shall list the property's contribution, code rating, if any, per the "Mount Rainier Historic District National Register Nomination";
- MHIC licensed contractor is required. If a contractor is to be hired to perform "home improvement" work, as that term is defined in § 8-101 of the Business Regulation Article of the *Annotated Code of Maryland*, as amended, then no City building permit shall be issued **unless all contractors and subcontractors performing the work are validly licensed by the Maryland Home Improvement Commission (MHIC)**. The contractor's home improvement license number shall be listed on the permit application;
- Historic Preservation Tax Credits. The applicant shall acknowledge that he/she has received information concerning historic preservation tax credits available from the *City of Mount Rainier Code*, Chapter 2A, or has waived the receipt of such information;
- All construction shall comply with the City's noise ordinance (*see Mount Rainier Code* § 10-121) and the "nighttime noise restrictions" in Section 10-121B and shall be effective from 7:00 p.m. until 8:00 a.m. of the following day;
- The construction site shall be maintained free from unsafe or hazardous conditions;
- Any material change in a project for which a City building permit has been issued shall be submitted to the building inspector as an amendment to the approved plans and specifications;
- A performance bond executed by the insurance company according to forms

approved or provide by the City, letter of credit executed by the bank in the form approved or provided by the City, or cash deposit in the form of cash, check, or money order, may be required, when in the judgment of the building inspector, there is a possibility of damage to sidewalks, curbs, storm drains, streets, retaining walls, rights-of-way or other public property during any construction and to ensure completion of the work as specified in the building code;

- Whenever the building inspector finds that an emergency exists which requires immediate action to protect the public health or safety or to correct a dangerous condition, the building inspector shall promptly cause such building, structure or portion thereof to be made safe or demolished;
- A City building permit may be suspended or revoked by the building inspector for work preformed in violation of any provision of the chapter, failure to comply with any notice or order issued pursuant to the chapter, or where a permit has been obtained through nondisclosure, misstatement or misrepresentation of a material fact;
- Any person who violates any of the provision of the chapter shall be issued a citation of municipal infraction with a fine of Two Hundred Dollars (\$200.00) for each offense. Each day the violation continues shall be deemed a separate offense;
- The City may enforce the provision of the chapter through injunctive, mandamus, or any other appropriate proceedings, and a court of competent jurisdiction may issue an order for abatement, restraining order, injunction, mandamus or other form of relief to restrain or correct violations;
- The City may bring suite to collect all costs, assessments or liens imposed or incurred by the City;
- A lien will be created on real property for monies expended by the City for the

abatement of violations where the responsible party refuses or fails to comply with the lawful order of the City after due notice thereof. The amount of such lien shall be collected and enforced in the same manner as other City taxes on real property.

Please note that this is a summary only.

A full text of Ordinance 9-2005 can be reviewed on the City's website

[www.mountrainiermd.org](http://www.mountrainiermd.org) or at City Hall.

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## Resolution 29-2005

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City Council passed Resolution 29-2005 on December 6, 2005 requesting that the City of Mount Rainier opt out of specified development standards applicable to the City's TRN Character Area approved as part of the Section Plan and Section Map Amendment (SMA) for PG's County Gateway Arts District. Below is a synopsis of which zoning standards are proposed as opt outs.

The Gateway Arts District Sector Plan and Sectional Map Amendment (SMA) that was adopted last year by the County Council affected the design standards and allowed uses of properties in the City of Mount Rainier. The City is now divided up into "character areas," including Traditional Residential Neighborhood (TRN) that roughly equates to the old R-55 standard. The mixed use town center that encompasses our central business area along Rhode Island Ave. and 34<sup>th</sup> St. was not affected as far as the standards are concerned, but the allowed uses were changed in the new Arts District Sector Plan.

The Mayor and Council have been following the debate regarding the trend in some suburbs for developers to buy small houses, tear them down, and build what are termed "mcmansions." We have already witnessed at least one "tear-down" of a small cottage to be replaced by a 3 story house with 5 bedrooms and 3 full baths. We end up losing small homes that would have been affordable for low and middle income families. In addition, you lose privacy in your backyard as well as being in the shadow of the new home. Furthermore, being a historic district, we have had a goal of preserving our bungalows and foursquare houses.

With this in mind, the Mayor and Council are proposing to our County Councilman, Will Campos, that the City be able to opt out of some of the new standards in the Gateway Arts District Sector Plan. Below are the proposed changes. You can get a copy of the present standards from City Hall.

The county issues building permits based on the adopted standards. Keep in mind that a standard can be waived with what is called a variance. Variances from the standards are not

**Resolution, continued on page 10**

## Police Chief's Report

### How To Reach Us

For police service calls  
(24 hours a day) 301-985-6565/66  
Administrative Offices ONLY  
(M-F, 9A-5P) 301-985-6580  
[www.mountrainiermd.org/government/mrpd/index.html](http://www.mountrainiermd.org/government/mrpd/index.html)

Please cut and place on or by your phone

### CSAFE Success—Cross Border Cooperation

Over the past six months the Department has successfully worked with our state, county and local law enforcement partners to include agencies from the District of Columbia to reduce crime, recidivism and improve the quality of life through the Collaborative Supervision and Focused Enforcement (CSAFE) grant program. Through CSAFE, the Mount Rainier Police dedicate one day a month to focused enforcement efforts.

A sampling of the joint activity occurring between May 2005 and October 2005 of the Department's rigorous enforcement operations initiative involving the Prince George's Police Department; Narcotics Unit and their Special Assignment team, Metropolitan DC Police and Metro Transit Police resulted in more than fifteen (15) adult and juvenile arrests, twenty-five (25) field observations and more than one-hundred forty (140) traffic citations being issued. In August, MRPD conducted residential checks of known sex offenders and persons on parole and probation with assistance from agents from the Maryland Division of Parole and Probation.

These and other interagency examples of cross border cooperation is part of a continuing "Hold the Line" strategy between Maryland and District of Columbia law enforcement agencies focus on enforcement to keep persons engaged in criminal activity from floating back and forth between Maryland and the District of Columbia. Teaming with agents from the

Maryland Division of Parole and Probation and the U.S. District Court; Court Services and Offender Supervision Agency (CSOSA), the Mount Rainier Police are regularly performing residential checks of parole and probation clients moving across the state line.

Most important through the CSAFE grant program the Department was able to gain an GIS analyst and software that enables the mapping of the locations of crimes, and the movement of probation and parole clients, including known sex offenders. The idea is to make sure crooks, thieves and drug dealers know there is cooperation between departments across state lines.

The collaborative results are positive and ongoing. They are the next educational step in getting the community involved so effective policing can continue along the borders and in the end convince residents that progress is being made to reduce crime in known hotspots areas of the City.

### Sex Offender Registry

The Maryland Department of Public Safety and Correctional Service maintains a website of registered sex offenders in the State and our City. Anyone can obtain this information through their website at [www.dpscs.state.md.us](http://www.dpscs.state.md.us) or if you do not have a computer you may call 410-585-3600.

### Vacation Check for Your Home

When you go on vacation are you concerned with leaving your home unattended? Why not notify us so we may check on it from time-to-time? If you plan on leaving on a short or long vacation and would like us to check your property, please call 301-985-6566 or 6580 to be placed on our house checklist. We will need your address, if you have a car where will it be parked; on the street or driveway and it's tag number and the length of visit. We also will need a

number to contact you at in case the need arises.

### What Happens When You Call the Police

What happens when you call the police? The Police Department goes to great length to serve the community. When a citizen calls for police service, of any kind, day or night, the dispatchers at Bladensburg Police (our contract service) will ask for all the necessary information, including the circumstances for the call; location, who's calling, what help is needed; descriptions and facts related to the call, such as vehicles (color, license plate #, etc.); descriptions of people (gender, race, age, height, clothing, hair length, etc.); direction of travel; is the situation currently in progress or has there been a delay; are there weapons involved; etc.—his is then relayed to responding units. The officer now has the necessary information to answer your call.

Dispatchers take your information so that we can notify you about the outcome of the call and/or get additional information if necessary. When multiple calls for service come in at, or around, the same time, the calls are prioritized based on the level of urgency. Even if delayed, we always answer all calls.

As a rule of thumb, if you're not sure whether or not you should call about a situation—**always call**. It's never a bother when you call us.

### Auto Theft

The crime of auto theft continues to be our number one problem in the City accounting for 40 percent of our reported part I crimes. Do not forget to lock your car! Please follow these steps.

#### **LOCK YOUR CAR AND TAKE THE KEYS, and**

- Do not leave valuables in the car, or
- Packages in plain sight, and

*Police, continued on page 7*

Hyattsville- Mount Rainier- Brentwood Boys & Girls Club  
& Northern County Soccer Alliance

2005 Winter Brazilian Indoor Soccer at  
Hyattsville Elementary School  
December 3, 2005 – February 28, 2006

Soccer Registration Form

Each Session Costs \$35, select one session below (or two for \$70)

U6*, U7, U8 Saturday	10:00 – 11:00 AM	\$35	_____
U6*, U7, U8 Saturday	11:00 – 12:00 PM	\$35	_____
U8, U9, U10 Tuesdays	6:30 – 7:30 PM	\$35	_____
U8, U9, U10 Fridays	6:30 – 7:30 PM	\$35	_____
U11, U12, U13 Tuesdays	7:30 – 8:30 PM	\$35	_____
U11, U12, U13 Fridays	7:30 – 8:30 PM	\$35	_____
Total Fee Paid			\$ _____

\*U6 Advanced U6 players. U6\*, U7, U8 play 4 v 4 and U11, U12, U13 play 5 v 5. Each session is limited to 20 to 22 players to insure that every player has plenty of playing time.

Make check payable to **NCSA** and indicate **Child's name and Soccer on Check Memo line**, indicate telephone number if not printed on check, Check No: \_\_\_\_\_. Staple Check to Registration Form.

Follow the Steps and Register On Line at [WWW.HMBSOCCER.ORG](http://WWW.HMBSOCCER.ORG)

## Round Three of LNG Battle Held December 7

The resolution denying a request by the Washington Gas Co. to construct a liquefied natural gas (LNG) facility in a heavily populated section of Hyattsville, MD by the Prince George's Planning Board in September was celebrated as a victory in Round 2 of community opposition to the proposal. What the community did not realize is that the County's zoning process is quite complicated and multilayered.

The next step was to convince the Zoning Hearing Examiner to also deny the proposal. Despite previous testimonies and exhibits, the community was faced with beginning anew.

It has become clear that the Zoning Hearing Examiner (ZHE) is a separate entity in the County zoning bureaucracy. All citizens and supportive organizations must register as a "Party of Record" and all testimonies must be restructured and reintroduced.

"This is a crazy system," commented Imani Kazana, President of the Avondale Citizens Association. "The basic County zoning brochures do not properly explain these details, and it seems to discourage meaningful opposition to an objection-

able zoning matter by community people. No wonder so many developments are approved despite community concerns," she continued.

Despite this revelation, Mayor Malinda Miles, the Avondale Citizens Association (ACA), the Washington Gas Watch Alliance, and numerous other local allies were determined to go on to the next round with determination to stop this corporate giant from proceeding with what they believe to be a very dangerous project. "It does not make common sense to place such a volatile storage facility in the middle of a heavily populated residential area," said Mayor Miles.

Ms. Kazana recently stated, "We must protect our lives and property from financially greedy corporate entities who prey on governmental confusion and a lack of awareness or understanding within a community."

The Avondale group and its allies presented their case at the Zoning Hearing Examiner session on December 7, 2005. Further information can be obtained from Ms. Kazana at 301-779-6948.

## Reflections

*By Mayor Malinda Miles*

During this holiday season, all of us should reflect upon the many blessings that we received the past year. Though we may have had troubles financially, suffered an illness, or lost loved ones, we survived. There were so many tragedies during the past year, where literally thousands of people endured tremendous losses. We must also be mindful of our troops in Iraq and elsewhere in the world, and pray for those who have family members in the armed services.

As you reflect on the past 12 months, remember to hold your head high as you look toward a brighter and more peaceful tomorrow here at home and abroad. I am so grateful to the entire Mount Rainier employee force, for their contributions and hard work to provide quality services to the residents. Our police department has been diligent in reducing crime. Our Public Works Department and the division of Code Enforcement have been tenacious in their efforts to keep the City clean. As the Mayor of this great thriving City, I wish the employees and citizens a wonderful, happy, healthy, and safe holiday, filled with joy and good cheer. May your New Year be filled with unforeseen treasures.

## Announcements

The following web sites may be of interest to you.

Malinda Miles — [www.malindamiles.com](http://www.malindamiles.com)

Historic Mount Rainier Maryland — [www.mountrainiermd.org](http://www.mountrainiermd.org)

Mount Rainier Police Department — [www.mountrainiermd.org/government/mrpd/index.html](http://www.mountrainiermd.org/government/mrpd/index.html)

Bunker Hill Volunteer Fire and Rescue Company — [www.mrvfd.org](http://www.mrvfd.org)

Mount Rainier Elementary School — [www.pgcps.org/~mrainier/](http://www.pgcps.org/~mrainier/)

Thomas Stone Elementary School — [www.pgcps.org/~tstone/index.htm](http://www.pgcps.org/~tstone/index.htm)

Hyattsville Middle School — [www.pgcps.org/~hyattsms/](http://www.pgcps.org/~hyattsms/)

Northwestern High School — [www.pgcps.pg.k12.md.us/~nwest](http://www.pgcps.pg.k12.md.us/~nwest)

Prince George's County Municipal Association [www.mdmunicipal.org/chapterweb/pgcma](http://www.mdmunicipal.org/chapterweb/pgcma)

Maryland Municipal League — [www.mdmunicipal.org](http://www.mdmunicipal.org)

Friends of the Mount Rainier Library (FOL) — [www.mtrainierfol.org/](http://www.mtrainierfol.org/)

Gateway Community Development Corporation [www.gateway-cdc.org](http://www.gateway-cdc.org)

Washington Metro Area Transit Service [www.wmata.com/](http://www.wmata.com/)

Mount Rainier Business Association (MRBA) [www.mrbasociation.org](http://www.mrbasociation.org)

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## December Leaf Schedule

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Full leaf vacuuming started Tuesday, October 25, 2005. The schedule below will be followed weather permitting. In order to have your leaves vacuumed, please follow the schedule and rake your leaves to the curb. Here are a few reminders.

- Rake your leaves at least 24 hours before the crew is expected to begin on your block.
- Rake your leaves to the curb without blocking the roadway.
- Please keep rocks, bricks, branches, brush, metal, or any other objects away from raked leaves.
- If leaves are in bags, they will **not** be vacuumed.

The Public Works Department will make an effort to stay on schedule, and you can help us by following the reminders above.

El plan por abajo se va a seguir dependiente an el tiempo, Para que se limpian sus hojas, sigan al plan y rastrillen las hojas al encintado 24 horas antes de la llegada de los trabajadores.

### Area 1

Dec. 20  
3700 34<sup>th</sup> Street  
3700 35<sup>th</sup> Street  
3700 36<sup>th</sup> Street  
3700 – 3800 37<sup>th</sup> Street  
3400 – 3600 Eastern Avenue  
3500 37<sup>th</sup> Street  
3200 Varnum Street  
3400 – 3600 Perry Street  
Wells Avenue  
Newton Street  
Oak Lane

### Area 3

Dec. 29  
3800 – 4600 30<sup>th</sup> Street  
3800 – 4500 31<sup>st</sup> Street  
3000 – 3100 Perry Street  
2900 – 3100 Bunker Hill Road  
3000 – 3100 Shepherd Street  
3000 – 3200 Taylor Street  
3000 Upshur Street

### Area 5

Dec. 22 & 27  
3800 – 4200 34<sup>th</sup> Street  
3800 – 4000 35<sup>th</sup> Street  
4000 36<sup>th</sup> Street  
4000 37<sup>th</sup> Street  
3400 – 3700 Bunker Hill Road  
3400 – 3700 Shepherd Street  
3400 Taylor Street  
3400 Tilden Street

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## Youth Recreation Programs

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### Hyattsville-Mount Rainier-Brentwood Boys & Girls Club

The PG County Boys & Girls Club offers boys & girls ages 5–18 opportunities to participate in baseball, basketball, cheerleading, football, soccer, softball, and track.

- 301-864-1112; Carrol McLaurin, 301-422-3141; Basketball: Jeffrey Lindsey, 301-559-0602
- [www.pgiparks.com/things/pgcbgc/contacts.html](http://www.pgiparks.com/things/pgcbgc/contacts.html)

### Boys Scouts Troop 224

Meets in St. Jerome's Church, Hyattsville

- Thursday evenings, 7:30–9 p.m.
- 6th grade through high school
- [users.erols.com/wthomas/troop224.html](http://users.erols.com/wthomas/troop224.html)

### Cub Scouts Pack 224

Meets in St. Jerome's Church, Hyattsville

- Tuesday evenings, 7–8 p.m.
- 1st grade through 5th grade
- Ages 6th grade through high school
- [users.erols.com/wthomas/troop224.html](http://users.erols.com/wthomas/troop224.html)

### Girl Scouts

- Mount Rainier E.S., Tues., 2 p.m.
- Thomas Stone E.S., Tues., 2 p.m.
- Hyattsville Middle Sch., Fri., 6 p.m.
- Tiffany Lathan, 301-449-5690

### Boys and Girls Club, Northwestern H.S.

- 301-985-1423
- M-F, 3:30 to 8 p.m.

### Joe's Movement Emporium

- After-School Programs
- 3802 34th St., 301-699-1819
- [www.worldartfocus.org/youth.html](http://www.worldartfocus.org/youth.html)

### Mount Rainier Nature Center

- 31st and Arundel Rd.
- 301-927-2163; TTY 301-699-2544
- [www.pgiparks.com/places/nature/rainier.html](http://www.pgiparks.com/places/nature/rainier.html)

The Nature/Recreation Center is a unique facility which operates as both a nature center and a recreation center.

### Nature Club for Kids

Bladensburg Waterfront Park, 4601 Annapolis Road, Bladensburg. Kids, learn about nature and ecology through games, crafts, stories, and other nature-themed activities. The club meets the first Sat. of each month.

- 301-779-0371; TTY 301-699-2544
- Ages 6–12
- Fee: \$1, Non-Resident \$2

## For Immediate Release

For more information: Contact Ms. Jeannelle Wallace  
Phone Number: 301-985-6585

### Fred Keeney, Chief of Police Mount Rainier Maryland Resigns His Post

After 6 years of service to the City, Colonel Fred Keeney submitted his resignation as Chief of Police on Thursday, December 15, effective Monday, January 2, 2006. Following the submission of his resignation, Chief Keeney announced his resignation to his staff during a 3:00 p.m. meeting. City Manager, Jeannelle Wallace, noted that it was with regret that she accepted his resignation.

During his tenure as Chief of Police, Keeney helped move the City of Mount Rainier forward through active community policing, increased enforcement, greater cooperation with neighboring jurisdictions, and made the community a safer place for businesses and residents.

In addition, since taking office, Chief Keeney has restored credibility and accountability to the Police Department. The Mount Rainier Police Department once plagued with a host of problems that resulted in a loss of confidence and trust of the City's residents and the Mayor and Council has received top recognition and honorable mention for many of the Department's forward thinking projects and programs. In 2004, Keeney was appointed as the President of the Maryland Chief's Association.

At the City's Employee Appreciation Awards Ceremony, Friday, December 16, 2005, Mayor Malinda Miles thanked Keeney for his many contributions and years of service. Mayor Miles commented that it is always difficult when talented and experienced employees leave the City, but there are times when an individual needs to move on with their life and pursue other interests. Chief Keeney has made that decision, and the Mayor and Council wish him much success in his future endeavors. Mayor Miles also shared comments that she received from residents who applauded the City for its improvement in the areas of public safety including the reduction of crime and community policing. Mount Rainier is a City on the move, a place where people want to come to live and work. Much of this can be directly contributed to the work and efforts of Chief Keeney. Although saddened by his departure, The Mayor and Council wish Colonel Fred Keeney well in all of his future endeavors.

Until further notice, Lieutenant Michael Scott will serve as Acting Chief of Police for the City of Mount Rainier. In the near future, the City will begin the process of seeking to fill the vacancy created by Chief Keeney's departure.

Police, continued from page 3

- Park your car in a well lighted area, and
- Use an anti-theft device, and
- Use your trunk to conceal gifts.

To learn more about auto theft preventions go on line to [www.mdautototheft.org](http://www.mdautototheft.org) or contact the Department at 301-985-6565/66 and ask an officer to visit you for further information.

### Crime Down During First Nine Months

During the first nine (9) months of this year for the period ending September 30, 2005, Part I crime in the City as reported to the Maryland State Police and the FBI has decreased 15 percent for the same period in 2004. Crimes against property (burglary, theft, etc.) have decreased by 17 percent and crimes against persons (rape, robbery, etc.) have decreased by 8 percent. These are preliminary figures that will be further verified in early 2006, nonetheless, the results are promising.

PART I CRIMES	2004	2005	Change
ARSON	1	1	0
ASSAULT (Aggravated)	17	17	0
AUTO THEFT	154	129	-16%
BURGLARY	56	41	-28%
HOMICIDE	1	1	0
LARCENY	189	161	-15%
RAPE	0	2	200%
ROBBERY	39	32	-18%
TOTAL	457	386	-15%

## Mount Rainier Community Tool Shed Information

The Mount Rainier Community Tool Shed is located at 3601 Bunker Hill Road. For information, call 301-779-0133. The new hours are Saturdays 10 a.m.-1 p.m.

The Tool Shed has a collection of hand and power tools available at no charge for use by residents, businesses, and community groups of Mount Rainier.

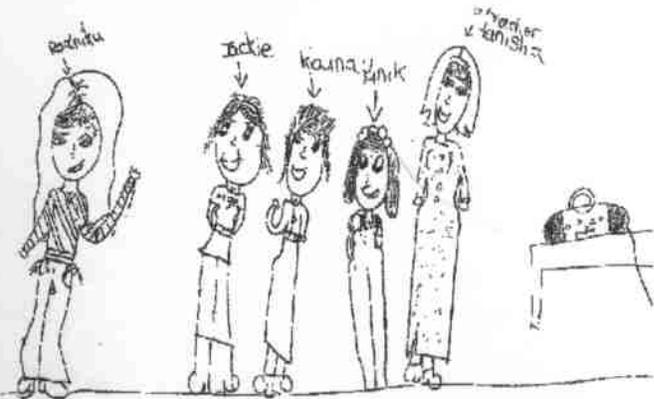
An application must be completed prior to borrowing. Call City Hall or download an application at [www.mountrainier.org/community/toolshed](http://www.mountrainier.org/community/toolshed).

# The Rap and Act Group

The "Rap and Act" Group--youngsters ages 9-11, plus a few older teens--meets at the Queenstown Apartments Community Center. The center's after school program provides academic, social and recreational programs for young Queenstown residents.

The young people are eager to share their experiences and ideas with the Mt. Rainier community, and to write about others in our community. Mt. Rainier resident Julie Barnett works with them as they develop their skills as writers, reporters and graphic artists. The "Rap and Act Group" is a project of **Actively Building Community/Activamente Buscando Comunidad**, a local initiative to promote solidarity, dialogue and participation among the diverse sectors of our community.

In our first exploration of community, most wrote about or drew groups they felt connected to. Ten year-old Kiera described her experience surviving Hurricane Katrina.



**Dance Group, by Rodnika Campbell, 9**

## THE HURRICANE KATRINA

by Kiera M. George, age 10

Hi, I'm from Louisiana. It all started when we were at my house. My mom was already planning on going by her friend's house. Her other friend was driving us there. We were scared because we have never been in a hurricane, not that I know of. Well, the next day we woke up we saw tons of water. We were really scared then. We saw alligators and crocodiles and we all panicked and panicked. My mother's friend knew somebody that lived in the apartments and she had a cell phone. She tried to call the police but they were saving someone else. So we thought and thought, and somebody said he had a boat, so all of us tumbled onto the boat until we saw the safety people that saved people. They took us on a bridge and my mother and I walked until we saw a hotel. We stood there until the people said get out because they were going to blow the hotel up. We stood on the bridge by the Superdome and we struggled for food. We saw dead bodies floating in the water and we were on the bridge for six days.

That's how our story went. This is only part of my story of the hurricane.

## EL HURACÁN KATRINA

por Kiera M. George, 10 años

Hola, soy de Louisiana. Todo empezó cuando estábamos en mi casa. Mi mamá ya estaba planeando ir a la casa de su amiga. Su otra amiga nos iba a llevar ahí. Tuvimos miedo porque nunca habíamos estado en un huracán, que yo sepa. Bueno, al día siguiente nos despertamos y vimos montones de agua. Entonces tuvimos miedo de verdad. Vimos cocodrilos y caimanes y nos cundió un pánico horrible. La amiga de mi madre conocía a alguien que vivía en los apartamentos y ella tenía un teléfono celular. Trató de llamar a la policía, pero ellos estaban salvando a otra persona. Así que pensamos y pensamos, y alguien dijo que tenía un bote, así que todos nos metimos en el bote hasta que vimos al personal de seguridad que salvaba a la gente. Nos llevaron a un puente y mi madre y yo caminamos. Vimos un hotel. Nos quedamos ahí paradas hasta que la gente dijo que salieramos porque el hotel iba a explotar. Nos quedamos paradas en el puente cerca del Superdome, y luchamos por conseguir alimentos. Vimos cadáveres flotando en el agua, y estuvimos en el puente durante seis días.

Así fue nuestra historia. Esta es solo parte de mi experiencia en el huracán.

Copy and layout provided by Julie Barnett and Melissa Barringer

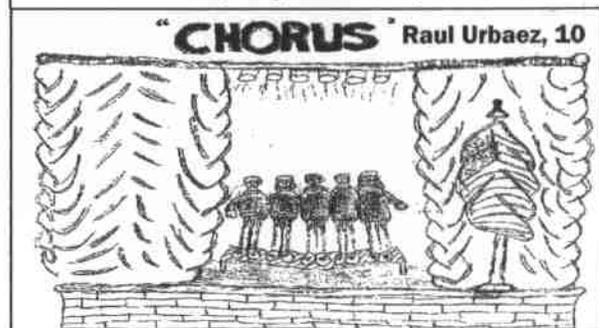
## LATIN TEENS IN ACTION

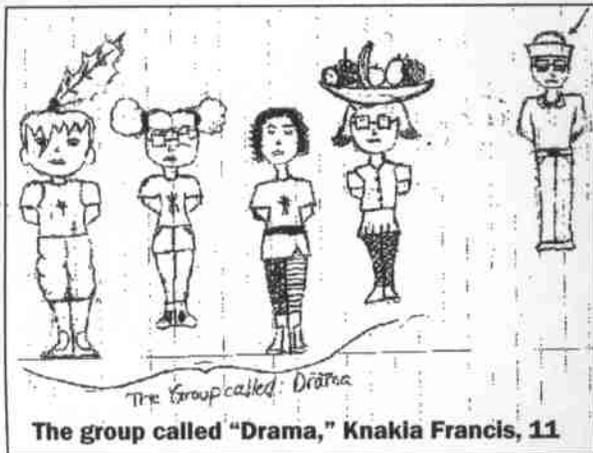
by Wendy Molina, age 16

This group is very important because teens learn so many things about life consequences. For example, drugs and liquor. I think this program can help a lot of teens in a bad situation. This program is run by the police department and a teacher from Northwestern High School called Mr. Modesto. Mr. Modesto is one of the Hispanic people that help us as teenagers to get through life. Thanks to Mr. Modesto, a lot of teens get together every Friday at the police station in Langley Park.

This is very important to me because it has helped me and many other people that were in a situation that was very hard to get up from, but I learned not to give up because life continues and we can't be in the same place.

It feels good to be in that program because it opens your mind to the world of how to solve problems that we get into. There are good things that happen every weekend in that police station, for example, parties, dancing lessons, and activities for each month. It's not just about talking about your life, family or your future, it is about many other things that teenagers do, but in a healthy way. I mean that in these parties we don't have any type of drugs, so it is very safe. Parents don't have to be afraid or think something is going to happen to their kids. Everything there is safety.





### HOW MY FRIENDS BECAME MY FRIENDS by Christian Medrano, age 10

My name is Christian Medrano and I am here to tell you how my friends and I became friends. It all started in kindergarten when I was alone and didn't know anybody. When my friend named Antwan helped me around, school felt comfortable. After he did, I was happy about school. Second grade was the grade that I met another friend named Kevin. He was smart, so whenever I needed help, I asked him. Kevin met Antwan and they had a lot in common so they became friends.

In fifth grade, another friend made his appearance. His name is Carlos, but I call him Carlito. I was a little rough on Carlito, because I didn't know better. Hey, I'm a nice guy, so don't think I'm mean. If you do, read the underlined sentence so you will not think I'm mean. Anyway, we became friends when we were eating lunch and he gave me money when I had to pay for lunch and I had no money. After that, we got along better than before.

In sixth grade I met two friends and they are named David and Da'Vaughn. Carlito, Antwan, Kevin and I always go to David's house. Only Carlito, Antwan and I know Da'Vaughn and we call him so we can talk about what we're going to do. During the summer I met a person named Kelvin and every friend I mentioned (except Da'Vaughn) knows him. We have a great relationship with each other. Yeah, sure, we get in arguments, but we resolve them by the way we handle things. For example, we talk about what happens when somebody hits another person. We have fun in such different ways. When we get bored, we think of something to do. We share ideas and express ourselves.

### COMO MIS AMIGOS SE HICIERON MIS AMIGOS Por Christian Medrano, 12 años

Mi nombre es Christian Medrano y estoy aquí para contarles cómo yo y mis amigos nos hicimos amigos. Todo empezó en el jardín de niños, cuando estaba solo y no conocía a nadie. Cuando mi amigo llamado Antwan me ayudó a conocer allí, me sentí cómodo en la escuela. Después de eso, estuve contento respecto a la escuela. Fue en el segundo grado en el que conocí a otro amigo llamado Kevin. Era inteligente, así que cada vez que yo necesitaba ayuda, se la pedí a él. Kevin conoció a Antwan, y tenían mucho en común, así que se hicieron amigos.

En el quinto grado, otro amigo apareció. Su nombre es Carlos, pero yo lo llamo Carlito. Yo me porté un poco rudo con Carlito, porque no sabía hacerlo de otro modo. Miren, yo soy un buen muchacho, no piensen que soy malo. Si piensan así, lean la frase subrayada, para no pensar que yo sea malvado. De cualquier modo, nos hicimos amigos cuando estábamos almorzando y el me dio dinero cuando tuve que pagar el almuerzo y no tenía dinero. Después de aquello, nos llevamos mejor que antes.

En el sexto grado conocí a dos amigos, que se llaman David y Da'Vaughn. Carlito, Antwan, Kevin y yo siempre vamos a la casa de David. Solo Carlito, Antwan y yo conocemos a Da'Vaughn, y le llamamos para platicar de lo que vamos a hacer. Durante el verano conocí a una persona llamada Kelvin, y todos los amigos que ya mencioné (excepto Da'Vaughn) lo conocen.

La relación entre todos nosotros es muy buena. Claro, discutimos, pero resolvemos nuestras discusiones solucionándolas entre todos. Por ejemplo, hablamos de lo que pasa cuando alguien golpea a otra persona. Nos divertimos de tantas formas diferentes. Cuando nos aburrimos, pensamos en algo que podamos hacer. Compartimos ideas y nos expresamos.

Bueno, ya describí cómo mis amigos nos hicimos amigos. Gracias por leerlo.

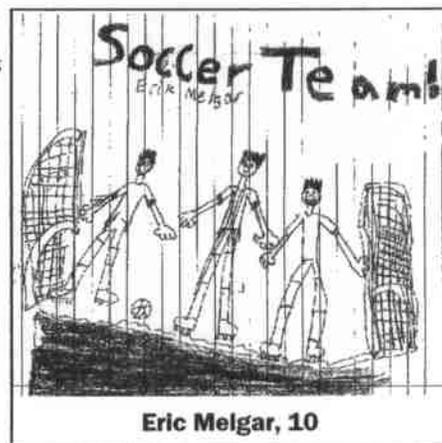
### JÓVENES LATINOS EN ACCIÓN

por Wendy Molina, 16 años

Este grupo es muy importante porque los jóvenes aprendemos tantas cosas acerca de las consecuencias para la vida. Por ejemplo, las drogas y el alcohol. Creo que este programa puede ayudar a muchos adolescentes cuando están en una mala situación. Este programa está coordinado por el departamento de policía y por un maestro de la Northwestern High School, llamado el Sr. Modesto. El Sr. Modesto es uno de los hispanos que nos ayudan a nosotros los jóvenes a sobrellevar bien la vida. Gracias al Sr. Modesto, muchos jóvenes nos reunimos todos los viernes en la estación de policías en Langley Park.

Esto es muy importante para mí, porque me ha ayudado a mí y a muchas otras personas que estábamos en una situación de la que teníamos gran dificultad para salirnos. Aprendí a no darme por vencida, porque la vida sigue y no podemos quedarnos en el mismo sitio.

Se siente bien estar en ese programa porque te abre la mente al mundo de cómo resolver los problemas que nos suceden. Pasan cosas buenas en esa estación de policías, por ejemplo fiestas, clases de baile, y actividades para cada mes. No se trata solo de hablar de tu vida, familia o futuro, también se trata de muchas otras cosas que hacemos los jóvenes, pero de manera sana. Quiero decir que en estas fiestas no tenemos ningún tipo de drogas, por lo que son muy seguras. Las mamás y los papás no tienen por qué temer, ni pensar que algo les vaya a pasar a sus hijos. Todo ahí es seguridad.



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## Preparing for Snow Removal

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Now that we are into the fall season and winter is fast approaching, Public Works attention is now turned to making preparations for snow removal, in the event of a snowstorm.

The Mount Rainier Police Department has an active role during a snowstorm. For example, when an impending snowstorm is predicted for the region, the Police will check the snow emergency routes in Mount Rainier to make sure that all vehicles have been removed. The snow emergency routes in Mount Rainier are currently as follows:

1. 34th Street from Rhode Island Avenue to Arundel Road
2. Chillum Road from Arundel Road to the City boundary at Queens Chapel Road
3. Rainier Avenue from 34th Street to Upshur Street
4. Upshur Street from Rainier Avenue to 28th Place
5. 28th Place from Upshur Street to Russell Avenue
6. Russell Avenue from 28th Place to Arundel Road
7. Varnum Street from Russell Avenue to Eastern Avenue
8. Arundel Road from Russell Avenue to 34th Street.

Violation and Penalties. Every person convicted of a violation of any provision of Chapter 13A of *The Mount Rainier Code* shall be required to pay a fine of one hundred fifty dollars (\$150) in addition to any other costs provided by law.

During a snowstorm, the first streets to be cleared are the snow emergency routes. In Mount Rainier snow emergency routes are clearly identified by signs. Snow emergency rules are in effect when the District of Columbia declares a snow emergency.

It is illegal to park on snow emergency routes during a storm. The Mount Rainier Police will enforce the City Code as it relates to clearing of snow emergency routes before the snow begins to fall. Residents of Mount Rainier can do their part to help City snow removal crews. During a snowstorm the best policy for residents is to keep off the roads so the snow removal crews can operate unimpeded. If at all possible, residents should wait until the storm has passed and roads are passable. Abandoned vehicles prevent snow plows from clearing streets.

Also, when removing snow from around a parked vehicle, it is better to deposit the snow on tree boxes or grassy areas instead of throwing it out on the street or on the sidewalk.

Finally, residents and business owners are required by City Code to clear the sidewalks of snow directly in front of their property. In that way, most sidewalks in the City will be safely passable and pedestrians will not have to walk in the street.

### Resolution, *continued from page 2*

uncommon. The Mayor and Council have many times had to vote on whether to allow a deck, fence, or house addition to violate the zoning standards. So even if we return to more stringent standards, the variance process will exist. The difference is that the Mayor and Council will have a say in what is built rather than being left out of the process.

Siting Standard #17 (p. 137) now allows 45 percent of a residential lot to be covered with structures (house, deck, concrete driveway, sheds). We are proposing to return to the old standard of 30 percent. This still allows for additions to homes but helps control how large new houses can be.

Siting Standard # 19 (p. 137) currently allows a residential lot to be as narrow as 20 feet. We are proposing to return to the old standard of 65 feet. This means that almost all new homes will have to be reviewed for a variance since most of our house lots are only 40 wide. The old standard includes an exception for homes built prior to 1928.

Siting Standard #21 (p. 137) currently allows a house to sit as close as 20 feet from the street, AND a front porch is not included as part of the "house" so it can be even closer to the street than 20 feet. We are proposing a return to the old standard that the house and porch must be at least 25 feet back from the street. A variance would be needed from the standard to build closer to the street.

Siting Standard # 25 (p. 138) currently allows the distance between the house and side lot line to be 8 feet on both sides, and that can be reduced to 4 feet on each side if the resulting building would be less than 14 feet in width to comply with the 8 foot standard. We are proposing a return to the old 17/8 standard that said the total of the widths of both side setbacks had to equal at least 17 and one side had to be at least 8 feet. So you had to have 8 feet on one side of the house and at least 9 feet on the other.

Access and Circulation Standard # 2 (p. 138) requires that a sidewalk from a home's front door to the sidewalk along the street must be a minimum of 5 feet wide. We propose to opt out of this minimum.

Parking and Loading Standard # 6 and # 7 are requirements for the number of parking spaces required for a house IF a parking district is established by the county or city for the residential area. We are proposing to opt out of Nos. 6 and 7, but leave Standard No. 5 in place which says that parking for at least 1 and a maximum of 2 on-site spaces must be provided per lot, but if the house has at least 20 feet of street parking in front of it, then the minimum of 1 space on-site is waived.

Building Height Standard # 7 (p. 143) allows an accessory structure (garage, studio, shed) to be as tall as the ridge line of the house. We are proposing a return to the old standard which was a maximum of 15 feet high (or get a special exception).

*Council Meetings*

1st and 3rd Tues., 7 p.m., City Hall lower level

*Beautification Committee*—3rd Mon., 7:00 p.m., City Hall

*Cable Commission*—2nd Mon., 6:00 p.m., City Hall

*Friends of Library* ([mtrainierfol.org](http://mtrainierfol.org))—Mon., 7:30 p.m., Community Vision, 34th St.

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

*MRBA*—2nd Weds., 6:30 p.m., **Mount Rainier Police Station**

*Tool Shed Committee*—2nd Mon., 7:00 p.m., City Hall

*MUTC Town Center Design Review Committee*—2nd Weds., 6:15 p.m., City Hall

*Design Review Board*—3rd Weds., 7:00 p.m., City Hall

*Tree Commission*—2nd Thurs., 7:00 p.m., City Hall

Note: The above Committees are scheduled to meet according to the above schedule. Please check the City’s website or contact City Hall to verify if a meeting is being held on a particular date. Meeting notices are posted at City Hall prior to the scheduled meeting.

## December–January calendar

December 2	Recyclables Pick Up	January 4	Regular Trash Pick Up
December 5	Bulk Trash (By appointment only)	January 6	Recyclables Pick Up
December 7	Regular Trash Pick Up	January 9	Yard Waste Pick Up (By appointment only)
December 9	Recyclables Pick Up	January 11	Regular Trash Pick Up
December 12	Yard Waste Pick Up (By appointment only)	January 13	Recyclables Pick Up
December 14	Regular Trash Pick Up	January 16	Martin Luther King Holiday (Bulk Trash Pick Up on Tuesday)
December 16	Recyclables Pick Up	January 18	Regular Trash Pick Up
December 19	Bulk Trash (By appointment only)	January 20	Recyclables Pick Up
December 21	Regular Trash Pick Up	January 23	Yard Waste Pick Up (By appointment only)
December 23	Recyclables Pick Up	January 25	Regular Trash Pick Up
December 26	CITY HALL CLOSED	January 27	Recyclables Pick Up
December 28	Regular Trash Pick Up		
December 30	Recyclables Pick Up		
January 2	New Year Holiday (Bulk Trash Pick Up on Tuesday)		

Starting December, every 2<sup>nd</sup> Monday will be Yard Waste Pick Up. Call (301 985-6558) to make an appointment. Please have all bulk trash out by 7:00 a.m. on bulk trash day and all appointments for both bulk trash and yard waste made before 12 noon on the Friday preceding pick up day.

www.mountrainiermd.org

**Mayor**

**Malinda Miles**  
301-699-1378

mayormiles@malindamiles.com

**City Manager**

**Jeannelle B. Wallace**  
301-985-6585, ext. 22

fax: 301-985-6595

jwallace@mountrainiermd.org

**Asst. City Manager**

**James Booth**  
301-985-6585

fax: 301-985-6595

jbooth@mountrainiermd.org

**Councilmembers**

**Ward 1**

**Carol Gandee**  
301-277-6377

gandydncr@aol.com

**Alta Morton**

202-309-5455

altaward1@hotmail.com

**Ward 2**

**Pedro Briones**

301-277-1833

pedroeb@aol.com

**Bryan Knedler**

301-699-3134

bknedler@aol.com

**Message**

**Terry Kelly**

tkelly60@aol.com

## 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 5:00 p.m. Public Works open 7:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m.

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)  
301-985-6590 (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 Executive

Jack Johnson

301-952-4131

County Councilman

Will Campos

301-952-4436

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 10:30 (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

301-918-8111

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)

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Mount Rainier, MD 20712

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**December 2005/January 2006 Message**  
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