

## ACTING TOWN MANAGER'S CORNER.....

"Distracted driving is being touted as the new DWI for good reason — it's more deadly. Consider this:

- Using a cell phone (handheld or hands free) extends a driver's reaction time as much as a .08 BAC (breath alcohol content)
- Texting while driving has surpassed drinking and driving as the leading cause of teen accidents and deaths
- Driving while texting is six times more dangerous than driving while intoxicated
- You are 23 times more likely to crash if you are texting while driving

Unfortunately, knowledge doesn't always yield wisdom, with 50 percent of high school students and 47 percent of adults admit texting while driving. Furthermore, 20 percent of teens and 10 percent of parents admit that they have *extended* multi-message text conversations while driving."

On behalf of the Town staff, we wish you all a happy, joyous and safe holiday season.

## OCCOQUAN NEWSLETTER

### TOWN OF OCCOQUAN

Email: [Info@occoquan.org](mailto:Info@occoquan.org) Town Hall: 703-491-1918

Founded in 1734

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Permit No. 19

# OCCOQUAN NEWSLETTER

VOLUME XXV, ISSUE XII

TOWN HALL: 703-491-1918

DECEMBER 2013

#### TOWN COUNCIL

Earnest W. Porta Jr., Mayor  
Elizabeth Quist, Vice-Mayor  
Denise M. Bush  
Joe McGuire  
Patrick A. Sivigny  
James N. Walbert



#### TOWN HALL STAFF

Sheldon E. Levi, Acting Town Manager  
And Chief of Police  
Abigail Breeding, CPA, Treasurer  
Peggy Blackwell, Town Clerk  
Bucky Brill, Town Maintenance Supervisor  
Patricia Thomas, Arts and Crafts Show Director

## MAYOR'S LETTER

I want to start this month by thanking everyone who participated in the Business Guild's Holiday Open House and the Town Hall Tree-Lighting on November 22. Thank you especially to those volunteers who decorated the town tree, served as Salvation Army Red Kettle campaign bell ringers for the evening, and participated in the coat drive organized by Theresa and Tessa Yates.

On Sunday, December 1, at 6:00 p.m., our friends from Ebenezer Baptist Church will hold their annual town blessing at the historic church at the corner of Commerce and Washington Streets. Everyone is invited, and the service will be followed by the free town holiday party at Madigan's Waterfront Restaurant. The following weekend, on Saturday, December 7, the Business Guild will again sponsor Santa's arrival in town by boat. Santa is scheduled to disembark at the Town pier at noon and then proceed to Town Hall, where he will greet children of all ages. On that same day, starting at noon as well, the VFW/Ladies Auxiliary will be hosting a Christmas party for children. These are but a sampling of Occoquan's wonderful holiday traditions, and I hope many of you will be able to find the time to enjoy them.

Once again during the holidays, members of the Occoquan community will be making a particular effort to remember those who are less fortunate. The town is again the site of an "Untrim-a-Tree" program for needy children. Tags may be obtained at Town Hall and at *Personally Yours*. Additionally, *Off the Beading Path* is continuing the annual "Tree of Hope" drive to benefit the Hilda M. Barg Homeless Prevention Center. Details on both initiatives may be found elsewhere in this newsletter. And of course, please remember that the holidays are a particularly important time for our town merchants, some of whom depend heavily on the holiday season for their success, so please patronize them to the maximum extent you are able for your holiday shopping needs.

On Tuesday, December 3, the Town Council and Planning Commission will be holding public hearings and meeting to vote on proposed changes to the town's deck ordinance that are designed to make it easier for homeowners to obtain permission to add decks to their homes. I encourage anyone interested in this issue to attend.

Let me close by thanking all of you for your support and generosity of spirit during the past year. Please have a safe and joyful holiday, and do not hesitate to contact me at [eporta@occoquan.org](mailto:eporta@occoquan.org) with any comments, questions or concerns.

**At the November 2013 meeting, the Council voted to:**

- Approve the Snow Removal Contract to JLC Contracting
- Appoint Carol Bryant to the ARB
- Appoint Leo Smith to the Planning Commission

**TREE OF HOPE AND UNTRIM-A-TREE**

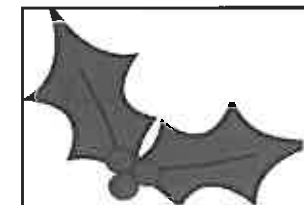
To participate in the Tree of Hope campaign, visit Off the Beading Path at 310 Mill Street, Suite E, in Occoquan and purchase a small (\$5) or large (\$10) ornament and hang it on the Town tree in front of Town Hall (314 Mill Street). All proceeds from the campaign go to support the Hilda M. Barg Homeless Prevention Center.

To participate in the Untrim-A-Tree program, pull a gift tag from the tree inside the Occoquan Town Hall (314 Mill Street) or obtain one from Betsy Merklein at Personally Yours (308 Mill Street). Purchase the gift on the tag and return it to either Town Hall or Personally Yours by December 9. Gifts will be distributed to children in Prince William County who might not otherwise receive anything during the holidays. The Untrim-A-Tree program is sponsored by Prince William County Volunteers, who partners with other local organizations -- in this instance the Business Guild of Occoquan. Thank you everyone in advance for thinking of those who are less fortunate during the holidays.

**TOWN BLESSING AND HOLIDAY PARTY**

Please join your friends and neighbors for the annual Town Blessing at **Ebenezer Baptist Church Sunday, December 1, at 6 p.m.** Immediately following the Blessing will be the Town sponsored annual holiday party at *Madigan's Waterfront Restaurant*. We hope to see you there.

# DECEMBER 2013



| Sun   | Mon            | Tue   | Wed  | Thu                     | Fri  | Sat                                      |
|---|----------------|---|--|-------------------------|--|--|
| 1<br>6 p.m.<br>Town Blessing<br>and Party                                 | 2              | 3<br>6:30 Public<br>Hearing<br>6:45—PC<br>7:00 TC                 | 4<br>                                      | 5                       | 6  | 7<br>12 noon<br>Santa arrives by<br>Boat |
| 8   | 9              | 10  | 11<br>                                     | 12<br>OHS<br>6:30—87:30 | 13   | 14                                       |
| 15  | 16<br>6:30—ORC | 17  | 18<br>                                     | 19                      | 20   | 21                                       |
| 22  | 23             | 24<br>Town Hall<br>Closed   | 25<br>Christmas Day<br>Town Hall<br>Closed | 26                      | 27   | 28                                       |
| 29  | 30             | 31<br>New Year's Eve<br>(And a Happy<br>New Year to<br>everyone!) |  |                         |  |  |
| NOTE: Holiday<br>Trash Schedule<br>Tues., Dec. 24<br>and<br>Tues., Dec 31 |                |   |  |                         | Town Hall will be closed on<br>Wednesday, January 1. |  |