

Budget Document Survey

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1. Readability: Is the subject matter presented in an easy to read format and in terms that are understandable?

Please Circle One: Difficult Somewhat Difficult Adequate Good Very Easy

2. Using the following scale, please rate the following sections (1-Very Helpful, 2-Helpful, 3-Not Helpful):

Sec 1 – General Overview	_____	Sec 2 – City Overview	_____
Sec 3 – Budget Overview All Funds	_____	Sec 4 – Budget Overview School	_____
Sec 5 – Budget Overview Enterprise Funds	_____	Sec 6 – Financial Forecasts, Plans & Policies	_____
Sec 7 – Capital Improvement Program	_____	Sec 8 – Departmental Budgets	_____
Sec 9 – Appendix	_____	Sec10- Glossary	_____

3. Content: What would you like to see added, expanded, reduced or removed?

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Please Circle One: Start Over Minimal Help Answered Most Questions Good Very Helpful

5. Comments

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Mayor Kimberley Driscoll's FYI SALEM

Volume 3, Issue 1

A Quarterly Newsletter for the Citizens of Salem

November 2009



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Message from Mayor Kimberley Driscoll

Welcome to the ninth edition of *FYI Salem*.

Well ... we survived another October! This year, Haunted Happenings and Halloween were as successful as ever despite the slowing economy. Halloween, falling on a Saturday was of particular concern and ended up drawing close to 100,000 people to our City. Despite the larger than normal crowds, most everyone was well-behaved and left the City at the end of the night in an orderly manner. All in all, it was a fun, family-friendly event and an enjoyable month of October. It became a lot more enjoyable for all of us when we found out that the City made a profit of a little over \$270,000 - \$70,000 more than last year. This fact, makes it a little easier for all of us to suffer through some of the challenges that October can bring. I continue to be amazed each and every year by the spectacle that Hallow-

een has become in Salem.

Now that Halloween has ended, we turn our attention to the other holiday season—Thanksgiving and Christmas. When your out holiday shopping visit downtown and shop at our quality retail and eclectic shops. Support our downtown and shop local—you won't regret it!

Throughout the winter months, there are also countless events for you to enjoy like Santa's arrival from the top of the Hawthorne Hotel organized by the Chamber of Commerce and the Christmas Tree Lighting taking place on the Essex Street Pedestrian Mall at the fountain outside of Museum Place. The Historic Salem Inc. (HSI) Christmas House Tour is set to take place and the outdoor skating rink will also make another appearance on the Salem Common (weather permitting). Holiday Happenings in

Salem is a great time to enjoy all that we have to offer.

In this edition of *FYI Salem*, you'll read about the appointment of our new Police Chief, the funding of the new MBTA Commuter Station project, the new Senior Center moving forward and some positive news on City finances.

While we continue to face challenges, I am proud of our City and all that we have accomplished. Despite the hurdles that exist, we are well poised and in a strong position to manage through them. Money remains tight but what we have is being managed professionally and responsibly. And not only that, private investment and interest remains strong. We are excited about much of this progress and hope you enjoy reading these updates!



Paul Tucker Selected as New Police Chief

On October 1st, Mayor Kimberley Driscoll appointed Captain Paul Tucker as the new Police Chief to lead the 80-member Department into the 21st Century.

Chief Tucker is well equipped to head one of the premier Police Departments in the Commonwealth. His decorated career, professionalism and commitment to the job will

serve the Department and the City well for many years to come.

Chief Tucker has served in the Salem Police Department for over 20 years – since 1983. He quickly moved up the ranks and led the Criminal Investigation Division for 17 years. His dedication to the well-being of the residents of Salem was self-evident early on and he has earned countless

commendations and citations for his heroic actions and meritorious service over the years.

His Criminal Investigation Division is held in high esteem throughout the region as a leader in investigative work and ultimately apprehending criminals and keeping the streets of Salem safe. Before being appointed

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New MBTA Train Station Becomes a Reality

Last month, Governor Patrick announced that a new, state-of-the-art Commuter Parking Facility will move forward at the Salem Train Station thanks to a full funding commitment from the state. This project will include close to 1,000 parking spaces, approximately 500 more than presently exist, as well as a waiting area for commuters and visitors.

The project will be funded through existing Department of Capital Asset Management (DCAM) monies (committed as part of the Courthouse project), federal transit dollars secured by Congressman Tierney and state and local sources. In addition to the committed federal and DCAM funds, the state will fund a substantial portion of the total \$40+ million project costs and will now work with the MBTA and the City to

finalize each party's contribution to the project.

The MBTA station in Salem is one of the most heavily used in the system and requires significant investment. It serves not only hundreds of daily commuters but also is a point of arrival for



thousands of tourists and visitors. The existing surface parking lot is routinely filled before 8:00 a.m. on weekdays and certainly does not meet the needs of the commuters that use the facility on a regular basis.

This project will be transforma-

tional to the City, our economy and our commuters. The construction of a new commuter station in Salem has been on the drawing board for over two decades. To finally see it move forward is amazing and a huge credit to Governor Deval Patrick, Congressman John

Tierney, State Senator Fred Berry and State Representative John Keenan who all played important roles in keeping this project on track. The Salem Partnership has also been a key advocate to help advance the new garage. The City is very excited and encouraged by this news.

City officials are now actively engaged and working with state and MBTA representatives on the project. Fortunately, there also will be plenty of opportunity for residents to share input with the City and MBTA with the design plans at 15%. As the project meets important design thresholds additional public meetings will take place.

In addition to the MBTA parking garage and train station, the City plans to pursue the development of the City-owned lot adjacent to the MBTA property – the crescent-shaped parking lot on the Bridge Street side. The lot could potentially host a mixed-use building including anything from office space, to retail and restaurant uses. The City is equally excited about the potential that this development holds.

City's Bond Rating Upgraded

The City of Salem recently received some unexpected, very good news.

Following a telephone conference call a few weeks ago with City officials, including Mayor Kim Driscoll, and representatives from Standard and Poor's, the City's bond rating was increased from 'A-' to 'A' based on their view of the City's improved financial management procedures and sound budgeting practices. The call was originally scheduled to discuss the City incurring short and long term debt as part of the recently adopted Capital Improvement Plan.

The increased bond rating will help decrease the City's borrowing costs and sends a positive message with

regard to the City's approach to budgeting both operational and capital needs. Soon after Mayor Driscoll took Office, the City's bond rating was decreased based on inherited practices of financial mismanagement and irresponsible spending. Thankfully, working collaboratively with the City Council, the Administration has tightened the City's financial policies, developed more efficient ways to deliver City services, reigned in spending and enhanced revenues where feasible.

The City's Finance Team deserves a lot of credit for their efforts to continue to improve our financial position especially during these challenging times. The bond rating upgrade is a great acknowledgement of all of

the City's work to improve the management of its finances. This is confirmation that, despite the down economy Salem is managing its resources as well as it can.

Reasons for the upgrade cited by Standard and Poor's include the City's improved financial management procedures which began in 2007 and budget changes that eliminated the negative general fund balance in FY2008 allowing for structurally balanced budgets in FY2009 and 2010. A stable area employment and good household incomes, extremely strong per capita market values and low net debt position are other reasons mentioned for the bond rating increase.

City Completes Intersection Reconfiguration

The City of Salem recently completed a major intersection improvement and reconfiguration at Congress, Peabody and Ward Street.

This project has been in the works for a couple of years. In 2007, the City received a Brownfields Cleanup Grant from the Environmental Protection

Agency (EPA) to remediate the property at 61 Ward Street which is at the center of this intersection and formerly was the location of a small building that functioned as a gas station years ago.

The cleanup grant totaled \$200,000 with a \$40,000 match provided by the City. The redevelopment of



this intersection was driven by the need to create a safer intersection, remove the blight associated with an abandoned and neglected building, and construct a pocket park in the Point area – one of our densest neighborhoods.

Following an extensive public process, work finally began in April of 2009. Cleanup activities included removal of small quantities of lead

paint, chemicals, and asbestos contaminated material located in the abandoned building. Following the deleading and abatement of the abandoned building, it was demolished and properly disposed of.

The intersection was then reconfigured to improve safety for both vehicular and pedestrian traffic. Con-

struction aspects of the project included improved pedestrian access, including new crosswalks and sidewalks, new lighting, seating, landscaping, and upgrades to the storm-water drainage system. This project also provided National Grid with the opportunity to repair and replace vintage gas lines located in and around the project area. The plantings and benches were installed in the pocket park in September and the final paving of the new intersection was completed in October.

This project was a great success and after 2 years of hard work the City is very grateful that it is completed. This major investment in cleaning-up a blighted area, as well as making a very tricky intersection safer, is an important accomplishment for the City and the neighborhood.

Thinking Outside the Barrel: the Perfect Pick-Up Contest

Salem has been a great success story by significantly reducing its waste and increasing its recycling participation. While average recycling rates have improved from 9% to 19%; Salem still has a long way to go to achieve their ambitious goal of 30%. SalemRecycles, the City's volunteer recycling committee, has conducted many initiatives to successfully improve recycling awareness.

The latest SalemRecycles initiative involves the "Perfect Pick-Up", a contest sponsored by North Shore Recycled Fibers, the City's recycling/disposal vendor. This contest will reward a lucky Salem resident who

has done a great or "perfect" job with their recycling that week. The contest commences the week of November 30 when the first drawing for the weekly \$50 prize will be held.



The rules are easy. You must first register by agreeing to take the recycling pledge by completing a form available at City Hall Annex, 120 Washington Street-4th floor engineering; or the Council on Aging-5 Broad St; or going to www.Salem.com/recycling. Click onto "The Perfect Pick-Up" and you will find a registration form and a poster explaining the correct sorting of our dual stream system. Each Friday, a completed form will be chosen to potentially win the next week's prize. This contest will run from December 2009 through May 2010. Call 978-619-5679 with any questions.

Just what is the Perfect Pick-Up?
It's rather simple, it's all in the sepa-

ration of recyclable items. Paper must be placed in a separate container (no plastic bags) while commingled recycling (plastic, glass, aluminum) must be placed in another container. Each week one randomly selected household will win \$50 just by following these simple rules.

Register, either on-line under Trash/Recycling: the Perfect Pick-Up; or by filling out a form available at Council on Aging or City Hall. By registering, you are agreeing to take the SalemRecycles pledge for appropriate recycling practices.

Each Friday a potential winner will be drawn on a random basis. The recycling of the potential awardee will be checked for conformance with the appropriate practices; and if the household conforms they will be awarded a \$50 debit card. Each household is eligible to win one prize annually.

The contest will continue for 26 consecutive weeks.

New Senior Center Project Moving Forward

The owners of the vacant lot on the corner of Boston and Bridge Street have announced they plan to file with the City this month to begin the permitting process for the project to construct a new state-of-the-art senior center.

High Rock LLC, the owners of the former Sylvania site have released preliminary renderings of the Gateway Center building that will be home to the City's new senior center. The proposed building beautifully wraps around the corner of Boston and Bridge Street at 2-stories. As it moves down Bridge Street it steps up

to 3 and then 4-stories. It includes a magnificent atrium enclosed in glass to give an open-air feeling to visitors which will serve as one of the entrances to the senior center and bridge that facility with a new fitness center proposed for the space at the corner.



High Rock LLC is moving forward with this project due to their strong belief that the City

of Salem is poised for investment and represents as an attractive place to build a new commercial complex, despite not having commitments in place for full occupancy in the upper

floor office space.

A new senior center project has been in the pipeline for more than a decade. The current senior center facility is severely deteriorating and is in need of significant investment and renovation. It is comprised of 15,000 square feet on three separate levels and only offers 25 off-street parking spaces. The building also has accessibility and other limitations that hinder that City's ability to provide new and enhanced senior programming. The new facility at the Boston and Bridge Street site will be 20,000 square feet on one floor and has access to over 370 parking spaces.

The City and developers are hopeful that construction will begin by Spring 2010.

City Raises \$5,000 to Support Salem Award

This year, the City of Salem has raised close to \$5,000 to support the Salem Award and its not done yet!

In March, Mayor Driscoll requested authorization from the City Council to establish a revolving fund to collect a 25 cent surcharge on tickets to the Witch House, which was also approved by the Park and Recreation Commission. The monies collected by the surcharge are to be dedicated to help defray costs and expenses associated with the annual Salem Award for Human Rights and Social Justice, in particular the care and upkeep of the Salem Witch Trials Memorial. This year through September (not including October), the City has been able to raise \$5,000 for the Salem Award.

The Salem Award for Human Rights and Social Justice Foundation was established in 2001 to carry on the

work of the Salem Witch Trials Tercentenary Committee, which presented the first Salem Award in 1992. The purpose of the Award is to encourage an understanding of the lessons of the Salem Witch Trials in the context of contemporary life. If one were to study the Salem Witch Trials, it is clear that order



was restored to the Salem community by the outspoken protests of a few good citizens who spoke bravely and acted courageously in opposition to the prevailing chaos that existed at the time. In Salem in 1692, several individuals risked their lives to speak against the oppression of the trials and to call for order and forgiveness. Today, we continue to depend upon those few individuals who will not be silenced by fear and social disorder. In so doing, the Salem Award seeks to

recognize and honor present day champions of human rights and social justice.

The Salem Award Foundation, under the leadership of both the City of Salem and Salem State College, works in cooperation with local museums, the National Park Service, members of the business community and the public at large, to establish selection criteria, solicit potential award recipients, and sort through nomination forms. In addition to the Salem Award Program, there are often accompanying symposiums held which bring together experts to present an in-depth consideration of issues related to the work of the Salem Award recipient.

Given the origin of Witch House receipts, it seems fitting that a portion of these revenues go toward funding the Salem Award Foundation and the upkeep of the Witch Trials Memorial, both of which seek to recognize, honor, and perpetuate a commitment to social justice and human rights – an enduring lesson of the Salem Witch Trials.

Improvements Completed at Mack Park

Over the last month, the City has made significant investments in Mack Park and it shows!

A little over a month ago, the City completely renovated the playground equipment at Mack Park

installing a new playground structure. The total project cost was approximately \$42,000. The project was coordinated by the Park and Recreation Department and was built by volunteers from the neighborhood and inmates from Essex County Sheriff Frank Cousins' Department. The old playground was in terrible condition and in desperate need of im-

provement.

A couple of weeks ago, the City completed a second project at Mack Park – repairing the stairs on the Mason Street side of the park. The stairs were in complete disrepair and, in some



stretches, were a safety hazard for anyone using them. Pummel Construction was the contractor that conducted the repair work. The project took about two weeks from start to finish and cost the City \$27,000 to re-

place and repair the crumbling concrete stairs and railing. Last week, the City contracted with Pummel once again to repair the stone pillars at the Tremont

Street entrance of the park that had recently been damaged by a vehicle at the park. That work was completed last week.

It's great to see these improvements move forward at Mack Park. They were very necessary and enhance the beautiful park for all of the neighborhood to enjoy.

In all, this year the City has invested close to \$75,000 in Mack Park. These improvements would not have been possible without careful planning through the City's Capital Improvement Program which funded all of these enhancements. This work is another example of the City's commitment to improving neighborhood parks and playgrounds throughout the community.

City Profits Over \$270,000 from Haunted Happenings

The City of Salem made a profit of over \$270,000 from the month of October this year. This marks an increase of approximately \$70,000 when compared to last year and a \$150,000 increase when compared to 2006 when Mayor Driscoll first took Office.

In total, the City took in a little over \$440,000 but incurred close to \$170,000 in extra staffing, supplies and event expenses associated with the festivities during October and, specifically on Halloween

night. These revenues do not include the estimated \$90,000 in additional hotel/motel receipts that the City expects to garner in connection with the visitors that October draws to Salem making the total profit closer to \$360,000.

The vast majority of the City's revenue is collected through parking fees and meters. The City also benefits from higher than average profits at the City-owned Witch House through monies generated from admission and the gift shop.

It's also worth it to mention that the

Police Department, under the leadership of first year Chief Paul Tucker, controlled spending this year and by doing so was able to save approximately \$50,000 in expenses largely attributable to utilizing the Police Station on Margin

Street as the operations center on Halloween night rather than the mobile center usually provided by the North Eastern Massachusetts Law Enforcement Council or NEMLEC.

This year, Halloween fell on a Saturday which drew close to 100,000 visitors to

Salem. While crowds were probably larger than they ever have been people were relatively well-behaved and, at the end of the night dispersed orderly and peacefully.

On Halloween, similar to prior years the City had specific, strategic entertainment throughout the night. Last year, for the first time, a closing ceremony was planned to signal a festive close to the night and to the Halloween season. In addition to entertaining the crowds, the closing ceremony is an important public safety tool, giving the crowd a clear indication that they have had their fun, the night is over, and it is time to go

home.

This year, fireworks were once again ignited over the North River viewable from Washington Street as part of Halloween's closing ceremony. In addition, the City and Destination Salem teamed up with Boston's Radio 92.9 to produce a Haunted Happenings finale concert. The concert featured *Dancing Nancy* and *Dick and Jane* as an opening act. The concert was held on a mobile stage on Washington Street at Lynde Street.

There were other initiatives planned to help ensure a safe and enjoyable Halloween. A Safety Enhancement Zone was designated and individuals who violated the law (public drinking, littering, vandalism, etc.) were issued triple fines. Once again this year, this was a highly effective tool for the Police Department to deter unlawful and undesirable behavior. The City also distributed "do's and don'ts" flyers leading up to Halloween to visitors and residents so that the expectations for a safe and enjoyable Halloween day and night were well known in advance.

The City has had a consistent public safety message for the last 3 years now and it appears to be paying off!



Decorated head of Criminal Investigation Division takes the reigns

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Chief, Paul was a leader in the Department, serving as the most senior, highest ranking officer under Chief Robert St. Pierre.

Chief Tucker's professional experience and qualifications are widespread.

He is a graduate of the Federal Bureau of Investigation National Academy, the Federal Law Enforcement Training Center Advanced Narcotics Investiga-

tion Unit and is the current Director of the North Shore Drug Task Force. Paul has training in high intensity drug trafficking and other specialized

law enforcement education.

In addition to his over 20 years of service with the Salem Police Department, Paul has earned his Juris Doctor from the Massachusetts School

of Law graduating with Magna Cum Laude honors. He also holds Bachelor and Master degrees in the field of Criminal Justice.

A formal swearing in ceremony took place on Thursday, October 1st at Old Town Hall in Salem. The swearing in ceremony included elected officials and other dignitaries from across the region, including Public Safety Secretary Kevin Burke and Essex County District Attorney Jon Blodgett.

October 1st also happens to be Paul Tucker's birthday and the large crowd enjoyed having a chance to congratulate the new Chief and welcome him to the new position.

Tucker's appointment follows the retirement of former Police Chief Robert St. Pierre who served in that role for 25 years.



SalemRecycles Named 2009 Municipal Green Binnie Award Winner

MassRecycle, the Massachusetts Recycling Coalition, named SalemRecycles the 2009 Municipal Green Binnie Award Winner.

The Green Binnie awards acknowledge individuals and organizations for their outstanding contributions to recycling in the state. The awards were presented at MassRecycle's 20th Anniversary Celebration & Annual Recycling Awards on Thursday, November 12th, 2009 at the Charles River Museum of Industry and Innovation in Waltham.



SalemRecycles, the City of Salem's Volunteer Recycling Committee, began working to increase recycling and reuse through education and idea exchange in early 2008. Since the group's inception, the City has seen a 100+% increase in recycling rates and a 25% reduction in trash tonnage. This dramatic shift is a result of SalemRecycles' efforts to create a comprehensive recycling outreach program for residents, businesses and local events and organizations.

SalemRecycles contributes to local access TV segments, submits a periodic

column to the Salem Gazette, hosted a community book swap and held a shredding day for residents this year. They have also established a Recycler of the Month program to identify and thank residents who partake in the City's recycling program. In the Fall of 2008, the group partnered with local organizations to hold a Business Recycling Forum and is now working to develop a green business award. SalemRecycles is currently working with the MBTA to create a paper-recycling program at the train station. You can learn more about SalemRecycles' accomplishments at www.salem.com/recycling.

City to Install Automated Kiosks in Parking Lots

Soon the Church Street and City-owned MBTA parking lots will be home to new automated parking kiosks or pay-and-display units.

As part of the City's Capital Improvement Program, a total of \$50,000 was appropriated to purchase new automated parking kiosks to install in the Church Street and City-owned MBTA parking lots. Many communities, including Boston and Lowell are utilizing this technology to make operations more efficient and convenient for consumers. 5 units will be located at Church Street and 2 will be located at the MBTA City-owned lot. The ma-

chines allow customers to use not only cash but also credit and debit cards for payment.

On Church Street, the old gates at the exit and entrance as well as the attendant booth at the exit will be removed. New posts and signage has been installed to identify and number the parking spaces. Once the machines are installed and fully functioning, the City will reap financial savings allowing the lot to operate without employees staffing it full-time. It will also save money on

maintenance costs on the existing aging equipment. The City-owned MBTA parking lot will also benefit from new automated parking machines. The new kiosks will replace the old equipment which is not user-friendly and at times not all that functional.

The City expects the machines to be fully operational this month. For the first few weeks, the City will have "ambassadors" at each location to assist and educate people on how to use the new machines.



City Receives \$1 Million PWED Grant from State

The Massachusetts Executive Office of Transportation has announced that the City of Salem has been awarded a \$1 million Public Works Economic Development (PWED) Grant to fund the Lafayette Street Improvement Project.

With this funding, the City plans to make infrastructure improvements to and completely reconfigure the intersection on Lafayette Street at Washington Street and Dow Street. The project specifically includes streetscape improvements along Lafayette Street from Harbor to Washington and Dow Street. The work includes traffic improvements and sidewalk reconstruction as well as reconfiguring the intersection to function more efficiently



and safer.

A report completed by the Central Transportation Planning Staff (CTPS) for the Boston Region Metropolitan Planning Organization indicated that the Dow, Washington and Lafayette intersection was operating at substandard levels - Level of Service D and F during the morning and afternoon peak hours. In addition, the data showed that this location had a high number of accidents, in particular it had a higher number of pedestrian related crashes. The CTPS report identified a number of shortfalls at this intersection for both motor vehicle operators and pedestrians and outlined some suggested short and long term improvements. This grant will support enhanced traffic and infrastructure improvements at this

busy Route 114 corridor based on many of the recommendations in the CTPS study.

The City is extremely thankful to its state delegation, Senator Fred Berry and Representative John Keenan, and the Patrick Administration for identifying this project for PWED funding. With the former St. Joseph's Church slated for redevelopment these improvements become even more necessary.

The Executive Office of Transportation provides PWED funding awards to municipalities for transportation infrastructure improvements that will spur economic development, job creation, smart growth and better pedestrian access. In this latest round of PWED funding, the Patrick Administration will direct a total of \$8.6 million in infrastructure grants to projects in eight communities across the Commonwealth.

City Solicits Local Businesses to Sponsor Solar Trash Compactors

The City of Salem, in collaboration with the City's Renewable Energy Task Force, is asking local businesses to sponsor solar powered trash compactors the City owns and has placed throughout the downtown. Businesses may contact City Hall to have their business design name or logo placed on a sponsorship ad panel. The cost to sponsor a trash compactor is \$500 for a year.

By way of the sponsorship ad panels,



businesses are not only provided an affordable means of a year's worth of advertising, they are also contributing to the current and future beautification and "greening" of Salem. All money raised from the sponsorship of the compactors will go towards future renewable energy and energy efficiency projects for the City.

Of all the municipalities throughout the country which utilize Big Belly Solar Trash Compactors, Salem is one of the first to sell ad space on the units. The BigBelly attracts a lot of attention

from the general public and the media, making it a great platform for these purposes. Smartly, the City is not only taking advantage of the operational efficiency benefits that the BigBelly brings to the table, but also are using them for public service messaging and advertising.

The designs for the sponsorship ad panels were approved by the Salem Redevelopment Authority. The City will partner with Digital Imaging to print and laminate the ad panels.

For further information about buying a sponsorship ad panel, contact Tom Watkins at (978) 619-5696.

SalemRecycles Hosts Second Annual Free Book Swap

Over this past weekend, SalemRecycles hosted their second annual Book Swap.

Salem Recycles, the City's Recycling Committee, once again sponsored the free book swap at St. Peter's Church on St. Peter Street on



Saturday. The crowds this year were even bigger than last years. Many residents participated and shared their old books, CDs, DVDs and videos and took home a whole new selection for their family and friends—just in time for the holidays!

Those interested were able to drop items off at St. Peter's Church on the Friday before the event and on Saturday morning.

All items were loosely categorized to help in the hunt for free entertainment and all 'unswapped' leftover items will be reused or recycled.

Project Lifesaver Program to be Implemented in Salem

The City of Salem through its Council on Aging and Police Department has secured funding to implement the Project Lifesaver Program for seniors and others.

The Project Lifesaver Program helps communities provide rapid response to save lives and reduce serious injury of adults and children who wander due to illness or disability. LoJack

will provide equipment, training, certification and support to Salem's Police Department to operate the Pro-



ject Lifesaver Program. Essentially, the participant is given a bracelet to wear that has LoJack technology built in. There are over 1,000 agencies that participate in the program

across the United States, Canada and Australia. In total, there have been over 1,900 searches in the last 10 years with an astounding 100% success rate.

The program will be funded through a combination of private sources including \$1,250 from the Salem Rotary, \$1,250 from the City Trust Fund Commission and \$500 from Dominion Energy equaling \$3,000 the total cost of the

program. The Salem Police Department, in coordination with the Council on Aging, will be responsible for the management of the program.

The LoJack finding equipment will be installed at the Police Station including 2 locator boxes and 2 handheld devices which will be stored in police cruisers. Each resident who is interested in signing-up for the program should contact the Council on Aging at (978) 744-0924.

The City expects the program to be up and running by the Thanksgiving holiday. Participating residents will be charged a \$30 per month fee to pay for the operation, management and maintenance of the program.

Over \$1 Million Certified as Free Cash in Salem

The Department of Revenue (DOR) has certified the City's Free Cash level for Fiscal Year 2010 at \$1,261,200.

Free Cash is typically derived from unexpended budget dollars and/or higher than anticipated revenues from the prior fiscal year. Upon Mayor Kimberley Driscoll taking office, just about every penny of the City's Free Cash account was used to balance budget shortfalls, leaving the City in a very precarious financial position with little savings to rely upon for unanticipated or unforeseen needs. In fact, in FY06 the City's Free Cash reserves stood at just \$538,372.

Since that time period the Administration and City Council have worked collectively to improve the City's fiscal health. As such, Salem's Free Cash

reserve balance has grown in each of the prior three years from \$538,372, to \$1,114,950 last year, and now to \$1,261,200. Some of the steps the City has taken beyond frugal budgeting include: regular budget forecasting; improved operating and capital budget procedures; preparation of a Five Year Capital Improvement Program (CIP); preparation of Comprehensive Annual Financial Reports (CAFR), and the adoption of Fiscal Reserve Policies. All of these efforts have been aimed at rebuilding the City's reserves and putting the City on firmer financial footing. The result of these actions is that the City now has a level of certified Free Cash that will put Salem in a better position to deal with current and future revenue uncertainties. The City is by no means "out of the woods" from

a budget perspective, but certainly is in a better position than three years ago and that is important considering the strong likelihood of cutbacks in Local Aid to cities and towns.

The increases seen over the last three years are directly attributable to the City's responsible budgeting practices and policies, difficult choices made over the last 3 years and cooperative spirit that exists between the Administrative and Legislative branches of government.

A portion of the free cash certified has been transferred – 20% to the City's Stabilization Fund and 20% to the Capital Improvement Program Fund – consistent with the City's Financial Reserve Policies.

City Plans Customer Service Training for Employees

In an attempt to continually improve the way in which Salem's City government communicates with the public the City has organized customer service trainings for all employees who have regular contact with residents.

The Massachusetts Interlocal Insurance Association (MIIA) is the City's property and casualty insurance provider. In addition to insurance coverage, MIIA provides the City with a wide range of services including high-quality wellness

programs, risk management and claims administration. MIIA specializes in insurance coverage for municipalities and other governmental agencies in the Commonwealth. As part of the programming offered to Salem, MIIA is sponsoring two customer service training sessions this month.

Sometimes with limited resources, it's easy to let the small things fall through the cracks. However, for most Salem residents their main interactions with

the City are while registering concerns, comments and requests with various departments. Ensuring that City staff is courteous to all residents and responsive to their needs is extremely important.

These seminars will provide participants with specific skills for offering 5-star service in person and on the telephone, strategies for dealing with difficult customers, and tips for providing excellent service even when you don't feel like it.

Salem Days at the Museum of Science a Huge Success

Almost 3,000 Salem residents visited the Museum of Science free of charge during the month of September as part of a pilot program sponsored by the Read Family Charitable Trust.

The City is very thankful to the Read Charitable Trust whose generosity allowed all Salem residents the opportunity to visit the Museum of Science free of charge during September Salem Days. This first of its kind program has been lauded as a tremendous success. On average, nearly 100 people a day took advantage of free admission to the museum's 700 exhib-

its and watched one of the five shows playing at the Mugar Omni Theater.

Through this program the Museum of Science welcomed nearly 2,800 Salem residents to experience its exhibits, programs, and films free of charge. The City and Museum look forward to continuing the partnership with the Read Family Trust next year.



The Read Trust has a long history of generosity with the City of Salem from funding the annual Read Fund Picnic which has added a science education component in recent years to funding science teachers and more re-

cently underwriting Read Discovery Science Centers in each of Salem's schools. September was chosen as the month to launch this program to give an opportunity for parents to share learning experiences with their children to help students get excited about science as they begin their school year.

Clearly the numbers show that a wide range of Salem's population took advantage of this program. Museum visitors for the month of September totaled 2,743. Six hundred ninety-one visitors being between the ages of 3 to 11; 1,776 visitors ranged from age 12 to 59; and 276 visitors were senior citizens (60 and up). All involved look forward to continuing to grow this initiative over the next two years.

Salem Public Library: Highest Circulation North of Boston

The Salem Public Library had its highest circulation ever in FY09 with 537,375 books, dvds, and cds borrowed from the historic building on Essex Street. Not only that, the Library in Salem has the highest circulation of any public library North of Boston. This is quite a feat given the size of our community.

The Library also has the highest circulation in NOBLE (North of Boston Library Exchange) an automated network of 28 area libraries. In comparison, neighboring libraries in Peabody circulated 281,863 items, Beverly 401,212 and Marblehead 219,278. With a population of slightly over 42,000 residents, an astonishing 31,956 Salem citizens have library cards.



The Library offers an amazing array of information, services and other resources to residents who have library cards online as well. In addition to their amazing circulation numbers, you can find out what programming options are available at the Library, if the books you are looking for are in and determine what museum passes are available to purchase at the Library all from the convenience of your home.

The Library is housed in a wonderful building located in Salem's historic district. It was originally built as a home for Captain John Bertram and his family. The building was donated to the City of Salem by his wife and daughters following his death and the Public Library opened its doors on July

8, 1889.

The Library is open seven days a week, Monday – Thursday 9 am to 9 pm, Friday and Saturday 9 am to 5pm and Sunday 1pm to 5pm. You can visit the Library during these times to discover its selection of books, movies, music and more for all ages.

The City is so proud of our Library, its amazing staff and the terrific offerings we make available to our residents. With limited resources, the Library continues to serve the City at a very high level. If you haven't recently, please find the time to come and visit the Library to enjoy all of the resources that are available in a very warm and comfortable setting. You can also check out the Library's website at www.noblenet.org/Salem.

Farmers Market Ends Successful Season

In June 2009, the long anticipated Salem Farmers' Market opened in Derby Square to a very successful season organized by Salem Main Streets. The market ran for 19 weeks and hosted 20 vendors.

Each week the market was filled with fresh fruits and vegetables from local farms, fresh lobsters from a local Lob-



sterman, hand made soaps and even fresh bread and baked goods. Salem's own Maitland Mountain Farm provided one of the most popular items; fresh eggs. Several thousand people came each week to enjoy the market which ran through October 29th. The market renewed a Salem tradition which first started in 1634, the year Salem was first authorized by the Massachusetts General Assembly to hold a weekly market. Attendance figures for

the 2009 market season exceeded 36,000. In addition to fantastic produce the market served as a community gathering place enlivening Derby Square every Thursday from 4 – 7 pm. The market hosted many local musicians playing soft background music and many Salem restaurants which provided cooking demonstrations and food samples. The market was the result of the work of Salem Main Streets' Farmers Market Committee, dedicated local volunteers and coordinated support by City departments.

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Mayor Kimberley Driscoll's FYI SALEM

Volume 3, Issue 2

A Quarterly Newsletter for the Citizens of Salem

March 2010



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To contact Mayor Driscoll write to Salem City Hall 93 Washington Street Salem, MA 01970, call (978) 745-9595 ext. 5600 or email at mayor@salem.com.

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Message from Mayor Kimberley Driscoll

Welcome to another edition of the *FYI Salem* quarterly newsletter.

We find ourselves in the heart of the budget season. As I meet individually with each municipal department head it becomes clearer and clearer that we will need to continue finding ways to operate more efficiently and think creatively about how to generate additional revenues or risk severe cutbacks in core municipal services. I'd like to take this opportunity to highlight a few things that we are actively working on toward this end.

I am strongly advocating for something that is called health insurance plan design control. Under current state law, cities/towns can not make any changes to the health insurance plans they offer employees, including changes in co-pays, without approval of a majority of their employee unions. You may remember that last year I asked all 8 of our unions to agree to a modest increase in their co-pays from \$5 to \$15, which could have avoided any reductions

in staff and services. At the time, the result was disappointing with all 8 unions refusing to agree to a co-pay increase, thus forcing the city to layoff personnel and impact services.

This year, mayors and city/town managers are working hard to promote a change in law that would allow these types of health insurance co-pay changes to be accomplished outside of the collective bargaining process. In Salem alone, a change from a \$5 to \$15 co-pay would save close to \$1 million. We desperately need the state legislature to act on this matter and change the law to allow cities and towns the ability to manage their health insurance costs and preserve services residents have come to expect and certainly deserve given the property taxes being paid. If you agree, please contact your legislators and advocate for this change as I have.

In addition, the City is close to finalizing an agreement with the Town of Swampscott to regionalize our Purchasing Departments. This regional

approach is one that we need to continue to deliver services and conduct city business in a more efficient and effective manner. While last year we encountered stiff opposition to the concept of regionalizing public health services, this year the Board of Health is once again contemplating the potential benefits of a more collaborative approach with respect to public health. State health code regulations do not stop at our city limits and I believe they could be administered and enforced in a more efficient manner if done regionally.

In this edition of *FYI Salem*, you'll read about the new elevator project at City Hall, a dramatic increase in the City's recycling rates, the Bridge Street/Route 1A project starting and a new street sweeping schedule.

As Spring unfolds, I remain optimistic about the City, our continued progress and what lies ahead. I hope you do too. Please enjoy reading the updates contained in the pages ahead.

Kimberley Driscoll

New Businesses Still Coming to Salem

Despite the economy, the City of Salem is still attracting a slew of new businesses. Over the last few months, a number of new retailers and restaurants have chosen to invest in our City. The list is quite impressive.

Greenland Café, located next door to City Hall on Washington Street, is under construction and hopes to open for service by late Spring. Greenland Café expects to serve coffee and pastry in the morning and gourmet sandwiches and tapas for lunch and dinner.

The build-out of the restaurant is coming along quite nicely and will be beautiful once completed later this Spring.

Hip Baby Gear, a new store located in the same block as Greenland Café in the Kins-
Continued to Page 6

Salem City Hall Elevator under Construction

A long awaited elevator for Salem City Hall is finally under construction! The elevator will replace the current chair lift system, which provides limited accessibility to the second floor of the building. The elevator will be housed in a small addition at the rear of City Hall where the current ramp into the building is located.

The elevator project has undergone several re-designs and delays over the past 20 years; primarily due to financial constraints. The project is now moving forward with the assistance of American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA) funds. In July of this year, the City of Salem received



\$305,977 in Community Development Block Grant-Recovery (CDBG-R) funds from the Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD). Eligible uses of the CDBG-R funds include handicap accessibility improvements, such as the construction of an elevator.

The elevator design was most recently updated by Gray Architects of Salem in 2007.

The new design calls for the removal of the existing handicap ramp. In its place will be a glass enclosed lobby. The lobby will be entered at ground level, with elevator stops at the first and second floors. A variance was received from the Architectural Access Board (AAB) from a third floor elevator stop, as this floor is not

used for public purposes. The elevator addition went through a design review process because it is located in the City's Urban Renewal District. It was approved by the Salem Redevelopment Authority in July 2007.

In October, the City released a Request for Bids for the construction of the elevator. The lowest bidder for general contractor services was New England Builders, of Methuen. The construction supervision will be led by Gray Architects. The elevator is slated to be completed by May 1, 2010.

The new elevator addition is a long overdue improvement to the City Hall building, the second oldest operating City Hall in America. This addition will greatly enhance City Hall's accessibility and, as a result, our ability to better serve all of Salem's residents.

Salem Recycling Rate Hits New Milestone

In December, and for the first time since Salem began its curbside recycle program, the City has achieved a 21% recycling rate. This means that 21% of curbside collection represents materials that are recyclable: paper, plastics, metal and glass. For calendar year 2009 the city achieved a recycling rate average of 18% comparing very favorably to other North Shore communities.

Two years ago the Massachusetts Department of Environmental Protection reported that Salem had one of the lowest recycling rates on the North Shore at around 9%. At that time the City put out to bid and negotiated a new solid waste and recycling collection and disposal contract that limited household trash pickup to three 35 gallon barrels, and increased recycling to weekly pickup.

In addition, SalemRecycles, the City's Recycling Committee, began an aggressive education and awareness campaign to inform residents of the new curbside pickup guidelines and to disseminate information on best recycling practices. The commit-

tee has also initiated and partnered with other community groups and businesses on a variety of educational events. They have branded the Salem-Recycles logo and produced educational information including postcards, fact sheets and book marks.



In early December 2009, the City of Salem and SalemRecycles in collaboration with North Shore Recycled Fiber, a division of the Newark Group, unveiled the latest initiative - the Perfect Pick-Up contest. Salem residents can register online at Salem.com/recycling under Perfect Pick-up. One household is drawn weekly, and upon verification of good recycling practices (via in person inspection with photo) the winner is awarded a \$50 check by the Newark Group. To date there have been nine winners, who are also invited to participate in other city-sponsored 'green' initiatives.

Thanks to all the Salem citizens who participate in the curbside recycling program and helped Salem achieve the 21% December recycling rate! Please help the City to maintain this great recycling rate by following recy-

cling do's and don'ts for paper and co-mingled items.

For paper you can recycle anything that rips - magazines, catalogs, phone books, paper back books, dry food and medicine boxes (cereal, aspirin, crackers, etc.) You cannot recycle any type of plastic bags curbside, but do return them to your grocery store. You cannot recycle foil juice boxes, milk and juice cartons with the plastic spout (carton is recyclable if the spout is removed), wax cardboard, or foil laminated paper (chip bags).

Salem also recycles what is described as co-mingled-aluminum cans (soda), steel cans (food), plastic bottles and plastic containers with a 1-7 recycling symbol, and glass bottles. You cannot recycle plastic without a number, Styrofoam, or light bulbs (please return to Home Depot or Whole Foods), aerosol cans or plastic bags. Any molded plastic cannot be recycled (yogurt, sour cream containers) even if there is a 1-7 within the recycling arrows.

The Newark Group also offers free recycling drop off and confidential shredding at 53 Jefferson Avenue.

Kernwood Country Club Makes Donation to help City fight Vandalism

The Kernwood Country Club has generously donated \$6,200 to the Salem Police Department allowing them to purchase state-of-the-art technology aimed at preventing graffiti.

This piece of equipment called the FlashCAM-880 will provide the Police Department another "tool in the toolbox" to deter vandalism and anti-social behavior including graffiti, illegal dumping and other illicit activity. The camera senses motion of up to 100 feet away and then begins taking high-resolution digital photographs along with a bright flash of light and loud voice message warning intruders. It is portable and can be moved from place to place which will allow the Police Department to target problem areas

across the City.

A few years back the Kernwood Country Club made another generous donation which allowed the Department to purchase the very successful 3-wheeled T-3 vehicles. The T-3 vehicles have vastly improved our community policing efforts and this new equipment will allow us to take advantage of available technology to continue this trend. Last year, they donated a similar amount to the Fire Department toward the purchase of emergency preparedness equipment.

Taking advantage of technological advances has been a recent focus of the

City's Police Department as part of their ongoing efforts to accomplish as much as possible with limited resources. Over the last two years, in addition to this camera and the T-3 vehicles already mentioned, the Police Department has purchased a digital license plate reader and installed surveillance cameras in our downtown.

As a City, we extend our sincere thanks to the

Kernwood Country Club for this generous donation and continued commitment to the community. You can read more about this impressive piece of equipment at www.qstartech.com.



Bridge Street/Route 1A Reconstruction Project Begins

The City's next large-scale roadway improvement project has begun. The reconstruction of Bridge Street 1A, from the Salem-Beverly Bridge to the Bypass Road, is the next in a long succession of roadway improvement projects that have been completed under the administration of Mayor Kimberley Driscoll. Newport Construction, of Nashua, New Hampshire, was recently selected by the Massachusetts Department of Transportation (MassDOT) to construct the project at a cost of \$6.9 million. This project is expected to take close to two years to complete, with most of the heavy roadway work completed by the end of the 2010 construction season.

After investing significantly in the design and engineering, the City has made this project a top priority and sought construction funding from the American Recovery & Reinvestment Act through the state Transportation Improvement Program. We've invested over \$500,000 in the design, permitting and public approval proc-

ess, through many neighborhood meetings. The businesses and residents of Bridge Street are ready for these improvements to the roadway. Once completed, the new roadway will provide the base for a revitalization of the entire neighborhood.



The construction work will consist primarily of removing the top 18-inches of roadway, regrading the road sub-base, then reconstructing the road. In addition, new utilities including drains, water mains, and sewers will be rebuilt as neces-

sary. New sidewalks, curbing and street and intersection lighting will also be installed. Finally, a new bike path shall be constructed from the end of the existing path at the by-pass road to the existing path at Cross Street.

Businesses and residents of the neighborhood are cautioned that this type of heavy construction will likely be dirty, noisy and dusty; however, the construction oversight team is dedicated to minimizing impacts and responding to concerns. Businesses will remain open in the area and continued patronage is encouraged.

Hours of construction shall be 7 AM to

3:30 PM, Monday through Friday, and started last week and will continue through early December. No regularly scheduled work will be allowed on holidays or weekends, except if given written permission in advance by the City.

The City Engineering Department will be coordinating the construction work with MassDOT's Resident Engineer, Mr. Bernard LaVita, who is responsible for the day to day oversight of Newport's activities. Mr. LaVita's telephone number is 978.804.0690 and residents can call him directly if they have any questions relative to the project. National Grid Gas and Electric crews have been working on Bridge Street for the last month to relocate and replace their conduits to avoid conflict with the Bridge Street work and to ensure utility upgrades are completed before the new pavement is down.

To keep resident and businesses updated on the construction schedule, the City plans to utilize the local newspapers, cable television, CTY-Connect and the city website. There may be short periods of time between construction activities that the road is left with a rough surface or manhole structures are raised, prior to final paving. Residents and drivers on such streets are urged to use caution as it is an active construction site.

Salem Awarded \$250,000 for Regional Policing Efforts

Thanks to the hard work of Congressman John Tierney, the City of Salem has been awarded \$250,000 to fund regional efforts to pool resources to better solve crimes, address criminal trends and train officers.

Last May, the Salem Police Department, in collaboration with the surrounding communities of Beverly, Danvers, Hamilton, Wenham and the Salem State College Campus

Police, jointly prepared a request to fund a regional approach to law enforcement. The \$250,000 appropriation is expected to fund improvements in the fields of crime, information technology as well as fingerprint and video evidence analysis.



The City is very thankful to Congressman Tierney for his advocacy to secure this funding in Congress's annual spending bill. Given the current financial situation affecting the state and many communities, without this funding we could not afford to implement this regional approach which undoubtedly will save money over the long term and make us more effective and efficient at solving crime in Salem and the North Shore.

This regional project is intended to reduce the financial impact on individual departments by sharing the cost of technological support personnel and equipment. As an added benefit, this will also foster a more collaborative approach to investigating crimes and training law enforce-

ment personnel. Police departments are making great strides in sharing information as criminal activity continues to cross community lines; however, we need additional technology and the personnel to support it to effectively provide police support services in a rapidly changing, highly technological time.

When the economy declines we know criminal activity tends to increase, so this funding is more important than ever. It ensures that the involved agencies have the ability to work collaboratively on resolving issues that cross city lines and use technology to our advantage to better analyze and address criminal trends.

This annual spending bill (H.R. 3288, FY 2010 Consolidated Appropriations) was recently approved.

Salem and Peabody Awarded Grant

The City of Salem, in collaboration with the City of Peabody, has been awarded grant funding through the District Local Technical Assistance program of the Metropolitan Area Planning Council (MAPC).

The Cities of Salem and Peabody will collaborate on the development of a consistent corridor plan to redevelop and improve Boston and Main Street. This corridor is a major roadway connecting the two communities, specifically connecting Salem to downtown Peabody. While the final scope of the project is still being finalized, it will include components like analyzing various land use issues and developing a shared plan for revitalization of the corridor through enhancement of existing retail areas, identifying housing/mixed use opportunities, potential rezoning, and multi-modal transportation improvements. This plan would be the first plan for Salem and Peabody that crosses municipal boundaries.

Currently, a mix of retail and residen-

tial uses exists along the entire stretch of Boston/Main Street. Salem and Peabody propose to review the existing and historic land use and zoning along this corridor in both municipalities to determine where there are inconsistencies and opportunities for renewed vitality. The exact



boundaries of this project area will be the intersection of Boston and Bridge Streets in Salem to Peabody Square (intersection of Main/Lowell, Foster/Central Streets), approximately one mile in length. Issues to be analyzed include land use, zoning, economic development opportunities, housing, open space, and pedestrian and bicyclist safety. Residential areas will be assessed to better understand the current housing stock, as well as the housing demands in this area. The plan will identify areas where mixed use development, including housing and retail, would be appropriate.

Undergraduate students from Salem State College will assist MAPC with this project by completing the initial

data collection, including demographic information, current and historic land-use patterns, zoning, and observations of current multi-modal transportation circulation. The students have already begun to collect the data and will share the information with MAPC throughout the project.

Residents, businesses, and other stakeholders from both communities will be included throughout the process. The final result of this initiative will hopefully include a joint agreement on goals and objectives for the corridor, a concept plan for the enhancement and redevelopment of the corridor, support for zoning ordinance amendments that would ensure that redevelopment is consistent between the two communities, and identification of multi-modal transportation priorities that extend across municipal boundaries.

This is great example of how the Cities of Salem and Peabody can benefit from working collaboratively on common interests. It is vitally important that both communities have seats at the table in order to reach agreement on how we would like this important entrance corridor to look in the future.

City Plans to Launch Anti-Speeding Campaign this Spring

Based on extensive commentary received at neighborhood meetings held this past Fall, the City and the Salem Police Department are working on the implementation of a city-wide Anti-Speeding Campaign.

This Traffic Safety Campaign entitled, **Go Fast, Get Fined**, will combine enhanced police enforcement with education and awareness aimed at reducing the number of motorists speeding on Salem roadways.

This Spring, the City of Salem Police Department will be conducting city-wide anti-speeding saturation patrols as part of an effort to remind motorists of the need to slow down in Salem neighborhoods. In addition, residents, neighborhood associations and municipal officials are also being asked to take on an active role in the anti-speeding campaign by



alerting friends, family and neighbors about the enhanced enforcement activity and reminding all motorists that speeding vehicles and traffic violations impact overall safety and erode the quality of life in our neighborhoods.

Nearly every neighborhood has identified speeding as a problem in need of attention. As part of the campaign, new speed radar signs will be installed to alert motorists of travel in excess of the posted limits. Speeding cars are a big problem and a leading cause of traffic accidents. The goal of the **Go Fast, Get Fined** campaign is to remind residents to slow down and help keep city streets safe for pedestrians, cyclists, and other motorists.

The best way to tackle a city-wide problem like speeding is to work together in a collaborative way to increase enforcement, educate motorists about the need to slow down to keep their neighborhood safe, and make sure residents are aware of the impact that speeding cars have on the overall qual-

ity of life in our City.

The main objective of this initiative is to deter speeding. We need your help to make this a success! Please tell your neighbors about the **Go Fast, Get Fined** effort and encourage them to spread the word to their friends, family and co-workers. Please work with the Salem Police Department to identify the roadways and areas that you are most concerned about when it comes to speeding and traffic violations. The Police Department has a very good list already, but the more we hear directly from you about these trouble spots, the more effective enforcement efforts can be.

Lastly, and most importantly, please don't speed. Many times when the Police Department participates in selective traffic enforcement, we end up ticketing residents and neighbors of the very street that we have received complaints about.

City works to Remove Unsightly Double Telephone Poles



State law bars double poles from staying up over 90 days.

The 10 North communities with the most double poles as of April 30:

Community	Poles
1 Salem	361
2 Malden	333
3 Lowell	322
4 Lawrence	287
5 Melrose	271
6 Haverhill	265
7 Stoneham	244
8 Woburn	228
9 Billerica	211
10 Somerville	192

SOURCE: Mass. Department of Public Utilities

In conjunction with Salem neighborhood groups, the City has taken aim at double telephone poles and the pace at which utility companies work to remove them.

Legislation has been filed in both the State's House of Representatives and Senate, House Bill 3060 and Senate Bill 1543 respectively, that would establish a procedure for cities and towns to impose fines when utility companies have not complied with the 90-day time period mandated by law to remove these so-called "double poles."

To advocate for the passage of this bill, the City's Neighborhood Improvement Advisory Commission is helping to coordinate a postcard and letter writing campaign. To date, close to 100 postcards from Salem residents have been generated and mailed to the State House in support of this important measure.

Double poles cause several problems in our community including issues with

access for the disabled, pedestrian concerns, safety hazards and are often the source of blight. Unfortunately, at this time the 90-day period is not adhered to and communities do not have any way to enforce this regulation. This bill would change that and allow cities and towns to assess a fine of no more than \$1,000 per occurrence. We hope this will motivate utility companies to remove double poles within 90 days.

You may have read a recent article in the Boston Globe which highlighted this problem and focused on the north of Boston region. Salem was listed at the top of the list as the community with the most double poles north of Boston.

If residents are interested in helping the City change this dubious distinction and pass this important bill they should contact the Mayor's Office for more information and for copies of postcards.

Business Investment Alive and Well in Salem

Continued from Page 1

man Building, recently completed renovations and is open for business offering clothing and products for babies and young children, including classes and lectures geared for new parents.

Mud Puddle Toys, based out of Marblehead, is opening a Salem store on the pedestrian mall in the former Digital Imaging space next to Rockafellas. Mud Puddle Toys sells eco-friendly products and offers a unique selection of toys for kids big and small.

Café Valverde Coffee Roasters is a new café that has opened up in the former Fuel site, also on the pedestrian mall

at 196 Essex Street. Up until now, Valverde has imported coffee beans mostly over the internet but now plans to run his own shop.

Adriatic Restaurant, which will be occupying the space formerly housing Edge-water Café, is expected to open this April offering Mediterranean fare with brick oven pizza.

Roost Urban Country Design recently opened its doors at 40 Front Street. At Roost, you'll find an original mix of art, furniture, gifts, accessories, lighting, jewelry & bath products.



And lastly, Coven, a new café/dessert bar (and highlighted in another story in this newsletter) is planning to open at 281 Essex (the last spot in the former Tompkins Furniture building). The owners are relocating from New York and have described their concept as having a 50's retro/comic book vibe.

Please frequent these new businesses, as well as our veteran stalwarts, and support the City's local economy. Our business community is second to none on the North Shore and the more we, as a City, support it the better off our overall community will be.

Community Schools Program Unveiled

This past fall the City's Park, Recreation & Community Services Department partnered with the Salem School Department to offer enrichment programs in the schools directly after dismissal. Programs have been offered at Witchcraft Heights Elementary, Bates Elementary, Saltonstall Elementary, and Bentley Elementary. Programs started at Horace Mann Elementary in January.

Many of these Community Schools Programs have proved to be a success, often generating a waitlist with requests from parents to offer additional sessions. Some of the programs that have been offered include: Develop Your Creativity Through Painting & Crafts, Rockin' Romans, Explore The World With Food & Crafts, and Young Artists/Famous Artists.

The City is looking to add to the pro-

grams currently being offered next school year. The School Department is distributing flyers to students and parents to promote the programs and to allow them to register early as these programs are popular and fill up quickly.

If you have any questions or are interested in leading a program, please contact Eileen Dunn at (978) 744-0180, ext. 20.

City Receives Grant for Power Plant Study

Last month, the state announced that the Massachusetts Clean Energy Center awarded \$200,000 for the City of Salem to fund a 12-month feasibility study that would examine potential reuse options for the current Salem Power Plant site currently owned by Dominion Energy.

The purpose of the study is to examine the facility's short and long-term capital plans and environmental compliance investments, as well as exploring potential clean energy and green technology alternatives which may be utilized at the facility. In addition, the study will examine the facility's role in the context of electric supply and

related reliability needs for northeastern MA and within the NE-ISO region. Finally, the study will examine potential costs involved with remediation and decommissioning of the plant in the event of a potential closure. Lastly, and very importantly the study will examine the issues with an eye toward the impacts associated with jobs and tax revenues generated at this site

The City of Salem will be issuing a Request for Proposals (RFP), in coordination with the Executive Office of Energy and Environmental Affairs and the Clean En-

ergy Center, to select a consultant to conduct this study. The City is close to finalizing the RFP and will be issuing it soon. As part of this study, the City will be establishing an advisory group of important local stakeholders to help move this study ahead.



This study is critically important to Salem in planning for our future. Having a strong understanding of the power plant's short and long-term plans is the only responsible course for the City. It will help us better understand our financial and development planning efforts in the years ahead.

Common Cause Recognizes City's Website for Fourth Straight Year

For the fourth year running, the City of Salem's website has once again been recognized by Common Cause Massachusetts as one of the best in the entire state.

The City is pleased to have been continually recognized for our efforts in opening up the process of government. Since taking office, we have been able to achieve many improvements to the City's website from posting meeting agendas and minutes to automatic email notification capabilities, all of which make information easier to access and keep citizens informed.

For the past four years, www.salem.com has been recognized by Common Cause Massachusetts with their *e-Government Award*. However, this year marks the second year in a row that Salem's website has been recognized with the *e-Government Award with Distinction*.



In order to be recognized by The Massachusetts Campaign for Open Government, a project of the non-partisan group Common Cause, with the *e-Government Award with Distinction*, city and town websites must post essential information including Governing Body's Agenda, General By-Laws or Ordinances, Governing Body's Minutes, City/Town Budget, Archived Governing Board Agendas & Minutes, Zoning By-Laws, School Committee Agendas & Minutes, Public Meetings Calendar and Agendas & Minutes for at least one other Board/Commission.

Of the Commonwealth's 351 cities and towns, only 49 community websites were recognized with the *e-Government Award with Distinction*.

In addition to these online resources, Salem's website has seen significant improvements to its email subscriber list, Mapping & GIS webpage, Community Calendars, and basic general information.

Residents and visitors may even view online community videos. New this year, is the City's Web Q&A Constituent Services Center where residents can log requests and track their status and communicate with departments online.

This recognition demonstrates our commitment to keep residents informed and aware of what's happening at the local level. We know folks lead busy lives, so the easier we can make it to connect to City Hall, the more able residents are to become active and involved citizens. Salem was recognized for this achievement at a ceremony in the State House on Tuesday, March 16th 2010. This event occurs during "Sunshine Week" when media outlets throughout the country focus on issues and ideas for making government more transparent.

For more information please visit www.maopengov.org and/or www.commoncause.org.

Beautification Committee Hosting Plant Sale

Join the Salem Beautification Committee as they hold their third annual Plant Sale fundraiser on the Salem Common. The event is planned for Saturday, May 15, 2010 (rain date: Sunday, May 16) between the hours of 8:30 a.m. and 12:30 p.m.

You'll be amazed at the wide assortment

of home-grown perennials, a variety of annuals, and a selection of hanging baskets. Rain barrels, composters, water conservation garden spray nozzles and recycling bins will also be available for purchase.



Please come and take advantage of these wonderful offerings and, at the same time support the amazing efforts of the Salem Beautification Committee. The money raised from this event allows this important Committee to continue their work to make Salem a cleaner and more beautiful community.

Greg Mortenson to Receive the Salem Award

The Salem Award for Human Rights and Social Justice, established in 1992 as part of the Witch Trials Tercentenary, is awarded each year to keep alive the lessons of the Salem Witch Trials of 1692 and to recognize individuals whose commitment to social justice and human rights has alleviated discrimination and promoted tolerance.

In recognizing and honoring them, we publicly acknowledge the powerful significance and practical consequence of their work and join them in fostering acceptance, compassion and reconciliation. The Salem Award Foundation

also sponsors lectures, panel discussions and other programs on topics related to promoting human rights and social justice, and supports the public Salem Witch Trials Memorial.

The Salem Award for Human Rights and Social Justice Foundation, comprised of a cadre of dedicated and hardworking residents chaired by resident Meg Twohey, has worked tirelessly on this year's program. The award ceremony will take place on May 1st at Salem High School and this year's recipient is Greg Mortenson, author of *Three Cups of Tea*, a



book detailing Mr. Mortenson's dangerous and difficult quest to build schools in the wildest parts of Pakistan and Afghanistan. This is a bestselling book and the City is excited about Mr. Mortenson's visit to Salem to accept this award.

Given the popularity of this best selling book the ceremony is already sold out. The Foundation is still accepting names to place on a waiting list in the case that tickets become available. Salem residents may obtain free tickets at Salem City Hall at the Legal Department. There is a limit of two tickets per resident.

Business Spotlight: Coven Dessert Bar & Café

The downtown Salem area has been rapidly on the rise, and no where is this development more evident than on Essex Street. Just on the other side of Washington Street are a crop of exciting new businesses. The latest to this burgeoning scene is Coven. Part artisanal market, part cafe & dessert bar, Coven is a foodie's paradise. Taste buds have already been tantalized by the mention of the foods and desserts that will be available when Coven opens this Spring. Owners Robert Trezza and Jennifer Vourlos promise to provide their customers with an array of local produce, dairy and unique foods such as an olive bar, a cheese table, gourmet pasta, condiments, oils, spices and more. The market has literally grown from requests made by prospective patrons that stopped by the store or joined their Facebook fan page.

For those who don't have the time to cook all the ingredients offered up, but are still seeking a home style meal, they can grab a freshly prepared meal from the menu of grab-and-go items ready to be heated up at home, including organic rotisserie chickens. Those

who frequent the nearby health centers, will be happy to see the healthier choices available such as fresh salads and reduced fat meals. In addition, Jen is working on creating some gluten free, vegan, and sugar-free desserts.

If looking to grab a bite to eat while shopping one may want to try out some of their fresh made soups such as french onion soup with a bacon custard and gruyere tuille, red wine tomato with grilled fontina bites, or signature sandwiches, such as the short rib & gruyere sandwich, the Merguez sausage and pickled fennel sandwich or for vegetarians perhaps the sweet potato and ricotta sandwich will hit the spot.

What meal is complete without dessert? Coven will be offering a dessert bar featuring modern twists on some old favorites such as Twinkies, Cheesecake and uniquely flavored Cannolis. For the

creative a "Top Your Own" cupcake bar is sure to please with its vast assortment of toppings. Everything is made in house, from scratch using only the finest ingredients...no shortening or box mixes here.

Jen and Rob, self-proclaimed children at heart, have found a way to make the guests in their cafe feel like a kid again. In addition to other yummy breakfast items such as quiche, crepes, and fresh sweet cream waffles with warm maple butter, they will also feature a cereal bar offering twenty different types of cereals. Utilizing the toppings from the cupcake bar as cereal toppings to create unique concoctions is not only allowed, it is strongly encouraged.

Coven hopes to begin their epicurean gathering in early Spring this year. Until then stop by the Facebook site www.facebook.com/covensalem and see just what all the excitement is about!



City Plans to Host Clean Salem, Green Salem Event

To celebrate Earth Day, Salem Recycles has once again collaborated with the Beautification Committee to host the Clean Salem, Green Salem event on May 1st. This collaboration has resulted in an expanded event that incorporates additional 'green' initiatives and activities.

Beginning at 8:30 am, volunteers are welcome to meet our team leaders at Riley Plaza, the YMCA Parking Lot, or the MBTA Train Station the morning of May 1st. There are also groups from each of Salem's schools and various neighborhood organization targeting areas throughout the City. If you want to find a group working in your neighborhood or organize a group to help clean up another location, please contact Ellen Talkowsky at 978-619-5676. In keeping with the 'green' theme, volunteers cleaning various sites will be separating recyclable materials from trash and debris, which will be picked up by Northside Carting and delivered to the city's recycling

processor North Shore Recycled Fibers. Volunteers are invited to the Salem Common for a community pizza party at noon.

This year Salem Recycles has arranged for the following four recycling programs to take place on the Common from 10:00am to 1:00pm. First, a Northside Carting dumpster will be on-site to promote our e-waste recycling program. Everything from household batteries to ipods to cell phones can be dropped off and recycled. For a full listing of what will be accepted please visit www.salem.com.

In addition, a used-bicycle collection will be held for "Bikes Not Bombs". Bikes Not Bombs is a Boston-based non-profit that ships used bikes and parts to undeveloped countries. Most old two-wheelers are retooled to do things like pump water and grind meal, or repaired for transportation uses. Remaining bikes are repaired and sold by inner-city teenagers as part of a vocational training pro-

gram. A \$10-per-bike donation is requested to defray storage, processing and shipping costs. Receipts for cash donations and the value of each donated bicycle will be provided.

North Shore Recycled Fibers will have receptacles for residents to drop off their plastic grocery bags. The plastic bags collected will be made into more plastic bags. Included in the list of plastics that will be accepted are: grocery and produce bags, plastic coverings used on multi-packs of paper towels and placed over dry cleaning from your laundry.

Lastly, the Big Brother Big Sister Foundation will be collecting donations of lightly used clothing and small household items. Items they will accept for donations are: Clothing; Shoes; Accessories, Jewelry, Handbags, Purses; Jeans; Coats, Hats, Gloves; and small household items (anything smaller than a microwave such as pots, pans, dishware, and knick knacks).

Please keep checking www.salem.com for updates on this event.



Micro-Wind Turbine to be Installed at Winter Island

This month, the Park and Recreation Commission approved the placement of a combination street light/micro-turbine wind energy unit near the Harbormaster's Office at Winter Island. The turbine will be installed at no cost to the City by Deerpath Energy of Marblehead.

Specifically, Deerpath Energy has proposed to install a Skystream 4.7 micro-wind turbine not to exceed 50 feet in height.

Energy produced by the turbine will be the City's energy at no cost and all data collected will be shared



with the City to help advance our green energy efforts and goals. The proposal also includes help in evaluating other areas of the City for potential power generation via wind and micro-turbine.

This project will be advantageous to the City in a variety of ways. This highly visible wind energy demonstration project will help promote green initiatives and will hopefully be a centerpiece of a larger public education and outreach effort. Over the long-term, it also may be a perfect complement to other green initiatives at Winter Island, including the

potential development of a commercial-scale wind turbine.

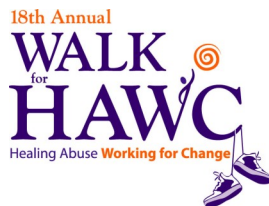
The City has made a great deal of progress over the last few years in the area of green and renewable energy. Most recently, in addition to this latest development, the City has brought on a grant-funded Energy and Sustainability Manager, and are currently close to entering into a contract with an Energy Services Company to improve the energy efficiency and overall condition of City facilities. Lastly, we are actively engaged in becoming a Green Community under the Green Communities Act allowing access to additional funding and even greater energy conservation.

Walk for HAWC Scheduled for April 25th

Join Mayor Kimberley Driscoll and this year's Honorary Chair, Robert St. Pierre, Retired Police Chief of Salem on **Sunday, April 25th** for the 18th annual **Walk for HAWC**. The walk is HAWC's only annual fundraising and community awareness event, raising \$180,000 to support HAWC's free services for victims of domestic violence and their children. HAWC is the only comprehensive domestic violence agency on the North Shore.

By participating in the Walk for HAWC on Sunday, April 25th, you are taking to the streets to send a loud and clear message: celebrating those

who have freed themselves from abuse; supporting those still working toward freedom and honoring those who remember a loved one whose life was lost to violence.



How you can get involved in the Walk for HAWC on Sunday, April 25th in Salem:

Create a team (or walk with the Mayor's Striders) to raise money and support for HAWC's free services

Distribute and hang posters to publicize the Walk throughout the North Shore

Organize a group at your work, school, place of worship or other organization to educate others about

ways they can help prevent domestic violence

Hold an event to raise money for the Walk

To register your team or for other information about the Walk, please visit HAWC's website at www.hawcdv.org or call Alicia Weaver (978) 744-2299 ext.27.

The walk is a five mile loop through historic downtown Salem and is a family-oriented, festive event. There will be music, food and entertainment before, during and after the walk. So, gather your friends, family, colleagues, children and dogs to join us in making a statement to end domestic violence on the North Shore!

Friends of Winter Island Formed

The Friends of Winter Island (FOWI) is being organized by Salem residents to promote and guide the preservation and restoration of historic resources on Winter Island. They include the Light House, former Coast Guard Air Station buildings, Waikiki Beach, and Fort



Pickering itself, with its 366-year history. Members of FOWI will also seek to beautify the island and preserve its natural habitat by removing invasive vegetation and by planting trees, flowers and shrubs that are both native and sustainable.

FOWI anticipates working with the City and all Salem municipal preservation partners to preserve this publicly owned resource. Toward this

end, FOWI will work to raise major funds to finance preservation projects; will organize volunteer work parties to restore grounds and buildings; and will publish a newsletter to inform members and the public about preservation developments. FOWI shall work closely with other preservation partners, such as the Plummer Home, Essex National Heritage Commission, National Park Service, Salem State College and Conservation Commission.

New Street Sweeping Program Announced

The City's Street Sweeping Program for entrance corridors will begin on Thursday, April 1st and a brand new intensive cleaning initiative within our neighborhoods will begin on Monday, April 26th. The City has reworked the sweeping schedule and made a commitment to clean our neighborhoods of all the winter sand and debris faster, more efficiently and more effectively than in previous years.

Entrance Corridor Street Sweeping will begin on Thursday, April 1st and continue through April 14th. Residents should consult the No Parking/Tow Zone signs posted along each of these entrance corridors that notify drivers of what day parking restrictions are in effect. Sweeping schedules alternate between the odd and even sides of the street so residents are able to park their cars on the opposite side of the street during scheduled sweeping days. In these areas, parking is prohibited from 5:00 a.m. to 7:00 a.m. except for the even side of Essex Street, from #2-98, which will be swept as posted on Wednesday, April 14th from 7:30am to 9:00 am. For a detailed schedule, you may consult www.salem.com under the Public Works Department page for the



2010 sweeping schedule.

After April, these entrance corridors will be swept on an as needed basis and will no longer have monthly parking restrictions unless a special posted no parking sweep is necessary. The City will still have our sweepers out on a regular basis during the summer and fall months, but by removing the tow zone restric-

tions, our residents will not be inconvenienced every two weeks of the month for a six-month period.

The Point Neighborhood and 1-178 Derby Street will also now be incorporated into the new residential schedule.

Beginning Monday, April 26th and running through May 7th, a new intensified residential street sweeping program will take place. Under this new program, we will be able to clean all of our neighborhoods in just two weeks. Each neighborhood will be posted with temporary No Parking Tow Zones signs and sweepers will be sweeping **both sides** of the street on the same day. Streets will be still swept the day after your trash pick-up day. The days prior to your scheduled sweep is a perfect time for residents to remove the sand and debris from their sidewalks into the curb line on the street, just please do not make mounds or piles, as they are more

difficult for the sweeper to pick up.

City streets will be broken down into two zones. Streets in Zone One will be swept during the week of April 26-30th, and streets listed in Zone Two will be swept during the week of May 3-7th. Residential sector sweeping will take place from 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. Residents will be able to use the previously swept entrance corridors as alternative parking areas on the day of their sweep. Another neighborhood sweep is scheduled for July 12th through July 23rd.

Resident cooperation is vital to the success of this program. You must remove your cars from the street on your designated sweeping day. The fewer cars on the street, the better we can clean. Our goal is to clean the streets not to tow cars, so please park accordingly during scheduled street sweeping days.

The City has contracted with Minuteman Power Sweeping, Inc. to ensure that this aggressive schedule will be executed effectively. Minuteman has contracts with several neighboring cities and towns and has 30 years of experience sweeping streets. One of the greatest challenges our DPW crews face is getting pulled away from the sweeping routes because of other public works emergencies. Other than inclement weather, the contractors will be on the street sweeping routes. Weather cancellations will be posted on www.salem.com

Mayor's Annual Easter Eggs-travaganza Planned for April 3rd

The Salem YMCA, in conjunction with the City of Salem, is once again hosting Mayor Kimberley Driscoll's Annual Easter Eggs-travaganza.

This year's event will be held at the Nathaniel Bowditch Elementary School at 79 Willson Street

(same campus as Salem High School) on Saturday, April 3rd from 11 am to 1 pm. Be sure to join in on the fun, festivities, and prizes!



Our Easter Eggs-travaganza includes over 1,200 egg giveaways! There will be fun for children of all ages, including a bouncing house, arts and crafts, games and prizes, face paint-

ing and a special guest- the Easter Bunny! Pictures of children with the Easter Bunny will be taken. Candy and prizes are being donated by Walmart.

The event is free and open to the public. Year after year, this event has grown in popularity and now has become a family favorite. You don't want to miss it! Happy Easter!