

The Community Advisor

March 2009

Issue 1

Portsmouth welcomes a new Chief of Police

The City of Portsmouth has a new Chief of Police and we all read about it in the newspaper, heard it on TV, or on radio. Some people were disappointed that the new Chief is not a Portsmouth native and have mixed feelings, but let's see what he can do for our community. He started making his rounds in the neighborhoods and is introducing himself to the citizens. He is younger than any chief that we have had in a long time and we've had quite a few of them. He is charismatic, full of good ideas and is not afraid to ask other law enforcement agencies for help. He is looking to clean up Portsmouth of crime, get rid of or reduce gang activity, and is looking forward to a good partnership with the Portsmouth Sheriff's Office. Which of course is making the P.S.O. very happy. According to the Chief, he has already been in touch with local, state and federal agencies to implement certain strategies to create a stronger gang taskforce, check points and other programs to oust crime throughout our City. He wants to have patrol officers take a more active role and visit civic league meetings with the neighborhood impact officers, so they too, will become familiar with the residents and gain their trust and cooperation. These methods are refreshing and promise a bright future for our City. Ed Hargis in one of his speeches at a Meet and Greet meeting for some civic leagues, reminded me a little bit of our Sheriff. He said pretty much the same thing Sheriff Bill Watson, has said many times, which is: "If you want to sell drugs, commit crimes, and don't obey the law, move out of Portsmouth." Welcome to the City of Portsmouth Chief Hargis!

You're a Policeman.

When the hours seem long and the going, rough
When the pay seems small and the criminals,
tough
Just square your shoulders and call their bluff
Let them be the ones to cry, "Enough"



Chief of Police Ed Hargis at a Community Meeting

Honoring Miss Ida Barbour



In commemorating National African American History Month (February), the Ida Barbour Early Learning Center honored the founder of the Daycare Center at the Ida Barbour Park (900 Block of South Street) with a Wreath Laying Ceremony at the foot of her memorial. This little park is surrounded by colorful houses in which fixed and low income families take great pride in their homes. The children and seniors in this neighborhood can relax and play under the watchful eyes of their neighbors. The event was joyful and had a few speakers, among those were Mayor Holley, Councilwoman Randall and several others. Portsmouth Sheriff's Office Honor Guard presented

the Colors and looked sharp as always. For the few that are not familiar with Ms. Ida Barbour let me share this information with you. The Portsmouth native Ida Barbour was born in 1878. She was the daughter of two former slaves and most certainly loved children. She attended the Institute for Colored Youth (now Cheney University) and returned to Portsmouth where she began teaching at the Chestnut Street School (I.C. Norcom). After learning of the death of a neighbor, she took in five orphaned children and as time passed her family of homeless and neglected children grew. She founded the Miller Home and Day Nursery in 1910 and supported her large family with the help of a women's sewing circle. In 1917 a group of social workers merged with the Women's Sewing Circle and provided a more unified support for the service of children. In the same year the group incorporated Miller Home and Day Nursery and established a Board of Directors. Miss Ida Barbour died, but the service for children in need continued without cost to them. Many organizations, citizens, and doctors offered their generous support and services. In 2004 the Board of Directors voted to change the name of Miller Home and Day Care to the Ida Barbour Early Learning Center. The United States Library of Congress Archives lists this Day Care Center as one of the oldest daycare establishments in the Commonwealth of Virginia.

The Ida Barbour Early Learning Center always appreciates and welcomes donations, which are tax deductible. You can make checks payable to: Ida Barbour Early Learning Center and mail them to 1400 Camden Avenue, Portsmouth, Virginia 23704, or call 757-393-3097 for more information.



March of Dimes

Please support your Portsmouth Sheriff's Office in our efforts to raise funds for the March of Dimes. We will have several fundraisers, two of those will be at the Wal-Mart Store on Frederick Boulevard. The first will be on April 11th from 11:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. and the second will be on April 25th at the same time and same location. When you see Deputies in front of Wal-Mart asking for a donation, please open your heart and your wallet for the purpose of helping to save Babies. Since Sheriff Bill Watson took Office in 2006 the March of Dimes has become a big part of us and is near and dear to us. We have been actively involved in the fundraising effort annually and participate in the March of Dimes Walk. The Walk will take place at Olde Towne, 221 High Street on May 2nd. Registration begins at 1:00 p.m. and the actual Walk will start at 2:00 p.m. The five mile walk curves throughout Olde Towne's charming streets and the walk doesn't seem as long when you look at all the old houses and beautiful gardens. It is always a lot of fun. Entertainment and Vendors will also be at the event and should be a joy for young and old.

For anyone who is not familiar with the March of Dimes, here is a little history on the Foundation.

In January 1938, alarmed by decades of worsening polio epidemics and the terrible toll the virus was taking on America's young, President Roosevelt established the National Foundation for Infantile Paralysis. The National Foundation emphasized the nationwide significance and non-partisan character of the polio crusade. **FDR believed that people could solve any problem if they worked together.** Comedian Eddie Cantor coined the phrase "March of Dimes" (playing on the popular newsreel feature "The March of Time"), appealing to radio listeners all over the country to send their dimes directly to the White House. The campaign proved to be hugely successful. The National Foundation officially changed its name to the March of Dimes in 1979.

As the new century proceeds, the March of Dimes programs fund several different types of research, all aimed at preventing birth defects and infant mortality. These programs include basic research into life processes, such as genetics and development; clinical research applied to prevention and treatment of specific birth defects and prematurity; the study of environmental hazards; and research in social and behavioral sciences relevant to their mission.

The March of Dimes uses your money wisely: 77% of every dollar supports research and programs that help moms have full-term pregnancies and babies begin healthy lives. Your funds are used to bring comfort and information to families whose baby was born too soon, or sick.

Portsmouth Historic Cemeteries

The Portsmouth Sheriff's Office inmate work crews have been busy around Portsmouth Cemeteries. Old, historic cemeteries like Fisher Hill and Cedar Grove Cemeteries are in need of work and deserve attention. Cedar Grove Cemetery has the Cedar Grove Cemetery Foundation, which is working diligently toward improving this historic site, with some assistance from the Portsmouth Sheriff's Office. Fisher Hill has been adopted by the Sheriff's Office because it is the resting place for icons in the history of Portsmouth, such as I. C. Norcom, Ida Barbour, and Jeffery Wilson. We feel that it has to be preserved for the future and our children. We teach and tell stories about those well known people in history, name schools and parks after them, but do little to honor them in their final resting place. Over many years, those properties have been neglected and ignored. Ownership could not be established, because the heirs of the original owners could not be located, which pretty much means the property is considered abandoned. The Sheriff's Office is working on improving the condition of the Cemetery, but is calling out to the community to spark interest for this historic place. The conditions of the property is deplorable, many graves have collapsed, bones and coffins are surfacing, vandalism, and theft of headstones has occurred. Sheriff Bill Watson took it upon himself to get a headstone for the grave of I. C. Norcom, because someone stole the marker of his graveside. Unbelievable but true. We have a few people in the City who have taken notice of Fisher Hill and are working on enhancing the site. Ms. Christina Carlton a resident of Cradock, who is re-viving cemeteries and gravesides as a hobby, and Ms. Breckenridge-Haywood who is the president of the African-American Historical Society. It would be fantastic if schools, youth groups, or other organizations would be more involved in this venture. I think it would be amazing for future generations to walk through these cemeteries, as if they were parks, with benches and well preserved gravesides for history lessons or research. If those grounds could speak, the stories that we would hear would be about hardship, yellow fever and past times. May be we need to take the time and listen.



Community Events

The Sheriff's Office is always ready and willing to participate in all activities and community events throughout our City. If you would like Ident-A-Kid, Security Surveys, Crime Prevention, or any other community services the Portsmouth Sheriff's Office has available to its citizens at your neighborhood event, please contact Major D. Clemons or Sgt. L. Whitehurst to schedule your function at 757-686-2565. We are looking forward to hearing from you and as mentioned prior, always ready to serve.

Sheriff's Office Annual Report

The Portsmouth Sheriff's Office Annual Report is now available on our website at:
www.portsmouthva.gov/ps0

This report reflects the duties of the different divisions, such as Corrections, Court Security, Civil Process, Work Center, Training, and Traffic. We publish this report with the hope to give the public a better understanding of what the employees of the Sheriff's Office do on a daily basis and give you an oversight on general operations. Should you have any questions in reference to the Annual Report 2008, please call Lt. K. Johnson at 393-5461.

Free Firewood and Mulch

The Sheriff's Office has offered free Firewood to all who are on a fixed income and don't laugh, I know that we are looking for warmer weather right now. It is still available to those who need it to offset their heating costs for next winter. Sheriff Watson thought about what else he could do with all the wood from the downed trees, the inmate work crews clear from different properties throughout the City. He had the idea to chip all branches of the trees and offer it as mulch to our citizens. Many seniors and others on fixed incomes like to keep their property and landscape pretty, but may not be able to spend extra money on mulch for flower beds. With people getting laid off and our economy in trouble, this may help some folks do that. So if you would like to receive some mulch, call the Portsmouth Sheriff's Office Work Center at 393-5082 and speak to Captain Ashberry or Sgt. Rowland to let them know that you want some of the mulch Sheriff Watson is offering to the community. We will deliver the mulch to you and stack the wood at a designated spot free of charge. This is our effort to go green and let nothing go to waste and it will also save taxpayers money, since we would not have to take the wood to a landfill.



VIN Etching

In cooperation with the Virginia State Police, Operation H.E.A.T. Program (Help Eliminate Auto Theft), the Portsmouth Sheriff's Office, Fire Department and Police Department are putting together a VIN Etching event. It is planned for **August 7th** at the **Wal-Mart Store parking lot on Frederick Boulevard**. Refreshment will be provided for people in line. The VIN Etching will be absolutely free and can be done on all vehicles, as well as motorcycles.

For those of you who have never heard of VIN Etching:

All vehicles carry a federally-assigned number known as a Vehicle Identification Number (VIN). Making sure those numbers are marked permanently on a vehicle's windows steers thieves away. Why? Well, for one thing, disposing of a vehicle whose windows have been VIN etched takes time, trouble and money, all in short supply for thieves. That's because the windows of stolen VIN Etched vehicles must be stripped and replaced before a thief can get rid of the car, a costly and time-consuming process. And VIN Etching obliterates any potential profit professional thieves might have gleaned from the lucrative practice of selling windows and windshields for parts via chop shops.

Vin Etching is simple, fast, safe, relatively inexpensive and won't mar the look of the vehicle. Numbers are etched into the glass with a chemical solution. And those numbers will be there for good.

If you would like to know more about programs such as this, visit the Virginia State Police website at: www.vsp.state.va.us. This website also has many good links to prevent fraud and good advice on how to stay safe.



Pokey Smokey II



Pinecrest Baptist Church held a fundraiser for the Pokey Smokey II on March 22nd. The turn out of the community and the congregation was incredible. Anyone who grew up in Portsmouth rode or knew about the legendary Pokey Smokey in City Park. It was a joyful experience for children to ride with a friendly whistle coming from the smoke stack of the train. After many years the return of the train is closer than ever, thanks to the hard work of the Portsmouth Community Foundation and donations from local businesses and citizens alike. If you miss the old train and would like your children to be able to ride again, please donate to the Pokey Smokey II at their website www.thepcf.org and click on "Donate Now". Or send your check, payable to: The Portsmouth Community Foundation- Memo: Pokey Smokey Fund, to 360 Crawford Street, Portsmouth, VA 23704.

Portsmouth Business



We believe in keeping our Portsmouth businesses going and showing our support by frequenting local restaurants and by shopping in our City as much as possible. One of our local Hot Dog establishments is located at 3802 Deep Creek Boulevard and has been there for too many years to count. It was formerly known as Johnson's Hot Dogs and is now Copeland's Hot Dogs. The staff is ready to serve you as soon as you walk in and will call you by your name. It is the hang out for the neighborhood and the girls that work there are always ready for a joke or two. The

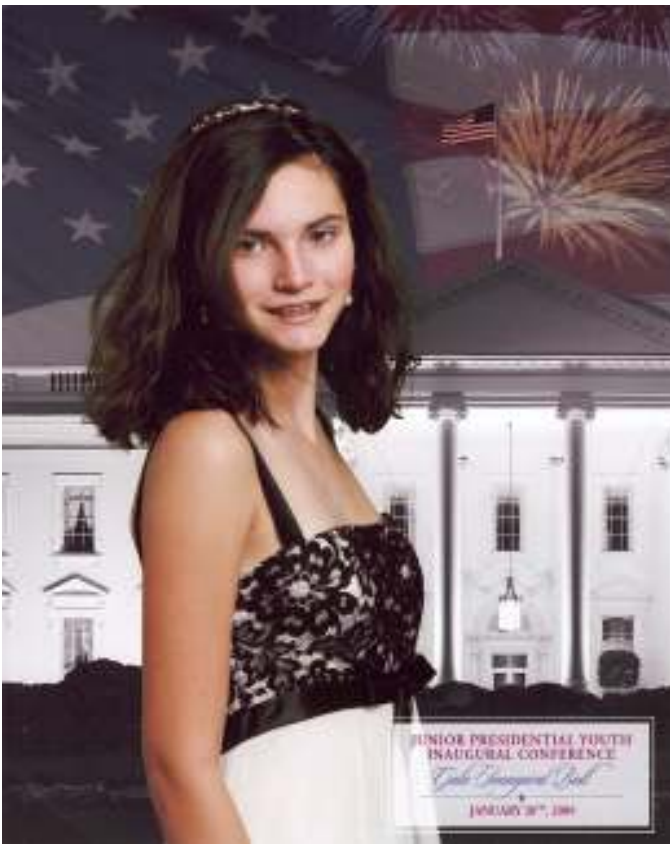
Sheriff has been going there to get his hot dogs for over 50 years and says they are still as good as ever. Stop in sometime and say hello to Debbie, Pearl, and Crystal, grab some lunch and enjoy.

Project Lifesaver



Project Lifesaver was established in 1999 as an initiative of the 43rd Virginia Search and Rescue Company of the Chesapeake Sheriff's Office and is designed after the Stokes County, North Carolina Mountain Rescue Program, which pioneered in the use of special equipment and procedures to locate lost and wandering patients with mental disorders. With the dramatic increase of people diagnosed with Alzheimers, Down Syndrome, and Autism, the program has become one of the leading organizations addressing the need to protect these patients and bringing some comfort to their families and caregivers. Project Lifesaver is in partnership with local law enforcement and public safety organizations. The local Search and Rescue Team received special training in the behavior patterns of Alzheimer and dementia patients, and how to use the radio technology equipment to locate the lost person. Every patient that is enrolled will be outfitted with a personalized wristband that emits a tracking signal, for a small monthly fee (\$10 per month). This fee includes monthly battery changes. When a participant is reported missing, the Search and Rescue Team will respond to the wanderers area and start searching with the mobile locater tracking system. Searches have been reduced from hours and days to minutes. Recovery times average less than 30 minutes. Recently the Portsmouth Sheriff's Office and other agencies in the area received some new and improved equipment. The Portsmouth Sheriff's Office is proud to be part of Project Lifesaver. If you are interested in this program or would like to enroll a loved one, please contact Sgt. T. Faesi at 393-3203 or Major D. Clemons at 686-2565.

Congressional Youth Leadership Council



Mariah Beck

The Congressional Youth Leadership Council (CYLC) is a program that scholars represent the upper echelon of today's youth in both academic performance and community leadership. Each student is selected for nomination based upon academic achievement or classroom surveys, as well as by distinguished educators, mentors or CYLC program alumni, ensuring that every participant possesses the drive and determination to emerge as a future world leader.

CYLC's mission is to foster and inspire young people to achieve their full leadership potential. In support of this mission, members of the U.S. Congress and over 50 embassies representing countries around the world serve on CYLC's Honorary Board of Advisors.

This winter CYLC hosted the Junior Presidential Youth Inaugural Conference, and Ms. Corina Beck, who is an employee of the Portsmouth Sheriff's Office, and her husband Eric are the extremely proud parents of a young lady who was invited to

attend the Junior Presidential Youth Inaugural Conference. Mariah Beck got to experience something, which is out of reach for most of us. She spent five days in Washington D.C. and listened to keynote speakers such as General Colin L. Powell, USA (Ret.), Former Secretary of State and Founder of America's Promise Alliance, Al Gore, Former Vice President of the United States of America and Nobel Prize Winner, Erik Weihenmayer, Filmmaker, Mountaineer and Author. Mariah was also invited to attend the Inauguration of the 44th President of the United States of America and the Gala Inaugural Ball.

This will be forever imbedded in the memory of this young girl and through her constant effort to achieve excellence in school and sports, she has received another scholarship for the upcoming year.

Mariah has been participating in the program since she was in 4th grade, and has really enjoyed all of it. Corina and Eric would also like to thank everybody who helped support her financially, and with their encouragement.

Please Join The
Portsmouth Sheriff's Office

For

A Family Day

Filled With Fun, Food, Baked Goods, And Games,
For The Whole Family.



On May 30th



From

10:00 a.m. until 4:00 p.m.

At The

City Park - Double Shelter

Right Across From The Playground.

Admission Will Be By Donation And All
Proceeds will go to the
March of Dimes.

Please be generous and help to
Save The Babies.

