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Mayors Report - November 2014



Moving into the Holiday Season ~ December marks a special time of the year in the Town, especially in our downtown. Mount Airy's Historical Main Street will be hosting "A Main Street Christmas" all season long with special events leading up to Christmas. Be inspired to transform your homes into a holiday wonderland as you come out to vote for the business with your favorite holiday decorations inside the store. Your vote will count as a chance to win a gift basket stuffed with goodies from all of our unique Downtown Shops! The contest is part of a town initiative to get the Main Street

"loop" from Route 27 on the south end to Route 27 completely decorated!

Have you been Naughty or Nice? ~ Please don't miss our annual Tree Lighting Ceremony, Saturday, December 6 at 5:00 p.m. and Santa Parade at 7:00 p.m. in front of the town tree located next to Town Hall at 110 South Main Street! The ceremony will feature performances from our local schools and Visit with Santa in Firehouse Pottery & Arts afterwards. Free hot chocolate will be served and apple dumplings will be available for sale! What a great way to take the chill off!

Painting the Town Pink - A cause to remember for every season ~ October was Breast Cancer awareness Month a big thank you to the American Cancer Society for sponsoring our annual walk. Together we raised over \$100,000.00. Also a big thank you to those businesses that helped raise awareness by Painting the Town Pink! The winners are Hair Impression on Ridgeville Blvd, Reflections (the salon by Domino's) and Betsy Lou's Pretzel's on Main Street. Please remember to support these business as they support our community!

Main Street Construction ~After an extended wait, The State Highway Administration has begun re-paving Main Street. We have been advised the remaining work will be completed by November 14, 2014, weather permitting. This

will provide a complete Main Street just in time for the Holiday season! The contractor is confident it will only take 2 weeks, but as always work is weather

2

dependent. They do not pave in rain/snow or below certain temperatures. The paving will take place Monday through Friday, 9:00 a.m. – 3:00 p.m. Thank you for your patience and don't forget to visit our newly improved Main Street. Parking has been added, sidewalks are wider, crosswalk safety has been improved, not to mention all the main utilities have been upgraded.

The Rain Tax Update ~ On October 23rd, 2014, the Carroll County Commissioners and the eight Carroll County municipalities signed a detailed agreement to meet the State MDE requirements for the Storm water Remediation Program, commonly known as the "rain tax " bill. This is a unique operational agreement that will allow Carroll County to assist in funding projects not only in the County, but in all of the eight municipalities as well. For Mount Airy, the original cost that was to be fully funded by the Town would have totaled approximately \$398,000.00. With the joint agreement and a joint MS4 storm water permit, the County will pay 80% of the costs of projects and the municipalities will pay 20% of their project costs. This brings Mount Airy's costs down to approximately \$75,000.00 per year over for a five-year period. This joint permit for Carroll County and the Towns runs for a five year period and will begin in Fiscal year 2016. Due to Mount Airy's dual county status, storm water remediation will also be needed on the Frederick County portion of the Town. The projected annual cost for the Frederick County side is \$100,000. Frederick County is not participating with the Town to share in the costs of remediation to meet program requirements. This is not expected to impact our town tax rate as this is already funded through our Capital Budget Plan.

Annual Audit ~ Our annual financial audit has been completed. Once again through conservative management, prior and present, total fund balances, which includes reserves and operating accounts, increased by \$2.1 million. Services have been maintained, taxes were not increased, and the Homestead Tax Credit preserved. We have also performed several upgrades to the community!

Mount Airy Gem ~ The Counties Four Veterans of Foreign Wars of the United States Post 10076 was established on November 6, 1967 and is conveniently located on Main Street in downtown Mt. Airy. They sponsor many programs such as: Americanism, National Military Services, VFW Youth Scholarships (Voice of Democracy, Patriot's Pen and Patriotic Art), Operation Uplink, Unmet Needs, Military Assistance Program, the Buddy Poppy program (the Buddy Poppy is made by our disabled veterans in the VA hospitals), Hospital and VAVS program, Cancer Aid and Research, Continuing Education, Veterans and Family Support, and Legislative. They also support the VFW National Home for Children (a home facility that takes care of children of veterans). VFW Post 10076 has been working hard to

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let our nearby veterans know that we are here. They offer food and drink specials at very affordable prices. It is one of the few places that you can come watch a game or enjoy your own music. Join them and enjoy the camaraderie and meet the other veterans in our area. Not sure if you're eligible? Stop in and they'll be glad to assist you.

The Mayor's Community Forums - The Mayors Community forums normally held bi-monthly will begin again in December. Feel free to contact me at prockinberg@gmail.com or call Town Hall @ [301-829-1424](tel:301-829-1424). Residents are encouraged to drop by Town Hall on Main Street and discuss any town related items. Town Council members are also invited to attend. The setting is comfortable and informal. Grab a cup of coffee and stop by!

Volunteer Opportunities: Please visit (<http://www.mountairymd.org/>) for a list of volunteer opportunities on one of our many commissions. We have three openings on our Water Commission. This volunteer Commission is made up of Mt. Airy residents who study and advise the Mayor and Town Council on all issues related to water, cost structure, conservation, capacities, etc. Please let me know if anyone is interested in serving on a commission where there is a vacancy. You can call Town Hall at [301-829-1424](tel:301-829-1424) or email me directly at prockinberg@gmail.com.