



## **MEMORANDUM**

**TO:** Mayor Greenlaw and Members of City Council  
**FROM:** Beverly R. Cameron, City Manager  
**DATE:** January 6, 2015  
**SUBJECT:** City Manager's Update

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Highlights of major activities and other notable developments:

***Restaurant Week*** - Fredericksburg's 9<sup>th</sup> annual [Restaurant Week](#) will kick off Jan. 16 and run through Jan. 26. The popular event allows people to enjoy prix fixe meals from more than 20 of downtown Fredericksburg's highly regarded restaurants. Two-course lunches are priced at \$10.15, while three-course dinners go for \$20.15 (to match the year). Participating restaurants include 25 30 Espresso, 806 Bistro, Bavarian Chef – Fredericksburg, Bistro Bethem, Brock's Riverside Grill, Capital Ale House, Castiglia's, Eileen's Bakery and Café, Foode, Fredericksburg Square Gazebo and Cabaret, The Happy Clam, Kenmore Inn, Kybecca, La Petite Auberge, La Rosetta International, Poppy Hill Tuscan Kitchen, Ristorante Renato, Soup and Taco, Sprelly, The Recreation Center, The Sunken Well Tavern and Vivify. It's a great opportunity to sample a large variety of dishes at a modest price, so plan to come enjoy the annual tradition.

***Gun Give-Back a Success*** - The Police and Sheriff's Department voluntary [Gun Give-Back event](#), initiated by Councilor Charlie "Chuck" Frye, Jr. and sponsored by Ms. Doris Buffett, exceeded the expectations of all of its participants with a final tally of 60 weapons collected in just four hours. A steady stream of gun owners drove through the back parking lot at the PD headquarters on December 13 and dropped off their firearms, which officers catalogued, packaged, and stored for eventual destruction. The firearms collected included handguns, long guns, a few homemade shotguns, and a handful of other types of guns such as BB, flare, and pellet weapons. Ms. Buffett has promised a \$100 donation to a local charity for each firearm turned in during the event, and additionally for any firearm voluntarily surrendered to the Police Department through March 31, 2015. An additional seven firearms had been turned in to police as of January 6. The majority of those surrendering firearms (27) requested that the donation should go to Micah Ministries, followed closely by Cops and Kids (22.5), with the remainder going to Empower House, the Thurman Brisben Homeless Shelter, or no preference indicated.

***DSS Gifts from the Heart Program*** - The halls and offices at the Fredericksburg Department of Social Services were overflowing with gifts destined for city children in need. Through the agency's "Gifts from the Heart" holiday assistance program,



community members were given the opportunity to sponsor a child for the holidays. Candidates for the program must apply for the holiday assistance in October and must receive services from DSS in order to qualify. This year the program served 206 children.

"Gifts from the Heart" would not be possible without the generous support of the Fredericksburg community. Twenty-one sponsors signed up, including the Silver Companies and the American Canoe Association. Many city departments also sponsored families. Special thanks are due to the Department of Economic Development, the Social Services self-sufficiency team, and the offices of the Commonwealth's Attorney, the Treasurer, and the Commissioner of the Revenue for "adopting" a family.

The "Gifts from the Heart" program is just one of the many supportive programs administered by the Department of Social Services. The program is voluntarily managed by DSS accountant, Ms. Hayley Badillo, in addition to her normal responsibilities.

***DSS Gets Lessons on Healthy Eating*** - The Fredericksburg Department of Social Service implemented a local agency wellness program called "Fit and Fabulous" as a way to combat stress through healthier diets, exercise, and education. One important component of the program are the monthly "Recipes with Ruth" seminars. Ruth Nedomanski, the mother of Assistant Director Beth Girone, agreed to share her passion and knowledge of healthy eating habits with DSS staff.

Once a month, Ruth hosts a luncheon in the DSS conference room, where she demonstrates how to prepare simple and healthy dishes. The menus have included Italian spaghetti squash casserole, guacamole, corn salsa and pan-seared chicken breasts. Recipes and cooking tips are also provided as part of the program. Typically 10 – 20 employees attend these seminar luncheons.



Ruth's passion for healthy living stems from her 30-year career in public school food and nutrition. In addition to sharing her expertise in food preparation, Ruth also spends time in speaking engagements, traveling, and volunteering for her church and other organizations.

***Planning Services Staff Educates Realtors about Sign Ordinances*** - On December 5, Code Enforcement Officer Marne Sherman provided information regarding the do's and don'ts of signage to approximately twenty-five members of the Fredericksburg Area Association of Realtors (FAAR). The training was offered as a proactive effort to enforce the city's ordinances regulating signage and to reduce future violations. Following a successful presentation from city staff and a warm reception from FAAR members, both agreed to continue the effort with an annual training each fall.

***Children's Tree Lighting 2014 Presented with Strong Partnerships*** - On Saturday, November 29 staff from the Department of Economic Development and Tourism along with staff from the Department of Parks, Recreation and Public Facilities coordinated the annual Children's Tree Lighting event in Hurkamp Park. The event was a partnership between the departments, the Fredericksburg Area Museum and Cultural Center, Fredericksburg Parent Magazine and the Children's Museum of Richmond – Fredericksburg Branch. The partners met for several months to coordinate the program and work together on logistics, marketing efforts and various initiatives.



More than 700 people attended the event on what turned out to be a beautiful Small Business Saturday in Downtown Fredericksburg. There were free crafts and snacks including cookies from Crumb and Get It, music by the Patriot Singers of Hugh Mercer Elementary School, the tree lighting with Mayor Greenlaw and story time and pictures with Santa who arrived via Trolley Tours of Fredericksburg. The Women's Health and Surgery Center gave out free hot chocolate and the Fredericksburg Area Service league provided

volunteers. In future years the Children's Museum will take on the role of the coordinating partner for the Children's Tree Lighting program and continue to foster these partnerships.