



Rockville Certifies 2023 Vote-by-Mail Election Results

Votes cast in the City of Rockville's 2023 vote-by-mail election have been certified by the city's Board of Supervisors of Elections.

In addition to 12,637 ballots cast on Election Day, 133 provisional ballots were tallied, for a total of 12,770 votes.

The number of votes cast in the 2023 vote-by-mail election increased 3.9% over 2019's 12,287.

Rockville voters elected **Monique Ashton** mayor with 7,298 votes and elected **Kate Fulton, Adam Van Grack, Izola (Zola) Shaw, incumbent David Myles, Marissa Valeri** and **Barry Jackson** to the new council. The Mayor and Council serve four-year terms.

Mayoral challenger Mark Pierzchala received 5,028 votes. There were 51 write-in votes for mayor.

In addition, the ballot included four nonbinding advisory referendum questions that allow voters to express a preference without resulting in a change to Rockville law.

Allowing voters aged 16-17 to vote: Yes: 3,601; No: 8,665; No

The top six vote-getters for council seats were:

Kate Fulton	8,948
Adam Van Grack	8,072
Izola (Zola) Shaw	7,612
David Myles	6,163
Marissa Valeri	5,995
Barry Jackson	5,962

Six other candidates running for council received the following votes:

Paul Scott	5,107
Richard Gottfried	4,102
Anita Neal Powell	3,829
Ricky F. Mui	3,196
Danniel Belay	2,001
Harold Hodges	641
Write-in votes	270

Opinion: 250.

Allowing city residents without U.S. citizenship to vote: Yes: 4,208; No: 7,926; No Opinion: 281.

Limiting elected officials to three consecutive terms: Yes: 9,267; No: 2,786; No Opinion: 455.

Creating representative districts to elect some or all councilmembers: Yes: 5,090; No: 6,378; No Opinion: 995.

The results are posted at www.rockvillemd.gov/election results. ✚

City of Rockville 2023 — Year in Review —

JANUARY

- Barack Matite, city manager for the City of Eudora, Kansas, became Rockville's deputy city manager. Matite served as city manager of Eudora from August 2016. He had joined Eudora in 2012 and served in several roles for the city. He was chosen from a strong field of more than 100 applicants nationwide.
- Rockville scored 100 marks for the city's commitment to the health, welfare, safety and equality of its lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and queer community in its sixth year of participating in, and the 11th year for, the Human Rights Campaign's Municipal Equality Index.
- Rockville started the search for artists to design and create murals for City Hall and the Rockville Senior Center.
- The Mayor and Council initiated a public review process for changing city code and the zoning ordinance related to accessory apartments and accessory dwelling units, or ADUs.
- Tyree Davis IV, Rockville's advisor to the city manager for justice, equity, diversity and inclusion, in January presented to the Mayor and Council a report on his first six months in the post, and outlined his plans for the future. Davis was hired in June 2022 to fill the first-of-its-kind role for the city, leading the Justice, Equity, Diversity and Inclusion Division under the City Manager's Office.
- The Mayor and Council and members of the city's senior staff showcased the City of Rockville for county elected officials during a meet-and-greet at Glenview Mansion.

FEBRUARY

- Voters in Rockville's election were given the opportunity to vote for seven members of the city's elected body, following the unanimous vote of the Mayor and Council on a resolution to add two seats to the

council.

- Rockville began developing a Historic Preservation Work Plan, a 10-year program that lays out a series of recommendations to assess and update the city's historic preservation program. The plan, endorsed by the Mayor and Council in May, is the first step in updating how the city approaches preserving its history.
- The Rockville Planning Commission and Chief of Zoning Jim Wasilak presented "Zoning 101," an introduction for the community about Rockville's zoning ordinance rewrite, on the city's YouTube channel, www.youtube.com/cityofrockville. This will be a major city project over the next 18-24 months. (See the article on page 2 for an update on the process.)

MARCH

- City police began issuing citations for vehicles exceeding the speed limit on a segment of Veirs Mill Road where the city had recently installed speed monitoring cameras.
- Rockville ranked eighth overall and fourth among small cities in the U.S. for its ethnic diversity, once again placing highly in an annual WalletHub study. More than one-third of Rockville's residents were born outside of the U.S.
- More than a year on from Rockville's adoption of its first Climate Action Plan, many of the plan's 42 initiatives had made progress, with several action items completed. The Mayor and Council initiated the plan in January 2022 with the goals of equitably reducing greenhouse gas emissions that cause climate change, and improving community and city resilience to extreme weather. They were updated on the plan's progress in March.

APRIL

- The City of Rockville hosted four interactive listening

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Christmas and New Year's Closures

City government and facilities will be closed for the Christmas and New Year's Day. All city facilities will be closed Mondays, Dec. 25 and Jan. 1. Parking will be free at city-owned meters on Dec. 25 and Jan. 1. Recycling, trash and yard waste normally collected on Mondays will occur one day later than usual during those holiday weeks. For more information, visit www.rockvillemd.gov/recycling-trash or call 240-314-8568.

The Rockville Senior Center and fitness room, Glenview Mansion, and the Rockville Civic Center business office are always closed Sunday and will be closed Dec. 25 and Jan. 1. For theater tickets, visit www.rockvillemd.gov/theatre.

Several facilities will offer limited holiday hours:

Lincoln Park, Thomas Farm and Twinbrook community centers will be open 10 a.m.-4 p.m. Dec. 24 and 31, and 10 a.m.-6 p.m. Dec. 26 and Jan. 2.

Croydon Creek Nature Center will be closed Dec. 24 and 31, open 10 a.m.-2 p.m. Dec. 26 and open normal hours Jan. 2.

The Rockville Swim and Fitness Center will be open with limited hours and services on Dec. 24 and 31.

The Rockville Skate Park will be closed Dec. 24 and will close at 7 p.m. Sunday, Dec. 31.

Learn more at www.rockvillemd.gov or call 240-314-5000. ✚

Mayor and Council Name Acting City Manager

The outgoing Mayor and Council on Nov. 15 appointed Craig L. Simoneau as Rockville's acting city manager. Mayor Monique Ashton announced the appointment at the first meeting of the new Mayor and Council on Nov. 20.

The Mayor and Council are conducting a national search for a new city manager.

Simoneau has served as Rockville's public works director since September 2005. He served as acting city manager from February 2016 to January 2017. A licensed professional engineer, he is a



Craig L. Simoneau,
acting city manager

graduate of the U.S. Military Academy at West Point and has a master's degree in civil engineering from the Massachusetts Institute of Technology.

Before arriving in Rockville, he served as the public works director at Fort Monroe, Virginia, where he led an organization of 117 employees responsible for all base facilities. ✚

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MAYOR & COUNCIL
111 Maryland Ave.
Rockville, Maryland
20850-2364

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Zoning Update to Include Diagnostic Report as Guide

Rockville's zoning laws will be evaluated as a first step for the Zoning Ordinance Rewrite. The comprehensive rewrite of the city's zoning ordinance — chapter 25 of city code — aims to modernize the laws to meet the changing living, working and recreation trends of Rockville's residents in the 21st century. ZoneCo, a consulting firm based in Cincinnati, Ohio, is conducting the analysis to determine how the city's zoning regulations implement the land-use goals of the Rockville 2040 Comprehensive Plan. ZoneCo will provide the city with a diagnostic report based on its evaluation. The diagnostic report from ZoneCo will be informed by data, based on existing adopted city plans, policies and regulations, and will review and diagnose any issues and strengths of the current zoning code to analyze how well it is supporting and implementing the goals of the Rockville 2040 Comprehensive Plan. The report will conclude the data-gathering phase of the zoning rewrite project, form the foundation of the next phase of the project and ultimately inform the draft zoning ordinance. The diagnostic report will be presented to the Planning Commission at a future meeting. The diagnostic report will be posted on the zoning ordinance rewrite webpage at www.rockvillemd.gov/2521/zoning-ordinance-rewrite, which also provides an overview of the rewrite project. The rewrite project is expected to be completed in the next 18-24 months.

Matching Grant Program Seeks Projects to Improve Communities

Application Deadline is Jan. 19

The city's matching grant program helps neighbors work together to accomplish common goals that support the health, vitality and inclusivity of the place they call home. The Community Empowerment Matching Grant application deadline is Friday, Jan. 19. Neighborhood, civic or homeowners associations, community groups, organized groups of neighbors and student groups are eligible to apply. Neighbors and organizations willing to match funding through cash, in-kind donations and volunteer hours are also eligible. Applications are reviewed and grants awarded by the City Manager's Office. Grants typically range from \$500-\$1,000, must benefit a clearly identified area within city limits and may address any or all of the following objectives:

- Building community:** Projects that promote the development or sustainability of a neighborhood association or community group. Activities that foster diversity, equity and inclusion.
- Community improvement projects:** Projects that improve shared space within a neighborhood or strengthen community identity. This may include landscape improvements and maintenance, natural features management, benches, painting, or certain exterior improvements. Bonus points will be awarded if two or more groups work together on a project.
- Livability initiatives:** Projects that provide educational and outreach opportunities that strengthen social connections between neighbors or neighborhoods. This may include improving safety, addressing a neighborhood challenge or conflict, serving low-income seniors or finding ways to welcome newcomers to Rockville.

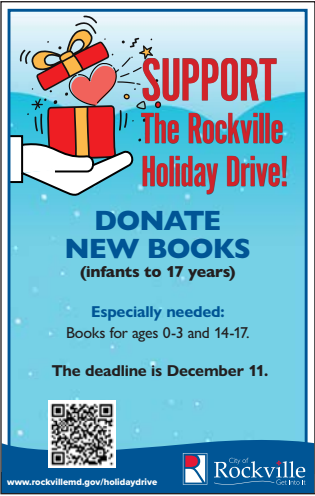
For additional information, contact Hjarman Cordero at 240-314-8344 or hcordero@rockvillemd.gov. To see the objectives for matching grants, and for an application form and additional information, visit www.rockvillemd.gov/community-empowerment.

Rockville Holiday Drive Continues into Gift-Giving Season

Donations are being accepted for the 2023 Holiday Drive, Rockville's annual push to help the community's hundreds of children and families in need during the holiday and gift-giving season. In what has become an annual tradition, businesses, individuals, civic groups, schools, foundations and the faith community, as well as individuals, contribute time and resources to make the holidays special for the less fortunate in the area. Last year, for Thanksgiving, the Holiday Drive served 630 Rockville households, including seniors, and 1,200 children and teens in December. This year, the drive will give gift cards and books to children and teens during December.

How to get involved:

- Send a contribution:** Tax-deductible monetary contributions will be used to buy books and gift cards in December. Donations can be made online at www.rockvillemd.gov/holidaydrive. Checks can be made payable to "City of Rockville" (with "Rockville Holiday Drive" in the memo line) and sent to Rockville Holiday Drive Fund, c/o Community Services Division, 111 Maryland Ave., Rockville, MD 20850.
- Volunteering:** Sort and bag books and deliver them to housebound residents. Visit Rockville's volunteer website to sign up at cityofrockville.galaxydigital.com/need.
- Donate Books:** Drop off new or gently used books at one of the following city buildings: City Hall, Thomas Farm Community Center, Lincoln Park Community Center, Twinbrook Community Center, the Rockville Swim and Fitness Center, or Rockville Senior Center. For more information, visit www.rockvillemd.gov/holidaydrive or call 240-314-8300.



'Snow-How': Information About Winter Weather

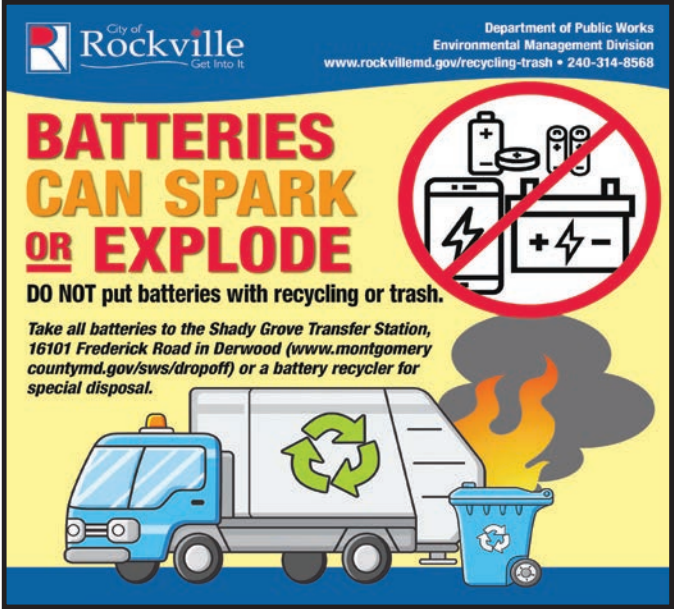
Quick Links, Facts and Phone Numbers

When winter weather strikes, turn to the city's website at www.rockvillemd.gov. Closure and snow emergency information will be available on the website, as well as through Facebook (www.facebook.com/cityofrockville) and X, formerly Twitter (@rockville411), and by signing up for Alert Rockville notifications at www.rockvillemd.gov/alerts. City crews treat and plow roads in priority order. First are primary roads, including major arterial roads, emergency routes, central business districts and primary residential roads near schools. Next are secondary roads, including the remainder of neighborhood streets, alleyways and cul-de-sacs. To check if an address is within the city limits, find the Address and Residency Check map at www.rockvillemd.gov/maps. Removing snow from sidewalks, driveways and entrances is the responsibility of the property and/or business owner or community association. Rockville requires that snow and ice be removed from sidewalks, steps, driveways, parking spaces and similar paved areas for public use within 24 hours after a snowfall of up to 3 inches, within 48 hours after a snowfall of 3-10 inches, and within 72 hours after a snowfall of more than 10 inches. If residents can do so, they should clear snow from around fire hydrants and storm drains. To report a sidewalk that has not been cleared within the required timeframe, call 240-314-8330. Residents are encouraged to check on older neighbors who may need assistance clearing snow. For information about the city's volunteer snow shoveling for seniors, visit RockvilleReports.com/volunteer-to-shovel-snow.

NUMBERS TO KNOW	
Emergency	911
Dept. of Public Works ...	240-314-8500
Water Main Breaks/	
Sewer Line Overflows ...	240-314-8567
Rec. Programs	
Cancellation Line	240-314-5023
Montgomery Co. Hypothermia Alerts	
(report safety concerns for people or pets)	301-279-8000
Report a Downed Tree ...	240-314-8700
Rockville City Hall	240-314-5000
Rockville City Police Department	
(non-emergency)	240-314-8900
Report a Power Outage	
or Downed Wire	1-877-737-2662

\$25,000 Bloomberg Arts Grant Will Create Safer City Streets

The City of Rockville is among 25 cities in the U.S., Canada and Mexico, chosen from an extensive pool of 200 applicants, that have been awarded Asphalt Art Initiative grants through Bloomberg Philanthropies. In collaboration with VisArts, the city will use the \$25,000 Bloomberg grant to integrate artistic elements and asphalt art into a broader roadway improvement project for Beall Avenue. The new Asphalt Art Initiative projects will be installed in 2024. Each addresses a particular challenge related to pedestrian and cyclist safety in applicant cities. "The Asphalt Art Initiative has proven that when cities invest in these low-cost projects, streets become safer and communities become stronger," Bloomberg Philanthropies founder Michael R. Bloomberg said. For more info, visit bit.ly/RkvAsphaltArt.



Help the Rockville City Police Department Take the Plunge at the Maryland State Police Polar Bear Plunge

Friday, Feb. 2 • Sandy Point State Park, Annapolis

Pledge in Support of Rockville's Plunge Team and Support Special Olympics Maryland at: support.somd.org/team/539762.



FOLLOW US! ... ON FACEBOOK: Including the following pages: City of Rockville Government; City of Rockville Recreation and Sports; Rockville City Police Department; Croydon Creek Nature Center; City of Rockville Rocktoberfest; and City of Rockville Farmers Market. **ON INSTAGRAM:** @city_of_rockville, @rockvillerec and @rockvillecitypolice. **ON X (FORMERLY TWITTER):** @Rockville411 and @RockvilleCityPD. **ONLINE:** Rockville Reports.com.

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THE MAYOR AND COUNCIL ARE HOLDING HYBRID MEETINGS. The public is welcome to participate in person or virtually, until further notice.

Meetings Schedule:
Mondays, Dec. 4 and 18 at 7 p.m. Visit www.rockvillemd.gov/AgendaCenter for details.

There will be no scheduled drop-in sessions with the mayor and individual councilmembers until further notice.

Share comments live during community forum. Sign up by calling the City Clerk/Director of Council Operations at 240-314-8280 by 10 a.m. the day of the meeting. All comments will be acknowledged by the Mayor and Council at the meeting and added to the agenda for public viewing on the website.

If you wish to submit comments in writing, please email mayorcouncil@rockvillemd.gov by 10 a.m. on the day of a community forum or public hearing.

Mayor and Council meetings are broadcast on Rockville II, channel 11 on county cable, live-streamed at www.rockvillemd.gov/rockville11 and available a day after each meeting at www.rockvillemd.gov/videoon-demand.

Open House on the Future of the American Legion Bridge and Interstate 495/270 Corridor

An open house on Saturday, Dec. 2 in Rockville will offer the public the opportunity to engage with the Maryland Department of Transportation about improvements to the Interstate 495/270 corridor from the American Legion Bridge to Frederick.

The open house will be held 10 a.m.-noon, at Thomas S. Wootton High School, 2100 Wootton Parkway. It is the last in a series of open houses this fall soliciting input about improvements for the entire corridor.

Topics will include transit

and ridesharing, transit-oriented development, a phased approach to managed lanes, a study of I-270 north of the Intercounty Connector (MD 200) to Frederick, and the potential of implementing managed lanes as a publicly funded and delivered project.

Meeting materials are available at www.americanlegionbridge270.com.

There will not be any formal presentation and there is no need to register to attend or provide comments. The open house offers an informal way to directly

engage with the program team on potential multimodal transportation solutions for the corridor. Staff from the City of Rockville's Department of Public Works will attend.

MDOT offers options for those requiring assistance to participate in the open house. Learn more at bit.ly/ALBridge270OpenHouse.

MDOT will host additional meetings, beginning later this winter, to cover specific phases of the improvements program, such as the I-270 portion through Rockville. ✚

New Attached Accessory Dwelling Unit Law to Go Into Effect in April

Legislation allowing the conditional use of attached accessory units in the City of Rockville will go into effect Tuesday, April 9 following passage of a zoning text amendment by the Mayor and Council in October.

Attached accessory dwelling units, or attached ADUs, are secondary dwellings either inside or attached to single-family homes. Examples of these include

an apartment over a garage or a smaller structure (on a foundation) in the backyard.

A property owner who wants to construct an attached ADU must meet requirements for owner-occupancy, square footage, parking and other conditions.

When the new regulations become law in April, those who wish to either build an attached ADU under the new zoning rules

or bring an existing unpermitted attached ADU into compliance can begin the application process. Attached ADUs were previously only permitted as special exceptions.

For more information about accessory buildings and dwellings, visit www.rockvillemd.gov/2345/Accessory-Buildings-and-Dwellings. ✚

Mayor and Council to Begin Budget Discussions

The Mayor and Council are scheduled to hold their first discussion of budget priorities on Monday, Dec. 4.

The discussion will include reviewing results of a live polling exercise that will be held during the Mayor and Council meeting at 7 p.m. at City Hall.

A Fiscal Year 2025 budget public hearing was held Nov. 20, during the first meeting of the new Mayor and Council. Find video of the hearing with the Nov. 20 meeting listing at www.rockvillemd.gov/AgendaCenter.

The \$157.2 million budget for Fiscal Year 2024, which be-

gan July 1, keeps the city's real property tax rate at \$0.292 per \$100 of assessed valuation. All residential and commercial property owners pay this tax. Rockville has not increased its property tax rate since 1995.

Public participation in the budget process is a high priority for the Mayor and Council and city staff. The community budget priorities survey at www.rockvillemd.gov/ budget is available in simplified Chinese, French, Korean and Spanish, as well as English. Survey responses provide valuable input to the Mayor

and Council for their budget discussions.

For more info, visit www.rockvillemd.gov/budget or call the Finance Department at 240-314-8400. ✚

Get Involved with the City

- **Send an email** to mayorcouncil@rockvillemd.gov.
- **Testify at a hearing** or in writing to mayorcouncil@rockvillemd.gov or by mail to the Mayor and Council, Rockville City Hall, 111 Maryland Ave., Rockville, MD 20850.
- **Volunteer** to be on a board or commission. Find ways to give of your time and talents at www.rockvillemd.gov/volunteer.

Boards and Commissions

Anyone interested in serving on a board or commission may write to: Mayor and Council, 111 Maryland Ave., Rockville, MD 20850, call 240-314-8280, or fill out and submit an expression of interest form at www.rockvillemd.gov/boardscommissions.

While some meetings are canceled, other board and commission meetings will take place virtually. See times and dates, and ways to participate on the city's online calendar: www.rockvillemd.gov/calendar.

- **Dec. 13 Planning Commission 7 p.m.** (To participate, visit www.rockvillemd.gov/AgendaCenter for details closer to the date.)

Vacancies

The Mayor and Council are seeking applicants for the following boards and commissions:

- Community Policing Advisory Board (2)
- Cultural Arts Commission (1)
- Environment Commission (2)
- Human Rights Commission (1)
- Planning Commission (1)
- Senior Citizens Commission (1)
- Rockville Housing Enterprises (1)

For more, visit www.rockvillemd.gov/boardscommissions or call 240-314-8280.

LEARN MORE ON ROCKVILLE II
www.youtube.com/cityofrockville

► SPEAK UP ◀

Report potential fraud, waste and abuse related to City of Rockville government services and employees.

Call 1-866-921-6714

Email rockvillemd@integritycounts.ca
Visit www.integritycounts.ca/org/rockvillemd
For more information, visit www.rockvillemd.gov/fraud-waste-abuse.

SIGN UP FOR WEEKLY NEWS!
www.rockvillemd.gov/newsletters



City Hall: **240-314-5000**

Police Non-Emergency: **240-314-8900**

24-Hour Utility Emergency Report Hotline: **240-314-8567**

STAY INFORMED: The Mayor and Council meeting schedule and agendas can be found at www.rockvillemd.gov/mayorcouncil. Staff reports with background information are included with the agendas, which are posted several days before each meeting.

Gift Greener and Recycle This Holiday Season

Do you plan on giving new electronics as a gift for the holidays?

For products that help reduce environmental impacts and energy costs, look for Energy Star-qualified and Electronic Product Environmental Assessment Tool-registered products. Find more green gift ideas from Montgomery County's Gift Outside the Box Campaign at www.montgomerycountymd.gov/dep/gift-greener.html.

Rockville collects and recycles electronics, such as cell phones, computers, televisions and holiday lights. To make a bulk waste or electronics recycling collection appointment, call 240-314-8568.

Getting rid of old batteries? Don't dispose of them in your trash or recycling cart, where they could start a fire. Instead, bring batteries of any size to the household hazardous waste drop-off at the county transfer station at 16105 Frederick Road.

For batteries larger than 9 volts, including rechargeable batteries found in phones, laptops and power tools, cover the terminals with packing tape or duct tape and place them in a plastic bag or container, separate from batteries that don't require being taped. Find more information, including locations that accept batteries for recycling, at bit.ly/BatteryDisposal.

For more information on recycling and trash service, visit www.rockvillemd.gov/recycling-trash or see the 2024 schedule and the Christmas tree collection article on this page.

Post-Christmas 'Tree-tment': An At-Home Way to Recycle Holiday Trees

Rockville collects Christmas trees as part of its recycling collection.

Place trees at the curb for pickup on regular recycling and trash collection days after removing all ornaments and metals, wires, stands and decorations, including tinsel. Trees should not be bagged. There is no deadline for curbside collection of trees.

While the Montgomery County Recycling Center, which formerly converted the trees into mulch, no longer offers this service, the county recommends recycling branches and needles at home by using them as ground cover under trees and shrubs or by chopping them up and adding them to a compost pile.

Artificial trees cannot be recycled and should be placed in the gray trash cart for regular weekly collection. Artificial trees that are too large to fit in the cart can be collected by appointment as one of six bulk collections allowed per year or taken to the transfer station.

For bulk-waste disposal information, visit www.rockvillemd.gov/bulkwaste.

Fight the White Stuff with a Green Game Plan

Environmentally Friendly Snow- and Ice-Removal Tips

Walking in a winter wonderland can be wonderful. But it can also prove hazardous. Follow these tips to keep your sidewalks and driveway snow- and ice-free, while minimizing the environmental impact:

Shovel Early, Shovel Often

Removing fresh snow before it has a chance to harden into ice is the best way to keep your pavement clear. Deicers work best for melting thin layers of snow or ice. So, shovel first, break up any ice patches you can and then add the salt.

Use Salt Sparingly

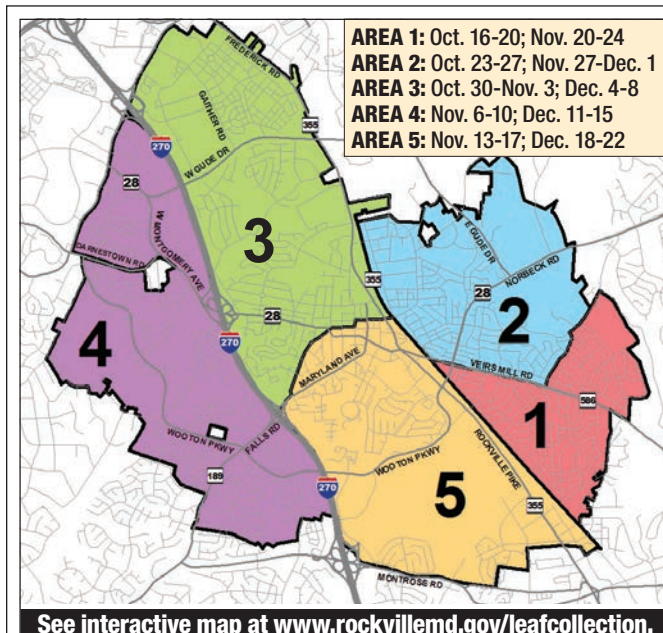
Scatter the deicer and leave space between the grains. A 12-ounce coffee mug full of salt is enough to treat a 20-foot driveway or 10 sidewalk squares. Using more salt than recommended won't speed up melting but can harm soil and water quality.

Buy Early and Check Labels

Buy your deicing product before the big storm, so you won't be staring at empty shelves in the stores. Check the label before you buy. Although slightly more expensive, calcium chloride (CaCl₂) requires less salt, works at lower temperatures and does not contain cyanide, unlike sodium chloride (NaCl, also known as rock salt). Urea is sometimes promoted as lawn-friendly because excess urea will act as a fertilizer. However, the application rate for urea is far greater than the amount your lawn needs, and most of the excess urea will only end up fertilizing the stream.

Avoid Kitty Litter and Ashes

While these products are environmentally friendly, they are only marginally effective at adding traction, and don't melt ice. If you need traction, a better option is to mix in a small amount of sand and use less salt. ❄️



Leaf Vacuuming Makes Final Sweep This Month

The city is scheduled to conclude its fall leaf collection on Friday, Dec. 22, with crews completing the second of two rounds of vacuuming leaves from neighborhood curbs.

An interactive map at www.rockvillemd.gov/leafcollection allows residents to input their address and learn when their leaves will be collected.

Rake leaves next to, but out of, roadways, gutters and bike lanes, and away from parked vehicles. Leaves should be raked by 6 a.m. on the first day of their collection period, but no earlier than one week before the collection dates to avoid grass damage or fire hazards. Remove sticks

and other objects from leaf piles. Avoid parking near leaf piles or other vehicles.

After the collection period ends, use biodegradable paper lawn bags or 32-gallon trash cans (without plastic garbage bags) to set leaves out on your recycling and trash collection day, or consider composting. Other environmentally friendly alternatives to raking, include leaving some leaves where they fall or using them as mulch in garden beds, where they provide natural habitat for beneficial insects. Mowing over the leaves can break them into tiny pieces that can filter into the grass, providing much-needed nutrients. ❄️

ROCKVILLE RECYCLES
WWW.ROCKVILLEMd.GOV/RECYCLING-TRASH • 240-314-8568

THANK YOU FOR RECYCLING THESE:

- Cans:** Aluminum and Steel Cans (empty and rinse)
- Glass:** Bottles and Jars (empty and rinse)
- Paper:** Cereal Boxes, Newspaper, Magazines and Mail, Flattened Cardboard & Paper Tubes
- Plastic:** Kitchen, Laundry, Bath Bottles and Containers (empty and replace cap)

These items go in the brown cart.

'NO' TO THESE:

- ❌ No liquids or food
- ❌ No tires
- ❌ No appliances
- ❌ No stoves
- ❌ No A/C units
- ❌ No paint cans

SIGN UP
FOR THE CITY'S MANY NEWSLETTER:
from environment to our newest volunteer news!
www.rockvillemd.gov/newsletters

Rockville Recycling and Trash Collections Holiday Schedule 2024

DATE	HOLIDAY	COLLECTION CHANGES
Monday, Jan. 1	New Year's Day	All collections occur one day later than usual this week.
Monday, Jan. 15	Martin Luther King Jr. Day	All collections occur one day later than usual this week.
Monday, Feb. 19	Presidents Day	All collections occur one day later than usual this week.
Monday, May 27	Memorial Day	All collections occur one day later than usual this week.
Wednesday, June 19	Juneteenth National Independence Day	Monday and Tuesday collections as scheduled; Wednesday and Thursday collections occur one day later than usual this week.
Thursday, July 4	Independence Day	Thursday collections occur Friday. No other changes this week.
Monday, Sept. 2	Labor Day	All collections occur one day later than usual this week.
Monday, Nov. 11	Veterans Day	All collections occur one day later than usual this week.
Thursday, Nov. 28	Thanksgiving Day	Thursday collections occur Friday. No other changes this week.
Wednesday, Dec. 25	Christmas Day	Monday and Tuesday collections as scheduled; Wednesday and Thursday collections occur one day later than usual this week.

Make sure your cart:

- Does not block sidewalks.
 - Does not block mailboxes.
 - Wheels are on the curb.
 - Does not exceed a maximum weight of 165 pounds.
 - Is removed within 24 hours of collection.
- Thank you for helping to keep our community and collection crews safe.

Food Scraps Compost Drop-Off

Rockville residents can drop off food scraps in the green bins at the Rockville Senior Center, 1150 Canation Drive, and the city's maintenance facility, 14625 Rothgeb Drive. The sites are accessible 24/7 and the service is free of charge. Find details at www.rockvillemd.gov/foodscraps.

No Plastic Bags

The city does not accept plastic bags or film of any type in recycling collections. Find grocery or retail stores that offer plastic bag collection bins near their entrances at bit.ly/howtorecyclebags.

Recycling and Refuse Office

Visit www.rockvillemd.gov/recycling-trash or call 240-314-8568 between 7 a.m. and 4:30 p.m. Monday-Thursday.

- Schedule a special pickup:
 - Bulk refuse.
 - Scrap metal.
 - Electronics recycling.
- Report a missed collection, ask a question or raise a concern.
- Order, change or return carts.

Find this information at www.rockvillemd.gov/recycling-trash. Encuentre la información en www.rockvillemd.gov/recycling-trash. www.rockvillemd.gov/recycling-trash에서 정보를 얻으실 수 있습니다. 如欲了解更多信息，请访问 www.rockvillemd.gov/recycling-trash.

Информация предоставлена на www.rockvillemd.gov/recycling-trash.

Hanapin ang impormasyon ito sa www.rockvillemd.gov/recycling-trash.



Find 2024 holiday collection schedule calendars for each collection day at www.rockvillemd.gov/recycling-trash.

www.rockvillemd.gov/recycling-trash • 240-314-8568

ROCKVILLE TOWN SQUARE PARKING

2 HOURS OF FREE PARKING

NO VALIDATION REQUIRED

ROCKVILLE REWARDS
shop small savings card

UNLOCK DISCOUNTS AT ROCKVILLE BUSINESSES

SUPPORT LOCAL SCHOOLS AND NONPROFITS

WWW.ROCKVILLEREWARDS.COM

MORE NEWS, MORE OFTEN, ON YOUTUBE ... Now on Rockville 11's YouTube channel, (youtube.com/cityofrockville): We say goodbye to Mayor Bridget Donnell Newton and Councilmember Beryl L. Feinberg; see the results of the 2023 vote-by-mail election; and a recap of the 2023 Veterans Day ceremony.



City Completes Northeast Park Pond and Stream Restoration Project

The city in November completed the restoration of the pond and stream in Northeast Park, a project that creates a healthier ecosystem and preserves park space at Gude Drive and RedGate Farms Court.

The 10-monthlong construction project's goals were to restore pond functionality, reconnect the stream to its floodplain, reduce invasive species and reestablish native vegetation, and meet regulatory requirements. It also addressed erosion at the end of Neal Drive and Wesley Road. An educational sign will be installed to highlight the project's stream restoration technique, stormwater management and water-quality improvements.

Staff from the city's departments of public works, recreation and parks, and community planning and development services collaborated on the \$1.94 million project.

The pond is part of a stormwater management facility originating from a 48-inch outfall south of Taft Street collecting stormwater from a 51-acre stormdrain network through residential, commercial and industrial areas. Built in 1973, it was

converted to an extended detention wetland facility in 2005 with a new riser and a regraded micro-pool. The latest improvements will allow the pond to successfully collect sediment and pollutants from stormwater runoff, helping to reduce pollution to local waterways that flow to the Chesapeake Bay. The new design makes the pond easily accessible, reducing maintenance costs and impacts on the park and community.

Care was taken to protect and maintain the Pablo A. Fontana Memorial Tree and Bench and to preserve as many existing trees as possible. A limited number of trees that were removed or impacted by the project were assessed and cataloged. Replanting of a floodplain forest was closely coordinated with the city's forestry division. The new trees were located to help ensure their survivability and maximize the number of trees for the site.

Find park information at www.rockvillemd.gov/northeastpark.

Learn more about the restoration at www.rockvillemd.gov/northeast-park-pond-stream-project.

Floating Zone Amendment Will Make Development Process Easier

A floating zone process text amendment adopted by the Mayor and Council in October will allow developments recommended in the city's comprehensive plan to move forward more swiftly.

Development plans that implement a land-use recommended in the comprehensive plan that differs from existing zoning will be able to move forward two years sooner than would otherwise occur. The amendment will also allow for concurrent review of project plan and site plan applications. While permitted previously, the procedure was not clearly outlined in the city's zoning code.

Under the amendment:

- A developer will be allowed to request a rezoning (or "map amendment") on a property if a change

in land use or zoning is recommended in the comprehensive plan. Typically, the city would initiate a map amendment to rezone parcels in accordance with the plan, but this will not occur until the zoning ordinance rewrite is completed in 2025.

- The Mayor and Council will be the approving authority for the map amendment as well as a concurrent project plan application.
- Subsequent approval of a site plan by the Planning Commission is required.

For more information, contact Jim Wasilak, chief of zoning, at jwasilak@rockvillemd.gov. To learn more about Rockville zoning, visit www.rockvillemd.gov/zoning.

Citywide Streetlight Replacement Gets Underway

Rockville will begin work this fall on the first phase of a citywide project to replace city-owned and -maintained streetlights with energy-efficient light-emitting diode fixtures.

The project's first phase includes replacing approximately 2,000 fixtures of the more common types, including colonial, contemporary and cobra-head fixtures. Replacement began in November with the cobra-head fixtures, which are found on arterial roads with higher traffic volumes. Conversions of fixtures on neighborhood streets will likely begin in December or January. Replacements are expected to be completed sometime midyear 2024, depending on weather.

The existing contemporary and colonial high pressure sodium lights will be replaced with colonial LEDs.

The city will replace other decorative fixtures as a later phase of the project. Streetlights that are owned and maintained by the city are located on metal or fiberglass poles and are fed by underground power. Streetlights owned and maintained by



Pepco are located on wooden utility poles and are fed by overhead power.

The Mayor and Council awarded the roughly \$1 million project contract to Lighting Maintenance, Inc. The city is funding nearly \$675,000 of the project through a grant award from the Maryland Energy Administration and from Pepco's EmPowerMD rebates.

The project supports energy efficiency efforts that are part of Rockville's Climate Action Plan. LEDs offer reduced greenhouse gas emissions and save tax dollars through lower energy and maintenance costs.

Community Organizations Invited to Apply for Grants

The City of Rockville provides grants annually to local organizations that partner with the city to enhance quality of life for Rockville residents.

Nonprofits supporting the advancement of education and community engagement are welcome to apply. Applications are being accepted for Fiscal Year 2025 (July 1, 2024-June 30, 2025).

To be eligible for a grant, organizations must provide services to Rockville residents and complete an online application.

Find an online application at www.rockvillemd.gov/2079/Community-Organization-Grant. Applications are due by 5 p.m. Monday, Jan. 8.

For more information, contact Abe Bruckman at abruckman@rockvillemd.gov.

Applicants will also have the opportunity to speak in support of their grant request at a public hearing for the city's budget in spring 2024.

Don't Let a Clog Become an Unwanted Holiday Guest

When the holiday feast is finished, don't pour fats, oils and grease, i.e., FOG, down the drain.

FOG, including sauces, gravy and salad dressings, can trap solids, form hard deposits and clog pipes, causing basement backups, sewer overflows and costly damage to city infrastructure and private property.

Before washing dishes, scrape food and grease into a trash can, use a paper towel to wipe away oil, or pour FOG into an empty can, let it cool to solidify and dispose of it.

'Volunteer Rockville' Has Good News to Persue About Help We Could Use

Looking to lend your time, talents and expertise to the City of Rockville? Look no further than "Volunteer Rockville," the city's email newsletter that presents volunteering news and opportunities to serve your city.

The bimonthly newsletter delivers to your inbox news about nonprofits, city and community programs seeking volunteers, Student Service Learning credit opportunities, and profiles of volunteers and organizations serving as agents of change in our community.

To sign up to receive the newsletter in your inbox, visit www.rockvillemd.gov/newsletters and select "Volunteering."

Volunteers Wanted for Senior Center Entrance Advisory Group

The city is seeking volunteers for an advisory group to provide input on a new entrance to the Rockville Senior Center.

The group will provide input for the design of a new access road to the center's parking lot from the intersection of West Gude and Piccard drives.

Members will meet several times throughout the design process to present concerns and issues, share the group's progress with interested parties, and provide recommendations to be incorporated into the project's design phase. Meetings will likely be held at the Rockville Senior Center beginning in January.

The group is the result of discussions between the city's Department of Public Works, the Senior Citizens Commission and neighborhood associations near the center. The final number of group members will depend on the level of community interest.

For more information, or to apply, contact Jennifer Wang, senior transportation engineer, at jwang@rockvillemd.gov or 240-314-8506.

Connect with us on Social Media.



READ ALL ABOUT IT! ... IN YOUR INBOX ... Sign up for the city's many email newsletters, featuring weekly roundups of city news and events, regular updates about arts and culture, planning and development, the environment and sustainability, and volunteering, and news from our nature, senior, and swim and fitness centers. Visit www.rockvillemd.gov/newsletters.

Rockville Region Places 7th in Arts Vibrancy Rankings

The Frederick-Rockville-Gaithersburg region has come in seventh out of 40 communities ranked as the most arts-vibrant nationwide. SMU DataArts, the National Center for Arts Research, released its 8th Arts Vibrancy Index in October, which identifies the 40 most arts-vibrant communities in the United States. The index analyzes 13 unique measures, including the level of supply, demand and government support for the arts in more than 900 communities across the country.

“In these rankings we highlight and celebrate communities big and small, located in every region, that have cultivated higher levels of arts activity per person living in the community,” the report’s executive summary states.

The Frederick-Rockville-Gaithersburg region, with an estimated population of 1,339,600, was second in government support for the arts and scored in the top 1% of measures related to contributed revenue and total compensation paid to those working in arts and culture.

Find out more about the index and the arts communities it analyzes at culturaldata.org/arts-vibrancy-2023/the-top-40-list.

Top 10 Vibrant Arts Communities in the U.S.

1. San Francisco-San Mateo-Redwood City, CA.
2. New York-Jersey City-White Plains, NY-NJ.
3. Washington-Arlington-Alexandria, DC-VA-MD-WV.
4. Boston, MA.
5. Philadelphia, PA.
6. Minneapolis-St. Paul-Bloomington, MN-WI.
7. Frederick-Gaithersburg-Rockville, MD.
8. Nashville-Davidson-Murfreesboro-Franklin, TN.
9. Los Angeles-Long Beach-Glendale, CA.
10. New Orleans-Metairie, LA.

Practice good **petiquette** in our parks!



Keep your pet on a leash at all times. If your pet makes a mess, clean it up!



2024

New Year's Rockin' Around the Senior Center

Rockville Senior Center
Thursday, Jan. 4, 2-4 p.m.

In this progressive appetizer event, visit rooms throughout the center, discover appetizers, drinks and desserts, then kick off the New Year!

Register with course #30349 at www.rockvillemd.gov/registration
\$8 members/\$12 nonmembers

The Theater and Mansion Presents Seasonal Favorites

The Rockville Civic Ballet presents “The Nutcracker” 2 p.m. and 7:30 p.m. Dec. 2 and 9; 2 p.m. Dec. 3 and 10.

Join Clara on her magical journey. Directed by Eleanor Simpson and Erin Kwong. Tickets are \$17; \$13 for children 12 and younger and seniors 60 and older. Visit fscottfitzgerald.showare.com/Nutcracker2023 for tickets. Visit friendsrcb.org for more information. Limited tickets are available.

Rockville Art League Members’ Juried Winter Show

The Rockville Art League Members’ Juried Winter Show of varied media will be on exhibit Dec. 3-Jan. 12 at the Glenview Mansion Art Gallery. Meet the artists from 1:30-3:30 p.m. Sunday, Dec. 3.

The Winter Jubilee 1-4 p.m. Saturday, Dec. 16.

Celebrate the Winter Jubilee at the F. Scott Fitzgerald Theatre and Social Hall.

Children and families can enjoy arts and crafts, face painting and games. Don’t miss balloon twisting, a juggling elf on a unicycle and classic characters, like Rudolph.

Tickets cost \$6 for residents and \$8 for non-

residents, 17 and younger. Register with course #29375 at www.rockvillemd.gov/registration. Mandatory chaperones 18 and older are free and do not need to register.

Rockville Concert Band presents “Snow Holidays: A Musical Journey Around the World” 3 p.m. Sunday, Dec. 17.

Be transported through enchanting melodies and rhythms from diverse cultures, igniting the holiday spirit and filling the air with joy and harmony.

No tickets required but a \$5 donation is suggested. Visit rockvilleconcertband.org for more information.

Rockville Chorus presents “Hallelujah for Holiday Classics” 7:30 p.m. Sunday, Dec. 17.

Features selections from Handel’s “Messiah,” “Jingle Bells” by James Lord Pierpont Light, “One Candle” by Peter Yarrow S’Vivon, a traditional Hebrew song, “What Sweeter Music” by John Rutter, and “You’re a Mean One Mister Grinch” by Albert Hague and Dr. Seuss.

No tickets are required but donations are appreciated. Visit rockvillechorus.org for more information. ✚

ROCKVILLE SENIOR CENTER

HOLIDAY BAZAAR

Sponsored by Rockville Seniors, Inc.

Saturday, Dec. 2
9 a.m.-2 p.m.



Handmade Crafts • Book Sale • Raffles • Plant Sale • Lunch Café • and More!

 **Rockville Senior Center**
1150 Carnation Drive, Rockville, MD 20850
240-314-8800 • www.rockvillemd.gov/seniorcenter

Hips, Knees, Ears and Breathing, This Month at the Senior Center

Stay healthy, informed and entertained with seminars and events from the Rockville Senior Center in December.

Register with the course number at www.rockvillemd.gov/registration. Learn about 60-plus programs, courses, activities and services at www.rockvillemd.gov/seniorcenter or by calling 240-314-8800. See the “Adults 60+” recreation guide at www.rockvillemd.gov/life for more information.

with tinnitus have hearing loss. Learn what tinnitus is, what causes it and treatments. Presented by doctors Glenn Elms and Richard Gomes, audiologists with Live Better Hearing.

Register with course #29324. 1-2 p.m. Tuesday, Dec. 12. Free. Hybrid.

Better Breather’s Club

The club will hold a holiday party. 1-2 p.m. Thursday, Dec. 21. Free.

Total Hip and Knee Replacement

Dr. Carlos Martinez discusses what to expect before and after surgery, and will review the anatomy of hips and knees, total hip and knee replacement, how a physical therapist can help, and strategies to improve daily living.

Register with course #28931. 1-2 p.m. Wednesday, Dec. 6. Free. Hybrid.

Your Hearing and Tinnitus

Ninety percent of people

Food Distribution

The Mobile Market returns 2-4 p.m. Thursday, Dec. 14, to the back parking lot of the Rockville Senior Center.

The Capital Area Food Bank Mobile Market program provides fresh produce to local communities in need, free of charge.

Intended to support members of the community at risk of hunger, there are no income requirements or other qualifications — food is provided to anyone who attends a Mobile Market distribution. ✚

Help shape the future of public art and make your community more vibrant.



WE WANT TO HEAR FROM YOU.
Fill out the city’s new public art survey at: bit.ly/rkvpublicart.

YOGA

at the **ROCKVILLE SWIM AND FITNESS CENTER**



Breathe, relax and lessen stress. Get fit and improve your posture.



Yoga classes are now enrolling. Visit www.rockvillemd.gov/registration.

The Rockville Swim and Fitness Center, 355 Martins Lane



WHAT ARE WE CELEBRATING THIS MONTH? Human Rights day and month, of course, and the holidays, but also December is the month for AIDS awareness, root vegetables and exotic fruits, worldwide food service safety, ties, pears, and car donation. This is also the month for spiritual literacy, writing a business plan and Operation Santa Paws, encouraging us to donate items to our furry friends in animal shelters.

December CALENDAR

FACILITIES LEGEND:

- CC** Croydon Creek Nature Center, 852 Avery Rd., 240-314-8770.
GM Glenview Mansion, 603 Edmonston Dr., 240-314-8660.
FSF F. Scott Fitzgerald Theatre, 603 Edmonston Dr., 240-314-8690.
LP Lincoln Park Community Center, 357 Frederick Ave., 240-314-8780.

- CH** Rockville City Hall, 111 Maryland Ave., 240-314-5000.
SR Rockville Senior Center, 1150 Carnation Dr., 240-314-8800.
SFC Rockville Swim and Fitness Center, 355 Martins Lane, 240-314-8750.
TF Thomas Farm Community Center, 700 Falls Grove Dr., 240-314-8840.
TC Twinbrook Community Recreation Center, 12920 Twinbrook Pkwy., 240-314-8830.

- V** Virtual Program/Offering
H Hybrid: Offering both Virtual and In-Person
F Facebook Live Event



1 **ROCKVILLE TOWN SQUARE HOLIDAY TREE LIGHTING** See article on page 8. 6-8:30 p.m. 131 Gibbs St.

2 **HOLIDAY BAZAAR** Handmade crafts, a book sale, raffles, a plant sale, a lunch cafe and more. See ad on page 6. 9 a.m.-2 p.m. Free. **SR**

2 **OPEN HOUSE ON THE FUTURE OF THE AMERICAN LEGION BRIDGE AND INTERSTATE 495/270 CORRIDOR** See article on page 3.

2,3,9,10 **THE ROCKVILLE CIVIC BALLET PRESENTS "THE NUTCRACKER"** See article on page 6. **FSF**

3 **ROCKVILLE ART LEAGUE MEMBERS' JURIED WINTER SHOW MEET THE ARTISTS** See article on page 6. Free. 1:30-3:30 p.m. **GM**

3 **NATURAL HOLIDAY CRAFTS** Spend the afternoon using a variety of natural or recycled objects to make holiday crafts and ornaments. Each participant will complete at least three projects. Adult participation required for children younger than 8. Register with course #28838. \$12 R/\$14 NR. Ages 6-12. 1:30-3 p.m. **CC**

6 **FUNERAL PLANNING IN ADVANCE** How your friends and family say goodbye to you is determined by the type of event you choose. You can plan for a formal affair with a long list of speakers, a more casual event with only your closest friends and family present, or anything in between. Register with course #28898. Free. 10-11:30 a.m. **SR**

6 **LITTLE EXPLORERS** Spend time with your little one exploring with a naturalist. Hiking, games and hands-on learning are part of the fun. Registration required with course #28819. Ages 2-5. \$8 R/\$10 NR. 10-11 a.m. **CC**

6 **TOTAL HIP AND KNEE REPLACEMENT** See article on page 6. Register with course #28931. Free. 1-2 p.m. **SR**

6 **V** **ASK AN EV (ELECTRIC VEHICLE) OWNER** Join the Electric Vehicle Association of Greater Washington for an online Ask An EV Owner event. Event page: evadc.wildapricot.org/Ask. 7:30-8:30 p.m.

9 **4th ANNUAL GINGERBREAD AND COOKIE DECORATING PARTY** Gingerbread House decorating competition for ages 9-14; cookie design competition for ages 5-8. Light beverages, snacks, gingerbread house kits and cookies provided. Preregistration required with course #29847. Noon-4 p.m. \$10. **LP**

10 **FAMILIES OUTSIDE: READY FOR WINTER** Each session explores a different nature topic to teach you more about native habitats. Adults and children must register, and all children must be accompanied by an adult. Ages 3 and older. \$5 R/\$6 NR. Register with course #28825. 11:30 a.m.-12:30 p.m. **CC**

10 **CHANUKAH CELEBRATION** See article on page 8. 4 p.m. 131 Gibbs St.

11 **CAPITOL CAROLLERS** Classic, secular and international holiday pieces with gorgeous harmonies and beautiful arrangements. Register with course #29477. \$6 M/\$9 NM. 2-3 p.m. **SR**

12 **YOUR HEARING AND TINNITUS** See article on page 6. Register with course #29324. Free. 1-2 p.m. **SR**

12 **NATURAL HOLIDAY CRAFTS WITH CROYDON CREEK NATURE CENTER** Spend the afternoon using a variety of natural or recycled objects to make unique holiday crafts and ornaments. Each participant will complete at least three projects. Register with course #29706. \$12 M/\$15 NM. 1:30-3 p.m. **SR**

14 **CAPITAL AREA FOOD BANK MOBILE MARKET** See the article on page 6. 2-4 p.m.

16 **THE WINTER JUBILEE** See the ad on this page. 1-4 p.m. **FSF**

17 **ROCKVILLE CONCERT BAND PRESENTS "SNOW HOLIDAYS: A MUSICAL JOURNEY AROUND THE WORLD"** See the article on page 6. 3-4 p.m. **FSF**

17 **ROCKVILLE CHORUS PRESENTS "HALLELUJAH FOR HOLIDAY CLASSICS!"** See article on page 6. 7:30-8:30 p.m. **FSF**

18 **COOKING CLASSES WITH CHEF ALBA: A VERY BRITISH BRUNCH FOR THE HOLIDAYS** Cook along or simply watch during live and interactive Zoom cooking classes. Menu: brunch pancake sharing board, egg-in-the-hole smoked salmon and avocado brioche toasties, and the ultimate panetone mini-trifles. Register with course #29555. \$15 M/\$20 NM. 11:30 a.m.-1 p.m. **SR**

21 **V** **WALKING THROUGH THE WINTER WONDERLANDS** Join this virtual walk and view beautiful winter scenery from different parts of the world. Walk more than 2 miles in the comfort of your home. Seated instruction available. Register with course #28437. Free. 10-11 a.m. **SR**

22 **GINGERBREAD WONDERLAND** Craft a whimsical gingerbread masterpiece and take home a sweet holiday centerpiece to impress friends and family. Register with course #29715. \$20 M/\$25 NM. 1-2 p.m. **SR**

25 **CITY GOVERNMENT CLOSED** See article on page 1.

26 **DECORATE GINGERBREAD HOUSES AT THOMAS FARM COMMUNITY CENTER** All materials supplied. Grades 3-6. \$20 R/\$25 NR. Register with course #29828. 1-3 p.m. **TF**

28 **NATURE GAME DAY** Spend a morning of your winter break trying out some family-friendly nature-themed tabletop games and puzzles. Naturalist game masters will be on hand to explain the rules. Games suited for ages 5 and older. Children younger than 12 must be accompanied by an adult. Hot cocoa and light snacks provided. Register with course #30243. \$4 R/\$5 NR. 10 a.m.-noon. **CC**

30 **CRITTERS AND COCOA** Spend a winter morning with the animals and a cup of hot cocoa. Learn about Croydon Creek's animal ambassadors and what they can teach us about their wild counterparts. Ages 2 and older. Register with course #30237. \$4 R/\$5 NM. 10-11 a.m. **CC**

F. Scott Fitzgerald Theatre
AT ROCKVILLE CIVIC CENTER PARK

Rockville's home for the arts...

Winter Jubilee

Saturday, Dec. 16
1-4 p.m.

at the F. Scott Fitzgerald Theatre, Rockville Civic Center Park

Join us as we celebrate the Winter Jubilee at the F. Scott Fitzgerald Theatre and Social Hall. Children and families can enjoy arts and crafts, face painting, balloons, and interactive characters! Cost: \$6 Residents; \$8 Nonresidents; free for adults 18 and over.

603 Edmonston Drive, Rockville, MD
Box Office: 240.314.8690 • www.rockvillemd.gov/theatre



R = Residents • NR = Nonresidents • M = Member • NM = Nonmember

FOR MORE INFO AND UP-TO-DATE EVENT LISTINGS: WWW.ROCKVILLEMD.GOV/CALENDAR

Year in Review

continued from pg. 1...

- sessions to kick off outreach and engagement for the Town Center Master Plan update, which will help guide the area's success in coming decades. The most recent master plan for Rockville Town Center was adopted in 2001. The goal of the master plan is to create a cohesive vision for the Town Center area that meets the city's goals regarding climate action, bicycle and pedestrian safety, and racial equity and social justice.
- State aid for schools, legislation addressing transportation needs and a grant to renovate restrooms at a city community center were among wins

for Rockville during the Maryland General Assembly session that concluded April 10.

- Managers and leaders from the City of Rockville attended a first series of meetings as part of a one-year commitment to the Government Alliance on Race and Equity.
- Rockville Housing Enterprises, the city's public housing agency, acquired Scarborough Square in the city's College Gardens neighborhood, which provided and preserved 121 affordable housing units in the City of Rockville.

MAY

- The Rockville City Academy returned, offering members of the community an opportunity to better understand how

the City of Rockville operates with a closer look at city departments and services. The academy was comprised of four sessions that connected participants with city staff who help keep Rockville running.

- The city's Traffic and Transportation Division held two virtual meetings to discuss upcoming projects to improve mobility and safety for pedestrians and bicyclists as part of the city's Vision Zero Action Plan
- The two-day Hometown Holidays Music Fest, featuring local flavor, two stages of entertainment by local acts, the Taste of Rockville and activities for kids, returned to RedGate Park.
- A long-planned major road project crossed the finish line in late spring

as the city completed construction of improvements to Baltimore Road. The project makes the connection between Rockville Town Center and the city's east side more convenient, safe and accessible for pedestrians, bicyclists and motorists. The improvements, which span more than a mile-and-a-half, create a more consistent roadway design, add pedestrian safety measures at several intersections and offer easier access to the Rockville Metro station.

- Rockville welcomed Joyce Tian, winner of the "If I Were Mayor ..." essay contest, to City Hall. Tian, a fourth-grader at Beall Elementary School, earned the right to serve as Rockville's Mayor for a Day, doing an on-camera

continued on pg. 8...

MLK Day Celebration Offers an Opportunity to Serve

Rockville will honor Martin Luther King Jr.'s life and legacy as the city holds its 52nd annual Martin Luther King Jr. Day celebration with a ceremony on Saturday, Jan. 13, and a week of service activities.

King recognized the power of service. The civil rights leader famously said, "Everyone can be great because everybody can serve." In 1994, Congress passed the King Holiday and Service Act to designate the federal holiday as a National Day of Service. By observing Martin Luther King Jr. Day through service activities, Rockville begins each year with a commitment to making our community a better place.

The city is sponsoring service activities in which the community can participate. (Some of these activities are weather dependent and may be rescheduled). They are:

- Creating kits for unsheltered veterans.
- Partnering with Project Linus to make blankets for sick children.
- A trail cleanup to remove trash from the Hayes Forest Preserve at Croydon Creek Nature Center.
- A Weed Warriors invasive plant pull at a city park.
- Help Comfort Cases by donating Comfort Backpacks filled with needed items to provide comfort to children going into the foster care system.

Find additional opportunities to serve with city partners organizations, include those with activities at the Martin Luther King Jr. Day celebration at Rockville High School.

For more information, and to register to participate in a service activity, visit www.rockvillemd.gov/volunteer.

Save the Date for Rockville's Martin Luther King Jr. Celebration

Join the City of Rockville for the city's Martin Luther King Jr. Celebration.

The celebration will be held from 9:30 a.m.-12:30 p.m. Saturday, Jan. 13 at Rockville High School, 2100 Baltimore Road.

This free event kicks off a weekend of service and celebration of King's legacy and founding principles. The celebration features a screening and discussion of the award-winning documentary "Finding Fellowship," a performance by Soul in Motion, the opportunity to meet with and sign up for service projects through a variety of nonprofit organizations participating in the Salute to Nonprofits, and a kid-friendly performance and activity.

A continental breakfast will be provided, while supplies last.

For more information, visit www.rockville.md.gov/mlk.

Tree and Menorah Lighting Bring the Holidays to Town Square

The annual Rockville Town Square tree lighting will be held 6 p.m. Friday, Dec. 1 and the annual Chanukah celebration, 4 p.m. Sunday, Dec. 10 at Rockville Town Square.

Tree Lighting in the Square will feature food, drinks, live music and selfies with Santa.

The Chanukah Celebration, held by the Chabad Israeli Center of Rockville, will have Chanukah crafts, discounted skating, a menorah lighting, live music and fire juggling.

The Rockville Town Square ice rink is open for the season at 131 Gibbs St.

Rink hours are noon-10 p.m. Monday to Thursday; noon-11 p.m. Friday; 10 a.m.-11 p.m. Saturday; and 10 a.m.-10 p.m. Sunday.

Admission is \$13 for adults, and \$12 for seniors 60-plus and children 12 and younger. Skate rental is \$5. Parking in Rockville Town Square garages is free for the first two hours.

Visit www.rockvilletownsquare.com for more information about Rockville Town Square.

Rockville Nets Another Perfect MEI Score

Rockville has scored 100 marks for the city's commitment to the health, welfare, safety and equality of its lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and queer community in its seventh year of participation in, and the 12th year for, the Human Rights Campaign's Municipal Equality Index.

Rockville scored 95 out of 100, plus an additional 10 bonus points, for its nondiscrimination laws, law enforcement, employment and workplace inclusivity, leadership and services to the LGBTQ+ community. Final scores cannot exceed 100.

"Cities and towns around the country are stepping up each and every day, finding new and innovative ways to empower LGBTQ+ people in the face of a dire national state of emergency," Human Rights Campaign president Kelley Robinson said in a statement accompanying the report.

The 12th annual MEI scorecard, released in November, analyzes and rates 506 municipalities across the country, measuring each for the inclusivity of laws, policies and services for their LGBTQ communities. Cities rated include the 50 state capitals, the 200 largest cities in the U.S., the five largest cities or municipalities in each state, cities home to the state's two largest public universities, 75 cities and municipalities that have high proportions of same-sex couples, and 98 cities selected by HRC and Equality Federation state groups' members and supporters.

Cities are rated across numerous criteria, covering citywide nondiscrimination protections, policies for municipal employees, city services, law enforcement and the city's leadership on LGBTQ equality.

Rockville's MEI report can be found at www.hrc.org/resources/municipalities/rockville-md. Learn more about the MEI at www.hrc.org/resources/municipal-equality-index. 🌸

Year in Review

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interview with Rockville 11, visiting the Rockville City Police Department, the Department of Public Works Equipment Show and Croydon Creek Nature Center, and having lunch with Mayor Bridget Donnell Newton.

JUNE

- The 34th Annual Rockville Public Safety Awards at Lakewood Country Club, honored several Rockville City Police Department officers.
- Rockville joined Montgomery County for a Juneteenth celebration at BlackRock Center for the Arts in Germantown.
- Rockville City Police Department's 66 officers responded to 16,265 calls for service in 2022, or 65% of all calls within Rockville's city limits to city or county police or the county sheriff's office, according to an annual crime report prepared by RCPD. Overall, between 2021 and 2022, crimes against people, which include homicides, assaults and sex offenses, increased 13%, from 530 offenses in 2021 to 599 offenses in 2022.
- A city program that seeks to stop commercial facilities from polluting storm drains and streams recently took high honors in the Chesapeake Stormwater Network's Best Urban BMP in the Bay Awards. Better known as the BUBBAs, the program bestows the prestigious regional awards every other year on stormwater projects using BMPs, or best management practices.
- Bryan Barnett-Woods, a principal transportation planner with the City of Rockville, was named the Roland B. Sweitzer Municipal Employee of the Year for the state of Maryland. Barnett-Woods, who serves as the city's Vision Zero coordinator and the Pedestrian and

Bicycle Transportation coordinator, was honored by the Maryland City and County Management Association and the Maryland Municipal League

JULY

- A ribbon cutting re-dedicated Clarence "Pint" Isreal Park at 357 Frederick Ave. The newly upgraded park includes a new pavilion, walking path, benches, a walkway to the tennis courts and open space for play.
- The Maryland Heritage Areas Authority awarded the City of Rockville grant funding to study the Avery Road Colored Cemetery and Benjamin Franklin Smith Family Homestead, located within the footprint of today's Croydon Creek Nature Center and John G. Hayes Forest Preserve.

AUGUST

- Rob DiSpirito resigned as Rockville's city manager.

SEPTEMBER

- Rockville's Mayor and Council once again proclaimed September as National Recovery Month, part of their continuing campaign to shine a spotlight on the nationwide impact of opioid addiction. The focus of the Rockville Goes Purple campaign includes raising awareness, honoring those in recovery and lost to overdose, reducing stigma, and providing resources and education.
- Rockville marked the 22nd anniversary of the Sept. 11 attacks, remembering county residents who lost their lives with a ceremony at Courthouse Square Park, at the corner of East Jefferson Street and Maryland Avenue in Rockville's downtown.

OCTOBER

- The 27th annual F. Scott Fitzgerald Literary Festival honored author Jonathan Franzen with the F. Scott Fitzgerald

Award for Outstanding Achievement in American Literature.

- The Rockville Antique and Classic Car Show, a city tradition for six decades, rolled into Rockville Civic Center Park.
- Rockville's Education Commission has developed three focus areas for its future work drawn from information gathering and listening to the community, the committee told the Mayor and Council as it presented its annual report, which covers the committee's activities since it was created by the Mayor and Council in April 2022. Those areas are: keeping Rockville schools safe and secure; improving teacher retention and recruitment; and strengthening partnerships between businesses and schools.
- The Metropolitan Washington Council of Governments awarded the City of Rockville a 2023 Climate and Energy Leadership Award, recognizing the city's Flood Resiliency Program as a climate stewardship program that engages and serves the region's underserved communities and neighborhoods.

NOVEMBER

- The city held a vote-by-mail election for mayor and six councilmember seats. See page 1 for more information. Monique Ashton was elected mayor. Six councilmembers were also elected: Kate Fulton; Adam Van Grack; Izola (Zola) Shaw; David Myles; Barry Jackson; and Marissa Valeri. The new administration, Rockville's 67th, held its inauguration and first meeting this month.

DECEMBER

- See December's highlights in this edition. 🌸



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BACK IN THE DAY ... The December 2015 "Rockville Reports" reported that voters had reelected Mayor Bridget Donnell Newton and elected councilmembers Beryl L. Feinberg, Virginia D. Onley, Julie Palakovich Carr and Mark Pierzchala. (Read about the new seven-member Mayor and Council on page 1.) And city planners were taking their Rockville 2040 listening sessions to schools, visiting Richard Montgomery, Rockville and Thomas S. Wootton high schools to discuss the Comprehensive Plan with students. Find the since-adopted update at www.rockvillemd.gov/rockville2040.