



Manassas City Police: Staying Fit - Mind & Body

The Manassas City Police Department (MCPD) has joined law enforcement agencies across the country that have recognized staff total mind-and-body wellness as a top priority. For many years, the law enforcement profession has struggled to address the toll the profession takes on mental health. In 2018, 167 officers in the United States died by suicide, a number higher than the total number of deaths in the line of duty for the entire year.

“Our profession has finally recognized that the mental wellness of our staff is a concern,” said Manassas City Police Chief Douglas Keen. “We must find ways to work toward removing the stigma associated with asking for help.”

Last year, MCPD researched wellness programs and found that yoga and mindfulness practices have made improvements in mental wellbeing at numerous law enforcement agencies. Putting research into practice, MCPD partnered with local business Bed Rock Yoga to explore the possibility of implementing a yoga program in the City. With input from staff, Elizabeth Bailey, owner of Bed Rock Yoga, created a program involving simple yoga movements and mindfulness exercises focused on meditation and breathing. These exercises were designed to be accessible to all staff and to be easily integrated into an officer’s shift.

“When you add the specific stressors of working in law enforcement and the exposure to trauma on a regular basis, that level of stress can really drain your entire system,” said Elizabeth Bailey. “Yoga and its associated practices can help offset that stress and rebuild depleted reserves both physically and mentally.”

The first of three yoga training sessions began in August and staff were given the tools to continue using yoga on their own during the workday. So far, feedback has been positive and encouraging.

As another part of this effort, MCPD has contracted with Leslie Martin, a Licensed Clinical Social Worker, to provide one-on-one therapy and wellness services for staff. Martin uses therapy dogs in her work to engage staff.

“Petting an animal helps lower overall stress hormones and is an easy way to brighten someone’s day,” explains Martin.

Her services help staff address the unique pressures associated with careers in law enforcement. She focuses on improving wellness and building resilience before staff experience distress. Chief Keen continues to advocate for this service in an effort to overcome the negative perceptions associated with mental health.

MCPD has also revitalized the “lawfit” program as part of the wellness initiative. Last year, three staff members completed personal training certifications. These trainers are available to aid in developing fitness programs and help staff achieve their fitness goals. Along with this, MCPD staff members are encouraged to use one hour of their work day to work out. The Department is also implementing an incentive-based fitness program using a new obstacle course as a way to



New Obstacle Course

measure fitness improvements and aid fitness goals.

“We have to look at the wellness of our staff holistically and create a wellness program that encompasses both the physical and mental health of all staff,” said Chief Doug Keen. “We can then provide them with different tools to improve their overall quality of life.”

A wellness program for officers will not only be beneficial to the individual, but to the community.

A mentally fit officer has increased awareness, compassion and productivity. With this direction in mind, the Manassas City Police Department continues to work toward identifying and implementing additional resources, including a peer support team and therapy dogs to help create a robust wellness program.

“I commend Chief Keen and our Police Department for their willingness to address this important issue,” said City Manager W. Patrick Pate. “Policing is a tough job and at the end of the day we want all of our officers to return home safe and healthy.”



A Message from the City Manager



City Manager
W. Patrick Pate

Over the last several years, City staff has been working to gather information about community values and priorities. One of the products of these efforts, the “Manassas 2040 Comprehensive Plan,” is now available for public review. It can be found at www.manassascity.org/planmanassas.

Thank you to everyone who has already participated in this process to develop the draft document. It reflects our shared vision of “a community that takes pride in our authentic history, livable neighborhoods, quality schools, healthy economy and outstanding quality of life.”

In the Comprehensive Plan you will find chapters with goals and strategies related to land use, housing and neighborhoods, economic development, mobility, community facilities & infrastructure, environmental sustainability & health and parks, culture & recreation. This document describes actions that the citizens of Manassas said they wanted to implement to keep Manassas a strong and vibrant city for the next twenty years.

In addition, the document gives a lot of good information about the City and the services that are provided to you. For example, there is a map of all parks, culture & recreation facilities in the City. Another map shows where all existing sidewalks are located, and a third map shows the long-range bike network plan.

Many of the actions shown in the report will require perseverance and dedication to accomplish. Some of them may require changes in our lifestyles or habits. A few of them may prove to be too difficult to achieve. But all of them are designed to leave our community better for our children and grandchildren. Twenty years may sound like a long time, but most of us know that twenty years will go by all too quickly.

I encourage you to take some time to read the 2040 Comprehensive Plan. When you are done reading, call and let us know if you have any questions, send us your comments about the plan, attend public hearings to express your opinions and discuss what you have learned with your neighbors as the plan moves to adoption. This is your opportunity to help set the vision for the type of place you want to live in and be proud of.

Speaking of thanks, November is a month where we often focus on thankfulness as we celebrate the Thanksgiving holiday. We also celebrate our veterans, our right to vote, abundant food, clean water to drink, a safe community in which to live, opportunities to learn, visiting families, sports teams and the list could go on and on. If you are still reading this, I want to thank you for your interest in and support of your community. Folks often tell us that they rely on the City Connection to get information about what is going on in Manassas. For that, I want to thank the City staff who work so hard to bring this information to you each month.

In Manassas we have a lot to be thankful for!

City Leadership Academy 2019

Congratulations to the following 14 citizens for graduating from the 2019 City Leadership Academy: Pamela Lovera, Helen Sorto, Tom Osina, Todd Whitesell, Amalfi Arias, David Farajollahi, Megan Moore, Stephen Hersch, Cheryl Santos, Michael Laverty, Tom Lemmon, Lisa Tanis, Mike Freeland and Austin Tucker. These citizens worked for five weeks to learn how the City of Manassas government runs by taking tours of facilities, learning from City staff and ultimately deciding on how to guide a City budget. This Academy will be offered again in the fall of 2020. Watch the City's website and social media for applications.



Be Safe and Cook Safe this Holiday Season

Did you know... that Thanksgiving is a big day for home cooking fires? It's true. With the advent of turkey fryers came an increase in home cooking fires on Thanksgiving Day. The following are some safety tips that may keep your holidays fire free:

- Use the turkey fryer only outdoors on a sturdy, level surface.

- Make a 3-foot kid and pet-free zone around your fryer.
- Make sure the turkey is completely thawed before frying.
- Check the oil temperature often as fryers can easily overheat.
- Use long cooking gloves to protect hands and arms when handling the pot, lid and handles of the fryer.



It's a Wrap

This holiday season think reuse, reduce and recycle when you gift wrap and send cards. The City's Recycling Team has some great tips and tricks to help reduce your carbon footprint this year.

Did you know that if every American family wrapped just 3 presents in re-used materials, it would save enough paper to cover 45,000 football fields? If every family reused two feet of ribbon, the 38,000 miles of ribbon saved could tie a bow around the earth. If we each sent one new card less this year, we would save 50,000 cubic yards of paper.

Wrapping

- Ditch the rolls of expensive wrapping paper and avoid the glossy metallic gift wrap. Get crafty instead. Make your gift wrap personal with magazines, newspapers, comics, fabric and recipes.
- Use colorful bits of yarn, ribbon and string with added natural touches like cinnamon sticks, candy canes, sprigs of holly and pine.
- Put your gift inside a reusable



shopping bag. There are some really nice ones around and they are customizable.

Decorating

- Use natural decorations around your home. Branches, leaves and pine cones can be recycled as yard waste.
- Old ornaments can become new classics in a glass vase or ceramic bowl.
- Have some fun with DIY ornaments by using candy canes, cookies, popcorn, cranberries and salt dough.



Entertaining

- Save money and time by trimming down the menu to the family favorites.
- Replace bottled water with a glass beverage dispenser or pitcher. Add a bit of cucumber, lemon or berries for color and flavor.
- Pick some decorative, reusable containers for the leftovers and give them to your guests as they leave your event.

Trash & Recycle Holiday Schedule

Thanksgiving – Nov. 28
Thursday trash will be collected on Saturday, Nov. 30

Christmas – Dec. 25
Wednesday trash will be collected on Saturday, Dec. 28

New Year's Day – Jan. 1
Wednesday trash will be collected on Saturday, Jan. 4, 2020



2040 Comprehensive Plan Update

View a new draft of the plan for public review at:

www.manassascity.org/planmanassas

Key upcoming dates for the Plan's review are:

Wednesday, November 13th at 7 PM, Planning Commission Public Hearing
and
Wednesday, December 4th at 7 PM, Planning Commission Public Hearing (continued)

The City of Manassas Happenings

Find these events and more at www.visitmanassas.org. Here's what's happening in the City of Manassas:

Through Nov. 11 – **Bull Run Rotary Flag Display** on the Manassas Museum lawn



November - March - **Ice Skating at the Harris Pavilion** as soon as the weather allows for ice



Nov. 2, 11 a.m. - **Northern Virginia Veterans Day Parade**



Nov. 2, 11 a.m. – **Manassas Museum Veterans Display** on the Museum Lawn



Nov. 2, 2 p.m. – **Downtown Walking Tour**



Nov. 2, 1-4 p.m. - **Baubles & Bling** at Trinity Episcopal Church by GFWC Woman's Club



Nov. 2, 9 a.m. - 2 p.m. - Manassas Senior Center **Annual Craft & Rummage Sale**



Nov. 5 - Election Day



Nov. 5, 9 a.m. – **Career Day** at the Manassas Museum



Nov. 6 - Dec. 6 – New Exhibit - **One Sketch at a Time** @Center for the Arts



Nov. 7, 7:30 p.m. - **Manassas Warrenton Camera Club** @City Hall - www.mwcc-photo.org



Nov. 13, 3 p.m. - **Stories of Preservation and Progress Speaker Series** at the Manassas Museum

Nov. 13, 7 p.m. - **Planning Commission Public Hearing** on the Comprehensive Plan Update - Council Chambers, City Hall



Nov. 21, 7:30 p.m. - **Manassas Warrenton Camera Club** @City Hall - www.mwcc-photo.org



Nov. 30 – Dec. 15 – **ELF-The Musical** @ Center for the Arts

Dec. 2 & 3 - **K&J Jewelry & Accessory Sale** @ Novant Prince William Hospital

Dec. 4, 7 p.m. - **Planning Commission Public Hearing** on the Comprehensive Plan Update - Council Chambers, City Hall

Dec. 5, 7:30 p.m. - **Manassas Warrenton Camera Club** @City Hall - www.mwcc-photo.org

Dec. 6 – 31 – New Exhibit: **Deck the Halls** at the Manassas Museum

Dec. 6, 5 – 9 p.m. – **Merry Old Town** begins in Historic Downtown Manassas with **Santa Lights Manassas**

Dec. 6, 5– 8 p.m. Manassas Museum **Holiday Open House**

Dec. 7, 10 a.m. – 12 p.m. – **Greater Manassas Christmas Parade** in Historic Downtown Manassas



Dec. 8, 1- 4 p.m. – **Merry Old Town: Ice Skating, Free Carriage Rides, Shopping!**

Dec. 8, 1 - 4 p.m. - GFCW **Manassas Holiday House Tour** - tickets available at the train depot, Manassas Museum & The Things I Love

Dec. 11, 3 p.m. – **Stories of Preservation & Progress** Speaker Series at the Manassas Museum

Dec. 14, 7:30 p.m. - **Manassas Chorale Winter Concert** @Hylton Performing Arts

Dec. 15, 1–4 p.m. – **Holiday Open House at Liberia**

Dec. 15, 1 - 4 p.m. – **Merry Old Town: Ice Skating, Free Carriage Rides, Shopping!**

Dec. 18 - 22 - **Winter Wonderland Train Show** @Center for the Arts 3rd Floor

Dec. 18 - 23 - Manassas Ballet Theatre performs **The Nutcracker** @ Hylton Performing Arts Center

Dec. 22, 1 - 4 p.m. – **Merry Old Town: Ice Skating, Free Carriage Rides, Shopping!**



Get Social!

Visit the City at www.manassascity.org.

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www.twitter.com/cityofmanassas

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www.instagram.com/cityofmanassas

www.youtube.com/user/manassascityva

To contact the City of Manassas Connection newsletter, email prrince@manassasva.gov

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