

Veterans Day

I wear a red poppy from November 1 until November 11. This is an originally American symbol. Mostly I am asked what it is...it gives me a chance to tell of Moina Michaels, an American professor, who in 1918 was so moved by a poem called "In Flanders Field" (written by Lt. Col. John McCrae, a Canadian physician), that she began this tradition of wearing red poppies. It became the symbol of the American Legion, and spread beyond America to Canada and the rest of the Commonwealth.



The poppy gives me a chance to share my respect for those who serve and have served our Country in the military.

I know that my husband remembers those he served with for 20 years during November. Of the honorable men that shaped his life experience some have been lost to us. He reflects on the history of our armed forces, of our beloved Marine Corps. It is an important day to our community and country.

As a veteran's wife, I also reflect. Moments of enormous pride mixed with the memories of separation, and a husband at war. My remembrance is of other military spouses and their unwavering support of each other.

Veterans Day is reverent and honorable. On behalf of the City of Mount Vernon - thank you veterans..... sailors, marines, soldiers, airmen, and coastguardsmen. We honor you and your loved ones.

The public is invited to join us for the City of Mount Vernon Veterans Recognition Ceremony – Saturday, November 9 @ the Mount Baker Middle School Commons. A breakfast will be served to all veterans starting at 8:30am – service begins at 10am. Thank you for Mr. Rich Sundance & Mr. Kirk Duffy for their volunteerism in organizing the event.

Lodging Tax Funds and How They are Used

The City of Mount Vernon is the recipient of lodging tax funds each year. The tax is collected by hoteliers for each room night sold within the city limits. The funds are designated by law to be used in promotion of tourism, support operations of tourism-related facilities owned or operated by nonprofits, and for capital improvements to municipalities for tourism purposes.

Each year, the City of Mount Vernon has allocated approximately \$220,000 to applicants. Decisions to award funding come from a committee comprised of hotel managers, a City representative, and 2 representatives from recipients of the funding. Some of our biggest recipients are the Chamber of Commerce, which is given funds to operate the 7 day a week visitor center and promote tourism. The legendary Tulip Festival receives funds to help print their brochures, distributed to 220,000 people. Other recipients include the Celtic Arts Foundation to promote the Highland Games, the Lincoln Theatre, and McIntyre Hall. In 2012, we used lodging tax funds to remodel the Hillcrest Lodge kitchen! In 2013, we will allocate funds to help us complete public restrooms downtown.

Mayor's Coffee Hours

Saturday, November 16

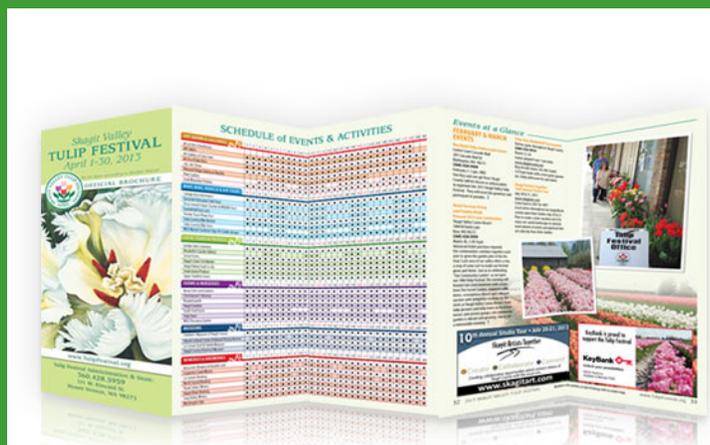
11:00 a.m. - 12:00 p.m.

Old Towne Grainery Tea Room & Galleria
100 E Montgomery St, 2nd Floor

Saturday, November 23

11:00 a.m. - 12:00 p.m.

Walk section of Skagit Riverwalk Trail
Meet at parking lot near the Tulip Tower and walk with the Mayor north through Lion's Park



Tulip Festival Brochure

Ladies' Night Out

Thursday, November 14

Special Events Include:

Storefronts Mount Vernon

Art Walk and Artists Reception: 4-8 pm

Gretchens

Kitchenware Demos: 11am, 1 pm, 2:30 pm

Cinderella's Secret

Fashion Show: 6 pm (reserve seating)

Pavé

All Day Trunk Show

Trumpeter

\$5 Wine Tasting

Forte Chocolates

Sneak Preview: 6-8 pm
Grand Opening Nov. 15!

City of Mount Vernon Budget Hearing

Tuesday, November 26, 6:00 pm
Police/Court Campus
1805 Continental Place

Check our website
www.mountvernonwa.gov
for Parks and Recreation offerings

Mayor Jill Boudreau

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www.mountvernonwa.gov



2014 Budget

The preliminary budget was delivered to Council on October 16.

Staff and I have worked diligently to address needs of the City with the following goals:

- Get our staff up to full work weeks – over the past 4 years, a large portion of City staff have been under a mandatory furlough, resulting in a 37.5 hour work week, and a 3.75% reduction in pay. We need to get us back to full speed. The cost of 'removing furlough' is \$227,000 to the annual budget.
- Add a full time police officer position, in efforts to increase traffic enforcement.
- Add additional help in staffing where workload is increasing. Our Community and Economic Development Department is seeing a significant increase in permitting and building activity. During the recession, this Department shed 5 full time employees due to a reduction in permit activity. The proposed budget increases hours through part time staff on an as needed basis. We want to continue to provide quick services to encourage the resurgence of economic activity in the City!
- Continue to expand and support the growing interest in our fiber optic infrastructure. One of our economic growth sectors of focus is promoting our fiber optic infrastructure. Businesses highly value a fast and uninterrupted internet connection, and the City has been successful in recruiting businesses to our City with this infrastructure.

This budget cycle is hard and grueling work and must be accomplished with great thoughtfulness to our community. The preliminary government operating budget is \$23.6 million, 4.9% higher than in 2013. The full budget (including our utility operations and capital funding) is \$47.2 million, 0.1% lower than 2013.

All budget meetings are public meetings! Please consider attending an upcoming Council meeting!

All Council meetings take place at the Police/Court Campus, 1805 Continental Place. City Council will take action to set property tax revenues for 2014 on Wednesday, Nov 13, at 7:00 p.m.

The Public Hearing to consider adopting the budget will take place on Tuesday, November 26, at 6:00 p.m.

The preliminary budget will be available for public viewing on the City website at www.mountvernonwa.gov on November 12.