

We provide professional, efficient services to create a lifetime positive difference for our Community.

Let's Talk About Safety In Our City

I am thankful for the consummate professionalism and bravery of our 42 police officers, supported by our fire department and street crew that were involved in the December 15 incident. Thank you as well to the numerous agencies offering assistance that continues today.

I have recently been asked "What actions have you and our law enforcement been taking to keep our city safe?"

This is a fair question, and I would like to be clear – the City of Mount Vernon has never denied or pretended that gang activity and violence do not exist here. Unfortunately, just like every other community in our Country, our small city is not unique in experiencing violence. However we *are* unique in our decades-long collaborative effort with schools, block watch programs, citizens academy, citizen volunteers, probation departments, work programs and other law enforcement agencies to proactively address crime. In spite of this recent event, our actions have proven to be effective.

If there is one positive outcome of this horrific event, perhaps it will be that all of us will seek to discover the answer to this same question—how do we address the very real issues of crime and gang activity?

On your quest for answers, I would like to point you in the direction of our Police Department's Annual Reports (<http://www.mountvernonwa.gov/Archive.aspx?AMID=45>) as well as our Department's most recent Strategic Plan (<http://www.mountvernonwa.gov/ArchiveCenter/ViewFile/Item/509>).

Drive out fear with truthful information. Those who are truly seeking to learn more about MVPD efforts will discover a wealth of information on these sites pertaining to crime statistics, as well as our policing philosophy. This report details specific goals and objectives. For example:

- Prevention of crime is #1. In our 25-year tradition of community policing it is impossible to give statistics on what was prevented, yet one outstanding number is that "Suspicious" calls are one of the highest calls for service, indicating that residents are willing to call and report activity that is out of the norm for their neighborhoods.
- Maintaining staff levels that are currently allocated is challenging and the need for more allocated officer positions is articulated in the strategic plan.
- A small priority policing team focuses on specific drug houses and interventions cooperates with the Skagit Interlocal Drug Enforcement Unit (SCIDEU). Federal government support and funding has been withdrawn over the years, making the burden nearly impossible for local agencies.
- Overall, violent crimes decreased by 16% in 2015.

The fact remains that our largest and most powerful group in Mount Vernon is law abiding residents who call Mount Vernon home. It's you and it's me. We have the collective power to address social ills, be involved, be kind, and not accept those who do us harm.

Join or start a Block Watch, attend a Mayor's Coffee, or participate in Citizens Academy (learn more at <http://www.mountvernonwa.gov/index.aspx?nid=393> or call the Crime Prevention Division at 360-336-6271).



WINTER WELLNESS WEEK

January 22 - 28, 2017

Get your year off to a fun and healthy start by joining us for FREE daily activities during the annual Mayor's Winter Wellness Week!

Free daily events will be offered by the Celtic Arts Foundation, Skagit Valley Food Co-op, Hospice of the Northwest, Mount Vernon High School, Mount Vernon Downtown Association, Tri Dee Arts and the City of Mount Vernon.

Visit www.mountvernonwa.gov or "like" our Facebook page "Mount Vernon Wellness Challenge" for a current schedule and all the latest information.

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Visit <http://app.leg.wa.gov/districtfinder/> to determine which district you reside in.

Officer Mike McClaughry

Our city experienced a horrific event on Thursday, December 15 that has left one of our police officers critically injured. Officer Mike McClaughry, or "Mick" to everyone who knows him, joined the Mount Vernon Police Department on May 28, 1985.



Some may only know Mick as a dedicated MVPD officer of 31 years, but Mick is also the father of three grown children. He is a grandfather, a brother and an extended father figure to so many children in this community. Mick was the Department's first DARE Officer, providing mentoring to children in K-6th grade.

Words cannot express the impact that this tragic event has had on our City staff, and our Police Department in particular. I hope you will join me in prayers for a swift recovery for this respected and dedicated public servant.

Emails of support for Mick may be sent through Harborview Medical Center website: <http://www.uwmedicine.org/patient-resources/email-patient> Simply type "Mount Vernon Police Officer" in the Patient Name field.

Cards of support for Officer McClaughry may be dropped off at the Mount Vernon Police Department (1805 Continental Place) or at City Hall.

Mount Vernon Police 2017 Citizens Academy

Now is the time to sign up for the 2017 Citizens Academy program, which will run from February 9 - April 27, meeting every Thursday from 6:30 - 9:30pm.

The purpose of the Citizens Academy is to enhance communication and understanding between the Mount Vernon Police Department and citizens.

Attendees will become familiar with the Department's policing philosophy; discover what it is like to be a police officer in Mount Vernon; go on a ride along in a police car; visit 911 dispatch; and receive hands on experience during a Mock Scenes day. Classes are taught by police officers, department personnel, and guest speakers, covering over 20 topics.

Applications are available online at www.mountvernonwa.gov/ca or at the Police Department Front Desk at 1805 Continental Place.



January Mayor's Coffee Hours

- **Saturday, Jan 7, 10am** ~ City Library, 315 Snoqualmie Street
- **Friday, Jan 13, 10am** ~ Fire Station 3, 4701 E. Division Street
- **Friday, Jan 20, 10am** ~ City Hall, 2nd Floor, 910 Cleveland Avenue
- **Friday, Jan 27, 10am** ~ MVPD Multi-Purpose Room, 1805 Continental Pl.