



# Top of the Hill News

Information for The Citizens of Fort Wright  
February 2007 Eileen Hastings Editor

## THIS ADVICE COULD SAVE YOU TAX MONEY IN THE NEW YEAR!

**Attention business, property, and vehicle owners!** Recently, an attorney who has been working in Fort Wright for thirty years discovered that his legal malpractice insurance policy was being subjected to the City of Covington's 10% insurance premium tax, not the City of Fort Wright's 6% rate. The error was corrected and the attorney is saving about \$200 per year now due to the difference in the rate, and the City is receiving the additional insurance premium tax. The error was made by the insurance company because the attorney's mailing address stated: "**Covington, Kentucky 41017**" instead of more specifically, "**Fort Wright, Kentucky 41017**".

The state of Kentucky determines which revenue sources that cities and counties may use to fund the services it provides. Most of the City of Fort Wright's revenue comes from property tax and payroll and business tax. However, the fourth highest source of revenue comes from insurance premium tax, which, in Fort Wright, is a 6% tax on insurance premiums, such as homeowners insurance; vehicle insurance premiums; and insurance premiums for businesses. Check your insurance premium invoices. There should be a line item on it such as "Municipal insurance premium fee: or "surcharge". In addition, state law allows the insurance company to charge 15% of the 6% rate as a fee to collect the tax, and to remit to the City. This means the rate actually shown on your invoice may be 6.9%. Covington's 10% insurance premium tax rate, after the collection fee of 15% is included, is 11.5%. If you have any questions about this, check with your insurance agent or company, or call the City at 331-1700.

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## CONGRATULATIONS POLICE OFFICER TRAVIS BROWN!

Congratulations to Fort Wright Police Officer Travis Brown for being one of the recipients of the 2006 Governor's Impaired Driving Enforcement Award! This is the fourth time that Officer Brown has received this award, for keeping impaired drivers off the road and our streets safer!

## SNOW EMERGENCY PROCEDURES

Although it occurs very seldom and is used only as a last resort, there are several things you need to know when a "Snow Emergency" is declared. Only the Mayor or City Administrator has the authority to declare a Snow Emergency. Once the Emergency has been declared, citizens have three hours to remove their vehicles from the streets. Police Officers are authorized to tow or affix a citation to any vehicle parked on a City street during this time. The City has only declared three Snow Emergencies in the past fifteen years. The City has exercised restraint in declaring these emergencies. Please cooperate when a Snow Emergency is declared, in the interest of public safety, so that police, fire, and ambulance vehicles and equipment can safely and quickly access each residence and place of business in the City.

## **SOUTH HILLS CIVIC CLUB FREE TO RESIDENTS AND BUSINESSES**

Residents are able to utilize the South Hills Civic Club on Blue Grass Avenue, off East Henry Clay, for free. The facility holds up to 99 persons. There is a \$100.00 security deposit that must be made, in the event that anything is damaged or the facility is not cleaned and returned to its pre-use condition. Businesses may also use the Civic Club, but not for profit-seeking business activities. The Civic Club is available 7 days per week, but only one rental use per day is allowed. Interested parties may call to check on the availability of the Civic Club at (859) 331-1700, Monday - Friday 8:00 AM - 5:00 PM. Reserving the Civic Club is based on a first come basis and may not be reserved more than 365 days in advance. Standard procedure is for the resident or business to call the City office to check on a date, and if available your name is placed on the calendar, with an application form then mailed out. The first page of the application is due back to the City within 10 days. The deposit is due 30 days prior to the usage date. The resident or business obtains the key at the City office the day before, or day of the rental, except weekend rentals, when the key must be picked up on Friday. The rental allows you to access the hall after 9:00 AM, and you must be out by midnight on the same day as the rental. Additionally, the resident or business is responsible for clean up and returning the facility to its pre-use condition, by midnight on the date of the rental. The key must be returned the next day, or on the next business day following rental, by no later than 5:00 PM. Some cleaning supplies are provided. There is also a microwave and refrigerator at the Civic Club, but not a stove or oven.

The South Hills Civic Club building and grounds, established in the late 1950's, were generously donated to the City about ten years ago by the remaining members of the South Hills Civic Club, for the benefit and enjoyment of Fort Wright residents. The rental form is also available to download on-line at [www.fortwright.com](http://www.fortwright.com) - but the date of the rental request must be confirmed by telephone at 331-1700, prior to submitting the form.

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## **SHOP-WITH-A-COP HELPS LOCAL CHILDREN ENJOY CHRISTMAS**

Thanks to several contributions by Fort Wright residents and businesses, the annual Shop-With-A-Cop program offered by local Police organizations provided many local children a brighter and more enjoyable holiday! **Wal-Mart** in Fort Wright contributed **\$2,500.00**, **US Bank** on Dixie Highway contributed **\$150.00** and **their customers** contributed another **\$200.00** through a donation box there. **City Wide Maintenance** located at **1671 Park Road** contributed **\$200.00**, **Buffalo Wild Wings** contributed **\$150.00**. Also, **Gene and Margaret Weaver, Dan Kreinest and Yvonne Wagner, and Val Dolwick** made contributions. Many thanks to Fort Wright **Police Officer Danny Martin** who assisted once again this year in organizing the event and in escorting children to Wal-Mart to do some holiday shopping!

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## **CITYWIDE DAILY TRASH PICKUP CONTINUES**

For the past four years the City of Fort Wright has provided almost daily pickup of trash along the main thoroughfares of the City. With the assistance of a Volunteer from the Kenton County Detention Center, literally thousands of bags of trash, tires, and other debris are collected and removed from streets in the City each year! This program is made possible through the efforts of **Kenton County Jailer Terry Carl** as a way for communities to benefit from those incarcerated in the Kenton County Detention Center. All Volunteers have non-violent records and are carefully selected by the Detention Center before participating in this program. Volunteers in the past have also helped to paint and clean the interior of the City building; clean South Hills Civic Club; shovel snow; paint over two hundred fire hydrants in the City; even a certified mechanic to do minor work on City equipment; and numerous other duties very beneficial to the City. The City provides transportation and lunch and all City Departments help to coordinate the efforts of this Volunteer with supervision and transportation. This is the type of basic service, keeping **YOUR** City litter free, that can almost only be provided through Volunteer efforts. Since January 1, 2006 alone, more than 1,000 bags of trash have been collected from streets in Fort Wright! Please do your part as well to keep those residential areas litter free!

## ***THANKS FLOYD AND EILEEN HASTINGS FOR HOSPITALITY!***

A special note of appreciation to Floyd and Eileen Hastings who generously provided a Holiday Open House luncheon for City employees at their home on Mount Vernon Drive on December 28th!  
Thank you from all City employees! Your thoughtfulness and holiday spirit is touching, and the food was excellent!

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## **THANKS NORTHERN KENTUCKY HERITAGE LEAGUE FOR GRANT!**

In a letter dated December 30, 2006, Northern Kentucky Heritage League Treasurer Jane Purdon notified the City's James A. Ramage Civil War Museum that it was the recipient of their President's Project for 2006, including an award of \$600! Writing on behalf of the Heritage League's Board President, Charles R. Goettsch, Ms. Purdon stated that they were "...very impressed with the Museum when we visited in October and wish you well..." and further stated their "...appreciation for the effort you have put forth". We thank the Northern Kentucky Heritage League for their generosity and support! The Heritage League's grant will be used for display and exhibit development.

### **JAMES A. RAMAGE CIVIL WAR MUSEUM**

1402 Highland Avenue

### **CLOSED FOR THE WINTER FROM DEC. 18 REOPENS FEB. 17**

Fridays - Mondays: 10:00 AM to 5:00 PM

For more Information on the Museum, visit the City's website at [www.fortwright.com](http://www.fortwright.com)

For Information on Group Tours or How to Become a Museum Volunteer, call 331-1700.

### **CPR & FIRST AID CLASSES**

The next CPR class is the CPR Professional Class—being held on Saturday, February 10th from 9 AM to 2 PM. The Professional class is somewhat more advanced from the basic class, it is for individuals who are currently in or will be in any type of medical field, including EMT and nursing. To sign up for any of these classes, please call 331-1700 with your name, address and phone number.

### **OFFICES CLOSED**

City Offices will be closed on Monday, February 19th, in observance of President's Day

### **HAPPY BIRTHDAY**

**Officer Andrew Vonderhaar**  
February 16th

**Firefighter/EMT Tim Deye**  
February 16th

**Specialist Marc Schworer**  
February 24th



## **POLICE NEWS**

The Fort Wright Police Department has been very successful in recent weeks in pursuing some important criminal cases. The first arrest of note was on December 13, 2006, for an attempted bank robbery and we served a bank robbery warrant. This case would not have been possible without the keen observations and quick actions by Heritage Bank employee Shane McQueary to notify law enforcement of the suspicious activity. He unquestionably prevented a bank robbery; he did everything right and his exceptional efforts led to this important arrest. If you see Shane congratulate him on a job well done!!

There were two suspects charged and the third subject is under investigation. The primary suspect, Jeffrey L. Hamilton, was charged with attempted robbery and had a warrant for bank robbery out of Cincinnati, Ohio. There were two other suspects in the vehicle; Kattera T. Jervis is also charged with attempted robbery and possession of a controlled substance. The third person was Kavonda Morgan who was taken to the hospital for a drug overdose. Jeffrey Hamilton is a suspect in bank robberies in both the Cincinnati and Columbus areas. The officers on this case, Detective Michael Knight, Sgt. Randy Newsom and Officer Danny Martin did great police work that I am certain will lead to a successful prosecution of these suspects.

The next investigation of note is the Lookout Motel Arson Fire, on January 04, 2007. This investigation involved the Fort Wright Fire and Police Departments and the Kenton County Arson Task Force. The fire started approximately between three and four in the morning and endangered all of the occupants of the motel. The suspect was arrested after giving a confession to Detective Michael Knight. The suspect is Gary L. Spoonmore Jr. a 32 year-old who had been staying at the motel for several months. He is charged with Arson First Degree and eleven counts of Wanton Endangerment First Degree and is a suspect in other arsons in the City of Covington. Again, all of the officers investigating this case did a great job and the Fire Department did an outstanding job containing and putting out the fire and getting everyone out safely.

On Friday, January 12, 2007, the Fort Wright Police Department located a 15-year-old runaway from Green Township, Ohio; Brittany Waddell. This missing person case was publicized extensively on the local news because the victim was considered at risk. She was safely returned to her family and her adult cousin, Rodney L. Kindoll was arrested for a parole violation warrant, Custodial Interference, Rape Third Degree and Burglary Second Degree. Officers Vonderhaar and Martin did an exceptional job, responding quickly, taking care of the victim and arresting the suspect.

On another note, the Police Department continues to use technology to improve efficiency: we have recently added barcode scanners to the cars so we can scan information from drivers licenses into accident reports or citations. In addition, a PDA was purchased to make auditing the evidence room more efficient.

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### **THANKS FORT WRIGHT GARDEN CLUB FOR HOLIDAY DECORATIONS!**

A huge thank you again this year goes to the Fort Wright Garden Club for decorating the stop signs around town with holiday sprays and bows! Included in making the sprays were Nick Brake, Jack Brueggemann, Floyd and Eileen Hastings, Jennifer Keating, Bob and Joy Kress, Norma Rolf, Mary Lee Scheper, and Harry Schwabe. Hanging them (all 120 plus of them!) were Floyd Hastings and Derek Beach. Those who took them back down were Floyd Hastings and his Granddaughters Caitlin and Ariana Beach. It certainly helped in decking out the streets in Fort Wright for the holidays!

### **THANKS FOR ADOPT-A-TROOP DONATIONS!**

A great note of appreciation to Edwin Vardiman of Mount Vernon Drive and Ken and Sandra Pelgen of Cumberland Avenue for their recent contributions to the City's adopted military unit, the Iron Rakkasans! Your support of America's finest is greatly enjoyed and appreciated by our troops!

## **BUCKLE UP FORT WRIGHT!**

The Commonwealth of Kentucky's new Primary Seatbelt Law went into full effect January 1, 2007. This change in statute authorizes police officers across the state to stop vehicles even if the only violation is that you or any passenger in your vehicle is not wearing their seatbelt. The law changed on July 12, 2006, but a "grace period" was given to attempt to educate the public during which time police could stop vehicles for only a seatbelt violation but could only issue courtesy warnings. The previous seatbelt law permitted police to cite drivers for no seatbelt only if the vehicle was stopped for some other traffic violation.

In 2006 in Kentucky, 907 people were killed in vehicle crashes with about 64 percent of those not wearing seatbelts. The state's research showed that when used properly, seatbelts reduce the risk of front-seat passenger fatalities by 45 percent. Many of these statistics can be found on the Buckle-Up Kentucky web site at [www.kytc.state.ky.us/buckleupkentucky.html](http://www.kytc.state.ky.us/buckleupkentucky.html).

If saving or protecting your own life is not incentive enough to wear a seatbelt, know that it is the law in Kentucky, and the law **is being enforced** in Fort Wright. In fact the Police Department has a Highway Safety Grant for traffic enforcement including an emphasis on seatbelt violations. If you are stopped by police and cited for not wearing a seatbelt the penalty is \$25.00 for adults, and for a child less than 40" in height and not in a child restraint system, the penalty is \$50.00. This penalty can multiply by the number of people in the vehicle not wearing seatbelts. The driver of the vehicle is responsible for all the passengers in the vehicle. For example, if four people are in your vehicle and no none is wearing a seatbelt, the penalty is \$100.00. Play it safe and thank you for buckling up Fort Wright!