



Main Street News

Winter 2013

www.wraba.org

ROANOKE CITY POLICE DEPARTMENT NEWS

Written by Scott Leamon Crime Prevention and Community Outreach Roanoke Police Department

Normally crooks and thieves would get coal in their stockings but this holiday season they will get an unwanted gift from the Roanoke Police Department in the form of five crime analysts.

The Roanoke Police Department has added three more full-time crime analyst positions, a major step forward for the department and a huge step back for any criminals looking to take advantage of your community.

“The crime analysts will not only improve efficiency in the

way we research and investigate any trends in criminal activity,” explained Roanoke Chief of Police Chris Perkins, “they’ll also allow us to predict where and when the next criminal incident is most likely to happen.”

“If I have an idea of where a thief might strike, and the times when that thief likes to operate, then I can have officers in that area waiting to catch him,” said Roanoke Police Department Zone Lieutenant Stephen Keatts.

The five crime analysts have only been together for a short period of time so Chief Perkins said there will be a learning curve but he expects great things from the crime analysis team in the future.

“Recently we had officers arrest a robbery suspect right in the box where one of our crime analysts said he would be, in other words the suspect was in the area where he was predicted to be at the time he was predicted to be there,” Chief Perkins explained.

STORMWATER UTILITY UPDATE

By Phil Schirmer, Engineer, City of Roanoke

Roanoke City Council will consider adoption of a Stormwater Utility at its November 18, 2014 meeting.

The stormwater utility will provide dedicated funding to construct drainage infrastructure projects citywide, assure compliance with water quality regulations and provide for increased maintenance and repair of existing storm drain systems.

The fee is based upon measured impervious surfaces

for all parcels in the City. All parcels in the City are charged the fee, including City owned property, there are no exemptions. The proposed monthly fee is \$0.90 per 500 square feet of impervious surface and will be phased in over a 3 year period; beginning at \$0.30/500 SF on July 1, 2014, moving to \$0.60/500SF on July 1, 2015 and then to the full rate on July 1, 2016. The average monthly fee, based upon the full \$0.90/500SF

for residential properties is \$5.76, and an average \$55.60 for non-residential properties. The fee will be billed on the semi-annual real estate tax invoices.

All properties are eligible to receive credits up to 50% of the fee. Credits may be earned for existing stormwater management facilities; properties may earn up to 10% for flood reduction, 10% for water quality, and 5% if the facilities exceed the minimum

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2013-2014

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FROM THE DESK OF WRABA'S EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR



Wendy J. Jones,
WRABA Executive Director



**Williamson
Road**

**Over 150
Businesses**

To Serve you!



*Williamson Road - Over 150
Businesses to serve you!*

RESTAURANT WEEK 2013

During October 7-13, 2013 we celebrated the restaurant sector of our population with the first Williamson Road Restaurant Week. Of 35 dine-in restaurants on Williamson Road we had participation from half. I have contacted and heard from several of the participants. Several had such success they are keeping their specials around for a while. Many are asking when we will another Restaurant Week. It is our intention to hold this event annually. We are so glad that the participants found the event a success!

For those of you not in that business sector, we are also

considering similar events for other sectors. We'd like to hear your thoughts. If your sector is not the one highlighted, you too can benefit by inviting people into your business too.

WRABA'S EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR HONORED 2013 SMALL BUSINESS ADVOCATE OF THE YEAR

Each fall the Roanoke Regional Chamber of Commerce holds their annual Small Business Awards banquet. This year WRABA's Executive Director was nominated for the honor of Small Business Advocate.

There were four well deserved nominees in this award category .

On Thursday October 3, 2013 the awards banquet was held where Mrs. Jones received the award.

Several Williamson Road businesses were also nominated for awards in various categories. Neely's Accounting Services was nominated in the Business-to-Business category . Magic City Motor Corporation was nominated in the Legacy Category.

Being nominated for an award is high praise indeed! The application process that follows is complex. Congratulations to all nominees!

DECIDING WHEN TO START RECEIVING SOCIAL SECURITY BENEFITS

*Submitted by Tim Murphy, CPA,
Partner, Kennett & Kennett*

As you approach retirement age, you must decide whether to begin taking reduced social security benefits early or wait until full benefit retirement age (FBRA), or even later. In many cases, this decision will depend on factors other than trying to receive the greatest lifetime benefit from social security. Remember that while you have the option of receiving social security benefits as early as age 62, the eligibility age for Medicare remains at 65. So, although you may be able to replace a sufficient amount of your earned income with social

security benefits beginning at age 62, you may not be able to adequately replace your employer-provided health insurance.

Even if you have sufficient funds to live on without considering social security, many people prefer to begin receiving benefits as soon as possible. For 2013, the benefits at age 62 are reduced by 25% of what they would be at age 66 (i.e., the FBRA); but, you will receive more social security checks if benefits are drawn early. In addition, drawing early social security benefits may allow

you to leave tax-deferred retirement accounts untouched and growing for longer periods.

Another reason to receive benefits early is if you have children living at home. Children under age 18 (or up to 19 if a full-time student) may be eligible for benefits if you are also receiving social security benefits.

Furthermore, if you wait until the FBRA to draw benefits, it will take several years to reach the break-even point to make up for the years of payments that were not received.

Example: Receiving social security benefits at age 62

Continued on page 7



ROANOKE COUNTY UPDATES

By Megan Cronise, AICP-Principal Planner, Roanoke County Community Development

PLANTATION ROAD BICYCLE, PEDESTRIAN AND STREETSCAPE IMPROVEMENT PROJECT

With our consultants, Whitman, Required and Associates, on board we are making significant progress with the design of the Plantation Road project. Roanoke County staff and

the consultants have been meeting since September with businesses on Plantation Road and on neighboring streets to discuss the project and other issues in the area. Our meeting with Wendy Jones also provided valuable insight regarding both Plantation Road and Williamson Road. The response to the project has been overwhelmingly supportive thus far. A meeting with residents

impacted by the project is scheduled for November. A Community Meeting will be held in January exhibiting preliminary plans and a Design Public Hearing will be held in May or June. For more information visit www.roanokecountyva.gov/Plantation. Please contact Megan Cronise by email at mcronise@roanokecountyva.gov or by phone at (540) 772-2068 ext. 282 with questions.



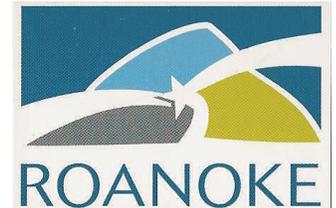
STORMWATER UTILITY UPDATE (CON'T)

Continued from page 1

development requirements in place at the time the facility was constructed. Credits are doubled when existing properties are retrofitted with stormwater management controls meeting current standards.

Additional information about the Stormwater Utility and impervious surface measurements is available on the City webpage, www.roanokeva.gov, under "Read About ". Questions should be directed to the

Engineering Division at 8 5 3 - 2 7 3 1 o r engineer@roanokeva.gov.



WRABA CHRISTMAS CHEER CONTINUES

In 2000 WRABA began a program where members adopt angels from the area elementary schools and giving them Christmas gifts. These gifts come from the member's own pocket and bring joy, comfort and caring to these children. Our members recognize that our children are the future.

Angel gifts are to be returned to the WRABA

office by December 3rd this year. WRABA's Executive Director delivers the gifts and a stuffed stocking for each Angel to the schools in time for Winter Break and the children to open on Christmas.

We still have opportunities for participation! Stocking stuffers are now being collected. What was the one thing you looked forward to getting from your stocking

each year? Wouldn't it be great to share that experience with other children? If you wish to donate an item or cash for the purchase of items please contact the WRABA office via email at wraba@wraba.org or phone at 362-3293 to arrange your donation today!

WRABA wishes you a very Merry Christmas and a Safe and Happy New Year!



ROANOKE CITY FIRE DEPARTMENT NEWS

Submitted by Tiffany Bradbury RCFD Fire Prevention Specialist



Space Heaters Need...
...Their Space!

twitter.com/RoanokeFireEMS
Look for us on Facebook -
RoanokeFireEMSDepartment



Cold Weather Fire Safety

As the temperatures plunge, the risk for having a fire in your home increases. Here is an important checklist to make sure you and your family are fire safe:

- ◆ Our furnace has been inspected and serviced by a qualified professional during the last 12 months. *(furnace should be serviced at least once a year.)*
- ◆ Our chimneys and vents have been cleaned and inspected by a qualified professional. I have checked for creosote build-up. *(Not cleaning your chimney is the leading cause of chimney fires from built up creosote. This service needs to be done at least once a year.)*
- ◆ Our wood for our fireplace or wood stove is dry, seasoned wood.
- ◆ Our fireplace screen is metal or heat-tempered glass, in good condition and secure in its position in front of the fireplace.
- ◆ We have a covered metal container ready to use to dispose cooled ashes. *(The ash container should be kept at least 10 feet from the home and any nearby buildings.)*
- ◆ Our children know to stay at least 3 feet away from the fireplace, wood/pellet stove, oil stove or other space heaters.
- ◆ Our portable space heaters have an automatic shut-off.
- ◆ Our portable space heaters will be plugged directly into an outlet *(not an extension cord)* and placed at least three feet from anything that can burn like bedding, paper, walls, and even people. *(Place notes throughout your home to remind you to turn-off portable heaters when you leave a room or go to bed.)*
- ◆ We have tested our smoke alarms and made sure they are working. *(You need a smoke alarm on every level of the*
- ◆ Our furnace has been inspected and serviced by a qualified professional during the last 12 months. *(furnace should be serviced at least once a year.)*
- ◆ Our chimneys and vents have been cleaned and inspected by a qualified professional. I have checked for creosote build-up. *(Not cleaning your chimney is the leading cause of chimney fires from built up creosote. This service needs to be done at least once a year.)*
- ◆ Our wood for our fireplace or wood stove is dry, seasoned wood.
- ◆ Our fireplace screen is metal or heat-tempered glass, in good condition and secure in its position in front of the fireplace.
- ◆ We have a covered metal container ready to use to dispose cooled ashes. *(The ash container should be kept at least 10 feet from the home and any nearby buildings.)*
- ◆ We have tested our carbon monoxide alarms and made sure they are working. *(Carbon monoxide alarms should be located outside each sleeping area and on every level of the home, inside each bedroom and outside each sleeping area. For the best protection, the smoke alarms should be interconnected so when one sounds, they all sound.)*
- ◆ We have tested our carbon monoxide alarms and made sure they are working. *(Carbon monoxide alarms should be located outside each sleeping area and on every level of the home.)*
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- ◆ We have tested our smoke alarms and made sure they are working. *(You need a smoke alarm on every level of the home, inside each bedroom and outside each sleeping area. For the best protection, the smoke alarms should be interconnected so when one sounds, they all sound.)*
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Williamson Road



Williamson Road Area Business Association

December 2013						
S	M	T	W	T	F	S
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
8	9	10	11	12	13	14
15	16	17	18	19	20	21
22	23	24	25	26	27	28
29	30	31				

January 2014						
S	M	T	W	T	F	S
			1	2	3	4
5	6	7	8	9	10	11
12	13	14	15	16	17	18
19	20	21	22	23	24	25
26	27	28	29	30	31	

February 2014						
S	M	T	W	T	F	S
						1
2	3	4	5	6	7	8
9	10	11	12	13	14	15
16	17	18	19	20	21	22
23	24	25	26	27	28	

March 2014						
S	M	T	W	T	F	S
						1
2	3	4	5	6	7	8
9	10	11	12	13	14	15
16	17	18	19	20	21	22
23	24	25	26	27	28	29
30	31					

Dates To Remember:

December:

- 3rd: WRABA Annual Christmas Dinner
- 25th: Christmas
- 31st: New Year's Eve

January:

- 1st: New Year's Day
- 9th & 11th: Adopt-A-Street Clean Up Days
- 17th: Lee Jackson Day
- 20th: Martin Luther King Jr Day
- 21st: WRABA Monthly luncheon and Board Meeting

February:

- 2nd: Ground Hog Day
- 14th: Valentine's Day
- 17th: President's Day
- 18th: WRABA Monthly luncheon and Board Meeting

March:

- 9th: Daylight Savings Time Begins-Spring Ahead!
Check Smoke Detector Batteries
- 17th: St. Patrick's Day
- 18th: WRABA Monthly luncheon and Board Meeting

WRABA Monthly MEETINGS

WRABA meetings are held the third Tuesday of each month (except December) at noon. A hot buffet lunch is served and there is always a speaker on an interesting topic. Meeting reminders are emailed to dues paying members prior to each meeting, and an RSVP is required as we must provide a headcount to the hotel. Become a dues paying member and join the meetings for networking and knowledge!

Speakers for the next few months are listed below. If there is a topic on which you would like a presentation, please feel free to contact me at (540) 362-3293 or via email at Wraba@wraba.org!

December 3rd: Annual Christmas Dinner-Angel Gifts Due back to WRABA

January 21st: Roanoke City Library presents "Star City Reads"

February 18th: Kevin "KC" Bratton Roanoke City Supervising Appraiser will discuss property appraisals in Roanoke City

March 18th: Brandon Turner of Roanoke City Economic Development Department will present Enterprise Zone 1A Modifications and Grant Opportunities



WHAT DOES THE DEBT CEILING RESOLUTION MEAN TO INVESTORS?

Submitted by Mike Pendleton, CFP, AAMS of the Hollins Branch of Edward Jones



After plenty of haggling, and a fair amount of political theater, Congress reached a last-minute agreement to raise the debt ceiling and end the partial government shutdown. Most people would agree that a fully functioning government that can pay its bills on time is a positive thing — and it's certainly good news for investors, because a default on the part of the U.S. government could have had serious repercussions in the financial markets. But what's next?

We may find out fairly soon, because the legislation that passed only funded the government through Jan. 15 and raised the debt limit through Feb. 7.

But as an investor, you don't have to wait until next year to respond to these ongoing political issues.

Consider taking the following steps:

- Look for opportunities. The stock market didn't overreact to the drama in Washington. Also, despite the likely short-term drag on the economy caused by the partial government shutdown, U.S. companies have shown that they are able to increase earnings, even with slow sales growth — and corporate earnings are a key driver of

stock prices. These are all good signs for investors. And stock valuations (as measured by price-to-earnings ratios) are reasonably attractive. So, now may be a good time to pursue new investment opportunities, assuming they're appropriate for your individual needs, goals and risk tolerance.

- Be prepared for volatility. The financial markets have their "likes" and "dislikes" — and one thing they don't like is uncertainty. So, despite the fact that the markets stood up pretty well during the shutdown/debt ceiling episode, it's still quite possible that we'll see some volatility in the weeks ahead. To prepare yourself for these potential fluctuations, you'll want to own an appropriate mix of investments — which means you may need to rebalance your portfolio. A diversified portfolio can't guarantee profit or protect against loss, but it can reduce the impact of volatility — and it can help keep you calm, too.
- Be aware of interest rate movements. If the debt ceiling had not been raised, it's highly possible that we would have seen a spike in interest rates, which could have hurt the value of your

bonds. (When interest rates rise, investors won't pay full price for existing bonds because they can get newly issued ones at the higher rates.) But even though we avoided this scenario, you'll still need to be on the alert for interest-rate movements over the next several months — especially if the Federal Reserve discontinues its bond-buying program, which is designed to help keep long-term rates low. Still, it's probably not a good idea to totally avoid bonds in anticipation of rising rates, because bonds can help balance your portfolio if stocks were to decline. Nonetheless, keep a close eye on the Fed's actions, and be prepared to make changes if it appears that rates may indeed jump.

Apart from registering your opinion with your elected representatives, you can't control what happens in Washington. But, no matter what political conflicts are taking place, you can control your investment decisions — and you can continue with a strategy that can help you make progress toward your long-term financial goals.

“Be prepared for volatility. The financial markets have their “likes” and “dislikes” ...”



ADOPT-A-STREET CLEAN-UP DAYS

Our Schedule for 2014 Clean-up schedule has been set. We have two days per quarter to make it as convenient as possible to volunteer. If you call me I will even provide the trash bags, gloves and pick sticks!

We also provide water and refreshments to participants.

Thursdays 9:30 AM - 4 PM
Saturdays 9 AM - Noon

Join us on either of these days:

Thursday			Saturday	
Jan 9th	or		Jan 11th	
April 3rd	or		April 5th	
July 10th	or		July 12th	
Oct 9th	or		Oct 11th	



DECIDING WHEN TO START RECEIVING SOCIAL SECURITY BENEFITS (CON'T)

Continued from page 2

versus the FBRA: Curt is single and plans to begin receiving social security benefits on his 62nd birthday in 2013 when his benefit, based on his earnings history, is \$1,000. He will receive monthly social security retirement benefits of \$750, or 75% of his benefit. Therefore, he will receive 48 benefit checks of \$750 each (not considering annual inflation adjustments), a total of \$36,000, by the time he reaches age 66 (his FBRA).

Curt's benefit would have been \$1,000 if he had waited until age 66 to begin receiving benefits. Therefore, it would take him 12 years (starting at age 66) before the additional \$250 per month (\$1,000-750) benefit caught up to the \$36,000 he would have received between ages 62 and 66.

When the present value of future social security benefits is considered, it could be more favorable to start the benefits as soon as possible (if the money is going to be invested). However, if you are simply using early social security benefits to replace a similar amount of earned income, the short-term financial position will not be improved and the long-term outlook could suffer.

Another factor to consider in taking retirement benefits early is the increased tax cost. With a smaller social security retirement benefit, you may need to work or draw on other resources to meet expenses. If the additional

taxable income you generate exceeds certain thresholds, 50% to 85% of your social security benefits will be taxable.

You might carefully consider the long-lasting advantages of waiting until FBRA based on the following factors.

Life Expectancy: Your life expectancy may be the biggest factor in deciding whether to receive benefits early. By age 62, you should have a good handle on your own life expectancy based on your current health and the longevity of your parents. In general, 77 years might be a good cutoff point. If you reasonably expect to reach that age, waiting until FBRA may be a wise choice.

Shortening the Retirement Period: A significant factor in retirement planning projections is the length of the retirement period. For example, if you want to retire at age 62 and you have a life expectancy of 85, you have a 23-year retirement period to fund. By working past age 62, you are shortening the retirement period and lowering the amount of money needed to fund your retirement regardless of longevity.

The Earnings Test: If you are considering receiving retirement benefits before your FBRA but you intend to keep working, you must consider the earnings test. For 2013 social security benefits are reduced \$1 for every \$2 in earning above the exempt amount of \$15,120.

Replacing Lower-wage Years: Your social security benefits are calculated based on your highest 35 years of

indexed earnings. If you can replace lower-wage years early in your career with higher-wage years after age 62, the benefit can be increased. This can lead to a greater benefit when you retire.

Inflation Adjustments: Social security benefits receive an annual inflation adjustment. By taking early benefits, your starting base for these annual adjustments is smaller. For example, if your benefit was \$1,000, but you retired early and received only \$750, each year you would miss out on the compounded inflation adjustment of that \$250 in lost benefits. In other words, the gap between the early retirement benefit you receive and the amount you would have received by waiting will get bigger and bigger.

The Effect on Your Spouse: Your decision to start receiving social security benefits before reaching FBRA may also affect your spouse's benefits. If your spouse does not have a personal earning record, he or she will only receive half of your retirement benefit.

After FBRA: If you delay receiving benefits until *after* your FBRA, you will receive larger benefits because of the delayed retirement credit. You may receive a credit of up to 8% per year for each year you delay receiving benefits until age 70.

If you are able to wait, the delayed retirement credit can have a significant impact. In addition to the higher retirement benefit you will receive, you will also shorten your retirement period and increase your spouse's survivor's benefit.



“...If you are considering receiving retirement benefits before your FBRA...”





Williamson Road Area Business Association
 4804 Williamson Road
 PO Box 7082
 Roanoke, VA 24019

Phone: 504-362-3293
 Fax: 540-362-5789
 E-mail: WRABA@WRABA.ORG

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 WEBSITE!**
WWW.WRABA.ORG
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PRSR STD
 US Postage
 PAID
 Roanoke, VA
 Permit 78

Membership Application

Name _____

Business _____

Mailing Address _____

Street Address _____

Phone _____ FAX _____

Email Address _____

Website Address _____



Yearly membership is \$165 per member. The membership year runs from July-June and will be prorated. If you have any questions please call Wendy Jones at (540)362-3293.

**Attention All
 Readers!!!!**

Have a suggestion for an article you would like to see in The Main Street News? Call Wendy Jones today (540)362-3293 or send an email to wraba@wraba.org.



Please join us every third Tuesday (except December) for our luncheon and meeting. This is a great opportunity to network and enjoy some really great food! Meetings are held at noon. Please watch your e-mail for meeting location details!