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City Announces Holiday Hours

DECEMBER 19TH 2011 BY UNKNOWN

City Announces Holiday Hours

By Annabeth Miller, SMT Editor

The upcoming Christmas and New Year's holidays will mean adjustments in the city's schedules the next few weeks.

Dexter City Administrator Mark Stidham reported today that city offices hours and services will be adjusted for city employees to share the holidays with their families.

City offices will be closed at 12 noon this Friday and will be closed on Monday, Dec. 26. City offices will reopen for business at 8 a.m., Tuesday, Dec. 27. Offices will be open all day on Friday, Dec. 30 but will be closed on Monday, Jan. 2.

Trash collection in the city will take place according to schedule this week, Stidham said. However, the two weeks after Christmas and New Year's Day will be adjusted for trash pickup.

During the weeks of Dec. 26 – 30 and Jan. 2-6 trash pickup in the city will one run-day late and there will be no bulk trash pickup either week.

In addition to adjustments with office and trash schedules, the first aldermanic meeting of the New Year will be held at 7 p.m., Tuesday, Jan. 4 in the Municipal Building on Vine Street.

The Holiday Schedule

- Friday, Dec, 23 – Closed 12 p.m.
- Monday, Dec. 26 – Closed; no trash pick-up
- Tuesday, Dec. 27 – Reopen at 8 a.m.
- Friday, Dec. 30 – Open
- Monday, Jan. 2 – Closed; no trash pick-up
- Tuesday, Ja. 3 - Reopens at 8 a.m.

Photo Above: Kendra Williams, Crystal Allstun, Milissa Wright and all the Dexter city staff wish everyone a Merry Christmas and Happy New Year! (SMT Photo by Annabeth Miller)

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Senate Passes Payroll Tax Package

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Senate Passes Payroll Tax Package

By Annabeth Miller, SMT Editor

WASHINGTON, D.C. – The Senate on Saturday approved a two-month extension of the payroll tax cut, virtually ensuring another partisan fight early next year over President Obama's favored tax break while teeing up a separate battle over a controversial pipeline.

The Senate voted 89-10 in support of the package, which will likely be taken up by the House next week.

Lawmakers decided on a two-month extension after they were unable to agree on how to pay for a package that would extend the tax cut through the next election.

Final passage would mean American families would continue to enjoy a 2 percentage point cut from their Social Security tax. In addition, weekly jobless payments averaging about \$300 for millions of people who have been out of work for six months or more would be continued.

U.S. Senator Roy Blunt (Mo.) released the following statement today regarding the passage of an expedited review process for the Keystone XL Pipeline and the two-month extension of the payroll tax cut and extension of unemployment benefits:

"I was proud to vote to move forward on the Keystone XL Pipeline today, which will create 20,000 jobs at no cost to American taxpayers. This bill calls on President Obama to make a decision within 60 days on the single largest shovel-ready project in America, which should not be delayed by politics or elections.

"I'm also glad this package, which provides a two-month extension of the payroll tax cut and extension of unemployment benefits, will not lead to a tax increase as President Obama originally requested. While I don't believe short-term holidays are a long-term solution in fixing our economy, I applaud the leaders on both sides for reaching an agreement on credible pay-fors without tax hikes on families and job creators who are already struggling to make ends meet.

"President Obama's policies have only served to worsen our economy to date, which is why we must continue to work together in Congress to implement long-term policies that will help put more Americans back to work. The Keystone XL Pipeline is a good example of a project that will move us toward that goal, and I urge President Obama to put politics aside and authorize this important infrastructure project immediately."

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Is Texting While Driving the New Drunk Driving?

DECEMBER 16TH 2011 BY STAFF WRITER

Is Texting While Driving the New Drunk Driving?

There has been a lot of talk since the National Transportation Safety Board (NTSB) said yesterday that they want to ban all non-emergency cell phone use by drivers. And by ‘a lot of talk,’ I mean 2,397 news articles found by Google as of 4:29 on Wednesday, 12/14. The New York Times, Washington Post and CNN are among the major news sources that have reported the story.

In case you didn’t read any of these articles, the NTSB was responding to an accident that happened on the highway last year in Missouri. A 19-year-old crashed into an 18-wheeler, resulting in a pile-up that involved two school buses. Two people, including the 19-year-old and a teen on one of the buses, were killed. 38 were injured. And the crazy thing is that leading up to the accident, the 19-year-old had sent or received 12 texts in 12 minutes, while barreling down the highway.

The NTSB has deemed that no cell phones—even the handheld kind—should be used on the road. This has generated an outcry, with most stories not really showing indignation so much as surprise. Is it really that dangerous a problem? The Christian Science Monitor reported in November 2009, two years ago, that talking on a phone while driving gives you the same reaction time as driving intoxicated.

(<http://www.csmonitor.com/USA/2009/1105/p25s07-usgn.html>)

Texting while driving might be the new ‘drunk driving,’ a behavior that is quickly

becoming stigmatized as irresponsible, reckless and inconsiderate. This leads to some serious questions. Will texting while driving soon mean that some people have to get non-standard insurance, take distracted driving courses and even serve jail sentences?

Texting while driving might be more dangerous than drunk driving, though. That’s because regular people are doing it—teens, commuters, truck drivers. It isn’t just the people with drinking problems that you have to worry about anymore, and it isn’t a problem that’s mostly isolated to late-night hours. People text while driving all the time, and maybe the behavior peaks during rush hours.

[images/Blog Images/show/ul83](#)

A blogger at Lacantdrive.com (L.A. Can’t Drive) says the following when mentioning the epidemic of Los Angeles commuters stuck on their iPads, Blackberries and other devices: “If you ask any of these drivers to close their eyes for 4-5 seconds while driving at any given moment—on local roads, in their neighborhood, on the freeway, etc.—I bet you every single one of them would refuse and think such an idea was insane. Well, essentially, that’s what they’re all doing multiple times on just one leg of their commutes by fueling their digital crack addiction.”

So maybe smart phones are a new form of substance abuse, in which case, the whole drunk driving comparison starts to make a lot more sense.

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Essex Man Joins Highway Patrol

DECEMBER 14TH 2011 BY UNKNOWN

Essex Man Joins Highway Patrol

A Stoddard County native is among those who will graduate this week from the Missouri Law Enforcement Academy.

Dylan L. DeJournett of Essex is among the 30 Missouri State Highway Patrol troopers who will graduate in ceremonies on Friday in Jefferson City. DeJournett is the son of David and Marilyn DeJournett of Essex and is a graduate of Richland High School.

The ceremony is scheduled for 10 a.m. in the Patrol's Law Enforcement Academy gymnasium. The 94th Recruit Class reported to the Academy on July 1, 2011. The new troopers will report for duty in their assigned troops on January 2, 2012.

During the graduation ceremony, Missouri Attorney General Chris Koster will address the class. The Honorable Mary R. Russell, Missouri Supreme Court, will administer the Oath of Office to the new troopers. Thomas U. Black of Nelson, will give the invocation and benediction. The Troop F Color Guard will present and retire the colors, and Trooper Andrew A. Armstrong, Troop F, will sing the national anthem.

Dean Gil Kennon, vice president of college affairs for Mineral Area College, will be present to confer an associate's of applied science degree to the new troopers based on their course work at the Academy.

Four class awards will be presented. The recruits accumulated points toward graduation in the categories of physical fitness, firearms, and academics throughout their 24 weeks at the Academy. The person with the highest number of points in each category earns the respective award.

Class members include:

- Jason A. Akers, Ballwin, Troop C, St. Genevieve/Perry Counties
- Jason A. Ashby, Fenton, Troop C, Jefferson County
- Thomas J. Black, Columbia, Troop H, Buchanan/Andrew Counties
- Todd K. Burton, Springfield, Troop F, Audrain County
- Clinton R. Capps, Salem, Troop I, Crawford County
- Ryan W. Clement, Grovespring, Troop C, Franklin County
- Stephen J. Cool, Higginsville, Troop H, Clinton/Caldwell Counties
- John T. Cunningham, Belton, Troop A, Carroll/Ray Counties
- Robert R. Davis, St. Peters, Troop C, Lincoln/Pike Counties
- **Dylan L. DeJournett, Essex, Troop E, New Madrid/Pemiscot Counties**
- Jennifer A. Doplick, St. Louis, Troop C, Jefferson County
- Trevor H. Elliston, Mt. Vernon, IL, Troop C, Jefferson County

- Graydon L. Gaines, Kirksville, Troop B, Randolph/Monroe Counties
- Eric J. Graslie, Wentzville, Troop C, St. Charles County
- Erica L. Grass, Lake St. Louis, Troop C, St. Charles County
- Patrick T. Harms, St. Charles, Troop C, St. Charles County
- Cameron M. Heath Jr, Cape Girardeau, Troop E, Scott/Mississippi Counties
- Jordan A. Hilliard, Mt. Vernon, IL, Troop C, North St. Louis County
- Austin B. Kings, Moberly, Troop F, Audrain County
- Ashley E. Klempke, Los Angeles, CA, Troop F, Moniteau/Morgan Counties
- Jake T. Langsdale, Lee's Summit, Troop A, Johnson County
- Blaine M. Loring, West Plains, Troop E, Butler/Ripley Counties
- Lucas S. Lowe, Marthasville, Troop H, Grundy/Mercer/Livingston Counties
- Justin J. Moll, Centralia, IL, Troop C, North St. Louis County
- Mark A. Philpott, Ava, Troop G, Carter/Reynolds Counties
- Eric D. Rehmert, Owensville, Troop C, Franklin County
- Elvis Rondon, Batavia, IL, Troop A, Carroll/Ray Counties
- Rawn P. Toler, Monett, MO, Troop F, Montgomery County
- Joseph M. Van Meter, Bloomington, IN, Troop E, New Madrid/Pemiscot Counties
- Nicholas B. Yoder, Mundelein, IL, Troop C, St. Francois/Washington Counties.

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Wreaths Program Honors American Veterans

DECEMBER 13TH 2011 BY UNKNOWN

Wreaths Program Honors American Veterans

By Annabeth Miller, SMT Editor

BLOOMFIELD - It was a beautiful day – with the sun shining down on the hillside south of town as volunteers of all ages converged on the Missouri Veterans Cemetery.

The brisk temperature and breeze didn't deter those who came to place evergreen wreaths on the headstones at the cemetery. From young people in red stocking caps and members of the Children of the American Revolution, to members of the Civil Air Patrol to the Patriot Riders – they all gathered for a very special holiday moment.

It's a simple image, but one of honor: A green and red wreath laid across the tombstone of a veteran. It's a powerful image: a veteran's headstone and a evergreen wreath with a red ribbon. It's an image of honor, or remembrance, of gratitude.

Along with scores of other communities around the country, including Arlington National Cemetery, the area gathered at the Missouri Veterans Cemetery in Stoddard County.

Founded in 1992 by wreath-maker Morrill Worcester, the event helps communities recognize and remember the sacrifices of those who've served in America's armed forces.

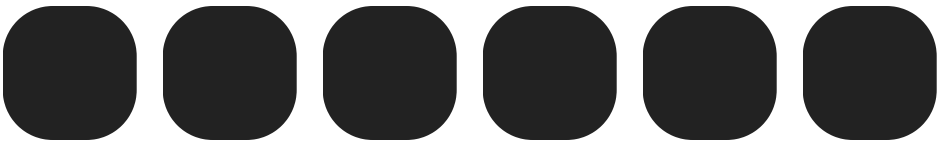
Following a brief yet poignant ceremony, volunteers scattered throughout the hillsides at the cemetery to place a wreath at each headstone in the cemetery. This is the third year for the Wreaths Across America at the Missouri Veterans Cemetery in Bloomfield.

ShowMe Gallery

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