

# WHAT'S *New*

IN THE METROPOLITAN POLICE DEPARTMENT

*A weekly update for residents, visitors, and workers in the District of Columbia*



Friday, December 6, 2013

## TWENTY-SIX NEW OFFICERS ARE HITTING THE STREETS OF DC

Patrols in DC neighborhoods are being boosted by the addition of 26 officers who were sworn in during a graduation ceremony on Friday, December 6, 2013, at the Metropolitan Police Academy in Southwest DC.

Training awards presented during the ceremony recognized Officer Owais Akhtar (Academic Training Award); Officer Randy Harrison (Firearms Training Award); Officer Colin Everett (Vehicle Skills Awards); and



Officers Brittany Gerral and George Poor (Physical Skills Awards). The new officers all completed approximately 24 weeks of training at the police academy, which includes a full program of physical, classroom, and firearms training to prepare them for the challenges of being a police officer. The subjects covered include laws of arrest, search and seizure, criminal law, traffic regulations, human relations, community policing, and ethics. In addition, recruit officers receive skills training in firearms, operation of emergency police vehicles, self-defense, advanced first aid, and much more.

The Metropolitan Police Department (MPD) is focused on building a crime-fighting partnership with the community, and developing our own promise and potential as a department. Police work requires a certain type of individual — one who has strong interpersonal skills and the motivation to work with our partners to help build strong, safe and healthy communities throughout the District of Columbia.

## WATCH OUT FOR CHARITY SCAMS THIS HOLIDAY SEASON

The holiday season is traditionally a time of giving, with many charities seeking contributions to help the less fortunate. But it can also be a time when some con artists try to take advantage of other peoples' generosity by going door-to-door for "charitable donations" — when there is really no charity involved. If someone shows up at your door asking for donations, always ask for identification and look at it carefully. It's also a good idea to request printed information about the charity, or a phone number or website that you can contact for more information. Also, find out how the funds will be used. Be especially wary of people

who ask for cash only or of children out soliciting funds who are not accompanied by an adult. If you are not satisfied with the answers you get, there is a simple solution: don't give — at least not right away, until you have had a chance to do your research. As an alternative, help a charitable organization you are familiar with.



*Image: Michal Marcol / FreeDigitalPhotos.net*

» For more information on becoming a police officer in the MPD visit the police recruiting website at: <http://dcpolicejobs.dc.gov>

» The MPD is looking for volunteers to join the MPD's Reserve Corps, which provides qualified civic-minded individuals with the opportunity to assist the MPD in carrying out its policing responsibilities. Details on the Reserve Corps and other volunteer programs are available at: <http://mpdc.dc.gov/page/volunteer-opportunities-mpdc>

» For more information on charity and other scams, visit: <http://mpdc.dc.gov/scams>

» Charity scams are just one type of crime that can happen during the holidays. For a list of winter holiday safety tips for shoppers, travelers and when you're at home, check out: <http://mpdc.dc.gov/holidaysafety>

## ENJOY THIS HOLIDAY SEASON SAFELY ON THE ROADS AND IN THE SHOPS

The holiday season is upon us! Houses and trees have been decorated with garland and lights, Christmas songs abound, and the shoppers are out in force. Special seasonal markets have cropped up in various parts of the city, and specialty boutiques and shopping centers are doing strong business. It may be tempting to rush from one store to another to catch the best sales and to get your shopping completed as quickly as possible, but it's important to take the time to remember your safety – and the safety of others – while you shop.

When walking along the busy streets of DC, pedestrians should keep the following tips in mind:

- Stay on the sidewalk, not in the street; only cross the street in crosswalks with traffic control devices.
- Look both ways before crossing the street
- Never run between cars into the street.
- Wear clothing that allows drivers and people to see you. That means no dark clothes after dark or early in the morning.
- Keep alert! You may seem like an easy target to muggers and other crooks if you're loaded down with packages.

Drivers are also reminded to exercise caution and keep their cool while travelling from shop to shop in search of the perfect gift. Aggressive driving is described as a combination of unsafe and unlawful actions that demonstrate a conscious and willful disregard for safety, including offenses such as running red lights and stop signs; following too closely, or tailgating; changing lanes unsafely; failing to yield the right of way; improper passing; and speeding. Don't let your anger get the best of you if you're driving. During the holidays, be sure to allow extra travel time, because traffic congestion — and the related delays — is among the primary factors that lead motorists to drive aggressively. By leaving extra travel time, you will be less inclined to drive aggressively in order to make up for time lost in congestion.

Remember to signal your intentions, concentrate on your driving (not your cell phone, stereo, passengers, or other distractions), and extend common courtesies to other drivers at all times. Finally, keep everyone in your car safe by reminding them to wear their seatbelts. Drivers will be pulled over, ticketed, and fined for not obeying the seat belt laws. Penalties include the assessment points on your driver's license and fines ranging from \$50 to \$150 for offenses.

» The MPD offers safety tips for walkers, runners and bikers online at:  
<http://mpdc.dc.gov/sharetheroad>

» This holiday season, don't let the spirit of giving lull you into giving burglars, muggers, and pickpockets a better chance to do their dirty work. Crooks love the holidays as much as everyone else, especially because it's an opportune time for crime. Learn more at:  
<http://mpdc.dc.gov/holidaysafety>

» Aggressive driving will cost you. For more information on aggressive driving as well as the 10 basic rules of courtesy and safety, go to:  
<http://mpdc.dc.gov/smoothoperator>

### NEWS & NOTES

#### Also Noteworthy

**Remembering Homicide Victims on 12/7.** MPD's Victim Services Branch, in collaboration with other community service

providers, will host the Sixth Annual Tree of Remembrance event on December 7, 2013, from 11am-5pm at 101 M Street, SW (First District Community Room). This Holiday Remembrance Event is dedicated to honoring the lives of loved ones lost in the District of Columbia. For more call Dawn Christie (202)

727-7139 or Carla Okonkwo (202) 645-6363. **Join the MPD Reserve Corps.** The MPD Reserve Corps, a volunteer policing program is seeking new members. Applications are now being accepted at <http://dcpolicejobs.dc.gov>.

#### Information, ideas, or comments about this service?

Send an e-mail to **KAYLIN CASTELLI**, Manager of Internet Communications, at [kaylin.castelli@dc.gov](mailto:kaylin.castelli@dc.gov)

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