

City Calendar

<http://bit.ly/mgacal>

Monday, 1/2/2017
City Hall Closed for
New Year's Day

Garbage collection will be on a
one-day delay all week.

Monday, 1/9
Council Meeting
6pm @ City Hall

Thursday, 1/12
THE GAME SHOW
7:30pm @ CoMMA

Monday, 1/30
42ND STREET
National Broadway Tour
7:30pm @ CoMMA

Monday, 2/6
Council Meeting
6pm @ City Hall

Friday, 2/10
LIVE FROM NASHVILLE
7:30pm @ CoMMA

Thursday, 2/23
"PIPPIN"
National Broadway Tour
7:30pm @ CoMMA

Monday, 3/6
Council Meeting
6pm @ City Hall

Leaf Pickup

The City will collect loose
leaves through January.

PLEASE DO NOT PUT
LIMBS OR OTHER
DEBRIS IN LEAF PILES!

<http://bit.ly/2dr0ii4>

Winter weather and water pipes

The City of Morganton, and surrounding water providers, have been dealing with an above average number of water line breaks these past few months, and as winter continues, residents should know that more breaks are likely. However, residents can be assured that City workers are ready to respond.

This fall, Morganton and the region, experienced a drought that left soil extremely dry. The dry soil shrunk and left voids around water lines in some places. Voids increase the stress on water pipes.

"We witnessed this during a recent repair [in October] where the soil was dry and cracked ten feet below the surface," Water Resources Director Brad Boris said. "Voids around water lines offer no support, and a shift in the line causes a break."

As for water main breaks related to cold weather, several factors come into play.

Most water line breaks are due to the age and material of the pipe. Older pipes and brittle cast iron pipe are more susceptible to breaking.

Plus, pipes shrink during cold weather. That puts extra stress on pipes joints and segments, which often leads to pipe failure. And, the ground surrounding pipes will expand and shrink during "freeze and thaw" cycles. That movement puts additional stress on pipes, which can cause them to break. Unfortunately, there's not much anyone can do about it.

"Water line breaks are just part of the business, and they happen all across the



To report a water outage, call 828-438-5276.

country," Boris said. "But the important thing is that we're prepared to handle the breaks and our crews are trained and committed to restoring water service as quickly as possible when there is a break."

The City of Morganton has approximately 331 miles of water lines in the distribution system, some of which date back to the early 1900's. Most of the recent breaks were on old brittle cast iron pipes installed in the 1950's.

"It's very important that we maintain, repair, and replace the City's water infrastructure," Boris said. "As part of our infrastructure replacement strategy, we use more flexible and corrosion resistant zinc coated ductile iron water lines when replacing pipes or installing new lines. This is a big improvement that will help in reducing breaks."

For more information, or to report a water line break, call 828-438-5276.

Cable rate increase in January

During the budget meeting held in June, the Morganton City Council approved a cable television rate increase effective January 1, 2017.

The rate for Broadcast Basic Cable will increase to \$27.40, and the rate for Basic Cable will be \$76.63.

The increase is due to rising programming costs



CoMPAS must pay to various broadcasters to carry channels.

Protect your water pipes during winter

Take some precautions this winter to prevent freezing pipe.

- **INSULATE!** Pipes in attics and crawl spaces should be protected with insulation or heat. Pipe insulation is available in fiberglass or foam sleeves. Home centers and hardware stores have sleeves providing 1/8 to 5/8 inches of insulation.

- **WARM THEM UP!** Heating cables and tapes are effective in freeze protection. Select a heating cable with the UL label and a built-in thermostat that turns the heat on when needed (without a thermostat, the cable has to be plugged in each time and might be forgotten).

- **LET HEAT IN!** Doors on cabinets under kitchen and bathroom sinks should be left open during cold spells to allow the warmer air of the room to circulate around the pipes.

- **EMPTY THEM!** Exterior pipes should be drained or enclosed in 2-inch fiberglass insulation sleeves.

- **SHUT THEM OFF!** Pipes leading to the exterior should be shut off and drained at the start of the winter.

- **LET THEM DRIP!** Let faucets drip slowly to keep water flowing through pipes that are vulnerable to freezing. Ice might still form in the pipes, but an open faucet allows water to escape before the pressure builds to where a pipe can burst. If the dripping stops, it may mean that ice is blocking the pipe; keep the faucet open, since the pipe still needs pressure relief.



From left: Judge Claude Sitton, Claude Huffman, and Larry Whisnant pose for a photo with the recently restored Police Box now located in the History Museum Annex in downtown Morganton. Whisnant and Huffman have been working on restoring the building for a couple years with the help of the City and several local businesses.

Restoring a piece of history

Thanks to former and current City employees and a few local businesses, a piece of Morganton's history has been restored. That piece of history is known as the "Police Box".

The Police Box sat on the Historic Courthouse Square about 80 years ago. Originally, it was a cab off an old steam train engine, but the City repurposed it to serve as a satellite office for Morganton policemen and put it on the square sometime in the 1930s. Then, sometime in the 1940s or later, the Police Box disappeared.

A few years ago, Larry Whisnant, former City Councilman and Public Safety Major, became interested in finding out what happened to the Police Box.

"I found some old pictures and read an article about it in the paper, and I started wondering, 'What happened to that building?'" Whisnant said. "To me it was, and is, an important piece

of history for law enforcement and downtown Morganton."

To help in the search, Whisnant recruited Claude Huffman, a former City fire captain. The two talked about the Police Box often, and they would ask friends about it. They'd talk to local business owners, anyone who may know about the box and where it had gotten off to, and although some people could remember seeing the Police Box on the square, no one had any idea where it had ended up.

Then one day, their luck changed.

Read the full story about how Whisnant and Huffman discovered the box at <http://bit.ly/2hIFOJR>.

Whisnant and Huffman are interested in finding out more about the Police Box. If you have any information, details, or pictures showing the police box, please contact Whisnant at 828-205-0544, or call the History Museum at 828-437-1777.

MORGANTON CITY COUNCIL

Ronnie Thompson • Mayor

S. Sidney Simmons • District 1

Forrest A. Fleming • District 2

John H. Cantrell • Mayor Pro Tem - District 3

Vacant • District 4

CONTACT THE COUNCIL

☎ 828-438-5228

✓ citymayor@ci.morganton.nc.us

✓ citycouncil@ci.morganton.nc.us

Morganton Matters is produced by the City's Public Information Office.

☎ (828) 432-2516

✓ pubinfo@ci.morganton.nc.us

January 2017