

The City of Rochester Hills

Hills Herald

News & Information

Fall 2014



Bryan K. Barnett, Mayor

A Message from the Mayor



I've never won an Academy Award, Heisman Trophy or Nobel Peace Prize. Heck, I've never even been close. I have, however, watched those fortunate winners give passionate acceptance speeches, pride oozing from each word, and an ear-to-ear smile illuminating the room.

This month, the City of Rochester Hills won our version of an Academy Award by being ranked as the #1 city in Michigan, and the #9 city in the entire United States according to *Money* magazine's "Top 10 Best Places to Live in America."

In awarding this distinction, *Money* looked at several criteria including economic opportunity and jobs, education, housing affordability, and safety. In fact, to better understand the inner workings of communities, they sent staff people on site to look specifically at how these cities actually work. Their visit confirmed what so many of our residents already know, that Rochester Hills is the best place in Michigan, and one of the top ten places in America to live, work, and raise a family.

My personal favorite category on which *Money* magazine graded prospective communities is "happy people and community spirit!" If Disney World is the "Happiest Place on Earth" and Aruba is "One Happy Island," then the City of Rochester Hills is now the "Happiest City in Michigan." (*Please keep the singing of Pharrell to yourself!*) This wonderful news further validates the independent survey Oakland University conducted last year that found 99% of our residents are happy and satisfied with their decision to live here in Rochester Hills.

"Their visit confirmed... Rochester Hills is the best place in Michigan, and one of the top ten places in America to live, work, and raise a family"

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With 75,000 residents, there are probably 75,000 reasons why people love our community. Our top ranked schools, pristine parks and trails, innovative business community, and picturesque neighborhoods are on the top of many happy residents' lists. For others, it is our low unemployment, low taxes, and proximity to great restaurants, shopping, and entertainment that make living in Rochester Hills so satisfying.

I am sure others are drawn by our great partners like the Rochester Hills Public Library, Older Persons' Commission, Rochester Avon Recreational Authority, Oakland University, Rochester College, Crittenton Hospital Medical Center, and our ever growing list of world class businesses and organizations.

Others may be most inspired by our places of worship or the generosity of our non-profits like the Rochester Rotary, Rochester Area Neighborhood House, Blessings in a Backpack, and our award winning Chamber of Commerce.

Whatever your reason for loving our community, we recognize that we are blessed. **Whether you are an original Avon Township resident or a brand new addition this past year, we are happy you have chosen to live in our spectacular city.**

This national recognition by *Money* magazine is a wonderful and well-deserved gift, and given that next month our City will celebrate its 30th birthday, the timing seems perfect. I hope that each of you will join me in sharing in the community pride that comes with this high honor. I encourage you to mention it at work, discuss it in the grocery store, celebrate it at the school bus stop, tell it at the coffee shop, and brag about it to friends and family around the country. You can add it to your email signature, include it in your Christmas cards, carve it in the back of your haircut, tattoo it on your...well, whatever way seems most appropriate, I hope you and your family celebrate.

As for myself, I am overwhelmingly proud and honored to be your Mayor, and to have the opportunity to receive and share this "award" with you. I have never wavered in my belief that Rochester Hills is the preeminent place to live, work, and raise a family; and it is extremely gratifying to have this belief recognized and confirmed. With over 30,000 places to live in America, our happy community sure has earned it!

Hills Herald

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Why is Rochester Hills #1 to you?



SUNDAY MORNING MIRACLE

Tornado: A Neighborhood Story

by Mayor Bryan K. Barnett

On Sunday, September 21, 2014 an F1 tornado struck the city of Rochester Hills. As far as we can tell, it is the first tornado to ever hit our community. The tornado touched down at 5:57 a.m. and just two minutes later...was gone. In just 120 seconds, it damaged over 40 homes, uprooted over 100 trees, and devastated a three block portion of North Fairview Farms.

What it didn't do, however, is perhaps more significant. It did not cause any injuries - truly a Sunday morning miracle! It also didn't catch us off guard. While tornados in September are rare and almost unheard of in the early morning hours, our First Responders were ready. Coordinating a response of nearly 100 people across various organizations like Homeland Security and the Salvation Army, Rochester Hills Chief of Fire and Emergency Services, Sean Canto, commanded the scene and incident flawlessly.

I immediately called on many of our city's friends and colleagues to assist in our time of need. Thank you to the cities of Rochester, Auburn Hills, and Troy, and Oakland Township. Thank you to Rochester Community Schools and the Royal Park Hotel for providing transportation and shelter. Thank you to the City of Rochester Hills Parks and Forestry Department, Building Department, and the Department of Public Services. All answered the call to serve and assist our residents within hours. As I went door to door and talked to residents, the comments were enthusiastic and grateful. All were very pleased and impressed by the coordinated city response, thankful for the support, and appreciative of the assistance.

There is one last item that the tornado was not able to impact...the resilience of the incredible neighbors of North Fairview Farms. That, to me, was the real story of this tornado - neighbors helping neighbors. Residents walking down the street, tools in hand, asking how they could help. Within just a few short days, North Fairview Farms was back on its feet and looking dramatically different than it did just days earlier.

It's always tough to quantify community spirit. It doesn't have a win/loss record you can read about in the paper, and it cannot be easily measured on a temperature-like scale. No...if you want to see community spirit on display, I suggest you drive down Grandview, Fairfield or Ridgecrest or just spend a little time in the North Fairview Farms neighborhood park. It is both physically visible and emotionally tangible. It's one of the aspects a challenge like this provides - a test of a community's mettle.

Money magazine had already chosen our city as one of the "Top 10 Places to Live in America" prior to the tornado. I want to personally thank the residents of North Fairview Farms for confirming that choice in their own spectacular way.

*"The services that gathered to help us from Rochester Hills and surrounding communities was not only incredibly expedient but highly efficient as well."
- An appreciative resident*



Out & About in Rochester Hills



The First Annual Crafts on the Clinton to support the Clinton River Watershed Council was a rousing success.



A great time was had by all and we look forward to next year. Thanks once again to our generous sponsors and crafters!



photos ©Eric Rard Perry — at Yates Cider Mill



Young visitors enjoy the Rochester Hills Museum's wonderful Children's Garden, and the Little Free Library that was donated by the Rochester Garden Club!



The "Frozen" celebration at the Village of Rochester Hills - where everyone could be a prince or a princess!

Hills Happenings

Something for Everyone at OPC!



We are very pleased to welcome Renee Cortright, OPC's new Executive Director. Renee comes to OPC from the Birmingham Area Senior Center where she was Executive Director for four years, and prior to that, she was the program planner. She brings experience working with local governments, businesses, civic organizations, governing boards, and most importantly, seniors. Renee has been on the job over three months now and her mission is to welcome Rochester Hills residents 50+ to become members of the 90,000 sq. ft. center.

The Older Persons' Commission (OPC) provides something for everyone with a wide array of personal enrichment, fitness, aquatic, social, and travel offerings. There are also supportive outreach services like Meals on Wheels, Adult Day Services, transportation, and more. The OPC is open Monday through Friday from 6:30 a.m. to 8:45 p.m. and Saturdays from 7:00 a.m. to 3:45 p.m. Rochester Hills residents

50+ are automatically members so if you haven't registered, please stop by the office at 650 Letica Drive, Rochester or visit www.opcseniorcenter.org for a full listing of offerings. Here's a small sampling of upcoming opportunities this fall!

Fitness is fun! Several options are available to keep adults active no matter what their age: Stretch & Balance, Zumba Toning, Ballet & Barre Stretch, and Jazzercise. In the therapy and lap pool, offerings include: Aquatic Tai Chi, Healthy Joints, H2O Boot Camp or Intro to Scuba Diving.

But fitness options don't stop there. Learn how to play pickleball, volleyball, table tennis, or join the hockey league. These group exercise options offer social benefits as well. Walk the track, lift weights or work with personal trainers. Join the growing number of OPC members who are actively demonstrating that exercise helps to keep a body strong.

Enrich your life! Just as our bodies need physical exercise to keep them in the best possible shape, the brain needs exercise to remain useful. There are countless ways to give your mind a workout at OPC. Attend a lecture by an Oakland University Professor, learn a new language, and take a computer class on Twitter or digital photography. Make a pot on the pottery wheel, learn the art of PenZen or attend a class in the woodshop.

Enjoy new experiences! Attend the fall musical *C'Mon, Be Happy* at OPC. For adventure seekers, there are travel opportunities to local historic venues, DSO concerts or theatre productions, plus extended trips in and outside of the U.S. Upcoming trips include: Jewels of France River Cruise, *Pippin* at the Wharton Center, or Flint Sloan & Art Museum.

Intergenerational Opportunities! Join OPC's 5th Annual Indoor Triathlon on January 17, 2015. Compete as an individual or put together a team with your son, daughter, grandparent or grandchild. Complete a timed 20 minute swim in our 25 yard lap pool, bike ride on the spinning bikes, and run on the indoor track. Go at your own pace, we keep track of your distance. There will be individual and team awards. What a great way to start off 2015! Call 248-608-0251 to register.

For more information regarding fitness, enrichment, social, travel, supportive services, volunteer opportunities and more at OPC call 248-656-1403 x 0.



Intense Pickleball game in progress



Jan M. getting creative with the PenZen Group



OPC Senior Day with special guest Mayor Barnett

Rochester Hills Fire Department



A Message from Chief..... Sean Canto

With the summer coming to a close and old man winter around the corner, the Rochester Hills Fire Department would like to remind you about proper maintenance of your wood-burning fireplace or wood stove. As you snuggle in front of a cozy fire or bask in the warmth of your wood stove or fireplace, the last thing you are likely to be thinking about is the condition of your chimney. However, if you don't give some thought to it before you light those winter fires, your enjoyment may be very short-lived. Dirty chimneys can cause chimney fires which damage structures, destroy homes, and injure or kill people.

Chimney fires can burn explosively – noisy and dramatic enough to be detected by neighbors or people passing by. Flames or dense smoke may shoot from the top of the chimney. However, those are only the chimney fires you know about. Slow-burning chimney fires don't get

enough air or have fuel to be dramatic or visible. With proper chimney system care, chimney fires are mostly preventable. Properly maintained chimneys are less likely to catch fire. Make sure a Certified Chimney Sweep inspects your venting system annually, and cleans and repairs it whenever needed. Your sweep may have other maintenance recommendations depending on how you use your fireplace or stove. If you have any questions or concerns about your chimney cleaning process, feel free to contact the Fire Marshal's office at 248-656-4720 and ask for Captain Todd Gary, our Fire Marshal.



It is also important to dispose of wood burning ashes appropriately. The Rochester Hills Fire Department strongly suggests placing these ashes in a metal bucket, cover with water, and place them approximately three (3) feet away from any structure. **Each year we encounter a home fire that was a result of improperly disposed ashes.**

As a reminder, October is also Fire Prevention Month. The Rochester Hills Fire Department will be holding several events for the month of October that can be found on the City of Rochester Hills website and our social media pages. If you have any questions related to Fire Prevention Month, feel free to contact our Public Education Specialist Nancy Butty at 248-656-4720.

Finally, during this November's election you will see a ballot question in reference to an increased millage for the Fire Department. The Rochester Hills Fire Department was created in the City Charter adopted in 1984 which capped the Fire millage at 2.5 mills. This millage was created when the department was an all "volunteer organization." As the city grew, so did the number of incidents the Fire Department responded to. In 1984, the Department responded to 174 incidents, compared to 6,152 incidents in 2013. This year the department is on track to make approximately 6,500 incidents. With the increase in fire and EMS incidents, and as the city continued to grow, we started to see an increase in our response times. Obviously with the fire and emergency medical services industry being time-sensitive, our goal is to maintain our response times within or close to the nationally established criteria. Seconds certainly do count during an emergency.

The ballot question allows for a Charter Amendment to change the Fire millage from 2.5 to 3 mills. A Rochester Hills property owner will see an increase of approximately \$75 on a \$200,000 market valued home. When this is averaged out on a monthly basis, it is approximately the cost of one "McDonald's Super Sized Value Meal," or \$6.25 a month. The Rochester Hills Fire Department strives to provide the highest level of service possible to the citizens and visitors of our city. Thank you for your continued support and your consideration this November.



Oakland County Sheriff's Office



A Message from Sheriff..... **Michael J. Bouchard**

Holiday Safety Shopping Tips

With the holiday shopping season just around the corner, it is a busy time for not just retailers and shoppers, but also for thieves. Thieves have no regard for anyone but themselves. Everyone is vulnerable. That is why it is important to be vigilant when going out shopping during the holidays.

When it comes to staying safe while shopping for the holidays, choosing when and where you shop is critical. The holiday season is always a special time of year. It is also a time when busy people become careless and vulnerable to theft and other holiday crime. We can never be too careful, too prepared, or too aware. Most important is to reduce your own vulnerability and do what you can to minimize the possibility that you could be a victim of a crime or accidental loss.

As you find time to shop, please be mindful of the following safety tip:

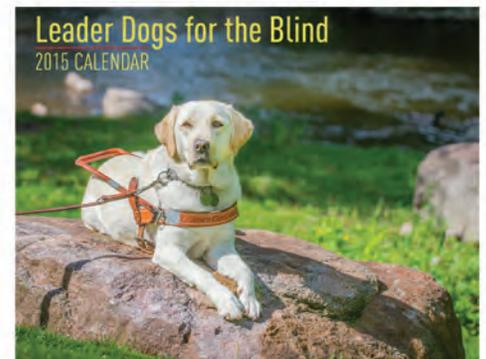
- While shopping in the evening hours, park in areas of parking lots that have adequate lighting.
- Be aware of your surroundings. Look for suspicious persons, etc. when you are shopping as well as traveling to and from your vehicle.
- Do not leave valuables and purchased items in your parked car where they can be seen. Lock them in the trunk or conceal them within the vehicle.
- Make sure purses and wallets are secure on your person at all times.
- Avoid carrying large amounts of cash. Pay for purchases with checks, credit, charge or debit cards.
- Carry cash and wallets in a front pocket to reduce your chances of having your pocket picked.
- Avoid overloading yourself with packages. It is important to have clear visibility and freedom of motion to avoid mishaps.
- Consider shopping with someone rather than going alone. Criminals are less likely to approach people who are in groups.
- **Report suspicious people or activity to law enforcement *immediately!***

Leader Dogs for the Blind 2015 Calendar

In Rochester Hills, we are very proud to have Leader Dogs for the Blind in our community. Founded by three Detroit-area Lions Clubs members in 1939, Leader Dogs for the Blind provides guide dogs to people who are blind and visually impaired to enhance their mobility, independence, and quality of life. Each year, over 270 clients attend their 26-day residential training program to be paired with a guide dog. This is a life-changing event that opens the door to independence, safety, and self-worth for many individuals.

Celebrate your love of dogs every day throughout the year with a 2015 Leader Dogs for the Blind calendar. Leader Dogs for the Blind calendars and holiday cards will be on sale beginning the second week in October. Calendars are \$15 each and cards are \$20 for a pack of 20 cards/22 envelopes.

Calendars and cards can be purchased in the Leader Dog Administration Lobby from 8:30 a.m. – 5:00 p.m. Monday through Friday. They can also be purchased online at www.leaderdog.org (there is an additional \$3 shipping charge). Leader Dog's gift shop will be open to the public on Saturday, December 6 from 10:00 a.m. – 3:00 p.m. for holiday shopping.



Rochester Hills Parks

COOL WEATHER FUN AWAITS IN ROCHESTER HILLS PARKS

Summer is gone, fall is upon us, and old man winter will soon be howling at our doors. Lucky you! You're just moments away from the perfect spot to embrace the cooler weather – a Rochester Hills park!

Autumn is a fantastic time to go hiking or biking on the Clinton River Trail, watch animals prepare for winter in the Avon Nature Area, collect colorful leaves, or just breathe in the cool, crisp air. Of course, November 11 is Veterans Day and a great time to check out Veterans Memorial Pointe. The Clinton River flows along Yates Park which is right across the street from Yates Cider Mill, which means delicious cider and donuts...how convenient!

Winter lasts a long time here in Michigan, so it's important to find some fun activities to get yourself outdoors. Be sure to dress in layers and wear hats and mittens - so you won't be tempted to run back indoors while you are ice skating at Spencer, sledding at Bloomer, making snow angels at Borden, or cross country skiing on trails (ungroomed). Santa and Mrs. Claus are expected at the Museum on December 6 and Winter Animal Adaptations (an Environmental Education program) comes to Bloomer Park on December 27.

A great way to kick those winter blues is to discover a winter wonderland right outside your front door. Just like every snowflake is unique, so are each of your 14 Rochester Hills parks!



OCTOBER IS DEER AWARENESS MONTH IN ROCHESTER HILLS

With the arrival of fall comes an increase in deer activity, and motorists should be more aware of the greater potential for deer to dart across roadways.

Don't Veer for Deer!

To prevent deer/vehicle crashes, please be on the lookout for deer by the roadways. Deer/vehicle crashes are a year-round problem, but deer are most active in the spring and during the fall mating season. (October 15 - December 15)

Flashing your high-beam headlights or honking your horn won't deter deer. When startled by an approaching vehicle, they can panic and dart out from any direction without warning.

According to [SEMCOG's website](#):

WHAT YOU CAN DO

- ◆ Buckle up, stay awake, alert, and slow down.
- ◆ Always use your safety belts.
- ◆ Heed deer crossing and speed limit signs.
- ◆ If you see one deer, please slow down because chances are there are others nearby.
- ◆ Be especially alert for deer at dawn and dusk.

IF A CRASH IS UNAVOIDABLE

- ◆ Don't swerve! It is safer to strike the animal rather than hit a tree, telephone pole, or other vehicle.
- ◆ Brake firmly.
- ◆ Hold onto the steering wheel.
- ◆ Stay in your lane.
- ◆ Bring your vehicle to a controlled stop.

AFTER A CRASH

- ◆ Pull off the road, turn on your emergency flashers, and be cautious of other traffic if you leave your vehicle.
- ◆ Don't attempt to remove a deer from the roadway because an injured deer's sharp hooves can easily hurt you.
- ◆ Report the crash to the nearest police agency and your insurance company.

During this active deer season, please remember to Buckle Up, Stay Alert, and Slow Down!



The City of Rochester Hills is very pleased to be a drop-off site for Sheriff Michael Bouchard's annual Coat Drive, Coats for the Cold. Our drop-off box will be located in the lobby of City Hall from November 1 through November 30. Please bring clean new or gently used coats during City Hall office hours, Monday - Friday from 8:00 a.m. - 5:00 p.m. All coats collected during the coat drive will be given to charitable organizations for free distribution to those most in need. Thank you for your generous donation.

Neighborhood House Holiday Giving Tree

Rochester Area Neighborhood House (RANH) will soon be kicking off their annual Holiday Giving Event, and Rochester Hills City Hall is proud to participate. The giving tree will be decorated with gift tags in place on November 10. RANH has asked that all gifts be returned by December 8. A member of the Neighborhood House Elf Squad will collect the gifts and take them to the Holiday Event site where families will be able to pick gifts for their children.

Support of the Holiday Giving Program is vital to its success. Please help us put happiness in the hearts and smiles on the faces of our local children in need this December. If you have questions, please contact the Mayor's Office at 248-656-4664 or RANH at 248-651-5836. Thank you for your interest in this wonderful holiday program.



Department of Public Services

#59 in *Governing* Magazine's Top 100 Fleets

Reflecting back on the last ten months, the City of Rochester Hills has endured the snowiest winter in 130 years and has persevered through one of the busiest construction seasons in recent history. **We would like to thank you for your understanding and patience during these unprecedented times.**

Our Department of Public Services (DPS) team has strived to provide services in the most effective and least inconvenient manner possible for our residents and visitors. Our DPS/Engineering team consists of many highly experienced, multi-disciplined professionals who understand that providing these essential services in an effective and efficient manner allows us to maintain and improve the quality of life for our community.

We would like you to know that teamwork is the essential ingredient in our success. Whether we are working to clear snow from our 280 miles of roadway, assisting thousands of resident concerns throughout the year ensuring that reliable water and sewer services are provided, or developing and administering over \$10 million dollars of public infrastructure projects in 2014, we are a team that works together to provide the best and most thorough services to our community.

We would like to share some of the highlights of 2014:

- The Veterans Memorial Pointe enhancement project was recognized by both the American Council of Engineering Companies of Michigan and the Keep Michigan Beautiful organization.
- Over 78,000 square yards of concrete and 23,100 tons of asphalt were placed, mostly in residential areas, as part of public infrastructure projects.
- The DPS Fleet Services Division was recognized as Top 100 Fleet in North America by *Governing* magazine.
- We were awarded a \$2 million dollar Storm Water-Asset Management-Waste Water (SAW) grant from the Michigan Department of Environmental Quality (MDEQ).

As fall approaches, we are buttoning up the construction projects started earlier this year and preparing for another winter season. Your support of our services helps to provide safer roads, deliver safe and reliable water and sewer utilities, enhance our vibrant character, and incorporate amenities that continue to make Rochester Hills the premier community of choice to live, work, and raise a family.

Looking ahead, we would like to thank you again for your patience and we look forward to providing another year of exceptional services to the City of Rochester Hills.

The City of Rochester Hills infrastructure is contained within a 32 square mile footprint consisting of:

- 280 miles of major and local roadways
- 320 miles of sanitary sewer
- 420 miles of water main
- 94 miles of pathway

The city also maintains a Fleet Services Division that maintains 131 vehicles and 200 pieces of power and field equipment.

For additional information, please visit www.rochesterhills.org/dps.



Winter Operations

Snow Removal in Rochester Hills

During the winter months, the Department of Public Services is responsible for snow and ice control on 242 miles of local roads and 38 miles of city major roads. By operating an effective winter road maintenance service, the city is able to provide a safe roadway system during the colder months.

Every winter storm is characterized by a unique combination of temperatures, precipitation, duration, and intensity. Our winter road maintenance policy is as follows:

- The city is divided into six routes with two plow trucks assigned to each route.
- The routes begin on the east and west sides of the city and progress towards the middle.



WINTER STORMS ARE CATEGORIZED AS:

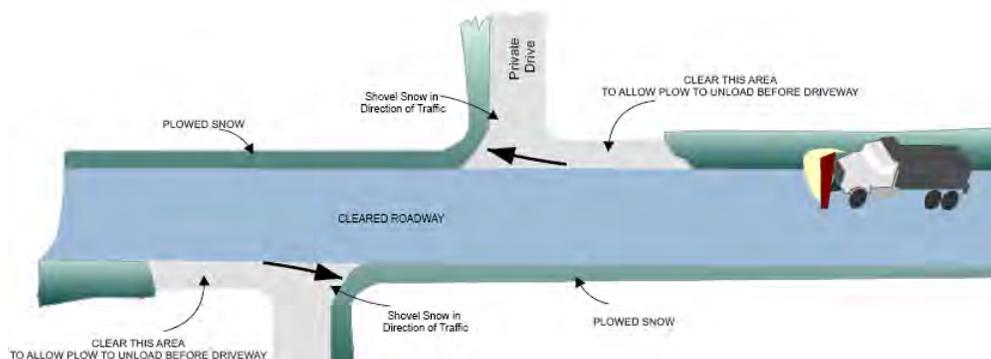
CATEGORY 1: SNOWFALL OF LESS THAN FOUR INCHES

- MAJOR ROADS AND EMERGENCY ROUTES – 38 miles of major roads that are plowed and salted on a 24 hour basis, seven days a week as needed.

CATEGORY 2: SNOWFALL OF FOUR OR MORE INCHES THROUGHOUT THE CITY

- MAJOR ROADS AND EMERGENCY ROUTES – see above.
- LOCAL ROADS – 242 miles of local roads are plowed and salted on an as-needed basis, 24 hour a day, seven days a week.
- In order to maximize efficiency, plow routes are designed to allow for continuous plowing which minimizes all stopping, backing up, and turning around.
- The utilization of fourteen 4x4 pickup trucks allows this continuous plowing to occur because they have better maneuverability and can access areas that cannot be easily addressed with a plow truck.
- Depending on the size of the snow event, our drivers will work up to 16 hour shifts.

HOW TO MINIMIZE THE CHANCES OF SNOW BLOCKING YOUR DRIVEWAY



Ways you can help:

- Remove vehicles from the street during a snowstorm.
- Do not shovel snow into the street, which is not allowed per the Michigan Vehicle Code.
- Allow enough time for travel.
- Report concerns to the Department of Public Services at 248-656-4685.

For additional information, please visit www.rochesterhills.org.

Rochester Hills Building Department Updates

Smoke Alarms

Did you know that:

- Roughly half of home fire deaths result from fires in the small percentage of homes with no alarms.
- Homes with smoke alarms (whether or not they are operational) typically have a death rate that is 40-50% less than the rate for homes without alarms.
- A 2004 U.S. telephone survey found that 96% of the households surveyed had at least one smoke alarm.
- In one-quarter of the reported fires in homes equipped with smoke alarms, the devices did not work. Households with non-working smoke alarms now outnumber those with no smoke alarms.
- Why do smoke alarms fail? Most often because of missing, disconnected or dead batteries.

The State of Michigan rules regarding smoke alarms in homes include the following requirements:

- Smoke alarms in each sleeping room and on every floor of the home including the basement.
- Power supply for smoke alarms supplied by 110 volt wiring with a battery back up or by a battery capable of providing power for at least 5 years.

The Rochester Hills Building Department, as a regular part of our permit and inspection activities, will be checking existing homes for the required smoke alarms. You should note, studies show that approximately 40% of the smoke alarms do not work. A smoke alarm, like any home appliance, should be updated and maintained.

If your home has smoke alarms, you should consider when you last updated them. It is recommended that they be replaced every 10 years. Here are some other tips to make sure your smoke alarms are working properly:

- Test your smoke alarm monthly.
- Replace batteries once a year or as soon as you hear the alarm “chirping” to warn of a low battery.
- Do not disable smoke alarms even temporarily. If your smoke alarm is sounding “nuisance alarms,” try relocating it further from the kitchen or bathrooms where cooking fumes and steam can cause the alarm to sound.
- Consider upgrading to smoke alarms with long-life batteries.
- Replace smoke alarms that are over 10 years old.

Please contact the Rochester Hills Building Department at 248-656-4615 or email building@rochesterhills.org, if you have any questions.

SMOKE ALARMS SAVE LIVES

**MAKE SURE YOUR SMOKE ALARMS PERFORM AS INTENDED
– WHEN YOU NEED THEM THE MOST**

- **TEST** smoke alarms monthly
- Change the **BATTERIES** every year
- Beware of **CHIRPING** smoke alarms – it’s time to replace the batteries
- Replace older smoke alarms – **REPLACE** alarms that are more than 10 years old
- Know the **SOUND** of the smoke alarm and what to do if the alarm goes off



**REMEMBER, ONLY WORKING SMOKE
ALARMS CAN SAVE YOUR LIFE!**

Fall Homeowner Association Forum



The Building Department staff will be hosting our annual Fall Homeowner Association Forum on Thursday, October 23, 2014 at 6:30 p.m. in the City Council Auditorium. All Homeowner Association Board members are invited to attend. This is an opportunity for you to get updates on various projects, issues, and happenings around the city which you can then forward on to your association members. Please let us know if you have any topics or issues of interest for your neighborhood that you would like us to cover. Please RSVP and forward any suggestions you have for the fall agenda to Bob White at whiteb@rochesterhills.org. We look forward to seeing you at the meeting.

Keep Your Heating System Working Efficiently All Winter

With the arrival of fall, cold weather is not far behind. Have you had your furnace tuned up this fall to get it ready for winter's worst?

If you have not, here's something you should know: An annual check-up will not only save you money, it will also help you sleep more easily. That's because an inefficient heating system wastes fuel and your hard-earned dollars. More important, a furnace that's not operating properly can endanger your health by spilling carbon monoxide and other gases into your home. For savings, safety and comfort, routine maintenance of your oil or gas furnace is a must.

Furnace maintenance is not a "do-it-yourself" job. A qualified licensed contractor should be called to perform a safety inspection once a year.

Lower Your Heating Costs this Winter with Furnace Maintenance

- Dial down your thermostat 5 degrees for some real savings.
- Don't heat a room that you don't regularly use.
- Replace your old thermostat with a programmable one that allows you to automatically set the temperature.
- Replace your air filter.

Most forced air units have a filter that cleans the air before heating and circulating it throughout the home. The filter should be checked monthly for the buildup of any dirt during periods of furnace use and cleaned or replaced as necessary. When installing a new or cleaned filter, be sure to:

- Turn off electrical power to the unit.
- Look for the door or panel that conceals the blower; sometimes this is marked "filter". Lift this door or panel off of its holding hooks or unscrew its retaining screws to remove it. Standard filters are mounted next to or under the blower motor.
- Slide the filter out along its tracks. Check to see whether it is a disposable filter or intended to be cleaned and replaced. This should be marked on the filter's edge, along with directions for cleaning, if applicable. If it's a disposable filter, its size will probably be printed on the frame's edge also. Make a note of its size and type, so you will have that information with you when you buy new filters.
- Install the new filter by sliding it back into place, noting that arrows stamped on the edge indicate the proper direction of airflow.

A simple way to remember to change your furnace filter is to buy a box of filters and leave the box right beside your furnace. Every time you walk by your furnace, you'll see the box and that will remind you to change the filter.

Is it Time to Repair or Replace that Furnace?

It is rarely easy to decide whether to repair or replace an expensive appliance when the time comes. If the cost of repairing your furnace exceeds the cost of replacing it, the decision is easy, but that is seldom the case. The first step in your decision whether to repair or replace, should be to get the opinion of a licensed heating expert. Have your furnace thoroughly inspected and get an estimate for both repair and replacement of the unit. The heating contractor will assess the potential for increased energy savings and can suggest the expected short term and long-term costs of both repair and replacement. When you have that information be sure to get one, if not two, expert opinions so you are able to make a balanced decision. The issues that you and the furnace experts will need to take into account are:

- Age of the existing furnace
- Cost of operating the existing furnace versus a new furnace
- How long will you live in the home
- Your peace of mind

SAFETY NOTE: Having a carbon monoxide detector in your home is a good idea and can save lives. Make sure you follow the installation instructions. They usually recommend a minimum height above the floor for best results.

Rochester Hills Museum at Van Hoosen Farm Fall and Winter Programs

Honoring our Local Legacy Families

The Rochester Hills Museum is beginning phase II renovation of the 1927 Calf Barn. This amazing preservation and adaptive reuse project could not have been done without the help of some generous local families. To honor their contributions to this project and to the community, we have dedicated windows on the building to help tell their family stories.



The Pixley Family

Pixley Family Family Legacy Donors

Jonathan Pixley was part of the first generation of the Pixley family who moved to the Rochester area in 1831. Seven generations of the family have lived and worked in this community, including Jonathan's great-grandson, Vern, who helped develop and build the furniture and mortuary businesses. Currently in its 85th year, the business is now run by the sixth generation of the Pixley family. Entrepreneurship and community involvement are both part of the Pixley family's lasting legacy.



Three Generations
Andrew Pixley, Vern Pixley II, and Don Pixley



Coming Events

Santa's Visit

Saturday, December 6

9 a.m. – 4 p.m.

\$ 4 members \$ 7 non-members

Santa and Mrs. Claus visit the Museum to meet with the children of our community. A wagon ride takes you from the Dairy Barn to the Van Hoosen Farmhouse and delicious fresh baked cookies await you. Don't forget your camera!

Limited tickets sold each hour and must be purchased in advance – online at www.rochesterhills.org/museum or stop by the Museum on Fridays and Saturdays between 1:00 p.m. and 4:00 p.m.



Old Fashioned Christmas

Saturday, December 20

1 p.m. – 4 p.m.

\$ 4 members

\$ 7 nonmembers in advance \$ 10 at the door

Join us for old fashioned holiday fun! Check in at the 1927 Dairy Barn and see the All Aboard! Model Train display. A wagon ride takes you to the all of our Museum buildings for musical entertainment, crafts, snacks, theatre groups, and even chestnuts roasting over an open fire! Tickets can be purchased online at www.rochesterhills.org/museum or by phone at 248-656-4663.



Society for the Preservation of Old Mills Annual Conference

Thursday, October 23 – Sunday, October 26

Complete Conference Fee: \$210 for SPOOM member and \$260 for non-member

Saturday Only: member \$125 and \$175 for non-members

The Rochester Hills Museum is proud to be hosting the 2014 National SPOOM Conference. This four day conference will highlight and celebrate the milling history we have in Southeast Michigan. Conference attendees can attend miller training classes, onsite and offsite historic tours, informative lectures, mill tours, banquet dinners, vendor showcase, participate in photo contest, and much more.



Environmental Programs in Rochester Hills

Terrific Turkeys

Saturday, November 22

1:00 p.m. to 2:30 p.m.

Turkeys almost became our national bird! Before you enjoy these birds at your Thanksgiving celebration, come and learn about them. *Terrific Turkeys* will include a short presentation, craft, and fun games. The program is free for Rochester Hills Museum members. The cost for non-members is \$5 for adults and \$3 for students and seniors. To register for this program, call 248-656-4663 or e-mail rhmuseum@rochesterhills.org.



Winter Wonderland at Bloomer Park

Saturday, December 27

1:00 p.m. to 3:00 p.m.

Winter is here and there are so many wonders to see. Come dressed for the weather and ready to learn about all the fascinating things that are going on in winter. This program will also include a hike to look for animal homes, tracks, and wildlife. *Winter Wonderland* will be held at Bloomer Park. Ages 6 and up are welcome. This environmental program is free for Rochester Hills Museum members. The cost for non-members is \$5 for adults and \$3 for students and seniors. To register for this program, call 248-656-4663 or e-mail rhmuseum@rochesterhills.org.



Exhibits at the Rochester Hills Museum

Mills in Rochester

Rochester, Michigan was a thriving mill center into the early 1900s with the Clinton River, Paint Creek, and Stoney Creek providing abundant water power. These mills helped put Rochester on the map and helped turn our small settlements into thriving villages and cities. This exhibit will be on display from October 24 through November 22.



All Aboard!

The Stoney Creek Model Railroad Club transforms the Dairy Barn into a display of transportation from times past. Members will be on hand to run the trains and share their passion with kids of all ages. Trains will be running Fridays and Saturdays from November 28 through the first week of January.



Dog Licensing

In mid-August, Oakland County Animal Control began conducting a thorough census for unlicensed dogs within Rochester Hills and neighboring Oakland County communities. This resulted in long lines at the City's Treasury counter, with extremely long wait times as we issued nearly 1,000 delinquent dog licenses in a relatively short period of time. This unanticipated volume of County dog license purchases couldn't have come at a busier tax collection time. The Treasury Department apologizes if your wait time to pay a property tax bill, water bill, or permit fee was excessive.



For dog owners, State law requires all dogs four months and older to be licensed. The primary purpose of the dog license is to ensure that the pet is current with their rabies vaccination. To obtain a dog license, a current rabies vaccination certificate is required. If you have a rabies certificate valid through 2017, you have the option to purchase a three-year dog license for 2015. The 2015 dog licenses will be available for renewal this December. If you plan to renew the license at the City's Treasury Department in December, please contact us at 248 656-4675 to verify we have received the dog licenses from the County.

For information on purchasing a dog license, please contact Oakland County at www.oakgov.com/petadoption or the City of Rochester Hills Treasury Department. The 2015 dog licenses can be purchased for the non-delinquent fee through Monday, June 1, 2015. Please visit the City's website at www.rochesterhills.org for more information.

Sign-Up for Automatic Payment of your Property Tax Bills

Tax amounts will be available beginning November 5, 2014 at www.rochesterhills.org/taxlookup

The Treasury Department is now offering Automatic Bill Payment as an option for paying your property tax bills. The city will automatically deduct the full amount of your summer and winter property tax bills from your specified checking or savings account on designated recurring dates. The winter property tax bill can be specified to be deducted on either the **last business day in December or the due date, normally February 14**. The summer property tax bill will be deducted on the **due date, normally September 14**. An enrollment form for Automatic Payment will be enclosed with your 2013 winter property tax bill to be mailed in mid-November. The enrollment form is also available on the [city website](#). Please submit the completed form to us 14 days prior to the scheduled payment. To enroll in this service for payment of your 2014 winter tax bill on December 31, 2014, please submit the form to us by **December 14**. **Forms cannot be processed without your signature**. Signed forms can be scanned to osieckil@rochesterhills.org, faxed to City Treasury at 248-841-2585 or mailed to City of Rochester Hills Treasury Department, Attn: Linda Osiecki, Deputy Treasurer, 1000 Rochester Hills Dr., Rochester Hills, MI 48309. Note: For those who prefer to initiate an electronic tax payment, we will continue to provide our user-initiated electronic payment system at <https://eps.mvpbanking.com>.

To verify you are being taxed correctly, check the exemption status on your tax bill. If the property is your principal residence, it is normally 100% exempt from school operating taxes. The notation **100%** should appear under **"*HPR/MBT Exemption %"** and **"EXEMPT"** will appear under the amount for school operating. **For those changing their principal residence, the deadline to qualify for a Principal Residence Exemption on both the summer and winter tax bill has now been extended, by law, from May 1 to June 1**. Note: Property must be owner occupied and **Form 2368 must** be submitted to the local tax collecting unit **on or before June 1**. Additionally, another deadline date has been put in place for property that is a principal residence and is owner occupied **between June 2 and no later than November 1**. **Form 2368 must** be submitted to the local tax collecting unit **on or before November 1**. These properties will now qualify, by law, for a Principal Residence Exemption on the winter tax bill for that year. For more information regarding these recent tax law changes or any "exemption" questions, please contact our Assessing Department at 248-656-4605.

The 2014 winter property taxes are payable without penalty through Tuesday, February 17, 2015 – postmarks will not be honored. On February 18, a 3% penalty will be added to the unpaid balance of all 2014 summer and winter taxes. Beginning March 1, delinquent taxes must be paid to the Oakland County Treasurer with additional late fees. If you are paying by mail, please retain the top portion of the tax bill for your records and return the bottom portion with your payment. **If you are paying in person, please bring in both portions of the tax bill if you want a paid receipt**. Please note that due to the availability of property tax information on our city website, and continuing increases in postage cost, the city made a fiscally responsible decision to discontinue mailing informational copies of the property tax bills. **If you wish to continue receiving an informational copy of the property tax bill or would like the information over the phone, please contact the City Treasury Department at 248-656-4675**. For additional information on payment options, Summer Tax Deferment or Homestead Exemption requirements, please visit, www.rochesterhills.org/treasury or call the Treasury Department at 248-656-4675.



Experience the Magic of Meadow Brook Hall

43rd Annual Holiday Walk ~ November 28 - December 23, 2014

The beauty of Meadow Brook Hall is never more apparent than when it is dressed in holiday splendor during the annual Holiday Walk. The Tudor-revival style mansion, known as “America’s Castle,” will be all aglow with historic and holiday treasures.

Meadow Brook Hall is the fourth largest historic house museum in the United States and is renowned for its superb craftsmanship, architectural detailing and grand scale. Built between 1926 and 1929 as the residence of Matilda Dodge Wilson (widow of auto pioneer John Dodge) and her second husband, lumber broker Alfred G. Wilson, the 110-room, 88,000-square-foot, Tudor-revival style mansion is complete with vast collections of original art and furnishings.

To learn more about this festive occasion, please visit the [Meadow Brook Hall](#) page of the Oakland University website.

Rochester Hills Museum - Let us host your family event!

The Rochester Hills Museum at Van Hoosen Farm is the perfect location for your next family event.

- Wedding Ceremonies and Receptions
- Anniversary, Birthday, and Graduation Parties
- Bridal and Baby Showers
- Meetings of organizations, craft and hobby groups, and social groups
- Engagement, Wedding, Senior, Homecoming & Family photographs

Are you planning a wedding reception, anniversary party, graduation party or other family event? The 1927 Calf Barn is ready for you! The Calf Barn has 2,700 square feet of unobstructed space with exposed beams. It will seat up to 160 guests. Rental includes access to the Dairy Barn for viewing of exhibits and use of restrooms, as well as exclusive use of the grounds surrounding the barns. Call the Museum to check availability and fees.

Our garden gazebo located along Stoney Creek, and our 16 acres of beautiful gardens and grounds make the ideal backdrop for your outdoor events and photographs.

Your special event can take place any day of the week. Please contact us at 248.656.4663, www.rochesterhills.org/wedding, or by email at rhmuseum@rochesterhills.org for pricing and availability, or stop by for a visit and check us out!



Veterans Memorial Pointe ~ Veterans Day Ceremony

The annual Veterans Day Ceremony will be held at Veterans Memorial Pointe on Tuesday, November 11 starting at 11:00 a.m. sharp! Guest speakers will be Bryan K. Barnett, Mayor of Rochester Hills, and Post Commanders from our local VFW, DAV and American Legion Posts.

We welcome you to join us as we recognize and honor the men and women who serve and have served in our armed forces.

“On Veterans Day, we honor ALL American veterans, both living and dead. In fact, Veterans Day is largely intended to thank LIVING veterans for dedicated and loyal service to their country. November 11 of each year is the day that we ensure veterans know that we deeply appreciate the sacrifices they have made in the lives to keep our country free.” ~ *US Military*



Eagle Scout Projects at the Pointe

Adam Kiwor of Boy Scout Troop 40 has finished the first phase of his project. “Eagles Landing” is located at the southwest corner of Livernois and Avon Roads. The project allows canoeist and kayakers a place to launch their boat or set in for a rest off the river. There will be a map of the river to let you know the other rest areas, plus there will be a huge carving of eagles carved into tree located next to the boat rack. Donations are still needed to complete this project.



Collin Vasseur of Boy Scout Troop 123 is honoring the Revolutionary War Veterans who lived in the our area and are buried in our local cemeteries with a memorial stone and plaque that includes a bit of history of these patriot soldiers.

James Monagham of Boy Scout Troop 129 is working on a big clean-up project that will improve the drains at the south end of the parking lot at Veterans Memorial Pointe. The drainage ditch will be cleaned out and re-worked by using road fabric in the bottom of the ditch overlaid with washed stone for easy maintenance. James is also planning housing for our bird friends as well.

Ryan Chatterye of Boy Scout Troop 360 is planning to install a sun dial at Veterans Memorial Pointe. It will be located at the south end of the park in the area of the rest rooms. The sun dial will have the Boy Scout Law and the Scout Oath incorporated in its design. This project has a spring 2015 completion date – just in time for someone to plant springtime flowers around the sun dial! The sun dial project will be called “Eagles Watch.”

Special Thanks

Rochester Hills Mayor Bryan Barnett and program coordinator Ed Leafdale would like to express their sincere thanks to the many Eagle Scouts and their friends and families for all of the hard work they have done over the years on projects throughout the city. The planning, financing, and building these projects is the sole responsibility of the Scout, and there is no cost to taxpayers. The projects are one of the final steps necessary for Scouts to earn the highly esteemed rank of Eagle Scout. At the same time, our residents and visitors enjoy these projects, and the City of Rochester Hills is made better because of them. It is truly a situation where everyone benefits, and to all involved, we say, “Thanks for a job well done!”

Memorial & Scout Brick Order Form

Buying a Memorial Brick is a simple way to leave your mark of remembrance. This is your opportunity to become a part of something special in our city. Your help will enable us to maintain this place of honor, and by buying a brick, you or your loved one will become a part of this memorial forever.

In addition to Memorial Bricks, you may purchase a brick to honor an Eagle Scout or Girl Scout Gold Award. These bricks are a lasting tribute to young men and women who have attained the highest rank in Scouting.

The price of each brick is \$55.00. All proceeds will go toward the upkeep of Veterans Memorial Pointe.

If you have not done so, please take a moment to visit this lovely and peaceful memorial park located on the southeast corner of Livernois and Avon.

Please print clearly - one character per box. Include spaces where necessary. There is a limit of 12 characters per line, including spaces. Bricks will be inscribed exactly as shown.

The Memorial Bricks are meant to be a lasting tribute to a friend or loved one. Once the bricks are placed, they cannot be relocated.

Beautification Clock Fundraiser

Veterans Memorial Pointe was created to honor all veterans who have served this great country. Each war and conflict has a memorial to honor the veterans who served. We continue to make this park a beautiful lasting tribute to those brave veterans.



The next improvement will be a large clock at the northwest corner of the park. Funding for this project has already begun, but more is needed to see this project reach completion. The total project will require approximately \$3,500 to \$4,000, of which \$1,200 has been raised.

If you would like to contribute, please send your donation to:

Community Foundation of Greater Rochester
Veterans Memorial Pointe Clock Fund
PO Box 431
Rochester MI 48308

Any donation, large or small, is greatly appreciated as we continue to honor our brave men and women who have served our country.

This project is in collaboration with VFW Member Ed Leafdale and Dr. Jeffrey Buller of Buller Chiropractic Clinic.

Please print clearly or type all information

Purchaser's Name _____

Address: _____ City _____

State _____ Zip _____

Phone: _____

NOTE: Price of \$55 includes 24 characters, including spaces. Additional characters may be added for \$1/ character. Please print the following information. In honor of:

Check box if person spent time in the service. A star will be added to their brick at no extra charge. Please fill out this Brick Order Form and mail with a check made payable to:

Community Foundation of Greater Rochester / VMP
PO Box 431
Rochester, MI 48308-0431 (Please note on check: Veterans Memorial Pointe Fund)

Upon receipt of your check and order form, you will be sent an acknowledgement letter. Bricks are installed in the park twice a year in late October and May.

For information and additional order forms, please call the Community Foundation of Greater Rochester at 248-608-2804 or the Mayor's Office at 248-656-4664.

Congratulations

Rochester Hills



**#1 in
Michigan**

**#9 in
America**

Thank you for allowing us to serve you!

TREE MAINTENANCE REMINDER

The Rochester Hills Forestry Division has an ongoing street tree maintenance program conducted by Parks & Forestry and contracted crews.

Under the program, trees and shrubs that impede the passage of vehicles along streets, or pedestrians on pathways, interfere with safe sight distance requirements, or pose a hazard to the right-of-way will be addressed.

Although some work will occur in various locations throughout the city, the main emphasis of the 2014-2015 program will be in the east side of the city.

The adjacent property owner is responsible for removing encroachments or obstructions when trees or shrubs growing on private property interfere with the use of streets or pathways, as required by ordinance specifications. Property owners may be notified regarding what action is required of them. No notification will be given for trees and shrubs growing on city right-of-way.

If you have questions about the program or its requirements, please contact the Forestry Division at 248-656-4673.



CHRISTMAS TREE RECYCLING

The City of Rochester Hills will once again allow its residents to dispose of natural Christmas trees by dropping them off at the Clinton River Watershed Council at 1115 W. Avon Road, just west of Livernois, on the following dates and times **ONLY**:

Saturday, December 27, 2014	10 a.m. – 4 p.m.
Sunday, December 28, 2014	12 noon – 4 p.m.
Saturday, January 3, 2015	10 a.m. – 4 p.m.
Sunday, January 4, 2015	12 noon – 4 p.m.
Saturday, January 10, 2015	10 a.m. – 4 p.m.
Sunday, January 11, 2015	12 noon – 4 p.m.



Christmas trees will be accepted subject to **ALL** of the following conditions:

- Residents of Rochester Hills may drop off trees during the announced days and hours only.
- Trees shall be dropped off at the designated area only. Any other disposal, at or near the designated site, will constitute improper disposal and violators will be subject to ticketing.
- Only natural Christmas trees will be accepted. No mass or commercial disposal is permitted. No disposal of any other materials, natural or artificial, is permitted.
- All non-woody material, such as lights and wires, ornaments, rope, garland, stands and braces, bagging, etc., must be removed **before** drop off.
- Volunteers will inspect trees for compliance with this order before accepting them for disposal. Trees or other matter that do not meet the restrictions will not be accepted.

Under contract with the City of Rochester Hills, Republic Waste Services will collect discarded Christmas trees devoid of any ropes, lights, metal, plastic or other hangers during Christmas week and the following three weeks. Trees measuring greater than six feet tall must be cut in half prior to placement at curbside. Republic will deliver the trees they collect to a compost site rather than a landfill or disposal facility.



Rochester Hills City Council

Michael Webber ~ At-Large



I always look forward to the fall and winter seasons because of the many events that make our community great. The pumpkin carving at the Rochester Hills Museum is always a great experience as we get closer to Halloween. My wife Julia, son James and I enjoyed participating in the Brooksie Way again this year. As we get closer to the holiday season, our community will enjoy the Rochester Area Christmas Parade and all of the events surrounding the holiday.

This past summer brought many events to our community that I was honored to participate in - including Heritage Days, Rochester Memorial Day Parade, Relay for Life, Festival of the Hills, and the Art and Apples Festival.

As I have done in the past in the *Hills Herald*, I would like to provide you with a legislative update of what is going on within our city government. It has been an honor to represent you on the City Council over the past almost seven years and I continue to work toward solutions for our community.

Our city recently adopted the Fiscal Year 2015 budget as part of our three-year budget process. Because of the decisions that have been made in the past six years – a 20% reduction in city staffing, reductions in health care costs, contracting out some services – the city has been able to invest money back into our local neighborhood roads. This year was the first of three years that the council will budget at least \$5 million for local neighborhood road repairs.

In addition, the budget continues to maintain our low millage rate while providing the services that residents expect. The budget includes money for one additional police officer contracted through the Sheriff's office. We have budgeted to update our Fire Stations next year. The city continues to look at ways to improve our parks and open space natural features that our families enjoy.

Summer was once again a busy road construction season in our community. A lot of the programs will be ongoing until late November. The projects are needed to maintain our infrastructure. I am happy to report that Tienken Road – one of our county roads most in need of repair – is seeing improvements this year that will continue into 2015. The repairs will extend ultimately from Adams Road to Rochester Road.

Over the past year, there has been a lot of discussion regarding Oil and Gas drilling in the Greater Rochester area. This discussion has also been happening in other high density population communities across the state. It has gained the attention of Governor Snyder and the State Legislature, who have introduced legislation that could be a game changer on this issue. Due to this pending legislation, I joined my colleagues in supporting a Six-Month Moratorium on the placement of any oil/gas drilling within our city.

Our City Charter and DEQ regulations — that require a drilling rig to be placed over 450 feet from a residential structure – present few locations within our city to drill. Senate Bill 1026 was introduced by State Senator Jack Brandenburg because of similar concerns in Shelby Township. The Six-Month Moratorium passed by Rochester Hills supports this bill and Senator Brandenburg's efforts to pass it. The bill would not allow placement of a drilling well within a city or township with a population of 70,000 or more. Our resolution also calls for city ordinances that will first have a public hearing at the Planning Commission before they reach City Council.

I urge everyone to vote in the upcoming election on November 4. In addition to races for federal, state, county and judicial seats, the city also has a ballot proposal regarding funding for our Fire Department. I encourage everyone to learn about the proposal before Election Day.

As always, I remain committed to representing you to the best of my ability. I welcome your phone calls and e-mails. I wish you and your family the very best this fall and winter.

Stephanie Morita ~ District One



It must be fall because [Yates Cider Mill](#) is open. Their Cinnamon-Sugar Donuts are my favorite diet busting “I don’t even want to know how many calories” treat. But before I get there, I still need to contend with the damage done by our resident Rochester Hills Innovative by Nature Woodchuck. We have named him Wilbur – and that’s him sitting about fifteen feet up in a Cherry tree taking a break from stripping off leaves and eating them.



Wilbur (and not the deer) has been responsible for eating the parsley and tomatoes right out of the planters on our deck.

And while I would like to blame Wilbur for our dying Maple tree, that’s not his fault. Luckily, our City has a [Cooperative Tree Planting Program](#) for street trees. The deadline for ordering a tree for spring planting will be the first Friday in March. For more specifics see including the order form, [click here](#), and the street tree list [click here](#). Trees are priced at 50% of the estimated cost to the City. In 2014, it cost \$120 to have an 8 to 10 foot tall tree planted.

Soon enough we will have snow, and that means sledding. The Bloomer Park sledding hill is “awesome” according to our 9 year old – and shouldn’t be missed. It consists of four tall and fast groomed sledding runs of pure childhood joy. If you get the chance this winter, make a memory your family will never forget. A flyer with a map and other info is available by [clicking here](#).

Lastly, and most importantly, we have a City Charter amendment proposal on this November’s Ballot which will allow the City to levy a larger millage to support our Fire Department. Our City has grown and changed over the last 30 years – and the funding for our Fire Department has not kept up the same pace.

As a resident, wife, mother, neighbor, and Council Member, I want us all to be safe in our homes and have the help we need if we need it. While next year’s budget provides for an additional Sheriff’s Deputy and long overdue capital improvements to our City’s fire stations, these improvements do not go far enough. The ballot measure this November will go a long way toward solving staffing and capital fund issues with our Fire Department.

If you are the member of a Homeowners Association or other group, who would like to have someone from Council come speak to you about the Charter Amendment and its significance – please feel free to contact me by email at moritas@rocheshterhills.org or by telephone at 248-841-2643.

As always, it is my honor and pleasure to serve you. Thanks for placing your faith in me.

City Council Contact Information

**Greg Hooper – President
District 3**

Voicemail – 248-841-2645
Email – hooperg@rochesterhills.org

**Michael Webber – Vice President
At-Large**

Voicemail – 248-841-2649
Email – webberm@rochesterhills.org

Stephanie Morita – District 1

Voicemail - 248-841-2643
Email – moritas@rochesterhills.org

Adam Kochenderfer – District 2

Voicemail - 248-841-2647
Email – kochenderfera@rochesterhills.org

Thomas Wiggins – District 4

Voicemail – 248-841-2648
Email – wigginst@rochesterhills.org

Kevin Brown – At Large

Voicemail – 248-841-2646
Email – brownk@rochesterhills.org

Mark Tisdell – At Large

Voicemail – 248-841-2644
Email – tisdelm@rochesterhills.org



Mark Tisdel ~ At-Large

Twice a month, the Rochester Hills City Council meets to determine the fate of pending issues with a black and white—“Yes” or “No”—binary vote. Information is presented, both for and against, each agenda item. Council Members deliberate, and using their best judgment and knowledge on each issue, vote “Yes” or “No.” In a world of gray realities, legislative bodies reconcile contradictory viewpoints using a blunt all-or-nothing process. How do we, any of us, actually know what we think we know about any subject and form our vote?

The nature of knowledge, and how it is acquired, is its own field of study: epistemology. Knowledge can be based on perceptions or empirical data but all knowledge also requires some amount of reasoning. A legislative body has staff members that specialize in specific areas of government service: finance and accounting, parks and forestry, infrastructure, and public safety. And those of us that cast a “Yes” or “No” vote on complicated issue also have access

to highly-trained technical advisers: attorneys, engineers, and consultants. Legislators are also contacted, directly, by individuals and organizations both for and against the gray issue(s) at hand.

None of these “sources of knowledge” are perfect or without biases. Further, the means of transferring knowledge from imperfect sources to imperfect decision-makers is itself imperfect. Similarly, the individuals and organizations advocating for or against specific issues may themselves have limited access to specialists and technical advisers, elevating perceptions over analysis.

For advocates seeking a desired outcome through the binary yes/no process it is common to label those who disagree as ignorant or corrupt. Calling out dissenters this way can be both reassuring and comforting. If your opponent can’t see the “right” answer that you see, then he must be ignorant, e.g., unaware or uninformed of the “facts.” If those opposed to your desired outcome demonstrate an understanding of the “facts”, yet are still against you, then it is easy to conclude they must be corrupt. How else can such a disparate interpretation of the facts be explained?

Elected officials may very well recognize the nuances of an issue, yet they must still cast a black and white vote and they *must* implement their decision-making process publicly. Not only is this a requirement of law—the Open Meetings Act, for example—but “public” policy committing “public” monies created in “private” deliberations is inherently wrong.

Voters will participate in a binary process this November within the secure confines of the voting booth; deciding for or against specific candidates and proposals on the ballot. Every candidate and ballot initiative will have good and not-so-good characteristics. Still, voters will make a black and white, “Yes” or “No” choice.

It’s a healthy exercise to acknowledge the blunt and imperfect binary instrument used to enact public policy, and it can be humbling to admit your acquisition of knowledge and interpretation of the “facts” is, and always will be, limited. Advocates of any “solution” may claim possession of the sole “facts” needed to persuade or undermine those with a different opinion. While that passion is to be applauded, we know that one position can’t encompass all the gray areas of an issue. The result: binary votes in a *gray* world is still the best of all the worse alternatives.

The [Rochester Hills City Council](#) consists of seven members: four district and three at-large members. They are elected to four-year terms, and due to term limiting, can serve no more than two terms for a maximum of eight years.

The Council meets on Monday evening at 7:00 in the City Hall Auditorium per their approved [meeting schedule](#). To view videos of City Council meetings anytime, access the video library for streaming web

Mark Your Calendar

City Offices will be closed on the following days:

<i>Thanksgiving</i>	<i>November 27 & 28</i>
<i>Christmas</i>	<i>December 24, 25 & 26</i>
<i>New Years Eve</i>	<i>December 31</i>
<i>New Years Day</i>	<i>January 1 & 2</i>
<i>MLK Day</i>	<i>January 19</i>
<i>President’s Day</i>	<i>February 16</i>
<i>Good Friday</i>	<i>April 3</i>

Attention Rochester Hills Voters

The Rochester Hills Public Safety and Infrastructure Committee, with City Council's support, is asking voters for the authority to amend the City Charter to authorize the City to levy up to 3 mills for funding of the Fire Department.

About the Fire & EMS Millage

Q: Why do we need a millage increase?

A: With the growth of Rochester Hills and the number of fire and EMS calls on the rise, response times are slowing down. And when a building is on fire or a resident needs immediate medical attention, every single second counts.

Q: What will the millage increase pay for?

A: Every cent of the millage will be spent on more Firefighters and EMS workers offering 24/7/365 service at every fire station, which will improve response times when an emergency occurs.

Q: How much will it cost?

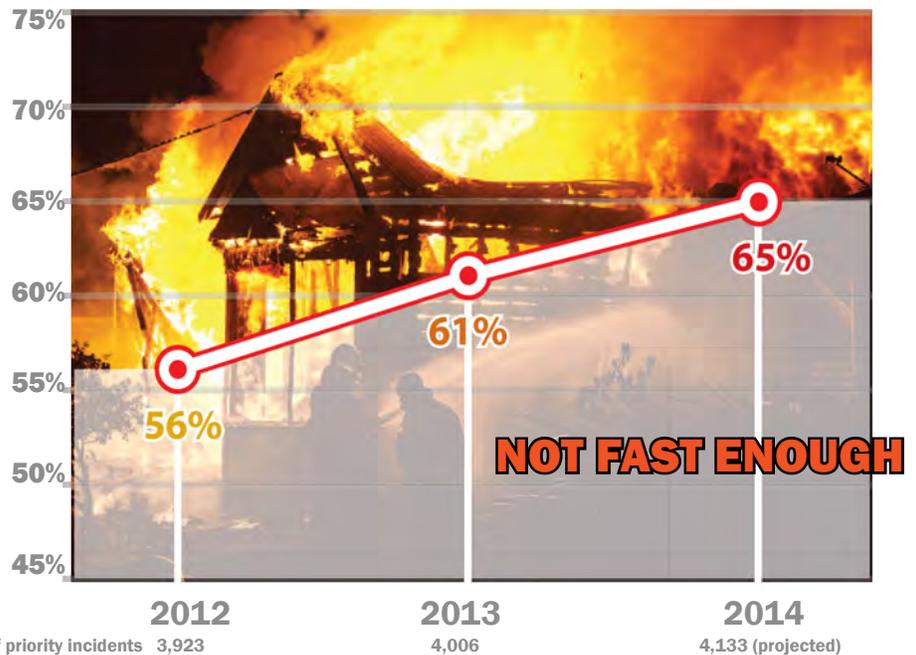
A: For a family in a \$200,000 home, the increase would cost \$1.43 per week, less than 1 cup of coffee.

Market Value Home	Current 2014 Fire Department Millage rate of 1.9564	Proposed 2015 .7436 mill increase to the Fire Dept. Millage per council resolution	Proposed future 1.0436 mill increase to the Fire Dept. Millage on the ballot
\$100,000	\$97.82	\$37.18	\$52.18
\$200,000	\$195.64	\$74.36	\$104.36
\$300,000	\$293.46	\$111.54	\$156.90
\$400,000	\$391.28	\$148.72	\$208.72

To learn more about the proposal visit www.rochesterhills.org/firemillage.

With public safety, every second counts!

This year
65%
of the Fire/EMS Department's priority incidents exceed the national response time standard of 5 minutes or less.



PROPOSED CITY CHARTER AMENDMENT TO AUTHORIZE ADDITIONAL MILLAGE FOR FUNDING THE FIRE DEPARTMENT

A proposal to amend the City Charter by modifying Section 4.2, subsection .4. This subsection authorizes the City to levy up to 2.5 mills for funding of the Fire Department. If adopted, the charter amendment will increase the amount the City may levy for funding of the Fire Department to 3 mills.

Shall the City of Rochester Hills Charter be amended to modify Section 4.2 to authorize the City to levy up to 3 mills for funding of the Fire Department?

YES
NO

What is the cost of this proposal for a homeowner in Rochester Hills?

For a family in a \$200,000 home, the proposed 2015 millage increase would **cost less than 1 cup of coffee, \$1.43 per week.**



CITY OF ROCHESTER HILLS
CITY GENERAL ELECTION
TUESDAY, NOVEMBER 4, 2014

To the Qualified Electors of the City of Rochester Hills:

NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN That a City General Election will be held in the City of Rochester Hills, County of Oakland, State of Michigan on

TUESDAY, NOVEMBER 4, 2014
THE POLLS will be open 7 o'clock a.m. until 8 o'clock p.m.
AT THE POLLING PLACES LISTED BELOW:

Precinct # 1	Faith Church, 160 W. Hamlin Rd.
Precinct # 2	Bellbrook, 873 W. Avon Rd.
Precinct # 3	Meadows Upper Elementary School, 1435 W. Auburn Rd.
Precinct # 4	North Hill Elementary School, 1385 Mahaffy
Precinct # 5	Reuther Middle School, 1430 E. Auburn Rd.
Precinct # 6	Avon Clubhouse, 2600 W. Auburn Rd.
Precinct # 7	West Middle School, 500 Old Perch
Precinct # 8	VanHoosen Middle School, 1339 N. Adams Rd.
Precinct # 9	Rochester High School, 180 S. Livernois
Precinct #10	Brewster Elementary School, 1535 Brewster Rd.
Precinct #11	Reuther Middle School, 1430 E. Auburn Rd.
Precinct #12	Hamlin Elementary School, 270 W. Hamlin Rd.
Precinct #13	Deerfield Elementary School, 3600 Crooks Rd.
Precinct #14	West Middle School, 500 Old Perch
Precinct #15	St. Mary's of the Hills, 2675 John R
Precinct #16	Brooklands Elementary School, 490 E. Auburn Rd.
Precinct #17	Meadow Brook Elementary School, 2350 Munster
Precinct #18	Rochester Adams High School, 3200 W. Tienken Rd.
Precinct #19	Long Meadow Elementary School, 450 Allston
Precinct #20	Brooklands Elementary School, 490 E. Auburn Rd.
Precinct #21	Hart Middle School, 6500 Sheldon Rd.
Precinct #22	St Luke's Church, 3980 Walton Blvd.
Precinct #23	Danish Village, 2566 Walton Blvd.
Precinct #24	Rochester Hills Offices, 1000 Rochester Hills Dr.
Precinct #25	Rochester Adams High School, 3200 W. Tienken Rd.
Precinct #26	VanHoosen Middle School, 1339 N. Adams
Precinct #27	St. Mary's of the Hills, 2675 John R
Precinct #28	Hampton Elementary School, 530 Hampton Circle
Precinct #29	Rochester Adams High School, 3200 W. Tienken Rd.
Precinct #30	St. Mary's of the Hills, 2675 John R
Precinct #31	Reuther Middle School, 1430 E. Auburn Rd.
Precinct #32	Hart Middle School, 6500 Sheldon Rd.

**ALL POLLING PLACES ARE HANDICAP ACCESSIBLE
BRAILLE AND AUDIO VERSIONS OF VOTING INSTRUCTIONS ARE AVAILABLE**

FOR THE PURPOSE OF ELECTING CANDIDATES FOR THE FOLLOWING OFFICES:

STATE	Governor/Lt. Governor, Secretary of State, Attorney General
CONGRESSIONAL	U.S. Senator, Representative in Congress
LEGISLATIVE	State Senator, Representative in State Legislature
STATE BOARDS	Member of the State Board of Education, Regent of the University of Michigan, Trustee of Michigan State University, Governor of Wayne State University
COUNTY	County Commissioner
JUDICIAL	Justice of Supreme Court, Judge of Court of Appeals, Judge of Circuit Court, Judge of Probate Court, Judge of District Court
COMMUNITY COLLEGE	Oakland Community College Board of Trustees
LOCAL SCHOOL DISTRICT	Avondale School District Board Member, Rochester Community School District Board Member

AND FOR THE PURPOSE OF VOTING ON THE FOLLOWING PROPOSALS:

STATE	PROPOSAL 14-1 - A REFERENDUM OF PUBLIC ACT 520 OF 2012, ESTABLISHING AN OPEN SEASON FOR WOLVES AND AUTHORIZING ANNUAL WOLF HUNTING SEASONS PROPOSAL 14-2 - A REFERENDUM OF PUBLIC ACT 21 OF 2013, GRANTING THE NATURAL RESOURCES COMMISSION THE POWER TO DESIGNATE WOLVES AND OTHER ANIMALS AS GAME WITHOUT LEGISLATIVE ACTION
CITY	PROPOSED CITY CHARTER AMENDMENT TO AUTHORIZE ADDITIONAL MILLAGE FOR FUNDING THE FIRE DEPARTMENT

REGISTERED VOTERS LIVING IN AVONDALE SCHOOL DISTRICT WILL ALSO VOTE ON THE FOLLOWING PROPOSAL:

LOCAL SCHOOL DISTRICT BOND PROPOSAL

Absentee ballots are available at the City Clerk's Office, 1000 Rochester Hills Drive, Rochester Hills, Michigan 48309. The Clerk's Office is open Monday through Friday from 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m.

IN ADDITION, THE CLERK'S OFFICE WILL BE OPEN ON SATURDAY, November 1, 2014 FROM 8:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m. The last day to obtain absentee ballots by mail is Saturday, November 1, 2014 at 2:00 p.m.

Questions concerning the General Election should be directed to the Clerk's Office at 248-656-4630.

**Tina Barton, City Clerk
City of Rochester Hills
248-656-4630
1000 Rochester Hills Drive
Rochester Hills, Michigan 48309**

The City of Rochester Hills
1000 Rochester Hills Drive
Rochester Hills, MI 48309

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The Village of Rochester Hills Tree Lighting Ceremony 2014

Join us at the Village of Rochester Hills on Friday, November 21, for the Annual Holiday Tree Lighting Ceremony. Gather around the stage in Fountain Park at 7:00 p.m. to help us celebrate the simple joys of the holidays. Mayor Bryan Barnett will lead the countdown for Santa's arrival and children's eyes will sparkle as they flip the magical switch to illuminate the Village's 25-foot Christmas tree and a breathtaking display of lights! Cap the evening's festivities with a visit to Santa's Snug in Festival Park for a free photo. It's the perfect way to kick off the season, and it's only at the Village of Rochester Hills!

Visits with Santa Claus are always free and are available on weekends until December 24. Please remember to bring your camera as photography is not provided. For additional information, please visit the Village of Rochester Hills website at www.thevorh.com.