

The City of Rochester Hills

Hills Herald

News & Information

Winter 2010



Bryan K. Barnett, Mayor

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United States[®] Census 2010

Have You Been Counted?

Did you know in Los Angeles, there are fewer people than there are automobiles? China has more English-speaking people than the United States? The first official census was taken in 1790, and the first census form was not created until 1810? ***Most importantly, did you know that more than 60% of our local and major road funding is based on our city's population count?***

You are probably wondering how I know these facts to be true, or at the very least why they even matter. These facts are the result of millions of people across the United States who completed their census forms. It is true that the methods of counting have improved drastically since 1790, but each decade it gets more difficult to get an accurate count of population in the United States.

This March, every household in Rochester Hills will receive the **2010 Census**, which counts all residents living in the U.S. In a time where every dollar makes a difference, and while we are tightening the purse strings locally, participating in the **2010 Census** is perhaps the easiest way you can contribute to our community in this financial time

“The 2010 Census affects the amount of federal dollars that Rochester Hills receives for our local roads, OPC and our schools.”

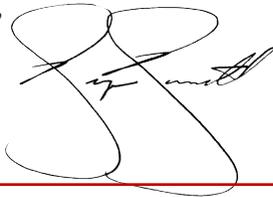
of need. The data that is collected in the **2010 Census** will pave the way for our city for the next decade.

The last time a Census poll was taken in 2000, Rochester Hills did not report very well. We were ranked in the bottom five of all cities in Oakland County, and this time we must do better. Many residents are unclear how the Census affects a community and how it makes a difference to Rochester Hills. Very simply, the 2010 Census affects the amount of federal dollars that Rochester Hills could be eligible to receive. In order for our city to continue to flourish, we need to receive the adequate federal funds to support the growth we have experienced over the past decade, and the programs that improve OUR quality of life. ***Census counts are used to determine how much money we will receive for local road projects, senior centers like the Older Persons Commission (OPC), and school lunch programs. Census counts also affect the college tuition grant and loan programs, just to name a few.***

Additionally, Census data gives Rochester Hills a voice in Congress by determining how many seats Michigan will have in the U.S. House of Representatives. That means more local people fighting for what our community needs in Washington.

10 minutes, 10 questions. Look for your Census form to arrive in your mailbox in March. The 2010 Census Day is April 1, 2010. I encourage you to be counted and support those programs that are vital to Rochester Hills and our resident's well-being.

God Bless,



10 QUESTIONS
MINUTES

TO DEFINE WHO WE ARE AS A NATION

United States[®]
Census
2010

The Census: A Snapshot

- ▶ **What:** The census is a count of everyone residing in the United States.
- ▶ **Who:** All Rochester Hills residents must be counted - both citizens and non citizens.
- ▶ **When:** You will receive your questionnaire in March 2010 either by U.S. mail or hand delivery.
- ▶ **Why:** Rochester Hills population determines up to 60% of the federal funding we receive for road projects. In addition to continued community services like school lunch programs, senior centers, college tuition grant and loan programs, just to name a few.
- ▶ **How:** Households should complete and mail back their questionnaires upon receipt. Households that do not respond may receive a replacement questionnaire in early April. Census takers will visit households that do not return questionnaires to take a count in person.

**State of the City
Address
March 10, 2010
7:00 PM
Rochester College
Theatre
Please join us**

Rochester Hills Is Proud to Receive AA+ Bond Rating



Keith Sawdon
Finance Director

Strong financial position and good management practices cited

On January 13, 2010, Standard & Poor's Ratings Services assigned its 'AA+' rating and stable outlook to Rochester Hills' 2010 general obligation (GO) refunding bonds and reaffirmed its 'AA+' rating on Rochester Hills' outstanding bonds. The rating is the second highest possible credit rating a municipality can receive.

A credit rating is an indicator of a municipality's creditworthiness used by investors and takes into consideration the municipality's fiscal management, among other factors. A rating of "AA+" allows the city to issue bonds at low interest rates since the strong credit rating draws a large number of investors willing to buy the Bonds. **Of the approximately 220 Michigan municipal entities rated by Standard & Poor's, only 37, or 17% carry ratings at or above the rating level assigned the City of Rochester Hills.**

Their rating reflects their assessment of the city's:

- Very strong financial operations with high level of reserves,
- Low-to-moderate debt burden,
- Participation in the Detroit-Oakland County economy, and
- Very strong wealth and income levels.

S&P stated that: Rochester Hills' overall financial picture has remained strong, in our view. Rochester Hills' management practices are considered "good" under Standard & Poor's Financial Management Assessment. This assessment indicates that most fiscal practices are formalized and regularly monitored by its managing officials.

Keith Sawdon, City Finance Director said, "We are very pleased with the rating that S&P has given us. A rating this strong, in an economy as weak as Michigan's, confirms that the fiscal direction the city is headed in is sound, and it also speaks highly of the leadership presented by the Mayor and the City Council. The city should be commended for their fiscal responsibility."



City Saves \$500,000 Refinancing OPC Building Bonds

In our ongoing effort to save taxpayer dollars, the City's Fiscal Office reviews outstanding bonds to determine if those bonds are good candidates for refinancing.



A recent review indicated that the bonds sold in 2001 to finance the City of Rochester Hills portion of the construction of the Older Person Commission (OPC) Building, had the potential to meet and exceed the standards established in the city adopted Debt Management Policy and provide a net savings to the city and its taxpayers.

Based on the initial analysis done by the City's Fiscal Office, City Council authorized the refinancing of the OPC Building Bonds. The refinancing bonds were priced and sold on January 14, 2010 resulting in a net present value saving to the City of over \$500,000. That savings will mean that future millage rates, levied by the city to retire that debt, will be lower for City of Rochester Hills taxpayers.

A Message from Sheriff... *Michael Bouchard*

Sheriff Bouchard Encourages Safe Driving In the Snow

Sheriff Bouchard wants to remind drivers that winter driving can be safe with planning and extra caution. If you find yourself driving in the snow, *stay alert, slow down and stay in control*. These are the three key elements to safe driving in the snow.

Here are a few other tips for driving in the snow:

- If you think you may be heading into snow or there is a possibility of driving in the snow, make sure you do a maintenance check on your vehicle before making the trip. Check the vehicle battery, belts and hoses, anti-freeze, oil, lights, brakes, heater and defroster and check the exhaust system for leaks which may allow carbon monoxide to enter the vehicle.
- Plan your route ahead of time and give yourself extra travel time. Make sure someone knows your travel plans.
- Wear comfortable clothing that does not restrict your movement while at the wheel. Keep warm clothing available for when you exit the vehicle.
- Always clear any snow and ice from all windows, lights, mirrors and the roof before driving. After starting the vehicle wait for the interior windows to clear of fog so you will have appropriate visibility.
- Make sure there is sufficient windshield washer fluid in the vehicle reservoir and that it is rated for freezing temperatures.
- It takes longer to stop on slippery surfaces, so add additional time to the three-second rule.
- Know the proper handling procedures for a skidding vehicle.
- Slow down in snow and icy conditions, make turns slowly, and make all starts slow and smooth.
- Remember that bridges and overpasses may freeze before the regular travel lanes of a roadway.
- Watch out for black ice, areas of the roadway that appear black and shiny and where your vehicle can suddenly lose traction. Slow down in these areas and keep your foot off the brakes.
- If you get stuck or stranded, don't panic. Stay with your vehicle for safety and warmth. Wait for help to arrive. If you have a cell phone and are in an area with cell phone service, try calling for help. Try to always know your exact locations while driving.
- Keep your clothing dry. Wet clothing can lead to dangerous loss of body heat.



Winter Driving Survival Kit:

It's a good idea to keep a winter survival kit in your vehicle if you might be traveling into an area where you could encounter snow. Having essential supplies can provide some comfort and safety for you and your passengers. The following items are recommended for your winter driving survival kit:

- Ice scraper/snowbrush
- Shovel
- Sand or other type of traction aid
- Tow rope or chain
- Booster cables
- Road flares or warning lights
- Gas line antifreeze
- Flashlight and batteries
- First aid kit
- Fire extinguisher
- Small tool kit
- Extra clothing and foot wear
- Non-perishable energy foods, like chocolate or granola bars, juice, instant coffee, tea, soup, and bottled water
- Candles and a small tin can to hold the candle
- Waterproof matches



WINTER MAINTENANCE PREPARATION-SNOW PLOWING

Weeks before any snow hits the ground, the City of Rochester Hills Fleet division is busy preparing the city's equipment for the monumental task of clearing snow and ice from over 250 miles of major and local roads. All this plowing/salting and ice control will occur in less than 48 hours after the snow stops falling. Once the job is complete, it will have included nearly 1000 lane miles of vehicle travel. After that, the 84 miles of pathways will be cleared. This work requires a large amount of equipment and preparation of the city's fleet of more than 40 light, medium and heavy trucks.

The Fleet division starts an exhaustive equipment preparation program in early fall. Vehicles are brought into a newly designed and technologically updated facility that was completed in 2007. Expertly trained mechanics and supervisors make a thorough inspection of all vehicle operating systems, from the blades that scrape the road on the bottom to the warning lights at the bottom. Any worn out components are replaced, electrical systems are tested, hydraulic hoses inspected, air brakes disassembled and inspected, salt spreaders mounted and calibrated.

All this activity is intended to eliminate equipment downtime and overtime expenses. The performance history is impressive as deficiencies are detected and corrected before a service failure occurs. Truck drivers operate in an atmosphere of safety and reliability.

It requires a team of dedicated mechanics, drivers and supervisors to complete the winter maintenance program, and it could not be completed without the collaboration of the Rochester Hills City Council. A City Council that understands and supports the need to have a well maintained fleet for the benefit of the motoring public.



Above: A city mechanic preparing snow removal equipment for winter.

Below: A snow plow clearing a subdivision street to insure clear and safe passage for Rochester Hills residents.



TREE MAINTENANCE

The Rochester Hills Forestry Division began its annual street tree maintenance program in November and will continue until all work is completed. Operations will be 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, or that interfere with safe sight distance requirements will be addressed.

Although some work will occur in various locations throughout the city, the main emphasis of the 2009-2010 program will be in the southwest portion of the city (Sections 19, 20, and 28-33).

If trees and shrubs growing on private property interfere with streets or pathways, residents will 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 any questions about the program or its requirements, please contact the Forestry Division at 248-656-4673.

Forestry crew members performing tree maintenance in Rochester Hills



ARBOR DAY 2010

The City of Rochester Hills will observe its 20th anniversary as a Tree City USA on Arbor Day 2010. Please join us for a special celebration of this accomplishment on April 30 at 4:00 pm - location to be determined. See the Spring issue of the Hills Herald, check the city web page, or call Parks & Forestry at 248-656-4673 for updated details.

The annual celebration of Arbor Day provides an opportunity for individuals and communities nationwide to recognize that viable, healthy community trees serve many positive purposes. Trees purify air, produce oxygen, conserve soil and water by reducing storm water run off, reduce heating and cooling costs for our buildings, moderate air temperature, and provide food and shelter to wildlife.



Mayor Barnett is joined by a troop of enthusiastic Cub Scouts as they celebrate Arbor Day by planting a tree in the City of Rochester Hills.

The Right Street Trees Made Easier

Planting the right trees in the right locations along city streets provides environmental benefits and improves the “livability” of our city. To encourage this, the city has established a “**Cooperative Tree Planting Program.**”

Citizens or businesses may have a tree planted on the public right-of-way adjacent to their property for **50%** of the estimated cost to the city. The city’s contribution will come from the city’s Tree Fund. The trees will be planted, maintained, and guaranteed for one year by the city’s landscape contractor. The Forestry Division works with the purchaser to determine the specific location within the city’s street tree ordinance guidelines.

Street trees are planted every spring and fall (spring planting occurs in late April/early May, fall planting in November). Quantities are limited, so interested property owners should order early. March 8, 2010, is the deadline for ordering trees for Spring 2010.

All trees are 2-inch caliper (stem diameter) and approximately 8-10 feet tall. The following tree species are normally available (not all varieties are suitable for all locations): Maple, Hornbeam, Hackberry, Beech, Honeylocust, Coffeetree, Sweetgum, Tuliptree, Blackgum, Oak, Baldcypress, Linden, Elm. (Note: Due to over-planting, red maples and flowering pears are no longer offered.) Other varieties are sometimes available – please call for info, or visit our website at:

http://www.rochesterhills.org/city_services/forestry/tree_planting/street_treelist.asp
(Photos and descriptions of many of the trees are included on this web page.)

The trees will be priced at \$135.00 each. Checks should be made payable to “City of Rochester Hills” and mailed to the Parks & Forestry Department with the order form.

Please call the Parks & Forestry Office at 248-656-4673 for additional information.

City of Rochester Hills Cooperative Tree Planting Program – Spring 2010

Name: _____

Address: _____

Phone: _____
(day): _____ (eve.): _____

Preferred Species (please indicate first and second choices):

Price: \$135.00 each. Please enclose check/money order. Do not send cash.

Make checks payable to: **City of Rochester Hills**

Orders must be **received** on or before March 8, 2010.

City of Rochester Hills, Forestry Division
1000 Rochester Hills Drive
Rochester Hills, MI 48309-3033



City of Rochester Hills Summer Seasonal Help Wanted!



The City of Rochester Hills is accepting applications for various Summer Seasonal Positions (Spring through Fall). If applying for a position in parks, you must be able to work a flexible shift, 40 hours a week. Our parks, Borden, Bloomer and Spencer, are open seven days a week, evenings and holidays.

To be considered for a position that requires driving, applicant must have a current Michigan driver's license with no more than 4 points on record.

Positions, locations and requirements are:

PARK ATTENDANT- Parks: Working concession stand, permit booth, boat rental, batting cages, maintenance of parks, public relations rule enforcement, driving, etc. Minimum age 18 or High School Graduate.

LIFEGUARD – Spencer Park: Beachfront lifeguarding, park maintenance, public relations rule enforcement, back-up for concession stands, etc. Minimum age 16. Red Cross Certification or equivalent is to be submitted with application.

SEASONAL LABORER – Parks or DPS: Lawn mowing/trimming, painting, shovel work, building maintenance, tree maintenance, driving, etc. Minimum age 18.

SEASONAL ENGINEERING ASSISTANT (Pending Approval) – City Hall: Second year engineering college student, Civil Engineer, GIS or Land Surveying preferred, driving. Minimum age 18. Copy of current transcript is to be submitted with application.

The **Seasonal Application and Information** can be downloaded from our website (www.rochesterhills.org) or obtained from our Human Resources Department. Completed applications can be dropped off, mailed, or faxed to:

Human Resources Department
City of Rochester Hills
1000 Rochester Hills Drive
Rochester Hills MI 48309-3033
Fax (248) 656-4739.

Human Resources Hours: Monday – Friday 8:00 am – 5:00 pm

EOE

It is the policy of the City of Rochester Hills to hire qualified individuals with limiting conditions in accordance with all applicable state and federal laws. Applicants having a limiting disability requiring some special accommodation to participate in the exam process, as described above, must notify the Human Resources Dept. of that fact at the time of application, or at least one week prior to test date.

The City of Rochester Hills

Environmental Education Center

February

Thursday, February 18

12:00pm-4:00pm **Open House**
1:00pm-2:00pm **Critter Camouflage**

Walking in the woods, fields, and in your own backyard, do you see many animals? You probably miss a lot more than you know because they are masters of camouflage! As a necessity for survival, most animals have some special means of camouflage. Learn about color, shapes, textures and markings that help animals survive. Participate in games inside and out to test your powers of observation. How good are your eyes? Come for a visit and find out! Ages 6 and up.

Friday, February 19

12:00pm-4:00pm **Open House**
1:00pm-2:00pm **Open Wide**

The type of teeth an animal has determines what it eats. Join us to explore the teeth of carnivores, omnivores and herbivores. We will do a skull study, notice differences, similarities and relate sizes and tooth types. We will also play a game and watch how some of the animals here at the environmental center eat their food. For ages 6 and up.

March

Tuesday, March 9

1:00pm-2:30pm **Maple Sugaring**

Syrup from a maple tree? How can that be? How was such a wonderful treat discovered and what do you have to do to get the sap to turn into syrup? Go back in time with us to explore how maple sugaring began and how it has progressed up to now. We will also learn how big a tree has to be before it can be tapped, which trees will give you sap and play a maple sugar game. If the weather is right, we may even have sap boiling on our stove outside. For ages 6 and up.



*Park Ranger
Lance DeVoe
tapping a tree
to get ready
for maple
syrup season*

Saturday, March 20

9:00am-12:00pm **Sap-To-Syrup Pancake Breakfast**
\$5.00 per ticket

Visit the EEC to see an old fashioned sap-to-syrup boiling operation. We will be making syrup from trees tapped right here in Rochester Hills. Sample some real maple syrup and enjoy a pancake breakfast complete with sausage, juice and coffee. Tickets must be purchased in advance and are available at the City of Rochester Hills Parks Dept. (8:00am-5:00pm) or by credit card by calling the EEC at 248-656-4775. Tickets are split into two sessions, 9:00am-10:30am or 10:30am-12:00pm. When purchasing tickets please specify which session you would like. Tickets are limited so purchase yours A-SAP.

April

Thursday, April 1

1:00pm-3:00pm **Antler Amble**

Each winter white-tailed deer shed their antlers only to grow new ones beginning in the spring. Learn about this amazing cycle and then search the 100 acres behind the EEC for dropped antlers. Dress for walking in the woods. You can take home any antlers you may find. Ages 7 and up.

Friday, April 23

7:00pm-8:30pm **Nite Hike**
\$5.00 adult/\$3.00 child

Explore the sounds of the night and the secrets of nocturnal animals. We will search for owls and bats on the 100 acres behind the EEC and discover what it is like to live in darkness. Hopefully we will have the owls talk to us! Warm up around the campfire with a cup of hot chocolate after the hike. Fun for the whole family but not suitable for very young children..

Environmental Education Center
1115 W. Avon Road
Rochester Hills, MI 48309
or call 248-656-4775
or visit the [EEC on the City Website](#)

Spotlight on Families First!

Recipients in Rochester Hills.....

The Families First Winners for the month of October are the Bante family, and their foster son, Alex Chivescu. Alex was an exceptional student at Stoney Creek High School. He was extremely bright and hard-working, with a near perfect ACT score. Sadly, when circumstances at home made it difficult for him to continue to live there, Alex was placed in the Children's Home of Detroit. Things were made worse for Alex because he had to leave his beloved Stoney Creek. "My school means everything to me," Alex wrote at the time. "When chaos reigned at home, I immersed myself in my studies and my friends."



*James and Suzanne Bante
October 2009*

Alex took matters into his own hands and began a search for foster parents in the Rochester Community School District area. The search was made even more difficult because it is nearly impossible to find any foster home for a 17-year-old boy. Nobody was advocating for Alex, so he had to advocate for himself.

Alex compiled a list of two dozen prospective parents and wrote the most important letter of his life. Thankfully, one of those letters was addressed to James and Suzanne Bante. James and Suzanne took Alex into their home and hearts.

Jim and Suzanne have grown to love Alex and consider him a member of their family. Alex spent his entire senior year with the Bantes. He did, however, move from the Bante residence to further his studies and attend another school, Harvard University.

"There are so many positive things about this family that it is hard to name them all," Mayor Barnett stated. "Through our Families First Program, I have heard many wonderful stories about Rochester Hills' families, yet I continue to be amazed by their generosity and goodness." He added, "I am pleased and proud to have James and Suzanne Bante as our October Family of the Month, and wish Alex Chivescu the very best in all his future endeavors."

Mike, Colleen, Matthew, Tommy and Genna Schomaker have been selected as recipients of the Families First Award for the month of November 2009. Mike and Colleen, with faith, strength, and love, have guided their family through many challenges and have succeeded in the face of daunting odds.

Tommy Schomaker was born with a heart condition that would necessitate many surgeries and procedures which began immediately after he was born. In addition to surgeries, Tommy has had to endure medical procedures, constant medications and many, many doctor visits. At age 7 ½, Tommy was put on a transplant list because he was very ill and growing weaker. He was not able to go to school, he tired very easily, and had to take medicine to keep his heart beating. Then a miracle happened, a heart was found for Tommy and the transplant was successful.

Tommy is now able to do many things. He goes to school, can hit a baseball, run his own bases, climb the stairs, and is learning to ride a bike. Tommy has his own book titled, "Tommy's New Heart" which he shares with his classmates at St. John Lutheran School.

The Schomaker family is very thankful for the hope and prayer that kept their family going during the most difficult times. Through the many uncertainties and overwhelming anxiety, they believe they were blessed with many miracles, and rejoice in the joy Tommy is experiencing doing things like going to school and playing ball.

Mike and Colleen have taken their faith one step further and have joined with other "heart" parents to start a charity called "Hearts of Hope." Hearts of Hope was established to assist parents with living expenses they incur during the long vigil of hospitalization their children endure at the University of Michigan hospital.

In addition, the Schomaker family has reached out to many families at the University of Michigan hospital to provide support, love, hope and caring. Colleen has provided a shoulder and an ear to many a mom in need.

Tommy's parents and brother and sister have all been touched by the events that have occurred in Tommy's life, but especially by the deep and abiding love they have for each other.



*The Schomaker Family
November 2009*

Spotlight on Families First!

Recipients in Rochester Hills.....

Michael, Anne, Maura, Griffith, Aiken, Devin and Maeve Losh are the December 2009 Family of the Month. Anne Losh is an active member of the Hampton Homeowners Association (HOAH), the association for single family homes. She has served as secretary for two years and president for one year. She reenergized the Association, dramatically increasing active membership and initiated or restarted family and children activities. She also led the subdivision's sign beautification and spring time cleanup of wooded areas in the subdivision.

Anne has also taken an active role in the Property Owners Association of Hampton (POAH) for all Hampton residential units. She greatly improved the relationship between the two groups. She has been serving as president of POAH, while volunteering her time and efforts to manage the swimming pool for the past three years. She ensured that all residents are familiar with the deed restrictions and continually works with city personnel to ensure there are no ordinance violations. She also led the effort to bring in a new golf course management company and worked to improve the landscape on and around the golf course.

The family also spends time volunteering at their local church, St. Mary's of the Hills. Michael Losh volunteers time as a Cub Scout Leader and for the Habitat for Humanity Program. The family also finds time to volunteer at Holy Family Regional School and actively helps at the church to support St. Michael's Food Pantry.

In nominating the Losh family, Louis Rumao stated, "This family symbolizes what an "ideal" family should be. The parents love, nurture and protect the children. The children are respectful and obedient to the parents and caring toward each other."



*The Losh Family
December 2009*

The Leniczek family consists of Larry and Kathy and their children, Kelley, Stephanie, Emily and Catie. The entire family is loved and respected in their neighborhood and community. Larry Leniczek has served on the Meadowbrook Valley Homeowners' Association Board many times and in many capacities throughout the years.

Kathy has also served on the board and is a very active volunteer in Rochester Hills. She has generously donated her time and efforts to Rochester Community Schools at the elementary, middle and high school levels. She has also served as the President of the PTA. In addition, Kathy spends time as an active parishioner at St. Irenaeus Catholic Church by volunteering whenever she is needed. She delivers weekly Meals on Wheels, has served on numerous committees, and her most recent accomplishment has been to complete her second, three-day Breast Cancer walk.

The Leniczek girls are very trustworthy and responsible. Kelley, Stephanie, Emily and Catie are very hardworking and committed students who excel in sports and academics. They also spend time involved in Youth Group activities and volunteer for various community service organizations through their church.

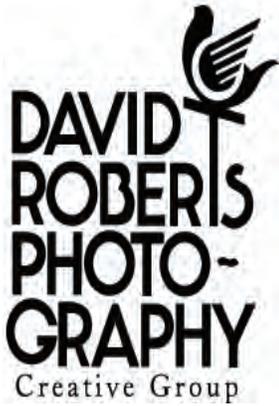
In nominating the Leniczek family, Tricia and Mike Behm and Bryan and Michele Morrow said, "The Leniczek family are a well-deserving family for the Families First program. They represent what the spirit of family and community should be."



*The Leniczek Family
January 2010*

The Families First program was initiated by Mayor Barnett to recognize and celebrate the foundation of what makes Rochester Hills a great community. Whether it is to celebrate unspoken acts of kindness or other unique examples of community service, the objective is to recognize those individuals that make our community great. Please take a moment to nominate the person or family that you feel has truly made a difference.

The success of the Families First program is due in large part to the ongoing support of our sponsors. Please join us in thanking them for their generosity, and for helping us celebrate these outstanding Rochester Hills families.



To nominate a family, please fill out the nomination form, or [download](#) the form from the city's webpage. You can mail it, fax it, email it, or drop it off at the Mayor's Office.

I would like to nominate the following family as the City of Rochester Hills "Family of the Month" as part of Mayor Bryan K. Barnett's **Families First!** initiative.

Family Members Name(s): _____

Address: _____

Telephone: _____ Email: _____

Rochester Hills resident(s) for _____ years.

I chose this family for consideration because: _____

Nominated by: _____

Address: _____

Telephone: _____ Email: _____

Rochester Hills Museum



Exhibit on display through March 2010

Mothers, Daughters, and Leaders of Oakland County

The exhibit showcases 40 women who have achieved distinction in the arts, community leadership, business, science, and family life. All of the women have strong connections to Oakland County and their contributions are of enduring nature that will be reflected upon by future generations. Come to be inspired by our community residents!

Permanent Exhibit

A Lively Town – The Museum’s permanent exhibits explain our community’s history as we evolved from a wilderness in the early 1800’s to a suburban community today – from surveying chains and ox yokes, to commercial farms and businesses along Main Street, hundreds of artifacts and photographs are on display. In addition, guests can view the Museum orientation video, tour the 1840 Van Hoosen Farmhouse, the 1850 Red House, view our model train layout, visit the Museum store, and more!

Book Review

“Bill’s Super Service” by Nancy Broomfield Aiken

\$19.95 in the Rochester Hills Museum store

During his illustrious career, William S. Broomfield represented the Rochester Hills community in Congress for 36 years, served as a State Representative at age 26, and was the state’s youngest-ever Speaker Pro Tem. He served under 8 Presidents and 11 Secretaries of State. He served on many committees, and his role on the Foreign Affairs Committee took him around the world seven times and allowed him to meet with nearly every world leader.

But through it all, Bill was known as a nice guy. His philosophy: Work hard, do your best, be honest. A great life lesson for us all!



New Hours at the Museum!

Drop in hours are Friday and Saturday from 1-4 pm, year round.

Group tours, school groups, scouts, churches, civic organizations, homeowners associations, and PTAs, can be arranged by appointment. Museum staff have a wide range of PowerPoint presentations we can either bring to you, or show in our beautiful historic setting. Check out the [Museum website](#) for a complete list of programs we offer.

Planning a Wedding?



The Rochester Hills Museum at Van Hoosen Farm is available for indoor and outdoor weddings. Located in historic Stony Creek Village, the 1840 farmhouse has been carefully and beautifully preserved. Indoor wedding ceremonies are held in the classic library and outdoor weddings are held in the 18’ garden gazebo located in a maple and walnut grove along tranquil Stony Creek.

For additional information, visit the [city website](#) or call the Museum at 248-656-4663.



Rochester Hills Parks

City Parks are open for all winter activities

It may be cold out there, but winter activities are abundant. One big advantage to all this cold weather we've been having is the lake at Spencer Park is finally frozen. Three separate ice rinks have been cleared on the lake – one for ice skaters and two for hockey players. The adjacent warming shelter offers a cozy fireplace, heated restrooms, refreshments, and table games. Call Spencer Park at 248-656-4657 for current conditions and updates.

The frozen lake is ideal for ice fishing, and there are over three miles of ungroomed trails throughout the park for cross-country skiing or snowshoeing.

When there is sufficient snow, the sledding hill at Bloomer Park is open between the hours of 9:00 am and 5:00 pm. The sledding hill offers three downhill runs with separate walking paths alongside leading back to the top of the hill. The Hilltop Shelter with a fireplace, picnic tables, and heated restrooms is used as a warming area for sledders. For safety reasons, snowboards, innertubes, and standing on sleds are prohibited.

Cross-country skiers can use the many non-groomed nature trails available at Bloomer Park as well. Call Bloomer Park at 248-656-4753 for current conditions and updates.

So don't fret about the weather, visit your city parks with your family and friends and enjoy the outdoors.



Outdoor fun abounds at Rochester Hills Parks



ROCHESTER HILLS PARKS NEW SCHEDULE

All Rochester Hills parks will be closed to the public on Mondays, Tuesdays, and Wednesdays through March 15 and again beginning November 15. Closing the parks three days each week will result in the decrease of some operational costs and will help the city reach some of their cost-saving goals during these economically difficult times. We encourage all visitors to use the parks when they are open and continue to participate in the many available winter activities.

EARLY SHELTER RESERVATION SPECIAL

Rochester Hills Parks Division is now accepting shelter reservations for 2010 and offering a “**\$50 Early Shelter Reservation Discount**” off regular rates to those who reserve and pay for one of the following shelters at Spencer Park or Bloomer Park by April 30, 2010.

	Reg. Rate	Early Rate
Bloomer		
Stone Shelter	\$225	\$175
Pine Grove Shelter	\$175	\$125
Hilltop Shelter	\$175	\$125
Spencer		
Boathouse Shelter	\$200	\$150

Shelters can be reserved on weekends during the period of May through October and on weekdays when day camps are not using them. Bloomer Park offers picnicking, scenic hiking/biking trails, horseshoe pits, and playgrounds. Spencer Park offers swimming and boating from Memorial Day through Labor Day, hiking, picnicking, tennis/volleyball courts, and much more. Both parks are located in lovely wooded settings.

For additional information, visit the Park's “Shelter Reservations” page on the city's website at http://www.rochester-hills.org/city_services/parks/Shelter_Reservations.asp.

Call the Parks Office at 247-656-4673 Mondays-Fridays, during normal business hours, to schedule and process your reservation.

PARK FEE CHANGES FOR 2010

Motor Vehicle Entry Fees, Shelter Reservation Fees, and Field Reservation Fees have been revised for 2010.

Motor Vehicle Entry Fee

(NOTE: Vehicle registration determines residency status for Resident Discount Rate.)

There is no charge for bicycles ridden into the park or for pedestrians.	Spencer Park		Bloomer/ Yates Parks
	Fee	With Resident Discount	Fee
Annual City Park Permit*	\$60	\$30	
Annual Bloomer/Yates Park Pass			\$30
Annual Senior Citizen Park Pass* (60+)	\$20	\$10	
Annual Handicap Park Pass*	\$20	\$10	
Annual Bus Rate City Park Permit	\$120	\$60	
Annual Bus Rate Bloomer/Yates Park Pass			\$60
Daily City Park Permit	\$10	\$5	
Daily Bloomer/Yates Park Permit			\$5
Daily Bus Rate Permit	\$20	\$10	\$10
Off-season Daily Permit (October 15 – May 15)	\$5	\$3	\$5

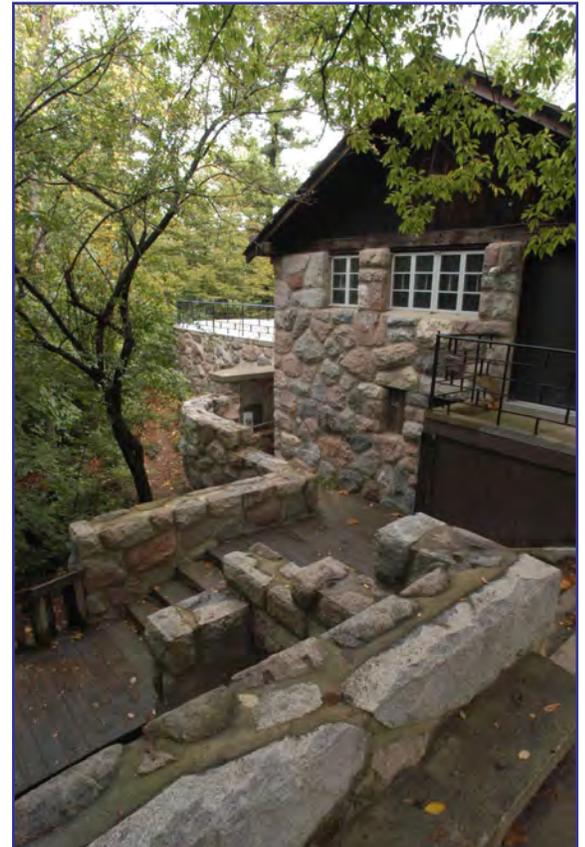


*Annual City Park Permits, Senior Citizen Park Passes, and Handicap Park Passes are honored at Spencer Park, Bloomer Park, and Yates Park.

Daily Shelter Rental Fees

(NOTE: Shelter Rental Fee does not include Motor Vehicle Entry Fee.)

BLOOMER PARK SHELTER/ TENT	DAILY RENTAL FEE
Stone Shelter	\$225
Pine Grove Shelter	\$175
Hilltop Shelter	\$175
Mountain Ash Shelter	\$100
Tent	\$100
SPENCER PARK SHELTER/ TENT	
Spencer Shelter	\$200
Tent	\$100



Sports Field Rental Fees

Visit the city's website for a listing of the current Sports Field Rental Fees at:
http://www.rochesterhills.org/park_fees/uploads/Field_Fees_for_website.pdf.



Rochester Hills Fire Department

A Message from Chief..... **Ron Crowell**



Recreational Fires

Did you know the city has an ordinance relating to recreational fires? Recreational fires are the burning of dried seasoned firewood for recreational or religious purposes. The City Council recently amended the ordinance and the fine structure for residents who are in violation of the ordinance. The Fire Department deals with numerous residents who burn leaves and yard debris in violation of the city's ordinance. Any resident found to be in violation of the ordinance will be fined \$100.00 for the first offense, \$250.00 for the second offense, and \$500.00 for the third and all subsequent offenses.

Residents can burn dry seasoned firewood in a commercial fireplace (typically purchased at a hardware store) without a permit. If you wish to burn on the ground or a fire pit you constructed on the ground, you are required to have a permit. For additional information, please visit the [Fire Department](#) page of the city website.



Are you prepared in case of an emergency?

In the event of an emergency, you are well protected by highly trained and dedicated staff of the Rochester Hills Fire Department and Oakland County Sheriff's Office. However, in an emergency situation these simple steps can make a big difference in ensuring the safety and well-being of you and your loved ones:

- 1. GET A KIT** – Recommended items to include in a basic emergency supply kit are water, food, battery-powered radio, flashlight, extra batteries, first aid kit, whistle to signal for help, dust mask, items for personal sanitation, wrench or pliers, can opener, local maps, and a cell phone with chargers. Additional items such as medications, glasses, baby items, cash, etc. may be considered on an as needed basis.
- 2. MAKE A PLAN** - Your family may not be together when an emergency situation occurs, so it is important to plan in advance. You should have a plan to know how you will contact one another, how you will get back together, and what you will do in different situations.
- 3. BE INFORMED** - In addition to planning for your family, it is important to learn about the emergency plans that have been established in your area by your state and local government. Early notification is very important during an emergency. To receive notification of emergencies, Rochester Hill's residents can sign up with **NIXLE**, the community's early notification system of vital information that needs to be widely communicated.

For more information on emergency preparedness, please contact the Rochester Hills Fire Department at 248-656-4650 or visit the following websites:

www.nixle.com

www.rochesterhills.org

www.fema.org

www.bt.cdc.gov

www.ready.gov



Free Blood Pressure Checks

The Rochester Hills Fire Department will be at City Hall on the first and third Tuesday each month through the end of the year providing free blood pressure checks to residents. Residents can come to the Resource Room on the lower level between 11:00am and 11:30am to have their blood pressure checked. For critical lifesaving information relating to your blood pressure, visit the American Heart Association Website.

For additional information, please contact the Rochester Hills Fire Department at 248-656-4650.

2009 Winter Taxes Due February 16, 2010

The 2009 Winter Property Taxes are due February 16, 2010. Postmarks will not be honored, so please allow, as the post office recommends, 5 business days for first class postal delivery. Visit the [Treasury Department](#) on the city's website for more information on convenient payment options. On February 17, 2010, a 3% penalty will be added to the unpaid balance of all 2009 summer and winter taxes. Beginning March 2, 2010, delinquent taxes must be paid to the Oakland County Treasurer with additional late fees. Questions can be directed to the Treasury Department at 248- 656-4675 or treasury@rochesterhills.org

Renew Dog Licenses at City Hall

Through Tuesday, June 1, 2010, Oakland County's yearly dog license for 2010 may be renewed at the City Treasury Department for the non-delinquent fee. Please bring the postcard renewal reminder that was sent to you. Your dog's rabies vaccination certificate must be presented when you apply for the license. If you recently acquired a dog or are a new resident, you have a 30-day grace period to license your dog. If you are purchasing your dog license at the city, the check must be made payable to the "City of Rochester Hills." Visit the [Treasury Department](#) on the city's website for more information regarding animal licensing. Questions can be directed to the Treasury Department at 248-656-4675 or treasury@rochesterhills.org

Tax Assessing Information and Board of Review Updates

A Declining Real Estate Market, Proposal A and Property Taxes?

With the State of Michigan continuing to be mired in the worst real estate market in its history, many people are asking what is the expected impact on our property tax burden for 2010? Visit the [Assessing Department](#) on the city's website for an article explaining the assessment process, Proposal "A"/Property Taxes. Questions can be directed to the Assessing Department at 248-656-4605 or assessing@rochesterhills.org

Foreclosure/Bank Sales How do they affect value?

With the drastic increase in the number of foreclosure/bank sales of property, taxpayers are interested in understanding the ultimate impact of these transactions on the property taxes they pay. Visit the [Assessing Department](#) on the city's website for an article addressing Foreclosure Sale Guidelines and the impact on the assessment/taxation process.

2010 Assessment Change Notices

The 2010 Assessment Change Notices (ACN) will be mailed to all property owners of record in Mid-February. The ACN will indicate: the new assessed and taxable values for 2010, an estimated expected change in property taxes as a result of the new values, the Homeowner's Principal Residence Exemption Status, and indicate if there has been a Transfer of Ownership

in 2009. The notice will also indicate the ability to contact the Assessor's Office during an Assessor's Review period and when the appeal period begins for the local March Board of Review.

2010 Assessor's Review

Following the mailing of the Assessment Change Notices in mid-February, the Assessing Department will hold an Assessor's Review until the Organizational Meeting of the March Board of Review on Tuesday, March 2, 2010. This is an opportunity to discuss your questions and concerns regarding the assessment/valuation process addressed with an assessing staff member. The Assessing Department can be reached at 248-656-4605 or stop in and see us, second floor of City Hall.

2010 March Board of Review Hearing Information

The 2010 March Board of Review will begin hear 2010 assessment appeals on Monday, March 8, 2010. If you wish to make an appeal to the local board of review, you must schedule your appeal no later than Thursday, March 11, 2010 at 5:00 p.m. in order to ensure the Board of Review can hear your appeal. Visit the [Board of Review Dates](#) page on the city's website for additional information on the 2010 March Board of Review Hearing Dates. For additional information on the local [Board of Review](#), visit the city's website or contact the Assessing Department at 248-656-4605 or assessing@rochesterhills.org.

Veterans Memorial Pointe

Memorial 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.

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

Inscription Information

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.



Memorial Brick Order Form

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.

Eagle Scout Project 2010

This year, Veterans Memorial Pointe will once again be home to a innovative and beneficial Eagle Scout project. Chris Ogg, son of city staff member Joni Ogg, will plan and build a new Guard Station at the Pointe. Chris is a member of Troop 125 of the Shelby Township area.

The scope of the work is to build a station area where the Honor Guard can perform their rifle ceremonies. The scout must plan and design, raise the funds and obtain building materials to compete the project. The Honor Guard Station should be ready for use before Memorial Day weekend 2010.

Veterans Memorial Pointe has been the inspiration for many Eagle Scout projects. Please visit the Pointe to see the new Honor Guard Station, and to see how it has become a place of lasting beauty in the City of Rochester Hills.

City of Rochester Hills Hosts American Water Work Association Water Tapping Competition

The City of Rochester Hills Public Service Department is hosting the American Water Work Association (AWWA) water tapping competition at the Rochester Hills DPS Facility on March 2, 2010 at 10:00am.

Our city water tap crew will be competing against water department crews from cities and townships from all over the State of Michigan. In the competition, teams race to tap a water pressurized ductile iron pipe, install corporation stop, cut and flare ¾" copper tubing for installation of a water service line with curb stop and connecting this line to the meter yoke. To prepare for this competition, our city team has been coming in early, on their own time, every morning from 6:00am to 7:00am to practice for this event. If our team wins, they will have the opportunity to participate in the national competition that will be held in Chicago on Saturday, March 13, 2010. All expenses will be paid for by the American Water Work Association.



Rochester
Hills' Water
Tap Crew

Hills Herald

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City of Rochester Hills

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in the *Hills Herald* may be directed to:

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1000 Rochester Hills Drive
Rochester Hills, MI 48309

-or-

hillsherald@rochesterhills.org

New Graph on Water Bill

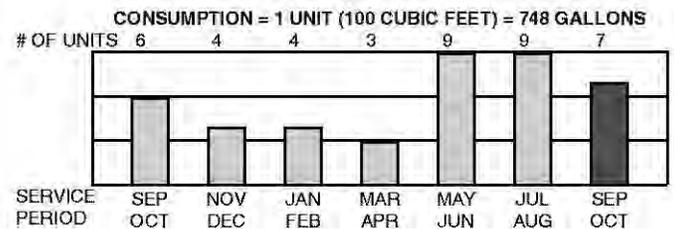
You may have noticed the new graph on your water bill and asked yourself, “What is this graph showing me?”

The graph is providing you with the number of water units and the service periods billed for the last seven (7) billing periods and allows you to compare the water use for the current billing period to the same billing period one year ago. By reviewing the graph on your bill, you can begin to see your water use pattern.

The example above demonstrates that this customer uses less water in the winter months (November through April), more water in the summer months (May through August), and in the fall months, they used an amount of water that falls in between the winter and summer months. By looking at the water use in this example, it appears that this customer is using outside water between the months of May and September. This pattern will be common for many customers in that you may see higher use in the summer months because of outdoor use. As a reminder, the city does have a water restriction for outdoor watering by means of an automatic or programmable landscape irrigation system. Watering with these systems may be done only between the hours of midnight to 5:00 a.m.

Every customer has a different pattern of water use. As we all know, water is expensive, so here are a few simple water savers that may reduce your water bill:

- Check all faucets for leaks – a slow drip can waste 15 to 20 gallons of water per day.
- When doing dishes by hand, never leave the water running.
- Take showers instead of baths.
- Take shorter showers – you will use less water.
- Do full loads of laundry.
- Do not leave water running while brushing your teeth, washing your hands or shaving.
- Do not use the toilets to flush away tissue. Every flush takes two to five gallons of water.
- Reduce outside water use.



OAKLAND COUNTY HOMEBUYER PROGRAM

If you have ever thought about purchasing your own home, now is the time to act. The Oakland County Homebuyer Program has received federal stimulus funds to help qualified homebuyers purchase and improve vacant and foreclosed properties. The Program is designed to help low income families with good credit and a steady income purchase a home as their primary residence.

Eligible homebuyers must have:

- incomes at or below 50% of Area Median Income (AMI). For example, a family of four earning up to \$35,500 per year is eligible. An income eligibility chart is on the reverse of this letter.
- a credit score of 620 or better. Oakland County will obtain credit reports for completed applications at no cost to the applicant.
- sustained income with a two year history
- lawful residence in the United States, and
- no history of bankruptcy or foreclosure within the last 36 months.

Applicants can obtain a Homebuyer Screening Form by visiting the [Oakland County Community & Home Improvement Division \(OCCHI\)](#) website or by calling 248-858-1529. Applications are processed on a first come, first served basis.

Oakland County will provide no-interest deferred payment loans for down payment assistance, closing costs, home improvements or other financing. The homebuyer must prequalify for a fixed rate mortgage loan from a lending institution for 51% of the purchase price. Oakland County will finance the remaining 49% of the purchase and rehabilitation costs up to \$100,000. The homebuyer must also provide \$1,000 to initiate the purchase. The homebuyer only pays on the conventional mortgage obtained from their lender. Payment on the down payment and home improvement loans is deferred until the property changes ownership or the property is not the primary residence.

The Oakland County Home Buyer Program covers properties in 43 select Oakland County communities. This outstanding homebuyer program is designed to help you afford your dream of homeownership. We encourage you to consider buying and improving a vacant foreclosed property through the Oakland County Homebuyer Program.

DEER AWARENESS



Deer Feeding Ban

Efforts to decrease the large deer population, traffic hazards, deer/human interaction, the spread of deer-related diseases, and damage to private property has resulted in City Council passing a citywide ban on feeding deer in Rochester Hills. It is unlawful to place on the ground, or within five feet of the ground, any fruit, berries, grain, vegetables, nuts, salt or other edible materials that may attract or feed deer unless such materials are covered or protected in a way to prevent deer from feeding on them.

Don't Veer for Deer!

To prevent deer/vehicle crashes, please observe the deer crossing signs and be on the lookout for deer by the roadways. Deer/vehicle crashes are a year-round problem, but deer herds are most active in the spring and during the fall mating season (Oct. 15-Dec. 15). Motorcyclists are especially vulnerable, with 80% of motorcycle/deer crashes resulting in an injury or fatality. According to SEMCOG's brochure:

WHAT YOU CAN DO

- ◆ Stay aware, awake, alert, and sober
- ◆ Always use your safety belts
- ◆ Heed deer crossing and speed limit signs
- ◆ If you see one deer, slow down – chances are there are others nearby
- ◆ Be especially alert for deer at dawn and dusk
- ◆ Flashing your high-beam headlights or honking your horn won't deter deer.

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, remember to: Buckle Up, Stay Alert, and Slow Down.

10
QUESTIONS. MINUTES.

MAKE A DIFFERENCE. MAKE HISTORY.



Your census form will arrive in March 2010. Don't miss your opportunity to make a difference. By answering 10 simple questions, you can help improve our schools, roads, hospitals, job-training programs, public transportation and much more.

United States
**Census
2010**
It's In Our Hands

Rochester Hills City Council



Michael Webber

At-Large

I wish all of you a very happy 2010. I am optimistic that this will be a positive year for our city and region. Many families in our city have been affected by the economic downturn in our state and region – my family included – but there is reason to believe that better days are ahead. Frankly, they have to be.

My wife Julia and I had a great new year visiting Julia's parents in San Antonio, Texas. We had a chance to see the Michigan State Spartans in the Alamo Bowl and enjoyed the River Walk although I admit that it would never work in Michigan given our climate.

With a new year, it also means new council board and committee appointments. I am honored to be appointed to some very good committees – the newest being the Older Person Commission (OPC) Governing Board. The OPC is a jewel within the Rochester area and the region. The goal of the board is to sustain and preserve the OPC so it continues to be a jewel in our area long into the future. I know that Julia and I will use it someday as seniors

in this community.

In the last *Hills Herald* article, I wrote about our Fiscal Year 2010/2011 budget process last summer. I am pleased to report that our city has followed the lead of Oakland County in adopting a two year budget with a five year financial outlook. This long term planning will allow us to make decisions that will sustain city services that are vital to our community into the future while maintaining our low tax rate.

As a city councilmember, I have tried to do what any of us would do – approaching the city budget much as we would our own family budget. You must budget for your needs first. As a city, we need public safety and we need safe roads. In order to accomplish this, you also need good employees. With that will come health care and retirement costs. Like many businesses, our city has worked with our employees to contain these costs.

As budgets continue to tighten, a higher percentage of the budget will go towards public safety and roads. This means that some of the quality of life items – such as parks – that make our community great will suffer during this economic downturn. This may mean reduced park hours. So far we have managed to fund parks at adequate levels for the next few years.

One way that we can turn the economic tide is through economic development. The city's economic development team worked hard in 2009 to attract sixteen new companies to Rochester Hills. Retaining and growing jobs must be a focus because we are competing with other cities, regions and states for jobs.

Residents often ask me about the budget process and how the city can afford to purchase green space or keep the library and OPC open during these challenging economic times. It should be noted that we have a smaller General Fund budget than many cities our size – the rest of the budget is made up of dedicated millages that were voted on by the people. So when we purchase green space, it is done with the green space millage that is set aside only for that purpose. I think that is an important point when talking about budgeting.

I welcome you joining me on Facebook and Twitter. While I will sometimes make comments about sports and pop culture, I also tend to talk about city happenings from time to time. Social networking sites are just another avenue to stay current with what is happening in our world.

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 spring.

*Working to
serve the
residents
and business
owners in
the City of
Rochester
Hills*



Clockwise from standing: Michael Webber, J. Martin Brennan, Nathan Klomp, Ravi Yalamanchi, James Rosen, President Greg Hooper and Vice President Vern Pixley

The Rochester Hills City Council consists of seven members: four district members 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. Please refer to the council members link for more information regarding individual members.

The Council meets every Monday of each month at 7:00 p.m. in the City Hall Auditorium unless otherwise indicated. To view videos of City Council meetings anytime, access the video library for streaming web video. Visit the Meeting Information portion of this website to access the current meeting packet and current meeting schedule.

Rochester Hills



We live it



We love it